

## Education Front - Motivational speaker Michael Walden focuses on attitude

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Iroquois Point Elementary School sixth graders stand with motivational speaker Michael Walden outside their school, Nov. 19. Walden met with students, faculty and parents to motivate and encourage students to be successful in life by having a good attitude. The Joint Venture Education Forum sponsored the event.

EWA BEACH — Well-known motivational speaker Michael Walden made his first Hawaii appearance at Iroquois Point Elementary School here, Nov. 19.

Walden began his speaking career 17 years ago as a sergeant in the Army's 82nd Airborne Division and since then more than 100,000 students have heard him speak.

Walden gave his power presentation "Attitude is Everything" to the students and staff of Iroquois Point Elementary and presented his workshop for the parents that evening. Iroquois Point Elementary School Principal Heidi Armstrong believes Walden was a great choice.

"Mr. Mike," as the students called him, told the audience that "goals are the roadmap to dreams" and "you must be giving your best to reach your dreams."

According to Walden, the path to success starts with having a winning attitude, showing respect for the adults in your life, being a good friend, being drug-, tobacco- and gang-free, and furthering your education.

The students repeated Walden's mantras "I'm going somewhere" and "It starts with me, it starts today," and were later asked to state something they would like to change about their attitudes. Numerous students said they would like to work on completing their homework neatly and on time, while others were concerned they weren't showing the proper respect for their parents.

Walden arrived early enough to observe students and staff arriving to school and was impressed with the respect students showed for adults and vice versa.

"Good things are happening at this school," Walden said.

At the end of the presentation, it was not difficult for students and adults alike to stand a little taller and believe "I can do that."

Walden's presentation was made possible by a partnership grant from the Joint Venture Education Forum (JVEF), a military and Department of Education partnership that enhances the educational experience of students at military-impacted schools in Hawaii.