



Ka Wai Ola

NEWS FOR THE LĀHUI

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Preschool Experiences Rooted in Hawaiian Culture

PAGES 18-20



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2024 OHA Annual Report

A mother and her keiki enjoy reading books together during activity time at Tūtū and Me, a Partners in Development Foundation early childhood education program - one of many early education programs that integrate Hawaiian culture-based learning into the curriculum. - Photo: Courtesy of PIDF

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Signals of Change at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

Aloha mai kākou,

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is undergoing a transformative period marked by pivotal changes in governance, strategy, and symbolism. These signals of change reflect our commitment to the agency's mission of advancing the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians while aligning our actions with the principles of self-governance and our cultural pride.

One of the most notable developments is the new leadership within the Board of Trustees and the establishment of two new standing trustee working committees: Budget and Finance, and Investments and Land Management. These committees are designed to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficacy in the stewardship of OHA's financial and land-based assets.

The Budget and Finance Committee focuses on fiscal responsibility and on ensuring resources are allocated effectively to support Native Hawaiian communities. Meanwhile, the Investments and Land Management Committee aims to optimize the management of OHA's lands and investments, ensuring proper stewardship and alignment with long-term sustainability and growth of the trust assets.

A simple, yet profoundly symbolic change has also taken place at OHA's main office building. For the first time, the hae Hawai'i, the Hawaiian flag, now flies alone in front of the agency's headquarters.

This action holds deep significance, reflecting OHA's commitment to Native Hawaiian self-governance and our cultural identity. The decision to only fly the hae Hawai'i aligns visually and symbolically with the agency's statutory mandate under Chapter 10H of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, which emphasizes the recog-

niton and self-governance of the Native Hawaiian people.

Specifically, [§10H-2] articulates the chapter's goal to "provide for and to implement the recognition of the Native Hawaiian people by means and methods that will facilitate their self-governance...and by further promoting their culture, heritage, entitlements, health, education, and welfare."

The presence of the hae Hawai'i as the sole flag at OHA's headquarters serves as a powerful statement of ea (sovereignty). It's a visual declaration of OHA's role as a champion and advocate for Native Hawaiian rights, self-determination, and cultural identity and preservation. It reflects our stand against historical erasure and asserts the enduring presence of our people.

Every day, as I enter and exit Nā Lama Kukui, I find myself gazing up at our hae, proudly waving in the makani. It fills me with immense pride and serves as a daily reminder of the profound purpose we carry within these walls.

Our hae Hawai'i stands as a beacon of hope, signaling to all who pass by that committed, diligent work is underway inside; it marks our unwavering dedication to uplifting a beloved lāhui and advancing ever closer to the realization of ea. ■

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira

Ka Pouhana | Chief Executive Officer



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Special insert 2024 OHA Annual Report

A Conversation with Kaiali'i Kahele



OHA Board of Trustees Chairperson Kaiali'i Kahele
- Photo: Joshua Koh

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

Office of Hawaiian Affairs Trustee Kaiali'i Kahele was elected to represent Hawai'i Island during the 2024 Primary Election with 57% of the vote. Immediately following the swearing-in ceremony of new and re-elected OHA trustees in Honolulu on December 4, Kahele was elected by a majority of his peers to serve as chair of the Board of Trustees – the first time a newly elected trustee has been voted as chairperson.

Kahele, a Hawaiian Airlines pilot with 23 years of military service, is the only trustee in OHA's 45-year history to have previously served in both the Hawai'i State Legislature and the U.S. Congress. He unexpectedly entered the political arena in February 2016 after the passing of his father, the late Sen. Gil Kahele. On his deathbed, the senior Kahele asked his son to take on his leadership kuleana and then-Gov. David Ige appointed him to replace his father for the duration of his term in office. The community subsequently confirmed their support for Kaiali'i Kahele's leadership during the 2016 and 2018 elections.

In 2020, Kahele was elected to represent Hawai'i's 2nd congressional district in Washington, D.C., but served only one term, deciding that the frequent separation was too hard on his young family. Believing he could better serve Hawai'i in Hawai'i, he made a run for governor in 2022 but was defeated by Gov. Josh Green.

Kahele settled back into "civilian" life in Hilo, focusing on his career as a pilot and his 'ohana, using the time to take a step back and reflect on what he had done well – and what he could have done better. Then sometime in late 2023, he was approached by several respected kūpuna – including former OHA trustees Mililani Trask and Mālama Solomon – to consider taking on the kuleana of running for OHA. Together with his wife, Maria, Kahele made the decision to run for OHA's Hawai'i Island seat.

As an OHA trustee and board chair, what do you hope to accomplish?

I never thought that I would be back in public office this soon. Honestly, I never really thought I would be in politics. I didn't grow up wanting to be a state senator, a member of Congress or an OHA trustee. I dreamed about being a pilot.

But my dad made sure that I understood the importance of participating civically, the importance of giving back to community. And although I love flying, I also love serving in elected office. I want to make life better for our people and tackle the most difficult challenges we face – that our state faces – and bring people together in a collaborative way to solve long-standing problems that people before me have not been able to solve.

So, I've returned to elected office with a renewed focus on where I believe Hawai'i should go and what leadership should look like. And now I have this unique opportunity to lead the Board of Trustees as chair for the next two years and that's something I take very, very seriously. It's a heavy kuleana. I want to help reshape OHA and take it in a new direction.

Under your leadership, what kind of changes should our lāhui expect to see at OHA?

My leadership style is built on empowerment, personal responsibility, and developing the next generation of leaders – and I will do my best to set a good example.

What's important to me is that our new leadership team and standing committee chairs will be empowered

like they have never been empowered before to lead their committees and to lead the respective administrative divisions that fall under their kuleana. I'm looking forward to seeing what they are going to do. My goal is to raise the bar for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Within 48 hours of assuming the chairmanship of the Board of Trustees, I sent all OHA staff an outline of my philosophy, vision, and values. That is my philosophy and vision for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The way I intend to lead OHA is embodied in that document.

My vision is to establish a different culture at OHA, one where we're more collaborative and have a more team-minded approach built on trust, collective progress, and a shared vision. It requires breaking down individual silos at OHA and having a bias for action.

What do you plan to focus on first in 2025?

We cannot successfully address the issues [facing our people] if we don't address OHA's internal issues first – whether it's staff vacancies or morale. I'm planning to meet with all staff to hear from them about what we do well and what we could do better. Before the end of the year, I [also] want to do anonymous climate surveys to give staff a chance to address issues they feel are important.

I want to make sure that OHA is living its values and that we're valuing our people. We cannot do our jobs as trustees – and senior leadership cannot do their jobs – without the staff. They're our greatest asset.

So, what are we doing to make sure that they feel valued, that their voices are heard, and that they're being properly compensated? What are we doing to help them address their mental and physical health? We need to invest in professional development, be open and honest, and communicate. That is what makes for thriving businesses and organizations.

I am also asking, "what are we doing to develop the bench? Who is next up?" We need to have people prepared at any time to step into different roles because if only one person knows how to do something and they leave OHA, they take their institutional knowledge with them. We lose all of that. There's no backup.

Externally, the thing that is top of mind for me is reestablishing OHA's relevance in multiple different areas, but first and foremost at the legislature. The new legislative session is coming up and I think Trustee [Brickwood] Galuteria and I are perfectly positioned because of the existing relationships we have at the legislature. That is going to be key for priority legislative issues that I envision OHA will have this session.

Beyond the legislature, OHA needs to reestablish relevance in all areas of government – from the county councils and the mayors to the governor's office to the congressional delegation. Creating a partnership with the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement is going to be important. They are a nimble, non-bureaucratic nonprofit, while OHA, as a quasi-state agency, is more bureaucratic.

But together, our collective strength can be a powerhouse for the Native Hawaiian community: the ability for CNHA to innovate and to move fast, married with

SEE KAIALI'I KAHELE ON PAGE 5

“One of the core things OHA should be doing is working towards the self-determination of our people.”

- KAI KAHELE

KAIALI'I KAHELE

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the constitutional power of OHA and its \$700 million plus portfolio.

So, it's about reestablishing our credibility and our relevance with other government agencies, as well as the various stakeholders and partners that we have in the community. That needs addressing, and that is what I intend to focus on in 2025.

What is OHA doing well and what needs to be improved?

OHA does incredible work for the organizations that are receiving grant funding from OHA. The distribution of millions of dollars across the pae 'āina for Native Hawaiian-serving nonprofits is making a difference in the lives of our beneficiaries.

Another thing OHA is doing well right now is leading the charge on issues like iwi kūpuna, especially what happened most recently on Kaua'i. OHA took a prime leadership role to address something that is really a core issue for Native Hawaiians – the protection of our kūpuna.

OHA is also well-positioned to shape the narrative [of our people] through *Ka Wai Ola*. The 70,000+ distribution every month is powerful. We can't depend on the mainstream media because they will write and report what they want. I've seen the worst of media, especially as it relates to Native Hawaiians. So, *Ka Wai Ola* is a start. I have even bigger ideas of how we can be a voice and really chart our own narrative for the Native Hawaiian community.

In terms of improvement, I already spoke about relevancy. Another thing we can improve on is how we manage our land assets. We haven't done anything in Kaka'ako Makai in the last 10 years. And there is no vision or collective thought being put into what we're going to do with our Iwilei lands or collaboration with the City and County [because] the rail is headed our way. OHA is perfectly positioned to be part of that conversation. That needs to be improved.

OHA also needs to re-engage our Native Hawaiian communities. Civic education is woefully deficient, not just in our Native Hawaiian communities, but throughout our state.

Native Hawaiians only represent about 21% of the state population so we need everyone at the table. And when they don't show up to vote, and don't make their voices heard, we cannot do the job that we want to do at OHA. So, we have to reignite these little kūpuka throughout our

communities. We are not addressing the most important issues in people's lives – and the only way to know that is to get out into the community. We need to meet people where they are in their communities.

