

SGT Kawaiola Nahale (Reserve)



"Being in the water is very healing for me."

Current Location:

Wahiawa, Hawaii

MOS/Current Occupation:

36B (Budget analyst)

Warrior Transition Unit:

Schofield Barracks Warrior Transition Unit, Hawaii

Hometown:

Honolulu, Hawaii

School(s):

West Hawaii Explorations Academy, Hawaii; Honolulu Community College, Hawaii

Events training for:

Swimming

Injury or Illness:

Cancer



U.S. Army Reservist and native Hawaiian Kawalioa Nahale loves the water and excels when she's in it. At the 2014 U.S. Army Warrior Trials, Nahale was a four-time medalist, winning gold in the women's 50 freestyle, 100 freestyle and 50 backstroke. She brought home silver in the 50 breaststroke. She is looking forward to testing herself against top warrior athletes from around the world.

"Being able to represent the United States at the Invictus Games is a huge honor for me," she said. "And representing the Army is very humbling. I am very grateful to be doing so."

In April 2013, Nahale was diagnosed with breast cancer, and adaptive reconditioning has been instrumental in getting her back on track and back in—and on—the water (she paddles canoes, as well). A former competitive community and high school swimmer, Nahale credits adaptive reconditioning with helping her cope with the "bad days" associated with her recovery. "When I swim or paddle, I am able to focus on all the moving parts of the sport," she said. "It allows me to not think about the 'Why me?' traps that I sometimes fall into. Being able to be in the water is very healing for me." She will compete in swimming at the Invictus Games.

In addition to setting her sights on medaling at these games and continuing as a warrior athlete, Nahale would like to help other wounded Soldiers recover and reintegrate by becoming Cadre at one of the Army's Warrior Transition Units. Her long-term goals include returning to active duty, becoming a drill sergeant, progressing in her career as a budget analyst and serving in the Army for 30 years.