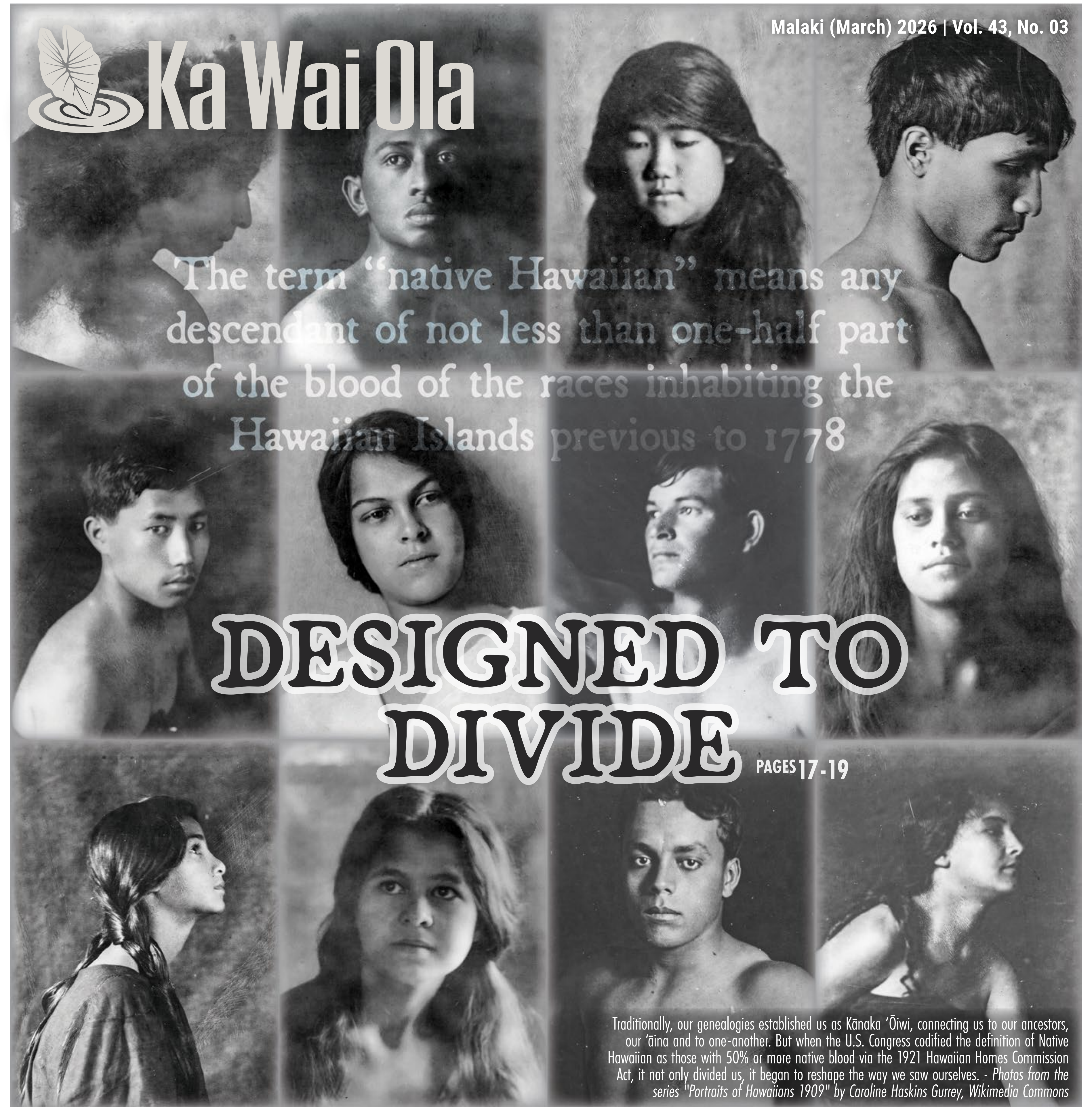


Traditionally, our genealogies established us as Kānaka ʻŌiwi, connecting us to our ancestors, our ʻāina and to one-another. But when the U.S. Congress codified the definition of Native Hawaiian as those with 50% or more native blood via the 1921 Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, it not only divided us, it began to reshape the way we saw ourselves. - *Photos from the series "Portraits of Hawaiians 1909" by Caroline Haskins Gurrey, Wikimedia Commons*

Ka ʻAha Hula at Waimea - The Gathering of Hula at Waimea
March 7, 18, 26, 28 & 29
11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. | Waimea, Oʻahu
Enjoy hula presentations by a variety of hālau. waimeavalley.net

Go Farm Hawaiʻi Open Houses
March 7, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Pūlehunui Farm (Puʻunēnē), Maui and Kamananui Farm (Waialua), Oʻahu
Guided tours of the farm training sites and learn about the program. gofarmhawaii.org

Hilo Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival
March 7, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Hilo, Hawaiʻi Island
The first annual Hilo Steel Guitar Festival at the Prince Kūhiō Plaza. hawaiiansteelguitarfestival.com

Kamaʻāina Sunday
March 8, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Honolulu, Oʻahu
Audio tours of ʻIolani Palace, ʻono food, lively entertainment, and local vendors. iolanipalace.org

Women of Waiʻanae Scholarship Deadline
March 13 | Waiʻanae Coast, Oʻahu
Scholarships for nontraditional students pursuing career training or higher ed. womenofwaianae.org/scholarships

105th Annual Kamehameha Schools Song Contest
March 14, Pre-show 6:30 p.m., Competition 7:30 p.m. | K5 Live broadcast
Encore presentations March 20, 7:00 p.m. on KGMB and March 22, 5:30 p.m. on K5. ksbe.edu/songcontest

Cultivating Canoe Crops Course Deadline
March 15 | Hawaiʻi Island
This free training opportunity from Go-Farm runs April 9 - May 30. For info or to register go to: gofarmhawaii.org

Mālama Hulēʻia Community Workday
March 21, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Līhuʻe, Kauaʻi
Volunteer to help with conservation work at Alakoko Fishpond. malamahuleia.org

Puʻuhonua Mākeke
March 21, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Waimānalo, Oʻahu
Products, services, and businesses from Puʻuhonua across Hawaiʻi. Puʻuhonua o Waimānalo in the Pavilion. FB/IG @puuhonuamakeke

The Heart of Hawaiʻi's ʻUkulele Culture with Terry Brown
March 21, 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
Iwilei, Oʻahu
An ʻukulele workshop for beginners and enthusiasts. Receive hands-on instruction and techniques on the second floor of Nā Lama Kukui. To RSVP email kaimom@oha.org or 808 594-1835.

Make Music Jamms
March 21, Noon - 1:00 p.m. | Iwilei, Oʻahu
Concert hosted by the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame at the second-floor stage at Nā Lama Kukui. IG @nalamakukui

Hot Kūpuna Nights
March 22, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. | Iwilei, Oʻahu
Bring your ʻukulele to the second floor of Nā Lama Kukui and join in the kanikapila. Food will be available for purchase. IG @nalamakukui

History of Pāʻulaʻula & King Kaumualiʻi OHA SPONSORED
March 27, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Waimea, Kauaʻi
A presentation by Dr. Peter Mills hosted by the Friends of Kaumualiʻi. For info or to register contact Maureen Fodole at kaumualiiohana@gmail.com or call 808-652-0021.

Culture & Health Fair OHA SPONSORED
March 28, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. | Waimea, Kauaʻi
A presentation by Friends of Kaumualiʻi about the king's life plus booths, local vendors, lomilomi tables, lāʻau lapaʻau and more at Waimea High School. For info contact Maureen Fodole at kaumualiiohana@gmail.com or call 808-652-0021.

Learn Kōnane
March 28, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Iwilei, Oʻahu
Free kōnane classes and on-going games are on the last Saturday each month at Nā Lama Kukui with Uncle John Kaohelaulii. IG @nalamakukui

Waipā Community Workday
March 28, 9:00 a.m. – Noon
Waipā, Kauaʻi
Check in at the old Waipā poi garage before 9:00 a.m. Bring shoes, water, gloves, hat, rain gear, a towel, a change of clothes, snacks and/or lunch. Lunch is provided if you rsvp in advance. waipafoundation.org

EVENTS HONORING PRINCE KŪHIŌ

Prince Kūhiō Day
March 26
(State Holiday)

7th Annual Kūhiō Festival
OHA SPONSORED
March 14, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Hoʻolehua, Molokaʻi
Music and hula, and a play about Kūhiō's lifelong dedication to Hawaiʻi's people. At the Lanikeha Community Center. Contact Hoʻolehua Homesteaders Association at lakuhiokalanik@aol.com.

Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole Festival
OHA SPONSORED
March 21, 3:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Nānākuli, Oʻahu
All day entertainment, mele and hula, keiki village, food booths, crafters, kūpuna bingo, fireworks show and more at Kalanianaʻole Beach Park.

Prince Kūhiō Kawaiahaʻo Aliʻi Sunday Service
March 22, 9:30 a.m.
Honolulu, Oʻahu

Waimea Valley - Kūhiō Day
March 26, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Waimea, Oʻahu
FREE admission for Kamaʻāina with valid ID.

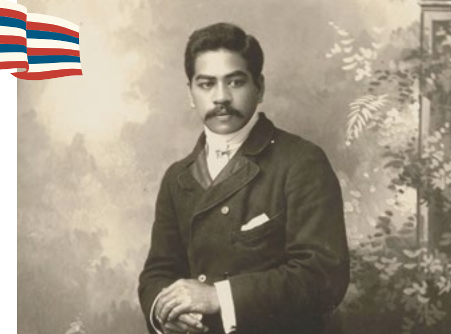
Prince Kūhiō Hoʻolauleʻa
March 27, 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Kahului, Maui
An evening of hula, music, exhibits and workshops at Queen Kaʻahumanu Center. FB@princekuhiomaui

Prince Kūhiō Parade
March 28, 5:00 p.m. | Kapolei, Oʻahu
Parade starts at Kapolei Hale, proceeds along Kapolei Parkway, and ends at Ka Makana Aliʻi. aohcc.org

Kaʻahumanu
March 17, 1768
(Her birthdate as observed by the Kaʻahumanu Society)

Kaʻahumanu was born in a cave at Puʻu Kauiki, at Hāna, Maui. Her mother was Nāmāhānaikaleleokalani, the daughter of Mōʻī Kekaulikekalaninuikuihonoikamoku, who reigned over Maui for over 30 years. Her father was Keʻeaumoku Pāpaʻiahiahi, an aliʻi from Hawaiʻi Island. Kaʻahumanu was born into a high-ranking line and a very political environment. She married Kamehameha I and upon his death became Kuhina Nui, co-ruler, alongside Kings Kamehameha II and III.

March 15 at 9:30 a.m.
Kawaiahaʻo Church
Aliʻi Sunday Worship Service



Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole Piʻikoi
March 26, 1871

Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniʻanaʻole was born at Kamaloʻula in Kōloa, Kauaʻi to David Piʻikoi, a Kauaʻi chief and Aliʻi Wahine Victoria Kekaulike, the sister of King Kalākaua. Kūhiō's birth place today is a memorial park in his honor. The rock walls, hale platforms, cooking area and fish pond offer a glimpse of the area from Kūhiō's time, over 150 years ago. Crops produced abundant food and Hōʻai bay, now across the street, connects to the small fishpond, like a personal ice box when ʻono for fish.

March 22 at 9:30 a.m.
Kawaiahaʻo Church
Aliʻi Sunday Worship Service

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Being Willing to Sit with Complexity

Aloha mai kākou,

In every generation, our lāhui is asked to engage difficult conversations that challenge not only what we believe, but how we listen, learn, and care for one another along the way.

This month's *Ka Wai Ola* reflects that reality. From the history and impacts of blood quantum to youth-led justice reform and stories of cultural resilience, each article reminds us that progress often begins with honest questioning rather than easy answers. It requires a willingness to sit with complexity, confront uncomfortable truths, re-examine what we inherited, and grow together as understanding evolves.

Encouragingly, our youth are modeling new ways forward. The young leaders of Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai are stepping into civic life with a level of engagement many eligible voters have yet to exercise. Drawing not from titles or long résumés but from lived realities, they are learning how laws are made, offering testimony, and shaping policy rooted in cultural values that challenge the status quo. Their tenacity invites those of us who may have grown jaded, disengaged, or resigned to step forward again with renewed purpose.

From Hilo to Kaʻūpūlehu and beyond, we see communities grappling with pressing questions: how land and resources are stewarded, how justice systems respond to our youth and families, how cultural spaces are sustained, and how trust is built between institutions and those they serve. Our lāhui has never advanced by avoiding disagreement or simplifying hard truths. Progress has come when people engage — respectfully, persistently, and with care for what serves us all beyond individual interest. Difficult conversations will continue, as they must.

Many of us feel the strain of a world moving faster than thoughtful dialogue can keep pace with. We are encouraged to react rather than research, to defend rather than deliberate. ʻIke paired with humility, however, remains our greatest teacher. This is especially true when our own experiences differ from those still navigating burdens shaped by systems we did not create, yet may unknowingly sustain through our action, inaction, or silence.

The discussion surrounding blood quantum reflects this tension. Many rightly challenge its colonial origins — a tool deliberately designed to divide Indigenous peoples. At the same time, generations of Native Hawaiians navigated systems built around those rules to secure homesteads intended to restore stability, connection to ʻāina, and opportunity for their families.

As conversations about reform continue, there is growing recognition that meaningful change must also uplift the tens of thousands of beneficiaries still waiting for their first homestead award. Justice requires us to hold multiple truths at once: to pursue inclusion while protecting fairness for those still waiting, and to shape solutions that heal historic harm without creating new inequities. Expanded opportunities must strengthen, not strain, access to limited trust lands held for the shared benefit of our lāhui.

Perhaps our work is not simply to embrace progress, but to remain willing to stay in conversation — clear-eyed about where the past has fallen short and committed to decisions that reflect the care, respect, and intention our people have always deserved. ■

Mahalo nui,

Summer Lee Haunani Sylva
Ka Pouhana Kūikawā | Interim Chief Executive Officer

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OHA's New Home Repair Grant Will Soon be Available

By Lindsay Kukona Pakele,
OHA Strategy Consultant

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) Mālama Honua Home Improvement/Renovation Program Grant for Nonprofits (Mālama Honua) is a pilot grant that supports a nonprofit partner to administer a health and safety-focused home improvement program for income-qualified Native Hawaiian homeowners who are otherwise ineligible for traditional financing.

The selected nonprofit will provide targeted grants to address urgent, documented health and safety repairs that threaten habitability, helping Native Hawaiian homeowners remain safely in their homes.

The grant program was developed through extensive research of existing home repair program models, consultation with home repair programs in Hawai'i, and rooted in the lived experiences of our OHA beneficiaries. It also supports OHA's Mana i Mauli Ola Strategic Plan goals for housing stability, economic security, and health outcomes for beneficiaries.

OHA identified service gaps (the need for support systems to help homeowners maintain habitability); financial barriers (financing is often inaccessible for income limited beneficiaries); scarce resources (existing home repair grants are rare and funding is exhausted rapidly); and determined that there are urgent infrastructure remediation needs in our Native Hawaiian communities.

The Mālama Honua grant solicitation was released on February 1 and OHA has been sharing information about the program via its website and social media platforms, and via a recent Zoom webinar that explained how prospective nonprofit partners can apply for the grant as well as the need for grant evaluators for both the Mālama Honua and Capitol Improvement Project (CIP) grants.

Once a nonprofit partner(s) has been selected, the nonprofit partner(s) will receive/process Mālama Honua applications from beneficiaries and administer this OHA-funded grant program.

Grants of up to $10,000 will be available for minor safety repairs. Examples include accessibility and mobility modification; simple kitchen and bathroom repairs such as cabinets, sinks, toilet, ventilation, etc.; or pest and infestation remediation.

For more critical repairs, up to $20,000 may be granted. Critical repairs include things like structural integrity; plumbing, water and waste systems; electrical systems; drywall, insulation and weatherproofing; and lead and asbestos mitigation.

Elective renovations, such as remodels, additions, landscaping or nonessential upgrades are not covered.

OHA Trustees have approved $250,000 for fiscal year 2026, and $500,000 for the following year. The program is open to homeowners with either fee simple or DHHL properties, and there is no pre-set list of home repair contractors.

Once a nonprofit partner has been selected, more information will be made available about how and when homeowners can apply for a Mālama Honua grant. ■

For more information go to oha.org/housing.

Mālama Honua
Grant At-a-Glance

Upcoming Deadlines for Nonprofit Partners

Letter of Interest Deadline: March 6, 2026

Note - Letters of Interest must be approved before access to the application is provided.

Application Deadline: March 27, 2026

The selected nonprofit partner(s) will administer a home repair program for qualified OHA beneficiary homeowners, as described below.

Homeowner Eligibility Criteria for Beneficiaries:

- Native Hawaiian (affirmed via OHA's Hawaiian Registry Program).
- Hawai'i resident.
- Homeowner occupies the home and can verify property ownership.
- Mortgage and utility payments are current.
- Property taxes are current (or on a payment plan).
- Property covered by homeowner's insurance.
- Repairs are on the approved list.
- Proof of total household income up to 80% AMI.

'OHAna we have lost

Honoring former
Office of Hawaiian Affairs Employees

A Fierce and Passionate Advocate

Gayla Ann Mahealani Haliniak-Lloyd

Feb. 8, 1962 – Sept. 28, 2025

Submitted by OHA's Beneficiary Services Staff

Ua lele ka manu i Kahiki.

He hali'a aloha no Gayla Haliniak, a wahine koa whose life was devoted to her people, her island, and her kuleana to Moloka'i.

Gayla was a fierce and passionate advocate who was never afraid to speak up on behalf of her community. She was known for her feisty spirit and strong voice, especially when it mattered most. When she spoke, her words carried the mana of Moloka'i: grounded, fearless, and full of purpose.

She served with deep knowledge, understanding Moloka'i not just as a place, but as a people. Her advocacy was rooted in her love for Moloka'i and respect for the voices she represented. She remained unwavering in her commitment, even when standing firm meant going against the grain. She lived for her people, always choosing kuleana over convenience, and pono over silence.

Thorough her 11 years of service to Moloka'i as a beneficiary services agent with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Gayla gave much of her time and energy to support her island. She worked tirelessly to advocate for Moloka'i and its residents, always with courage, honesty, and responsibility.

Gayla carried Moloka'i, not only in her na'au, but in the deepest part of her being. Her love for her island was ancestral and sacred; it guided every choice she made. She was a protector, a voice of truth, and a warrior of aloha who stood firm when others could not. And alongside her strength was her warmth, her love for her 'ohana, her laugh, and the insights she shared so freely.

Gayla stood fierce and firm in the love of her land, as a champion for her people - and her legacy will continue in the seeds that she planted within us. She will be remembered for her service to our lāhui and aloha for her beloved Moloka'i Nui a Hina. Aloha nō. ■

Ka'ūpūlehu: Where Lāhui is Practiced, Not Just Spoken

Part 1 of a two-part series

By J. Kara Dumaguin

When people speak about Ka'ūpūlehu, they often begin with its beauty. The clarity of the water, the quiet of the bay, the slope of Hualālai rising behind it. But for those who belong to this place, or who carry kuleana to it, Ka'ūpūlehu is not first a landscape. It is a relationship.

It is a place where 'ike is practiced, not archived. Where governance is lived, not theorized. Where lāhui is not only spoken but enacted.

Lāhui is a word many of us carry with pride. It can mean people, nation, collective identity. But in 'ike Hawai'i, lāhui also holds another layer. It speaks to gathering together, shaping boundaries, even placing kapu when needed. In this way, lāhui is not only who we are, but what we are responsible for doing together, including knowing when to restrain ourselves for the good of the whole.

At Ka'ūpūlehu, lāhui is not expressed only through words or symbols, but through daily choices. Through when we take and why we wait. Through how we listen to place. Through how we mālama 'āina and mālama kai in ways that are patient, disciplined, and deeply relational.

This understanding of restraint is not unique to Hawai'i. Across Polynesia, communities have long practiced forms of collective stewardship that center care and limitation as much as use. In Rarotonga, Tahiti, and Aotearoa, ra'ui and rāhui temporarily close areas to allow resources to recover, guided by local knowledge and collective agreement. These are living practices that continue to adapt across generations.

At Ka'ūpūlehu, this lineage continues through Hui Kahuwai, a community-based marine stewardship group formed to mālama approximately 3.6 miles of Ka'ūpūlehu's coastline and the nearshore waters that sustain it.

Hui Kahuwai is a gathering of families, fishers, lineal descendants, cultural practitioners, scientists, and agency partners working together under a shared ethic that the health of the place and the health of the people are inseparable.

Ka'ūpūlehu has always been understood through the logic of the ahupua'a, where 'āina and kai are not separate realms but parts of a single system, connected from ma uka to ma kai. What happens in the uplands shapes what happens along the shore, and stewardship of the nearshore cannot be separated from care for water, soil, and pathways that feed it. Hui Kahuwai's work along the coastline is grounded in this broader understanding of place, even as it focuses its daily practice on the nearshore.

This work is rooted in an 'ike that predates modern management systems. An understanding that places have rhythms, limits, and needs that must be listened to, not overridden.

An 'opihi clings to a pōhaku at Ka'ūpūlehu, protected thanks to the efforts of Hui Kahuwai, a community-based marine stewardship group formed to mālama 3.6 miles of coastline and the nearshore waters that sustain it. - *Courtesy Photos*

The Try Wait initiative at Ka'ūpūlehu has been successful in helping restore the health of the reef. Unlike with Western management systems, at Ka'ūpūlehu stewardship begins with relationship.

Historically, konohiki served as place-based managers who understood the patterns of land and sea, when certain i'a (fish) would spawn, when areas needed rest, when abundance could be shared. Their authority did not come from enforcement alone, but from an intimate knowledge of place and trusted relationships within the community.

Today, while the konohiki system no longer operates within Hawai'i's modern legal framework, its spirit persists in how Ka'ūpūlehu governs its relationship with its nearshore waters. Decisions are not made from afar. They emerge from observation, conversation, and collective care.

One of the most visible expressions of this, which many *Ka Wai Ola* readers may already be familiar with, is the practice known as Try Wait.

Developed by the Ka'ūpūlehu community as a way to care for Ka'ūpūlehu and a portion of the neighboring ahupua'a of Kūki'o, Try Wait reflects a collective decision to hold back, allowing the kai, i'a, and ko'a the time they need to regenerate.

Try Wait is not about restriction for restriction's sake. It is about cultivating awareness, patience, and reciprocity. This is where lāhui becomes tangible through daily practice.

In many Western management systems, stewardship is often framed through regulation, enforcement, and extraction thresholds. At Ka'ūpūlehu, stewardship begins with relationship. With knowing the currents. With remembering who taught you to throw net. With recognizing that your actions ripple far beyond the shoreline.