Another thing that I intend to address immediately is OHA's near-absence on the military leased lands issue. These are ceded lands. I wrote about it in my December column and Naka Nathaniel did a piece on it [in *Ka Wai Ola*] but we have not seen action from the board.

We cannot be left off the table in these conversations. And right now, we are. I intend to bring my 23+ years of military experience to this. My entire career has been in the Indo-Pacific and I deeply understand the issues. My dad retired as director of public works at Pōhakuloa, so I grew up there. This is really important to me.

Please comment on building affordable/workforce housing on OHA's land in Kaka'ako Makai.

Affordable and workforce housing is something I'm deeply focused on in Kaka'ako Makai. [But] it is pointless to create a master plan without knowing we have the entitlements we desire. OHA needs community support from local leaders who don't want what's happening in Kaka'ako Mauka to happen in Kaka'ako Makai. How can we meet that sentiment halfway and collaborate? OHA has a clearly thought-out mission around residential development, not only for Hawaiians, but for local families who are owner-occupants – not short-term renters or investors.

We have a shortage of essential workers – teachers, law enforcement, nurses, civil service, hospitality and construction. How can we ensure most units are dedicated as affordable and provide a housing preference for them? Without these workers we cannot function and if they don't have a place to live then they're moving to the continent. In 2023 we had an outmigration of 11,000 people and it's our local families who are leaving because they cannot afford a place to live.

We can partner with [other agencies and Kaka'ako Makai landowners] DHHL, the University of Hawai'i, Kamehameha Schools to possibly do a joint venture. We can make an incredible Kaka'ako Makai – one that houses both Native Hawaiians and other local people and



Aerial view of Kaka'ako Makai with Kewalo Basin to the right. OHA envisions affordable/workforce housing on several of its parcels while committing the remaining parcels to create a cultural center and an open-air promenade with space for restaurants and Native Hawaiian businesses and no high density development along the waterfront. - Photo: Jhewel-Georlyn Felipe

provides a cultural center and promenade with no high density development along the waterfront.

What about OHA's lands in Iwilei?

There is a robust effort among various stakeholders and partners along the transit-oriented development [through Kalihi and Iwilei into downtown]. One such organization is Move O'ahu Forward led by Stanford Carr, Jennifer Sabas and Lance Wilhelm. I've already met with them as well as with Honolulu City Councilmember Tyler Dos Santos-Tam who represents the district. They are already working on a master plan for the area, so the first thing OHA should be doing is making sure it has a seat at the table with the Move O'ahu Forward organization.

We also need to start talking to different landholders in the area – Kamehameha Schools, the City & County of Honolulu, the University of Hawai'i, Castle & Cooke – to see how we can collaborate on infrastructure because the rail stations will be the hub and the biggest areas for growth along the rail line. What is the location of our lands in relation to the rail stations and how can we connect? Obviously workforce housing should be a key part of these lands.

Rail is coming in the next decade and its coming right down Dillingham Blvd. So what is OHA doing today to prepare for that? What is our plan for our lands and what infrastructure is needed? To be honest, we haven't even begun to scratch the surface.

For more than 40 years – and in violation of state law (HRS 10-13.5) – OHA has been seriously underfunded by the State of Hawai'i in withholding OHA's pro rata share of public land trust (ceded land) revenues, hampering forward progress for the agency. Under your leadership how will this be addressed?

We have never been able to get an accurate inventory of those public trust lands. The approximately 1.8 million acres of former crown and government lands that were taken illegally at the overthrow, conveyed to the United States at annexation, and then given to the new State of Hawai'i per the Admissions Act to be held in trust for public trust purposes.

The 1978 constitutional convention that created OHA specified [that the agency should receive] a 20% pro rata share of public land trust (PLT) revenues. But ever since [OHA's] inception the legislature has been trying to water down that constitutional amendment.

It is my understanding that OHA, along with the Governor's Office, will both dedicate financial resources to fund a public land trust inventory system so we can finally resolve this issue. DLNR's existing database is woefully deficient. I haven't spoken to him yet, but it looks like we have a governor who is sympathetic to our cause and open to helping us address it.

Once we know what we should be getting in terms of PLT revenues, we can approach it from that point. It also requires having good relationships and trust with the money chairs. Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz as well as Rep. Kyle Yamashita on the House side – their support is crit-

SEE KAIALI'I KAHELE ON PAGE 6

“Native Hawaiians only represent about 21% of the state population so we need everyone at the table. And when they don't show up to vote, and don't make their voices heard, we cannot do the job that we want to do at OHA.”

- KAI KAHELE

KAIALI'I KAHELE

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ical as well because it is going to have to come from them.

This goes back to one of the things that I talked about before – if our people are not educated on the issues or why it's important, if they don't engage civically, if they don't know or don't care, and they don't understand how it affects their lives – then we will not have the political capital at the legislature to advocate for these things. If we just depend on OHA's public policy division and a couple of trustees to [increase our PLT allocation] it's not going to happen. We need the collective power of our lāhui behind us to accomplish that.

HRS 10H-21 directs OHA to “implement the recognition of the Native Hawaiian people by means and methods that will facilitate their self-governance.” What does OHA need to do (or what will OHA do) to move our lāhui towards some form of sovereignty?

One of the core things OHA should be doing is [working towards] the self-determination of our people. The fact that it is not part of our current strategic plan means that no one is talking about it, and that is something that I'm going to address. And if required, amend our strategic plan to make sure that self-governance and self-determination is back in our strategic plan.

OHA's mission is clear: improve the lives of Native Hawaiians. And further, to bring to fruition self-determination and self-governance to address the economic disparities of Native Hawaiians around housing and health care. To leave self-determination and governance out of the current strategic plan is a mistake.

I don't know that it is as divisive an issue as we think. I just think that people are not educated on the issue. I don't think most people understand what independence is versus federal recognition versus nation within a nation.

I think OHA can fill a space that no one is filling today – which is educating our people on what self-determination actually means and the [forms it might take to determine the] best path forward for our people.

Why don't we bring in the subject matter experts around those different pathways, like Ka Lāhui Hawai'i or Dr. Keanu Sai? Why don't we bring in someone who can talk about the nation within a nation concept or federal recognition under the auspices of the United States? Under President Obama the Department of the Interior created a process for self-determination. What does that look like for the Native Hawaiian community?

[We need to] have these discussions. The trustees need to re-energize this conversation so we can take a more definitive position. Let's reanalyze the issue and possibly codify some of our strategic initiatives regarding self-determination into the current strategic plan. ■

Our Blueprint Towards Ea

OHA's Bold Vision for the 2025 Legislative Session



By Elena Farden

As the sun rises over the capitol's iconic silhouette, the hum of anticipation fills the air – this is the season where ideas ignite, voices converge, and the vibrant mix of hope, determination, and steadfast resolve to manifest a thriving future for our lāhui teems.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Strategy & Implementation team is poised to advocate for a transformative budget bill that reflects the agency's unwavering commitment to uplifting the lāhui. This proposal, which seeks critical funds, underscores OHA's proactive role as an equal partner with the State of Hawai'i in fulfilling its trust responsibility to Native Hawaiians.

Central to this effort are initiatives tied to OHA's Mana i Maui Ola Strategic Plan, which charts a course for improved outcomes in four key areas: educational pathways, 'Ōiwi health and wellbeing, quality housing, and economic resiliency. These kūkulu represent more than individual goals – they are the connective tissue of a comprehensive vision to create systemic, generational change.

2025



LEGISLATIVE SESSION

A Blueprint for Progress

- **Educational Pathways:** OHA is focusing on curriculum support for Hawaiian-focused charter schools and Hawaiian Language Medium Immersion programs while seeking to establish a Native Hawaiian practitioner pathway within Career Technical Education programs. These initiatives aim to equip students with culturally grounded knowledge and skills that honor traditional practices while preparing them for modern career opportunities and community-readiness.

- **'Ōiwi Health and Wellbeing:** Addressing root causes of social determinants of health is a priority. OHA plans to pilot a specialty court and restorative justice program that incorporates traditional healing practices. This innovative approach reflects a commitment to holistic health and wellbeing, focusing on solutions that align with Native Hawaiian values and promote long-term community resilience.
- **Quality Housing:** This budget bill proposes funding to expand affordable, non-traditional housing options, such as multi-generational homes and accessory dwelling units, ensuring Native Hawaiians can remain in the communities of their choice.
- **Economic Resiliency:** Recognizing the critical role of economic stability, OHA seeks funding for a rural agriculture accelerator program for Native Hawaiian mahi'ai (farmers). This program aims to bolster Kānaka-owned businesses and advance innovative economic systems deeply rooted in Hawaiian knowledge and values, strengthening the lāhui's self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Grounded in Responsibility and Sovereignty

These strategic initiatives are guided by a fundamental understanding of the state's obligation and OHA's unique position within the public trust framework. The State of Hawai'i Constitution, Article XII, Section 4, and Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 10 and 10-H collectively establish critical and complementary roles that the state and OHA stand in as stewards of Native Hawaiian wellbeing.

This shared kuleana between OHA and the state is a profound expression of the principle, “Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono.” OHA's budget proposal reflects not just funding requests but a call to action, urging the state to uphold its constitutional and moral obligations to the lāhui.

Moving Forward with Unity and Purpose

OHA's Strategy & Implementation team is engaging with community leaders, legislators, and partners to ensure the proposed initiatives resonate with the needs of Native Hawaiians. Collaboration and transparency remain at the heart of this work. The journey toward a thriving lāhui is a shared one. Through collective advocacy and strategic investment, OHA reaffirms its commitment to the Native Hawaiian people, paving the way for a resilient, vibrant future. ■

Refusal to Meet Reflects a Lack of Transparency

The EPA recently amended the Administrative Consent Order that requires the Navy to regularly engage with water protectors – a move that limits the community’s ability to hold the military accountable for ongoing issues related to the 2021 fuel leak at Red Hill

By Cheryl Chee Tsutsumi

More than three years after 19,000 gallons of fuel leaked from the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility at Kapūkākī in November 2021, dozens of local organizations have expressed deep concern about the U.S. Navy’s and Defense Logistics Agency’s (DLA’s) lack of transparency, accountability and willingness to communicate as promised.

