



# Ka Wai Ola

NEWS FOR THE LĀHUI

kawaiola.news

## KĀNAKA, COME HOME

PAGES 18-20



The results of the 2020 Census confirm that more Hawaiians live on the continent than in Hawai'i. With so many Hawaiians living away from Hawai'i, our political and cultural influence in our kulāiwi is diminished. - Original artwork by 'Auli'i Nathaniel





*Aloha  
Kalikimaka,  
Lonoikamakahiki,  
&  
Hau'oli Makahiki  
Hou!*



## Reversing the Diaspora Requires Bold Solutions and Collective Commitment

### Aloha mai kākou e ka lāhui Hawai‘i,

It is with immense joy and a profound sense of responsibility that I extend my warmest greetings to you as I embark on this journey as Ka Pouhana (CEO), entrusted with the honor of leading the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). Working alongside our esteemed Board of Trustees and OHA's dedicated staff, I am filled with excitement for the collective effort we will invest in building a thriving lāhui for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi throughout our pae ‘āina.

As we stand at the threshold of the fourth year of Mana i Maui Ola, OHA's strategic plan, the wellbeing of our people is at the forefront of our endeavors.

The upcoming period holds the promise of addressing pressing issues such as education, healthcare, quality housing, and economic stability here in our beloved Hawai‘i Nei. Our commitment is unwavering: to ensure a Hawai‘i where our ‘ohana can remain connected to our ancestral home for generations to come. For those who have moved away, we aspire to create a Hawai‘i you can once again call home with pride and belonging.

The Hawaiian diaspora casts a shadow over our communities, urging us to confront this challenge with urgency and innovation.

Personally, as a makua and kupuna wahine with two daughters residing on the continent, I understand the heartache that distance can bring. My mo‘opuna, Kapouhiwaokalani and Kānehoalani, are growing up over Face-Time, the first in our ‘ohana born outside of Hawai‘i.

Their desire to return is met with the harsh realities of financial constraints and the high cost of living. It is a sentiment shared by many in our diaspora, creating a poignant reminder of the importance of our mission.

OHA's journey to reverse the diaspora is monumental, requiring bold solutions and a collective commitment to shaping the future of our lāhui. We are challenged to bridge the gap between our people and their roots, to ensure that the essence of being Kānaka ‘Ōiwi is nurtured and celebrated right here in the embrace of our islands.

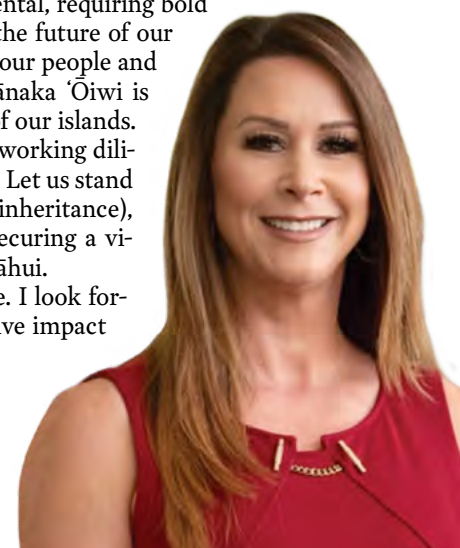
Together, we shall navigate the waters of change, working diligently to make our Mana i Maui Ola vision a reality. Let us stand united, inspired by the rich legacy of our ho‘oilina (inheritance), fueled by the love for our ‘āina, and dedicated to securing a vibrant and resilient future for every member of our lāhui.

Mahalo piha for entrusting me with this privilege. I look forward to the incredible journey ahead and the positive impact we will create for generations to come. ■

Me ka ha‘aha‘a,

**Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira**

Ka Pouhana | Chief Executive Officer



**Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira**  
Ka Pouhana  
Chief Executive Officer

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# Ferreira Selected as OHA's New CEO

By Ed Kalama

Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) trustees have selected Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira as the organization's new Ka Pouhana/Chief Executive Officer. Ferreira follows Dr. Sylvia Hussey, who left the agency in July.

Since 2019, Ferreira has served as budget chief of the Hawai'i State Senate, where she helped to shape and formulate state budgets. She is a former executive strategy consultant and division director of Extension Educational Services for Kamehameha Schools, where she also served as the trust coordinator for the Charles Reed Bishop Trust.



OHA's new Ka Pouhana/Chief Executive Officer Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira. - Photo: Alice Silbanuz

and aloha Colin Kippen for his leadership in serving as our interim CEO during this time of transition."

Ferreira began her new post on Nov. 1, 2023. Among her priorities are developing strategic partnerships and collaborations to achieve the goals of OHA's Mana i Maui Ola strategic plan, strengthening the organization's current community programs and services, and working to increase the agency's trust assets and portfolio performance.

"I am honored and invigorated to lead our charge toward a brighter future for the lāhui," Ferreira said. "With an unyielding commitment, we're embarking on a transformative journey to uplift and amplify the strength and resilience of our Native Hawaiian communities."

With more than 20 years of experience working in Hawai'i, Ferreira has amassed an extensive professional network and important connections within the Native Hawaiian community.

"The Office of Hawaiian Affairs stands at the forefront of change," Ferreira said. "With unwavering determination and precision, we will be resolute in our mission to ensure the conditions necessary for the prosperity and wellness of all Hawaiians and our beloved pae āina." ■

Ferreira carries a master's in education and a bachelor's in communications from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She is kama'āina with familial ties to Hawai'i Island, Moloka'i, and O'ahu. Many of her Ōpūnui 'ohana are from Lahaina, Maui.

"We are certain that Stacy's strong skill sets, proven abilities and dedication to our lāhui will serve our organization and beneficiaries well as we move forward with our mission of bettering the lives of Native Hawaiians," said OHA Board Chair Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey. "I'd also like to mahalo

# OHA Approves \$6 Million for Hawaiian-Focused Public Charter Schools

By Ed Kalama

Seventeen Hawaiian-focused public charter schools will be receiving a total of \$6 million in support from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) over the next two fiscal years.

At their October meeting, trustees approved a \$2.7 million Hawaiian Focused Charter School Fund Administration Grant to Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana (KALO) to manage per pupil funding support for 16 of these schools. Since Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School is an educational partner of KALO, their funds - \$300,000 in per pupil funding and \$150,000 in facilities support - will be administered directly by OHA.

In February 2023, OHA awarded a \$2.85 million grant to KALO to administer a new phase of the charter school grant intended to support unmet facilities needs. A recent survey among these charters revealed that every single program reported the need for facilities assistance.

Of the more than 4,000 students who attend Hawaiian-focused charter schools, 77 percent of them are of Native Hawaiian ancestry. Since 2005, OHA has provided more than \$21.5 million in per pupil grant funding to 17 Hawaiian-focused public charter schools.

"We need to ensure that our Hawaiian-focused charter schools have the resources necessary to implement a curriculum grounded in 'ōlelo Hawai'i, 'ike Hawai'i, and Hawaiian cultural values," said OHA Board Chair Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey. "With these funds, schools can self-determine how to best provide the educational equity needed to serve their students and have resources available for needed building repair and maintenance."

Lindsey added that KALO has continually shown its support for these charter schools through its tireless advocacy at all levels, and the network of engagement it provides the schools through meetings, conferences, and visits.

Charter schools face challenges in securing funding for their facilities because they do not receive any Capital Improvement Project or repair or maintenance funds from the state. Data published during the 2019-2020 school year showed public schools received \$17,475 per pupil while public charter schools received \$9,697 in per pupil funding from the state.

OHA has been a consistent supporter of Hawaiian-focused charter schools, providing legislative advocacy and programmatic support, as well as grant funding support. ■



Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School on O'ahu. - Courtesy Photo



Waimea Middle School on Hawai'i Island. - Photo: Jason Lees

## Hawaiian-Focused Charter Schools Receiving OHA Grants

### O'ahu

- Hakipu'u Learning Center
- Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School
- Ka Waihona o Ka Na'auao Public Charter School
- Kamaile Academy
- Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau Laboratory Public Charter School
- Mālama Honua

### Hawai'i Island

- Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo Public Charter School
- Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School
- Ke Ana La'ahana Public Charter School
- Ke Kula 'o Nāwahīokalaniopu'u Iki Laboratory Public Charter School
- Kua o Ka Lā New Century Public Charter School
- Waimea Middle School

### Kaua'i

- Kawaiikini New Century Public Charter School
- Kanuikaponu Public Charter School
- Ke Kula Ni'ihau o Kekaha Learning Center
- Kula Aupuni Ni'ihau A Kahelelani Aloha Public Charter School

### Moloka'i

- Kualapu'u School: A Public Conversion Charter



# Encouraging Mālama Hawai'i Tourism



Justin Naka'ahiki speaks at the Travel Weekly Hawai'i Leadership Forum in April 2023 at the Sheraton Waikiki. - Courtesy Photo

By Nathan Hokama

When Justin Naka'ahiki was growing up, his parents always reminded him about the valuable resources available to Native Hawaiians and encouraged him to take advantage of those opportunities.

As a shy boy from Kekaha Hawaiian Homestead on Kaua'i, Naka'ahiki took his parents' advice to heart. And today, with the support of an Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) Mālama Loan for Native Hawaiian business owners, Naka'ahiki now owns his own company: Destination Marketing Hawai'i.

## A Local Company with Global Reach

This small-town boy is now playing in the big leagues.

Naka'ahiki's company has a vast network that connects Hawai'i to English-speaking audiences around the globe with compelling pre-arrival messages for travelers coming to our islands.

Naka'ahiki is the ideal go-between. He capably represents Hawai'i to businesses throughout the world and represents the interests of businesses seeking support in Hawai'i. He recently organized a major conference here in Hawai'i for 300 of the world's travel industry leaders.

But success didn't happen overnight. It's been a long journey full of obstacles, but Naka'ahiki has been able to move forward and has made good business decisions along the way – a prime example of someone who turns challenges into opportunities.

## Thriving in Challenging Circumstances

After graduating from Waimea High School, Naka'ahiki earned a marketing degree from UH Mānoa and hit the ground running. He worked in various positions

at a Honolulu advertising agency, which led to a successful career in the travel industry and tourism marketing. His 20-year career includes a decade of leading the marketing efforts for Aqua-Aston Hospitality.

"I made a switch in my career just two months before the Great Recession [of 2008]," Naka'ahiki recalled.

The self-described optimist didn't let the daunting challenges of visitor decline and the volatile economic climate derail him. He stayed with it, developing the tenacity and an unshakable confidence that would serve him well in the future.

In 2018, he left the hotel industry with a myriad of connections and contacts to join Destination Marketing Hawai'i.

Naka'ahiki had known the company's owner for years through his professional network, and she had become something of a mentor to him. She started the company in 1998, but wanted to transition out and pegged Naka'ahiki to take over.

For two years, Naka'ahiki worked with her, learning the business and enjoying the freedom she gave him to take on big projects.

## Pandemic Introspection and Rebalancing

In early 2020, Naka'ahiki purchased Destination Marketing Hawai'i. No sooner had he acquired the business, when the unthinkable happened – the pandemic began, lockdowns were enforced, and the visitor industry went into a tailspin as visitors stopped coming to Hawai'i.

"I saw colleagues who had been in the business for 20 to 30 years leave the industry," Naka'ahiki said.

Instead of despairing, Naka'ahiki used the downtime for administrative housekeeping, getting all the paperwork in order for his newly acquired company. "Since I was now my own boss, it was a time to reassess everything," he said.

## Timely Support from OHA

Naka'ahiki also turned to OHA and federal funding to help his company get through the pandemic. He had learned about OHA's loan program "through friends of friends and through cousins of cousins," and knew he would be in good hands.

The financing came at a critical time, allowing him to create a solid foundation for his company.

Loan Processor Robert Crowell with OHA's Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund program said OHA was able to provide Naka'ahiki with funds to revamp Destination Marketing Hawai'i's portfolio of products and services and, critically, to provide funding to keep Naka'ahiki's assistant employed.

By 2021, Destination Marketing Hawai'i was ready to move forward.

## A New Way of Seeing Hawai'i

The pandemic was also a time for reflection. During the lockdown, Hawai'i residents had an opportunity to experience uncrowded beaches for the first time and better understand the need to protect and preserve Hawai'i's natural beauty and ecosystems.

Suddenly, stewardship of our islands, destination management, and attracting the right "types" of visitors – instead of high volumes of visitors – became the topic of everyday conversations and high-level policy discussions.

Naka'ahiki not only looked at changes within his own company, but also the way Hawai'i was being marketed and promoted in general. His abiding love for Hawai'i and genuine respect for all people guided the direction of his company.

And his values-based commitment to mālama Hawai'i became even stronger as the pandemic challenged and broadly changed perspectives on the perils of over-tourism.

Naka'ahiki didn't get caught in the fray by taking sides on the issue of destination management versus tourism marketing. His seasoned industry perspective allowed him to see the intrinsic value of both views as he used his influence to personally promote efforts to "rebalance" Hawai'i's visitor industry and help others to know and appreciate the authentic Hawai'i.

"Over-tourism is not unique to Hawai'i," he said. "We need both destination management and travel marketing. One can leverage the other more effectively for storytelling. The two specialties can work hand-in-hand."

In the meantime, Naka'ahiki continues to move his business forward. Although he has big aspirations – and has even considered replicating his business model to support other destinations around the world – at the end of the day, his connection to the land and 'ohana was stronger.

"This is my home," he said. "This is where I'm meant to be." ■

# Assisting Charter Schools

Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana (KALO) is playing a key role in OHA's support of Hawaiian-focused Charter Schools

By Ed Kalama

Since 2005, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) has provided more than \$21.5 million in per pupil funding to 17 Hawaiian-focused public charter schools.

These schools share a common focus of using innovative educational approaches to perpetuate 'ōlelo Hawai'i, impart Hawaiian culture and traditions, and achieve academic excellence. OHA has been a consistent champion of the Hawaiian-focused charters, offering programmatic support, providing advocacy on the legislative level, and awarding grant funding.

In October, trustees approved per pupil funding totaling \$3 million over the next two fiscal years. In addition, OHA has created a new phase of its Hawaiian-Focused Public Charter School Fund Administration grant which will see an additional \$3 million being provided to the 17 schools to assist with unmet facility needs.

The administration grant was awarded to Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana (KALO), which has been supporting Hawaiian-focused charter schools since 2000 when the first charters were issued. KALO is dedicated to preserving Hawaiian language, culture, and traditions while simultaneously empowering the community.

Among its many programs, KALO is an educational partner to Kanu o ka 'Āina New Century Public Charter School (KANU), which is one of the 17 schools included in the OHA grant. As such, OHA directly administers funds provided for KANU, while the other 16 schools have their funds administered by KALO.

*Ka Wai Ola* recently sat down with KALO's Chief Information Officer Nancy Levenson, whose role includes grant compliance oversight, to discuss how OHA and KALO are supporting the more than 4,000 students who attend these schools.

**KWO:** Could you briefly describe what is involved in administering these funds for the charter schools?

**Nancy Levenson:** KALO has been collaborating with the 16 charter schools supported by the OHA grant since 2000, and we've fostered strong relationships with the school leaders. KALO ensures the establishment of Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) with each school, designs reporting frameworks, oversees the tracking of progress, collects data reports, and compiles comprehensive reports to submit to OHA. In addition, KALO provides support to the schools by coordinating an annual conference and engaging in advocacy initiatives.



Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana (KALO) has been supporting Hawaiian-focused charter schools since 2000. The KALO team includes (l-r): Joe Fraser, Noekeonaona Kirby, Katie Benioni, Ikaika Jenks-Pua'a, Nancy Levenson and Taffi Wise. - Courtesy Photo

**KWO:** What advantages does it bring to have KALO administer these funds?

**Nancy Levenson:** Our team has extensive experience in grant management and the complexities that come with it. This experience is invaluable in navigating the intricacies of administering funds, ensuring compliance with OHA's requirements, and optimizing the impact of the funds on the schools and their students.

KALO's in-depth knowledge of each school community and their unique needs is a significant advantage. Our established processes for fund administration promote accountability, reporting efficiency and transparency in the use of funds. This is critical in maintaining the trust of all stakeholders, including the schools, OHA, and the broader community.

**KWO:** Support for facilities needs is a new phase of the OHA grant. Could you talk about the type of projects this funding will go toward?

**Nancy Levenson:** In a survey conducted among our 16 participating schools, all 16 programs reported having unmet facility needs. These include a lack of classroom space and buildings for students and staff, and the need for repairs and maintenance of current facilities. Issues related to plumbing, sewage, dining areas, and air conditioning were also of major concern. Other facility needs mentioned by schools included expenses for rent and utilities, the absence of security systems, and the necessity for equipment like tables, desks, and student transportation vehicles.

Since the commencement of the OHA grant, schools are beginning to address these needs. The most common being addressed are repairs and maintenance of buildings and equipment, while eight schools have submitted expenditures related to rent and utilities. Additionally, the schools have addressed issues such as the installation

of security systems, procurement of equipment, and the purchase of vehicles.

**KWO:** What is the most important thing for the community to know about OHA's support of these schools?

**Nancy Levenson:** OHA's funding for Native Hawaiian charter schools reflects a holistic approach to education. These schools incorporate cultural practices, land stewardship, and community values into their educational models, nurturing the overall wellbeing of students and the community, which empowers Native Hawaiians to take control of their educational destiny. It encourages self-determination and self-governance, which are central to OHA's mission in supporting the Native Hawaiian community.

Community awareness is crucial regarding the fact that the Hawaiian-focused public charter schools, supported by OHA funding, are closely aligned with OHA's strategic objectives in education. These objectives are centered on advancing the welfare and achievements of Native Hawaiian communities. OHA's steadfast advocacy and support play a vital role in ensuring the sustainability of school leadership, allowing these institutions to continue their important work.

**KWO:** What would you say is the best thing about OHA providing this funding for the charter schools?

**Nancy Levenson:** One of the best things about OHA providing funding for charter schools is that it creates stability for these schools, allowing them to direct their focus toward educational excellence. Simultaneously, it empowers schools to offer culturally appropriate 'āina and language-based learning, contributing to the preservation and revitalization of Hawaiian culture, enriching the lives of students, and strengthening the lāhui. ■



# Little Fire Ant Infestations Threaten Keiki, Pets, Ecosystems and Agriculture



Little fire ants (LFA) are yellow-red in color and 1.5 mm in length (half the size of a sesame seed). LFA nest in a variety of habitats including in trees, potted plants, irrigation lines, and electrical boxes. They are slow-moving and easily dislodged from plants and trees. - Photo Hawai'i DLNR



Dogs, cats, and other pets encounter little fire ants (LFA) while eating, resting, or wandering in the yard. The ants crawl around in their fur and will sting soft tissue, including the eyes. Pets in LFA infested areas suffer high rates of skin irritations and tropical keratopathy, a clouding of the corneas resembling cataracts. Blindness may also occur. - Courtesy Photo



Little fire ants (LFA) deliver a painful sting when disturbed. Welts can last for weeks and are painful and itchy. Topical over-the-counter steroid creams and antihistamines can help alleviate discomfort. Allergic reactions to LFA stings are possible and can be fatal. - Photo healthline.com

By Kimeona Kane and Wayne Chung Tanaka

When Charene Crusat Haliniak moved to Hawaiian Paradise Park on Hawai'i Island from urban Honolulu, it was a long-awaited chance to reconnect with her home island, and to nurture and be nurtured by the 'āina surrounding her new hale.

The first order of business: remove the invasive plants that had overgrown her property and give the native 'ōhi'a and hāpu'u room to flourish.

As she began to clear out yet another invasive tree, a sprinkling of leaves and bark dust fell on to her hair, her neck, her arms, as expected. This time, however, the falling detritus also included a shower of "little fire ants" (LFA) – the tiny, slow-moving, non-native insects infamous for the burning pain of their stings.

"The welts last for days. And even after the welts go away, I still have red marks...The itching is relentless," Haliniak recalled of her first and many subsequent encounters with LFA.

Despite applications of Amdro pellets and precautionary measures like covering herself head-to-toe before doing any gardening, LFA and their stings are now an inevitable part of her new life.

"I try to keep them out of the house and the immediate areas around my house, and in my garden - which is a losing battle. There are ants everywhere," Haliniak said.

Two of her three dogs have developed keratopathy, or clouding of their eyes, a condition attributed to fire ant stings.

Her neighbors have responded in various ways to this invasive pest, present on Hawai'i Island since at least 1999. One neighbor removed every tree from his property. Others pay for quarterly pesticide service, about \$65 for a quarter acre application recommended every eight weeks for an indefinite period.

Their impact has been felt from Puna to Kona, with a pronounced effect on local agriculture. LFA have vexed organic farmers, subjected coffee farm workers to debilitating stings, and contributed to infestations of other agricultural pest species like aphids. One banana farmer spends tens of thousands of dollars every year on pesticides, with no end in sight.

## O'ahu Community Steps Up as Infestations Spread

LFA are now spreading to other islands, including O'ahu, where they have been found on the windward side from Kahuku to Maunaloa. While the Hawai'i Ant Lab and O'ahu Invasive Species Council are doing what they can – and can point to proven eradication strate-

gies with recent successes on Maui – they are underfunded and understaffed.

With government resources limited, and heeding the cautionary tale of Hawai'i Island, community leaders and groups on O'ahu have taken it upon themselves to defend the island's – and all of Hawai'i's – future food security, native ecosystems, cultural practices, public health, and economy.