This does not mean science is absent here. On the contrary, Ka'ūpūlehu is a place where 'ike Hawai'i and contemporary science walk together, sometimes in tension, often in alignment.

Community monitoring, fish counts, spawning observations, and long-term data collection all inform how Hui Kahuwai understands what is happening along the coastline. But these tools serve the place. The place does not serve the tools.

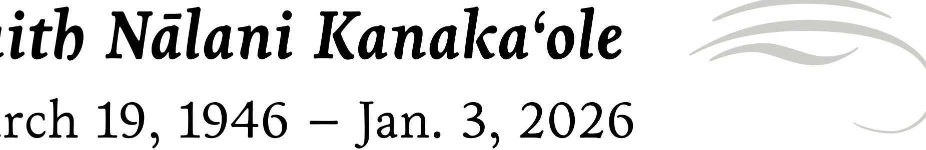
What emerges is not rigid management, but adaptive stewardship, a way of responding that honors change, uncertainty, and the limits of any single knowledge system.

And this is perhaps one of Ka'ūpūlehu's most powerful lessons. Governance grounded in place is not about controlling nature, but about listening to it and adjusting ourselves accordingly.

As pressures on Hawai'i's nearshore resources increase, Ka'ūpūlehu stands not as a perfect model, but as a living example of what becomes possible when communities are empowered to steward their own places. It reminds us that lāhui is not only something we claim in moments of pride or protest, but something we practice quietly, every day, through care, restraint, and relationship.

In the next part of this series, we will look more closely at how this stewardship unfolds in practice, how Hui Kahuwai navigates modern governance, scientific partnership, and community decision-making through an adaptive approach that remains deeply rooted in 'ike and aloha 'āina. ■

Always Inspiring and Always Demanding Excellence



Faith Nālani Kanakaʻole

March 19, 1946 – Jan. 3, 2026

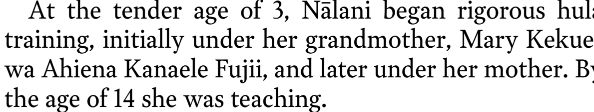
By Bobby Camara

mina.mina
1. nvt. To grieve for something that is lost; regret, sorrow.
2. To prize greatly, value greatly, especially of something in danger of being lost; to value, place great value on; value, worth.

Beloved Kumu Hula Nālani Kanakaʻole was born into an extraordinary hula lineage and ʻohana. The youngest of Luka and Edith Kanakaʻole's six children, she was raised in Keaukaha on Moku o Keawe. She was brought up in the old way, immersed in nā mea Hawaiʻi and, like others in her prominent ʻohana, she worked her entire life to preserve and perpetuate ʻike Hawaiʻi.

Kumu Hula Nālani Kanakaʻole - *Courtesy Photo*

At the tender age of 3, Nālani began rigorous hula training, initially under her grandmother, Mary Kekuewa Ahiena Kanaele Fujii, and later under her mother. By the age of 14 she was teaching.



Her mother founded Hālau o Kekuhi in 1953. Nālani always knew she would be a teacher and she eventually took on the kuleana as a kumu of Hālau o Kekuhi along with her sister, Pualani Kanakaʻole Kanahele, and later, with her niece Huihui Kanahele-Mossman.

Over the decades, Hālau o Kekuhi has staunchly protected traditional, pre-contact forms of hula, garnering international acclaim and helping to elevate respect and appreciation for ʻai haʻa (a vigorous, ancient style of hula performed close to the ground).

For a time in the 1970s, Nālani studied art history at UH Hilo. But it was through hālau that she met and later married artist Sig Zane. Their son, Kūhaʻoimaikalani, was born in 1983, and in 1985, the pair founded the eponymous Sig Zane Designs, known for its elegant clothing and inspired designs. Nālani later resumed her studies and graduated from UH Hilo with a bachelor's degree in art in 2001.

In 1993, Nālani and her sister, Pualani, were named National Heritage Fellows by the National Endowment for the Arts and last November, the sisters were honored with lifetime achievement awards by the Hawaiʻi Academy of Recording Arts. Nālani also served for decades as a Merrie Monarch judge.

All of this serves as a prelude and backdrop to my own personal, unique remembrances of Nālani Kanakaʻole.

I first encountered Nālani when she was her mother's kākoʻo in my ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi class at Hilo College 52 years ago. More than half a century past.

Her mother, Aunty Edith, was a gem who welcomed any and all into her warm embrace. No matter age, ethnicity, or social standing. Her father, Uncle Luka, was also patient as he shared the how-to construction instructions to fashion ʻulīʻulī and pūʻili. We were all expected, it was assumed, that we would practice what they preached.

And then there was Nālani. Much more circumspect and to many, intimidating. She was her own woman. Thought-filled, grounded in that inimitable ʻai haʻa way, she didn't cut much slack for anyone.

When asked a question in conversation, there was that inevitable pause. Sometimes short, often unnervingly long. One might think to one's self, "OMG, does she hate me? Does she think I'm stupid?"

But no. She was thinking and forming an appropriate response. Mayhaps calculating one's level of knowledge or degree of competence before saying anything.

We became close and sometimes went holoholo to Kīlauea or Pāpaʻi. Lots of lively talk story in the moonlight with our group of friends. And then one night I worked up the courage: "I can come hula?" Pause. "Yeah."

Nālani Kanakaʻole with her ʻohana. L-R: Her husband Sig Zane, daughter-in-law Shaelene Kamakaʻala holding grandson Naholowaʻa Zane, son Kūhaʻoimaikalani Zane, and granddaughter Loliʻi Kamakaʻala Barron. - *Photo Courtesy of the Zane/Kanakaʻole ʻOhana*

I was a skinny Portuguese boy with thick glasses and a muʻumuʻu (paralyzed) arm. But I went, and sweated, and got scolded. Same like everybody else. For a season I immersed myself, worked hard, played hard. After a few years I moved on from hula. But she remained, always one of my kumu. Always accessible.

Much later in life, a good friend told me, "Get hula with Nālani! Come! Going be 'Hula-Lite' for us mākua and kūpuna types." Again I worked up the courage, this time for ʻauana. "Can?" Smile. Nod. Still the commitment, carpooling to hula and learning new words every week.

Of course it wasn't "lite" but we were hooked. "Secret" practices so we wouldn't disappoint her. Older brains and bodies, but always with obedience to Kumu Nālani. We figured it out, using medical appliances for our wasted knees and ankles.

We were inspired to do our best because of our collective awe of, and aloha for, Kumu Nālani. Her voice, her intellect, her rigor, her absolutely incomparable choreography. She was unequaled.

We'd chuckle at the kāholo to the right, kāholo to the left styles, understanding, as she shared with us, that hula motions are based on life: swimming, digging, planting, paddling, surfing. "Move fluidly like that. Get outside and do it so you know how. But you folks know already. The young kids need help. Too many computers."

The best, the very best thing, was just being in hālau and listening to Kumu Nālani inimitably strum and sing our old favorites. Her old favorites.

Ever-curious, always exploring and selflessly sharing. Making art, writing, composing, always busy, always inspiring, and always demanding excellence.

Those who lived times with Nālani truly lived them with enthusiasm, and that continued even when beers on the beach segued to white peach bellinis at restaurants, and outfits fashioned from Indian tapestry morphed into designer wear accented with pearls and jade. How exquisite are all our memories. Almost like a dream.

On the minds of many, each with their own very personal relationship with Kumu Nālani, we collectively grieve as, again, another fount of kūpuna knowledge is lost. Auē. . . ■

Kumu Hula Nālani Kanakaʻole is survived by her husband Sigmund Zane; son Kūhaʻoimaikalani Zane (Shaelene Kamakaʻala); grandchildren Loliʻi Kamakaʻala Barron and Naholowaʻa Zane; sister Pualani Kanakaʻole Kanahele; the extended Kanakaʻole, Kanahele, and Zane ʻohana; and the many haumāna and cultural practitioners who have learned from her. Her hoʻolewa and celebration of life was held on February 21 at Edith Kanakaʻole Stadium in Hilo.

A Quiet Pillar of the Polynesian Voyaging Renaissance

Milton "Shorty" Gervin Bertelmann

Aug. 15, 1947 – Nov. 26, 2025

Submitted by the Polynesian Voyaging Society

The Polynesian Voyaging Society honors the life, leadership, and enduring legacy of Pwo Navigator Milton "Shorty" Bertelmann, a foundational leader of *Hōkūleʻa* and a quiet pillar of the Polynesian voyaging renaissance.

From the earliest days of *Hōkūleʻa*, Shorty stood at the heart of the mission. Beginning in 1975, as *Hōkūleʻa* first sailed throughout the Hawaiian Islands recruiting crew members, Shorty committed himself fully to the care of the canoe, the discipline of the crew, and the deeper purpose of restoring traditional voyaging knowledge.

In 1976, Shorty was selected from among dozens of highly capable candidates to sail on *Hōkūleʻa's* historic maiden voyage from Hawaiʻi to Tahiti, a journey that reawakened traditional Polynesian voyaging and forever changed our understanding of who we are as Pacific peoples.

And it changed Shorty. His selection was no accident. He possessed extraordinary leadership qualities: quiet, unwavering, and deeply grounded. He understood why he was there and never lost sight of it: to care for *Hōkūleʻa*, to protect and support Mau Piailug, to learn traditional navigation, and to help ensure that the canoe found Tahiti.

Central to Shorty's legacy was his profound relationship with his teacher Mau Piailug. Shorty approached navigation with humility and absolute focus, recognizing the rare and sacred opportunity to learn from a master.

Mau, in turn, recognized Shorty as a true student, one who listened, observed, and committed fully. Their teacher–student relationship became historic, representing one of the first times Micronesian navigational knowledge was shared beyond its homeland. That bond succeeded because Shorty wanted to learn, and Mau was willing to teach. Shorty protected Mau, held sacred Mau's teachings, upheld the strict standards of conduct that Mau lived by, and ensured that the space around him remained respectful and focused.

Shorty remained deeply committed to the mission beyond that first voyage and emerged as one of *Hōkūleʻa's* most trusted captains. He made several pivotal voyages and was instrumental to their success and to the continued growth of the voyaging movement across the Pacific.

Pwo Navigator Milton "Shorty" Bertelmann - *Photo: Kaimana Pinē/PVS*

In 1980, he sailed again from Hawaiʻi to Tahiti on a demanding 31-day voyage marked by relentless weather and extreme physical and mental challenges.

In 1985, Shorty captained critical legs of *Hōkūleʻa's* maiden voyage to Aotearoa (New Zealand), including the journey from Rarotonga, Cook Islands, to Waitangi, Aotearoa – the first deep-sea leg without Mau on board. It was a difficult and deeply spiritual leg of the voyage, marked by extraordinary moments at sea.

Shorty was the captain the canoe needed. He was thorough in preparation, exacting in training, calm under pressure, and steady in spirit. Everyone trusted him. His leadership carried the canoe safely through uncertainty and into new horizons.

He continued to serve as captain on numerous significant voyages, including bringing *Hōkūleʻa* home from Aotearoa in 1987, and later captaining the voyage to the Cook Islands in 1992.

Across these journeys, he raised the bar of excellence for voyaging, establishing rigorous standards of training, safety, preparation, and conduct that remain foundational today.

He was known for staying awake long hours, checking everything, and paying attention – not only to the canoe, but to what nature was doing to her.

In his quiet way, he was always present. He was kind, but firm. He rarely spoke his expectations aloud, but everyone felt them. He held himself, and everyone around him, to the highest standards: care for the canoe, care for Mau, care for one another, succeed together.

Behind Shorty's steadiness was a life shaped by profound experiences. Shorty served in the Vietnam War, a chapter that deeply affected him. Those who knew him understood that the war left lasting scars, and that when *Hōkūleʻa* returned home in 1992, Shorty carried both the weight of that history and the toll of years of intense commitment. He pulled back quietly, as he lived by never seeking attention, never asking for recognition; but his impact never diminished.

Shorty helped lay the foundation for everything *Hōkūleʻa* stands for today, and from his character emerged our voyaging values: the canoe is your home, the crew is your family. These principles became embedded in the culture of *Hōkūleʻa* and later carried forward into journeys such as the Worldwide Voyage.

He taught us that finding islands begins with caring for your home and your family and that through discipline, humility, and commitment, navigation becomes a way of life. His leadership, integrity, and devotion to the mission shaped the voyaging renaissance in Hawaiʻi and throughout the Pacific. He showed us that true leadership does not need volume or rank. It needs clarity of purpose, discipline of action, and unwavering commitment.

We honor and thank Shorty for who he was, for what he gave, and for the standards he set that continue to guide us. His spirit will forever be felt on the deck of *Hōkūleʻa*. His leadership remains our compass and his legacy lives on in every voyage, every crew member trained, and every horizon crossed by *Hōkūleʻa*.

Aloha ʻoe, e Shorty. You found Tahiti, and you helped us find ourselves. ■

Shorty, who was also a rancher on Hawaiian homestead land in Waimea, Hawaiʻi Island, is survived by his wife, Sue Bertelmann; son Kainalu Bertelmann; daughter Bree Malia (Shayne) Bertelmann; sister Lynda Bertelmann; sisters-in-law Delsa Bertelmann and Deedee Bertelmann, and Kathy Hau of Kahaluʻu; four grandchildren; nieces and nephews. His celebration of life was held in February.

Success in Seattle Shaped by a Childhood in Kalihi

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

Sage Keʻalohilani Quiamno, 34, often reflects on the significance of names. In Seattle, Washington, where she resides, her acquaintances defer to her English name. Back in Hawaiʻi, her ʻohana calls her Keʻalohi.

Generations of her ʻohana have grown up in Honolulu's Kalihi neighborhood. Her parents, grandparents and great-grandparents all attended Farrington High School and married their high school sweethearts.

Those connections continue to ground her in Hawaiʻi even though she's lived on the continent since 2013. Over the years, she has built a successful career as a strategic communications leader and angel investor, making the list of *Pacific Business News*' 40 Under 40 last year. But Quiamno never forgets who she is.

Public relations and marketing executive Sage Keʻalohilani Quiamno grew up in Kalihi. - *Courtesy Photo*

From her mother, Shannan Lokelani, whose ʻohana hails from both Hawaiʻi Island and Oʻahu, Honolulu-born Quiamno claims Kānaka Maoli, Chinese and Portuguese ancestry. Her father, Roy, is Filipino.

When Quiamno was growing up, her mom was a manager at Hawaiian Telcom while her dad worked in maintenance at Outrigger Resorts & Hotels in Waikīkī and ran his own auto body shop. Their urban neighborhood was a blend of recent immigrants and Native Hawaiians, characterized by the sounds of conversations in English, Samoan, Tongan, Tagalog, Chamorro and ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi echoing through its streets.

"What I really learned in my time growing up in Kalihi is that we get a bad rep, but to me it probably provided the most eye-opening and character-building childhood," Quiamno said. "It's really working-class families and that hard work mentality bridging the gap across cultures."

She attended St. John the Baptist Catholic School, which exposed her to the wealth disparities in Hawaiʻi. Kamehameha Schools' Explorations program taught Quiamno about her Kānaka culture and traditions. Early in life, she developed a love for paddling that persisted for years.

Raised in the age of blockbuster movies like *Erin Brockovich* and *Legally Blonde*, Quiamno dreamed of becoming a defense attorney. "I wanted to defend and advocate on behalf of others," she said.

She credits her aunt, Erin Kahunawaikaʻala Wright, as associate professor at UH Mānoa, with inspiring her from a young age. A mentee of Haunani-Kay Trask, Wright taught Quiamno about activism, social justice, equity and Hawaiian identity, taking her to protests at ʻIolani Palace. Together, the pair would speak in ʻōlelo and discuss their family's genealogy.

Quiamno's time at Saint Francis School were formative years for the then-teenager. She studied Japanese and served as class president. She joined speech and debate, which left her enthralled by the concepts of building a case and structuring an argument.

And she found herself pushing back against the school

SEE **SUCCESS IN SEATTLE** ON **PAGE 10**

Pauahi Nona Ka Lei

Songs Honoring Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop

On March 13, Ke Kula ʻo Kamehameha will gather as one ʻohana to honor Ke Aliʻi Pauahi and her enduring gift of education, culture, and aloha ʻāina. Through mele, we uplift her vision and ʻauamo the kuleana to perpetuate her legacy — strong in spirit, rich in aloha, rising with ea, and united as one.

Celebrate Ke Aliʻi Pauahi and the timeless tradition that binds generations of learners.

Tune in live and learn more at **ksbe.edu/songcontest**

Ke Kula ʻo Kamehameha

Building Pilina on the Continent

By Jayden Kepoʻo-Caspino

Situated on the traditional homelands of the Kalapuyan people, more than 2,400 miles away from Hawaiʻi, is a 3,500-square-foot puʻuhonua for poʻe Hawaiʻi and Pacific Islanders in Oregon – the AloHā Resource & Community Center (ARCC).

This dream of creating a community space came to fruition in 2022, when the leaders of Ka ʻAha Lāhui o ʻOlekona Hawaiian Civic Club (KALO HCC), an Oregon and Southwest Washington-serving nonprofit and member of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, recognized the need for a place where Kānaka ʻŌiwi, Pacific Islanders, and poʻe Hawaiʻi could gather, heal, and unapologetically express their shared values.

The name itself – AloHā – emphasizes the importance of pilina and the need for a physical puʻuhonua, where people can be he alo a he alo (face to face), grounded in Native Hawaiian values, and connected through the exchange of hā (breath).

The inoa piha (full name) of this puʻuhonua – AloHā Resource & Community Center – and its acronym, ARCC, reflects KALO HCC's role as a bridge for community living away from Hawaiʻi, offering a place where people can still "feel Hawaiʻi," no matter where they are.

Kumu Louise Wilmes teaches keiki about the pilina between Native Hawaiians and Native Americans through the AloHā Resource & Community Center's mural, created by Kānaka artist Kanani Miyamoto during the culturally immersive 2025 Hāloa Summer Program. - *Courtesy Photo*

Today, ARCC holds space for community connection and growth in many forms. The center houses a library of some 1,300 books – over 80% of which are Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander-focused. In 2025 alone, community members donated over 300 books to share in the ARCC.

With the understanding that access to traditional and local Hawaiʻi foods are limited, ARCC opened a small community pantry where people can "shop" for non-perishables and available produce like kalo leaves free of charge.

Most impactfully, KALO HCC keeps Native Hawaiian culture alive at the ARCC through hands-on, in-person workshops and community gatherings.

Each month, KALO HCC hosts cultural workshops on topics ranging from lei-making to kōnane. Other activities include regular ʻohana game nights. Our work reflects the strong-willed commitment of our organization's founder, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole, to the rehabilitation of his lāhui. As Prince Kūhiō once stated, "Stick together and try to agree to the best of your ability to meet the most important problem: the rehabilitation of our race."

With more than half of Native Hawaiians now liv-

SEE **BUILDING PILINA** ON **PAGE 10**

Native Hawaiian Health
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN

- Program covers tuition, associated fees and provides students with a monthly stipend
- Open to individuals seeking a career in a primary health profession
- Applicants must be Native Hawaiian
- Enrolled or accepted at an accredited university
- Full time enrollment required

Application closes on March 15

SUCCESS IN SEATTLE

Continued from page 8

administration and its rules, which she deemed unfair. Quiamno especially remembers administrations' reprimands of LGBTQ+ classmates. "I knew it wasn't right," she said.

After graduating in 2009, Quiamno accepted a full-ride scholarship to UH Mānoa. She attended classes in both the business and communication schools. While at the university, Quiamno served as a student senator and joined a co-ed business fraternity.

But within the university's student body, she distinctly felt the absence of other Kānaka students. Native Hawaiian Student Services filled that gap. "It was a gift and a privilege to be able to learn and live and breathe my culture in college," Quiamno said.

Although she completed internships at McNeil Wilson Communications and for former Gov. Neil Abercrombie, she realized that working for the hotel industry or the government didn't appeal to her.

She was ready for new experiences and before she graduated in 2013, Amazon offered her a job in Seattle. When Big Tech rang, she answered the call.

After graduation, she relocated to the Pacific Northwest. Initially, she found it difficult to get used to its weather, culture and social scene. "Deep down, Seattle is such a beautiful, rich community," Quiamno said. "If you invest in Seattle, it will invest back into you. But when I first moved here, it was a rough go."

After one year at Amazon, she pivoted to real estate development and pay equity startups. They fed her appetite for entrepreneurship.

And in 2019, Quiamno took the entrepreneurial plunge and launched Future for Us, a community platform for women of color along with a co-founder. For her contributions, she was named one of *Seattle Magazine's* Most Influential People, a Gates Foundation's 100 Changemakers in 2019, and a Vital Voices Global Leadership Incubator Fellow, which helped her build up her company.

Then, in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Feeling burnt out in her late twenties, she moved back to Hawaiʻi. Her company was acquired in 2021, and she took a 10-month career break. "Being able to slow down and take a breath, that really helped me gear up for my next thing," Quiamno said.

During the pandemic, she was recruited to lead diversity, equity and inclusion at Amazon Prime Video, which brought her back to Seattle. Quiamno shaped the streaming service's talent and inclusion strategy for its labor force around the world from 2021 until early 2025.

After layoffs hit the tech giant, Quiamno poured her energy into her own fractional public relations firm, Stealth, catering to early-stage startups. She also used her position as an angel investor to fund Kānaka women entrepreneurs.

And earlier this year, Yoodli, an enterprise AI role-play platform, hired Quiamno to spearhead its strategic public relations, communications and marketing. She's eager to learn more about the new frontier of artificial intelligence.

However, "my end goal is to move back home," Quiamno said, "once I'm ready." ■

Keola Kaʻula and her daughter, Kainani Kaʻula-Inos, kuʻi kalo (pound taro) during a Papa Kuʻi workshop held in collaboration with Loʻi Loa LLC at the AloHā Resource & Community Center on July 5, 2025.

Executive Director Leialoha Kaʻula leads a hands-on laulau workshop with KALO members, teaching families how to prepare traditional Hawaiʻi foods at the AloHā Resource & Community Center on September 18, 2025.

BUILDING PILINA

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ing on the continent, KALO HCC's vision continues to center on Prince Kūhiō's call to uplift the lāhui beyond the pae ʻāina. This is accomplished through scholarships, support for Native Hawaiian artists and businesses, increased access to health and traditional food services, the opening of spaces to learn mele, hula, oli, and traditional crafts, and culturally immersive summer programs; ARCC stands as a living example of ʻike kūpuna guiding community wellbeing.

ARCC is also a place for elevating ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi. After about three years of planning, KALO HCC has finally launched its Hiʻikua Program, an immersive ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi program that bridges generations. KALO HCC recently wrapped up a 10-week ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi 101 cohort taught by Kumu ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi Haia Ku, an alumna of Ke Kula Kaiapuni ʻo Ānuenue and Kamehameha Schools Kapālama.