The catastrophe contaminated O’ahu’s primary source of drinking water, located just 100 feet below the underground facility, and impacted a Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) well serving 93,000 residents. More than 6,000 consumers, including both civilian and military families, suffered a host of ailments, including skin, neurological and gastrointestinal problems. Some are still experiencing debilitating medical issues.

Completed in 1943, the Red Hill facility comprises 20 tanks 100 feet wide and 250 feet high, each able to hold 12.5 million gallons of fuel. For nearly 80 years, fuel was piped to Pearl Harbor, 2.5 miles away. In March 2022, after years of resistance, the Department of Defense (DoD) finally agreed to remove the estimated 104 million gallons of fuel stored in the facility and permanently close it.

In June 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized an Administrative Consent Order (ACO) with the Navy and DLA, outlining a scope of work for the defueling and closure of the facility, and for the safe operation of the JBPHH water system.

Within six months, most of the fuel was removed and relocated to storage facilities in California, the Philippines, Campbell Industrial Park in West O’ahu, and an “upper tank farm” at JBPHH.

Decades of work still remain, however, including removing sludge and residual fuel, remediating environmental contamination, dismantling 10-plus miles of pipelines, and confirming that the Navy’s water system complies with safe drinking water standards.

Recognizing the need for ongoing community input and involvement, the ACO established a Community Representation Initiative (CRI) to ensure that 10 volunteer “watchdogs” would receive updates on the work; make certain it was being done in a safe, timely manner; and participate in meaningful exchanges with Navy, DLA and EPA representatives at twice-per-quarter (i.e., eight annual) meetings.



Youth organizers distributed free “Lemonade 4 Red Hill” at the December 12 meeting “while clean water lasts.” From left: Wayne Tanaka; Madison Owens, Sierra Club Hawai’i’s community organizer; Hyun-Jin Kim; John Hahn; Kaheleikeao Jamile; and Sydney Chung. - Photo: Brynn Foster

The importance of robust CRI and community engagement was underscored when the DoD’s Office of the Inspector General made public three reports in November 2024, citing the numerous Navy failures that contributed to the 2021 crisis as well as prior and subsequent releases of fire-suppression foam containing extremely toxic “forever chemicals.”

According to one report, risks to the environment and drinking water due to the proximity of the aquifer to the Red Hill facility had been well documented for years, but Navy officials ignored the warnings.

“DoD officials did not effectively manage and oversee the operations, maintenance, and safety of DFSP [Defense Fuel Support Point] JBPHH,” the report noted. Nor, it went on to say, were they adequately prepared to analyze, prevent or respond to a fuel incident.

Furthermore, officials “did not issue the required public notice to effectively communicate the drinking water contamination incident response in a timely manner to the affected community.”

Also in November 2024, the Navy, DLA and EPA announced an amendment to the ACO, which Sierra Club of Hawai’i Director Wayne Tanaka described as “muzzling” the CRI. “The changes were imposed without public notice or comment,” he said. “The community must have a say when it comes to our water, our home, our future.”

Tanaka said that the amendment gives the Navy and DLA the power to dictate what the CRI can discuss at meetings; allows them to refuse to answer questions from the community that they deem irrelevant; reduces their attendance requirements from eight meetings a year to four; limits public testimony to just 30 minutes (total) at each meeting; and prevents the CRI from adding any item to the agenda within three weeks of a meeting.

“This means that if a new report, development or crisis happens in the weeks leading up to a meeting, it can’t be discussed,” Tanaka said. “Plus, there’s no process to



At the December 12 meeting, ‘ōpio organizers John Hahn and Kaheleikeao Jamile formally presented a letter signed by 57 community organizations that urged Navy, EPA and DLA officials to rescind recent ACO amendments. - Photo: Wayne Tanaka

review or appeal the Navy’s rejection of agenda items or questions.”

Adding insult to injury, Tanaka said, was the Navy’s and DLA’s failure to attend a December 12 CRI meeting, during which they had been expected to provide updates and answer questions about the Red Hill situation.

Flagrantly disregarding the terms of the AOC, the Navy and DLA attended only two meetings in 2024 (the last time was in March 2024, almost 10 months ago) - this despite being required, under the terms of the ACO at that time, to be present at a minimum of two meetings per quarter. Tanaka noted that the EPA has fined the Navy \$5,000 for failing to show up at the December 12 CRI meeting - a penalty that amounts to little more than a slap on the hand.

At the meeting, youth organizers formally presented a letter signed by 57 community groups – including the Sierra Club, Papa Ola Lōkahi, Hawai’i Land Trust, Conservation Council for Hawai’i and the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs – to Navy, DLA and EPA officials urging them to rescind the amendment. As this issue of *Ka Wai Ola* went to press, neither the military nor the EPA had responded to the letter.

Tanaka views the CRI as a trusted champion of the public that isn’t afraid to raise questions and concerns about the Red Hill crisis no matter how inconvenient and uncomfortable government authorities might find them.

“The Navy and DLA strong-armed the EPA to get more control over the CRI, and the EPA capitulated,” he said. “Instead of silencing the voices of the CRI and concerned citizens, the Navy and DLA should be working with the CRI to fulfill their commitments and clean up their mess.” ■

Ka Wai Ola offers the Navy, DLA and EPA the opportunity to comment about the opinions and information in this story.

No More Military Leases: Building a Future Grounded in Hope

By Bronson Azama, Dianne Deauna and Aree Worawongwasu,
for Ka Lāhui Hawai'i

Last month's cover story, "To Cede or To Seed," explored potential outcomes of what could happen when the leases for nearly 30,000 acres of state land currently used by the U.S. military expire in 2029.

The lands in question are stolen Hawaiian Kingdom crown and government lands that were violently seized without the consent of Kānaka Maoli; lands that are now being used as footholds and training grounds for the U.S. and its allies to maintain colonial control of Hawai'i and its geopolitical position in the Pacific.

Because the article did not reflect this historical and legal reality, it inadvertently blinds us to a perspective absent of the Aloha 'Āina victories that stopped the bombing of Kaho'olawe Island and Mākua Valley, and that prevented the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) from entering into lease renewals for Pōhakuloa until the Army complies with their current lease terms.

Our fears of what might happen under a Trump presidency should not stop us from reimagining a radically new future for Hawai'i – a future beyond the reach of imperialism.

The pending U.S. administrative transfer of power and threat of executive land seizures should not limit us to watching the negotiations between the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the U.S. military from the sidelines and merely hoping for better, higher rents.

The expiration of these leases is part of the larger conversation regarding the return of stolen 'āina, re-establishment of our kingdom, and requirements to restore our lands and waters.

With more than 750 bases in 80 countries, the U.S. military has contributed to thousands of environmental disasters across the globe. In an era faced with climate change, limited resources, ecological collapse, and more, do we have time for bad actors? The environmental degradation caused by the U.S. military demonstrates it is not a friend to Hawai'i or the planet.

On O'ahu alone, the military occupies 23% of the island's available land; yet their success in our "national defense" has consistently come at the expense of the health of our lands and waters, with multiple super-fund hazard waste sites and the destruction of natural resources, cultural sites, and wildlife locally and abroad.

We recognize our ability to pressure the United States military in the defueling of the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. Thousands of residents and affected military families held the U.S. Navy accountable to defuel the tanks expeditiously. Although the fight continues to remediate O'ahu's sole source aquifer, every milestone in the journey is attributed to successful community organizing.

To a certain extent, the military needs public support to renew the leases. Yet many Kānaka Maoli and others

vehemently oppose the ongoing taking and abuse of Indigenous lands.

Over the summer, approximately 600 community members attended and testified at the Army's public hearings on their draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Kahuku Training Area, Kawailoa-Poamoho Training Area, and Mākua Military Reservation, released in anticipation of upcoming decision-making hearings on the lease renewals.

Thousands of written testimonies were also submitted in opposition to renewing military leases, reiterating the socio-environmental impacts that negatively affect our day-day lives.

In her testimony, Wai'ānae resident Bernadette Fernandez recalled living in proximity to the military. "Growing up we heard the bombs. Try [to] sleep, gotta go school the next morning with [the sound of] bombing coming over that mountain," she said. "Wake up, walk to school, ashes falling your head."

As we navigate a path forward, we must avoid being intimidated by fear and instead ask the people of Hawai'i and the world: with America's far-right step, should it continue to forcibly guide the future of Hawai'i and our planet?

Let's envision what a free Hawai'i can accomplish for our islands, the Pacific, and the world, responding by affirming our sovereignty rather than holding ourselves back from an opportunity for a better future.

Our kūpuna who lived at a time in which the Kingdom of Hawai'i was an international leader in innovation, education, and healthcare, signed the Kū'ē Petition to preserve Hawaiian sovereignty. Our small island nation demonstrated how governance can better society. We can still pursue this future today and change the trajectory of our lives on this blue planet.

Kū'ē! We should not give up our agency to the U.S. military or the BLNR without objecting. We need to resist narratives that will deflate our collective consciousness as we pursue pono for our people and our land.

The greatest gains for land back and the protection of our most precious resource, wai (water), were not made

by elected leaders or government bureaucrats but by ordinary kānaka seeking justice. From the first landing on Kaho'olawe in 1976 to the occupation of Maunakea in 2019, the Aloha 'Āina movement has only grown stronger, its momentum undeniable. Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono! ■

Gather with Ka Lāhui at the 'Onipa'a Peace March on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025, to observe the 132nd anniversary of the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy and to honor the memory of Queen Lili'uokalani who laid the foundation of kapu aloha and the peaceful path forward. 'Onipa'a is a call to remain steadfast in our commitment to positive change, to stand up against all forms of oppression, and to uphold the values of compassion, respect and justice.