This includes Kimeona Kane, chair of the Waimānalo Neighborhood Board (and co-author of this article). Kane pursued a course of action with the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) after purchasing plants from a Waimānalo nursery that later tested positive for LFA.

The nursery acknowledged that they knew they had an LFA problem but continued to sell plants. This prompted a call to the Waimānalo Agriculture Association, which only raised additional questions regarding accountability and systemic failures.

This was not the first time community members were frustrated. In October 2022, the Waimānalo Neighborhood Board's Community Plan Committee hosted a discussion with the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) Response team, concerned that state agencies were downplaying the impacts of these pests in the community. In January 2023, the CRB Task Force announced that the battle to eradicate CRB on O'ahu was lost.

However, hope for eradication of LFA remains, and Waimānalo is not the only community now taking action. After LFA colonies were found near the Key Project's campus in Kahalu'u, community leader Joe Wat walked door-to-door in the nearby neighborhood, to enlist residents' help in identifying infested areas.

Rep. Lisa Marten, declaring her own district "ground zero" for LFA infestations on O'ahu, also went door-to-door in Kailua, distributing and collecting popsicle sticks and peanut butter for residents to help identify where eradication strategies may be needed.

And across the islands, school gardening programs teach their students to monitor their gardens for LFA and coconut rhinoceros beetles. School-distributed LFA testing kits have led to some of the earliest detections of the pest on O'ahu.

## Will the Department of Agriculture Fulfill its Kuleana?

While many more community members have joined the fight to detect and eradicate LFA, a lack of regulation may confound their efforts.

Despite the profound agricultural impacts of the pest on Hawai'i Island, the HDOA has not updated its pest control rules to prevent the on-island sale of plants, soil, and other garden and nursery products infested with

SEE LITTLE FIRE ANT INFESTATION ON PAGE 8



LITTLE FIRE ANT INFESTATION

Continued from page 7

LFA, CRB or other pests, or to require that those commodities be treated before they can be sold or moved.

While most businesses would willingly refrain from distributing such products, at least one O’ahu nursery is allegedly selling plants known to harbor the ants - and there is no regulatory mechanism to stop them.

Notably, draft rules that would enable HDOA to finally stop the sale of plants and other items infested with LFA, CRB, and other pests – and to require the quarantine and treatment of such items - were approved for a public hearing last February. The draft rules were reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals, the Board of Agriculture, and the Small Business Regulatory Review Board (which considers the potential impacts of such rules), with no testimony in opposition at any of their public meetings.

But eight months later, the hearing still has not been scheduled.

In an October 2023 letter to Sen. Jarrett Keohokālōle, HDOA Director Sharon Hurd explained that the “agriculture industry” objected to the proposed rules’ quarantine provisions.

In an email sent on the senator’s behalf, a staffer for Keohokālōle called the HDOA’s reason for the delay “unacceptable,” and urged the public to demand a public



Pictured above is an infestation of little fire ants (LFA). These tiny invasive pests pack a powerful, painful sting harmful to both people and animals. LFA were first discovered on Hawai’i Island in 1999, but are now present on all islands except for Moloka’i. LFA infestations can cause significant economic damage, specifically to the agriculture, park, and school sectors. - Courtesy Photo

hearing on the original rule proposal.

A new rule proposal was then put forward by the department in November that omitted any mention of the LFA – much less provisions to prevent on-island sales of LFA- or CRB-infected products.

Advocates who have been tracking these rules for months, if not years, were perplexed and outraged.

At its November meeting, the Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals was inundated with testimony in opposition to the new draft rules. Additionally, a letter signed by 23 community organizations was delivered to

the governor, urging that the original rule proposal drafted in February be given a public hearing.

In response to public pressure, on November 17 the HDOA withdrew its attempt to abandon the February rules, suggesting that it would move forward, finally, with the rulemaking process.

Whether the HDOA will follow up on its new commitment in a timely manner remains to be seen. ■

*Kimeona Kane is the current chair of the Waimānalo Neighborhood Board. Wayne Chung Tanaka is the executive director of the Sierra Club of Hawai’i and a former OHA public policy manager.*

Take Action

To report sightings of little fire ants on any island, call 1-808-643-PEST and/or visit [643pest.org](http://643pest.org).

To take part in the fight to stop the little fire ant, visit:  
[www.StopTheAnt.org](http://www.StopTheAnt.org)

Or contact: [hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org) to connect with other pest control advocates

I AM A FRIEND  
I AM AN EXPLORER  
I AM A DREAMER  
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Learn more and apply at [ksbe.edu/preschool](http://ksbe.edu/preschool)

Kamehameha Schools’ policy on admissions is to give preference to children of Hawaiian ancestry to the extent permitted by law.



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# Second Cohort of Moloka'i Clean Energy Technicians Graduate

By Liliana Napoleon

“It was the chance of a lifetime,” said Christina Bethke, one of the 12 Moloka'i residents who are now qualified to work as clean energy technicians. “I lived off the grid my whole life,” explained Bethke who was born and raised on homestead land. “Solar was my passion for decades now.”

Bethke and the other Moloka'i students just finished a four-month, fully funded intro to photovoltaic training course put on by the Ho'ahu Energy Cooperative Moloka'i (HECM). The training was a hybrid of curriculum-based and hands-on learning, intended to educate both in life skills and job opportunities, allowing graduates to transition from a “typical on-grid lifestyle” to an “energy farming lifestyle.”

Graduates of the program are now able to install rooftop solar, build micro and nano grids, and work with on-island renewable energy companies.

This is the second cohort of clean energy technicians that HECM has graduated. The course was taught by Moloka'i's Todd Yamashita, and supported by Project Assistant Leimana Ritte-Camara, as well as the HECM



Members of HECM's second cohort work on a small off-grid solar system built for a few homeless families living on vacant land owned by a local Moloka'i resident. - *Courtesy Photo*

board members. The students ranged greatly in age, from 17 to 72, with the group being female dominated with a high influx of homesteaders.

This gender breakdown makes sense because in the dynamic of the homestead lots, a great portion are leases that are being held by females and the program is targeted at specifically bringing the training to homesteaders on Moloka'i.

Bethke described how solar could make a big differ-

ence quickly, especially for families who haven't had the luxury of consistent electricity.

“The majority of my family still live on homestead and off grid,” said Bethke. “Solar has been very important to us.”

“Having a kid without electric is really rough...but we make do, we're tough,” Bethke added. Even just the act of turning on a light switch, “no one really knows the amount of gratitude I have for that.”

Bethke explained that they recently completed a 24-volt rooftop solar installation at the Camara's homestead, which can run big electronics, like a refrigerator, all day. “To have something on a homestead run 24 hours is unheard of,” she said.

Now, Bethke is looking at taking her training into the growing clean energy job market.

“Get your foot in the door now before it really booms,” she said.

To learn about future clean energy technician training courses, Moloka'i community members are encouraged to email [workforce@hoahuenergy.coop](mailto:workforce@hoahuenergy.coop). ■

*Liliana Napoleon, M.B.A., is Ho'ahu Energy Cooperative Moloka'i's training and workforce developer.*

# New Inductees into the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

One of the most prestigious honors for Hawaiian musicians is inclusion in the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame (HMHF). This, year seven individuals (three posthumously) plus “Honolulu Parks and Recreations Hula Teachers” will be honored at the December 17 “Lei of Stars 2023” ceremony (a Sunday brunch) at the 'Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach.

“Each year, the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame honors persons who have contributed to promoting, preserving and perpetuating Hawaiian music and hula,” explained HMHF President Toni Lee.

Kumu Hula Robert Uluwehi Cazimero of Hālau nā

Kamalei o Līlīehua is a multiple Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award winning and Grammy-nominated composer and musician. He was previously inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2006 as part of the musical duo, The Brothers Cazimero, along with his late brother, Roland Cazimero.

Also being honored this year is Dr. Randie Fong, a music educator, composer, kumu hula and current director of Ho'okahua, Kamehameha Schools' Cultural Vibrancy Group. Fong is a longtime advocate of culture-based education and has served as a cultural consultant.

Kumu Hula Kealoha Kalama, a renowned singer, dancer, and musician is another 2023 honoree. Named Hawai'i's “Most Beautiful Dancer” when she was just 15-years-old, Kalama went on to produce shows in Waikiki and found Hālau Pōhai Kealoha.

Kahu Aaron David Mahi is a noted musician and com-

poser. He is the former conductor of both the Royal Hawaiian Band (for 24 years), and the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra (for seven years). Mahi was honored with a Nā Hōkū Hanohano Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021.

Posthumous honorees include sisters and nā Kumu Hula Louise and Luka Kaleiki. Aunty Louise founded 'Ilima Hula Studio around 1956 with Dottie Ortiz and was later joined by her younger sister, Luka. Louise was among other notable kumu hula who influenced the establishment of the Merrie Monarch Festival.

Also being inducted posthumously into the Hall of Fame is Kumu Hula and Reverend Johnny Lum Ho, founder of Hālau o ka Ua Kani Lehua. Lum Ho was an

SEE HAWAIIAN MUSIC HALL OF FAME ON PAGE 10



Kumu Hula Robert Uluwehi Cazimero - *Courtesy Photo*



Dr. Randie Fong - *Photo: Kamehameha Schools*



Kumu Hula Kealoha Kalama - *Courtesy Photo*



Kahu Aaron David Mahi - *Photo: PID Foundation*



Nā Kumu Hula Louise and Luka Kaleiki - *Photo: Merrie Monarch Festival*



Kumu Hula Johnny Lum Ho - *Courtesy Photo*



## HAWAIIAN MUSIC HALL OF FAME

Continued from page 9

innovative musician, composer and choreographer. His creative hula performances were Merrie Monarch Festival crowd favorites.

Kumu hula being recognized under the umbrella of “Honolulu Parks and Recreations Hula Teachers” are Puanani Alama, Edwina Noelani Kanoho Mahoe and Liffie Leolani Pratt Ha’o. Parks and Recreations kumu being recognized posthumously are: Alice Kalahui, Alice K. Namakelua, Lei Collins, Adeline N. Maunupau Lee, Alice Keawekeane Garner, Rose Maunakea Lane, Joseph Kamohai Kahaulelio, George Holokai, Geraldine “Gerry” Alama, Lei Kaniho, Hannah Kaneakua Basso, Kaulana Kasparovitch, Blossom Clark, Hattie Au and Ku’ulei Clark.

The Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame is a nonprofit educational corporation founded in 1994. Its establishment was inspired by the legacy of Nā Lani ‘Ehā (David Kalākaua, William Pitt Leleiohoku, Lili‘uokalani and Miriam Likelike), the four alii considered patrons of Hawaiian culture and each of whom were brilliant composers and musicians.

Keeping with this tradition, inductees into the Hall of Fame are selected by the organization’s advisory board from among Hawai‘i’s many gifted composers, musicians and vocalists. Honorees include individuals who have been instrumental in creating and perpetuating Hawai‘i’s unique musical voice. ■

*The annual Lei of Stars awards ceremony serves as a fundraiser for the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame. Individual tickets are priced at \$200 and corporate tables of 10 are priced from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Individuals or organizations interested in attending should contact HMHF President Toni Lee at [parade.lady001@gmail.com](mailto:parade.lady001@gmail.com).*

# Preserving the Original Story of Kapaemahu



The dedication of a new plaque at the Kapaemahu Monument in Waikiki in late October was an effort 10 years in the making. Local leaders in attendance included (standing l-r) City Councilmember Radiant Cordero, City Managing Director Mike Formby, Mayor Rick Blangiardi, Rep. Adrian Tam, Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson. Kneeling is Hinailemoana Wong-Kalu.

- Photo: Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

**A**s a child in the 1980s, Hinailemoana Wong-Kalu remembers swimming with her friends at Waikiki Beach and then, cold and wet, sitting on the warm Kapaemahu Stones to dry off a bit before going home. At the time, she and her friends did not know the significance, or the story, of the stones, nor did she think that 30 years in the future she would be part of an effort to preserve and document the mo’olelo behind them.

For decades, the Kapaemahu Stones were actually forgotten, neglected, and – during WWII – buried beneath a bowling alley as the wahi pana of Waikiki was irrevocably transformed from a wetland ecosystem into an urban playground for tourists.

In 1963, the stones were rediscovered after the bowling alley was demolished. Renowned teacher and historian Mary Kawena Puku‘i knew the story of the stones, understood their cultural significance, and insisted they be preserved.

Puku‘i said that the name, Kapaemahu, means “a row of mähū.” But the plaque that was installed at the site called them “The Wizard Stones of Kapaemahu” (without translating “Kapaemahu”) and said they represented four “soothsayers” famous for their healing skills.

In 1997, as part of an effort to restore Hawaiian culture and history in Waikiki, the site was renovated and rededicated. The stones were placed on an elevated platform, enclosed inside a fence and the surrounding area was planted with native medicinal plants. The effort was led by historian George Kanahale and traditional healer “Papa” Henry Auwae. To this day, Auwae’s haumāna serve as the caretakers of stones.

Still, the story about the stones shared on the signage did not include the detail that the healers were mähū or, significantly, that this contributed to their miraculous abilities.

Wong-Kalu heard a mo’olelo about Kapaemahu while she was studying at UH Mānoa in the 90s. Years later, she shared the mo’olelo with filmmakers Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson while working with them on a documentary. But there were other versions of the story out there too.

Intrigued, Hamer began to research the mo’olelo and incredibly, in 2015, he discovered an original manuscript recounting the story of Kapaemahu. It was written by James ‘Aalapuna Harbottle Boyd,

who served both King Kalākaua and Queen Lili‘uokalani. Boyd’s manuscript was published in *Thrum’s Almanac* in 1907.

Kapaemahu is the story of four travelers who bring healing arts to Hawai‘i from Kahiki. They are described as “mähū” being masculine in appearance, but feminine in nature. The account related by Boyd, which some speculate was told to him by Lili‘uokalani herself, leaves little room for debate as to the true nature of the four healers. Moreover, Boyd says that it was their duality of spirit that augmented their healing powers.

“When I discovered the original manuscript, then dug through all the available newspapers and other sources from then until now, I began to understand how and why the story had been changed,” Hamer recalled. “That’s when it dawned on me that Kapaemahu is more than a story – it is a living record of a century of suppression and censorship.”

In addition to working on an academy-award nominated animated short film about the mo’olelo, a children’s book, and an exhibit at Bishop Museum, Hamer, Wilson and Wong-Kalu began working to get the signage for the monument changed.

That turned out to be a decade-long process that involved the City & County of Honolulu, the Mayor’s office and negotiation with the caretakers of the stones.

“After learning the deeper meaning of the mo’olelo and thinking about all that’s lost when people are denied knowledge of their history, it was clear that this was something we had to do,” Wilson reflected. “Not doing something to help right the wrongs of the past would simply be maintaining the status quo, which is unacceptable.”

In traditional times, mähū had a place of honor and respect in Hawaiian society. Tuti Kanahale, a native speaker and university language instructor, says that mähū had kuleana for genealogy, healing, storytelling and hula and that without them, this knowledge would be lost.

Lynette Paglinawan, a social worker and expert in ho’oponopono explains that Hawaiians recognized that duality exists within everyone: “We have a ‘Ku’ and a ‘Hina.’ We have a hard and a soft. We have a male and we have a female.”

This understanding and social acceptance of mähū was shared throughout the Pacific. Similarly, the notion of duality is characterized as “two-spirit” in many Native American tribes. According to the Indian Health Service, “In most tribes they were considered neither men nor women; they occupied a distinct, alternative gender status.”

Sadly, assimilation into Western culture and adoption of a Western lens has diminished the status and role of mähū within many Indigenous communities and precipitated discrimination against them.

On Oct. 24, 2023, a new bronze plaque for the stones was dedicated – a victory after so many years of advocacy and negotiation. It features a QR code which takes visitors to [www.kapaemahu.info](http://www.kapaemahu.info). The site includes detailed information about the history and cultural significance of the stones, a guided virtual tour app, and a link to the animated short film, *Kapaemahu*.

“It is a testament to the sophistication of Hawaiian society that our people knew there was much more than simply a gender binary existence, much more than just the physicality of our existence – that the heart, mind and spirit all culminate to make a whole person,” Wong-Kalu said. “They understood that one’s sexuality and preference, and one’s gender expression, is irrelevant in articulating who our people are and insufficient in speaking to our roles and responsibilities in society or the contributions we can make.” ■



# GIVE THE GIFT OF BOOKS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

As you shop for gifts this holiday season, consider going “low-tech.” Instead of new tablets, phones and the latest and greatest “must-have” high-tech gadgets and gizmos, gift your loved ones with books by, and for, our lāhui.

Native Hawaiians have a tradition of literacy and learning. In the 1800s, Hawai‘i had the highest literacy rate in the world. In 1834, less than a decade after books and newspapers in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i began being printed, an astounding 95% of Native Hawaiians were literate. In comparison, the worldwide literacy rate in the 1830s was only about 15%.

So this holiday season, escape the overstimulation of modern life and settle down on the sofa for some quiet time with a book about Hawai‘i by a Native Hawaiian writer. It’s an investment in our minds and imaginations – and an investment in our native economy.

**HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED – BUT THERE IS MUCH MORE TO CHOOSE FROM:**

## *Every Drop is a Man’s Nightmare*

By Megan Kamalei Kakimoto

A collection of stories featuring mixed Native Hawaiian and Japanese women through a contemporary landscape of inherited wisdom and the ghosts of colonization; a love letter to Hawaiian identity and a warning from an occupied territory threatening to erupt.

## *Everything Ancient Was Once New*

By Emalani Case

An exploration of Indigenous persistence through the concept of Kahiki, a term that is both the ancestral homeland for Kānaka Maoli and the knowledge that there is life beyond our shores.

## *From a Native Daughter*

By Haunani-Kay Trask

Revised edition of the book originally published in 1993. A provocative, well-reasoned attack against the rampant abuse of Native Hawaiian rights, institutional racism and gender discrimination. Includes new material that builds on issues raised in the first edition.

## *Kaluaikoolau*

By Piilani

Book 5 of the Hawaiian language reprint series, Ke Kupu Hou. The personal narrative of Piilani, devoted wife of Kaluaikoolau and mother to Kaleimanu. The family hid in the mountain forests of Kaua‘i to escape banishment to Kalau-papa that would separate their ‘ohana.

## *Ka Po‘e Mo‘o Akua: Hawaiian Reptilian Water Deities*

By Marie Alohalani Brown

An exploration of the fearsome and fascinating creatures known as mo‘o that live in or near fresh water, are predominantly female, and often masquerade as stunningly beautiful humans.

## *Lei Nāhonoapli‘ilani: Songs of West Maui*

Edited by Nicholas Keali‘i Lum and Zachary Alaka‘i Lum

Includes lyrics, translations and musical notations of more than 80 of the most beloved songs about this wahi pana.

## *Makabiki: A Murder Mystery During the Annual Tribute to the God Lono in Ancient Hawai‘i*

By Malcolm Nāea Chun

A murder mystery set in ancient Hawai‘i during the annual tribute to the god, Lono. A high priest is found dead before the rituals can begin.

## *Nānā i ke Kumu: Helu ‘Ekolu*

By Lynette K. Paglinawan, Richard Paglinawan, Dennis Kauahi and Valli Kalei Kanuha

This third volume of Nānā i ke Kumu, illustrated by ‘Imai-kalani Kalāhele, presents traditions associated with grieving and healing practices for modern-day family conflicts.

## *Nā Wahi Kapu o Maui*

By Kapulani Landgraf

Documents geographical, cultural and archaeological features within the 12 traditional land divisions of Maui with photographic images and poetic text offering insightful commentary on the land and its people.

## *No Mākou ka Mana: Liberating the Nation*

By Kamanamaikalani Beamer

An assertion that the founders of the Hawaiian Kingdom exercised their own agency, selectively appropriating ideas from the West – a new point of reference for understanding their motives and methods.

## *‘Obu‘obu nā Mauna o ‘E‘ēka: Place Names of Maui Komohana*

By Cody Pucio Pata

Details more than 1,600 place names from Maui Komohana (West Maui) compiled from maps, 19th and 20th century newspapers, online databases, archival records, mo‘olelo, mele and recordings of native speakers.

## *Remembering Our Intimacies Mo‘olelo, Aloha ‘Āina, and Ea*

By Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio

Centering on the personal and embodied articulations of aloha ‘āina, Osorio detangles the concept from the effects of colonialism and occupation.

## *Ua Mau Ke Ea: Sovereignty Endures*

By David Keanu Sai

An overview of the political and legal history of the Hawaiian Islands, chronicled through storytelling, interviews, archival images and Hawaiian language newspaper articles.

## *Ulu*

By Kai Gaspar

A lyrical and poetic memoir that captures the world of Hōnaunau, Hawai‘i Island in the 70s and 80s and the humanity of its unforgettable villagers. Gaspar weaves together themes of “broken family, queer exploration and aching love of land and culture.”

These titles and more are available online at Native Books [www.nativebookshawaii.org/](http://www.nativebookshawaii.org/) or visit their storefront at 1164 Nu‘uanu Avenue in Honolulu. ■



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# Growing Pains of Population Gains

## 2020 Census Results Confirm What We Have Felt for Years

By Cedric R. Duarte

The Wednesday night hula class is wrapping up at Hālau Ka Lei Hali'a O Ka Lokelani. Shoes are still piled up at the entrance. The walls are surrounded by pictures of loved ones, close friends, and hula icons Emma DeFries and Aloha Dalire. Pahu drums are carefully returned to rest until the next gathering. After hugs and kisses, it's time for heavy coats and scarves because it's 50 degrees and dropping outside. This hula class is in Oregon.

