



2025 ONIZUKA DAY SPECIAL EVENTS

MEET NASA ASTRONAUT DOMINIC ANTONELLI



Dominic Antonelli was selected as a NASA pilot in 2000 and completed 18 months of intensive training and evaluation as an Astronaut Candidate. Following this, he contributed to various technical assignments supporting the Astronaut Office. A veteran of two spaceflights, Antonelli has spent over 24 days in space.

In March 2009, Antonelli piloted his first space mission, STS-119, aboard Space Shuttle Discovery. This mission successfully delivered the S6 Integrated Truss Segment and the final pair of power-generating solar array wings to the International Space Station (ISS).

Antonelli later served as the pilot for STS-132 aboard Space Shuttle Atlantis (May 14–26, 2010), marking the 32nd Shuttle flight to the ISS. This mission transported an Integrated Cargo Carrier and a Russian-built Mini Research Module to the Station. Over the course of the mission, the crew completed 186 orbits, covering 4,879,978 miles in just under 12 days.

Before his career at NASA, Antonelli served as a fleet Naval Aviator and Landing Signal Officer aboard the USS Nimitz with the Blue Diamonds, Strike Fighter Squadron VFA-146. During this time, he flew F/A-18C Hornets in support of Operation Southern Watch. He accumulated over 3,200 flight hours in 41 different aircraft types and completed 273 carrier-arrested landings.

Antonelli is a Distinguished Graduate of the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School and has received numerous accolades, including the Navy Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal, and the NASA Return-to-Flight Award, among others.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Aeronautics and Astronautics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Master of Science in Aeronautics and Astronautics from the University of Washington.

Hear NASA Astronaut Dominic Antonelli speak about his thrilling experiences in space at 9:30 in the ACM building (building G) auditorium. An exclusive meet and greet with this distinguished astronaut will follow the presentation.

Limited seating will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. The waiting line will form outside the ACM building. The presentation will also be shown on the large screen outside the ACM building.

NOAA INFLATABLE WHALE



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will bring an inflatable juvenile humpback whale. It is 45 feet long and 32 feet wide.

Attendees will be able to tour inside and learn more about whale anatomy and structure. You will see how humans share some interesting similarities with whales. Tours will include the outside of the whale and general Hawaiian Humpback Whale information too. There will be fun and interesting items like a cross section of baleen.

NOAA will also have an educational table where everyone can learn, play games, and win fun prizes. NOAA fisheries will have a table near the whale with hands-on activities.

BIG TIRE BOOTCAMP

Join us for an exhilarating showcase of the Big Tire Bootcamp, the only adaptive fitness program in Hawaii. Designed to be inclusive and fun for all ages and fitness levels, our unique challenge course brings to life 10 different fitness stations featuring battling ropes, sledgehammer tire hits, tire flips, sandbags, and much more!

Safe, engaging, and perfect for everyone from elementary school children to adult. Each station is designed to enhance strength, agility, and endurance in a fun and supportive environment. Join us out on the Great Lawn for some challenging fun!

ELLISON ONIZUKA EXHIBIT

Ellison Shoji Onizuka was born and raised in Kealahou on the Big Island of Hawaii and earned his Eagle Scout rank before becoming a trailblazing astronaut and engineer. He became the first Asian American and person of Japanese ancestry to travel to space. After earning degrees in aerospace engineering from the University of Colorado, he served as a flight test engineer in the U.S. Air Force before being selected as a NASA astronaut in 1978.

Onizuka first ventured into space aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery in 1985 and later joined the ill-fated Challenger mission in 1986, where he tragically lost his life along with six other crew members. His legacy continues to inspire generations to dream beyond the stars. A special video tribute has been prepared about the life of Ellison Onizuka and will play throughout the day on the second floor of the Library building near the NOAA inflatable whale.

VEX ROBOTICS TOURNAMENT

VEX IQ robotics for students in grades 4-8, is the largest scholastic robotics program in Hawaii with 153 teams in the current year. 18 Hawaii teams are competing in the World Championships in Dallas, Texas. Each year the game challenge changes which fosters students learning and practicing engineering design, computer programming, and life skills like teamwork and problem solving.