Another ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi 101 cohort and an ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi 201 cohort will open this spring to help our communities build fluency.

Each year, KALO HCC's community center hosts an annual Prince Kūhiō Celebration during the week of his birthday to hoʻohanohano (honor) his legacy. This always brings together more than 150 community members for protocol, to commemorate Prince Kūhiō's many notable achievements, to enjoy live music from Kānaka artists living in Oregon, and to share a meal together. Each person who attends is a living testament of Prince Kūhiō's belief in organizing Native Hawaiians to take charge of their own destiny.

The AloHā Resource & Community Center stands as a living puʻuhonua shaped by ʻike Hawaiʻi, sustained by pilina, and guided by the collective efforts of our poʻe on the continent. As KALO HCC continues to grow in this space, ARCC exists to remind us that culture is not bound by geography, but thrives wherever the community chooses to nurture it.

Here in Oregon, Hawaiʻi is not left behind. We carry it forward through AloHā. ■

Jayden Kepoʻo-Caspino is a Waiʻanae-raised Native Hawaiian who moved from Oʻahu to Oregon in 2019. Now serving as the Communications & Marketing director at Ka ʻAha Lāhui O ʻOlekona Hawaiian Civic Club, Jayden shares his passion for Indigenous storytelling with poʻe Hawaiʻi living on the continent.

The First Coconut Grove Planted on Maui in Over 100 Years

Members from Ka Pōhōlima Kāʻeo community group smashed coconuts over the ahu (shrine) that they built on-site while the uluniu was being planted to seal the significance of the moment.
- Photos: Cody Lang/Lang Creative Media

Coconut practitioner Mikey Kyser of Pōhaku Pelemaka in Puna, Hawaiʻi Island, plants a niu seedling in the polymotu style.

Volunteers from across kō Hawaiʻi pae ʻāina worked together to establish Maui's first uluniu (coconut grove) in over 100 years.

By Annabelle Le Jeune

The echo of pahu drums under the darkened sky signaled to the 200 volunteers who stood waiting that it was time to begin their work: planting Maui's first uluniu (coconut grove) in over 100 years.

Cradled between grand sand dunes and the Kapoho Fishpond at the Waiheʻe Coastal Dunes and Wetlands Refuge, Uluniu o Kapuawailana was established the evening of January 22.

"This uluniu will be dedicated to and honor the legacy of Liliʻuokalani, the last sovereign queen of Hawaiʻi," said Kiaʻiokaʻuhane Collier, manager of Āina Stewardship for the Hawaiʻi Land Trust.

Following the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, the relationship between Kānaka and this important traditional resource was disrupted, leading to the loss of thriving coconut groves and the everyday use of niu in Hawaiʻi.

Thus, the uluniu was planted as a tribute to Liliʻuokalani's commitment to aloha ʻāina, setting an intention for the wellbeing of the new coconut grove and, consequently, of the people who will be nourished by a practice and place rooted in Hawaiian culture for generations to come.

Participants and practitioners from across the pae ʻāina represented cross-sector participation to show what is possible when various partners come together: Niu Now, Community Coconut Program from DLNR's Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program; UH West Oʻahu; Hawaiʻi Land Trust (HILT); Ka Poholima Kāʻeo; Pōhaku Pelemaka; with hoʻoponopono practitioners, kūpuna, volunteers, and community members.

Together, they entered into mū ka waha, a sacred ritual of stilling voice to focus intention, planting in silence for the next three hours beneath the night sky to the steady beat of drumming and the chant, *He Pule Niu*, calling for the growth of coconut, culture, and community.

Exactly 133 coconut trees were planted that evening, "One tree for every year since the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom," said Collier. Planting the coconut grove marked an act of resilience and healing.

While the trees were being carefully tucked into the ground, a crew from Ka Pōholima Kāʻeo stacked stones to build and complete an ahu (shrine) to mark a promise, sealing the significance of the moment, and reinforcing commitment to aloha ʻāina.

Twenty-three coconut varieties were carefully selected from a coconut nursery that Niu Now, the Coconut Community Program, and HILT started in preparation for this uluniu nearly a year ago. Seedlings were harvested from across Maui, each chosen for its distinct qualities: those used in Makahiki ceremony; those resilient to high-sand soils; varieties prized for their long fibers or favored for productivity, or the flavor of their water, meat, or milk.

The coconut seedlings were mostly planted using the polymotu practice, a traditional uluniu model adapted with contemporary techniques, grouping three or more trees of the same variety to promote and maintain genetic diversity.

The evening selected for planting purposefully aligned with the favorable farming practice of the Kūkolu mahina phase, which means "to stand in threes." Huli planted during these moon phases are believed to shoot up like coconut trees.

The idea for Uluniu o Kapuawailana emerged about two years ago when Collier crossed paths with Niu Now members Indrajit Gunasekara, Kekaula Hanohano and Jesse Mikasobe-Kealiinohomoku. Together, they envisioned a way to reconnect people with coconut as a cultural responsibility and a foundation of food sovereignty.

Collier is the primary caretaker of the Waiheʻe refuge and leader of Ka Pōholima Kāʻeo, the fishpond restoration group working with HILT toward a Hawaiian-led space filled with fish, food, and cultural resources concentrated in one location to sustain community wellbeing.

"The preparation work is a lot," said Hanohano, a coconut practitioner, and one of the main caretakers of Maui's newly established uluniu. "These plants thrive and we've seen a lot of success even in the harshest environments. So our intention is to just preserve those varieties of place."

Uluniu o Kapuawailana was planned in concert with the two-day ʻAha Hoʻoponopono Honua gathering held at UH Maui College and various sites around the island, which emphasized the importance of reconnecting people to ʻāina as a path to healing. In the face of the looming threat of the invasive Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle – and the continued practice of trimming the coconuts off trees – replanting niu becomes an act of healing and reclamation.

"When we heal land, we heal ourselves. When we heal ourselves, we heal land. It's a simultaneous thing," said Manu Aluli Meyer, hoʻoponopono practitioner and co-founder of Niu Now.

When the last coconut tree was planted, a light drizzle began eventually giving way to a steady downpour, blessing the freshly planted coconut seedlings. Meyer shared: "Hahai no ka ua i ka ulu lāʻau. Plant a forest and the rains will come." Share purpose with others and transform the world.

The evening closed with a hōʻike to honor Hanohano as a loea uluniu (coconut grove master practitioner).

"That title means I also need to constantly learn," he said. He notes that without the traditional governance systems that once distributed care for Hawaiʻi's lands, roles like his become vital to ensure "that people have kuleana to those spaces."

As a loea uluniu on urbanized Oʻahu where most coconut trees are pruned, he admits he has no direct access nearby to gather coconuts. That reality fuels his dedication to establish more uluniu throughout Hawaiʻi and reconnect people with a once-abundant relationship with coconuts.

Uluniu o Kapuawailana follows the growing niu movement, building on successful models such as the uluniu at Kūkaniloko established five years ago, where more than 100 coconut trees – of 16 varieties – were planted in service of a shared vision: that everyone in Hawaiʻi will once again have access to coconuts. ■

Youth Advocacy to Transform Hawai'i's Justice System

By Cameron Clark, Kaleionaia K-aloha and Jamee Miller

It began quietly, as many movements do.

A small group of Native Hawaiian youth, friends since the age of four, moved through childhood as best friends: playing, learning, and imagining futures rooted in education, leadership, and connection to ʻāina. They did not grow up talking about the justice system.

It was only in their teenage years that a shared reality came into focus: family members who were incarcerated and the weight of intergenerational involvement with a system that had shaped their lives long before they could name it.

They understood that while they could not change the past or the circumstances they were born into, they could shape what came next. Over the course of one weekend, they made a collective decision to speak openly, support one another, and transform lived experience into action, working toward a future defined not by the impact of incarceration within their ʻohana, but by opportunity, healing, and self-determination. From that decision, Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai (NOW) was born.

NOW emerged within ʻEkolu Mea Nui (EMN), a Native Hawaiian ʻohana-led nonprofit working to transform Hawaiʻi's justice system through cultural practice, lived experience, and values rooted in ʻāina aloha - the understanding that ʻāina is a living relative inseparable from the wellbeing of people and communities.

EMN operates at the intersection of grassroots leadership, policy, and systems change, bridging community voices with institutional decision-making to strengthen the futures of youth and families impacted by incarceration across Hawaiʻi.

From that foundation, NOW became a youth-led council built on voice, mentorship, and community. Young people speak for themselves, shaping solutions to prevent intergenerational incarceration by redefining accountability through healing, family, and culture.

In 2024, NOW youth were introduced to the legislative process by leaders from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Hawaiʻi who explained how laws are shaped and how testimony can become a tool for transformation. By the start of the 2025 Legislative Session, they were no longer just observers; they were ready to be active participants in the democratic process.

Together, EMN and the NOW Youth Council stepped into statewide leadership through the Debt Free Justice Hawaiʻi (DFJ-HI) campaign, joining national DFJ partners to eliminate the fees and fines imposed on minors in Hawaiʻi's juvenile legal system.

Guided by NOW's youth voices and lived experiences, EMN is working alongside community leaders, justice system experts, and institutional partners across Hawaiʻi to improve outcomes for youth by removing financial penalties that hinder true accountability and rehabilitation.

Youth from Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai made the rounds at Opening Day of the 2026 Legislature to meet Hawaiʻi's lawmakers. They are pictured here with Kailua-Waimānalo Rep. Lisa Marten (seated center). Behind her are (l-r) Dr. Jamee Miller, Kalei K-aloha, Zoe Martinez, ʻŌhāwai Manuel, Hailee K-aloha, Aubree K-aloha, and Carrie Ann Shirota. In the back row are (l-r) Pōmaikaʻi Akiona and Amanda Spikes - *Photos: Kalei K-aloha*

Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai youth attend a workshop on Native Hawaiian implements with loea Umi Kai. Sitting (l-r): Aubree K-aloha, Umi Kai, Zoe Martinez and Haleʻaha K-aloha. Standing (l-r): Dr. Jamee Miller, Hailee K-aloha, Pōmaikaʻi Akiona, Piʻilani K-aloha, Kauhi K-aloha. ʻŌhāwai Manuel, Kalei Miller and Kalei K-aloha.

Juvenile court financial penalties do not create accountability; they create debt, deepen inequity, and place an added burden on families already navigating harm.

According to the Hawaiʻi Department of Human Services (DHS), Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) youth make up 56% of all youth adjudicated in state juvenile court proceedings. With an estimated $40,000 in juvenile financial penalties assessed to NHPI youth and their families each year, these monetary sanctions reinforce cycles of punishment rather than on repair and accountability.

And despite all the harm these fines and fees create, they generate no meaningful revenue for the courts. A judiciary report confirmed that, from 2019 to 2024, youth and their families only managed to pay 17% of the fines ordered against them in juvenile cases.

In March 2025, NOW youth drafted House Concurrent Resolution 174 (Grandinetti), a measure that was unanimously adopted in both the Hawaiʻi State House and Senate. The resolution calls for increased investment in ʻāina-based community service programs for youth, signaling a shift away from punitive financial penalties toward culturally grounded accountability.

Through this process, NOW youth witnessed firsthand how their political advocacy could create change in Hawaiʻi. With DHS and the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council actively implementing their recommendations, the NOW resolution became the foundation for bold legislative reforms, marking the transition from youth advocacy to youth policymaking.

The passage of the resolution marked a milestone but not an ending.

As the 2026 Legislative Session commences, EMN and NOW are proud to support House Bill 1626 (Tarnas) and Senate Bill 2540 (Kouchi), companion bills that aim to fully replace Hawaiʻi juvenile fees and fines with culturally aligned, ʻāina-based rehabilitation and accountability programs. These measures reflect growing recognition that monetary sanctions do not improve youth outcomes or public safety, and that accountability must be rooted in healing rather than harm.

Debt Free Justice Hawaiʻi is supported by Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander families, youth leaders, community organizations, and legal advocates statewide, as well as a growing coalition of lawmakers committed to equity, culturally grounded solutions, and youth wellbeing.

EMN and NOW are incredibly grateful to Senate President Ronald Kouchi and Rep. David Tarnas for championing this measure, as well as leaders in the House (Vice Speaker Ichiyama and Rep. Marten) and Senate (Sen. San Buenaventura and Sen. Rhoads) for their earnest engagement with the Debt Free Justice Hawaiʻi campaign.

For NOW youth, the work moving through the 2026 session represents something larger than a single bill. It is a continuation of a vision grounded in ʻāina aloha, collective responsibility, and the belief that while systems may be inherited, futures can be changed. The question is no longer whether young people are ready to lead. It is whether we are ready to follow. ■

For more information: ekolumeanui.org, ekolumeanui.org/youth, debtfreejustice.org

Cameron D. Clark is an attorney and co-coordinator of Debt Free Justice, the national campaign to end fees and fines for youth. Kaleionaia K-aloha is co-executive director of ʻEkolu Mea Nui and an advocate for culturally rooted justice reform, food sovereignty, and land-based healing. Dr. Jamee Māhealani Miller is co-founder and co-executive director of ʻEkolu Mea Nui and an advocate for culturally grounded initiatives that reimagine justice, reentry, and workforce development as pathways to healing, resilience, and economic empowerment.

Threats to Greenland Recall the Annexation of Hawaiʻi

By Adam Keawe Manalo-Camp

This past January 17, marches unfolded across two island homelands, separated by thousands of miles, yet shaped over time by similar attempts by foreign powers to determine their futures.

In both places, these communities rejected the premise that their homelands could be treated as strategic assets rather than places of kinship, memory, culture, and political authority.

In Nuuk, the capital of Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), thousands gathered in what the Naalakkersuisut (the Greenlandic government) described as the largest protest in the country's history. Participants carried the red and white Erfalasorput flag and chanted, "Kalaallit Nunaat, Kalaallit pigaat." Translated, it means "Greenland belongs to Greenlanders."

The demonstration followed renewed and aggressive annexation rhetoric from U.S. political leaders, framed through the lens of national security, Arctic competition and tariffs. Greenlandic officials have made it clear that they vehemently oppose annexation of their country to the United States.

Meanwhile, in Honolulu, in a pair of back-to-back marches held on January 16 and 17, thousands of Kānaka Maoli marched from Mauna'ala to ʻIolani Palace to mark 133 years since the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom on January 17, 1893.

The annual ʻOnipaʻa observance recalls the intersection of economic pressure, political maneuvering, and the enforcement of U.S. Marines that ended the constitutional government of Queen Liliʻuokalani.

Kalaallit Nunaat means "the land of the Kalaallit" and is the Indigenous name for Greenland. The Kalaallit are Inuit and they comprise about 90% of the population. The name reflects political and demographic reality. Kalaallit Nunaat is an Indigenous homeland with its own parliament, electorate, and language. Greenlandic Inuit is the sole official language of the country, and cultural revitalization efforts have been central to contemporary public life.

Danish colonization of Kalaallit Nunaat began in 1721. Trade, missionization, and administrative governance gradually reshaped Inuit society. In the 20th century, colonial policy emphasized modernization and integration.

In 1951, Danish authorities removed Inuit children from their families to be educated in Denmark in what later became known as the "Little Danes" project. Inuit women were also subjected to coercive birth control measures in what is now referred to as the "Spiral Case." These initiatives were framed as "reform." Their consequences included family separation and intergenerational harm that remain within living memory.

Since 1979, Kalaallit Nunaat has exercised home rule and expanded self-government while temporarily remaining within the Kingdom of Denmark. Across party lines, there is broad support for eventual independence. Debate centers on economic sustainability and institutional capacity, but independence is widely discussed as a matter of when, not if.

U.S. interest in Kalaallit Nunaat is not new. American officials discussed its annexation in the 19th century during the same period of territorial expansion that included the U.S. "purchase" of Alaska from Russia and its growing interest in Puʻuloa (Pearl Harbor).

Some proposals imagined exchanging Kalaallit Nunaat for Mindanao during the American colonial period in the Philippines. After World War II, the Truman administration formally offered Denmark one hundred million dollars in gold for the island. Denmark declined.

Kalaallit Nunaat's geographic position between North America and Europe placed it within Cold War defense planning. That logic shaped the construction of Thule Air Base, now Pituffik Space Base, and the forced relocation of Inuit families in the early 1950s.

It also shaped the response to the 1968 crash of a U.S. bomber carrying nuclear weapons near Thule, which dispersed radioactive contamination around the settlement of Narssassuk. That episode remains a historical flashpoint.

Recent arguments in Washington, D.C., once again emphasize tariffs and Kalaallit Nunaat's strategic value. For many in Hawaiʻi, the structure of those arguments is familiar.

In the late 19th century, U.S. tariff policy destabilized the Hawaiian Kingdom. The McKinley Tariff of 1890 altered Hawaiʻi's economic position and strained the Reciprocity Treaty. Within three years, U.S. Marines landed in Honolulu.

By 1898, Hawaiʻi, and particularly Puʻuloa, was described as "indispensable" to American military supremacy in the Pacific. Comparable political rhetoric today characterizes Kalaallit Nunaat as essential to Arctic security and geopolitical competition for the U.S.

The prioritization of strategic value over local consent persists in Hawaiʻi today.

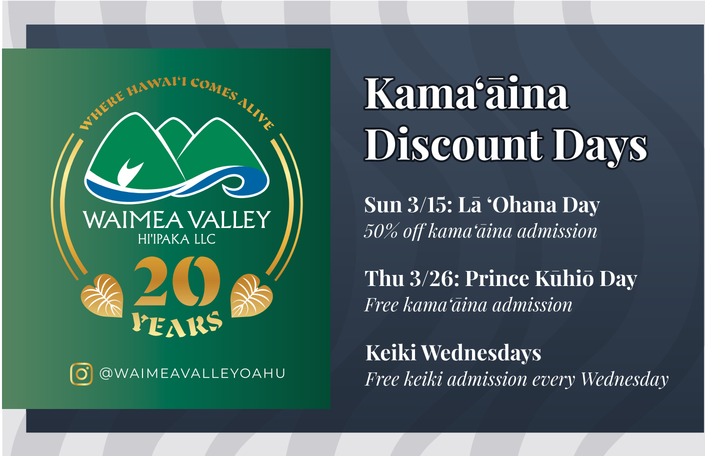
At the Pōhakuloa Training Area, the military controls 133,000 acres of conservation-zoned land which it uses for training. Pōhakuloa sits above an aquifer and lies within a landscape dense with ancestral trails, burials, and cultural sites, yet its cultural and ecological importance is treated as peripheral to its value for U.S. national defense.

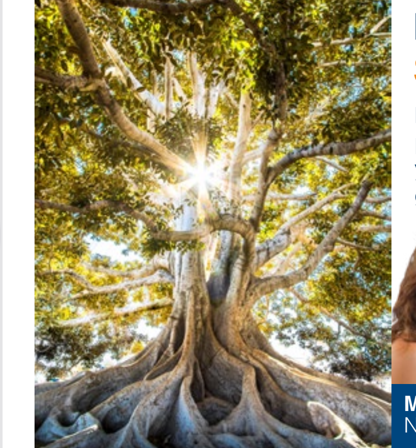
Across the Pacific, similar thinking continues to shape policy in Guåhan (Guam), the Marshall Islands, and Okinawa, where Indigenous lands host substantial U.S. military infrastructure. U.S. expansion beyond the North American continent is framed as a military necessity and as an economic benefit to impacted communities. Their consent becomes secondary and any resistance is reframed as ingratitude.

For many Kānaka Maoli, the renewed discussion of the annexation of Kalaallit Nunaat – regardless of what its Indigenous population wants – generates a visceral reaction based on historical resonance.

The Kūʻē Petitions of 1897, signed by 95% of Native Hawaiians who were living at that time, remain documentary evidence that annexation did not reflect the will of the Hawaiian people. The annual ʻOnipaʻa March is a reminder of this continued resistance.

In Kalaallit Nunaat, protesters are stating their position with equal clarity. When they declare that Kalaallit Nunaat belongs to the Kalaallit, they are asserting political authority over their homeland in defiance of the rhetoric that attempts to diminish their land and sovereignty as nothing more than a foreign country's strategic military asset. ■





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Ka Hoʻopili ʻAna i ke Mele Hawaiʻi o Mua me ko ke Au Nei

Bridging Hawaiian Music Past and Present

Na UH News | Unuhi ʻia e Manakō Tanaka

Ke lapalapa nei ke ʻano o nā mele Hawaiʻi a me ka hoʻōla ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi ma muli o ka hana a Nicholas Kealiʻi Lum, he haumāna laeʻula ma Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani, Ke Kōleke ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi.

ʻO Lum ka haumāna laeʻula mua i loaʻa mai ai ka makana kālā hele kulanui ʻo ia hoʻi ka Daniel and Lydia Makuakāne Endowed Scholarship and Fellowship. He mea ia makana i hoʻokumu ʻia e nā kaikamāhine o ua mau kānaka nona nā inoa ʻala e hoʻohanohano ana i nā hana kākoʻo a ka ʻohana Makuakāne no ka ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi a me ka hoʻonaʻauao Hawaiʻi.

Ke hoʻohui ʻia nei e Lum nā mea kuluma a me nā mea hou i loko o kāna noiʻi noelo i nā mele o ke au ma mua a me ko ke au nei. He mea kāna papahana laeʻula, ʻo ia hoʻi ʻo "Pewa: I Ola ke Mele Hawaiʻi i kona mele ʻia," e wili ʻia aku ana nā mele kuluma o Hawaiʻi me ke kani mele o ke au nei. Ma o ia hana e hōʻumeʻume ana i nā ʻōpio i ka ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi ma o ke mele Hawaiʻi o ke au hou.

"I loko o kaʻu pepa puka laeʻula, hōʻike aku au he mea kālele hua ʻōlelo (ʻo ia hoʻi he ʻlogogenicʻ) nā mele Hawaiʻi, no laila i loko o ia ʻano mele ua ʻoi aku nā hua ʻōlelo ma luna o ke kani o nā mele," wahi a Lum. "A i kuʻu manaʻo ua pili pū kēia i ke mele Hawaiʻi, ʻoiai ʻaʻole e hala, ua lanakila ka ʻōlelo i nā paukū ma luna o nā mea ʻē aʻe."

Me kēia makana, e hoʻomohala aʻe ana ʻo Lum i kāna pāleo mua loa mai ka makahiki 2023 ʻo *Pewa* ma o nā ʻano hou o ke mele Hawaiʻi, e paipai ana hoʻi i ka ʻaeʻoia o nā mea Hawaiʻi, a e ikaika mau ai ka ʻōlelo.

Ka paipai ʻana aʻe i nā hānauna hou

"ʻAʻohe wā hele kula maʻamau o ko māua mau mākua mai ka papa ʻeiwa ma Puna," wahi a Teresa Makuakāne-Drechsel. "No laila, he mea kēia ʻike maka ʻana i kēia kākoʻo no ko Kealiʻi ʻimi laeʻula ʻana e hoʻomanaʻo ikaika mai nei i ka welo mau o ko nā mākua welo, a e hāpai ʻia aʻe ana nā alakaʻi ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi o nā hanauna e hiki mai nei."

