

LATE TESTIMONY

From: richard braunskill [rbraunskill@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 04, 2013 12:36 PM
To: PSMTestimony
Subject: In Honor of General Rogers!

Aloha to whom it may concern,

I am a resident of Hawaii currently in school on the mainland. I moved to Hawaii in 1998 and one of the first strange experiences I had was going to work at PBS-KHET in the morning and seeing this guy on the corner waving the American flag. Being rather patriotic myself, I was really kind of shocked to see this Black man out there. Because it was early morning and I had to get to work, I never had an opportunity to actually talk to John. Shortly after that I became employed at Olelo Community Access TV. It was then, that I had my first opportunity to actually check out this General Roger character!

I have encounter more then a few people in my many years doing public access in Hawaii and New York, but none have been as genuine as General Rogers. The more I got to know him, the more impressed I was by him. The man truly loved Hawaii, veterans, and America. Having served his country in a war, then returned to that same land and demonstrated a humanity and responsibility that far too many American servicemen, fell shamefully short of. That is a rare quality in today's society. He could have just returned to the states and acted like the seed he planted in Vietnam never existed. But he didn't. Not only did he acknowledge his child, but he worked to bring her to his homeland to give her a better life.

While he is known for saving his child from an existence of shame and poverty, his legacy will include the outreach he did to so many other abandoned Amerian-Asian children. But his good works were not limited to helpless children, his good works were extended to his fellow veterans who also found themselves in need of a stateside advocate. People who saw him on the corner waving the flag, more than likely had no idea of how much he helped countless veterans with his tv show.

I think it is more than fitting that the General be honored at this time. He is a symbol of what more Americans should be. I questioned him one day about being a Black man waving an American flag in a country that had demonstrated long years of discrimination and hatred to his people. He turned to me, smiled, and said "Brother Brumskin, we have come further then most people in this country, and that could only have happened in America".

When you honor The General, you honor all of us in Hawaii, for what we claim Hawaii is really about, one big Ohana!

Mahalo for your time,

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