'Onipa'a Peace March Keiki T-shirt Contest



In anticipation of this year's 'Onipa'a Peace March and Rally on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025, Ka Lāhui Hawai'i sponsored an 'Onipa'a Peace March t-shirt design contest. The contest was open to all K-12 students and cash prizes were awarded to the three top winners and their kumu. Entries were judged by a panel of artists, organizers and educators who evaluated the students' use of this year's theme, kupukupu (fern) in their design and the overall effect. The first place winner was Anailah Tanioka, a seventh grader at 'Ewa Makai Intermediate (pictured here with her winning design). In second place was seventh grader Kahinimalamaakalani Kamakea-Ohelo from Mālama Honua PCS, and in third place was fifth grader Tony Nguyen from Likelike Elementary. Altogether, 55 talented student artists from 18 schools on Maui, O'ahu, Hawai'i and Kaua'i participated in the competition. - Photo: Ka Lāhui Hawai'i

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World Premiere of Moana 2

Pacific Peoples Represented on the Big Screen



On stage before the *Moana 2* World Premiere began, stars Auli'i Cravalho and Dwayne Johnson danced with an ensemble representing Pasifika and then spoke to the crowd about the importance of the film. "I do not own Moana," Cravalho shared, "we own Moana." - Photo: Jason Lees

By Ameer Hi'ilawe Neves

On a bright afternoon on Nov. 21, 2024, people from all over the world gathered at the Lanikūhonua Cultural Institute on the west side of O'ahu for Disney's *Moana 2* World Premiere. Invited guests were greeted with flower lei, hula, live music, local foods and a variety of activities to enjoy.

Event goers could learn a hula, meet Mickey and Minnie Mouse or the character Moana herself, create a phone charm or bracelet with seashells and beads, create art on a seashell, take a photo in the Moana-themed photo booth or get a flipbook to take home.

Several local businesses were also featured at the event including Lypid Kitchen with their "Pua" inspired BBQ Pork Bao and Better Sour with their *Moana 2* collection of gummy stars in iconic island flavors like liliko'i.

Auli'i Cravalho, who plays Moana, arrived on the blue carpet donning a custom shell top by Utah-based Samoan designer Afa Ah Loo. Cravalho posed for photos dressed in character with several guests and joined in a few fa'aumu ("chee-hoos") on the carpet.

"I miss being here and feeling the island vibes and feeling the aloha from start to finish on this carpet," said Cravalho. "It really feels like coming home."

Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, who voices the demigod Maui, also attended, dancing a tauluga (a Samoan dance celebrating the completion of a task) with his mother upon his entrance to the event before pausing for photo ops and interviews.

"It's the global premiere of *Moana 2* and [there are] a lot of people around the world who are excited to see it,"

Johnson said. "I've got my family here. A lot of people flew in. It's awesome to be here tonight."

Guests included Lahainaluna High School students and staff, *Lilo and Stitch* live action actress Maia Kealoha, Hawai'i-based influencer Bretman Rock, Hawaiian-Samoan reggae rock/pop band Common Kings and more.

As the sun began to set, guests were ushered to their seats in the outdoor theater. Each lawn chair had a Hawaiian Airlines blanket and a Heihei (chicken) or Pua (pig) plush character toy for guests to take home.

Pasifika (Pacific Islander) dancers took to the stage to perform for the crowd. Flags of each Pacific Island waved in front of the screen and "chee-hoos" echoed through the venue. Cravalho and Johnson briefly danced with the performers on stage, then thanked their families, friends, *Moana 2* creator Bob Iger, and the people of Pasifika.



Moana 2 World Premiere guests were gifted Hawaiian Airlines blankets and "Heihei" or "Pua" plush toys at the outdoor theatre at Lanikūhonua. - Photo: Ameer Hi'ilawe Neves



Reprising her role as Moana in *Moana 2*, Auli'i Cravalho smiles as she poses for pictures on the blue carpet in a custom shell top by Samoan designer Afa Ah Loo. - Photo: Jason Lees

"We [all] own *Moana*," said Cravalho.

With stars twinkling in the skies above, the movie began, full of lively new music from talented songwriters Abigail Barlow and Emily Bear, the first female duo to compose music for a Disney movie.

Several new characters are introduced in *Moana 2*: Moana's little sister Simea (voiced by Khaleesi Lambert-Tsuda from O'ahu) and crew members Kele (David Fane of Aotearoa), Loto (Rose Matafeo of Aotearoa) and Moni (Hualālai Chung also from O'ahu).

In the movie, Moni is a young storyteller who has learned all the mo'olelo of Motunui. For Chung, an up-and-coming 'Ōiwi actor-musician, *Moana 2* has been the opportunity of a lifetime.

"This story of Moana, has been so big for our people, not only [for] Hawai'i, but the entire Pacific," said Chung, adding that he was very grateful to be part of the movie and of the celebration of the movie here at home.

In *Moana 2*, three years have passed. Moana is now an accomplished navigator sailing far beyond the reef of her island home of Motunui. Whereas the first movie focused on connecting to the past and her ancestors, *Moana 2* focuses on connecting to the future and to all the peoples of the Pacific.

An emerging leader, Moana balances her duties to her people while heeding the call of her ancestors. When her ancestors send her on a journey to reunite the peoples of the Pacific, she struggles with leaving her 'ohana, fearing she may not return.

An important and timely theme throughout the movie is the idea that the peoples of the Pacific are connected, not divided, by the ocean.

Moana 2 represents all the people of Pasifika, showcasing our cultural connections through depiction of 'awa ceremonies, use of kapa, respect for 'aumakua (deified ancestors who may assume animal forms), and tattoo. The movie celebrates the achievements of all Pacific peoples – Polynesians, Micronesians and Melanesians – and represents our cultures, customs and voyaging traditions on the big screen.

"This idea of community, of loyalty to your 'ohana, is so much grander in this film," Chung reflected. "I think everybody will really connect with [the film] and take it to heart. ■"

Adamant About Authenticity



Lāiana Kanoa-Wong was one of the cultural consultants with Disney's Oceanic Cultural Trust, a collective of cultural advisors from across Oceania working behind the scenes on *Moana 2* to ensure Pacific island cultures were authentically represented in the movie. - Photos: Courtesy of Disney

Lāiana Kanoa-Wong talks about being a cultural consultant for “Moana 2”

By Donalyn Dela Cruz

Lāiana Kanoa-Wong recalls sitting with his ‘ohana and friends to watch the Walt Disney animated film, *Moana*, shown in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i at the Bishop Museum in June 2018.

Two years earlier, *Moana* first hit the theaters telling the story of a Polynesian teenager who sets sail on a quest to save her people.

“I was watching it, and I was mesmerized,” said Kanoa-Wong. “We were watching this story of - it was us, it was our people, and it was our cultures. I was seeing elements of Samoa culture, Maori culture, Asian culture and I was thinking about how proud I was and then hearing our ‘ōlelo on top of that I was like, oh, there’s something special to this and I just became more and more excited.”

Today, Kanoa-Wong is among the consultants in the Oceanic Cultural Trust for the development of *Moana 2* - the highest-grossing Thanksgiving release in U.S. history.

A Hawaiian cultural specialist at Kamehameha Schools, Kanoa-Wong grew up speaking ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i as a student of the kula kaiapuni Hawaiian language immersion program. He graduated from Ke Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Ānuenuē and holds a bachelor’s degree in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and a master’s degree in education from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

While his ‘ōlelo schooling proved to be of value, Kanoa-Wong said he never realized it would happen in the film industry and recalled how its use in the world was once questioned.

“Our families didn’t know, because I can remember my tūtū them, they were like, ‘why would you put Lāiana in kaiapuni? There’s no jobs out there for people in kaiapuni.’ And then here I am today working and doing stuff at Disney, sharing our stories because I went to kaiapuni,

because of my background in language and culture,” said Kanoa-Wong. “For our keiki, it’s limitless.”

According to the Walt Disney Animation Studios, two of *Moana 2*’s directors are of Samoan descent and were adamant about the authenticity of Oceania histories and culture when developing the first *Moana*. It established its Oceanic Cultural Trust, a collective of cultural advisors from across Oceania headed by Kalikolehua Hurley of Mililani, O‘ahu. The Oceanic Cultural Trust reached out to additional cultural advisors for *Moana 2*.

“To have a seat at the table felt really special, it felt maika‘i,” Kanoa-Wong said. “They’re open to hearing about our perspectives. They’re open to taking it in and using it as guiding stars as they were navigating to create those stories. I’m just really proud to be a part of it because it’s a continuation of the journey.”

Kanoa-Wong has also worked as the sole consultant on *NCIS: Hawai‘i* for 26 episodes and been involved in two shorts, *Hae Hawai‘i* and *E Mālama Pono, Willy Boy*.

He said it was also humbling and exciting to be a part of Disney’s Oceanic Cultural Trust for *Moana 2*, in which he participated in the sharing of ideas to constructively move the *Moana* storytelling process forward.

“They’ve been preparing for their moments and what they do in their spaces and so it’s nice to be amongst awesome Indigenous leaders,” he shared. “When I’m doing things like *NCIS* or other projects, I’m like the main con-

sultant. To me, that’s not a winning formula. It’s almost like we’ve got to go back to the ‘aha (assembly) style where we have a council of us who are helping to provide feedback. The fact that a corporation like Disney valued having multiple perspectives from different island hui showed growth in the industry.”

Kanoa-Wong says their collective goal “to do things right” is a concept that should be replicated.

The sharing of how one culture approaches a situation differently or the similar words used reaffirmed the connection of people bound by the Pacific, the world’s largest body of ocean.

Kanoa-Wong compared it to the 13th Annual Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC) that took place in June 2024 when people from across Oceania nations gathered in Hawai‘i to honor and share traditional cultural practices. Despite the evolution of cultures to place, voyaging is a foundation from which all derive.