Ke kū nei ke Kōleke ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi ʻo ia hoʻi ʻo Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani o ke Kulanui o Hawaiʻi ma Hilo ʻo ia ke kula hoʻokahi e mālama nei i ka papahana Laeʻula Hoʻōla ʻŌlelo a Moʻomeheu Hawaiʻi a ʻŌiwi. I ka makahiki 2023, ua kūkala kūhelu ʻia ua kula nei ʻo ia ke Kikowaena O Nā Waiwai ʻŌlelo ʻŌiwi o ʻAmelika me ka hoʻākea ʻana i ke kuleana o ia kula ma ka ʻaoʻao o ka hoʻōla ʻōlelo mai kekahi kapa a kekahi kapa aku o ʻAmelika.

"He welo kūmau ke kākoʻo a ka ʻohana Makukāne i ko mākou kōleke, mai ka wā o ko lāua makuahine [ʻo Lydia] i hana nui i ka hoʻomaka ʻana o nā papahana hoʻōla ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi," wahi a Kaʻiu Kimura, ke poʻo o Ka Haka ʻUla o Keʻelikōlani. "He mea hanohano ka hoʻomau ʻana o ka ʻohana e hana pū me mākou e hoʻokō i kā mākou pahuhopu."

Nicholas Kealiʻi Lum - *Courtesy Photo*

Ke kahu mau ʻana i ka ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi

He mea ka Makana Makuakāne e hōʻoia ana i ka loaʻa i nā haumāna, e like nō hoʻi me Lum, o nā waiwai e pono ai ka hoʻokō ʻana i nā kuleana noiʻi, ʻoiai e halihali ana i ke au e hiki mai ana nā loina kuluma a me nā waiwai i lilo ai ke Kōleke ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi he alakaʻi a puni ka honua no ka hoʻōla ʻōlelo ʻōiwi.

"He mea maʻamau ka hoʻomau ʻana i ke ola o ka ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi no nā hanauna e hiki mai ana i ko mākou ʻohana," wahi a Makuakāne-Drechsel. "He mea kēia makana e hōʻihi aʻe ai i nā loina o ko māua mau mākua me ke kīpapa pū ʻana i ala na nā mea ʻē aʻe e hoʻomau aku i kēia hana koʻikoʻi."

The spirit of mele Hawaiʻi and language revitalization are finding new life through the work of Nicholas Kealiʻi Lum, a Ph.D. candidate at Ka Haka ʻUla O Keʻelikōlani College of Hawaiian Language.

Lum has been named the first doctoral recipient of the Daniel and Lydia Makuakāne Endowed Scholarship and Fellowship. Established by the couple's daughters, the fellowship honors the Makuakānes' lifelong advocacy of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi and Native Hawaiian cultural education.

Lum is weaving tradition and innovation into his in-depth study of mele of old and new. His dissertation, "Pewa: I Ola ke Mele Hawaiʻi i kona Mele ʻia" (Pewa: The Life of Hawaiian Music in its Song), braids traditional Hawaiian mele to modern soundscapes, creating bridges between younger audiences and ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi through experimental musical expression.

"In my dissertation, I define mele as being ʻlogogenic,ʼ which means that words in a genre of music are more important than the musical treatment," Lum explained. "And I believe that represents mele Hawaiʻi; it's always the language within the text that is more important."

With the fellowship, Lum will be able to build on his 2023 debut album *Pewa*, using experimental approaches to mele Hawaiʻi that promote both cultural resilience and linguistic vitality.

Uplifting future generations

"Our parents did not have formal educational opportunities beyond the ninth grade in Puna," said Teresa Makuakāne-Drechsel. "Therefore, seeing this fellowship support Kealiʻi's doctoral journey is a powerful reminder that their legacy continues to uplift future generations of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi leaders."

UH Hilo's College of Hawaiian Language is uniquely positioned as the only institution worldwide offering a PhD in Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization. In 2023, it was also designated as the first National Native American Language Resource Center, further expanding its role in advancing language revitalization across the U.S.

"The Makuakāne family are longstanding supporters of our college, ever since their mother [Lydia] played a big role in the movement that started Hawaiian language revitalization," said Kaʻiu Kimura, director of Ka Haka ʻUla o Keʻelikōlani. "It's such an honor that the family continues to work with us to forward our purpose."

Keeping ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi alive

The Makuakāne Fellowship ensures that students, such as Lum, have the resources to complete their research, while also carrying forward the cultural knowledge and values that make the College of Hawaiian Language a global leader in Indigenous language revitalization.

"Keeping Hawaiian language alive for future generations has always been important to our family," said Makuakāne-Drechsel. "This endowment is our way of honoring our parents' values while giving others the opportunity to carry on this important work."

For more information contact the UH Foundation. This article was originally printed in UH News on October 28, 2025.

Ka Maopopo ʻana i ka Maʻi Poina ma o ka ʻOnina Kiʻi

Understanding Alzheimer's Through Animation

Na UH News | Unuhi ʻia e Paige Okamura

He puke keiki ʻo *Pōmai and Her Papa* i kākau ʻia no ke kōkua ʻana i nā keiki e maopopo mai ai i ia mea he maʻi poina, a ua lilo nō i wikiō ʻonina kiʻi hou.

Pili ia moʻolelo iā Pōmai, he kaikamahine e aʻo ana i ke kōkua ʻana i kona kupuna kāne i loaʻa i ka maʻi poina me ke aloha, a ma ke ʻano Hawaiʻi, i hiki i nā ʻohana ke kūkākūkā e pili ana i ka maʻi poina. Ua paʻi mua ʻia e ke Kulanui o Mānoa i ka makahiki 2019 a laila unuhi ʻia i ka ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, ua hele a laha kēia moʻolelo ma o nā keiki me nā kānaka mālama a puni ka paeʻāina.

Na Kalilinoe Detwiler, he haumāna laeʻula ʻōlelo Pelekānia ma ke Kulanui o Mānoa, i hana pū i kēia ʻonina kiʻi me ka hui Hā Kūpuna National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders, ma lalo o ke keʻena Thompson Kula Mālama Kaiaulu me ke Olakino Lehulehu. Hoʻokino ʻia maila ka puke me nā kiʻi ʻālohilohi, nā hāmeʻe piha ʻeu, a kūkaʻi ʻōlelo ʻia e nā limahina o Hā Kūpuna.

"Ke lana nei ka manaʻo, na kēia puke me ka wikiō e hoʻoulu i ke kūkākūkā ʻana ma waena o nā keiki, nā mākua, me nā kūpuna no ia mea he maʻi poina i loko o nā loina Hawaiʻi, ma ke ʻano kūpono no nā pae makahiki," wahi ā Detwiler, he lālā o ka Indigenous Nations Poet, Story Knife Fellow a he alakaʻi noiʻi no ka pāhana Symphony of Hawaiʻi Seas.

"Nanea au i noho pū me nā hāmeʻe, ka hoʻomoeā ʻana i ko lākou ʻano, a me wai lākou e pili ai. Pēia pū hoʻi me ka hoʻomoeā ʻana i nā hiʻohiʻona ʻike ʻia ma nā loli liʻiliʻi o ka naʻau me ko lākou maopopo ʻana i ka maʻi poina."

Hoʻomaka akula ka papahana ma Ianuali o ka makahiki 2025 me ke kaha ʻana nā mahele o ka moʻolelo, ka hoʻolālā ʻana i ka ʻikena, ka ʻoki leo ʻana, ka hana ʻana i nā kiʻi ma hope, nā ʻonina kiʻi, a me ka hoʻoponopono ʻana.

"Iā mākou e hana nei i kēia mau kumu ʻike no nā ʻōpio me nā mea mālama, ua ʻike nō mākou i nā ʻano mea kūpono no nā hānauna like ʻole o ka ʻohana e noho pū ʻana ma ka hale like ma Hawaiʻi," wahi a Detwiler. "ʻO ka ʻonina kiʻi kekahi ʻo ia mau mea. He mea ia i hiki ke hoʻolaha i kēia ʻano moʻolelo pohihihi a kaumaha."

"ʻO ka pahuhopu o Hā Kūpuna, ʻo ia ka hoʻomaikaʻi ʻana i ka hoʻomaopopo ʻana i nā ola o nā kūpuna, ka hoʻohanohano ʻana i ko lākou ola, me ka hoʻomaikaʻi ʻana aʻe i ka ʻoihana mālama kūpuna," i ʻōlelo ai ʻo Shelley Muneoka, ka Hoʻolaukaʻi Papahana no Hā Kūpuna. "He kōkua nō nā puke me nā ʻonina kiʻi i ka hoʻolaha ʻana i kēia ʻike i ka lehulehu ma ke ʻano kūpono." ■

The children's storybook *Pōmai and Her Papa*, which helps children understand Alzheimer's disease, has been adapted into an animated video.

The story follows Pōmai, a young girl learning to support her grandfather as he experiences memory loss, offering a gentle, culturally grounded way for families to start conversations about dementia. First released by UH at Mānoa in 2019 and translated into ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi in 2025, the story has reached keiki and caregivers across the islands.

The animation was developed by Kalilinoe Detwiler, a UH Mānoa Ph.D. candidate in English, with the Hā Kūpuna National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders, housed in the Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health. It brings the storybook to life with vibrant visuals, expressive characters and narration voiced by Hā Kūpuna team members.

The story of *Pōmai and Her Papa* is available as a free downloadable book or view the animated version on YouTube. - *Illustration by Byron Inouye*

"We hope the book and video will open conversations between children, parents and kūpuna about dementia in a cultural and age-appropriate way," said Detwiler, who is an Indigenous Nations Poet, Story Knife Fellow and co-principal investigator for the Symphony of Hawaiʻi Seas project.

"I enjoy spending time with the characters, imagining their expressions and who they might sit beside in the setting. I also enjoy imagining visual representations to subtle changes in their emotions and understanding of dementia."

The project began in January 2025 and included storyboarding, visual design, background art, voice recording, animation and editing.

"As we create resources for ʻōpio and caregivers, we recognize there are mediums that best suit the intergenerational households in Hawaiʻi," added Detwiler. "Animation is one of those mediums. It opens possibilities for stories that can be challenging or heavy."

"The purpose of Hā Kūpuna is to enhance understanding of kūpuna, celebrate their lives, and improve eldercare services," said Shelley Muneoka, Hā Kūpuna program coordinator. "Storybooks and animation help extend this information to new audiences in a meaningful way." ■

"Pōmai and Her Papa" can be viewed on Hā Kūpuna's YouTube page. PDF copies of the story can be downloaded for free at manoa.hawaii.edu/hakupuna/pomai-and-her-papa/. For hard copies, contact Shelley Muneoka at muneokas@hawaii.edu.

This article was originally published by UH News on November 18, 2025.

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A Living Legacy

Theatrical Performance Honors Prince Kūhiō

By Malia Nobrega-Olivera

Communities across Hawaiʻi are invited to honor the life and enduring legacy of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole Piʻikoi through two meaningful community events — a powerful living history play and the annual Prince Kūhiō Parade.

Presented by the Hawaiʻi Ponoʻī Coalition, *Ke Kauā o Ka Lāhui: The Life of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole Piʻikoi* is a compelling theatrical experience that brings history to life for today's audiences. Written by acclaimed playwright Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl and directed and produced by Sammie Choy, the living history play traces Kūhiō's journey from a young aliʻi to a visionary leader committed to the wellbeing of his people.

First debuted in 2022 at ʻIolani Palace during Hawaiian History Month, the production returns to deepen our shared understanding of Kūhiō's legacy — one rooted in leadership, civic engagement, and service to lāhui.

Audiences will witness pivotal moments in his life, including the founding of the Hawaiian Civic Clubs, the establishment of county governments, and his advocacy for the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. The play also highlights his broader impact, from protecting lands that would later become part of the National Park System to championing women's suffrage.

Each performance includes opportunities for reflection and discussion, inviting community members to consider how Kūhiō's vision continues to guide Hawaiʻi today.

Another highlight this month is the annual Prince Kūhiō Parade, organized by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs. As one of Hawaiʻi's recognized legacy parades, this beloved tradition brings together civic clubs, cultural organizations, schools, and community groups from across the pae ʻāina to celebrate Kūhiō's life and contributions.

Events like these offer meaningful ways for ʻohana and community of all ages to connect with Hawaiian history and celebrate a leader whose work continues to shape Hawaiʻi today. Everyone is welcomed to join in honoring Prince Kūhiō – a true servant of the lāhui. ■

More info available at hawaiiponoi.info

Ke Kauā o ka Lāhui

Oʻahu Performances

March 7 at 5:30 p.m.
Kroc Center, ʻEwa Beach

March 20 at 6:30 p.m.
King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center

March 21 at 6:30 p.m.
King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center

March 22 at 2:00 p.m.
King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center

Molokaʻi Performance

March 14 at 10:00 a.m.
Lanikeha Recreation Center, Hoʻolehua

Ke Kauā o ka Lāhui, a play about the life of Prince Kūhiō, debuted in 2022 at ʻIolani Palace and has also been presented on Kauaʻi. - *Courtesy Photos*

AOHCC Celebrates Kūhiō Day with its Annual Parade

By Cedric Duarte

The 2026 Prince Kūhiō Parade is scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2026, in Kapolei. Organized by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AOHCC), this annual event honors the life and contributions of Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole. His advocacy for Native Hawaiians continues to influence and shape the community today.

The Parade will begin at 5:00 p.m. on Kapolei Parkway, starting from Kapolei Hale and concluding at Ka Makana Aliʻi Center with a free concert and community celebration. The event will feature live entertainment, food, and arts and crafts vendors.

Now in its fourth year in Kapolei, the parade highlights the region's deep connection to Prince Kūhiō's legacy, as it is home to four Hawaiian homestead communities and the headquarters of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands.

Kūhiō served for nearly 20 years as Hawaiʻi's delegate to the U.S. Congress from 1903 until his passing in 1922, working to secure resources and opportunities for Native Hawaiians.

His most significant legislative achievement was the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921, which set aside more than 200,000 acres of land for Native Hawaiian homesteads. He also secured federal funding for roads, harbors, and lighthouses, and formalized the territory's county government system that is still in place today.

In 1918, Kūhiō founded the first Hawaiian Civic Club, a movement that has grown to encompass over 60 clubs across Hawaiʻi and the continental United States. ■

For more information visit aohcc.org.

Prince Kūhiō Parade

Saturday, March 28 at 5:00 p.m.
Kapolei Hale to Ka Makana Aliʻi Shopping Center

The annual Prince Kūhiō Parade - now in its fourth year in Kapolei - is a joyful community celebration to honor Kūhiō's life and achievements. In addition to successfully convincing Congress to pass the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act in 1921, Prince Kūhiō established the first Hawaiian Civic Club, secured federal funding for public works projects, and formalized Hawaiʻi's present county government system. - Courtesy Photos

DESIGNED TO DIVIDE

Understanding Blood Quantum

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

In her influential book, *Nānā i ke Kumu*, preeminent 20th century Native Hawaiian scholar Mary Kawena Pukui wrote: "Members of the ʻohana, like taro shoots, are all from the same root. With Hawaiians, family consciousness of the same ʻroot of originʼ was a deeply felt, unifying force, no matter how many offshoots came from offshoots."

Traditionally, our moʻokūʻauhau (genealogies) establish us as Kānaka ʻŌiwi – the Indigenous people of Hawaiʻi. It is from this foundation of moʻokūʻauhau that we have pilina to our ancestors, to this ʻāina, and to one another; an identity established by bloodlines, lineage, and connection.

It was not until the 1921 Hawaiian Homes Commission Act was passed by the U.S. Congress, with language defining "natives" as those individuals having 50% or more Hawaiian blood, that the idea of "blood quantum" to determine our Hawaiian-ness was introduced into the consciousness of our people and began to redefine how we saw ourselves.

A tool of dispossession

The idea of blood quantum to determine indigeneity is an invention of settler colonial governments designed to dispossess Native Peoples from their lands.

In Canada, the 1876 Indian Act, still in effect today, determines who receives "status" from the government. "Status Indians" must be 50% or more Indigenous and are eligible for a variety of benefits not available to the rest of the population. Whether or not a person identifies as Indigenous, or practices Indigenous culture and traditions, is irrelevant to the designation.

Miʼkmaq attorney and professor Pamela D. Palmater writes: "There is a long-term effect of this type of legislation: that every single First Nation in Canada effectively has an extinction date, a day when that Nation's last registered Indian is born."

In the Americas, blood quantum first shows up in 1705 in Virginia when the colony adopted an "Indian Blood Law" limiting the rights of Native Americans with 50% (or more) Indigenous ancestry and affording greater rights to those with less than 50% ancestry.

Then in 1887, Congress passed the General Allotment Act (the "Dawes Act") which gave the U.S. president the power to break up communally held tribal lands into parcels of about 160 acres that were then "allotted" to individuals – typically heads of households. The law was designed to push Native Americans from tribal land ownership to private land ownership, ostensibly to encourage independent farming and economic prosperity.

At the time, an estimated 138-150 million acres were under Tribal authority and control. According to the Native Governance Center, under the Dawes Act "the federal government used blood quantum to determine allotment eligibility and also granted Native people with lower blood quantums the ability to sell their allotments. Any unallotted ʻsurplusʼ land [in the end about 90 million acres] was sold to non-native buyers. The federal government used this strategy to further strip Native nations of their land base."

In other words, the government "gave" portions of land already controlled by the Native Nations to their individual members and when there were no more tribal members "eligible" to receive a land allotment based on blood quantum, the government kept the rest (about 65% of the original acreage) and sold it to non-natives.

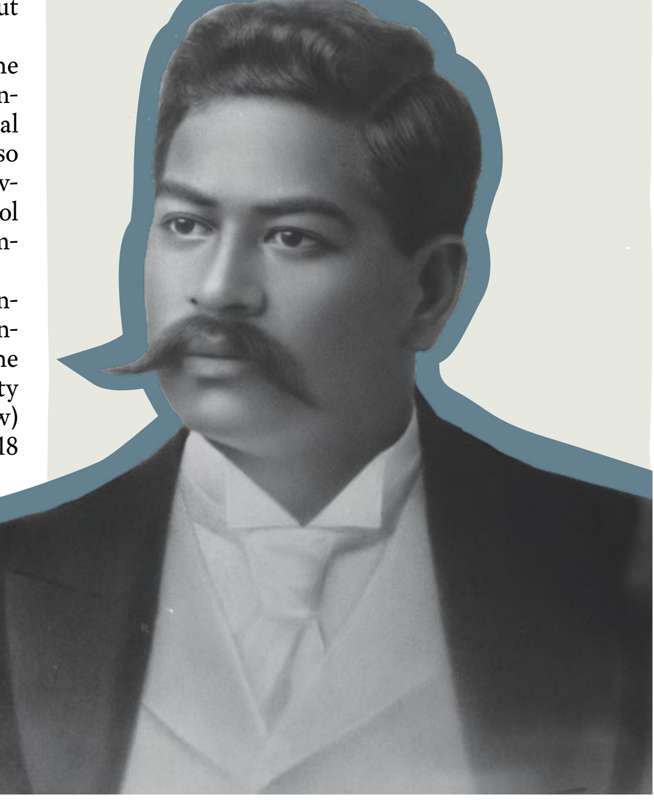
The "Indian Reorganization Act" of 1934 ended the forced allotment of tribal lands as the federal government changed its policy to one of recognition of tribal governments and the promotion of self-government – so long as they conformed to an American model. However, it also formalized blood quantum as the federal tool for defining Native American identity and tribal membership, replacing kinship-based membership systems.

"Blood quantum emerged as a way to measure ʻIndiannessʼ through a construct of race. So that over time, Indians would literally breed themselves out and rid the federal government of their legal duties to uphold treaty obligations," explained Dr. Elizabeth Rule (Chickasaw) an assistant professor at American University in a 2018 *NPR* interview.

According to the Native Governance Center, the Indian Reorganization Act resulted in many Native nations adopting "boilerplate constitutions" developed by the federal government that included using – for the first time – blood quantum as the basis for tribal citizenship.

SEE **BLOOD QUANTUM** ON **PAGE 18**

> "If conditions remain as they are today it will only be a matter of a short space of time when this race of people, my people, renowned for their physique, their courage, their sense of justice, their straightforwardness, and their hospitality will be a matter of history."
>
> *Prince Kūhio to Congress on Dec. 14, 1920*



BLOOD QUANTUM

Continued from page 17

Deciding who is Hawaiian

According to Dr. J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, a professor of Indigenous Studies at Princeton University, "the blood quantum rule operates as a technique of state craft that undergirds dispossession" noting that "U.S. governmental bodies have used blood quantum classifications both historically and in the present to appropriate Native lands and promote cultural and biological assimilation to the advantage of whiteness."

Her 2008 book, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity*, focuses on the U.S. imposition of blood quantum on Hawaiians codified in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) of 1921.

As her research documents, the legislation initially proposed by Hawaiʻi's Congressional Delegate, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole, defined Native Hawaiians as all Hawaiians "in whole or part." Members of Congress, however, were uncomfortable with an all-inclusive definition of Native Hawaiian and pushed for a new definition. Eventually, 1/32 became a hypothetical example and later, the newly proposed standard.

Kūhiō saw the HHCA as "belated justice" and emphasized in his testimony before Congress that Hawaiian dispossession, depopulation and economic marginalization had to be remedied. Its purpose, therefore, was rehabilitative and inclusive.

The greatest opposition to the HHCA came from Hawaiʻi's wealthy corporate plantation and ranch owners. They sent their representatives to Washington, D.C., to voice their dissent to Kūhiō's proposed legislation. Unwilling to give up their access to trust lands, they proposed "full-blood Hawaiian" as the most appropriate definition.

Kauanui asserts that the blood quantum criterion emerged as a way to avoid recognizing Hawaiian entitlement to the lands desired for the homestead program. "Key players in the HHCA hearings redefined 'need' in racial terms by using blood quantum as an indicator of social competency, where those defined by the 50% rule were deemed incapable to look out for themselves," she said.

"Hence, in the quest to control Hawaiian land and assets, blood quantum classification emerged as a way to undermine Kānaka Maoli sovereignty claims – not only by explicitly limiting the number who could lay claim to the land, but also by reframing the Native connection to the land itself from a legal claim to one based on charity."

> "It is our country, gentlemen. We did not want to be annexed to this country, and it was through the connivance of this country, through the help of the American minister that we became a part of this country. And then to say that we Hawaiians have no right to say what is for the best interests of our people in Hawaiʻi is damnable."
>
> *Prince Kūhio to Congress on Dec. 24, 1920*

This was evident in the testimony of attorney William B. Pittman at the Congressional hearings in December 1920 on behalf of Raymond Ranch (now Ulupalakua Ranch) and other interests.