"You just want to rush to your car so you can blast the heater," said Kumu Hula Leialoha Ka'ula. "Aside from that, you would never know you aren't in Hawai'i. We're connected when we are in that space; it's our pu'u honua; we are home."

Like many other Native Hawaiians, Ka'ula made the heartbreaking financial decision to move to the continental United States.

The Native Hawaiian diaspora has been growing at an unprecedented rate. The idea that more Hawaiians now live on the continent than in Hawai'i is no longer an assumption.

The final results of the 2020 Census show that 53% of Native Hawaiians now reside in the continental U.S., while just 47% are in Hawai'i.

Overall, 680,442 Native Hawaiians were counted in the United States in 2020, a 29% increase over 2010.

The U.S. Census Bureau carries out hundreds of surveys every year. However, its most well-known responsibility is to administer the decennial Census.

The U.S. Constitution requires the government to conduct a national census of the U.S. population every 10 years.

The decennial Census counts Native Hawaiians as disaggregated from other racial and ethnic groups, meaning that the Native Hawaiian population could be analyzed by itself.

The Native Hawaiian Research Hui, a collaborative initiative involving Native Hawaiian-serving organizations, including the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Lili'uokalani Trust, Papa Ola Lōkahi, The Queen's Health System, and Kamehameha Schools, has been monitoring these demographic trends.

The Hui's analysis revealed that the size of the Native Hawaiian populations in Hawai'i and on the continent increased. The difference is that the continental Native Hawaiian population is growing five times faster than the Native Hawaiian population in Hawai'i.

"I feel that I have a kuleana to help provide opportunities for Native Hawaiians to connect with their language and culture," Ka'ula reflected. "Several generations of Kānaka on the continent are disconnected from home both geographically and culturally. It doesn't have to be that way. We can bring music, language, and culture to

the continent and use technology to provide more opportunities to build that pilina."

Hālau Ka Lei Hali'a O Ka Lokelani has hosted regular special guests for workshops on hula, 'ōlelo Hawai'i, arts and crafts, and history.

"It's important for Hawaiians at home to empathize and have aloha for those on the continent. We're not any less Hawaiian just because we're not home. We can contribute to elevating our culture and help with issues facing our community."

Efforts to recreate the essence of Hawaiian culture on the continent have continued to expand in recent years. Concerts and events with other Pacific Islanders serve as gathering places for the Native Hawaiian community.

Over the last 20 years, the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs has held conventions in Anchorage, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement held its inaugural Western Regional Native Hawaiian Convention in Las Vegas this past summer.

Dennis Rose was born and raised in Orange County, Calif., and spent over a decade in Kansas City before moving to Hawai'i to care for his mother. He embraced the Hawaiian Civic Club of Kansas City to develop his Hawaiian identity.

"Being around the civic club is wonderful, and being

around the issues was very good for me," Rose said. "It was really different in the 80s and 90s. It was difficult to connect with other Hawaiians. Cell phones were new, there wasn't an internet the way we have it today and in Kansas City, Native Hawaiians were few and far between. You don't run into them at work, at church, or college. For some Hawaiians on the continent, you could be the only family for 25 or 50 miles or more."

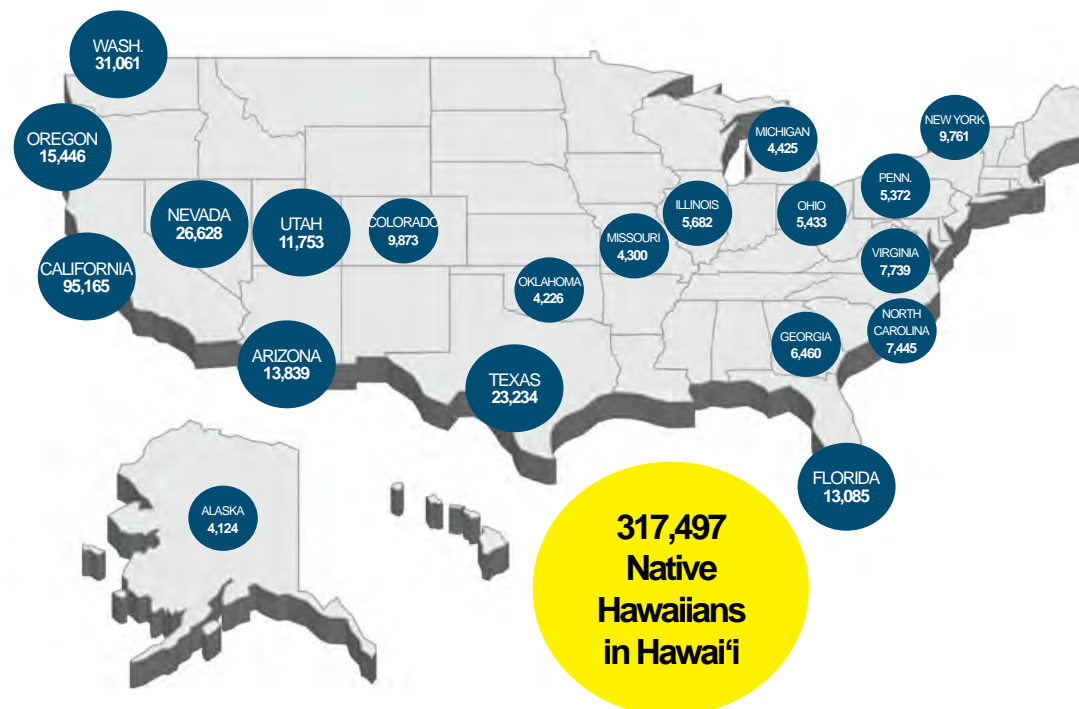
Rose sees how technology has closed the gap between Hawai'i and the continent, but feels there could be a greater digital connection that becomes a lifeline for those seeking to stay connected to the pulse of their homeland.

"What I would have given to be able to have the access we have today, that just did not exist in my world – and how wonderful it is for them to have the internet the way it is today. We just need more. It's so important for the continent Hawaiians to be able to learn about, and stay connected to, the culture, the issues, and the challenges we're having as a community so we can all be a part of the conversations and potential problem-solving. Recorded videos are great but livestreams that take time differences into account are best."

SEE POPULATION GAINS ON PAGE 13

## 680,442 Native Hawaiians in the U.S.

2020 Census results show that 53% of Native Hawaiians reside on the continent, 47% in Hawai'i



2020 Census; Population counts for Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone or in any combination; Top 20 states and Alaska. <https://data.census.gov>



## POPULATION GAINS

Continued from page 12

*"It's important for Hawaiians at home to empathize and have aloha for those on the continent. We're not any less Hawaiian just because we're not home."*

— KUMU HULA  
LEIALOHA KA'ULA



Kumu Hula Leialoha Ka'ula - Courtesy Photo

The 2020 Census results represent an inflection point for the Native Hawaiian community and punctuates the resilience of the lāhui. Technology has brought our language and culture closer to those on the continent. Still, there is a desire for more to be done. However, it's clear that regardless of where Native Hawaiians find themselves, we remain one people, connected by the enduring spirit of a nation. ■

*Cedric R. Duarte is a Honolulu-based communications professional who specializes in the Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander community. Over a 25-year span, he has held several key positions in media and is currently the Managing Partner of The Kālaïmoku Group, a Native Hawaiian-Owned SBA 8(a) Certified communications and marketing firm. He resides in Ewa Beach with his wife and two daughters.*

## Faces of the Diaspora Series Bridging Cultures

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

**K**e Aloha Alo Douma grew up in the shadow of O'ahu's lush Ko'olau Mountain Range. Now, she's raising her three children in the mountains, too – the White Mountains of Arizona in Pinetop.

"My heart is always back home in Hawai'i," said Douma, an attorney who specializes in Indian law. "There's always this hope and wish that, somehow, I'll be able to use the knowledge that I'm gaining to someday, help our Kānaka Maoli people."

But the American Southwest isn't strange to Douma, who was born in Phoenix. It plays just as important of a role in her life as Hawai'i.

Her maternal lineage stems from the White Mountain Apache Tribe, while her paternal roots are Kānaka Maoli and Samoan. Douma's father, Lefty Alo from O'ahu, met his future wife, Marjorie Cody, on a mission trip to the Southwest for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

He returned to the islands to sell his possessions before moving to the continent to marry her and start a family, with Douma being the eldest of three. But her parents eventually realized that O'ahu offered the children more education opportunities, with Brigham Young University-Hawai'i in Lā'ie. So Douma spent the "highs and lows" of her childhood in Kahuku.

In sixth grade, she journaled her career goals of either becoming a lawyer, an architect, or a backup dancer for singer Janet Jackson. Her dreams felt far-fetched at the time. "Nobody in my family had gone to college at that point," Douma said.

Her father worked in construction, and the threat of getting hurt on the job – and losing his income – always loomed. At one point, they lived in a tent on their homestead land in Hau'ula. Their faith kept them "always moving forward," Douma said.

Raised around her Hawaiian 'ohana, Douma's culture served as a pillar in her adolescence. She's named after her grandmother, who's named after her grandmother.

Douma learned hula, Tahitian, and Samoan dance, but doesn't recall her hula lineage. It culminated with her performing at the Polynesian Cultural Center.

At Kahuku High School, Douma shared the same religion and "chop suey" heritage as her peers. "It was easy because everybody was just mixed," she said.

But Douma yearned for change. "I wanted to try something different," she said. At the age of 17, she left O'ahu for BYU Provo in Utah, and was immediately hit with culture shock.

"I was so excited to get off the rock, and, as soon as I left, I was so sad," Douma said. "I had never been a minority. It was a hard transition."

She cried to her parents about returning to the 'āina. But her father – now a college graduate himself – used "tough love" to keep her in Utah through her first semester, and, over time, she befriended other Hawaiian students.

"He had a vision of something better for me that I couldn't see at the time," Douma said. "I grew to love it, and I grew to appreciate things that were different."

The decision to remain on the continent led to world travel. As a member of her university's Living Legends dance group,



Ke Aloha Alo Douma - Courtesy Photo

she represented both her Native American and Polynesian cultures in "countries I'd never heard of," like Croatia and the Czech Republic.

At 21, Douma followed in her father's footsteps as a missionary for the France Marseille Mission, learning French in the process. But after graduating, she put her hopes of law school on the back burner.

"I had never met an attorney," Douma said. "I probably had those negative stereotypes in my head that I had to overcome."

And she remembered the words once spoken to her younger self by her non-Polynesian swim coach. "You're just another lazy Hawaiian," he told her, which had devastated Douma.

Determined to succeed, she moved to Arizona to work in the White Mountain Apache Tribe's legal department where she learned about tribal law and prepared for law school.

At the age of 25, she became the first Kānaka Maoli Miss Indian World, winning on a platform promoting education and a talent of dancing hula. "That was so fun – to be able to bridge both sides of my cultures," Douma said. "I have grown to really appreciate each side of who I am."

She chose the University of Arizona in Tucson for its strong Indian law program and earned an advanced law degree in Indigenous people's law and policy.

In 2009, she married her husband, Casey Douma, also an attorney who she met at a summer law program. From the Pueblo of Laguna, he impressed her with his knowledge of Indian law and connection to his Native American heritage, which also includes Hopi Tewa.

They lived in New Mexico, then moved to Arizona for job opportunities. In 2010, they started their own family and have three children: Aulani, Imua and Kaikoa. Douma is "very intentional" about fostering the children's Hawaiian identity, and they visit Hawai'i every Christmas and over the summer.

"I want them to be immersed in whatever they can," she said.

As an attorney, Douma represents tribal nations, covering issues related to Indigenous rights. Her biggest career milestone thus far was serving as the attorney general for her tribe and successfully lobbying in Washington, D.C., to bring them basic resources. Some of her tribal members weren't "even able to turn on their faucet and get clean running water," Douma said.

Back in Hawai'i, her father looks for jobs for her, and her kids push their parents to move. While Douma doesn't know what the future holds, she keeps one belief close to her heart.

"We're lifting the bar for our people every time we are doing something good, whether we're back at home in Hawai'i or living on the mainland or abroad," she said. ■



# Supporting Kānaka Maoli Social Enterprises From the Continent

By Cheryl Chee Tsutsumi

**K**ama'āina have left Hawai'i for a multitude of reasons; for Lisa Lynn Kahululani Kleissner (maiden name Porter), a 1972 graduate of Kamehameha Schools, it was love.

Flashback: December 1974. Karl "Charly" Kleissner was an exchange student from Innsbruck, Austria, attending Seabury Hall on Maui and living with close friends of Kleissner's dad. Charly's visit with her family in Kailua, O'ahu, over Christmas that year proved to be life-changing. It didn't take long for the two young people to know they were meant to be together.

Eight years later, Kleissner left her position as co-principal of a small architectural firm in Honolulu to exchange vows with Charly in Austria. Thus began a life that has been marked by adventure, hard work, and philanthropy in over 25 countries on four continents.

After four years in Vienna, where they welcomed a son and a daughter, the Kleissners returned to the U.S., winding up in Silicon Valley. Kleissner worked in corporate architecture as a consultant for fledgling high-tech and biotech firms and traded some of her services for stock. Meanwhile, Charly had earned a doctorate in computer science and accepted an executive position with a high-tech company.

In 1999, when his company and several of the startups Kleissner invested in went public, they found themselves financially able to focus on "impact investing" – supporting companies and organizations that are dedicated to making a positive contribution to people and the planet.

The following year, they started their family foundation, the KL Felicitas Foundation (K for Kleissner, L for Legacy and felicitas meaning "happiness" in Latin) to empower like-minded entrepreneurs and innovators.

"For the last 23 years, Charly and I have been actively experimenting with the connection of purpose and capital," Kleissner said. "When the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors published Solutions for Impact Investors, a resource we co-wrote in 2009 for foundations looking to mission-align their endowments, we received a lot of invitations to speak at conferences around the world.

"That led to a chance meeting in Alaska with Brant Chillingworth, senior program officer for the Honolulu-based Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation. He invited us to connect with other Hawai'i foundations and trusts, which brought us to Neil Hannahs."

For 15 years, Hannahs was the director of Kamehameha Schools' Land Assets Division, managing a portfolio of 358,000 acres of agriculture and conservation lands in Hawai'i. After he left that post, he started Ho'okele Strategies in January 2016 to provide strategic analysis, leadership counsel, values mentoring and organizational support to businesses.

When Kleissner and Hannahs met, he talked about what he saw as an emergence of a cultural social enterprise movement in Hawai'i.

"Based on the success of what the KL Felicitas Foun-

dation was doing in India and central Eastern Europe, I was curious if our experiences could be helpful," Kleissner said. "Most importantly, it gave me an opportunity to come home and do something potentially meaningful for the Hawaiian community.

"I saw, in the local enterprises that Neil introduced to me, a beautiful integration of cultural values and innovation, something we were not seeing anywhere else. Ironically, these entrepreneurs did not understand how unique their businesses were. They just saw themselves as doing good work for the lāhui."

Together with Hannahs and Pia Chock, who manages Kamehameha Schools' \$10 million food systems investment fund, Kleissner co-founded the nonprofit Hawai'i Investment Ready (HIR; hiready.net) in 2013. Kamehameha Schools and the KL Felicitas Foundation provided seed capital to kick-start HIR's Business Accelerator Program, which guides local social enterprises as they analyze and refine their business and financial models and nurture the right relationships to achieve their next level of impact.

"When I started working with HIR, I realized how culturally disconnected I had become from Hawai'i and my 'ohana," Kleissner said. "HIR affords me the opportunity to reconnect while giving back.

"Our business accelerator cohorts have averaged 70% Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs; all participating businesses must have a clearly defined cultural impact and/or serve kama'āina and Kānaka Maoli. The Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs I have been honored to work with helped me 'hear' my Hawaiian grandmother's voice again."

Through this work, Kleissner also learned that strengthening Hawai'i's innovative island enterprises was not enough. Many of them were struggling to raise capital, and traditional grants and financing options were not always adequate or aligned with their needs. HIR's business accelerator program provided an opportunity to connect Kleissner's global community of impact-investing peers with a community of local grantors, traditional investors and impact investors who were willing to explore alternative strategies to support positive change.

To date, more than 70 organizations and companies have benefited from the program, and HIR has evolved



Lisa Kleissner (left) and Micky Huihui, executive director of the Hawai'i People's Fund, work on presentation skills during a recent HIR Business Accelerator Program session in Hāna. - Photo: Margaret Peebles

to become a leader in regenerative economic development. In February 2022, it launched the Hawai'i Food Systems Accelerator for local enterprises and for partners from the private sector, government agencies and philanthropic organizations who share the goal of developing a resilient food system in the Islands.

Native Hawaiians, Kleissner believes, are particularly attuned to the emerging concept of "system investing," which considers the big picture not just individual enterprises.

"You can't sail from Tahiti to Hawai'i by the stars unless you are aware of the entire environment, or system, in which you are operating," she said. "That includes other factors such as the wind, ocean currents, weather patterns and migratory paths of fish and birds. This is the wisdom we can tap into as we look to address food security, affordable housing and other issues."

Kleissner and Charly are hands-on with the programs and projects their foundation supports, and they spend about nine months on the road every year. Their primary residence is in Big Sur, Calif., but HIR has provided a way for them to integrate their ties to Hawai'i with their global work in the impact markets.

"While I have brought knowledge, networks and resources to Hawai'i to support Kānaka Māoli and kama'āina social enterprises, the people I have been privileged to work with have gifted me with so much more," Kleissner said.

"I may have left Hawai'i, but I never gave up my kuleana for Hawai'i. HIR allows me to be a global impact investor and a Native Hawaiian with kuleana to Hawai'i."



# The Invisible Diaspora

## Hundreds of Pa‘ahao are Serving Their Sentences on the Continent

By Adam Keawe Manalo-Camp

**N**ative Hawaiians currently constitute 21.8% of the Hawai‘i’s population yet comprise about 40% of the state’s inmate population. And a significant number of male inmates serve out their sentences not in Hawai‘i, but at facilities in Arizona.

Beginning in the 1980s, Hawai‘i’s prisons and jails became dangerously overcrowded due to increased poverty, the rise of the meth epidemic, and the enactment of new laws including mandatory minimal sentencing.

Due to overcrowding at Hālawā Correctional Facility (HCF) and at the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC), state officials began to ship both male and female inmates to facilities on the continental United States in the late 1990s.

The general criteria that continues to be used to determine who is sent to the continent is, if the inmate will be incarcerated for longer than five years and is in good health, then they are eligible for transfer to Arizona (but would be returned to Hawai‘i towards the end of their sentence). These include inmates convicted of felony charges ranging from first degree murder to robbery to possessing more than one ounce of meth.

This was practice was explained in a statement received from the Office of the Director of the Hawai‘i Department of Public Safety (PSD): “Over the years Hawai‘i’s inmate population has increased but prison space has not. If the PSD did not have the ability to send inmates to Saguaro Correctional Center, Hālawā Correctional Facility, PSD’s largest in-state facility, would be grossly overcrowded.

“Conditions created by overcrowding place the citizens and elected officials of Hawai‘i under a cloud of liability that could threaten the autonomous control and supervision of Hālawā Correctional Facility as well as other jails and prisons throughout the state and cost the state untold millions in federal fines.”

In 2007, male inmates began to be consolidated at the Saguaro Correctional Center (SCC) in Eloy, Ariz., a prison run by CoreCivic, a corrections management corporation. Consolidation was completed in 2015 and, as of mid-November 2023, Saguaro Correctional Center (also the subject of the 2017 documentary, *Out of State*, by Ōiwi filmmaker Ciara Lacy), had a Hawai‘i inmate population of 877.

In 2009, all female inmates were returned home to Hawai‘i after repeated incidents of abuse in Kentucky prison facilities.

However, the return of male inmates is unlikely due to the size of the population.

According to the statement from the PSD, “Bringing more prisoners home from the mainland is something that the department would like to see happen. It is an ongoing effort that requires multiple levels of coordination with all of the agencies that contribute to the crimi-



Operated by CoreCivic, a corrections management corporation, Saguaro Correctional Center in Eloy, Ariz., currently houses some 877 pa‘ahao (inmates) from Hawai‘i. In the late 1990s, the Hawai‘i Department of Public Safety began sending pa‘ahao from Hawai‘i to several prisons on the continent to address overcrowding. However, since 2015, pa‘ahao from Hawai‘i have been consolidated at Saguaro. - Photo: Mass.com

nal justice system. That is something that will have to be worked out over a span of years.”

Mark Kawika Patterson currently serves as chairperson of the Hawai‘i Correctional System Oversight Commission and is a passionate advocate for criminal justice reforms. During his tenure as warden of WCCC, he helped to push for more Hawaiian culture-based programs by engaging those in PSD and looking for partnerships – including with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. These included having the women transcribe Hawaiian language newspapers, engaging in Indigenous farming methods, cleaning up Ulupō Heiau, and other cultural programming.

“Learning ‘ōlelo and having contact with the land transformed the women,” Patterson commented.