“We know that we’re all one big ‘ohana. We know that we all have a very unique perspective to add and share,” he said. “We trust in the guidance and leaders of our kumu and our mentors and the people that have been around us in voyaging, in history, in education, in language.”

Using FestPAC and *Moana* as examples of how far Polynesians have come from a colonial and oppressed past, Kanoa-Wong lights up when talking about what children today have before them due to the work that has been done to preserve and perpetuate cultural practices.

“A film like *Moana* shows that there’s so many unique connections coming to life, and for our keiki, they’ll know nothing different,” he said.

Hōkūlē‘a is credited for the revival of voyaging societies across the Pacific. Polynesian Voyaging Society Master Navigator Nainoa Thompson was also a consultant on *Moana 2*, to provide his voyaging expertise and navigational philosophy.

“Nainoa talks about [that] we’re all navigators. We’re all navigators of our own lives and our own canoe,” recalled Kanoa-Wong. “What is our canoe? Our canoe is our body, our mind. But also, our canoe is our family. Our canoe is our community. And as we ascend into leadership roles, how do we navigate?”

For the navigational challenges that the character Moana faces, Kanoa-Wong believes she stokes inspiration.

“All of us are navigating and trying our best,” he said. “We can draw from our ancestral wisdom to guide us forward today, to use it as a platform to build from as we move forward in the future.” ■



Moana 2 takes place three years after the original and follows Moana and her crew on a new and exciting journey. *Moana 2* has broken multiple box office records since its world premiere on November 27.



Moana 2 includes a new cast of characters, including her fellow voyaging crew members Kele (David Fane of Aotearoa), Loto (Rose Matafeo of Aotearoa), Moni (Hualālai Chung from O‘ahu) and Moana’s little sister Simea (Khaleesi Lambert-Tsuda from O‘ahu).

Faces of the Diaspora

Educator from Wai'anae Advocates for Keiki Around the Country

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

Dr. Nicol Russell's inner child is an introverted bookworm from Wai'anae, O'ahu. Throughout her 26-year career in early childhood education, Russell, 46, has kept her younger self – and the stigmas she faced – top of mind.

In Wai'anae, “we had such a bad reputation for being all the things people associate with Native communities,” Russell said. “My whole life, it really was feeling like I had to disprove what I was hearing people say about this place that I loved.”

Today, when she trains teachers as the chief academic officer at the education technology company Teaching Strategies, she emphasizes the importance of relationships with students.

As Kānaka Ōiwi pupils, “the way that we were treated has just haunted me forever,” Russell said. “It was such a negative experience that I don't want that for other kids.”

Instead, she's focused on uplifting youth in the lāhui and on the continent. And it all started in Wai'anae, which generations of her 'ohana have claimed as their own.

Russell grew up as the middle child, with three sisters and two brothers. They spoke English, 'ōlelo Hawai'i and Pidgin. Under the eye of Russell's grandmother, a kumu hula, Russell and her sisters learned how to dance.

“As soon as I could walk, I could hula,” she said.

Russell reminisced on days spent at the beach and at lū'au. Her grandfather played bass guitar, and her grand-

mother ensured Russell learned how to prepare dishes like laulau and lomi salmon.

“I have such an Indigenous worldview because I was immersed in our culture,” Russell said.

Then, when she was 13 years old, her mother, Ashlyn Pi'ilani, passed away from cancer. “Like a lot of our people she was sick, and it went undiagnosed,” Russell said.

Responsibilities soon fell on her young shoulders as Russell helped her father, Lester Walker, with her younger siblings. Walker, who is from Birmingham, Alabama, arrived in Hawai'i as a Marine and never left.

Every day after school, Russell lost herself in books at the library, reading *The Sound and The Fury* and *The Color Purple*. As a Wai'anae High School student, she imagined a writing career and gravitated toward journalism.

Russell was accepted to several colleges on the continent, including the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. However, she stayed in Hawai'i to help take care of her family. At the University of Hawai'i, Russell decided against pursuing journalism and pivoted to English.

The summer before her sophomore year, she got a job at Kua'ana Native Hawaiian Student Services Center. Russell recruited future haumāna from other islands and organized community service events, including beach cleanups and protests. “That was the most important thing I did at the university,” Russell said.

In college, she also learned more about her father's experiences as a Black man – and what it meant for her to be a Black woman in the U.S. “I was finally coming to understand who I was as a person fully,” Russell said.

After graduating with her bachelor's degree in May 2001, she moved to Maryland that summer, then married her first husband. Russell is counted as the first in her 'ohana to leave Hawai'i. “It was like landing on Mars,” she said.



Dr. Nicol Russell. - Courtesy Photos

There, she encountered a new kind of diversity, surrounded by immigrants from Africa and South America. Although no one recognized her as Hawaiian, she felt she could fit in.

Russell decided to pursue teaching and, from 2002 to 2008, she taught kindergarten at Bradley Hills Elementary School in Bethesda, Maryland.

During that time, she and her first husband divorced.

In 2008, Russell moved to Arizona, spurred by a desire to be closer to Hawai'i and her sister and started working at Bright Horizons in Phoenix as a teacher, which served as her entryway into early childhood education. “I probably did the most growing [there] as a professional than anything else I ever did before that and since then,” Russell said.

She rose up the ranks from teacher to program coordinator to assistant director. Eventually, Russell became director of the center, hiring and training staff until she left in 2012.

Russell accepted a position at the Arizona Department of Education as its professional development coordinator, talking to thousands of teachers around the state when she presented trainings. In 2013, Russell was promoted to director of early childhood special education.

In 2015, Makena Hōkūle'a – Russell's daughter – was born. Russell refers to her as “an unexpected blessing” after her firstborn, Nainoa, passed away as an infant. That year, Russell became the deputy associate superintendent, overseeing a team of 28. “Everything was thriving,” Russell said.

She welcomed a new challenge in 2018 – pursuing a doctorate in education at Northern Arizona University. In 2019, she transitioned from the government sector to work at Teaching Strategies. Russell was initially hired as the director of Head Start research and support, then promoted to vice president of implementation research in 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Russell proposed a project in her doctoral program about how the shift to online schooling was affecting the Kānaka Maoli community. She interviewed teachers and students before graduating in 2021.

Even with her busy schedule, Hawai'i remains on Russell's mind. She visits often with her 9-year-old daughter, a sociable and easygoing child who dances hula at a hālau in Arizona and is learning the lunar phases in 'ōlelo.

“Wai'anae is still home,” Russell said. “I still feel like I've got work to do here on the continent, but I will be home again.” ■



Despite living away from Hawai'i, Russell is making sure her daughter's cultural identity as a Native Hawaiian is intact. In this photo, 9-year-old Makena Hōkūle'a (foreground) practices hula with her hālau.

Supporting Hawai'i's Keiki and Caregivers

Ka Pa'alana has been providing educational support for houseless and at-risk families for the past 17 years

By Amee Hi'ilawe Neves

Serving over 30 communities at 11 sites across the pae 'āina, Ka Pa'alana is a Partners in Development Foundation preschool organization that specifically serves houseless and at-risk families.

Founded in 2007 by former educator Danny Goya, Ka Pa'alana has helped over 2,720 keiki and 3,692 adults over the past 17 years. Currently, Ka Pa'alana serves 210 families across all sites.

"Ka Pa'alana was birthed into this preschool that was built and founded to help more vulnerable families. The idea was to be mobile and flexible in any area, in whatever community was willing to take us, and set up a tent if we needed to," said Ka Pa'alana Program Director Kasey Popken.

Thus, Ka Pa'alana is not a "brick and mortar" preschool. Ka Pa'alana sites include parks, community centers, public schools, and, during the summer, the Wai'anae Boat Harbor.

But it is much more than a preschool – Ka Pa'alana doesn't only provide support for the keiki who come through its program, but for their caregivers too.

"Danny, our founder, would always say, 'when a young child comes into our care... we can provide all the care that they need in preschool, but if they go home to a home that's unstable...then we've only done half the work,'" Popken recalled.

"But if we can work with the whole family, and if we can get them to a place where they can heal... then we've not only helped that child and that family for the time that they're with us in preschool, but hopefully for a lifetime."

Ka Pa'alana has several components to its program.

The early education, or preschool component, is where keiki learn based on their age and developmental level. In the parent and child time component, parents learn how to support what their children are learning, from developing fine motor skills to early reading and writing skills.

In Ka Pa'alana's adult education component, parent educators teach adults about self-care, and help them prepare for job interviews, become financially literate, and more. Finally, the outreach component is for families who prefer home visits from Ka Pa'alana parent educators who provide in-home resources and education.

By partnering with professionals in their community, Ka Pa'alana also connects families with community resources.

"Honestly, a lot of our partnerships come about from the different connections we make in the community and the different ties we have to other organizations," Popken said.



Because of their mission to serve houseless and high risk families, Ka Pa'alana is not a "brick and mortar" preschool program. Instead, their sites include parks, community centers and public schools on O'ahu, Maui and Hawai'i Island. Here, parents and their keiki participate in a music lesson at Hanaka'ō'ō Beach Park in West Maui. - Photos: Courtesy of Nida Otta, Ka Pa'alana



A Ka Pa'alana staff member makes learning fun for two young haumāna. In the 17 years since it was founded, Ka Pa'alana has served more than 2,720 keiki.

"A lot of the recruitment [for partnerships] is from our staff going out and saying, 'Hey, this is what we're doing for our families. We really need a dentist to come out. Do you guys have anybody willing to volunteer their time?' Or 'We need a shot clinic, can you help?' By reaching out, we are trying to create partnerships so we can provide holistic care to the families."

These partnerships help build connections between families and professionals, making it less daunting for parents and keiki to seek the help they need.

"We've invited the local dentist at the Wai'anae Comprehensive Center to all of our sites," said Ka Pa'alana Operations Manager Nida Otta. "We've had him at our health fair and then [the families] see him in the community. So, when they make an appointment, it's not scary for them to actually go for a dentist visit, you know?"