Arguing that the legislation should only apply to full-blooded Hawaiians Pittman said, "I do not believe the delegate [Kūhiō] will object to that – that it be confined to the full blood instead of the half blood – because he knows and everybody knows that any part Hawaiian is capable of taking care of himself and does not need any rehabilitation."

To which Kūhiō replied, "I would like to see everybody get the benefit of it in Hawaiʻi. For years past and up to the present time, the Hawaiians have never received any benefits."

The proposed legislation continued to use a 1/32 blood quantum to define Native Hawaiians at least through April 1921. However, after the proposal was rejected by Congress for an unrelated reason and sent back to the territorial legislature for revision, 1/8 became the new standard being debated.

By the time the proposal went back to Congress, however, Native Hawaiian was defined as 50%, "a compromise made between Kūhiō and Hawaiʻi Sen. John H. Wise (also Kanaka Maoli) with the elite 'Merchant Street gang' in Honolulu," Kauanui said.

She posits that "had there been an abiding focus on Hawaiian land entitlements, rather than a shift to a welfare discourse of Hawaiian neediness, genealogical descent could have remained as the way to determine Kānaka Maoli eligibility for homesteading, since as descendants of the kingdom, Kānaka Maoli could claim an equitable right to the land as their inheritance."

However, she adds, "neither the island representatives serving the interests of the sugar corporations, nor the U.S. government intended to bolster Hawaiian claims, especially those that would call U.S. occupation into question."

Kūhiō's call for Hawaiian rehabilitation focused on Indigenous mortality and the HHCA was originally premised on recognition of citizenship under the Hawaiian Kingdom as Hawaiians grappled with unresolved land rights, "but the problem was in articulating that awareness of these historical claims within the confines of American law, citizenship and racial categories," said Kauanui.

Blood quantum and identity

Until 1921, Hawaiians were simply Hawaiians. After foreign contact began in 1778, the mixed race children of Hawaiian mothers and (mostly) European fathers were raised Hawaiian and fully integrated into Hawaiian society.

Hawaiian identity was based on lineage and cultural norms rather than racial reckoning, thus many Hawaiian children of mixed ancestry were not even aware of their mixed ancestry – especially if they were hānai.

Today, despite the imposition of blood quantum on the Hawaiian psyche for the past 100 years, in most instances one's appearance or estimated blood quantum is not an exclusionary social factor because of the importance of genealogy and pilina within the Hawaiian community. Indeed, nearly every Hawaiian family today includes members who qualify (and don't qualify) as Native Hawaiian under the federal definition.

Reflecting on the negative impacts of blood quantum on our lāhui, Papa Ola Lōkahi CEO Dr. Sheri Daniels observed that it becomes a "have or have not" question. "I think when we talk about blood quantum, people get really stuck around 'what does it mean for me? How do I benefit?'" She acknowledges that we need spaces, as ʻŌiwi, to talk through the ʻeha (pain) associated with the blood quantum label and the ways it has divided us.

"We come from strong people so why are we still focused on how disparate we are? We know our moʻokūʻau-

"Portraits of Ha

+ Italian

+ Spanish

+ Japanese

+ Gilbertese

+ Chinese

+ German

First meeting of the Hawaiian Homes Commission on September 16, 1921. (L-R) Rudolph M. Duncan, Rev. Akiko Akana, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole, George P. Cooke, and Wallace R. Farrington. - *Photo: Hawai'i State Archives*

hau. It is about having koko (blood). If someone tells me they are Kanaka, I'm going to take that at face value. I'm not going to ask to see their documents."

As it suits their needs

In discussing blood quantum as a colonial invention used to acquire land, wealth and power, it is important to point out the glaring contradiction between the imposition of blood quantum policies on Indigenous Peoples as distinct from Black Americans.

While the federal government has consistently imposed minimum blood quantum requirements on Indigenous Peoples to establish them as "native," any amount of African blood was enough to establish someone as Black.

The notorious "one drop" rule originated after slavery ended in 1863 and was entrenched during the "Jim Crow" era, a period of legalized racial discrimination in America, primarily in southern states. It persisted until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Rooted in white supremacy and slavery, the "one drop" rule was intended to keep the white race "pure" and to prevent individuals with any amount of African blood from accessing the privileges of whiteness in America. Meanwhile, Indigenous persons of mixed race were not only permitted to assimilate – they were encouraged to do so.

Dr. Brian W. Dippie is a professor emeritus of U.S. cultural history at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. In his 1982 book, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and the U.S. Indian Policy*, he writes, "The situations of the Negro (sic) and the Indian were not really analogous ... one was earmarked for a segregated, menial existence, the other for full participation in white civilization."

Expanding on this idea he notes, "The native population was small – just an infinitesimal fraction of the whole American population – and while a massive infusion of Indian blood might pollute the national type, the limited amount available could do no harm and might even do some good."

For the U.S. government, assimilation of Indigenous Peoples had several benefits. For one thing, absorption of Indigenous Peoples into the dominant white American culture negates pesky Indigenous land and sovereignty claims, and reduces the number of individuals who can qualify for federal benefits as people intermarry.

Indigenous People have also been fetishized in American culture in ways that Black Americans have not. Take, for example, the romanticized "noble savage" trope or the sexualized "hula girl" of the territorial era. These stereotypes make native peoples more palatable and even inspire dubious claims of Indigenous ancestry.

Impossible to measure

Blood quantum as a concept for determining our Hawaiian-ness has become entrenched over the past century. As a result, many of us think of ourselves and our Hawaiian identity in terms of fractions.

However, blood quantum is impossible to quantify and cannot be measured using birth certificates. The reason? Science.

Children inherit half of their DNA from their mother and half from their father. But unless they are identical twins, siblings do not inherit the exact same DNA. That is why children from the same family can look quite different.

A child receives 23 sets of chromosomes from each parent – so 46 altogether – which makes up their DNA. When joined, these chromosomes commingle and swap genetic information resulting in even more variations.

According to biotech company Sano Genetics, there are more than 8 million possible DNA combinations from just 23 chromosome sets, and research has shown that full siblings can share as little as 37% or as much as 65% of their genetic variants.

So while siblings receive 50% of their DNA from each parent, they don't receive the exact same 50%. It is the reason why siblings who take DNA tests often get very different results. Thus blood quantum is an unscientific western construct without substance or merit.

Reconciling and moving forward

In contrast to genealogies and lineage which connect people to each other and to the land, the use of blood quantum to determine "Hawaiian-ness" attempts to classify ʻŌiwi into disparate groups of Hawaiians, which has divided families and communities for generations.

As intermarriage created new family dynamics and the 50% blood quantum requirement threatened HHCA descendants with dispossession from the land they were raised on, to its credit the State of Hawai'i was able to get Congressional approval to decrease the blood quantum requirement for successorship from 50% to 25% more than 20 years ago.

More recently, in 2017, the State of Hawai'i signed Act 80 into law further decreasing HHCA successorship to 1/32 Hawaiian – much closer to the original vision of Prince Kūhiō. However, implementation requires Congressional approval and it has been languishing in Washington, D.C., since 2022.

Ultimately, as is the case among First Nations Peoples, many ʻŌiwi object to the 50% blood quantum designation – not because they desire federal benefits – but because it is inherently divisive and undermines Indigenous self-identity and political claims. "Hawaiian kinship and genealogical modes of identification allow for political empowerment in the service of nation-building because it is inclusive," Kauanui said.

"Not only is the genealogical approach more wide-reaching, it is embedded in Indigenous ontologies (realities) whereby peoplehood is rooted in the land. This inclusivity is especially true in the face of non-Hawaiian political opposition to Native Hawaiian entitlements and the sovereignty movement."

While blood quantum continues to be a controversial topic, it does not need to be a divisive one. "We may not see eye-to-eye," Daniels said. "But, at the end of the day, if we all collectively say that our North Star is being Hawaiian – and we practice being the best Kanaka we can be – then everything else is just noise." ■

Author's note: Mahalo nui to Dr. J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, who generously shared her extensive research on blood quantum for the purposes of this article. Dr. Kauanui is an author, professor, and expert on settler colonialism, self-determination, decolonization, international law, race, gender and sexuality.

To learn more about Act 80 and to track changes to the HHCA visit: doi.gov/Hawaiian/hhca-amendments

awaiians, 1909"

Photo series by Caroline Haskins Gurrey, Wikimedia Commons

OHA Needs to Take an Active Role in Repatriation

By Angela Neller

As a Kanaka ʻŌiwi, I offer this with respect and careful consideration regarding the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). I recognize the complexity of the circumstances and the many perspectives involved, and I approach this matter with humility and thoughtfulness. My intention is to contribute in a way that is constructive, ethical, and grounded in care for the lāhui and the responsibilities at the center of this work.

Positionality matters. Hawaiian history is not confined to the past; it unfolds every day, shaping the lives of our people and the responsibilities we carry forward. Lineage is not abstract, it is lived. Future generations will inherit the consequences of what is preserved, altered, or left behind.

I am deeply concerned that the voices of Hawaiians, broadly, are being excluded from decisions regarding the return of our ancestral treasures. I say this with respect for the work that has come before and for the individuals who carried the kuleana of bringing our iwi kūpuna home.

However, changes to NAGPRA regulations in 2024 resulted in widespread claiming and repatriation of Hawaiian cultural objects without the knowledge of most of our community. Museums are required to defer to Native Hawaiian Organizations to identify items defined as funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony.

Because Hawaiians are not organized as a federally recognized tribe with a centralized governing authority, NAGPRA regulations are often applied on a "first come, first served" basis. Museums do not know who within the Hawaiian community to contact, or they are hesitant to engage once a claim has been made.

Since the regulatory changes, there have been 26 claims involving 467 cultural items under NAGPRA.

This includes a wide variety of items including tools, utensils, weapons, garments, jewelry and adornments. Of particular note are kiʻi akua, kiʻi lāʻau, akua hulu manu, lei niho palaoa, kupeʻe niho ʻīlio, ʻahuʻula, mahiole, ipu ʻāina, ipu kūha, and a wooden bowl with figures. Some of these items are associated with Kamehameha I, Kekuaokalani, and Hale o Keawe.

Where are these objects now? Who is caring for them? Who has access to them?

Power resides in access to shared knowledge. When information is withheld, decisions are made without us and our histories are used in ways that systematically exclude and oppress. This erodes connection, creates cultural loss, and transforms knowledge into a weapon rather than a source of collective strength.

Bearing witness to these realities is essential, as their impacts continue to affect our communities. Stewardship must therefore be relational, rooted in accountability, trust, and reciprocity. Building a stronger foundation requires listening deeply, walking alongside our communities, and learning with humility.

I ask that the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) take an active role in repatriation, not only under NAGPRA, but also in cases involving international claims and requests for returns from the Smithsonian Institution.

I am asking that OHA be at the table, have a voice in these decisions, and help determine the appropriate care and location of our nā mea makamae, so they may continue to connect meaningfully with our people. Our lāhui deserves transparency, inclusion, and care in decisions that shape our collective future. Please take action to protect the rights of all Hawaiians. ■

Angela Neller is a museum professional and curator with over 30 years of experience. She specializes in NAGPRA compliance and Indigenous collections care, focusing on developing ethical stewardship policies and collaborative research practices with descendant communities.

Diabetes: A Policy Failure We Can Still Fix

By Inam Rahman, MD

Diabetes is usually described as a medical condition, but it is also a policy problem - one shaped by access to care, affordability of treatment, food systems, and preventive infrastructure.

Diabetes occurs when the body cannot properly regulate blood sugar due to insufficient insulin, insulin resistance, or both. Over time, uncontrolled blood sugar silently damages blood vessels, nerves, and vital organs, driving disability, health-care costs, and premature death.

The scale of the problem is alarming. In Hawaiʻi, approximately 134,100 adults – about 10.3% of the adult population – have been diagnosed with diabetes. Thousands more likely have the disease but remain undiagnosed, while an estimated 400,000 residents are prediabetic and at high risk of progression.

This trajectory is not inevitable, but it reflects systemic failures in prevention, early detection, and long-term management.

Diabetes is diagnosed with straightforward blood tests that are inexpensive and widely available. Yet many patients are diagnosed late, often after complications have already begun. The barrier is not science; it is access, continuity of care, and effective outreach to high-risk communities.

Uncontrolled diabetes is a leading cause of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness, amputations, nerve damage, and cognitive decline. These outcomes devastate patients and families while placing enormous strain on public health systems.

Dialysis, hospitalizations, disability, and long-term care cost Hawaiʻi an estimated $2.6 billion annually, including $1.8 billion in direct medical expenses and $830 million in lost productivity. Prevention and early control are far more cost-effective than treating advanced complications.

Diabetes management is not static. Many patients initially control blood sugar through lifestyle changes and oral medications. Over time aging, weight gain, stress, illness, and progressive insulin resistance can make control more difficult. In these cases, insulin therapy becomes necessary and often lifesaving.

Public discourse sometimes frames insulin use as failure, but it simply reflects the natural progression of the disease. Policy should support - not stigmatize - appropriate escalation of care through patient education, nutritional counseling, and close follow-up.

Newer diabetes medications have reshaped treatment. They lower blood sugar, reduce cardiovascular and kidney risks, and promote weight loss, addressing core drivers of Type 2 diabetes. These therapies can delay insulin use, prevent complications, and reduce long-term health-care costs.

Yet their high price places them out of reach for many uninsured and under-insured patients, creating a two-tiered system in which outcomes depend, not on medical need, but on ability to pay. Policymakers must address affordability through insurance reforms, negotiated pricing, and support for safety-net providers.

While individual responsibility matters, environment matters more. Communities saturated with sugary drinks, ultra-processed foods, and limited access to preventive care predictably produce higher diabetes rates.

One of the simplest interventions - encouraging water instead of soda or alcohol - has measurable benefits for blood sugar, weight, and kidney health. Public policy can support healthier choices through education, pricing strategies, and better defaults in schools, workplaces, and public facilities.

Diabetes is common, and while its complications are costly and disabling, they are largely preventable. Effective policy should prioritize early screening, affordable medications, patient education, and sustained access to primary care. Investing in prevention and equitable treatment is not only compassionate, it is fiscally responsible.

The most dangerous diabetes is not the severe case. It is the ignored one. ■

Dr. Inam U. Rahman, MD, is a Honolulu-based community advocate, physician and policy contributor in Hawaiʻi.

Kudos to Hawaiian Council

By Ammon Baldomero

Here's everything about how the Hawaiian Council (HC) is bending the state to its will and entrenching itself in the state's tourism industry.

HC was born out of decades of Hawaiian activism dating back to the 1960s. The council's founders were mostly female legal and policy experts who, during the cultural rebirth, observed that awareness was high, but organiza-

SEE HAʻI MANAʻO ON PAGE 21

HA'I MANA'O

Continued from page 20

tion was poor.

In 2001, the women formed a coalition and called themselves Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA). Last year it rebranded as Hawaiian Council (HC).

For the first 17 years, HC operated as both community lender and de facto think tank for Native Hawaiian policy. More recently, HC has prioritized financial services – which is where CEO Kūhiō Lewis comes in.

Kūhiō inherited a lemon in 2018. His first official piece of mail was an eviction notice for the office. Staring into the abyss, he pivoted the nonprofit from policy to economic development determined to build wealth for Hawaiians and cultivate rising ʻŌiwi leaders.

He brought the council back from oblivion. During the pandemic, HC became one of Hawaiʻi's go-to financial institutions for distributing millions in government relief to local nonprofits and struggling families.

Since then, it has expanded into for-profit activities like buying companies and real estate.

In 2020 they partnered with local small businesses to launch The Mākeke – the Amazon/Etsy of Native Hawaiian products. So far, the online store has done $5 million in sales.

Then in 2023, HC's Kilohana division won a 2.5-year, $27.1 million destination management contract from the Hawaiʻi Tourism Authority.

In 2024 they ramped up their investments, purchasing 43 acres in Hilo to build 88 single-family affordable homes for local families; purchasing leading event production company, Hawaiʻi Stage, to service Native Hawaiian and visitor events; and launching Nā Lei Aloha lūʻau at Hyatt Regency Waikīkī Beach, the industry's only all-Hawaiian all-hula show.

In 2025 HC purchased Hawaiian retailer Nā Mea Hawaiʻi and produced *Hawaiʻi Calls / Advancing Hawaiʻi to the World*, a televised talent competition.

In the past two years, HC has graduated more Commercial Driver's License (CDL) drivers than the entire UH system; operated a work development program for carpenters, electricians, solar, firefighters and police; launched the KūHana business accelerator to help small businesses create business plans and get funded; opened a disaster relief center on Māui; and built 66 modular homes for Lahaina survivors.

Reflecting on the council's rise, they have three priorities: changing the world's perception of Hawaiʻi and Native Hawaiians; housing Hawaiians; and getting Hawaiians good-paying jobs.

It will be a few years till we see the fruition of their efforts and it's likely some won't go well – which is a good thing! In failing they learn Silicon Valley's guiding principle: fail fast, fail often.

Investing means both failure and learning. Then iterating based on that learning. It's painful and scary, like dropping in on a wave, but vital to progress.

Kūhiō and the council should be celebrated for their "go for broke" mentality. Their moves are a refreshing change from Hawaiʻi's seemingly risk-averse culture. ■

Ammon Baldomero is a writer and former analyst at Bank of Hawaiʻi and Zions Bancorporation. To read more, subscribe to his digital newsletter, "Hawaiian Luminary," where he discusses Hawaiʻi's politics, economy and culture.

Echoes of Diaspora

By Kawika A. Stafford

ʻO Kohala
the place that my grandma knew,
and her mom, and her mom's mom too.
Dense dark forest
filled with hidden meaning and mist;
crowd my dreams when I think of this...
Yet
it is Waimea of old that I truly miss,
longing for her misty morning kiss...
to caress me in her gentle arms
once again.
As time moves ever forward
And I continue to fade
it is in my mind
that I travel
back and forth...
each and every day;
sometimes as a boy
but most times as a man.
The years do pass,
people don't last,
as I continue
to cling to a well-worn and tattered dream.
What does it all mean?
From the mountain
to the sea,
when my journey
is complete;
in Waipiʻo Valley
is where I will sleep.
ʻO Hawaiʻi Nei,
Embrace me
as your native son
as I slumber in your arms
until that promised day has come.
End. ■

Kawika A. Stafford lives in Henderson, Nevada. He wrote this poem for his grandmother, Annie Lincoln Stevens who lived at Parker Ranch on Hawaiʻi Island.

To read more of Kawika's poetry go to blackeagledream.com.

HAWAIʻI ISLAND

OHA Satellite Office Dates

OHA Beneficiary Services will be traveling to serve beneficiaries on Hawaiʻi Island each month. Office hours are **8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.** *(closed from 1:00 - 1:45 p.m. for lunch).*

Waimea
Friday, March 6, 2026
Parker Ranch Center Conf. Room
67-1185 Mamalahoa Hwy.

Pāhala
Friday, March 13, 2026
Kaʻu Gym Multi-Purpose Room
96 Kamani St. #1149

Kona
Friday, March 20, 2026
Laʻiʻōpua 2020 Community Center Lānai
74-5210 Keanalehu Dr.

Kawaihae
Friday, March 27, 2026
Kailapa
61-4016 Kai Opae Pl.

Check the schedule at
oha.org/satelliteoffices

He Leo mai ka Nāhelehele

A Voice from the Wild

By Lisa Kapono Mason and Ben Catcho | Unuhi ʻia e Ben Catcho

Photos: Kamehameha Schools

Hāhālua, Wākiu, Kalamakū, Lauaʻe, Kuwā, Kāʻilialoha, ʻŪkiu. ʻO ia nā inoa i kāʻana ia me iaʻu mai ka wā kāhiko mai. "E ola ʻAlalā," ʻo ia ka ʻōlelo ma mua o kō mākou nele loa ana mai nā kuahiwi.

ʻAʻole lākou like i kapa ia iaʻu. He huna ia. Nahenahe ke mele o ka ʻehu kakahiaka. ʻOʻolokū ana nā manu mele hulahula ana ma nā lālā o ke kumu mai o maʻo. Puka ana nā ao, a lele aku mākou mai nā ʻōhiʻa o ka papa kaupoku, alohilohi kehau ma nā lehua.

Luʻu ana i ka papa hapamalu, e ʻai mākou i ka pilo me ka hōawa lana wale ka manaʻo o koʻu home, kohu māʻona mai ka wā ma mua. ʻOi aku ka nui o nā hoa e launa pū ai, nā mea e hulahula ana ma mā lau e heleleʻi ana ʻimi ana nā ʻelalala o lalo. ʻAʻohe like me mākou. Maliʻa paha hoʻokahi lā e loli ai kēia. Kohu kāhiko au, ma loko no o koʻu ʻōpio mau no ka pono e aʻo no ke au kūlohelohe.

Kāhiko no ka nahele e paʻa hohonu ai na aʻa i ka honua. Ua ʻao mākou i nā ʻano hou e kukā me kekahi, he mau kani hou e hiki ai mākou ke kāʻana i nā moʻolelo hou o kēia wā. He hekili ke ʻano o koʻu mau hulu ʻuliʻili a mākule kolu mau maka. ʻOi aku ka ikaika o koʻu wāwae. Māmau no hoʻi ke kaʻapeha o koʻu mau ʻēheu. Lana koʻu manaʻo i nā āwawa o lalo a maʻō loa o ke kai ʻuli. Maliʻa paha e lele aku mākou i ʻō. ■

Hāhālua, Wākiu, Kalamakū, Lauaʻe, Kuwā, Kāʻilialoha, ʻŪkiu. These are the names we were given before that curious day. They do not know that the forest calls us by a secret name only we can hear. "Thrive, ʻAlalā," they cried before we were swept away to the mountain.

This place is quieter after the morning chorus. As the sun rises, boisterous songbirds dance in the branches while keeping their distance. As the clouds break, we soar over the canopy of ʻōhiʻa, lehua glistening with dew. Diving into the understory, we find the taste of pilo and hōawa which reminds us of our past home but taste somehow sweeter than before.

We have more friends to watch and talk to, those that dance in the leaves and skitter after the crawling things. There are no others like us here. Maybe one day that will change. I feel old, even though I know so little here and have much to learn.

These trees are sturdy, with voices ancient and grounding. We have found new ways to communicate with each other, taking in the new sights and smells and sounds. My feathers are lightening and my cyan eyes are changing to an aged earth. My legs are stronger. My wings spread wider. I wonder who lives across these wide valleys and deep blue sea. Perhaps we will fly there. ■

Enroll Now for Spring Programs

By Bryan Esmeralda

In December 2025, Liliʻuokalani Trust (LT) celebrated the first anniversary of its Kīhene Lehua (KL) initiative, a vital part of LT's Early Childhood Program. KL offers housing in Honolulu to ʻohana with young children enrolled as LT beneficiaries, providing stability for families who previously faced housing insecurity or houselessness.