“Native Hawaiians are such a large demographic in the prison system, and many are coming from within and around Hawaiian homesteads. A lot of it has to do with generational poverty, untreated mental health, generational trauma, and other social determinants. Let’s be honest, the ones that go through the prison system are the marginalized. People with money are able to get around the system,” Patterson said.

Kumu Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu has taught hula and language programs at HCF and believes that the lack of access to land and the impact of colonization are factors for inmates that we need to understand.

“A capitalist society goes against the way Pacific Is-

lander and many Asian societies operate because it stresses accumulating wealth. Your value is based on what you earn, not who you are. This also breaks down family structures and makes the environment unfriendly to our way of life,” said Wong-Kalu.

The PSD’s 2022 Annual Report shows that the availability of Hawaiian cultural programs differ from facility to facility and that there is no comprehensive statewide Hawaiian culture-based programming similar to general education programs despite the fact that Hawai‘i has a unified integrated state-level prison and jail system.

“There cannot just be classes. It must be an integrated way of life and knowing one’s kūlana (role) and kuleana,” Wong-Kalu added.

“A major failure we have is re-entry,” Patterson notes. “We are being punitive and not rehabilitative. We need to be a pu‘uhonua where we heal people and have them bring their gifts to the community.”

Patterson believes that building relationships – including with the community, the land, and the culture – are key to healing trauma, breaking generational cycles of incarceration, and staying out of the prison system.

“We really shouldn’t be sending people to Arizona because we need to have the people re-establish their relationship with the community and they can’t do that over there,” he said. “There is a sense of place that can come only from here. If we can bring back the women, we can bring back the men.” ■



# Ho'i 'Ana i ke Kulāiwi

## Born on the Continent, These 'Ōiwi Returned to Hawai'i

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

**H**awaiians leave Hawai'i for all kinds of reasons. For many it's purely financial – the cost of living in Hawai'i has become so burdensome that too many people find they are living to work instead of working to live. They relocate to the continent to improve their quality of life, including achieving homeownership – something that has become out-of-reach for too many 'Ōiwi here in our kulāiwi.

Others leave because of job transfers or to pursue their careers. Some go to college on the continent, become part of their new communities, and remain once they graduate. Still others find love on the continent and happily relocate to be with their partner.

While some Hawaiians of the diaspora eventually return to Hawai'i, most never do. Instead, they find (or form) new communities on the continent, raise their families there, and visit Hawai'i and 'ohana back home as often as they can.

And a handful of 'Ōiwi, children of the diaspora born on the continent, find their way back to their kulāiwi as adults.

### Mele and Hula in the City by the Bay

Anina Nahe'ana Ka'ōhua'aionā'ali'i Carmack, 40, was born in San Francisco in the 1980s and Hawaiian music and hula have been part of her life for as long as she can remember. "My family was very 'arts and music,'" Carmack shared. Her father, Ka'ala Carmack, is a musician and her mother, Rosalie Alfonso, is a dancer.

Although her father is Native Hawaiian, Carmack is also Native American and Filipino. Her mother is Papago of the Tohono O'odham Nation, and growing up, the family would take road trips to Arizona to visit 'ohana and stay on the reservation. And every year, Carmack and her family participated in powwows, dressing in traditional regalia and dancing.

Carmack initially learned to dance hula from the performers that were part of her father's Hawaiian music group. At age 10, she joined Nā Lei Hulu i ka Wēkiu, and began studying under Kumu Hula Patrick Makuakāne. By the time she was 12, Carmack was the youngest member of Makuakāne's performing group. "That was a big experience for me," she said. "It really grounded me in my Hawai'i roots."

In addition to performing Hawaiian music, her father also taught music in San Francisco's "Japantown," and so Carmack (who is not part Japanese) ended up attending a Japanese bilingual preschool and elementary school – in part because the principal was also from Hawai'i like her dad. "Hawai'i people on the mainland tend to just find each other," she said.

Throughout her teens, Carmack traveled and per-

formed as part of Makaukāne's hālau. A couple years after graduating from high school, she decided to enroll at UH Hilo.

For her, attending college in Hawai'i wasn't just about getting a degree – it was also an opportunity to gain experience and to learn more about herself. "Growing up, we'd come here every Christmas and summer. When my dad's parents were still alive, we would come to O'ahu and sometimes me and my brother would attend summer school here."

Carmack's uncle and aunties were living on Hawai'i Island at the time and she knew having 'ohana close by would help with her adjustment. Because of her grounding in Hawaiian culture, the only "culture shock" she experienced moving from San Francisco to Hilo was transitioning from a big cosmopolitan city to a small town.

Despite moving to the home of the Merrie Monarch Hula Festival, Carmack fell away from dancing. "The hardest part of moving was not just leaving my parents and my city, but leaving hula because it was such a big part of my life. When I moved I thought I was going to be more immersed in it, but that was not the case at all."

After graduating with a degree in linguistics (she continued her study of Japanese plus 'ōlelo Hawai'i and a little bit of French) Carmack decided to remain in Hilo and ended up living there for another seven or eight years.

She eventually relocated to O'ahu due to limited job opportunities in Hilo and wound up working as a student services advisor at Heald College. Ironically, that gave her an opportunity to tap into her music background as she and a few others on staff incorporated Hawaiian music and hula into the schools' quarterly graduation ceremonies. "It was kind of nice to have that back in my life again," she said.

She started making new friends who were also into the music scene and began singing back-up in various bands. "Although I enjoyed Hawaiian music, I ended up singing with local cover bands and doing reggae music. It was new and exciting, being in that nightlife industry."

It was during this time that Carmack met her partner, Rob Wengler, an 'Ōiwi fire fighter; nine years later, they are a family with two keiki.

No longer part of the music scene, Carmack currently works as an executive assistant for a condominium complex and she and Wengler are focused on raising their children. Their oldest attended a Pūnana Leo and is now attending a kula kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion school), and next year their 2-year-old will start at Pūnana Leo. "We're committed as a family to learn the language together," said Carmack. "Neither of us are fluent, so it's a lifelong journey."

And almost two decades later, she found her way back to hula after her 6-year-old daughter started dancing with Kumu Hula Vicky Holt Takamine of Pua Ali'i 'Ilima and Carmack decided to join the hālau's new adults' class. "I'm just taking basic classes and it's nice to do



Anina Nahe'ana Carmack with her partner, Rob Wengler, at a recent gala. Although born and raised in San Francisco, she grew up dancing hula and singing Hawaiian music. Twenty years ago she enrolled at UH Hilo and after graduating decided to stay and make her home in Hawai'i. - Courtesy Photo

something for myself again as a mother," she said.

Carmack has been in Hawai'i for almost 20 years now and is settled with her 'ohana but her path was not without challenges. Reflecting on her transition from the continent, she spoke candidly: "Growing up I was so certain about my identity. And then when I moved to Hawai'i, sometimes local people made me feel less Hawaiian just because I was born somewhere else. Even though I could sing Hawaiian songs, dance hula, chant oli – it still wasn't enough."

"The mere fact that you aren't born on this land is a big factor to some people and, unfortunately, to some folks it doesn't matter that you are of Hawaiian blood or that you practice the culture."

"I feel like people who live on the mainland and who miss Hawai'i and Hawaiian culture accept anybody who is part of that, and you're all proud of who you are together. That is the aloha spirit I was so fortunate to grow up with."



## STORIES OF THE HAWAIIAN DIASPORA

## HO'I 'ANA I KE KULĀIWI

Continued from page 16

## Raised in Seattle but Rooted in Hawai'i

Growing up, Kaniela Hō'olu Hughes, 33, always felt like he was in between two worlds. Although he was born in Kirkland, Wash., and raised on the continent, Hughes' earliest memories are of Hawai'i.

"I remember the beach, and my mom taking us to the zoo, and listening to Willie K play music. My connection was always to this 'āina and the culture here," he recalled. "Both my parents were born and raised on O'ahu and for as long as I can remember, we spent most summers at my grandma's house in Kailua."

Hughes' parents moved from Hawai'i to Washington in 1981 after his father, David Hughes, a stand-out football player from Kamehameha Schools during the 1970s, was drafted by the Seattle Seahawks during his junior year at Boise State University.

The fourth of five children, Hughes was mostly raised in Seattle where the family settled once David retired from the NFL. Despite living on the continent, Hughes said his 'ohana maintained strong cultural connections. "My dad grew up playing and singing Hawaiian music in addition to being a very good athlete. And my mom [Holly (Haleamau) Hughes] was a professional hula dancer for Aloha Airlines.

"So, we grew up with Hawaiian music, hula, language, and food – we experienced all that. My parents did a very good job at raising us to have the values they grew up with in Hawai'i – humility and respect – respect for kūpuna, yourself and others. But also pride in who we are and where we come from – to never be ashamed of the food we eat or the songs we sing or the dances we dance."

Another strong element of Hughes' upbringing was his faith. When he was in sixth grade his dad became a pastor at a church in Seattle. "My Christian faith has always been a huge component of who I am and my identity to this day."

Perhaps due, in part, to his grounding in Hawaiian culture, Hughes always felt out of place on the continent. "Whenever we were in Hawai'i I asked my parents why weren't we living there as a family. 'Why aren't we



Kaniela Hō'olu Hughes was born and raised in Washington State but has dreamed about coming "home" to live in Hawai'i since he was a child. He made his move in 2015 at the age of 25. - *Courtesy Photo*

home? Everyone is happier when we're home. We have more friends and more family."

That yearning to live in Hawai'i never left him. It was always there, in the back of his mind. So when he decided to move home to Hawai'i in 2015 after graduating with a master's degree in theology from Westminster Seminary in Escondido, Calif., it really wasn't much of a decision.

"I was doing what I always knew I was supposed to do, and the time was right. I had just finished my graduate degree. I was single. I didn't have a job holding me anywhere," he said. "It was the first time in my life that I was in a place to be able to make the move back home in order to be where I wanted to be and pursue what I wanted to pursue."

Hughes moved home without illusions. "I didn't have a

romanticized view of Hawai'i. I had very realistic expectations, based on my exposure and experiences."

Still, his move wasn't easy. He moved in with a cousin but was shocked at how difficult it was to find work, even with a master's degree. "By the graces of some very good family friends I was able to find a job working construction and even then, with a good paying job, I was still in need of family to provide housing and they were so gracious to allow me to stay with them."

The construction job kept him afloat until worked his way into a teaching position at Kamehameha Schools. "It was a process, and it wasn't easy," he said. "There were definitely a lot of spam and cabbage days as I was trying to make a future for myself. It was a lot of prayer, hard work and sleepless nights. But by the grace of God and a lot of diligence, I've been able to carve a spot out for myself here."

His years at Kamehameha helped cultivate his perspective on what it means to be Kanaka today. "I couldn't have asked to be in a better place to develop myself and my understanding of the culture. I was able to learn from both my students and my fellow kumu and made lifelong friends. I grew a lot from that experience. It made me very pa'a in who I am and how I see myself as a Hawaiian."

Today, Hughes is working as a contractor for the Department of Defense at Indo Pacific Command. Addressing the elephant in the room, Hughes acknowledges that the military presence in Hawai'i has negatively impacted Native Hawaiians historically right up to the present, citing last year's devastating Red Hill jet fuel leak.

"Still, there's also the perspective that I can create change from within," he opined optimistically. "A growing group of young Native Hawaiians are stepping into some of these [military] spaces to create conversations that need to take place. I've seen growth happen within my own workspace and it's been very positive."

A few years ago, Hughes' younger brother, Iokepa, joined him in Hawai'i. And a few months ago, his parents did too. "I know there are people in circumstances very different than mine who probably wouldn't have the same opportunities that I had. And I feel very privileged because this is truly where my heart is and has been my whole life. I'm beyond grateful. When you truly want something and you're willing to sacrifice, there are ways to make it work." ■

## Protecting Maui Kānaka 'Ōiwi Ownership of Ancestral Land

The 'Āina Kūpuna Dedication ordinance for Maui County is designed to help families retain their family property by reducing their property taxes.

For more information or assistance please contact:

The Maui County Real Property  
Tax Assessment Division at (808) 270-7871

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs  
(for genealogy verification) at (808) 594-1835  
or (808) 594-1888



# KĀNAKA, COME HOME

BY NAKA NATHANIEL

*"Kānaka, come home."*

When Kalani Barrett said that to me and my 'ohana it was a clear and forceful blow to the na'au.

We were on the lānai of my parents' small cottage in Volcano and Mauna Loa was watching over us.

It was a tumultuous time in Hawai'i. The islands were just reopening to tourists, but the fuel leaks at Red Hill had poisoned the waters. And while it hadn't been made official, there were more and more Native Hawaiians leaving Hawai'i.

I asked how those of us in the diaspora could help Hawai'i Nei.

His quick answer: "Kānaka, come home."

This kāhea needs to be heard clearly across the honua. "Kānaka, come home."

Hawai'i is once again in a fragile place and too many of us are living away from the islands with diminished influence to make Hawai'i Nei the thriving homeland of the Hawaiian people. The diaspora is needed in our ancestral homeland.

There is a struggle for the future of Hawai'i. Who will be making the decisions about what course Hawai'i takes not only politically, but culturally? After decades of being shunted to the side, Kānaka have a chance to have a legitimate say.

This previously denied say was earned by Kānaka who rallied at Mauna Kea and led the rescue and relief work in the wake of Lahaina.

"When we show up, we win," said Tiare Lawrence, a Kanaka leader of the Maui wildfire response, at the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement's (CNHA) Native Hawaiian Convention in Maui in mid-November.

However, it's hard to be on the front lines and have a say when you're a member of the diaspora.

You've read here in *Ka Wai Ola* and in other places, that the United States Census made it official that there are now more Kānaka Maoli outside of Hawai'i than living in Hawai'i Nei.

It's an occurrence that has caused soul-searching and handwringing. We need to do what we can to get this reversed.

The fires in Maui have only made conditions harder for Native Hawaiians in Hawai'i.

My Hilo-raised father claims Hawaiians are the most adaptable people on the planet. He attributes it to our ancestors' skills of landing their canoes on uninhabited shores and creating new civilizations. That's why Hawaiians can thrive in the deep chill of Alaska and the Northwest or in the blazing heat of Nevada and Texas.

Besides adapting to physical environments, I know dozens of Native Hawaiians who have been successful in the hard-edged world of politics, finance and media on the continent. They have gone toe-to-toe in competitive fields and thrived.

We, in Hawai'i, need to actively entice them to bring their smarts and ambition to Hawai'i Nei.

At the CNHA convention in Las Vegas this summer a panel was convened to address the question: "Should Mainland Hawaiians Be Part of the Lāhui?" One of the panelists was Patrick Makuakāne, a Californian, who just received a MacArthur genius award.

"We're the proudest people I know in terms of where we're from," said Makuakāne. "It's hard to explain to people why, but so there's a sense of pride being a Hawaiian that will never be taken away from us because we moved."

Makuakāne is successful in California, in part because he's been able to leverage his Kanaka identity and the cultural resources available to him on the continent. He's a great example of the diaspora thriving on the continent.

However, there's one place where Kānaka aren't thriving, the place where Makuakāne is proud to be from: Hawai'i.

We need a campaign: "Kānaka, Come Home."

There needs to be a program to incentivize the diaspora

to return.

Creating a "Kānaka, Come Home" initiative will not be easy. The main hurdle is, of course, the cost of living and housing in Hawai'i.

On the same panel with Makuakāne, Carole Lanialoha Lee, who has lived in Chicago for most of her life, said: "I don't know how you guys survive in Hawai'i. I grew up hearing about the struggles and how my parents got [to Chicago,] and it was for me, a story of survival."

She's right. It's hard to understand how most of us live in Hawai'i. The question of housing is daunting.

Most of the returning diaspora have a family home they move into. The much harder path is to go into the open market and compete for high-priced housing with Californians bolstered by tech money or retired baby boomers sitting on top of formidable equity built up from prior ownership.

Hawai'i is suffering from a proliferation of people without generational connections, a sense of history or place.

When I took the channel jumper from Waimea to Kahului to attend CNHA's Native Hawaiian Convention in Maui, the kind accountant seated next me asked me to identify the island on the left side of the plane. He wanted to know if it was inhabited.

I dug deep into my reserves of aloha and explained Kaho'olawe to him.

Despite having lived in Hawai'i for several years and possessing a Hawai'i driver's license, he wasn't familiar with the island or its history.

For me, he was a symbol of those who have moved here, with wealth amassed from elsewhere, who haven't invested time to understand Hawai'i. Each encounter like this makes me think about the person whose place he's taking.

I realize it's not a zero-sum situation, but I can't help but think that a person living in Hawai'i, who doesn't understand Hawai'i, has stolen a place away from a Kanaka who should be living in Hawai'i Nei.

It's easy to overlook, in a world of borders and conflicts over immigration policy, that there are no restrictions that limit any American from living anywhere in the United States. Yes, affordability and community acceptance are

*"No Kanaka needs permission to move home to Hawai'i."*

SEE KĀNAKA, COME HOME ON PAGE 20



# Kānaka Came Home

NA NĀ NATHANIEL

I STARTED THINKING ABOUT COMING HOME IN MID-2016, AND HAVE BEEN BACK SINCE LATE 2018. INSPIRATION AND OBLIGATION BOTH PLAYED A ROLE IN THE DECISION.

GETTING BACK OUT IN THE WATER HAS BEEN A BIG PART OF MY LIFE. IT JUST FEELS GOOD TO BE WHERE I BELONG; WHERE MY MANA FEELS STRONG.

**KEENAN**  
MOVED FROM MINNESOTA

**KAHAI**  
MOVED FROM SAN FRANCISCO

**SEAN**  
MOVED FROM FLORIDA

I LITERALLY HAD NOTHING WHEN I MADE THE CHOICE TO MOVE HERE FOR MY SOUL. I HAD ZERO MONEY IN THE BANK, ONLY A FEW BOXES OF SENTIMENTAL BELONGINGS AND NO IDEA HOW I WAS GOING TO SURVIVE. WHAT I HAVE LEARNED IS THAT WHEN I TRUST IN THE MANA OF THE 'ĀINA IT ALWAYS SHOWS ME THE WAY, PROVIDES PATHS FOR ME AND KEEPS ME SAFE. WE ARE THE ONES THAT NEED TO TEND TO THE LAND, THE PEOPLE AND THE SPIRIT OF OUR ISLANDS. I GOT LUCKY AND JUST MOVED INTO THE FIRST LOW INCOME HOUSING IN 20 YEARS ON BIG ISLAND.



**ELI**  
MOVED FROM MASSACHUSETTS

COME HOME IF YOU CAN -  
**HAWAI'I NO KA 'OII**

DO NOT FORGET WHERE YOU CAME FROM AND SEEK TO ENHANCE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LAND, ITS HISTORY, ITS PEOPLE. I GREW UP IN HAWAII BEFORE THE RENAISSANCE, SO I AM HAPPY TO SEE THE RESURGENCE OF HAWAIIAN CULTURE AND HAWAIIAN PRIDE.

WHATEVER THE REASON YOU ARE PART OF THE HAWAIIAN DIASPORA DUE TO WORK, EDUCATION, OR PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, YOUR SPIRIT REMAINS INTERTWINED WITH THE RICH HERITAGE, TRADITIONS, AND VALUES THAT MAKE HAWAII SO REMARKABLE.

MAY YOUR LOVE FOR HAWAI'I AND THE VALUES IT EMBODIES INSPIRE YOU, WHEREVER YOU ARE. TRY TO COME BACK SOON.



**KELI'I**  
MOVED FROM NEW YORK

HOWEVER LONG YOU'VE BEEN AWAY, AND HOWEVER LONG IT TAKES TO RETURN, YOU CAN MAKE YOUR WAY BACK AND FIND YOUR PLACE AGAIN HERE. AND UNTIL YOU DO, KEEP FINDING AND CONNECTING WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH US.



**ANELA**  
MOVED FROM MINNEAPOLIS

THE BEST THING ABOUT LIVING HERE IS FINALLY FEELING AT PEACE IN MY NA'AU AND FEELING A SAFETY I COULD NEVER FIND ON THE CONTINENT. I HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAL DEEPLY AND BE SEEN BY OTHERS FULLY. IT REALLY IS A DREAM COME TRUE. ALL I EVER WANTED WAS TO BE "REGULAR" AND FEEL CONNECTED TO ALL THE THINGS YOU FEEL WHEN THINKING OF HOME.



**KALEI**  
MOVED FROM MINNESOTA



## KĀNAKA, COME HOME

Continued from page 19

"...a person living in Hawai'i, who doesn't understand Hawai'i, has stolen a place away from a Kanaka who should be living in Hawai'i Nei."

pragmatic limitations, but if you're an American and you want to live in Miloli'i, Wai'anae or Keaukaha there's nothing keeping you out.

It's a challenge to watch the competition for housing play out in parts of Hawai'i popular with remote workers. A returning Kanaka finding affordable housing is the exception to the rule, but those exceptions can be found.

When I write about the situations with Native Hawaiians, I'm inevitably confronted with a comment saying "Well, my German/Italian/Irish ancestors left Europe or my Japanese/Chinese/Korean ancestors left Asia and everything turned out just fine." I choose not to engage those commenters.

It won't help to point out that in all the places and groups they cite, the culture, language and political leadership are still dominated by the same ethnicity of the

emigres. That isn't the case with Kānaka Maoli. Hawai'i's culture, language and political leadership isn't Kānaka Maoli.