At Ka Pa'alana, families in the program are also able to support one another through their respective journeys in caregiving and healing.

"Ka Pa'alana is a safe place for the families. They know where we're at, they know what day and time we will be there, and it's in a location where they know their kids are going to be safe. They start to build these friendships with other caregivers as well," said Otto.

"I think for them, they feel like it's a place where they can connect with other caregivers with kids the same age and who might be going through the same thing, and so they just kind of go through it together."

Although Ka Pa'alana began 17 years ago serving the Wai'anae Coast, they have continued to expand across O'ahu, to Hawai'i Island and, this year, to Maui.

"Seventeen years in, we are still able to continue to serve families and see how families have been changed because of the work, the friendships and partnerships that we've built with them," said Popken. ■

To support Ka Pa'alana by donating or establishing partnership visit their website at <https://pdf.org/kapaalana>. To join the program call (808) 596-8711 to find a site near you.

Filling the Need for Keiki to Succeed

By Hannah Ka'ulani Coburn

A study from the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization (UHERO) revealed that an estimated 8,092 children do not attend preschool – not by family choice, but due to systemic barriers relating to availability, location and cost. This leaves a substantial number of children across the pae 'āina who are not receiving critical early educational opportunities.

The Head Start Association of Hawai'i (HSAH) is trying to do something about that.

In 1965, an outcome of then-President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty campaign was understanding the importance of education for vulnerable communities. That same year, UH Mānoa became involved in early childhood education research and began training faculty and community consultants for the first Head Start program.

Today, Head Start has grown to become the largest early childhood education provider in Hawai'i, serving about 2,300 preschool students, and over 720 Early Head Start students (keiki under 3 years old).

There are six Head Start and Early Head Start providers across the state: Honolulu Community Action Program (HCAP), Parents and Families Together, Maui Economic Opportunity, Hawai'i Island Family Support Services, Maui Family Support Services, and Kaua'i Child and Family Services. Together, these providers represent the HSAH.

HCAP Head Start operates primarily out of Department of Education (DOE) classrooms, with over 70 center-based classes.

"We strive to form collaborative relationships with our principals, with our complex areas, and with the DOE," explained Hawai'i Head Start Collaboration Office Director Ephraim Schwab. "The value of early childhood education is shared by the DOE and Head Start. Principals see the value of having students be prepared for kindergarten before they begin, but also see the value of having a program that can help those in our communities with the most need."

The Head Start program services children from all backgrounds in Hawai'i but has predominantly served the Native Hawaiian and Polynesian communities since it began.

"The Head Start program has become much more ingrained in the Native Hawaiian community, as our parents became our leaders and directors," said Schwab. "The community gravitated towards being more culture-based, knowing that culture-based education enforces the identity in the communities that we serve."

Head Start is part of the Hā Initiative that uses the



Ben Naki, vice president of early childhood education at Parents and Children Together (PACT) shares mana'o at a meeting of Head Start providers. PACT is one of six Head Start providers in Hawai'i. - Photos Courtesy of Head Start



A Head Start classroom at Prince Kūhiō Elementary School in downtown Honolulu. Head Start operates primarily out of Department of Education classrooms, with over 70 center-based classes serving about 2,300 preschool students.

framework of connecting students to the 'āina. Head Start and Early Head Start providers all incorporate elements of culture-based learning using basic 'ōlelo in instruction, introducing food from the Native Hawaiian diet, and having guest speakers that work in culturally significant fields, such as navigation.

"When I came into this position my mindset was, 'how do we make this relevant, practical and meaningful to our students and what role can I play in that,'" said Schwab. "It's been a big part to share that and see how we engage nationally as a Head Start association of Hawai'i in promoting our values as being uniquely Hawai'i."

Head Start is federally funded, so qualifying children and families are eligible to receive quality educational services at little to no cost. "We encourage our programs to go out into the community because we know we aren't helping everyone who can utilize these services," said Schwab.

"We have these resources that are available, and we want families to have what they need; whether

it's with our wraparound services, with WIC or SNAP, and if receiving these resources can help lessen the stress on the family, that is huge for us."

Head Start's wrap-around services offer part-day, full-day, home-based opportunities and inclusion programs to help best fit the needs of each individual family and child.

"We have a program that can help your family – and it might be able to offer you things that the DOE cannot offer," Schwab noted. "So, when parents are working to make ends meet, they have a preschool they can afford. They can go to work [knowing] their children will be taken care of in a safe environment."

Head Start's dedicated directors, managers, teachers, mentors, family advocates, teaching assistants, and health and maintenance staff work collaboratively with parents in the program to facilitate educational opportunities for the students.

"Our job is to empower Hawaiian keiki – and keiki of all cultures island-wide – and their families to ensure early access to education and support," said Pauahi Leoiki, HCAP's Head Start Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, Attendance family advocate.

"We work with families by connecting them with resources to meet their needs and become active advocates for their own 'ohana. We conduct parenting education workshops that teach families communication techniques and developmentally appropriate interactions they can use in their homes that are valuable in maintaining a healthy connection between the child and parent, as well as between the parents themselves," explained Leoiki, who is assigned to O'ahu's Wai'anae Coast.

"HCAP Head Start provides leadership opportunities for parents through our Policy Council and Parent Committee monthly meetings where families are invited to join and contribute to curriculum and activity planning with their child's teaching staff on a weekly basis," Leoiki added.

"Through my seven years with Head Start, I have seen families thrive to become engaging community members and return to HCAP Head Start, joining our team through various roles, whether it be as family advocates themselves or teaching staff," said Leoiki.

"Meeting families and assisting them in reaching their goals is the most rewarding aspect of my job. Hearing feedback from our families about how much of an impact HCAP Head Start has had fulfills my purpose to continue serving our community."

Head Start is currently working to expand its services to reach more under-served families across Hawai'i. ■

For more information go to www.hcapweb.org/head-start.

Inspired by the Moon



Haunani Miyasato with one her books, "Ka Lehua" describing the different parts of the lehua flower. - Courtesy Photos

By Kalawai'a Nunies

For years, retired preschool teacher Haunani Miyasato was bothered by the scarcity of books for preschool keiki written in 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Currently, only around 70 books exist, some of which are out of print. As a kumu and parent she knew that reading the same books year after year gets boring. The lāhui clearly needed more options.

To help fill this need, Miyasato has begun creating and publishing books for young children written entirely in 'ōlelo Hawai'i through her company, Kaulana Mahina. The books feature simple sentences and vibrant pictures. Sentences are composed with blocks inspired from the hakalama, a tool to assist in the pronunciation of Hawaiian words.

So far, Kaulana Mahina has published four books: *Ka Uhu*, *Ka 'Alalā*, *Ka 'Ōhi'a*, and *Ka Lehua*. In 2025, Miyasato is looking forward to publishing two more books around Merrie Monarch time: *Aia i hea ka wai a Kāne* and *Mele Wai*.

"*Aia i hea ka wai a Kāne* is based off *He mele no Kāne*," shared Miyasato. "It asks the question, 'aia i hea ka wai a Kāne' on all the pages on all the spreads and then answers it with lines from the mele. It talks about the sun rising at Ha'eha'e."

Before founding Kaulana Mahina, Miyasato, who has a degree in early childhood education, worked for 15 years

as a preschool teacher at Keiki Steps with IN-PEACE (the Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture).

"Of course, because I was a preschool teacher, I would try to incorporate more Hawaiian language and Hawaiian culture into my classrooms. One of the things that was lacking were books with these concepts. So, I had to make them," she said.

A mother of four, Miyasato sent her children to Hawaiian immersion charter schools (Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u and Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo) so they would have a more hands-on cultural learning experience.

To support her keiki in learning 'ōlelo Hawai'i, she enrolled at Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani, the College of Hawaiian Language at UH Hilo. One of her classes was called "Ka Nohona Kaulana Mahina" taught by Kumu Henani Enos. The course explored traditional Hawaiian relationships relative to temporal and spatial time. Her enrollment in that class would become a source of inspiration and a turning point.

"While I was in that class it brought up so much more questions. I would go to Kumu Henani and ask him all my questions after class. It made me curious and motivated me [search for] anything written about the mahina on the Papakilo Database. I spent hours researching and I took all that information and put it on the pelaha (poster)."

The pelaha kaulana mahina she created became the unexpected genesis to founding Kaulana Mahina.

Initially, Miyasato's sole intention was to create a Hawaiian moon calendar for her 'ohana. When it was finished, she took her poster to OfficeMax and printed a copy to hang in her house. But the response from her friends and family surprised her.

"Whenever friends would come over, they would be like 'can I have a copy?' It got to the point where the friends of my friends wanted copies," Miyasato recalled. "When I posted [the poster] on Instagram it started getting even more interest. People had questions about the mahina, and I would answer them over Instagram."

Ever the educator, Miyasato decided to put together a mahina workshop and tried it out with Ho'okua'āina, a nonprofit dedicated to perpetuating the cultivation of kalo in Kailua, O'ahu, and with Mālama Hulē'ia an organization dedicated to restoring the loko i'a (fishpond) at Alakoko, Kaua'i. Through these workshops, both Miyasato and the participating organizations learned more about the mahina and its impacts, and how to apply 'ike relative to mahina to their own practices.

"It was apparent that this was a need," Miyasato reflected. "So, now we go to schools and organizations and teach kumu about the mahina through a Hawaiian perspective so that they can incorporate it into their curriculum."

And so, Kaulana Mahina was born, evolving into a small business devoted to creating teaching resources



Miyasato teaches "Mele Helu Pō" at one of her Mahina Workshops. Here, participants are learning both the song and the hand motions to the mele.



Kaulana Mahina's first two books, "Ka 'Alalā" and "Ka Uhu."



Kaulana Mahina's second bundle, "Ka Lehua" and "Ka 'Ōhi'a'."

from a Hawaiian perspective. In addition to providing mahina workshops and writing and publishing keiki books, Miyasato has branched out, offering a mahina curriculum kit for kumu, cards, stickers, and more.