With the security that a safe home provides, participating ʻohana have been able to redirect their time and energy toward strengthening parenting skills, building support networks, securing steady employment, and addressing other stressors. LT supports these efforts through a range of programs and services designed to promote family wellbeing.

The housing component of KL is a cornerstone of LT's broader Hoʻokahua program, which focuses on creating positive parent-child relationships, pathways to economic stability, and safe, supportive housing. ʻOhana actively engage in individual and group services such as counseling, case management, and group programs.

LT's dedicated team of specialists walk alongside each ʻohana, recognizing the complex trauma many have experienced. Through opportunities for reflection, healing, skill-building, and resource connection, LT helps families work toward their goals and build a foundation for a brighter future. ■

Bryan Esmeralda serves as Director of External Relations at Liliʻuokalani Trust.

LT is a private operating foundation established in 1909 by Queen Liliʻuokalani for the benefit of orphan and destitute children, with preference given to Native Hawaiians. Today, LT's team of over 200 professionals serve thousands of kamaliʻi, or beneficiaries, through a combination of direct services and collaborations with community partners.

A move-in ready apartment at Kīhene Lehua in Honolulu. - *Courtesy Photo*

Ola ka Inoa - The Name Lives

ʻŌlelo Noʻeau #2484

By Paʻahana Bissen

In our moʻomeheu (culture), an inoa is a precious mea ola (living thing) possessed of its own mana. It shapes health, fate, and character. We are more blessed when we receive our inoa from kūpuna.

Culturally, there are different types of inoa: Inoa pō (names received in a dream); inoa hōʻailona (names received in signs, omens or visions); inoa ʻūlāleo (supernaturally voiced names), inoa hoʻomanaʻo (commemorative names) and inoa kūamuamu (reviling names).

Such has been the inoa of places on the continent settled by Kānaka Maoli. Kūpuna did not see their new settlement as a replacement for Hawaiʻi, but as a puʻuhonua (place of refuge) where ʻohana in kaiāulu could survive while keeping their culture alive.

The town of Kalama in southern Washington State was named after Maui-born trailblazer John Kalama. - *Photo: Wikimedia Commons*

Iosepa is a town in Skull Valley, Utah. In 1889, King Kalākaua permitted 50 Kānaka Maoli to journey to Utah. These Mormon converts followed Joseph F. Smith, whose perfect fluency in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi served as a powerful charm for their faith. Trekking from San Francisco via the Transcontinental Railroad, they settled 75 miles from Salt Lake City.

They named their town Iosepa, an inoa hoʻomanaʻo honoring Smith and an inoa hōʻailona that foresaw a great journey. Though its residents departed in 1917 to build a temple in Lāʻie, this mana lives on in streets named Honolulu, Wailuku, Kapukini, Waimea and Lāʻie. Today, the history of this puʻuhonua is preserved by the Iosepa Historical Society, Hui Hawaiʻi o Utah, and Kauwahi ʻAnaina Hawaiian Civic Clubs.

Kalama, Washington, stands as an inoa hoʻomanaʻo for John Kalama, a Maui-born trailblazer who arrived on the West Coast in 1830. During the 19th century, Kānaka Maoli were essential to the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), prized for their expert skills in swimming, logging, and smithing.

John Kalama served as a vital middleman between the HBC and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe from what is now known as southwestern Washington state. He eventually married Mary Martin, daughter of Nisqually Chief Sulkaden. Kalama, meaning "the torch" or "light," was bestowed upon the river and the city incorporated in 1871. This legacy of light is supported till today by the Mokuʻāina a Wakinekona Hawaiian Civic Club.

Las Vegas (The Meadows) and the "Ninth Island" is a desert puʻuhonua that grew from the 1950s recruitment of the first showroom entertainers, The Mary K (Kaʻaihue) Trio. Seeking to mimic Waikīkī, the hotel and entertainment industries drew Hawaiʻi's talent of travel agents, hotel managers and musicians to the Oasis. Showrooms adapted hula for the era's spectacle. In 1996, Uncle Mel Ozeki popularized the nickname "Ninth Island" in ʻOhana Magazine, bridging two lands defined by isolation: one by sea, one by desert. Today, the "Ninth Island" continues to draw all of Hawaiʻi as well as our Kānaka on the continent to where aloha and moʻomeheu is shared; an inoa hoʻomanaʻo to some, an inoa kūamuamu to others. Uncle Mel was a member of the Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club. ■

Nui ka ʻAi, Piha ka Naʻau

Plentiful is the Food, the Soul is Full

By Christina Young and Kuaiwi Laka Makua

March is National Nutrition month, a time to reflect on the foods that have nourished our kūpuna and continue to sustain our communities today. Prior to Western contact, Native Hawaiian diets centered on nutrient-dense foods that supported health across the lifespan.

Staple starches such as ʻulu (breadfruit), ʻuala (sweet potato), and kalo (taro), along with proteins and fats like moa (chicken), puaʻa (pork), and iʻa (fish), formed the foundation of Native Hawaiian diets deeply connected to ʻāina and culture.

These traditional foods connect us back to the ʻāina and culture while remaining essential for our future. The 2023 E Ola Mau key nutrition recommendations emphasize restoring access to traditional foods and food systems, developing culturally grounded nutrition education materials, and improving access to healthy foods for ʻohana.

Together, these key recommendations highlight a critical role of traditional foods and food sovereignty in advancing Native Hawaiian health.

In response to these recommendations, Papa Ola Lōkahi launched Nui ka ʻAi, Piha ka Naʻau, an initiative centered on food sovereignty, community-based education, and sustainable nutrition practices. This effort aims to promote lifelong wellbeing by empowering the lāhui with knowledge and resources rooted around traditional foods.

Through Nui ka ʻAi, Piha ka Naʻau, individuals can learn about Native Hawaiian traditional foods, where to purchase them locally, and how to prepare them in ways that honor tradition while fitting into contemporary lifestyles.

One component of this initiative is the development of recipes that reimagine traditional foods in familiar, modern dishes that are both ʻono and easy to prepare.

Recipes such as ʻuala alfredo, ʻulu cabbage stew, and kalo sinigang demonstrate how traditional starches can be easily incorporated into everyday meals. By bridging traditional foods with contemporary dishes, these recipes provide approachable first steps towards reconnecting with culture while promoting nutritious meals for ʻohana.

As we observe National Nutrition Month, Nui ka ʻAi, Piha ka Naʻau reminds us that nourishing our bodies is also a way to nourish our naʻau – strengthening connections to culture, community, and ʻāina through food. ■

Nutrient-dense staple starches such as kalo, 'uala (sweet potato), and 'ulu (breadfruit) along with lean proteins formed the foundation of the Native Hawaiian diet. Papa Ola Lōkahi's Nui ka ʻAi, Piha ka Naʻau initiative focuses on food sovereignty and strengthening connections to culture, community and ʻāina. - *Courtesy Photo*

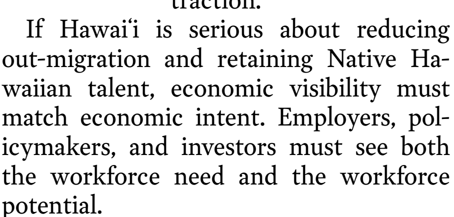
Who Gets Seen in Hawaiʻi's Economy Matters

By Andrew Rosen, NHCC Executive Director

When Lei Pedro stepped into the role of publisher and market president of *Pacific Business News* (*PBN*), she assumed leadership of one of the most trusted and influential business publications in Hawaiʻi. That role carries more than editorial responsibility; it carries economic influence.

I asked Lei how her journey led her to helm the state's number one business publication. Her answer was rooted in leadership, mentorship, accountability, and Hawaiian values.

Business journalism, she believes, determines who is visible, who is credible, and who attracts capital. "Business journalism doesn't just observe and cover the economy; it helps shape it. It provides business intelligence and best practices with editorial integrity to help business grow, advance careers and simplify professional lives. It attracts and follows capital."



Lei Pedro, publisher and market president of *Pacific Business News*. - *Courtesy Photo*

Shortly after taking the helm, Lei made a deliberate, thoughtful shift: *PBN* would expand its coverage of Native Hawaiian commerce. She joined the board of the Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce (NHCC) and began amplifying Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs, executives, and enterprises.

Why? Because visibility is economic infrastructure.

Native Hawaiian businesses are not peripheral to the local economy, they are employers, investors, and innovators. When their stories are told consistently and credibly, access to opportunity expands.

The timing is critical. Oʻahu unemployment rate is approximately 2.4%, effectively full employment. Yet this statistic masks structural pressure. Many families are working multiple jobs to keep pace with Hawaiʻi's cost of living.

Meanwhile, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander unemployment remains significantly higher, projected to be 8-9%. That gap is not just a disparity. It is a workforce opportunity.

At a time when employers across sectors report difficulty finding reliable talent, a segment of the population remains underutilized. The question is not whether jobs exist, it is whether career pathways exist that lead to sustainable wages.

When I asked Lei how *PBN* can help address this imbalance she replied, "We can highlight sectors hungry for talent, elevate companies investing in real pathways and amplify leaders building careers that last. When data is paired with human stories, decisions shift and so does the capital and opportunity flow."

Her answer was pragmatic. Media can spotlight sectors struggling to hire, highlight companies investing in workforce pipelines, and elevate leaders building real career trajectories. Data, when paired with human stories, moves decision-makers. It influences where capital flows and which workforce strategies gain traction.

If Hawaiʻi is serious about reducing out-migration and retaining Native Hawaiian talent, economic visibility must match economic intent. Employers, policymakers, and investors must see both the workforce need and the workforce potential.

Leadership in the media is not neutral. It determines which stories become strategies. "In media, choosing what to spotlight is an act of leadership," Lei said. "The stories we weave often become the strategies Hawaiʻi can adopt to move forward."

Under Lei Pedro's leadership, *Pacific Business News* is helping ensure that Native Hawaiian commerce and workforce realities are not sidelined but centered and woven into Hawaiʻi's economic conversation. ■

Questions or feedback? Please contact andrew@nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org.

What Our Ancestors' Teeth Can Teach Us

By Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH, RDN

For generations, Hawaiians recognized that true health depends on balance throughout the body. Our oral health is part of that balance. It is not just about appearance; it affects how we eat, speak, sleep, and even how our heart and blood sugar function.

When Europeans first arrived in Hawaiʻi, they described Native Hawaiians as having strong, healthy teeth – quite a contrast to many Europeans of that era whose sugar-rich diets and long sea voyages sustained by refined flour, alcohol, and salted meats often led to scurvy and poor oral health.

Archaeological studies of precontact remains support these accounts. Researchers found normal tooth wear and some periodontal disease in adults, but no evidence of scurvy or rickets – conditions that can signal problems with gum or bone health. Only about 10% of children had cavities, and just over 2% of their teeth were affected.

Today, oral disease is far more common. About 42% of Native Hawaiian adults have lost at least one permanent tooth due to decay or gum disease, and nearly 10% have substantial tooth loss. Among low-income preschoolers, 46% of Native Hawaiian children in Head Start have untreated tooth decay.

These differences are largely due to shifts in diet, alcohol, and tobacco use. Traditional diets were rich in whole foods that provided adequate amounts of vitamin C, calcium, and other nutrients important for oral health. They also included fibrous foods that required more chewing and increased saliva flow, helping wash away food particles and neutralize acids that erode tooth enamel.

In contrast, modern diets are high in processed and sugary foods that cling more easily to teeth and fuel bacterial growth that produces acid and erodes tooth enamel. Alcohol and tobacco further damage gum tissue and promote harmful bacteria.

Traditionally, Hawaiians used wood ash rubbed directly onto the teeth or mixed with salt water for daily dental care. Ripe noni fruit and puakala (native poppy) root were used to treat gum disease and infections. ʻŌlena (turmeric) and ginger may have been used to lower inflammation and promote healing. Post-contact, young guava leaves were chewed, or the inner gel of the aloe plant, were optionally applied for toothache and gum irritations.

Simple daily habits go a long way. Brush twice daily with a soft toothbrush. Floss your teeth daily. Rinse with water after meals. Limit sugary snacks and sweetened beverages. Drink water regularly to support saliva production. Avoid tobacco and alcohol. Managing blood sugar is especially important, since diabetes increases the risk of gum disease.

Keep in mind that oral health affects the rest of the body. Gum disease is a chronic inflammatory condition that can cause bacteria and inflammatory chemicals to enter the bloodstream. Left untreated, gum disease increases the risk of heart disease and complications from diabetes. In communities where chronic diseases are already common, protecting oral health becomes even more important.

By returning to traditional lifestyle patterns and maintaining daily hygiene habits, we can protect both our smiles and overall health. ■

Tradtional Hawaiian dental remedies included native plants such as puakala (native poppy) to address gum disease and inflammation. - *Photo: Waimea Valley*

Ma ke Ala o Papahānaumokuākea: Becoming the Dreams of Our Ancestors

By Darrian Kāhealani Muraoka

There are places that change the way you see the world, and there are places that change the way you see yourself. Papahānaumokuākea is both. She is not simply a protected expanse on a map; she carries memory, genealogy, and prayer.

In her vastness, I was reminded that we are always the footsteps of our kūpuna. Stewardship here is not just about protection; it is about navigating kuleana, listening to your naʻau, and answering the quiet question our ancestors echo to us: What kind of kupuna will you be?

My journey began in my first year as a marine debris technician with the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Program (PMDP) when our team traveled to remove marine debris from Kapou, Kamokuokamohoaliʻi, Kamole, and Lalo. As we crossed Ke Alanui Polohiwa a Kāne, we entered the realm of our kūpuna: Pō.

Darrian Muraoka collects marine debris in Papahānaumokuākea. - *Courtesy Photo*

In that space, time shifted and sea mist carried greetings only the naʻau can understand. The veil between past and present thinned and we were watched with guiding eyes. For days, 16 of us lived and worked together in rhythm, learning trust through long hours, shared meals, salt-soaked gear, and quiet exhaustion. The work demanded strength but, even more, humility.

Each island received us differently, but Kamole and Kapou were the most vivid. On our first morning at Kapou, after offering oli, we were given time to kilo – observe, listen, and be still. I sat quietly asking myself, "what kind of kupuna might I one day become?" In that stillness, life unfolded in cycles: manu feeding their young while manō circled patiently below. Creation and consumption. Beginning and ending. The balance of Pō and Ao.

Witnessing these processes was an emotional reckoning. I felt the weight of continuity in systems that existed long before me and will endure long after. Standing there with sun-worn skin and salt in our hair, being entrusted to care for this space filled me with profound humility. I felt grief for what was harmed and gratitude that we were present to respond. Kuleana means doing the work even when it is hard – choosing care over convenience, protection over apathy.

Kamole tested that resolve: unforgiving terrain, relentless sun, and debris heavy with the world's neglect. Between sweat and steady encouragement, 16 of us moved with one purpose: to fulfill our kuleana for ka poʻe o Hawaiʻi and for a world connected to these shores. Every net lifted, every fragment gathered, felt like a quiet act of devotion.

Coming home was unexpectedly emotional. We were able to care for a place that most will never see, not for recognition or praise, but because it is ours to protect. Perhaps this is how we will answer the dreams our kūpuna once prayed for: by being present, doing the work, and by continuing the lineage of responsibility entrusted to us. In standing in the realm of our kūpuna, we became part of the prayer that was sent forward into time.

Mahalo nui to Papahānaumokuākea, Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Program, The Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group, and all who protect Papahānaumokuākea; from the minds of the past to the hands of our future. ■

Darrian Kāhealani Muraoka was born and raised on the west side of Kauaʻi, where she learned to holoholo, hoe waʻa, and mālama the nearshore waters of Kekaha. She is a biologist on the Mānā coastline, a board member for the West Kauaʻi Canoe Club, a member of the Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group, and a member of Hui Mālama Pōlihale. This was her first year as a marine debris technician and she looks forward to returning to Papahānaumokuākea.

Prince Kūhiō and Me
(A Hawaiian Home Lands Trust Beneficiary)

By KipuKai Kualiʻi

Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole, a royal and a U.S. Congressional delegate, dedicated his life to improving conditions for Native Hawaiians following the overthrow. His legacy continues to shape our lives today in profound ways.

Prince Kūhiō's most enduring achievement was the passage of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921 (HHCA). The Act set aside 200,000 acres of former Hawaiian crown and government lands to create homesteading opportunities for Hawaiians with at least 50% Hawaiian ancestry, setting up the Hawaiian Homes Land Trust to support our self-sufficiency.

My family members and I, like thousands of other HHCA beneficiaries, can lease homestead lands for residential, agricultural, and pastoral uses for just $1/year for up to 99 years because of Prince Kūhiō and the HHCA.

The Act also set up a trust relationship between the U.S. and Native Hawaiians and is still the strongest federal recognition of our political status. Although waitlists and funding challenges persist, the HHCA is still a cornerstone of Native Hawaiian land rights and identity.

In Congress, Prince Kūhiō advocated for infrastructure and economic development in Hawaiʻi, helped secure federal funding for public works, and advanced Native Hawaiian interests within the U.S. political system.

He laid the foundation for ongoing federal programs and policies that acknowledge Native Hawaiian rights. Prince Kūhiō also helped set up civic institutions that continue to thrive, like the Royal Order of Kamehameha I and the Hawaiian Civic Clubs.

In my service as Kauaʻi County Council vice chair, Prince Kūhiō has always been an inspiration – especially regarding Native Hawaiian representation and the importance of having a seat at the table. Also, even more pointedly, he has inspired my service as a volunteer homestead advocate and leader in Anahola, on Kauaʻi, and across the state, for the past 25 years.

I've been a supporter of federal recognition since the Akaka Bill. Like Prince Kūhiō, I'm focused on helping improve the day-to-day lives of our people in practical ways. I believe wholeheartedly that a formal government-to-government relationship with the U.S. will absolutely help secure expanded rights and benefits for our people, while also helping defend against the misrepresented "racial discrimination" attacks we keep having to face.

For me, like Prince Kūhiō, it isn't just political, it's also cultural and land based.

Yes, we must reclaim our ancestral lands, advance environmental stewardship and revitalize our traditional knowledge. But we must also prioritize addressing our people's quality of life basics like physical and mental health, education, housing, economic stability, sustainability, and upward mobility.

Prince Kūhiō's work to secure land for his people helped preserve a land base tied to identity, community, and cultural resilience — foundations that many advocates point to in their calls for justice and self-determination today.

Our Hawaiian homestead trust is, itself, a living example of our Native Hawaiian rights within the U.S. system despite the fact the Congress didn't support Prince Kūhiō's desire for a 1/32 (3.125%) blood quantum and codified it at 50% instead.

Regardless, homesteaders across Hawaiʻi like me have better lives thanks to Prince Kūhiō. Join us in celebrating his life and legacy on Kūhiō Day (March 26)! ■

"E Ao i ka Naauao, a Malama hoi i ka Pono" - Kauikeaouli, 1824

By Kahea Faria

The growth of the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program from its inception to now is a sign that more of our people in Hawaii are turning to the language, culture, and history of our land and the education that is meant to embody it and facilitate the transmission of this knowledge to our children. For most families, this is the primary means of accessing this knowledge, and as such, it represents a public necessity, not a discretionary option.

While this growth has been encouraging, it has also revealed gaps in the structural foundation of the program. Most Hawaiian language immersion programs remain housed within predominantly English-medium schools, with a few stand-alone K–12 programs statewide and even fewer P–12 programs.

Haumana representing Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Puohala (PreK-12) perform at Ola Ka I at Windward Mall in Kaneohe. - *Photo: Pomai Paaoao*

These environments are essential, as they create at least one sustained domain in which Hawaiian can function as the sole language of instruction. This model is not intended to produce monolingual speakers, but rather to strengthen pathways toward genuine bilingualism. Consequently, parents within Hawaiian Language Immersion Programs are increasingly advocating for the establishment of P–12 programs in each school district.

Another area of pressing concern is the availability of qualified teachers. For many prospective educators, this pathway involves additional barriers not typically encountered in English medium education – most notably the need to attain a high level of proficiency in Hawaiian.

Recent efforts to expand access to advanced Hawaiian language instruction – such as online coursework offered through UHMC – along with financial support for teacher candidates from sources such as Kamehameha Schools' Hookawowo Scholarship, the Hawaii Community Foundation, and the State of Hawaii's Grow Our Own (GOO) Teachers, have helped to address these challenges.

Despite these efforts, the sustained growth of the program depends on continued investment in teacher preparation. For those who are interested, as well as those who are seeking a meaningful way to support our community through Hawaiian language, history, and culture, please contact either of the Hawaiian Language Immersion teacher preparation programs at the University of Hawaii - Hilo or at the University of Hawaii - Manoa.

Finally, the rapid growth of the Hawaiian language immersion program should be addressed in the same manner as those of any thriving public school setting - by being adequately resourced and supported in its expansion, rather than constrained by regulatory frameworks that inhibit development.

The state should take a proactive role in planning for a future that includes P-12 Hawaiian Language Immersion Program schools in every district statewide. Anything less constitutes a disservice to the community and stands in opposition to the program's purpose and intent to revitalize Hawaiian language, culture and history in Hawaii.

Ke ao ia nei ka naauao, auhea mai nei la hoi ke kahua o ka pono? ■

Kahea Faria is an assistant specialist in the College of Education, University of Hawaii at Manoa whose research focuses on the utilization of historical Hawaiian language literature to develop language proficiency, design curriculum, and inform teacher practice.

Nā Hua Kāpili, Mahele 2

Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

Aloha e nā makamaka heluhelu o kēia kolamu. I kēlā mahina aku nei, ua nānā kākou i nā hua kāpili mua e like me hoʻo-, haʻa-, hā-, kā- a pelā aku. I kēia mahina, e nānā kākou i nā hua kāpili hope (suffixes). He mau kōkua ua mau hua kāpili no ka maopopo a me ka mahalo ʻana i ka ʻōlelo makuahine. No laila, e noiʻi pū iho kākou.

ʻO kekahi hua kāpili hope i kamaʻaina loa ʻia e kākou ʻo ia hoʻi ka -na. Aia kēia hua kāpili hope ma hope o nā hua ʻōlelo e like me ʻaina, ʻohana, pukana, piʻina me haʻina. E akahele, no ka mea aia ʻelua mau waiwai o ka -na. Hoʻokahi waiwai ʻo ia ka hoʻokikino ʻana i haʻiinoa mai kekahi haʻihana; e laʻa, inā ʻo "piʻi" ka haʻihana no "climb" a laila ʻo piʻina ka haʻiinoa no "ascent." Inā ʻo "kalai" ka haʻihana no "carve" a laila ʻo kalaina ka haʻiinoa no "carving."