That's why our Native Hawaiian community has been cast to the winds. Today, we are kept connected to Hawai'i by L&Ls, visits by Hawaiian performers to the continent and Roku boxes that stream HNN and OC16.

What Hawaiians in Hawai'i and the diaspora are grappling with is deracination.

"To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul," wrote Simone Weil in *The Need for Roots* (1949).

"Uprootedness occurs whenever there is a military conquest, and in this sense conquest is nearly always an evil. There is the minimum of uprootedness when the conquerors are migrants who settle down in the conquered country, intermarry with the inhabitants and take root themselves. Such was the case with the Hellenes in Greece, the Celts in Gaul and the Moors in Spain. But when the conqueror remains a stranger in the land of which he has taken possession, uprootedness becomes an almost mortal disease among the subdued population."

I know not everyone can heed Kalani's kāhea. I know many who don't want to move to Hawai'i. They're doing great going toe-to-toe on the continent and being successful. Or they have spouses who can't imagine moving to a place that's a small fishbowl.

But the currency currently used in Hawai'i isn't based on aloha, so there's no way for those who sought better economic conditions to compete for housing in a place where housing for Native Hawaiians should be a guarantee.

There's also the question of identity that holds back the diaspora. My sister, who also heeded the kāhea and moved into our parents' cottage full-time (the same place

where Kalani's kāhea was first spoken) told me, "There are choke Hawaiians on the continent who don't think they are Hawaiian enough."

However, there's no one to judge or keep score. Every 'ohana has members who are no longer in Hawai'i. There are Kānaka in Hawai'i who can be hyperbolically judgmental about the decisions of Kānaka not to live in Hawai'i but they, too, inevitably have 'ohana living away from Hawai'i.

No Kanaka needs permission to move home to Hawai'i.

We all want to be in a place where we belong. We want to be in a place where our outside features and our names are the rule and not the exception. For Kānaka, that place is Hawai'i.

For me, the small thing that I rarely fail to note is being surrounded by Kānaka who also share names with my siblings. I never grew up with other people named U'ilani, Pomaika'i, 'Auli'i or Nae'ole.

Personally, it feels great to shed the diaspora label. I hope more Kānaka are able to do it. We need to take on a concentrated effort to not only keep Kānaka home, but also to help them come back.

*Kānaka, come home.*

You're desperately needed. ■



'Auli'i and Naka Nathaniel are the granddaughter and grandson of Harry and Katherine Nathaniel. 'Auli'i (@haku\_aulii) is an artist from Volcano and Naka (@nakanathaniel) is a writer from Waimea.

- Courtesy Photo

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OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS



**Tree Lighting, Light Parade and Block Party**

December 2, 6:00-6:30 p.m. | Honolulu, O'ahu

Watch opening night celebrations live at 'Ōlelo Channel 53. Honolulu City Lights will be open through Dec. 29, 2023. [www.honolulucitylights.org/faq](http://www.honolulucitylights.org/faq)

**Royal Hawaiian Band Performances**

December 1, 8 & 15, Noon - 1:00 p.m.  
Honolulu, O'ahu

The Royal Hawaiian Band holds free concerts on the 'Iolani Palace Grounds most Fridays. [www.rhb-music.com](http://www.rhb-music.com)

**63rd Waimea Twilight Christmas Parade**

December 2, 5:30 - 6:45 p.m.  
Waimea, Hawai'i Island

[www.WaimeaTown.org/parade](http://www.WaimeaTown.org/parade)

**38th Annual Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational Opening Ceremony**

December 8  
Waimea, O'ahu

Tribute to the legendary Eddie Aikau at Waimea Bay. The contest will run if wave face heights consistently reach 40-feet between Dec. 14, 2023, through March 12, 2024. [www.TheEddieAikau.com](http://www.TheEddieAikau.com)

**Kalikimaka Ma Ke Alanui (Christmas on the Avenue)**

December 9, 3:00 - 10:00 p.m.  
Nānākuli, O'ahu

Connect with family, friends, support local businesses and enjoy the holiday season. [www.nanakulichristmas.com](http://www.nanakulichristmas.com)

**37th Annual Kailua-Kona Christmas Parade**

December 9, 5:00 p.m.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i Island  
[www.HistoricKailuaVillage.com](http://www.HistoricKailuaVillage.com)

**Kama'āina Sundays**

December 10, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Explore 'Iolani Palace, enjoy entertainment and family-friendly activities. The theme is Makahiki. Free admission for kama'āina. [www.iolanipalace.org](http://www.iolanipalace.org)

**Hawaiian Holiday Shopping, Concert & Boat Parade**

December 10, 1:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i Island

Shop for gifts, enjoy live music by Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award winner Nāpua Greig then watch the 8th annual lighted boat parade in Kailua Bay. [www.HistoricKailuaVillage.com](http://www.HistoricKailuaVillage.com)

**Soil Health Workshop**

December 12, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.  
Kahului, Maui

Join a discussion with local staff from the U.S. Dept. of Ag - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Go-Farm about how to assess a soil health test and steps that can be taken to improve it. [www.gofarmhawaii.org](http://www.gofarmhawaii.org)

**Pi'o Summit: Advancing a Circular Economy in Hawai'i**

December 13  
Honolulu, Hawai'i

A UH Innovation event at the Hawai'i Convention Center. Topics include circular economy in the ahupua'a system, interventions and UH's role in creating opportunities for the future. Register at: [www.research.hawaii.edu/event/a-circular-economy-in-hawaii/](http://www.research.hawaii.edu/event/a-circular-economy-in-hawaii/)

**Kalani Pe'a Purple Hawaiian Christmas**

December 15, 7:00 p.m. HST.  
Kamuela, Hawai'i Island

The concert will feature Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award Winners Lorna Lim and Wailau Ryder plus hula performances. Attend in-person or watch online. [www.Kahilu.org](http://www.Kahilu.org)

**'Ewa Beach Christmas Parade**

December 16, 10:00 a.m.  
'Ewa Beach, O'ahu  
Start and end at Campbell High School.  
[www.eblcf.org](http://www.eblcf.org)

**Winter Weekend**

December 16, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Honolulu, O'ahu

A festive holiday event with keiki activities, crafts, and food. Dress up in your holiday best - ugly holiday sweaters included! [www.bishopmusuem.org](http://www.bishopmusuem.org)

**Waimea Light Parade**

December 16, 5:30 p.m.  
Waimea, Kaua'i  
[www.waimealightparade.com](http://www.waimealightparade.com)

**Lā 'Ōhana Day**

December 17, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Waimea, O'ahu

The 3rd Sunday of each month, is Family Day at Waimea Valley. 50% off general admission for kama'āina and military families. Learn Hawaiian history, culture, explore the gardens, and swim under the waterfall. [www.waimeavalley.net](http://www.waimeavalley.net)

**16th Jingle Bell Beach Run**

December 17, 7:30 a.m.  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i Island

A Christmas-themed family fun run featuring a 5K and a Santa's Keiki Dash for children 6 and under starting at the Coconut Grove Marketplace. [www.Kona5K.com](http://www.Kona5K.com)



**Waimea Valley  
Kama'āina  
FREE Admission  
Thursdays**

**from 12:00 3:00 p.m.**  
December 7, 14, 21, & 28  
Waimea, O'ahu

Every Thursday, before the Hale'iwa Farmers Market begins in Pīkake Pavilion, all Hawai'i residents receive FREE admission to Waimea Valley.  
[www.waimeavalley.net](http://www.waimeavalley.net)



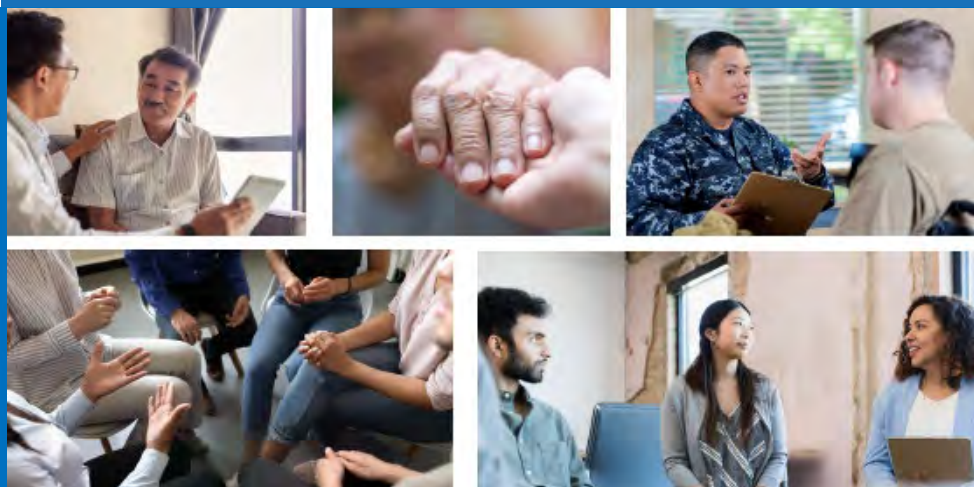


# Aloha,

Do you work with Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or Asian American Veterans or service members?

Do you have expert knowledge of Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or Asian American communities?

Your voice can help prevent suicide among other Veterans in Hawai'i



Participation involves a one-time virtual, phone or in-person appointment with a member of our research team. Compensation of \$50 is provided and will take approximately 1 hour.

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OPINION

## My Husband is Missing on Maui

By Samantha Higbee

My husband, Kainalu Higbee, is missing on Maui since 2022. We have three children together Ka'ilike, Konapilihi, and Kau'i. We think about Kai every day. He loved his family and was a good father. Our entire 'ohana misses him and there are no words to describe not having him home with us or not knowing what happened.

Kainalu was last seen leaving his mother's home on Mother's Day, May 8, 2022. Four days later, his truck was found abandoned at the Sunrise Cafe parking structure in Lahaina. The door was unlocked, and his wallet, along with his driver's license, debit/credit cards and an unopened pack of cigarettes were on the front seat. The beginning of the worst days of our lives.

Early in the investigation, the detective assigned to Kai's case seemed inattentive and not much was done. There was a lack of care. One day the detective told me, "Don't worry he will be home, he's probably just out doing drugs." I couldn't believe he was serious, that he would say this to our worried, heartbroken family.

At one point we pushed the Maui Police Department (MPD) to collect footage from surveillance cameras facing Front St. in Lahaina to see if it was really Kai who drove and parked his truck at Sunrise Cafe.

The detective told me there were no cameras facing Front St. I didn't believe him, so I posted about it on Facebook. A friend saw the post and told me a realty office at the wharf had cameras facing Front Street. I told the detective about it, but he called me later saying that the cameras had already taped over the week we needed. As the months go by, there is still no sign of Kai. No new leads. No answers. No one has come forward with information.

Kai is from Lahaina, and he has a twin brother named Ka'unalu (see photo). Sadly, his family home burned down in the recent wildfires and his



Kainalu Higbee (right) has been missing on Maui since May 2022. He has an identical twin brother, Ka'unalu (left). - Courtesy Photos

family was displaced.

Our family is hoping that one day we will embrace you, Kai, filling our lives with the completeness only you can bring. Until that day comes, we will persevere with unwavering hope and love. You are missed beyond measure, and our hearts ache for you every day.

MPD announced in November that they have launched a dedicated Cold Case Detail, Charlie Detail, that focuses on unsolved homicides and missing person cases. The community is encouraged to provide information or leads related to unsolved homicides or missing persons cases on Maui.

To report information, email [cold-case@mpd.net](mailto:cold-case@mpd.net) or call 808-270-5575. "Our goal is to bring closure to the families affected by these unsolved crimes and ensure that justice is served by holding perpetrators accountable," Police Chief John Pelletier said. ■

Kainalu's Police Report is #22-015637. Please call MPD with any information. We have a go-fund-me to provide a reward for information about his disappearance: <https://bit.ly/40Efjsk>.



## Pi'oloke ka Leo o ka Palila

By Lisa Kaponon Mason



Palila are seriously messy eaters, and this male seems to be saving a morsel of māmane mash on his bill for later. - Photo: Ann Tanimoto Johnson/ LOHE Lab

High on the western slopes of Mauna Kea, nestled in the tangles of an old naio tree, a hidden puff of golden and gray feathers slowly emerges to the boisterous calls of the morning's dawn chorus. Here is Palila (*Loxioides bailleui*), our last endemic finch-billed honeycreeper and a relatively late riser compared to their avian counterparts of Ka'ohe.

Curiously gregarious, Palila commonly forage in small family groups in search of the green seed pods of the māmane tree. Fortunately, evolution has granted Palila a unique tolerance to the toxic alkaloids of māmane. Palila

also reap nutritional benefits from māmane's nectar and the larvae of native *Cydia* moths laid within the seeds.

One of Palila's namesakes is no other than the famous warrior, Palila, from the islands of Kaua'i and O'ahu. Palila is known by the people of Kohala for their clamorous olokē (clamorous, agitated) singing style and characteristic *pah-lee-lah* call. ■

*Lisa Kaponon Mason was raised in Hilo and happily resides in Kea'au on the island of Hawai'i. She is a community educator, conservation researcher, and native bird enthusiast with a passion to help strengthen relationships between our manu and lāhui.*



Palila move across Mauna Kea along an elevational gradient in search of fresh green seed pods of the māmane (*Sophora chrysophylla*) tree. Once aged, the pods harden and turn brown, releasing bright orange seeds about the size of a kernel of corn. - Photo: Lisa L.K. Mason/ LOHE Lab



Naio (*Myoporum sandwicense*) is an alternate food source for Palila and is abundant in the subalpine forests of Mauna Kea. Here we have a healthy naio tree with uncurled leaves, flowers, and fruit, seemingly unaffected by naio thrips (*Klambothrips myopori*) which constitute a significant threat to naio across Hawai'i. - Photo: Lisa L.K. Mason

## Have a Healthy Holiday Season



By Jodi Leslie Matsuo DrPH

The holiday season is here and so is the flu. The basic symptoms are the same, but the severity of these symptoms differs from person to person.

Common flu symptoms include cough, runny nose, and congestion. However, those with more severe symptoms are also experiencing fever, chills, body aches, fatigue, headaches.

While the flu vaccine can help, it is not 100% effective. This is best explained by the American Medical Association, which states: "We don't know the effectiveness of the vaccine until we really get into flu season, and we see what types of viruses actually end up circulating in the population...as the flu vaccine is adjusted [each year] to align with what is predicted to be the most likely strains circulating."

In addition, what causes some people to get the flu worse than others? While a person's age and health status can influence this, whether (or not) a person gets the flu or how severe the infection, has a lot to do with the strength of their immune system.

Researchers found that people who take probiotics were less likely to get the flu, colds, and other respiratory infections or need antibiotics to treat them, compared to those not taking probiotics. People who received this benefit were those that took probiotics for at least three to six months. Probiotics are found in sour poi, yogurt, kimchee, natto, and other fermented foods.

Probiotics are important in maintaining a healthy immune function. The gut microbiome - the trillions of bacteria and other microbes that live in our intestines - has both helpful and harmful bacteria. It plays an active part in many body processes, including the immune system, containing up to 80% of the body's immune cells.

The helpful bacteria keep the lining of the intestines healthy and strong. This is important to prevent leaky gut (increased intestinal permeability), where infectious "bugs" and other toxins can leak through the intestinal walls. This

triggers inflammation, dramatically increasing risk of diabetes, arthritis, obesity, asthma, chronic fatigue syndrome, irritable bowel syndrome, and autoimmune diseases.

Healthy bacteria also train your immune cells to differentiate between normal microbes vs. foreign invaders. If these harmful invaders are encountered, it sparks a reaction that can neutralize or destroy them. Gut bacteria also stimulates the body to produce antibodies in response to new infections so it will be better prepared to fight them the next time it attacks.



Bananas, onions, garlic, oats, apples, and flaxseeds help maintain a healthy gut along with local foods like limu and poi. - Photo: Adobe Stock © Danijela

Keeping our gut healthy involves more than just eating probiotics. Prebiotic foods provide the nutrients needed for the helpful bacteria to flourish. This includes limu (seaweed), bananas, onions, garlic, oats, apples, and flaxseeds.

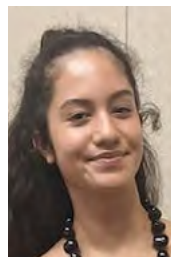
At the same time, limit added sugars, meats, egg yolks, cheese, alcohol, and artificial sweeteners. These all kill the helpful bacteria, leading to overgrowth of the harmful bacteria, ultimately weakening your immune system. Other habits that cause this overgrowth is stress, vaping, and smoking.

If you're looking for gift ideas this holiday season, a bag of sour poi might be a good idea. ■

*Born and raised in Kona, Hawai'i, Dr. Jodi Leslie Matsuo is a Native Hawaiian registered dietician and certified diabetes educator, with training in integrative and functional nutrition. Follow her on Facebook @DrJodiLeslieMatsuo, Instagram @drlesliematsuo and on Twitter @DrLeslieMatsuo.*



# Aloha 'Āina



By Kalei Cirillo-Nahinu,  
Grade 8  
Mālama Honua PCS

To me, aloha 'āina is perpetuating Hawaiian practices and taking care of and loving the land. I live aloha 'āina by learning about Hawaiian traditions and 'ike Hawai'i.

One thing we do at Mālama Honua Public Charter School is hana kūpono. Hana kūpono is showing respect to 'āina before gathering materials. Kumu Ka'anohi Kalama-Macomber taught my class about the process of making papa and pōhaku ku'i ai (poi pounding board and stone), including hana kūpono, carving, and perpetuating culture. These lessons helped me become more confident in my cultural identity and develop an aloha 'āina mindset.

Hana kūpono means to do the right thing, at the right time, with the right intention, with the right people, and at the right place. Hana kūpono creates a pono mindset of respecting 'āina before you gather materials.

When you begin hana kūpono, there are steps to follow: 1) Ho'ōmana - compliment/ uplift; 2) Mihi - ask for forgiveness; 3) Ho'ōlauna - introduce yourself; 4) Noi - request; 5) Mahalo - thank; and 6) Ho'ōmana - compliment.

My class practiced hana kūpono when we collected materials to make our papa and pōhaku in seventh grade. To carve our papa, we also had to make

a ko'i (adze), which has a handle made of hau. We went to a space that had lots of hau trees and used our kilo (observation) skills to look for a specific branch. Before we could gather, we had to complete our protocol of hana kūpono. We also used this protocol when we gathered our pōhaku, asking 'āina for permission.

"He ali'i ka 'āina, he kauā ke kanka." This 'ōlelo no'eau means "land is chief, and we are its servant" and shows aloha 'āina because we need to treat our 'āina as if it is our chief. The 'āina has created a space where we can live and thrive.

So, what can I do? When I work in the mala, plant native plants, and remove invasive plants, I am giving to 'āina and treating 'āina like a chief. When I tell mo'olelo that uplift 'āina, I am treating 'āina like a chief. When I call 'āina by its right name, I am respecting 'āina just like I respect people. When I practice hana kūpono, I am treating 'āina like a chief.

We should all have an aloha 'āina mindset because it can help us create a better understanding of who we are by connecting us to our kūpuna/ancestors. I learn more about myself when I am working in the 'āina because it gives me the time to think about my past, not two years ago but to my kūpuna and who they are, and my future.

When I feel lost and need to find meaning or understanding, I know that when I work in the 'āina and connect to my kūpuna and to myself, I can find who I am. An aloha 'āina mindset connects you to who you are and gives you a pilina with kūpuna and 'āina. ■



Haumāna clear ong choi from the lo'i at Ka'uluakalana. - Courtesy Photo

# Ho'okipa Hawai'i Focuses on Community and Visitor Engagement



By Mālia Sanders

Ho'okipa Hawai'i Weekend, presented by the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA), will take place Feb. 3-4, 2024, at the

Royal Hawaiian Center.

It is a two-day family friendly event dedicated to the inclusion of Hawaiian culture and knowledge systems through the medium of Hawaiian cultural practitioners, exhibits, demonstrations and vendors that engage community and visitors in a greater understanding and appreciation for the Native Hawaiian culture and Hawai'i.

Regenerative tourism extends sustainable tourism to address the primary core needs of the community, ensuring that benefits are circulated back into the community in a just and reciprocal manner. For a visitor, understanding where their dollar goes when they spend it is a critical element of responsible visiting.

One of the elements of the event is the Kuhikuhi Marketplace, a vendor mākeke (marketplace) that is specific to Native Hawaiian-owned small businesses that have a product or service that aligns with NaHHA's mission and fundamentals.

Vendors who will be showcased here have been vetted by NaHHA to ensure that their products and services speak to the ideals of regeneration. Many vendors will be graduates of NaHHA's Pākōlea program which focuses on removing the barriers for Native Hawaiian-owned small businesses to gain access to the industry and land their products on the shelves for visitor consumption providing local goods and services that are sustainable, socially responsible and culturally appropriate while keeping local business capital gains continuously circulating in the Hawai'i economy.

The Kuhikuhi Marketplace grows these opportunities to ensure local small businesses are engaged in tourism and that this interaction provides economic benefit to local families and reduces capital flight.

This event will feature center-stage activities at Helumoa, sponsored by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and will include musical performances and storytelling, as well as



for ma uka to ma kai panel discussions on topics focused on our ancestral and modern relationships and interactions with 'āina (land) and water; both kai (salt water) and wai (fresh water).

Each day will include two panel discussions. Facilitators and panelists will be knowledgeable community pillars and cultural practitioners driven by the restoring of cultural modalities that work from Indigenous knowledge bases.

