



## **17 join Ewa's peace force Officials credit the volunteer patrol with reducing area crime**

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Drug deals and gambling seem to be on the way down in some parts of Ewa Beach.

And some of the credit goes to the Hawaii Guardian Angels, who have been patrolling with residents for several months, a state official representing the area said.

"I want to thank you for making us feel safer," said Rep. Kymberly Pine (R- Ewa Beach, Iroquois Point) at the second graduating ceremony for the Hawaii chapter of Guardian Angels held at the state Capitol rotunda.

Seventeen people became official members of the Hawaii Guardian Angels yesterday. The second graduating class is made up of members ranging from 16 to 64 years old. Lt. Gov. James "Duke" Aiona spoke to the graduating class and commended them for assisting law enforcement officials.

Pine said the Guardian Angels, who have assisted a neighborhood patrol group in Ewa Beach, had helped deter drug dealing and gambling on Ewa Beach Road, Makule Road and Ewa Beach Park.

"I noticed a huge difference," Pine said.

"We have our good parts and our bad parts, and I think the best thing the Guardian Angels made it clear to criminals is that Ewa Beach is no longer going to be a place where we're going to tolerate them," Pine said.

Brigitte Taylor, 43, one of two women who graduated yesterday, said she had noticed a significant change in illegal activity in Ewa Beach with their help.

"Now when we patrol, drug dealers disperse," said Taylor, of Wahiawa, whose 10-year-old daughter, Jazzmyn, also graduated as a junior angel yesterday.

Vondell Waiwaihole-Cabos, one of three leaders of the Ewa Beach Patrol who asked for the Guardian Angels' help, said it would take a long time to wipe out crime in their neighborhood.

But she believes the area has improved because of the Guardian Angels.

She said the Angels had helped attract more residents to the neighborhood patrol, which grew from four to 60 members.

"It was because of them that they came. They felt safer when the Angels were here, and knowing they were going to do a walk with us," she said.

Chapter director Ricardo "Chico" Garcia, who grew up in a rough neighborhood in Chicago before moving to Ewa Beach, thanked graduating members for their dedication. Garcia said his Angels group also makes weekly patrols in Kalihi, Waikiki and Salt Lake. And they expect to open chapters on every island, including a Maui chapter next month.

Volunteers are recognized by their red berets and white T-shirts emblazoned with "Guardian Angels Patrol."

Their training includes 3 1/2 months of martial arts such as tae kwon do, and community service. Only members 16 years and older can participate in the patrol. Those under 16 can participate in martial arts training and community service.



*Hawaii Guardian Angels faced the state chapter's second graduating class as Lt. Gov. Duke Aiona spoke at graduation ceremonies at the State Capitol yesterday afternoon, honoring the group's commitment to fighting crime.*



*Graduating members of the Hawaii Guardian Angels have completed training in martial arts and community service.*