ʻO ka waiwai ʻē aʻe o -na, ʻo ia ma ke ʻano he haʻi ʻana i ka haʻina ʻia mai. ʻO nā hua ʻōlelo ʻaina, kiʻina, me haʻina, kekahi mau laʻana o kēia ʻano waiwai. Ua hiki ke ʻike i kāna hana he haʻi ʻana i ka haʻina ʻia mai ma kēia lālani mele, "ʻO aʻu lehua i ʻaina e ka manu." He ʻōlelo kahiko kēia mai ka moʻolelo ʻo Kawelo. I kēia mau lā nō naʻe, e ʻōlelo ʻia ana kēlā lālani mele penei, "ʻO kaʻu mau lehua i ʻai ʻia e ka manu."

Aia kekahi mau hua kāpili hope ʻē aʻe i like ka hana me -na, ʻo ia hoʻi, ka hoʻokikino ʻana i haʻiinoa mai kekahi haʻihana, ʻo ia nō ʻo -lana e like me kūlana a me -kana e like me palekana, me pilikana.

Iaʻu e holoholo ana ma Aotearoa, ma ke kipa ʻana i kekahi papa o ke Kura Kaupapa Māori ʻo Rākaumanga, ua ʻike au i kekahi hōʻailona ma ka ʻīpuka. Ua ʻōlelo ʻia, "Tangohia ngā hū." Ua unuhi kuapoapo au i ka Hawaiʻi penei, "hemohia nā kāmaʻa." Akā naʻe, ua ʻōlelo ʻia penei i kēia mau lā, "Hemo nā kāmaʻa." ʻOiai ʻaʻole ʻōlelo ʻia pelā i kēia wā o kākou, ua noʻonoʻo au, pelā paha ke ʻano o ka ʻōlelo o nā kūpuna. Ua hoʻohana mau lākou kūpuna i ka haʻi ʻana i ka haʻina ʻia mai a ua hoʻohana lākou i nā hua kāpili hope like me -hia (e.l. loʻohia, hulihia). -ia, -lia (e.l. kūlia), a me -mia (e.l. inumia, haumia).

He ʻano kauoha kēia hua kāpili hope kekahi. No laila, inā ʻōlelo ʻia ka mākia o ka Mōʻīwahine Julia Kapiʻolani, "Kūlia i ka nuʻu," he kauoha kēlā e kū wale, ʻaʻole e hoʻāʻo a loaʻa ka nuʻu iā ʻoe.

Ua hana au ma kekahi wahi ma ke alanui Hoʻokanikē ma ke ahupuʻa o Waiau. ʻO ke -kē ma kēlā hua ʻōlelo nona ka manaʻo o ka hana kūpīnaʻi o ke kani. E nāna i ka hoʻohana ʻana i ka hua kāpili mua ʻo hoʻo-. No laila, ʻo holoholokē ka holoholo ʻana i ʻō a i ʻaneʻi, i ʻō a i aneʻi. Huli aku, huli mai, hulihulikē! ʻO ka hoʻolelekē ka hana pīnaʻi o ka hoʻolele, kīloi, kiola ʻana i kekahi mea e like me ka hoʻolelekē ʻana i ka laukī i ka lua ʻo Mālama ma Kīlauea i ʻalana aloha no Kamohoaliʻi.

Inā ua komo ʻoe i ka helekona a i ʻole ka malakona, aia kekahi hua kāpili hope hou i maʻa iā ʻoe, ʻo ia ka -thon/-kona. No laila, ʻo ka telethon ke kelekona. Pehea e ʻōlelo ai talkathon? Kolekona paha? Pehea ka hua kāpili hope Pelekania ʻo -aholic? -aholika paha? No laila, ʻo ke kanaka i puni paʻa i ke kokoleka ka kokoalika? Auē, ke pāʻani wale nei au. He kōkua paha keia nānāina i nā hua kāpili? Inā pēlā, e noiʻi ʻoe i mau laʻana o nā hua kāpili like ʻole. ■

Kalani Akana, Ph.D., is a kumu of hula, oli and ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi. He has authored numerous articles on Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.

To read this in English go to kawaiola.news

ʻŌhai: Peaches or Nectarines, Anyone?

By Bobby Camara

ʻŌhai thrive on ʻāina pōhaku of Waikōloa, Moku o Keawe. - *Photo: Waikōloa Dry Forest*

Decades ago, a few friends and I Willy's-jeeped it to northwest Oʻahu, when one could drive around Kaʻena from Mākua and get to Mokulēʻia. The wildness was familiar and soothing.

Being curious, we wandered paths at Ka Lae, and encountered billows of what turned out to be ʻōhai (*Sesbania tomentosa*) – another one of our variable endemic plants, ranging from shrubs to small trees, with pua of peach, salmon, red, and even yellow. And in the sun, the warm lau smell (depending on your preference) like peaches or nectarines.

Clusters of a few flowers hide under a canopy of silvery leaves, their white hairs helping deflect harsh sunlight. I couldn't resist and started picking. Carefully, one by one, till I had what turned out to be enough for a maunaloa-style lei. I wore it to campus, and no one commented. Did they know? I still wonder.

Unlike our cherished kumulāʻau ʻāpaʻakuma (endemic trees), ʻōhai have a preciously short lifespan; 10 years, more or less. But being averse to rainy weather, they are a perfect companion on leeward shores and slopes where conserving wai is critical. ■

Sprawling on warm sand, ʻōhai (L) and naupaka kahakai (R) are intimate companions. - *Photo: D. Eickhoff*

Adorned with lei ʻōhai, Nalani shares her magic. - *Photo: Bobby Camara*

Carrying Kuleana: Native Hawaiian Women Rising

By Mālia Sanders, Executive Director, NaHHA

As we enter Women's History Month, I reflect on what it means to be a Native Hawaiian woman in leadership today. While my professional work is rooted in tourism, the truth is that Native Hawaiian leadership spans every sector of industry both here in Hawaiʻi and in places far from home. We may be fighting different fights, but we are all grounded in the same purpose.

To be a Native Hawaiian leader is to be courageous. It is to enter rooms that were not designed for us and to speak with clarity and conviction anyway. It is to advocate for Native Hawaiian voices at every decision-making table, not as token participants, but as rightful leaders. It is to carry kuleana that extends beyond job descriptions and titles.

In my work with NaHHA and through my writing for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, I am blessed to share stories from many Native Hawaiian women leaders. Leadership is not performance, it is responsibility. The same is true across our lāhui. Whether we are protecting ʻāina, advancing education, strengthening our economy, or nurturing our keiki, we are stewarding something far greater than ourselves.

We all ask the same questions, regardless of sector: Who benefits? Who decides? Who is sustained?

Indigenous leadership means building capacity within our communities so that our people are not only participants in systems, but designers of them. It means ensuring our youth see pathways to pride, prosperity, and resilience all around them. It means protecting culture from commodification and safeguarding our sacred spaces and practices with integrity.

Most of all, it means remembering that our work is intergenerational. I stand as a reflection of seven generations of ancestors behind me and as a promise to seven generations into the future. Every decision I make carries that awareness. Every Native Hawaiian woman I stand beside carries it too, whether she leads in a boardroom, a classroom, a loʻi, a clinic, or in her own home.

We may hold different roles, but we are united by the same intention: to choose our people every single day.

My call to action this Women's History Month is simple: lead where you stand. Lead with courage. Lead with cultural grounding. Lead with aloha and actively uplift Native Hawaiian women who are doing the same.

When we center our values together, our leadership becomes more than representation. It becomes an act of resistance that strengthens our resilience. It becomes collective healing in motion. It becomes self-determination lived out in real time - for ourselves, for our communities, and for the many generations yet to come. ■

OHA Hosts the Revival of Lā Kūkahekahe

Auhea ʻoukou e nā manu, nā alo leo o ka ʻāina. Lele mai! Lele mai! E nā manu lele mai i ka Lā Kūkahekahe! On February 14, as part of the month-long celebration of Mahina ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi (Hawaiian Language Month), the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) hosted the first Lā Kūkahekahe in nearly a decade. First established in the 1970s by ʻAhahui ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi, Lā Kūkahekahe was a day dedicated to celebrating ka leo o ke ola (the voice of life) through meaningful conversation, friendly competitions, live music, games, and food. OHA presented Lā Kūkahekahe in partnership with ʻAhahui ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi, ʻAha Pūnana Leo, Hawaiian Council, Ka Haka ʻUla o Keʻelikōlani, Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, Kanaeokana, Kāhuli Leo Leʻa, Kui Leo Hawaiʻi, and Kuini Piʻolani Hawaiian Civic Club. It was one of a series of gatherings last month that support the strengthening of Hawaiian language efforts and relationships across the pae ʻāina. Notably, this Lā Kūkahekahe honored our mānaleo (native speakers) and the original members of ʻAhahui ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi for their contributions to the perpetuation of our language. In the top photo, representatives of the original steering committee that met in May 1972 and eventually established the ʻAhahui ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi are honored. (L-R): OHA Trustee Dan Ahuna, Marvi Rosehill Ching (representing her mother, Violet Māhela Rosehill), Sarah ʻIlialoha Keahi, ʻAimoku McClellan (representing his mother, Esther Waiheʻe McClellan), Kamaluapāwehi Abad (representing her grandfather, Fred Cachola), and Dr. Larry Kimura. Also remembered at Lā Kūkahekahe were late steering committee members Dorothy Kahananui and Carinthia Harbottle. In the bottom picture, our remaining manaleo (native speakers) are honored. Sitting (l-r) are Louella ʻŌpuʻulani Albino, Karin Haleamau, Kahu David Kaupu, Kahu Charles Milikaa Yabui, and Carnation SaiFarr Harvest. Standing behind the manaleo are (l-r) Keala Kaupu, representing his aunt, Mable Paupalai Kaupu Boyd, and Kanoah Stevens representing his grandmother, Irene Nohokaha Midel. - *Photos: Nelson Gaspar*

Waimea Valley Indigenous Economic Resiliency Project

In a joyful January blessing ceremony, Waimea Valley launched its Indigenous Community Economic Resiliency Project, Hoʻopōmaikaʻi ʻĀina a Papa Hana o Waimea Ma ʻĀina Puʻukua – one of the most significant investments in the valley in over 50 years.

The process began in 2021 with the U.S. Economic Development Administration grant of $3.75 million, augmented by funding from the State of Hawaiʻi Grant-in-Aid program, the Hawaiʻi Legacy Lands program, the City Clean Water Natural Lands program, and generous community contributions.

These funds will be used to create a Hawaiian educational complex featuring an agroforestry garden and traditional Hawaiian hale – a multi-million-dollar investment in cultural education, infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and long-term community resilience.

"This project will help prepare Waimea Valley for the next 20 years, ensuring the valley thrives while continuing to support the nearly 200 individuals and their ʻohana who rely on Waimea Valley for their livelihood. Community and community partners have always been central to who we are. The work being done through this project is for the community," said Waimea Valley Executive Director Richard Pezzulo.

The Indigenous Community Economic Resiliency Project is more than a capital improvement – it reflects a long-term commitment to cultural perpetuation, environmental stewardship, workforce development, and community wellbeing. The creation of educational spaces, infrastructure modernization, and preservation of sacred lands, allows Waimea Valley to continue its mission to serve as a living cultural landscape.

Waimea Valley is owned and managed by Hiʻipaka LLC, a subsidiary of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Waimea Valley Executive Director Richard Pezzulo, Hiʻipaka Manager Leilani Kupahu-Marino Kahoano, and Hiʻipaka Manager Bob Leinau at the recent blessing ceremony. - *Courtesy Photo*

Old EIS Used to Approve Kahuku Development

A lawsuit filed in February challenges the City and County of Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting's approval of a new Ritz-Carlton resort at Kuilima on Oʻahu's North Shore.

The lawsuit, filed by Earthjustice on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity, Conservation Council for Hawaiʻi, and community group Kūpaʻa Kuilima, asserts that the county relied on an outdated supplemental environmental impact statement issued in 2013.

Meanwhile, another parcel closer to Kahuku and the James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge is also slated for development. The cumulative stressors on the area's ecosystem were never properly analyzed.

"Hawaiʻi's environmental laws exist to protect our ʻāina and the native species that are inseparable from Native Hawaiian culture and identity," said Jonee Kaina Peters, executive director of Conservation Council for Hawaiʻi.

"When agencies allow large-scale resort development to move forward without accounting for impacts to endangered species and culturally important ecosystems, they are failing both the law and their kuleana to future generations."

New information about native wildlife in the project area includes the presence of endangered yellow-faced bees, a breeding colony of Mōlī (Laysan albatross) established at nearby Kahuku Point, and the use of the beaches fronting the development area by endangered Hawaiian monk seals to birth and rear their pups. None of this was addressed in the 2013 environmental review.

"Hawaiʻi's environmental review laws are only as strong as the government's willingness to enforce them," noted Earthjustice attorney Dru Hara.

Sproat Honored by HILT

Kapuaʻala Sproat - *Courtesy Photo*

Kapuaʻala Sproat, Director of the Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law and a professor of law at UH Mānoa's Richardson School of Law was honored by the Hawaiʻi Land Trust (HILT) at its 24th-annual Buy Back the Beach benefit lūʻau on January 24 on Maui.

Each year, HILT recognizes people or organizations that have made a substantial impact on the health of Hawaiʻi's lands and communities with its Champion of the Land award.

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Ka Lāhui Travels to Waitangi Standing in Solidarity with Māori

A 17-member delegation from Ka Lāhui Hawaiʻi traveled to Waitangi, Aotearoa, (New Zealand) to stand in solidarity with our Māori cousins in defense of Te Tiriti o Waitangi on February 6, the 186th anniversary of its signing. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi guarantees the Māori people authority over their land, resources and cultural treasures, but largely has not be honored and, of late, is under attack. This has triggered widespread national protests. Ka Lāhui stood with Māori leaders, marching alongside them to the treaty grounds on February 6 in a show of international solidarity and an affirmation of the deep genealogical and oceanic ties shared by the Indigenous peoples of Moananuiākea. Ka Lāhui Hawaiʻi is a Kānaka Maoli initiative for self-determination and self-governance formed in 1987, and organizer of the annual ʻOnipaʻa Peace March. This photo of the delegation was taken on February 3 at Waitangi. - *Courtesy Ka Lāhui*

NEWS BRIEFS

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Sproat and co-awardee Earthjustice attorney Isaac Moriwaki worked for years on Maui's landmark Nā Wai ʻEhā case which helped restore stream flows and water rights on Maui and provided a powerful legal and community precedent for other water restoration cases across the islands.

Sproat joined the law school as an assistant professor in 2007. She currently teaches courses in Native Hawaiian and environmental law, and legal research and writing. She is also co-director of the Native Hawaiian Rights Clinic.

Prior to that, she served for almost a decade as an attorney with Earthjustice's Mid-Pacific Office. She has worked to preserve the resources necessary to perpetuate Native Hawaiian culture by litigating state and federal cases under the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, State Water Code, and various Hawaiʻi environmental laws. Sproat is from Kauaʻi's North Shore in Kalihiwai, but now resides on Oʻahu with her ʻohana.

Mahuna Appointed Police Chief

Reed K. Mahuna - *Courtesy Photo*

Following a nationwide search, on January 30 the Hawaiʻi County Police Commission named Hawaiʻi Island kupa Reed K. Mahuna the Hawaiʻi Police Department's (HPD) new police chief.

Mahuna has served as interim chief since last September. He was appointed deputy chief in January 2024.

He was selected from a competitive group of eight finalists. Members of the commission said that Mahuna's extensive experience in the department, as well as community input, were major factors in their decision.

He joined HPD in 1998 and, in addition to serving as deputy police chief, Mahuna has served as an officer, detective, lieutenant, and captain in multiple districts and divisions. More recently he served as major of the Technical Service Division overseeing criminal investigations, communications, records and traffic operations.

Born and raised on Hawaiʻi Island, Mahuna has an associate's degree in liberal arts and administration of justice from Hawaiʻi Community College and a bachelor's degree in criminology and criminal justice from Lindenwood University. He is the son of retired Hawaiʻi Police Chief Lawrence Mahuna who led HPD from 2002-2008.

Federal Funding for Pūnana Leo

The office of Sen. Brian Schatz has announced that $1.3 million in congressionally directed funding has been secured for ʻAha Pūnana Leo. The funding will be used to train teachers, support families, and develop new early childhood educational Hawaiian language teaching materials such as books and videos to help keiki build literacy and math skills.

Schatz, a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said, "This new earmark funding will help revitalize the Hawaiian language while making sure more kids have the resources to learn and grow."

ʻAha Pūnana Leo CEO Kaʻiulani Neff Laeha expressed gratitude towards Schatz and the rest of Hawaiʻi's Congressional delegation for their support saying, "ʻAha Pūnana Leo was built from the ground up by families and community members committed to restoring and strengthening ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, and this funding continues that vision ... ensuring that ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi continues to flourish in our classrooms, homes, and communities statewide."

FEMA Assistance Extended for Maui

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has approved a one-year extension of its temporary housing assistance to survivors of the 2023 Maui wildfires through Feb. 28, 2027. The housing assistance, set to expire in February 2026, was extended under the Robert T. Stafford disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act at the request of the State of Hawaiʻi.

SEE **NEWS BRIEFS** ON **PAGE 30**

Hana Keaka's *Lele Wale* Premieres in March

UH Mānoa's Department of Theatre & Dance proudly announces the premiere of Hana Keaka's latest production, *Lele Wale*, with performances scheduled March 4-8 in the Earle Ernst Lab Theatre at the Kennedy Theatre. Written and directed by MFA candidate Ikaika Mendez and inspired by the 2023 Maui wildfires, *Lele Wale* is shaped by mele, hula and the elemental rhythms of the natural world. The performance emerges as an offering, a prayer, release and call to remember our kuleana to the land and to one another. *Lele Wale* is performed in a combination of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, Hawaiian Creole English (Pidgin) and English and stars (sitting l-r): Kaʻiulani Iaea as Kawaiola, Waileia Tupou as Kamaluʻuluolele, and Kekili- lani Helekahi as Ululani; and Ramon Francis (standing) as Noah. Evening performances run Wednesday through Saturday at 7:30 p.m., with a 2:00 p.m. matinee on Sunday, March 8. Tickets range from $9-$18.00. For more information or to purchase tickets go to: manoa.hawaii.edu/liveonstage/lw. - *Photo: C. Lamborn*

NEWS BRIEFS

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The program extension was deemed necessary as Maui continues to face severe housing supply constraints following the wildfires combined with prolonged rebuilding timelines and limited affordable rentals, which has made it difficult for many displaced households to secure permanent housing without continued FEMA support.

Survivors with demonstrated need residing in any FEMA-provided temporary housing may remain for another year, provided they maintain eligibility. Additionally, households participating in FEMAs rental assistance program may continue receiving financial assistance to help pay their rent if they continue to demonstrate need and meet eligibility requirements.

FEMA is working with state and county officials to help ensure all survivors transition to permanent housing in the next year. For more information call your Recertification Advisor or the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-3362.

Hāpai Women Sought for Research Study

ʻŌiwi Ph.D. candidate Christina Young is seeking participants for a UH Mānoa research study centered on strengthening the health and wellbeing of our lāhui through a deeper understanding of hānai waiū (breastfeeding) experiences among Kānaka ʻŌiwi.

Her research entails conducting talk-story sessions with ʻŌiwi women who are hāpai for the first time to learn about their perspectives around infant feeding practices.

This work is grounded in the understanding that Hawaiian health and infant nutrition are deeply connected to ʻohana, community, and culturally aligned practices. Young hopes to use this research to uplift the voices of Kānaka ʻŌiwi mothers and contribute to research that reflects our values, informs future programs, and supports initiatives that prioritize Native Hawaiian health across the pae ʻāina.

Native Hawaiian women who are currently pregnant may be eligible to participate in this study. For more information, scan the QR code and/or contact Young at chyoung3@hawaii.edu.

Lono Ku Mana Hawaiian Gods Calendar

As we move from Lono into Kū, a unique wall calendar by artist Jackie Kahookele Burke offers a fresh way to track the passage of time. The calendar features an original painting of "unity and aloha" by Burke. Her vision was to create a representation of Hawaiian gods that would "vibrate a message that would bring together and create a unifying moment in time that reflects ancient wisdom and ritual into modern day consciousness." Her artwork is abstract and symbolic and represents the connection of energies. Presented on a single sheet, front and back, the calendar begins with the current Makahiki season and ends in November 2026 when the next Makahiki season will begin. For more information or to purchase go to jackieburkedesigns13.com or email jackieburkedesigns13@gmail.com. ■

Ke Kilo Lani Exhibit at WCC Honors the Life and Legacy of Robert Cazimero

Ke Kilo Lani, an exhibit honoring the life, legacy and enduring impact of Robert Cazimero is open now through May 15 at Gallery ʻIolani on the campus of Windward Community College in Kāneʻohe, Oʻahu. Cazimero is a renowned musician, kumu hula and cultural ambassador whose work has profoundly shaped Hawaiian cultural expression for more than five decades and the exhibit opens a window into his extraordinary life's work. Exhibit co-curators are Cazimero's nephews Martin and Richard Heirakuji, and his niece Stephanie Sky Yim. An opening reception for the exhibit was held on January 23 and included members of Cazimero's Hālau Nā Kamalei o LiliLehua. Upcoming programs and events include docent-led tours by hālau members, panel discussions, and a concert on March 22. In this photo from the opening reception, Cazimero sits at the piano with his nephew, Richard Heirakuji. Behind them are a few members of Hālau Nā Kamalei (l-r): Keola Makaʻiau, Julian McFadden, Brad Cooper, John Enos, Kyle Atabay, Daniel Nahoʻopiʻi, Jared Chard, Stan Cadinha and Edward Hanohano. - *Photo: Kapulani Landgraf*

ʻIolani Celebrates the Birthday of Kamehameha IV

Office of Hawaiian Affairs executive leadership were invited to ʻIolani School to celebrate the 192nd birthday of one of its founders, King Kamehameha IV (Alexander Liholiho), who was born on February 9, 1834. ʻIolani School was founded in 1863 by King Kamehameha IV and Queen Emma. The philanthropical royal couple also founded The Queen's Hospital in 1859. In addition to 'Iolani students and staff, royal society members were in attendance as well as representatives from The Queen's Health Systems. Pictured here in front of the portraits of the king and queen are (l-r): Kau'ionalani Nishizaki, vice president of Native Hawaiian Health & Kaleiopapa: Unity and Wellness at The Queen's Health Systems; OHA Interim Administrator Summer Sylva; OHA Chief Operating Officer K.Sean Kekina; and OHA Senior Director of Hawaiian Cultural Affairs Hailama Farden. Both Sylva and Kekina are 'Iolani graduates. - *Photo Courtesy of ʻIolani School*

Prince Kūhiō's Enduring Legacy: ʻĀina Hoʻopulapula

Kaialiʻi Kahele

CHAIR
Trustee,
Hawaiʻi Island

Each March, our lāhui pauses to honor Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole, whose vision and leadership secured a future for Native Hawaiians rooted in ʻāina, identity, and self-determination.