While visitors and the larger community are becoming familiar with Native Hawaiian value systems, there is a need for the extension of these concepts to be expressed and demonstrated through hands-on authentic and respectful, reciprocal exchanges with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners themselves – with a calling for community engagement.

NaHHA invites those with expertise in cultural programming, artisans, practitioners, and vendors with interest to visit [www.nahha.com/events](http://www.nahha.com/events) for more information and to apply.

We will share more information on [www.nahha.com](http://www.nahha.com) as details develop through our planning. Information on hotel room packages for the weekend will be shared soon! We look forward to inviting the public to Waikiki to enjoy the Ho'okipa Hawai'i Weekend next February! ■

*Mālia Sanders is the executive director of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA). Working to better connect the Hawaiian community to the visitor industry, NaHHA supports the people who provide authentic experiences to Hawai'i's visitors. For more information go to [www.nahha.com](http://www.nahha.com). Follow NaHHA on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @nahha808 and @kuhikuhi808.*



# Healing Through Performing Arts



By Ka'ohinani Daniels

All kamali'i are destined for greatness. Lili'uokalani Trust (LT) has been hard at work on its 2045 strategic plan, spanning early childhood (ages 0-5), youth programs (ages 6-18), and opportunity youth services (ages 16-26).

Partnering with mission-aligned Hawai'i-based and national and international organizations who reciprocate shared learning, aloha, and hō'ihi is part of our kuleana to fulfill LT's vision of "E Nā Kamalei Lupalupa."

LT has an ongoing partnership with New York City-based Gibney Dance. This multi-faceted dance organization taps "into the vast potential of movement, creativity, and performance to effect social change and personal transformation." LT recently brought their HANDS ARE FOR HOLDING® (HAFH) program to Hawai'i for the Queen's beneficiaries – and the experience was deep and impactful.

HAFH is a youth-centered workshop series that uses dance and movement to engage in conversations about healthy



HANDS ARE FOR HOLDING is a youth-centered workshop series that uses dance and movement to engage in conversations about healthy relationships, boundaries, respect, and choice. Picture (l-r front) are Palehua, Poli'ahu, Chiara and Melanie. Kapilina is in the back row. - Courtesy Photo

relationships, boundaries, respect, and choice in everyday interactions.

As part of the cultural grounding that is a hallmark of all LT programs and services, the partnership began with oli, mele, and hula, honoring Queen Lili'uokalani. The collaborative workshop series created a healing space for kamali'i to express their feelings and experiences as they connected to themselves, each other, and the Queen. Kīpuka Leihano [LT's Kapolei location which hosted the workshops] was filled with energy, deep conversation, music, and laughter.

"This program was really great, and I had so much fun...the space felt safe, and I felt loved. I had so much fun learning with Gibney and creating a new dance," said LT 'ōpio, Palehua. "Gibney gave me the opportunity to reflect on myself, my relationships, and my friendships. This program was life-changing! Thank you so much!"

In addition to Gibney Dance, LT partnered with Hale Kipa and Kanaka Maoli director composer, and choreographer Joshua "Baba" Kamoani'ala Tavares, who shared his original mele and hula with the kamali'i.

"The mele and hula, *He Mele Mana Wāhine*, was composed and choreographed in honor of Lili'uokalani, as well as the young mana wāhine in our hui, as an inspiration to embody and honor our Queen and her legacy," Tavares said.

The synergy between oli, mele, hula, movement, conversation, and pu'uhonua of the Queen's space allowed kamali'i to share and heal in ways that exceeded the expected outcomes of all of mākua present. E ola e nā kamalei lupalupa!

To learn more about Lili'uokalani Trust's partnership with Gibney, please contact Ka'ohinani Daniels at [kdaniels@onipaa.org](mailto:kdaniels@onipaa.org). ■

*Ka'ohinani Daniels is from Ka'elepulu, Kailua, O'ahu, and is humbled to serve Queen Lili'uokalani and LT's mission by co-creating performing arts programming with and for LT teammates and kamali'i.*

# Maui on Our Minds and in Our Hearts



By KipuKai Kualii

On Friday, October 20, I welcomed nearly 100 participants to our first-ever Hawaiian Homestead Maui Recovery Roundtable.

Originally, we scheduled that weekend to be our first in-person Sovereign Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations (SCHHA) Leadership Conference since the pandemic. However, we postponed our full conference to focus solely on Maui's recovery from the devastating wildfires and hurricane winds of early August.

My message to the participants gathered was: "Maui, you have been on our minds, in our hearts and in our prayers since day one. We are here today, with humility and fervor, to hear from you and learn from you."

I asked folks to speak up throughout the day and to share their mana'o by writing it down on post-it notes at four different easel stations: 1) What's working for our people on Maui?; 2) What's not working?; 3) What Should Be Happening That Is Not Happening Now?; and, 4) What Else Would You Like To Share?

Based on registrations, we had 13 homestead associations, three churches and 24 organizations represented. We had folks from all islands including six from Moloka'i, 23 from O'ahu and 48 from Maui. Homesteaders came from Anahola, Ho'olehua, Kahikinui, Kalama'ula, Kanehili, Ka'uluokaha'i, Kaupe'a, Kula, La'i'ōpua, Leialii, Pana'ewa, Paukūkalo and Waiehu Kou.

A special highlight (and treat) throughout the day included the delicious Hawaiian-style snacks and meals provided by some of Maui's local farmers, churches and homesteaders. We can't thank them enough!

Mayor Rick Bissen and Councilmember Tasha Kama both shared remarks. Later, Council Vice Chair Yukilei Sugimura and Councilmember Nohe U'u-Hodgins joined us for lunch sharing a few words. Autumn Ness from Councilmember Gabe Johnson's office and Christi Keliikoa from Councilmember Tamara Paltin's office spent the

day with us.

Eight different organizations did resource tabling, including the American Red Cross, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement (CNHA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Hawai'i Community Lending (HCL), Lahaina Kāko'o Resource Center, Maui Economic Opportunity (MEO), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Maui County clerks (voter registration).

Five panels included: 1) Native Service Providers (w/ CNHA, HCL & TiLeaf Group); 2) Maui Community Volunteers and HUB Resource Providers (w/ Na Kia'i O Maui, Aumana, Makana O Ke Akua, Nānāikapono Church, Living Way Church and In His House of Restoration Church); 3) Voices and Reflections from Homesteads on Maui Resilience Efforts (w/ Homestead Associations from Paukūkalo, Waiehu Kou III & Kahikinui, the Ahupua'a O Moloka'i and the Association of Hawaiians for Homestead Lands); 4) Lahaina Kāko'o Resource Center (w/ FEMA, HCL, Sentinel Pacific, Hui Ho'omalua, Haku Ho'oponopono and Hawaiian Homes Commissioner Randy Awo); and, 5) Federal Agency and Other Service Providers (w/ SBA, USDA, HCF, American Red Cross & MEO).

Mahalo nui loa to SCHHA's Iwalani McBrayer, Kainoa MacDonald and Rolina Fa'agai, for bringing everyone together and ensuring the roundtable's success.

Please join us at the Maui Beach Hotel from Jan. 11-13, 2024, for our SCHHA Leadership Conference. We'll have workshops by the state DHHL, our membership meeting and more from our Maui Homesteader Disaster Recovery team. For more info, contact us at [info@hawaiianhomesteads.org](mailto:info@hawaiianhomesteads.org). ■

*A longtime advocate for Hawaiian Home Lands trust beneficiaries and lands, KipuKai Kualii is the chair of the Sovereign Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations (SCHHA), the oldest and largest coalition of native Hawaiians on or waiting for Hawaiian Home Lands. Kualii also serves as the vice chair of the Kaua'i County Council and is on the National Association of Counties (NACo) board. After more than 10 years on the continent, Kualii moved home in 2001 and now lives in Anahola, Kaua'i where he serves as the Anahola Hawaiian Homestead Association (AHHA) president.*



# He Mau Mana'o no ka Lā Karisimasa



Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

**H**e mau mana'o kēia mo'olelo o lalo nei no ka lā Karisimasa i pa'i ia ma *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* (3 Mal., 1865) na kekahi kanaka ma ka inoa 'o

ILIKIPAU. Eia kā 'Ilikipau mo'olelo me ka ho'okomo nō na'e i ke kahakō me ka 'okina no ko kēia au po'e. Ua mālama 'ia ho'i ka hua ma'aka ma kekahi mau hua 'olelo. Eia kekahi, he 'elua hapakolu o ka 'atikala wale kēia o lalo.

"He nui ka po'e ho'omana'o i ka lā, i lā hauoli, a i lā hā'awi makana no nā makamaka, akā, ua 'ae pono mai lākou, ua akā-ka loa 'a'ole i hānau ko kākou Haku i ka lā 25 o Dekemaba. Ua akāka ma ke 'ano o ko Palesetina noho 'ana, ā hiki i nā Kahuhipa e kia'i i ko lākou po'e hipa ma ke kula i ka pō o ka lā 25 o Dekemaba, no ke anu, pēlā ma nā 'āina pali e ho'opuni ana iā Betelehemā. Ma ia 'āina ua ho'oku'u 'ia nā hipa ma nā kula, me ke kia'i 'ana o nā kahu i nā mahina o ke kau, a kokoke i ka pau 'ana o 'Okatoba, ho'omaka mai ka ua anu, ho'iho'i 'ia nā holoholona i kauhale.

"He mea pono paha ko kākou 'ike 'ole 'ana i ka lā o ka Haku i hānau ai, no ka mea, pēlā i loa'a 'ole ai iā lākou ke kumu e mālama a e mahalo ai ia lā.

"Ua lōkahi ka nui o nā kanaka na'auao i ka 'āna ua ho'omaka 'ia ka lā Karisimasa i loko o ke Keneture 'ehā ma hope mai o Karisto. Ma Roma kāhi i ho'omaka mua 'ia, a ua ulu mai ia no loko o kekahi 'aha'aina Pegana, 'o ia ka 'Satunalia.' He 'aha'aina kēia i mālama 'ia i loko o ka hapa hope o Dekemaba, ho'okahi hebedoma o ka 'aha'aina 'ana, ma ia hebedoma he nui ka 'uha'uha a me ka le'ale'a; ua

like nā kaurwā me nā Haku, ua hā'awi nā makamaka i nā makana kekahi i kekahi, no nā kamali'i ka lā hope o ia 'aha'aina, a ua hā'awi nui 'ia iā lākou nā ki'i li'ili'i. Ua ho'iho'i 'ia kēia mau hana no ka lā Karisimasa.

"Ua ho'omaka 'ia ka mālama 'ana i ka lā Karisimasa ma Suria, a me Palesetina, i ka makahiki o ka Haku 376, ua maopopo ma ka Hā'ia'o a kekahi kanaka kaulana o Ioane ka inoa, a 'o ka Waha-gula kekahi inoa ona, 'o ia hoi 'o Chrysostom. 'A'ole na'e i ho'opa'a loa 'ia ka mālama 'ana o ia lā ā hiki i ka makahiki 400 ma hope mai o Kristo, he wā ia e nui loa ana ka pouli a me ke 'ino i loko o nā 'Ekalesia.



'O ka 'aha'aina Satunalia — ka ho'omaka 'ana o ke Karisimasa.

"O Clement kekahi kanaka pono o ka wā kahiko loa. Ua ho'āhewa 'o ia i kekahi po'e no ko lākou makemake e 'imi i ka makahiki a me ka lā o ka Haku i hānau ai, me ka 'āna he hana palaualelo, waiwai 'ole, a he mea hiki 'ole ke 'imi a akāka le'a ka lā o ka Haku i hānau ai, wāhi āna.

"No laila ho'i, inā e makemake 'ole kekahi po'e e mālama i ka lā Karisimasa, 'Mai ho'āhewa aku kekahi iā lākou.'

"E kūpa'a lākou i loko o ke ola a Kristo i ho'ōla mai ai iā lākou." ILIKIPAU. ■

*Kalani Akana, Ph.D., is a kumu of hula, oli and 'ōlelo Hawai'i, and a research analyst at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. He has authored numerous articles on Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.*

*To read an English translation of the article, go to [kawaiola.news](http://kawaiola.news)*

# Reclaiming Time and Space - Part 2



By Kalei Nu'uhiwa, Ph.D.

**A**loha e nā hoamakamaka. Last month, the narrative ended at our arrival to Nihoa. Friends, let's continue from there. The lines of

one of Pele's migration chants come to my mind for this article, "O Nihoa ka 'āina a mākou i pae mua aku ai - Nihoa is the shore that we first landed upon."

Nihoa is an imposing presence with sheer pali, cliffs, that are rugged and uninviting. The side that has bays and green sloping hills looks inviting from afar, until you are inside the washing machine-like water, which constantly tries to push you into its embracing jagged rocks or twist your anchor line in the unseen boulders below the ocean's surface.

Thousands upon thousands of birds flew past or hovered above on the crazy updrafts. Curious sharks and monk seals swam around the vessels trying to figure out who we were and why we were invading their space. The Kupū'eu members quickly ascended onto the shore to conduct their first reintroduction of leo Hawai'i and kōnaka presence to Nihoa.

Shortly after, they returned to the *Hōkūle'a* before the sun set below the western horizon. We spent the night at Nihoa and left the next morning before the sun rose over the horizon. Our vessels set out, going back in time sailing towards Mokumanamana to reclaim our history.

Reflecting back now, akua forms were everywhere. Cloud formations escorted us all along our way reminding us that we were reconvening with our ancestral memories. The further away from Nihoa we got, the wilder and more intense the environment became truly testing everyone's personal limits.

We arrived to Mokumanamana two days later on the summer solstice. The bird sounds were deafening. The marine life was huge and indifferent to our presence. There's a simple code on akua lands: decide if you are friend, foe, or edible. You learn right away that humans are not the apex predators there.

Where Nihoa had imposing tall cliffs, Mokumanamana's sites taunt you to

make a mistake. The entire moku, island, is old and fragile comprised of remnant hills where the footing is almost never solid. Low bushes, sprawling succulents and grasses are its only vegetation. Every sense of your being is overwhelmed.

However, that night, under the light of the akua moon with moving shadows of birds flying over us, we conducted our ceremonies flawlessly. The birds contributed as if they had also been training for the rituals. Standing alongside or hovering over us, they added their voices to ours as if they were reacquainting themselves to their own ancestral memories when kōnaka and po'e manu together presided over ceremonies on that ancient moku.

The ceremony secured our relationship to the moku akua extending the size of our pae 'āina o Hawai'i. Our collective consciousness merged our genealogies once again to the moku akua as we reclaimed the northwest islands back to modern Hawaiians to continue having active relationships in our collective evolution, which brought me back to the meeting I was sitting in with the Papahānaumokuākea Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group.

Our cultural working group actively participates in permit reviews and policy making. We also contribute towards new knowledge of Papahānaumokuākea through research and by providing new Hawaiian names to rediscovered organisms and geological features.

It's a challenging and humbling group but we are at the table, participating in the discussions with others who also love Papahānaumokuākea. I suppose some day I'll share in detail about the ensuing research we conducted in the following years. But until then, I wish you all profound reflections. Aloha. ■

*Dr. Kalei Nu'uhiwa is Native Hawaiian from the island of Maui, a progressive pioneer with 30 years of experience in conducting research in various Hawaiian practices of time keeping, lunar calendars, heiau ritual, ceremonies, and epistemologies connected to phenology, strategic resource management and social wellbeing. Her expertise is Papahulilani, which is the study of celestial cycles and atmospheric phenomena.*



# Ho‘omaika‘i Loa 2023 NHEP Grant Awardees



By Elena Farden

In a remarkable showcase of support for Native Hawaiian education, the 2023 Native Hawaiian Education Program (NHEP) grant competi-

tion has reached its pinnacle. This year, the NHEP grant competition, funded through the federal Native Hawaiian Education Act (NHEA), made its mark by awarding 24 programs in September 2023, a total combined funding amount of \$33.2 million.

## Absolute Priorities for Community

NHEP is more than a grant competition; it's a powerful instrument for change in the education landscape of Hawai'i. Its mission is to support the development of innovative education programs that assist Native Hawaiians while also supplementing and expanding existing programs and authorities in the field of education.

The significance of the 2023 fiscal year lies in its absolute priorities. Unlike in previous years, the 2023 competition incorporates absolute priorities based on the authorized program activities outlined in the Native Hawaiian Education Act, a part of Title VI, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This innovative approach to grant allocation ensures that resources are strategically directed to address key areas of educational development for Native Hawaiians.

## NHEC's Pioneering Advocacy

A notable development in the 2023 NHEP grant competition is the inclusion of Absolute Priority II, in addition to the authorized program activities. This priority, inspired by Title III of division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, serves as a testament to the concerted efforts of the Native Hawaiian Education Council (NHEC) in advocating for Native Hawaiian students' educational needs.

Absolute Priority II specifically designates funds to be used for renovating or modernizing existing public elementary

or secondary schools, as well as structures related to these schools. To qualify for this funding, proposals must demonstrate that the structure in question predominantly serves Native Hawaiian students. This ambitious priority aims to enhance the learning environments of Native Hawaiian students across the state, fostering a brighter future for generations to come.

## Mālama Honua PCS Foundation: A Shining Example

As the September 2023 announcement of NHEP awardees by the U.S. Department of Education rolled in, the education community had reason to celebrate. Among the 24 new grantees, the Mālama Honua Public Charter School Foundation stood out for its dedication to the cause. The Foundation received a significant grant of \$2 million for Absolute Priority II, which will be used to construct a single classroom "pod" facility and restrooms to support sixth- to eighth-grade students on the main campus.

This funding will not only create state-of-the-art facilities but will also provide Native Hawaiian students with a conducive and inspiring environment for their education. It's a testament to the impact that advocacy, innovation, and collaborative efforts can have on Native Hawaiian education.

The 2023 NHEP grant competition and its Absolute Priorities represent a significant step forward in the journey to provide equitable and enriching education opportunities for Native Hawaiians. As these programs are set into motion, the future holds promise for the transformation of educational landscapes and the empowerment of generations to come. To learn more about the 2023 NHEP awardees, please visit: <https://oese.ed.gov/2023-grant-awards/>. ■

*Elena Farden serves as the executive director for the Native Hawaiian Education Council, established in 1994 under the Native Hawaiian Education Act. Elena is a first-generation college graduate with a BS in telecommunications from Pepperdine University, an MBA from Chaminade University and she is currently pursuing a doctorate.*

# Navigating the 2024 Economic Landscape

## Hawai'i Economic Outlook Conference Insights



By Andrew Rosen

As we approach the new year, businesses across Hawai'i are charting their courses for 2024. Budgets and strategies are being

carefully crafted to align with the goals and aspirations of our local economy. However, in this rapidly evolving environment, it's essential to base our plans on the most up-to-date data and insights.

The Mayor's Office of Economic Revitalization (OER) has been diligently working to support Native Hawaiian commerce, and their third quarter 2023 report provides valuable insights into the state of our local economy:

1. Construction remains strong: Building permits issued in the first seven months of 2023 saw a remarkable increase of 17.1% compared to the previous year. Furthermore, permit values for additions and alterations surged by 55.1%. However, it's worth noting that the value for commercial and industrial permits experienced a decrease of 21.2%.
2. Hawai'i real GDP dips: Hawai'i real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) faced a 3% decline in Q1 2023 compared to Q1 2019.
3. Labor force fluctuations: The labor force in Hawai'i slightly decreased in Q1 2023 compared to Q1 2019, with unemployment averaging 2.9% through July 2023, slightly higher than the 2019 figure.
4. Inflation concerns: Honolulu's consumer inflation averaged 3.1% through July 2023, significantly surpassing the 1.8% rate in 2019. Personal income grew by 2.7% in 2023, but it failed to keep pace with inflation.
5. Tourism challenges: Tourism bookings for November 2023 to September 2024 are down from the previous year, according to the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA).

Given these economic indicators, how can local businesses maximize opportunities and identify their potential in 2024? With a softening economy, challenges like stagnant tourism, inflation, higher interest rates, and global uncertainties are factors that need careful consideration in our planning for success.

Knowledge is the cornerstone of preparation, and that's why the Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce is proud to host the Hawai'i Economic 2024 Conference on Tuesday, Jan. 16, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. at the O'ahu County Club, where breakfast will be served.

Our conference will feature a panel discussion addressing the pressing issues that Hawaiian commerce may face in 2024. Elected officials will provide their perspectives, and Native Hawaiian businesses will share their strategies for navigating the year ahead.

Our panel will include four prominent State Legislators, two Native Hawaiian business owners, and industry insiders. We encourage members of NHCC and attendees to submit questions for our moderator, Kainoa Carlson, to pose to our expert panel.

We extend an invitation to all who are interested in Hawai'i's economic outlook for 2024 to attend the conference. To register, simply visit [nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org](http://nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org) and select the "Events" tab. For any inquiries or assistance, please feel free to contact me at [andrew@nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org](mailto:andrew@nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org) or call 808-208-5816.

As we step into the new year, let us equip ourselves with the knowledge and insights necessary to navigate the economic landscape successfully. Here's to a healthy and prosperous New Year filled with peace and opportunity for all. ■

*Andrew Rosen is executive director for the Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce and a longtime member. Contact Andrew at [andrew@nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org](mailto:andrew@nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org).*



# Kalima Lawsuit Case Status

By Thomas Grande, Esq. and Carl Varady, Esq.