One of Miyasato's favorite 'ōlelo no'ea is from the Hawaiian historian Kepelino: "Ahu kupanaha iā Hawai'i 'imi loa – a heap of marvelous things in Hawai'i [and its] profound knowledge."

A reminder that 'ike Hawai'i is rich with knowledge and full of marvelous things. ■

To learn more or to purchase books go to: <https://kaulana-mahina.com>.

Nurturing the Next Generation of 'Ōiwi Leaders

By Shelli Kim, KS Preschools Po'o Kula (Head of School)

One hundred and forty years ago, Ke Ali'i Bernice Pauahi Pākī Bishop envisioned a future where her people would thrive, guided by education. Through her legacy, Kamehameha Schools (KS) was established, creating a foundation for nurturing 'Ōiwi leaders who would carry forward the values and wisdom of our kūpuna. Today, that vision lives on at Kamehameha Schools Preschools (KS Preschools), where at the tender age of three, keiki begin their journey of discovery, growth, and cultural connection.

Enrolling your child in preschool is one of the most impactful decisions you can make to support their growth and future success. During these formative years, a child's brain absorbs knowledge and develops essential skills at an extraordinary pace. KS Preschools caters to our littlest learners by providing nurturing environments in 30 locations across the pae āina where keiki build a strong academic and cultural foundation.

E Ola! Thrives at KS Preschools

KS Preschools are guided by the E Ola! learning outcomes, which foster the development of well-rounded 'Ōiwi leaders. These outcomes emphasize 'ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledge), pilina (relationships), and 'ike kū'oko'ā (independent thinking). By integrating Hawaiian values and culture, keiki develop kuleana and aloha āina (love for the land), preparing them to thrive in an ever-changing world.

"The intentional foundation of Hawaiian culture helps keiki develop a strong sense of 'Ōiwi identity and pride," said Wai'ale'ale Arroyo, KS vice president of Hi'ialo. "They learn not only who they are, but also their kuleana to community and āina, preparing them to be the next generation of 'Ōiwi leaders."

At KS Preschools, keiki experience indoor and outdoor learning connected to culture, use technology as a learning tool, and are deeply grounded in Hawaiian identity and Christian values.

A Strong Cultural Foundation

At KS Preschools, Hawaiian culture is the foundation for teaching key academic readiness skills, such as reading, writing, counting, and observing. For example, keiki learn math concepts through activities in the māla (garden), measuring growth and understanding cycles of life, all while deepening their connection to āina. This ensures that keiki are not only academically prepared but also grounded in their cultural identity as they transition to kindergarten.



The ahupua'a is an important topic of study for keiki and kumu. Through lessons on local food systems, keiki explore how to grow and produce food on the āina, sell it to support their livelihoods, and use it to nourish themselves and their 'ohana. - Photo: Kamehameha Schools

Every day, kumu create an environment centered around our core values of aloha, mālama, and kuleana, nurturing kupuohi (thriving growth) in each keiki. As both educators and innovators, kumu play a vital role in shaping the learning experience, blending traditional Hawaiian practices with modern teaching methods to inspire and engage each keiki.

From the moment keiki step into the classroom, they are immersed in a space that honors and perpetuates the language, values, and practices of their kūpuna.

Caring for the Whole Child

The KS preschools' world-class Hawaiian culture-based educational experience includes teaching academic concepts as well as addressing the social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of each keiki. Safe and supportive relationships with kumu and peers build confidence and resilience. Hawaiian values like mālama are woven into daily life, encouraging keiki to care for themselves, others, and their surroundings.

Partnering with 'Ohana

Mākua (parents) are every keiki's first teacher. When that keiki comes to a KS preschool, it becomes a partnership between school and 'ohana to ensure success. Families are actively engaged in their keiki's learning journey through regular communication and opportunities to participate in classroom activities. By partnering with 'ohana, KS preschools strengthen the bond between home and school, creating a lasting support system for keiki.

Throughout the school year, KS preschools host 'ohana activities at kula and in the community. For example, Nānākuli Preschool joined a local community celebration of Lā Kū'oko'a (Hawaiian Independence Day) and invited 'ohana to participate in a day of communi-

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"We have thoroughly enjoyed our two years at Kamehameha Preschool. Our keiki's kumu have been such a blessing to our 'ohana and we are forever grateful to them. They did an excellent job of preparing our daughter for kindergarten while also incorporating culturally based learning, as well as doing an amazing job of caring for their social and emotional development."

- KS PRESCHOOLS 'OHANA SURVEY

ty engagement and cultural learning. We have also had 'ohana share their expertise at kula and at their farm for a lo'i project. Such events deepen 'ohana and keiki connections to Hawaiian history and strengthen the bond between home, school, and community.

'Ohana Day is a cherished tradition, where families come together to engage in their keiki's learning environment. While Lā Kūpuna provides an opportunity for grandparents to share special time with mo'opuna, bridging generations and reinforcing the value of intergenerational learning.

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"I love the focus on Hawaiian culture and use of Hawaiian language, how respectful and supportive their kumu are, the connection to place, development of kuleana and opportunities to develop a connection to environment and community."

- KS PRESCHOOLS 'OHANA SURVEY

Enrollment Open Now till Jan. 31

If you are seeking an educational experience that nurtures your keiki's mind, body, and spirit while grounding them in the traditions of our kūpuna, KS Preschools invites you to apply at ksbe.edu/preschools by Jan. 31, 2025.

Kamehameha Schools gives preference to applicants of Hawaiian ancestry to the extent permitted by law. This policy reflects our commitment to Ke Ali'i Pauahi's vision of creating educational opportunities for her people.

Kūlaniākea: A Different Kind of Preschool Experience



Some are more excited than others to get in the lo'i but all are offered the opportunity to participate in the work that helps feed our lāhui.

- Courtesy Photos

By Lisa Huyhn Eller

On the shores of Kāneʻohe Bay, young children ages 3- to 6-years-old make kilo, their observations of nature. They've learned 10 cloud patterns and currents unique to the bay, and they apply this knowledge to making small weather predictions and noticing ocean conditions before they board a wa'a (canoe) to sail.

The students are not on an annual field trip. This is their normal. This is part of their classroom at Kūlaniākea, a nonprofit nature and Hawaiian immersion school. The children engage in activities outdoors, including plant identification, biology, geography, engineering and zoology, as well as learning about navigation and cloud names.

"They watch, they look, and they learn. They feel the movement of the wave. They can tell you what direction the wind is coming from, because of the way the sail moves. That experience is invaluable. People have said, 'Wow, your kids are so smart!' It has nothing to do with that, it has everything to do with the environment we put them in," said Wailani Robins, executive director of Kūlaniākea.

The environment Robins speaks of is a school built on intentionality and aloha. In 2015, the school got its nonprofit status. The following year it officially opened with about nine children. But it didn't have a space. It was a preschool without walls that traveled with keiki around the island of O'ahu, often visiting Bishop Museum. In 2018, Papahana Kuaola, a mālama 'āina-based education organization, gave them a space to store their things and put down a hale pe'a (tent).

Though the school technically opened six years ago, it is the culmination of 30 years of experience in education. Robins worked at two Pūnana Leo sites, where she learned a lot about immersion. Then she was the director at Kawaiaha'o Church School, a Christian Montessori school. Taking what she learned from children, families,



The moveable alphabet is a useful tool in how Kūlaniākea approaches reading and writing.

educators and environments, she sought to create something different.

Parents Kaniela and Tash Lyman-Mersereau said they chose Kūlaniākea for their 5-year-old son Pa'akaniale'a (Pa'a) because they wanted a safe place where he could deeply connect and experience all that is Hawai'i.

"It is the language, the experiences with kai and 'āina, and the compassionate, caring kumu that make this school so special," said Kaniela Lyman-Mersereau. "We want our children to share the same love for home and seek the same 'ike as us so we can all connect to our genealogy without shame and move forward to remake Hawai'i into the unique, beautiful place it is. To us, this is what education needs to be in this day and age. This school shoulders the kuleana of our generation in so many ways."

Pa'a and his classmates have learned about kindness, sharing their feelings, taking care of one another and taking care of their space. They are also growing their knowledge of 'ōlelo Hawai'i and the natural world, and they share this knowledge with their families.

"Pa'a teaches us new words in 'ōlelo Hawai'i and is quick to correct us if we mispronounce a word," said Kaniela. "Recently, they learned about Lā Kū'oko'a and he came home telling me about Timoteo Ha'alilio. He has learned how to observe and interact with the language of nature with his trips on the wa'a, *Kā'ihēkauila*, and up ma uka at Papahana Kuaola. He can name the native plants and birds around him, tell us the name of the winds, rains and mountain peaks of his home. The list goes on..."

Robins believes Kūlaniākea is unique because of its dedicated and knowledgeable staff, and its untraditional classroom setting. The current enrollment for the combined preschool and kindergarten class is 24 students, ages 3 to 6 years old. Their toddler program is maxed out at eight students. Robins said they hope to expand the school up to fifth grade, believing that keeping children until this age will prepare them for any future educational path.

The participation of families is integral to the school's philosophy. Community is baked into everything the



Sailing on a wa'a on Kāneʻohe Bay is a regular part Kūlaniākea's innovative curriculum.

school does and is.

"Ohana Kūlaniākea does an excellent job of making it clear how we can support and what is expected of the mākua (parents). We all have basic kuleana in bringing snacks, fundraising and helping set up and break down their off-campus classrooms, but like other families we have also been able to help based on our given skill sets and work expertise," said Kaniela.

For example, Tasha runs a small business and helped the school set up their online purchasing system, while Kaniela is a teacher responsible for a small coastal sailing canoe similar to the one the kids learn on.

Kūlaniākea has a waiting list of two years for both programs. Robins said that while the waitlist indicates a high level of interest in their programs, it also illustrates the unmet needs for this kind of education. This is why they've made their educational resources available to other preschool programs, homeschooling families and the larger community. These resources include home labels, puzzles, posters and themed resource boxes. All of this can be purchased through the nonprofit's website.