Join us in room C-208 and cheer on the 20 teams as they try to score points by collecting and launching plastic pucks. Want to start a robotics program at your school or your scout unit? Find out what grants are available and how to get started.

SPEED CUBING

Witness firsthand the lightning-fast skills of our talented competitors as they battle it out for cubing supremacy. Enjoy live demonstrations and learn advanced solving techniques from experienced speedcubers. Test your own cubing abilities and try your hand at solving a variety of twisty puzzles. Come for sessions 1, 2, 3, or 4 in room D-250 or drop in anytime from 10:00 to 3:00.

GATEBALL ROBOTICS CHALLENGE

For the first time in the world, a modified Gateball game will be played by robots. What is Gateball? Use a mallet and try to hit balls through the Gate. Cheer for students and adults using robots to play a modified Gateball game in exciting one vs one challenges. See Gateball in action in Room C-225.

THE HISTORY OF MAKAHIKI

This the 9th year of the Onizuka Day of Exploration but did you know that the roots of this event are 114 years old? That's right! ODE was previously called Makahiki and it started in 1911. It is the longest continuously running Boy Scouts of America annual show in the entire U.S. Come and see how Boy Scouts celebrated this spectacular event throughout the last 115 years.

BIG KAHUNA CHESS TOURNAMENT

80 Proficient Chess Players Needed! Do you have what it takes to walk away with the BIG KAHUNA GRAND TROPHY? Is the Big Kahuna Chess Tournament on your bucket list for ODE? Which Chess Piece is your greatest ally? Only the best will make it to the finals. You have 5 rounds, single elimination. Who said age is a number when it comes to chess?

Sign-up today (80 slots will go fast). Register at www.onizukaday.com. Walk-ins accepted on first come, first serve basis. Find the Big Kanuna Chess tournament on the second floor lanai of the C building. 2 Players per table. 25 minutes per game. 5 rounds of single elimination games. No sudden death points per piece.

BIG KAHUNA is for ages 8 thru 17 in sessions A, B, C, and D

KEIKI KAHUNA is for ages 7 thru 10 in session E.

Session A. 9:00 am. BIG KAHUNA. Ages 8 thru 17

Session B. 9:30 am BIG KAHUNA. Ages 8 thru 17

Session C 10 am. BIG KAHUNA. Ages 8 thru 17

Session D 10:30 am. BIG KAHUNA. Ages 8 thru 17

Session E. 11 am. KEIKI KAHUNA. Ages 7 thru 10 only

Places of finalists will be determined during final runoff from 2:30 to 3:00pm. Every player will receive a participation ribbon. Finalists will receive trophies. Announcement of winners will be at 3:00. You must be present to win.

EXPLORE THE HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMAND CENTER TRUCK

Don't miss the chance to explore the Honolulu Police Department Command Center Truck! This unique opportunity allows you to get up close and personal with the state-of-the-art command vehicle and learn about its impressive features. Located near the Academy for Creative Media parking lot, the command center truck will be on static display for visitors to explore. Honolulu Police Department officers will be present to explain the truck's functions and demonstrate how they utilize this advanced piece of equipment during critical operations.

Take advantage of this rare opportunity to step inside the command center truck and see for yourself the technology that helps keep our community safe. Engage with the dedicated officers who serve and protect Honolulu and gain valuable insight into their daily operations.

MANDO MERCS COSTUME CLUB

The Mando Mercs Costume Club is a worldwide Star Wars costuming and registered non-profit fraternal organization comprised of and voluntarily operated by Star Wars fans. See your favorite Star Wars characters up close at Onizuka Day! There will be photo ops with keiki – if they aren't afraid of stand next to Darth Vader-throughout the day.

HCTM WORKSHOPS

The Hawai'i Council of Teachers of Mathematics (HCTM) aims to provide teachers with opportunities to exchange ideas and materials regarding mathematics instruction. HCTM seeks to further the cooperative study of ideas related to mathematics teaching at the elementary, secondary, and college levels. Through these efforts, the HCTM strives to enhance mathematics education by promoting collaboration, sharing resources, and supporting professional development opportunities for educators. The HCTM workshops are open to adult ODE participants.