On Oct. 26, 2023, the Hawai'i Supreme Court dismissed the appeal and writ filed in this case by a class member. No more appeals are possible. On Oct. 31, 2023, the First Circuit Court transferred the Settlement Funds, in the amount of \$326,342,409.43, to the Kalima Class Action Settlement Trust (the "Trust"). Now that the Settlement Funds are in the Trust, settlement payments to living class members will be made as soon as possible.

Checks will be mailed to the Class Members' most recent address. If your address has changed, please contact the Claims Administrator by e-mail at [info@Kalima-Lawsuit.com](mailto:info@Kalima-Lawsuit.com) or by phone at 1-808-650-5551 or 1-833-639-1308 (Toll-Free).

Checks of \$25,000 or more will require a signature of someone 18-years-old or older. If you receive your mail at a P.O. Box, please inform the P.O. Box manager if special arrangements are necessary to provide such a signature.

Probate Special Master Emily Kawashima and Probate Special Counsel Scott Suzuki will continue to work on implementing the "Probate Plan" and will be seeking approval from the Probate Court to direct payments from the Trust to those entitled to the settlement funds for deceased Class Members.

A notice about the Probate Plan will be mailed out by the Claims Administrator soon and will have more information about how the Probate Plan will work. Relatives of deceased class members who have not already done so should submit a Deceased Class Member Information Form. Family members can obtain more information about how Deceased Class Members' claims will be handled by attending the next Attorney Talk Story on Dec. 12, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. Details and more information are available on [kalima-lawsuit.com](http://kalima-lawsuit.com).

Please contact the Claims Administrator at [info@kalima-lawsuit.com](mailto:info@kalima-lawsuit.com) or at 1-808-650-5551 1-833-639-1308 (Toll-Free) if you have questions. Do not contact the Court directly. ■

## \$20M for Native Hawaiian Climate Resilience

On November 14, Sen. Brian Schatz and the Department of the Interior, Office of Native Hawaiian Relations (ONHR) announced \$20 million in new funding for the Kapapahulau Climate Resilience Program.

The initiative is funded through a provision of the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act authored by Schatz to support Native Hawaiian climate resiliency efforts.

"Through the Kapapahulau Climate Resilience Program, the federal government is directly funding Native Hawaiian-led climate solutions for the first time ever," said Schatz. "This \$20 million down payment – part of the Inflation Reduction Act's historic investment in climate action – recognizes the critical role of the Native Hawaiian community in charting a path towards a sustainable, climate resilient future in Hawai'i and beyond."

The Kapapahulau Climate Resilience Program will prioritize project proposals from Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) that focus on coping with past and present climate change-related impacts; adaptation to projected climate change effects; and efforts towards innovation, transformation, and systemic change to increase Native Hawaiian resilience.

Informed by Native Hawaiian and other subject matter experts over the past year, the Kapapahulau program is intended to assist NHOs affected by climate change across the pae 'āina with awards ranging from \$100,000 to \$5 million.

"Native Hawaiians are seeing climate change affect their communities, nearshore fisheries, traditional foods, resources, and cultural practices," said Stanton Enomoto, ONHR senior program director. "The program puts critical financial assistance into the hands of the Native Hawaiian Organizations whose practice of aloha 'āina reflects how the Hawaiian Islands and its environment are essential to the Native Hawaiian community identity."

Applicants may propose projects with durations of one-to-five years. ONHR will host a two-hour virtual pre-proposal informational session to provide an overview of the program and answer questions on Wednesday, December 13, at 12:00 p.m. HST.

The application deadline for funding

## OHA CEO Stacy Ferreira and HNN's Billy V on Sunrise



New Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) CEO Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira, sat down with HNN TV personality Billy V on November 17 to record a series of digital interviews "podcast style" for his show, Hawai'i News Now Sunrise. The interviews will be an opportunity for viewers to learn a little bit about Ferreira, as well as to hear about what OHA is doing today, and where Ferreira hopes to take the organization in her new leadership role. To listen to the podcasts go to: [www.hawaiinewsnow.com/podcasts/island-beat/](http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/podcasts/island-beat/). - Courtesy Photo

is Feb. 29, 2024 at 6:59 p.m. HST. Register to attend the information session at: [https://blm.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_tGZJxaeuQpuU5IUcGJkiFA](https://blm.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_tGZJxaeuQpuU5IUcGJkiFA)

For more information about the Kapapahulau Climate Resilience Program, visit the ONHR website at [www.doi.gov/hawaiian/climate-resilience](http://www.doi.gov/hawaiian/climate-resilience).

## FEMA Deadline Extended to December 9

The deadline to apply for federal disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been extended another 30 days. Homeowners and renters with uninsured or underinsured damage to their property from the Maui wildfires have until Saturday, Dec. 9, to apply.

This is also the deadline for homeowners, renters, and businesses to apply to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for a low-interest disaster loan for physical property damage.

"Registering with FEMA for Individual Assistance is the key that opens the door to many kinds of additional federal help, and we want to make sure everyone who is eligible for that aid has an opportunity to receive it," said James Barros, administrator of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency.

"The complexity of this event and the diversity of the Maui community

created some obstacles to getting all of the people who need help signed up for federal assistance," he added. "So we're grateful that FEMA extended the registration deadline."

FEMA provides funds paid directly to eligible individuals and households. Housing Assistance may include rental assistance, lodging expenses reimbursement, home repair assistance, and replacement assistance. FEMA also provides financial assistance for other disaster-caused expenses and immediate essential needs including funds to replace personal property, moving and storage expenses, transportation assistance, funeral, medical, dental, child-care, and miscellaneous disaster-related items.

As of mid-November, FEMA and the U.S. SBA had approved about \$260 million in federal assistance to survivors of the Maui wildfires.

To apply for FEMA aid visit [DisasterAssistance.gov](http://DisasterAssistance.gov) or call 1-800-621-3362.

## Advancing a Circular Economy in Hawai'i

Pi'o Summit 2023, a UH Innovation Conference sponsored by UH Mānoa's Office of the Vice President for Research



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and Innovation, is set for December 13 at the Hawai'i Convention Center in Waikīkī.

The modern pursuit of convenience has led to rampant consumerism and waste resulting in the continuous extraction of finite resources used to create products that end up in landfills.

Growing awareness has sparked a demand for urgent action to address issues such as resource management, biodiversity loss, climate change, energy efficiency, waste and pollution. One idea gaining traction is aimed at designing a Circular Economy, where waste is minimal.

Hawai'i's traditional ahupua'a system is an example of a circular system. Combining contemporary Circular Economy solutions with ancestral knowledge can create integrated approaches to sustainability that are both regenerative and socially just.

The summit will feature an international panel of keynote speakers, including Dr. Kamana Beamer, a professor with UH's Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge and Richardson School of Law, and Kawika Winter, reserve manager at He'eia National Estuarine Research Reserve, part of UH's Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology.

Session topics will include an overview of the history of Circular Economy as ahupua'a; contemporary restoration of ahupua'a; experiences, challenges and best practices of circular economy interventions; and UH's role in creating opportunities for Hawai'i's future.

For more information and to register for Pi'o Summit 2023 go to: <https://research.hawaii.edu/event/a-circular-economy-in-hawaii/>.

## DOI Awards \$1 Million in NATIVE Act Grants

The Department of the Interior's Office of Native Hawaiian Relations (ONHR) has awarded

## OHA Hosts 2nd Red Hill CRI Meeting



The Red Hill Community Representation Initiative (CRI), a community group comprised of water protectors, held an in-person and virtual livestream meeting on November 16 at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). CRI Chair Healani Sonoda-Pale facilitated the meeting attended by Red Hill Joint Task Force representatives, concerned community members, OHA staff and newly appointed OHA Ka Pouhana/CEO Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira. Discussions focused on the defueling process, safe drinking water and air monitoring and included a public Q&A.

- Photo: Kevin Chak

\$1 million in grants to eight Native Hawaiian organizations to implement the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act. This funding enables Indigenous communities to participate in national tourism goals and strategies, while seeking to enhance and integrate native tourism, empower native communities, and expand unique cultural tourism opportunities.

The eight 2023 HŌ'IHI grant recipients are: Hāna Arts, Hawai'i Land Trust, Hi'ipaka LLC., Hōlani Hāna; Kāko'o 'Ōiwi, Mālama Loko Ea Foundation, The Kohala Center, and Waimea Hawaiian Homestead Association.

"The HŌ'IHI Grant is meant to encourage a tourism model that accurately showcases Native Hawaiian culture and traditions while providing protection and awareness for Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources," said Ka'aleleo Wong, HŌ'IHI grant manager with ONHR. "Grant awardees for 2023 exemplify Hawai'i's overall movement towards regenerative tourism."

For more information about

the HŌ'IHI Grant Program and ONHR visit: [www.doi.gov/hawaiian](http://www.doi.gov/hawaiian).

## La'i'ōpua 2020 Fall Puwalu



It was a special moment at the Puwalu when lovely Kaulu Amaral offered an impromptu hula. - Photo: La'i'ōpua 2020

Over 100 La'i'ōpua homesteaders and other DHHL beneficiaries gathered on October 21 at La'i'ōpua 2020 (L2020) in Kona, Hawai'i Island, for a celebratory puwalu thanks, in part, to a grant from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Guests explored demonstration stations throughout the facility while keiki enjoyed a 40-foot, double plunge water slide. This was a unifying event for DHHL homesteaders, beneficia-

ries, and stakeholders – a time to sign up for future classes/workshops and enjoy music, food, and camaraderie.

Live music featuring Kahanuola Solatorio and Lina Robins-Tamure & 'Aina Asing was enhanced with impromptu hula by audience members. And captains Rusty Oppenheimer and U'i Malakaua of L2020 wa'a La'i'ōpua answered questions and invited participants to sign up for future sails.

L2020's lānai provided shelter from the elements and featured an array of pūpū and desserts created by the students of La'i'ōpua's Youth Culinary Program.

"The puwalu was a celebration of the community's participation in sharing its mana'o throughout the year," said Kawehi Inaba, L2020 executive director. "Their input has helped L2020 to create new workforce development, cultural, and educational opportunities for Native Hawaiians. The puwalu enriched communication between the residents of the Villages of La'i'ōpua, DHHL beneficiaries, and La'i'ōpua 2020."

La'i'ōpua 2020 is located on Department of Hawaiian Home Lands land, in the "piko" of the Kealakehe ahupua'a. For more information, [www.laiopua.org](http://www.laiopua.org).

## Makaimoku Named CEO of Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation

Keahi Makaimoku has been named CEO of the Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation. Makaimoku, who has been with the foundation as a program officer since 2012, assumed her new role as CEO on November 1.



Keahi Makaimoku  
- Photo: HML Foundation

Makaimoku has diverse experience across the nonprofit and education sectors. Prior to joining the foundation, Makaimoku worked for Kamehameha Schools' Public Education

Support Division where she supported the planning and implementation of the Ka Pua Initiative on the Wai'anae Coast. She has also served as chair of the Native Hawaiian Education Council since 2019.

Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation is a private grantmaking foundation established in 1990 by the late philanthropist Helga Glaesel-Hollenback.

Based in Honolulu, the foundation focuses its efforts on providing opportunities for those in need, especially children, to find hopeful futures, as well as to enhance stewardship, preservation, and protection of Hawai'i's natural environment.

Makaimoku resides in Hilo with her 'ohana and the foundation will continue its practice of being a hybrid workplace.

## CNA Training Now Available in Ka'ū

Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training is now available in Ka'ū on Hawai'i Island at Hopena Kūloli Medical Training Institute.

Hopena Kūloli is the vision of founder and nurse practitioner Hokulani Porter.



Hokulani Porter -  
Courtesy Photo

As a young single mother, Porter enrolled in a CNA program to learn skills that would enable her to earn a living wage. After working in several long-term care homes she returned to school to become a licensed practical nurse (LPN), then a registered nurse (RN) and finally a nurse practitioner (NP).

While studying to become an NP, Porter was sent to Ka'ū Hospital to complete her clinical study hours. After graduating in 2012 she decided to remain in Ka'ū, recognizing the community's dire need for health care.

Porter hopes that CNA training will not only provide her

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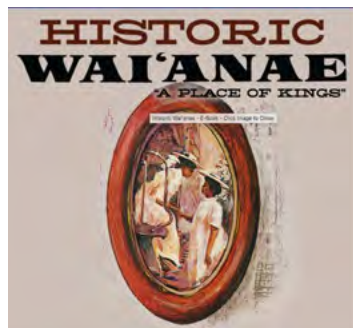
## NEWS BRIEFS

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students with the skills to earn a living wage in their own community but also help address the acute shortage of health care professionals in Ka'ū, particularly home health care service providers for kūpuna.

The training program requires two full-day classes per week for eight weeks. Clinical practicums are an additional four days. Anyone 18 years old with a high school diploma or GED may enroll. When the course and practicum are completed, students sit for a national board exam. Upon passing the exam they will be certified to work for any health care facility in the U.S.

For more information about Hopena Kūloli Medical Training Institute go to: [www.hopenakuloli.com](http://www.hopenakuloli.com).

Wai'anae Civic Club  
Releases E-Book

The Wai'anae Hawaiian Civic Club (WHCC) announced the October 15 virtual release of its *Historic Wai'anae* e-book and audiobook to mark the 50th anniversary of the hard copy version of the original publication by author Edward McGrath.

The release is part of an effort to breathe new life into the Wai'anae community's rich history through a digital lens. WHCC also aspires to revive 'ōlelo Hawai'i within Wai'anae Moku over the next 50 years. Part of this effort is to distribute pocket-sized 'ōlelo Hawai'i dictionaries to fourth graders throughout the region.

Purchasing the e-book or audio

version of *Historic Wai'anae* will help to fund this initiative. For more information or questions about WHCC, email [waianae-hawaiiancivicclub@gmail.com](mailto:waianae-hawaiiancivicclub@gmail.com). To purchase *Historic Wai'anae* go to: [www.historicwaianae.com](http://www.historicwaianae.com).

BISAC Offers New Detox  
Center

The Big Island Substance Abuse Council's (BISAC) new Detox Center reflects the organization's understanding of the different levels of substance abuse treatment and their relative benefits, and programs offered at their Detox Center utilize proven strategies for breaking the cycle of addiction.

A priority for BISAC is creating detoxification and treatment options for people experiencing homelessness and living with a substance use disorder. They do that by providing resources for detoxification and treatment to close the gap in services offered on Hawai'i Island, and by creating treatments that sustain recovery and enhance client resilience (i.e., increasing client knowledge base and skills, increasing treatment engagement, continued client engagement following discharge from live-in treatment programs, and increasing access to clean and sober transitional housing).

BISAC also is working to create the infrastructure necessary (staffing, training, facilities) to support ongoing, sustainable detox services.

These detoxification and treatment options will build the organization's capacity to provide additional units for the most vulnerable populations. The intended outcomes include expanding the continuum of care and increasing the number of transition housing units for individuals who are ready for re-entry. These service interventions provide comprehensive, holistic care to help the most susceptible, underserved populations.

BISAC is an Office of Hawaiian Affairs grantee. If you're interested in learning more about

'Ōiwi Tourism Leaders Gather  
at Ka Huina Conference

The Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association's (NaHHA) annual conference event, Ka Huina, made its return to the Hawai'i Convention Center in October after being held virtually for the past two years. "Ka Huina is convened with the intent that our panel discussions allow for 'safe space' learning with thought-provoking conversations based in a Hawaiian world view. We are hopeful that Ka Huina 2023 will inspire our decision-makers in tourism to hold fast to the intersections where culture and innovation meet so that we can continue to pivot the wa'a into the direction of regeneration for the betterment of all Hawai'i," said NaHHA Executive Director Mālia Sanders. In case you missed it, recordings of all of the event's insightful panel discussions and inspirational specialty speakers can be found on their website at [www.nahha.com/kahuina](http://www.nahha.com/kahuina). NaHHA is an Office of Hawaiian Affairs grantee. - *Courtesy Photo*

their programs, such as their Detox Center, please call 808-969-9994 or go to: [www.bisac.org](http://www.bisac.org).

Extended Drought  
Expected for Hawai'i  
Island

The County of Hawai'i Department of Water Supply (DWS) has undertaken a multi-phased strategy to meet the public's essential drinking water needs during the ongoing island-wide drought that weather experts predict will extend well into 2024.

DWS' drought strategy includes partnering with others including the Civil Defense Agency to prepare for extended dry weather conditions, conserving water storage, establishing temporary services from select fire hydrants so approved water haulers will have more sites from which to draw potable water to help those on personal rainwater catchment systems, and utilizing generators to power water facilities during electrical outages.

DWS also intends to maintain communication with the public about impacts to their water service and posting updated messaging at [www.hawaiidws.org](http://www.hawaiidws.org) and on DWS' Facebook page. They will closely monitor all 23 public water systems and ongoing weather forecasts, continue to promote water conservation and if warranted, issue mandates that customers limit their water use for essentials only (drinking, cooking, hygiene, sanitation).

For water conservation tips go to [www.hawaiidws.org/conservation-resources/](http://www.hawaiidws.org/conservation-resources/).

PA'I Foundation  
Introduces Lunar  
Planner

New for 2024, the PA'I Foundation is introducing a new Hawaiian Lunar Planner.

Seamlessly blending modern functionality with timeless wisdom, this meticulously crafted tool provides users with daily guidance and tailored recommendations based on the moon's phases.



While its primary audience is business professionals, the profound insights incorporated into the planner are rooted in the richness of Native Hawaiian cultural traditions that have steered traditional agricultural and fishing practices for countless generations. Experience a bridge between the past and the present as you navigate your days with this unique and culturally enriched planner.

Established in 2001 by Kumu Hula Vicky Holt Takamine, PA'I is a nonprofit dedicated to preserving and perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural traditions for future generations. PA'I views Native Hawaiian artistic practices as a form of resistance, organization and empowerment.

The Hawaiian Lunar Planner will be available for \$40 beginning the first week of December. For more information or to place an order visit [www.paifoundation.org](http://www.paifoundation.org).

Mitigating Visitor  
Impacts at Kumukahi

Located in the moku of Puna on Hawai'i Island, Kumukahi is the easternmost spot in the Hawaiian archipelago. As such, it is a wahi pana with deep spiritual and cultural significance for Native Hawaiians. Kumukahi is a leina a ka 'uhane, a place where souls of the departed leap from this earthly realm to the realm of the ancestors. The region includes countless cultural sites, including heiau and burials, and is home to many native species of flora and fauna.

It has also become an increasingly popular destination for

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## NEWS BRIEFS

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tourists.

Escalating disrespectful and destructive behavior by visitors gave rise to the introduction of a resolution by Puna Councilwoman Ashley Kierkiewicz asking that Hawai'i County agencies, the state Department of Land and Natural Resources, and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs take "immediate and long-term measures" to protect the area.

As reported by *Big Island Now*, on November 15 the Hawai'i County Council passed Kierkiewicz' resolution, reinforcing the council's promise to protect and preserve Kumukahi.

In 2020, representatives from the Hawai'i County Planning Department, University of Hawai'i, state Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, plus landowners and lineal descendants from the region began discussing a burial treatment and preservation plan to resolve long-standing iwi kūpuna issues.

County officials will continue to convene relevant agencies and community stakeholders to manage and steward Kumukahi. The resolution identifies non-profit Ho'oulu Lāhui to provide immediate and long-term support for these efforts via project management and community engagement. The county will use geothermal royalties collected from Puna Geothermal Venture to help fund the protection and preservation of Kumukahi.

## Native Hawaiian Artists Selected for Fellowship

Lehuanani Waipa Ah Nee and Pōhaikēaloha Panoke are among 36 people from Indigenous and native communities across the United States who have been selected for a yearlong fellowship offered by the Intercultural Leadership Institute (ILI).

The fellowship includes a series of virtual meetings with other fellows and mentors as well as



Lehuanani Waipa Ah Nee - *Courtesy Photo*



Pōhaikēaloha Panoke - *Courtesy Photo*

four in-person trips to a variety of native communities across the country. The artists will discuss issues specific to Indigenous cultures and how their art can capture experiences related to these communities.

Waipa Ah Nee is a Keaukaha native who began her photography career as a Hilo High student. She has documented events such as the Mauna Kea protests and the Mauna Loa eruption and uses her photography to tell inspiring stories about Native Hawaiians.

Panoke is from Wai'ānae and is a media producer, storyteller and founder of 'Ōiwi Online. She works with various forms of creative and digital media including film, interactive works and animation, creating media that supports the perpetuation of Indigenous excellence while educating both natives and non-natives as to the values of Indigenous culture.

"I'm really looking forward to learning about these different cultures and how they are faring in the world politically and physically, and how they are tackling very hard, but recognizable issues," Waipa Ah Nee told the *Hawai'i Tribune Herald*. "As artists, we have a tool in our hands that becomes a massive paintbrush that we can use to paint what's in front of us. We can use our work to perpetuate our stories and to tell new ones."

ILI is a collaborative program of Alternate ROOTS, First Peoples Fund, PA'I Foundation, Sipp Culture, First Alaskans Institute, and The International Association of Blacks in Dance.