Serving in Congress as the congressional delegate for the Territory of Hawaiʻi from 1903 to 1922, Prince Kūhiō championed one of the most consequential pieces of legislation for our people — the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) of 1920.

Signed into law on July 9, 1921, the HHCA established approximately 200,000 acres as a federal land trust to create a permanent homeland for Native Hawaiians. Prince Kūhiō's intent was clear: to return our people to the land so that families could build homes, cultivate farms and ranches, and pursue economic self-sufficiency grounded in culture and place. The Act represented a solemn promise — that Native Hawaiians would not be strangers in our own homeland.

Yet over the decades, that promise required vigilance. Upon statehood in 1959, Hawaiʻi assumed responsibility for administering the HHCA, but certain amendments — especially those affecting who could hold or inherit homestead leases — still required the consent of the United States Congress. As generations passed and intermarriage reshaped families, many descendants of original beneficiaries faced displacement because successorship rules no longer reflected the realities of our community.

Then-Congressman Kaialiʻi Kahele with AOHCC representative Hailama Farden in Washington, D.C., in July 2021. - *Courtesy Photo*

In my previous role as a member of Congress, I introduced the Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole Protecting Family Legacies Act in the 117th Congress on the 100th anniversary of the HHCA to address this very issue. The legislation provided congressional consent to a 2017 amendment enacted by the Hawaiʻi State Legislature (Act 80), which reduced the blood-quantum requirement for eligible successors to a homestead lease from one-quarter to one-thirty-second Hawaiian for spouses, children, grandchildren, and siblings of a lessee.

This change was not about altering Prince Kūhiō's vision — it was about preserving it.

Homestead associations and beneficiaries had long warned that rigid requirements were forcing families off ancestral lands, undermining stability and cultural continuity. By ensuring that descendants could continue to live on and steward these lands, the legislation sought to protect family legacies and uphold the original intent of the HHCA: long-term tenancy, self-sufficiency, and self-determination for Native Hawaiians.

Throughout history, Congress had consistently provided consent for HHCA amendments with broad bipartisan support, recognizing the unique trust relationship between the United States and Native Hawaiians. My bill followed that tradition, advancing Prince Kūhiō's work into the next century.

As we reflect on Prince Kūhiō Day, we remember that his leadership was not only about land — it was about dignity, identity, and the survival of our people as a distinct lāhui. The responsibility to protect that legacy now rests with all of us.

Prince Kūhiō once fought in Congress to secure a homeland for Native Hawaiians. A century later, we must continue to hoʻomau — with unity, wisdom, and commitment — to ensure that our families remain rooted in the lands he worked so tirelessly to restore.

E mau ke ea o ka ʻāina i ka pono. ■

Mission Driven Investments

Keoni Souza

VICE CHAIR
Trustee,
At-Large

As a trustee of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), I am often asked how we balance investment performance with our deeper kuleana to lāhui.

It is a fair question. In today's economy, too many decisions are driven solely by profit margins and short-term gains. But at OHA, our mission has never been about investment for profit alone. Our charge is to steward the Native Hawaiian Trust for the benefit of our people, today and for generations of lāhui.

There is a fundamental difference between investing to extract value and investing to build value for community. The first asks, "How much can we make?" The second asks, "How much can we uplift?" As trustees, we are bound to the second question.

That is why our support for responsible residential development in Kakaʻako Makai is rooted in stewardship, not speculation. Kakaʻako is more than a parcel on a map; it is ʻāina with history, memory, and meaning. For decades, Native Hawaiians have watched as prime lands were transformed into luxury spaces disconnected from local families. We cannot stand idle as our own people are priced out of the communities they helped shape.

When we speak about residential opportunities in Kakaʻako Makai, we are speaking about creating pathways for local families to remain in Hawaiʻi. We are speaking about stabilizing communities, supporting workforce housing, and ensuring that Native Hawaiian Trust assets are activated in ways that serve beneficiaries first. Stewardship means making prudent decisions that generate returns, yes – but returns that are measured not only in dollars, but in homes, jobs, and stability.

Our Native Hawaiian Trust Fund assets are not abstract financial instruments. They represent resources owed to the Native Hawaiian people, long-recognized obligations that must be managed with integrity and purpose. Every decision we make must honor that responsibility.

Responsible development can generate long-term revenue to fund scholarships, housing programs, cultural initiatives, and health services. At the same time, it can provide tangible opportunities for our community to live and work in places that have too often been reserved for outside interests.

Equally important is how we build.

When development moves forward in Kakaʻako Makai, it must include strong partnerships with Hawaiʻi's labor unions. Supporting union labor is not a political gesture, it is a community commitment. Our unions represent skilled local workers who live here, raise families here, and spend their wages here. By engaging organized labor, we ensure fair wages, safe working conditions, and apprenticeship opportunities that open doors for Native Hawaiian and local youth to enter the trades.

When we invest trust assets in projects that prioritize union labor, we create a multiplier effect. Construction jobs lead to household stability. Apprenticeships lead to lifelong careers. Union wages circulate back into local businesses, strengthening our island economy. This is how development becomes community building.

OHA has the opportunity and the responsibility to help change the narrative. Mission-driven investment means shaping projects so they reflect our values: mālama ʻāina, economic justice, and intergenerational prosperity.

We must also acknowledge that stewardship requires vigilance. Any residential development must respect shoreline access, cultural resources, and environmental protections. Growth cannot come at the expense of our ʻāina or our identity. The future of Kakaʻako Makai must balance housing needs with preservation, ensuring that development enhances, not erases, what makes this place sacred.

At OHA, we pursue projects because they align with our mission to improve the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians. When we leverage our trust assets thoughtfully, partner with labor, and center our community, we move beyond profit toward purpose.

That is the difference between investing for gain and investing for generations. ■

New Hope for Hawaiian Homelands My Conversation with Kali Watson

Keliʻi Akina, Ph.D.

Trustee, At-Large

For decades, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) has faced well-known challenges in delivering homesteads to Native Hawaiian families. Now, it appears that new funding and different ways of building communities are opening the door to moving homestead delivery forward at a scale we haven't seen before.

I recently spoke with DHHL Chairman Kali Watson to better understand what is changing and what beneficiaries can expect in the years ahead.

DHHL Chairman Kali Watson and Trustee Keliʻi Akina. - *Courtesy Photo*

One of the first questions I asked him was what allowed DHHL to award thousands of homesteads in recent years after decades of slow progress. Watson explained that the department is now taking a completely different approach. Instead of awarding homes one at a time, DHHL is issuing project leases upfront, allowing beneficiaries to select a lot before securing financing. Homes are then built in ways that match each family's financial situation. The goal, he told me, is to give families of all income levels the option of homeownership.

To bring Hawaiians back to Hawaiʻi, Watson emphasized that creating innovative solutions was necessary. He shared that DHHL has begun developing rental housing projects, largely because rental models allow the department to access federal funding otherwise unavailable.

When I probed further about why DHHL started rental projects, Watson pointed out that they're not meant to be permanent rentals. Instead, they're designed as rent-with-option-to-purchase communities, allowing families to build equity while renting and to eventually buy their homes. This gives families the chance to build generational wealth instead of remaining long-term renters.

As we continued talking, Watson stressed that homes alone do not make for thriving communities. Families also need access to schools, clinics, cultural spaces, and other services.

He pointed to partnerships with organizations to help create neighborhoods that integrate education, healthcare, cultural resources, and economic opportunities. The idea, he said, is to ensure families are not pushed into isolated subdivisions far from jobs and essential services.

Another topic we discussed was how DHHL plans to sustain these efforts over the long term. Watson shared that the department is now working to generate revenue from portions of its land inventory rather than relying solely on legislative funding. Plans include commercial and industrial developments that can generate income to reinvest in housing and infrastructure.

Despite these changes, Watson acknowledged that there is still much work to be done. More than 29,000 beneficiaries remain on the waitlist, and demand continues to grow. Still, with new funding in place and fresh momentum around land development, and program reforms, DHHL may be entering a period of unprecedented activity.

He also notes that placing beneficiaries into homestead housing benefits Hawaiʻi as a whole, freeing up rental housing currently occupied by beneficiaries waiting for leases.

For many families, the wait to come home may finally be nearing an end. ■

Honoring Our Kūpuna

Luana Alapa

Trustee, Molokaʻi and Lānaʻi

As we herald in a new year, I had the honor of joining many in our community to celebrate the life of former Office of Hawaiian Affairs Trustee Rowena Akana. Kawaiahaʻo Church was a fitting place to remember a woman who dedicated so much of her life to serving our people.

Rowena was, at times, a controversial figure but she was never without conviction. She served with unwavering passion and fierce advocacy, always standing firmly for what she believed would benefit the lāhui. Too often, the depth of her commitment and the impact of her work were underappreciated.

Over her decades of service, and alongside her fellow trustees, she helped launch and support numerous initiatives that continue to serve our community today. Her determination to see things through, no matter the obstacles, earned her the respect and love of many. Serving for almost 30 years as trustee, that longevity speaks not only to commitment, but to a deep sense of kuleana. For that we say: Aloha and mahalo, Rowena, for your service to our lāhui.

As we forge ahead to continue serving our beneficiaries, the Hawaiian Council is currently administering OHA's $6.1 million in emergency assistance to support Native Hawaiian beneficiaries who were impacted by the federal government shutdown and the suspension of SNAP benefits. If you or someone you know was affected, I strongly encourage you to apply.

Verified Native Hawaiian beneficiaries without dependents who receive SNAP benefits — but were excluded from the state's Hawaiʻi Relief Program — may qualify for grocery assistance of up to $350. Foodland gift cards will be distributed to residents of Oʻahu, Maui, and Kauaʻi, while KTA Super Stores gift cards will be available for residents of Hawaiʻi Island. Due to their remote locations, residents of Lānaʻi and Molokaʻi will receive direct assistance checks.

To apply online, visit hawaiiancouncil.org/oha-relief

Finally, Pepeluali is not only a month to honor our ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, but to celebrate Valentine's Day. I wanted to bless and mālama our kūpuna of Molokaʻi with some of my homemade Valentine's treats. Many kūpuna live alone and have few visitors, so I wanted to spread a little Valentine's aloha. Seeing their precious smiles and tears of joy upon receiving their treats? Priceless.

We honor those who came before us by continuing to care for our community and our beloved kūpuna. ■

(L-R): Nani Duvauchelle, Ermanand Tancayo, Trustee Alapa, Julia Tancayo and NakaiʻEwalu Kanahele enjoy a Valentine's Day visit. - *Courtesy Photos*

Kupuna Bettie West with her Valentine's Day gift from Trustee Alapa.

Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai

Shaping Policies That Will Define Their Generation

Brickwood Galuteria

Trustee, At-Large

Our ʻōpio stand at a moment in history when their voices matter more than ever.

As many of you know, I encourage civic engagement – and it's not just about voting or showing up at the Capitol – it is about understanding the systems that shape our daily lives and choosing to influence them with intention, courage, and aloha.

To that end I encourage our young people to seek out the wisdom of kūpuna, to sit with them, listen to their stories, and learn how they navigated struggles with dignity and resilience. When ʻōpio and kūpuna walk together, we strengthen the political and spiritual backbone of our lāhui. This is how we build a future rooted in justice, compassion, and collective strength.

In every generation, there are young people who rise - not because the path is easy - but because the calling is clear. We have a wonderful article in this month's *Ka Wai Ola* that features such a force. Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai is a council of young people who stand with courage, compassion, and cultural grounding to confront one of Hawaiʻi's deepest wounds: the intergenerational impact of incarceration on our families.

Their work is not simply programmatic; it is restorative. It is a return to the values that have sustained our people for centuries: aloha, kuleana, ʻohana, and the healing power of ʻāina.

At a time when our justice system continues to reflect disparities that fall heaviest on Native Hawaiian youth, Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai offers a different vision. They remind us that empowerment is not an abstract concept. It is lived when young people are given space to lead, to speak truth, and to shape solutions rooted in their own cultural inheritance.

Their focus on healing and justice transformation is not only timely, it is necessary. It is a reminder that the wellbeing of our ʻōpio is inseparable from the wellbeing of our lāhui.

In the last legislative session, House Concurrent Resolution 174 (SD1), which was authored by the haumāna of Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai, reflected that same understanding. The resolution called for a deeper examination of ʻāina based programs for youth in the juvenile justice system, recognizing that healing often begins where the land meets the heart.

In the current legislative session, HB 1626 and companion bill SB 2540 sit firmly in the policy universe that Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai already inhabits: youth justice, system reform, and culturally grounded alternatives for Native Hawaiian youth. These bills seek to strengthen the structures that support youth and their ʻohana, continuing to push us toward a system that uplifts rather than punishes.

Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai's support of these measures is more than advocacy - it is alignment. Their lived experience, cultural grounding, and unwavering commitment to their peers give these policies meaning beyond the written page. They are the embodiment of what these measures strive to achieve: a justice system that restores dignity, strengthens ʻohana, and opens pathways to wellbeing and systemic change.

To Nā ʻŌpio Waiwai, I offer a deep mahalo. Your leadership is a blessing to Hawaiʻi. Your courage lights the way. And your vision reminds us that when we invest in our ʻōpio, we invest in a future rooted in healing, justice, and hope.

I urge our young people to continue stepping forward — to testify, to organize, to vote, to learn from kūpuna, and to shape the policies that will define their generation. Civic engagement is not a burden; it is a birthright. And when ʻōpio claim that birthright with clarity and aloha, our entire lāhui rises. ■

Support Legislation to Increase OHA's PLT Share

Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey

Trustee, Maui

During the 2026 Hawaiʻi State Legislative Session, HB2584 and SB3308 seek to finally move Hawaiʻi closer to fulfilling a long-standing constitutional obligation: paying the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) its full pro rata share of revenues generated from the Public Land Trust (PLT).

These measures deserve the unified and vocal support of the Native Hawaiian community and all who believe in justice, trust responsibility, and constitutional compliance.

The PLT consists of approximately 1.4 million acres of former crown and government lands transferred to the State of Hawaiʻi at statehood. The Hawaiʻi State Constitution is explicit in how these lands are to be managed.

Article XII establishes that these lands are held in trust for Native Hawaiians and the general public, and Article XII, Section 6, requires that a pro rata portion of all income and proceeds from these lands be transferred to OHA for the betterment of Native Hawaiians.

For almost five decades, this pro rata share has been understood – and codified in state law – as 20%.

Yet despite this clear mandate, the state has never paid OHA its full share. Instead, OHA has received a series of "temporary" fixed payments that fall far short of what 20% of actual PLT revenues would amount to.

While Act 226 (in 2022) represented progress by increasing interim payments and providing partial back pay, it did not resolve the underlying structural problem: the state continues to undercalculate and underpay revenues owed to Native Hawaiians.

The 2026 legislative proposals – including companion measures introduced in the house and senate – aim to correct this inequity on an interim basis while a comprehensive accounting and audit of PLT revenues is completed.

These bills would increase annual revenue transfers to OHA for fiscal years 2026 through 2028, bringing payments closer to the constitutionally required 20%. Importantly, they do not create new obligations; they simply advance compliance with existing ones.

This effort comes at a critical moment. Numerous state agencies generate revenue from PLT lands including the Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Department of Transportation, the University of Hawaiʻi, and others.

While state agencies are legally required to report revenues annually, the current system relies heavily on self-reporting and incomplete inventories. As a result, trust revenues have historically been understated and Native Hawaiian beneficiaries have been denied resources intended to support housing, education, healthcare, cultural preservation, and economic self-sufficiency.

Supporting HB2584 and SB3308 is about more than dollars and cents. It is about honoring the promises made at statehood and reaffirmed in our constitution. Article XVI, Section 7 is clear that the legislature must implement trust responsibilities in a way that does not diminish benefits to Native Hawaiians. Continued underpayment does exactly that.

Critically, restoring OHA's full pro rata share does not take away from the general public – it strengthens the overall trust. When Native Hawaiians are supported through constitutionally guaranteed resources, the broader community benefits from reduced inequality, stronger families, and healthier communities.

OHA programs funded through trust revenues have a proven track record of serving Native Hawaiians statewide, from kūpuna services to higher education scholarships.

The 2026 legislative session presents an opportunity to take a meaningful step toward justice long delayed. These bills are not radical; they are responsible, measured, and rooted in law. They deserve strong testimony, community mobilization, and public pressure on lawmakers to do what should have been done decades ago.

We must support these measures – not only because they are legally correct – but because they are morally right. The time has come to move from temporary fixes to true accountability. Native Hawaiians have waited long enough. ■

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Note: Trustee columns represent the views of individual trustees and may not reflect the official positions adopted by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs Board of Trustees.

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NOTICE OF INTENDED REPATRIATION: MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE ART MUSEUM

In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum intends to repatriate certain cultural items that meet the definition of sacred objects and that have a cultural affiliation with the Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations in this notice. Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice may occur on or after March 13, 2026. A total of 14 cultural items have been requested for repatriation: one pohaku kuʻi ʻai, one lei niho palaoa, one lot of three pieces of kapa, eight kapa, one hoe, one lot of makaloa, and one kapa book. The museum has determined that there is a connection between the cultural items described in this notice and Hui Iwi Kuamoʻo. Additional requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice must be sent in writing. Requests for repatriation may be submitted by any lineal descendant or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice. Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to a requestor may occur on or after March 13. If competing requests for repatriation are received, the museum must determine the most appropriate requestor prior to repatriation. Requests for joint repatriation of the cultural items are considered a single request and not competing requests. Send additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to Abigail Hoover, associate director of Registration and Collections, Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, Lower Lake Road, South Hadley, MA 01075, emailahoover@mtholyoke.edu. ■

To create a space for our readers to honor their loved ones, Ka Wai Ola will print *Haliʻa Aloha - obituaries and mele kanikau (mourning chants)*. Haliʻa Aloha appearing in the print version of *Ka Wai Ola* should be recent (within six months of passing) and should not exceed 250 words in length. All other Haliʻa Aloha submitted will be published on kawaiola.news. Haliʻa Aloha must be submitted by the 15th of the month for publication the following month. Photos accompanying Haliʻa Aloha will only be included in the print version of the newspaper if space permits. However, all photos will be shared on kawaiola.news.

MALIA CATALINA MALAKAUA NAKAPAAHU
AUG. 15, 1933 – JAN. 2, 2026

Honolulu, Oʻahu: Malia Catalina Malakaua Nakapaahu, affectionately known as "Granny," passed away peacefully at home at the age of 92. Born in Makaweli, Kauaʻi, she was raised in Māʻili, Oʻahu, and attended Waipahu School. She was a member of the Hewahewa ʻOhana through her great-grandmother Elizabeth Pihikula Napahi Malakaua. Granny's life was a testament of love for her family, culture, and community and she will be remembered fondly by all who knew her. She began her career at the Honolulu Airport Maintenance Division before relocating to Kailua-Kona on Hawaiʻi Island, then transferring to the Keʻāhole Airport Maintenance Division, where she was promoted to supervisor before retiring in 1999. After retiring, Granny returned to Oʻahu, finding joy in raising her great-grandchildren and indulging in her love for music and hula. She cherished ʻohana performances at the Royal Hawaiian Center and was a devoted supporter of Hālau Hula o Maiki for over 45 years. Granny was married twice; first to Gordon Joseph Mann of Fresno, CA, in February 1951, then to Lionel Ewaliko Nakapaahu of Makaweli, Kauaʻi, in 1958. Both of her husbands predeceased her, as did her parents Ariston Sanidad and Ana Marie Malakaua Alvior; stepfather Daniel Alvior; and sister Martha Kalua Servantes. She is survived by daughter Olivia Lee Puakeala Mann; son Gordon Christopher Mann; sister Marcia Alvior Kanoa; grandchildren Leandra Tazhi Puʻuhonua Tavares-Jumawan (Jaden), Abra Rashid Kaulana Tavares-Crisostomo (Eduardo), Kona Mann (Karen), and Daniel Mann; and great-grandchildren Kalauokalaninui, Kawaikikilani and Haʻahula Crisostomo, and Kaila Mann. Celebration of Life will be held at Hawaiian Memorial Park in Kāneʻohe. ■

E Ō Mai, e Kuleana Land Holders!

THE KULEANA LAND TAX exemption helps Native Hawaiians keep their ancestral lands by reducing the rising cost of property taxes. All four counties have ordinances in place that allow eligible kuleana land owners to pay minimal to zero property taxes. Applications are available on each county's website.

For more information on kuleana land tax ordinances go to **www.oha.org/kuleanaland** and for assistance with genealogy verification, contact the Office of Hawaiian Affairs at **808-594-1835 or 808-594-1888**.

Empowering Hawaiians, Strengthening Hawaiʻi

560 N. Nimitz Hwy., Suite 200 · Honolulu, HI 96817
www.oha.org

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Office hours for all locations are 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

All Offices are closed on State holidays

Main Phone (all islands):
808.594.1835
Email:
info@oha.org

HONOLULU
560 N. Nimitz Hwy., Ste. 200,
Honolulu, HI 96817
Phone: 808.594.1888

EAST HAWAI'I (HILO)
2100 Kanoelehua Ave.,
Unit 9 & 10
Hilo, HI 96720
Phone: 808.204.2391

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Kaunakakai, HI 96748
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Classified ads only $12.50 - Type or clearly write your ad of no more than 175 characters (including spaces and punctuation) and mail, along with a check for $12.50, to: ***Ka Wai Ola* Classifieds, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, 560 N. Nimitz Hwy., Suite 200, Honolulu, HI 96817**. Make check payable to **OHA**. (We cannot accept credit cards.) Ads and payment must be received by the 15th for the next month's edition of *Ka Wai Ola*. Send your information by mail, or e-mail **kwo@oha.org** with the subject "Makeke/Classified." OHA reserves the right to refuse any advertisement, for any reason, at our discretion.

AINA REALTOR – I specialize in helping Native Hawaiians, first-time homebuyers, and local families navigate the home buying and selling process. I currently have buyers looking in all Hawaiian Homestead neighborhoods, and if you've been thinking about selling or buying but aren't sure where to start—or need guidance through the DHHL process—I can help. Let's talk story and explore your options. I handle every step with care, experience, and local knowledge. Call or text: Jordan Aina – RS-85780 – (808) 276-0880.

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AINA REALTOR - O'AHU DHHL LOT - 726 Iaukea Street, Papakolea - 2 bedroom, 1 bath Fixer upper, 7,500 sqft lot - Leasehold - Call Jordan Aina (Realtor) for details - 808-276-0880 - Locations LLC. I service Homestead on all islands. I also have buyers ready on each island.

AINA REALTOR - KAUA'I DHHL LOT - 4336 Haku Aina Road, Anahola - 4 bedroom, 3 bath Fixer upper, 10,000 sqft lot - Leasehold - Call Jordan Aina (Realtor) for details - 808-276-0880 - Listed by Colleague Kim, Locations LLC. I service Homestead on all islands. I also have buyers ready on each island.

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