The two artists are part of Cohort 5. Applications for Cohort 6 are currently available at [www.Weareili.org](http://www.Weareili.org). The application deadline is Jan. 12, 2024. ■



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

*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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## PLT Working Group Defines Lands, Revenues and Proceeds Due to Native Hawaiians

After years of concern about the state's inability to marshal and accurately account for all of the ceded lands now held by the state in the Public Land Trust (PLT) – and the state's inability to accurately account for and pay 20% of all of the proceeds and revenue derived from these lands to OHA for the "betterment of conditions of Native Hawaiians" – the 31st Legislature of the State of Hawai'i passed Senate Bill 2021, enacted into law as Act 226, to create a process to resolve this issue.

In establishing this working group, the legislature stated this action was necessary to uphold the state's constitutional trust responsibility owed to native Hawaiians.

In accordance with Act 226, the working group was to be comprised of six members, three appointed by the governor and three appointed by the OHA Board of Trustees.

The governor appointed Dawn Chang, director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and chair of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Luis Salaveria, director of the Department of Budget and Finance, and Ryan Kanaka'ole, a deputy attorney general to the working group.

OHA's Board of Trustees (BOT) appointed me, along with Hawai'i Island Trustee and Vice-Chair Mililani Trask, and Sherry Broder, esteemed Native Hawaiian right's attorney and a professor at the William S. Richardson School of Law.

The working group is responsible for accounting for all ceded lands in the PLT inventory, for accounting for all income and proceeds from the PLT, and for defining the 20% pro rata share of the income and proceeds from the PLT due annually to OHA for the "betterment of conditions" of Native Hawaiians.

Act 226 further provides that all state departments or agencies that



Carmen  
"Hulu"  
Lindsey

CHAIR

Trustee, Maui

use, manage, or receive income, proceeds, or any other funds derived from the PLT must cooperate with the working group.

The working group is required to prepare a report to the legislature of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation required and the annual amount constituting 20% of income and proceeds from the PLT due OHA. OHA is

required to provide administrative support as necessary and prepare the final report of the working group.

The working group has thus far met on September 5, September 21, October 17, October 31, and November 20 with more meetings yet to be set. All meetings of the working group are held in compliance with the State Open Meetings Act.

The State Land Information Management System (SLIMS), the Public Land Trust Information System (PLTIS), the DLNR Annual Report to the Legislature pursuant to Act 178, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2006, and the Report to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on the Accuracy and Completeness of a report by the Department of Land and Natural Resources to Hawai'i State Legislature on Public Land Trust Receipts for Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2016, by N&K CPAs Inc. (2018) were reviewed and discussed by the working group.

A discussion of other present and future sources of revenue and proceeds from all the state's PLT lands, including the state's submerged lands, is being undertaken. The working group is actively pursuing a means to receive accurate information from all departments and agencies that use, manage, or receive income, proceeds, or any other funds derived from the PLT lands.

Mele Kalikimaka and Hau'oli Makahiki Hou to you and your 'oha-na. ■



## Gambling Rears its Ugly Head at OHA and Gets Decapitated

A few months ago, some Native American Indians came to town. They met with all of OHA's female trustees (O'ahu Trustee Akaka, Chair Trustee Lindsey, Trustee Alapa and myself) in various separate meetings. They had a power point presentation inviting OHA to join a business partnership with them for a gambling casino in Waikīkī!

The "ask" was simple. OHA would give up all the parcels it owns in Kaka'ako for a "crap shoot" (literally) and would instead exchange the Kaka'ako lands for the old convention center in Waikīkī, which OHA would then refurbish as a gambling casino!

I explained to them that their proposal was dead in the water because Hawai'i is one of two states in the union that prohibits all forms of gaming. Simply put, gambling is a crime in Hawai'i.

I told them that only the Hawai'i State Legislature could change that law and that even if it was changed, the governor could still veto it. I told them that prior efforts to pass gaming laws in Hawai'i had all failed, and that in Hawai'i there is a strong anti-gaming lobby consisting of our state and federal law enforcement



**Mililani B. Trask**

VICE CHAIR  
Trustee,  
Hawai'i Island

agencies and our inter-faith Ecumenical Council of Churches because gaming attracts many other illegal activities, including prostitution and drug dealing.

My response was simple... GAMBLING IS ILLEGAL IN HAWAII, and OHA's primary obligation is to address the needs of our people for housing, health, education, 'āina and food.

Some trustees at OHA want to facilitate gambling in Hawai'i, claiming that we could get millions from the crap tables and make even more money by using our casino to host wrestling, MMA and Boxing matches just like some Native Americans do on the continent.

These ideas are ridiculous and idiotic. Gaming is illegal in Hawai'i. OHA's job is to address our people's critical needs pursuant to our strategic plan. Trustees who want to advocate for gambling need to re-read their oath of office and consider running for a legislative office.

My mana'o is simple. Gaming is not an option for OHA. Our job is to build 29,000 homes for our people, not gambling casinos.

Merry Christmas, Mililani ■

## OHA's O'ahu Community Meetings & 2023 Year End Review

As your O'ahu Island Trustee and Chair of the Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment Committee, I had the honor of hosting, alongside our Board Chair Hulu Lindsey, four well-attended community meetings and eight site visits, with a focus on home-stead communities. Mahalo nui to Chair Lindsey, Interim CEO Colin Kippen, OHA staff, and my Akaka Team for all your support.

Our meetings and site visits gave opportunities to stay on the pulse of the needs and concerns of our Hawaiian community and see and hear how we can further collaborate with organizations supporting our beneficiaries.

### Wai'anae (8/29/23)

#### Site Visits:

- King Lunalilo Trust, Nā Pua a Lunalilo – Mā'ili Kitchen
- Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center

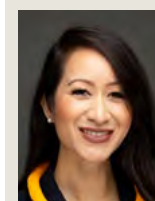
#### Presentations:

- King Lunalilo Trust, Nā Pua a Lunalilo- Mā'ili Kitchen – Tammy Smith, Director of Kitchens, Nā Pua a Lunalilo and Keolamaikalani Dean, CEO, King Lunalilo Trust.
- Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL) – Kali Watson, Chairman
- Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center – Landen Muasau, Dr. Stephen Bradley, and Dr. Kyle "Kaliko" Chang
- 'Elepaio Social Services – Alicia Higa and Jesse Mikasobe-Keali'inohomoku
- Wai'anae Economic Development Council- Joe Lapilio and Dan Gomes
- Nā Kama Kai – Matt Kauwe



Trustees Akaka, Lindsey, Souza, and Trask with the staff of Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and 'Elepaio Social Services. - Courtesy Photos

Mahalo nui to Alicia Higa, Jesse Mikasobe-Keali'inohomoku, Kenny Paresa, Nicki Hasegawa, Kaliko Chang, Auntie Nalani Benioni, Chef Kamoia Quitevis, Chef Mark Ka'aha'aina, and the Wai'anae



**Kaleihikina Akaka**

Trustee,  
O'ahu

High School Culinary Program for all of their assistance.

### Papakōlea (9/28/23)

#### Site Visits:

- FITTED Hawai'i
- Hale Makana O Mō'ili'ili Development

#### Presentations:

- Ikenakea Development – Patti Tancayo, General Partner
- DHHL – Kalani Fronda, Special Projects Team Lead
- Papakōlea Development Corporation – Lilia Kapuniai, Executive Director

### Kapolei (10/17/23)

#### Site Visits:

- Hale Kipa
- Ulu A'e Learning Center

#### Presentations

- Hale Kipa - Venus Kau'ioakawēkiu Rosete-Medeiros, CEO
- Ulu A'e Learning Center – Miki'ala Lidstone, Executive Director
- Kapolei Community Development Corporation - Auntie Homelani Schaedel

### Waimānalo (11/7/23)

#### Site Visits:

- College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resources (CTAHR)
- Hui Mālama O Ke Kai

#### Presentations:

- Mālama Honua Public Charter School – Denise Espania, Po'o Kula
- Truth is Now – Ashley Maha'a, CEO & Founder
- DHHL – Kalani Fronda, Special Projects Team Lead



Trustees Akaka, Alapa, Ka Pouhana Ferreira together with Waimānalo beneficiaries and Kahoano 'Ohana.

Mahalo to all the presenters and those who attended the meetings in-person and on livestream.

I wish you the very best during this holiday season. Enjoy the precious time that is shared with 'ohana and friends as we recharge and get ready for another busy and exciting year! Mele Kalikimaka a Hau'oli Makahiki Hou! ■

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<https://kawaiola.news>





## A New Day for Hawaiian Homelands

### Collaboration Between OHA and DHHL

When most people think about the Hawaiian Homelands, the image of a long waiting list of 29,000 people comes to mind. Many of us personally know stories of Hawaiian beneficiaries who have waited their whole lives never to obtain a homestead. This image has persisted despite the fact that the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) has a constitutional responsibility to improve the lives of Native Hawaiians by administering lands for homesteads.



**Keli'i Akina, Ph.D.**

Trustee,  
At-Large

responsibility to house Hawaiians on homesteads.

DHHL has seized the opportunity, breaking ground on various projects across the Hawaiian Islands. Notable developments include Ka'uluokaha'i on O'ahu, Pu'unani Homestead on Maui, La'i'ōpua Village IV on Hawai'i, Hanapēpē Phase II on Kaua'i, and the Ho'olehua Water System improvement project on Moloka'i. These initiatives signify progress and are models for future work.

DHHL is also pursuing innovative solutions to house Hawaiians during the waiting period. For example, the Honolulu City Council has approved DHHL's first rental housing project. This 23-story building in Mō'ili'ili, slated to replace the Stadium-o-Drome bowling alley, will offer 278 affordable apartments exclusively to Native Hawaiians, providing a tangible solution to the housing crisis.

Also, one of my first responsibilities when I became an OHA Trustee was to lead a committee tasked with reviewing OHA's annual \$3 million commitment to DHHL. These funds were used to help DHHL pay down interest on revenue bonds that were used to finance infrastructure projects. The projects resulted in the development of nearly 500 homesteads for Hawaiian families. This partnership between OHA and DHHL is a positive start, but there are other possibilities worth exploring such as:

- Collaboration on developing more affordable rental housing projects that offer interim housing to beneficiaries awaiting homesteads.
- Pursuing the development and leasing of DHHL condos and apartments as an alternative form of homesteads.
- Fostering commercial development on select DHHL lots to generate revenue to fund additional homestead development projects.

Now is the time for cooperation between OHA and DHHL in the spirit of "e hana kākou." Let's work together to ensure that Hawaiian Home Lands become a symbol of empowerment, resilience, and justice for generations to come. ■



Trustee Akina with Lt. Gov. Sylvia Luke, Maui County Council Vice Chair Yuki Lei Sugimura and beneficiaries at DHHL's groundbreaking event at Pu'unani subdivision on Maui in May 2023. - Courtesy Photo

The term "land rich but cash poor" has characterized the Hawaiian Home Lands for nearly a century. The land has been there, but the funds for water, electricity, roads, and other infrastructure have not.

In a landmark move, 2,515 Hawaiian waitlisters took legal action against the State of Hawai'i in the case known as *Kalima v. State of Hawai'i*. The case exposed the state's breach of its duties as trustees of the Hawaiian Home Lands Trust. The case led to a \$328 million settlement, offering some solace to the affected beneficiaries. However, this financial redress is just a step, albeit a significant one, on the path to ensuring Hawaiians acquire homesteads.

Fortunately, there are also major efforts underway. 2022 brought a glimmer of hope as the Hawai'i State Legislature allocated a historic \$600 million to DHHL. This funding aims to expedite the development of more homestead lots and essential infrastructure. It is a crucial step towards finally reducing the waiting list and fulfilling DHHL's constitutional

## An Eventful First Year in Office

Aloha mai kākou. I hope this message finds you well. As I reflect on my first year serving as an OHA Trustee, I am excited to share some updates with you.

Throughout the past year, my staff and I have had the opportunity to visit your communities and attend site visits to many of the organizations supported by OHA. We visited each island, formally and independently, to hear and understand the community's concerns and celebrations.

Your voice is crucial in these community meetings. They provide a great opportunity for you to present testimony, express concerns, celebrations, or suggestions directly to OHA. Face-to-face meetings with the community are vital, fostering collaboration among Trustees for success and a positive impact on our beneficiaries.



At CNHA's Native Hawaiian Convention on Maui in November. (L-R) Chris West, 'Ilima-Lei Macfarlane, Trustee Keoni Souza, and Kūhio Lewis. - Photo: 'Ilima Long

The Board of Trustees has chosen me as your commissioner to represent the OHA seat on the Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC), committed to the restoration of the island and its surrounding waters. I've had the privilege of visiting Kaho'olawe twice before – once with Kamehameha Schools and once with the University of Hawai'i, accompanying my wife, Mahina, who was hāpai with our first born at the time.

These two transformative experiences, working in both Hakioawa and Honokanai'a, have fueled my commitment and as the new commissioner, I am dedicated to being a passionate advocate for the ongoing cleanup and restoration efforts.

The KIRC Team successfully secured



**Keoni Souza**

Trustee,  
At-Large

funding to support the preservation of the island and they are currently repairing the essential boat for transporting supplies and personnel to the Kaho'olawe Reserve. They've also conducted safety training to ensure the safe removal of land debris and maintain individual safety regarding unexploded ordnance. Additionally, their focus includes revitalizing native plants and preserving natural habitats in and around Kaho'olawe's waters, including

its marine ecosystem.

Lastly, we are committed to safeguarding and preserving iwi kūpuna and historical sites on the island. If you're interested in contributing to any of these efforts, KIRC always needs volunteers for ongoing projects. Visit KIRC's website ([www.kahoolawe.hawaii.gov](http://www.kahoolawe.hawaii.gov)) for more information. Excitingly, the KIRC educational facility and office on Maui will break ground in 2024, serving educational, administrative, exhibition, and operational functions for Kaho'olawe.

Also, this year I've dedicated my time to chairing the Ad Hoc Committee on Cultural Protocols and Practices. I'm eager to share our progress and future initiatives at the upcoming board meeting on Dec. 7, 2023. One notable event that we are gearing up for is the "Festival of the Pacific" in June 2024, featuring attendees from around the Pacific hosted in Hawai'i, fostering a meaningful cultural exchange.

It has indeed been an eventful first year in office. My commitment to equality and fairness in the boardroom, meaningful conversations, along with the encouragement of new ideas, has been a priority. Looking ahead to 2024, I am excited about learning more from each of you to make informed decisions for our people during board meetings.

In closing, I extend a heartfelt mahalo to our Ka Pouhana Kūikawā, Colin Kippen, for his invaluable guidance and support throughout the past few months. As we welcome Stacy Ferreira, our new Ka Pouhana, may her leadership inspire a future marked by collaboration and progress for us all. ■



**BURIAL NOTICE:  
WAIKĪKĪ, O‘AHU**

A burial site comprising of three fragments of human skeletal remains (State Inventory of Historic Places # 50-80-14-7308) was identified by Cultural Surveys Hawai‘i, Inc. in the course of an archaeological inventory survey for Target at the International Market Place Project, Waikīkī Ahupua‘a, Honolulu District, Island of O‘ahu, TMK: (1) 2-6-022:049 and 050.

Per Hawai‘i Revised Statutes §6E-43, and Hawai‘i Administrative Rules (HAR) §13-300, these remains are considered previously identified. Based on the context, they are over 50 years old and most likely Native Hawaiian.

The project area is located within Land Commission Award (LCA) 8559, ‘ili of Kaluaokau, to William Lunalilo.

The project proponent is Target Corporation: Bob Meza, 50 S. 10th Street, TP-3 1180, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55403, Tel: (651) 334-3740.

Target Corporation is planning for preservation in place, however, the decision to preserve in place or relocate shall be made by the O‘ahu Island Burial Council in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) and any recognized lineal and/or cultural descendants (HAR §13-300-33). Appropriate treatment shall occur in accordance with HAR §13-300-38.

All persons having knowledge of these

human remains are requested to contact Regina Hilo, SHPD Burial Site Specialist, at 601 Kamokila Boulevard, Room 555, Kapolei, Hawai‘i 96707, Tel: (808) 692-8015, Email: Regina.Hilo@hawaii.gov.

Interested parties shall respond within 30 days of this notice and file descendancy claim forms and/or provide information to SHPD adequately demonstrating descent from this burial or ancestors buried in the same ahupua‘a or district.

**CULTURAL IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT:  
HAWAIIAN PARADISE PARK,  
KEA‘AU AHUPUA‘A, PUNA  
ISLAND OF HAWAI‘I**

On behalf of the County of Hawai‘i (CoH) Department of Parks and Recreation (P&R), ASM Affiliates (ASM) is preparing a Cultural Impact Assessment for the proposed Hawaiian Paradise Park New District Park. The proposed park would encompass the entirety of the 20-acre Tax Map Key (TMK) parcel (3) 1-5-039:267, in the Hawaiian Paradise Park subdivision along Kaloli Drive between 25th and 26th streets in Kea‘au Ahupua‘a, Puna District, Island of Hawai‘i.

The County is proposing to develop a district park within the Hawaiian Paradise Park residential subdivision to provide compatible recreational uses within the park supportive of the community’s needs and to provide appropriate facilities within the park to support the P&R current pro-

grams and public services.

ASM is seeking kama‘āina familiar with the areas’ cultural resources and traditional customary practices. We also seek input regarding strategies to prevent or mitigate impacts on culturally valued resources or traditional customary practices. If you know of such information, please contact Candace Gonzales, cgonzales@asmaffiliates.com, (808) 969-6066.

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESS-  
MENT: ‘OPIHIHALI, KONA,  
ISLAND OF HAWAI‘I**

Information requested by Scientific Consultant Services, Inc. of cultural resources and/or past and ongoing cultural practices on a 324-acre property located on lands of ‘Opihihali 2nd Ahupua‘a, South Kona District, Island of Hawai‘i [TMK: (3) 8-7-014:002]. Please respond within 30 days to Glenn Escott at (808) 938-0968.

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESS-  
MENT: MOLOA‘A BAY PROJECT,  
KAWAIHAU, KAUA‘I**

Pacific Legacy, Inc., on behalf of Moloa‘a Lot 10A, LLC, is conducting a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) for the proposed Estates at Moloa‘a Bay Project. The project area encompasses approximately 45 acres and is divided by a CPR with eight tentative homesites identified. The parcel is located in Moloa‘a Ahupua‘a, Kawaihau (Ko‘olau) District, Island of Kaua‘i at TMK:

(4) 4-9-009:002 (por).

Pacific Legacy, Inc. is seeking to identify and consult with individuals and organizations who possess knowledge regarding:

- Cultural associations of Moloa‘a Ahupua‘a, such as mo‘olelo or connections to legendary accounts.
- Knowledge of past and present land use within and near the project area.
- Knowledge of past and present traditional gathering practices in Moloa‘a.
- Knowledge of cultural resources which may be impacted by the proposed project, including traditional resource gathering sites, traditional access trails, archaeological sites, historic sites, and burials.
- Any other cultural concerns that community members may have in relation to traditional Hawaiian or other cultural practices within or near the proposed project area.
- Referrals to other knowledgeable individuals who may be willing to share their cultural knowledge of the proposed project area and wider Moloa‘a Ahupua‘a.

Individuals and organizations willing to share any information that will lend to our understanding of past and present land use and cultural practices in Moloa‘a are invited to contact Dr. Jillian Swift at 808-263-4800 or via email at swift@pacificlegacy.com. ■

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### FAMILY REUNIONS

**E nā 'ohana Hawai'i:** If you are planning a reunion or looking for genealogical information, *Ka Wai Ola* will print your listing at no charge on a space-available basis. Listings should not exceed 200 words. OHA reserves the right to edit all submissions for length. Listings will run for three months from submission, unless specified. Send your information by mail, or e-mail [kwo@OHA.org](mailto:kwo@OHA.org). E ola nā mamo a Hāloa!

### SEARCH

**KAHANAI-POMAIKAI** - Reunion slated for March 2024. Still working on date & location. Suggestions are welcomed. Contact Walter Kahanaoi 808-330-2188 or Jeanne Kahanaoi 808-354-7365.

**KIPI-KAHELE** - 'Ohana o Katherine Kaahea to Samuel Kipi and William Kahele: Reunion April 6, 2024. Site pending. Talk story, talents, games, pot-luck. Call Aldora Kahele (808) 782-9359, Airleen Lucero (808) 853-8503, or Kapua Kahele (808) 940-1413.

**PUKANA O KANIALAMA** - family reunion July 12-14, 2024, in Hilo. Descendants of Kinikahikiainoa and Poouli Pahane, Kanialama and Kaohuaino (their 3 keiki Keali'ikua'aina, Kaniakaio and Poouli), Kai'anui and Nakahili (parents of Poouli Pahane), Kelupaka Kona and Pila Kauahiokona (parents of Kai'anui). Main branches from the previous mentioned are Kahanu, Gooman, Long, Kona, Kai'anui. Please send contact information or questions to [pukanahilo@gmail.com](mailto:pukanahilo@gmail.com)

**WOOLSEY** - The descendants of William G Woolsey and Eliza K Pemberton are planning a family reunion on July 25-28, 2024, at One Ali'i Park, Moloka'i, Hawaii. We will talk story, have music, games, enjoy each other's company and have genealogy updates during the reunion. Camping is allowed for a small fee. For more information, please visit our website at [www.ohanawoolsey.com](http://www.ohanawoolsey.com), contact Alisha by text or phone at (808) 658-5658 or email [ohanawoolsey@gmail.com](mailto:ohanawoolsey@gmail.com). ■

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