Taking the community outreach even further, Kūlaniākea started an event in 2021 called Ola Ka 'Ī, the Hawaiian Language Thrives. It takes place at Windward Mall every February during Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language month) and is a celebration with local musicians, storytelling and more. More than 3,000 people attend the event annually. That original event inspired the development of other Ola Ka 'Ī events in 'Ewa, on Maui, and on Kaua'i with Ni'ihau participating. This year, new events will be added in Hilo, Kona, and on Moloka'i.

More recently, through an initiative called "Let's 'Ōlelo," Kūlaniākea is also building a database of Hawaiian words that people can access through a QR code in various community spaces. "If you learn to include one to two words a day in your everyday conversations, that's keeping ('ōlelo Hawai'i) alive," said Robins. "Through this initiative, we've touched hundreds of people." ■

For more information go to: www.kulaniakea.org.

'Aha Pūnana Leo

The Preschool Program that Inspired a Movement

By Maki'ilei Ishihara,

OHA Educational Pathways Strategy Consultant

In the 1970s, only about 2,000 people spoke Hawaiian – and most of them were over the age of 60. It was a near-inevitable – and likely intentional – outcome of the 1896 ban on Hawaiian medium education following the hostile overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893.

From that point on, in public spaces from government to education to business – and eventually in private homes, English rapidly replaced 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

In a 2019 *National Public Radio* interview, UH Hilo Professor Larry Kimura said, “Language is the first aspect of a people to vanish. People don't recognize that until it's almost gone because they're hanging onto their typical cultural identification tags such as their songs, their dances, their foods, their religion maybe, or what they wear or how they look. But language is the one that is slipping away without them noticing it. And by the time it happens, it's in very dire straits.”

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) categorizes five levels of language endangerment: vulnerable, definitely endangered, severely endangered, critically endangered and extinct.

While there is no definite threshold for categorizing each level, in the 1970s there is no doubt that 'ōlelo Hawai'i was critically endangered: most speakers were elderly and 'ōlelo Hawai'i was not being taught to new generations.

In 1983, a group of passionate young educators from across the pae 'āina united with an ambitious mission: to ensure the survival of the Hawaiian language by fostering a new generation of fluent speakers. The group included Kimura along with Makalapua Alencastre, the late 'Īlei Beniamina, Hōkūlani Cleeland, Kauanoē Kamanā, Kī'ope Raymond and Pila Wilson.

Their vision was rooted in re-establishing the historical Hawaiian Medium Education (HME) schools of the Monarchical Period and inspired by the Māori Kōhanga Reo movement, a grassroots initiative that began in 1982 to revitalize the Māori language in Aotearoa (New Zealand).

The group focused their efforts on nurturing a new generation of Hawaiian language speakers using immersion methods proven effective in Europe. This was the genesis of the Pūnana Leo preschool program and the re-emergence of a Hawaiian philosophy of education known as the Kumu Honua Maoli Ola.



In 1983, a hui of passionate young educators from across the pae 'āina united with the ambitious mission to ensure the survival of 'ōlelo Hawai'i and together they founded 'Aha Pūnana Leo. The group included (front row l-r) Makalapua Alencastre, the late 'Īlei Beniamina, and Larry Kimura; and (back l-r) Hōkūlani Cleeland, Kauanoē Kamanā, Kī'ope Raymond and Pila Wilson. - Photo Courtesy of 'Aha Pūnana Leo

Pūnana Leo, meaning “nest of voices,” is the equivalent of the Māori term Kōhanga Reo and honors those connections. The name symbolizes an environment wherein keiki are “fed” their native language exclusively – the way baby birds are cared for in their nests.

The first Pūnana Leo preschool opened in Kekaha, Kaua'i, in 1984. At the time, it was still illegal to use Hawaiian as the medium of instruction because the 1896 ban on Hawaiian language was still in place.

In 1986, after a three-year lobbying campaign by 'Aha Pūnana Leo, the Hawai'i State Legislature passed a bill lifting the ban on Hawaiian medium instruction in public schools.

Today, 'Aha Pūnana Leo operates 13 preschools across the pae 'āina, along with two infant-toddler childcare centers and other specialized programs.

About 7,000 keiki have either completed – or are enrolled – in the program. Of these, most have, or will, matriculate to one of the 22 kula kaiapuni (Hawaiian language immersion) public schools established by the Hawai'i State Department of Education (DOE). The kula kaiapuni also exist as a direct result of the advocacy efforts of 'Aha Pūnana Leo.

In 2014, 'Aha Pūnana Leo (and all its preschools) received the world's first endangered language early education accreditation from the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC).

WINHEC acknowledged the cognitive advantages of learning ma ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i (in the Hawaiian language), noting that children in Pūnana Leo preschools often out-

perform their English-speaking peers in early literacy.

Pūnana Leo's 40 years of success is deeply rooted in its family-focused approach which encourages parents to use Hawaiian at home to reinforce what their keiki are learning in school. This home-school connection strengthens the language within the family unit, ensuring that it thrives not only in the classroom, but in daily life as well.

Through partnerships – such as the one with the University of Hawai'i at Hilo's Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language – 'Aha Pūnana Leo offers professional development for teachers statewide, including opportunities to earn Hawaiian language teaching certifications. This broad network of support strengthens the foundation of Hawaiian language education, benefiting both students and teachers alike.

Moreover, by providing accessible resources for families, such as the 'Ohana Kaiapuni modules

for families learning together, and Nā Kai 'Ewalu Self-directed Modules for individual learners, Pūnana Leo continues to expand opportunities for Hawaiian language revitalization beyond the classroom.

Outside of Hawai'i, 'Aha Pūnana Leo's impact extends globally through the Niulohiki Distance Learning Program, a flexible online initiative that allows learners from anywhere in the world to engage in Hawaiian language courses. The program's accessibility ensures that everyone can participate in the revitalization of Hawaiian language and culture. Whether self-directed or teacher-led, Niulohiki provides learners with the tools to deepen their connection to Hawaiian heritage.

The legacy of 'Aha Pūnana Leo in transforming education in Hawai'i is undeniable. From its intrepid opening of an “illegal” Hawaiian immersion preschool on Kaua'i in 1984, through its decades-long efforts and advocacy, 'Aha Pūnana Leo has been a driving force and inspiration of the 'ōlelo Hawai'i movement.

In addition to Pūnana Leo's 13 preschools, there are now 22 DOE kula kaiapuni, 17 Hawaiian-focused public charter schools, and it is possible to pursue a doctoral degree in Hawaiian language at Ka Hala 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani. Today, approximately 24,000 people are fluent speakers of 'ōlelo Hawai'i – an increase of about 1100% since the 1970s - and that number continues to grow.

E ola mau ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i! ■

For more information about 'Aha Pūnana Leo or to apply go to: www.ahapunanaleo.org.



Kumu Jenna with mākuā and their keiki at Keiki o ka 'Āina's parent participation program in Waimānalo. - Photo: Courtesy of KOKA

PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCES ROOTED IN HAWAIIAN CULTURE



Partner Organizations PIDF, KOKA and INPEACE use 'ike Hawai'i to enhance early childhood education for keiki and their families

By Annabelle Le Jeune

In her Kailua-Kona home, Leilani Fukushima listens carefully as her 3-year-old daughter sings in 'ōlelo Hawai'i and dances down the hallways to a mele about the mahina that she learned in class that week.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Leilani and her two keiki trot into their Tūtū and Me classroom, a Hawaiian culture-based educational program offered by Partners in Development Foundation (PIDF) and designed to support both preschool-aged keiki and their caregivers.

But Leilani's daughter is not the only one who brings her lessons back home.

"It's good for me too, to learn," said Fukushima. "I'm about a quarter Hawaiian and I really don't know a lot of the language."

For the Fukushima 'ohana, Tūtū and Me is more than just a school. It's a place to get connected and grounded in community, culture and self. The PIDF program is just one of several Hawaiian culture-based education programs in an effort across Hawai'i to holistically activate the potential of keiki and caregivers to sustain thriving communities.

Meeting the Needs of Hawai'i's 'Ohana

About 30 years ago, three community-based organizations rooted in traditional Hawaiian values and teachings, were independently founded to help bridge the gap for Hawai'i's 'ohana to access quality, free (or affordable), and culturally informed early childhood education for keiki from birth to 5 years old.

Partner organizations Institute for Native Pacific Education and Cul-

ture (INPEACE), Keiki o ka ʻĀina (KOKA), and PIDF, emerged around the same time with a common purpose to nurture the health and educational readiness of Hawaiʻi's parents and keiki.

Hawaiʻi's public school system offers limited early childhood education options for families. And for households in remote or rural communities, finding a preschool that is not only accessible but affordable is a challenge.

The most recent data released by the State of Hawaiʻi's Executive Office on Early Learning, finds that nearly 40% of Hawaiʻi's preschool-aged keiki are not enrolled in a preschool program.

What's more, studies show that 90% of brain development occurs before the age of 5, and is shaped by positive interactions between keiki and caregiver, and access to early learning experiences, good nutrition, and regular healthcare.

That's why organizations like INPEACE, KOKA and PIDF offer comprehensive programs and services that extend beyond the classroom setting. These organizations recognize that the health of the community begins with the health of the ʻohana unit.

Each organization offers unique and complementary wrap-around services designed with the whole ʻohana in mind.

Keiki to kūpuna can participate and benefit from a menu of often interconnected focus areas including ʻāina-based learning, health and wellness, food security (i.e., access to affordable, healthy, local produce), financial literacy, and workforce development – to name a few.

The Key Ingredient to a Child's Success: Parents

During a keiki's early development, "their parents are their first and best teachers," said Ann Sullivan, Program Manager at KOKA.

Sullivan got her start in early childhood education programs 15 years ago when she enrolled her own daughter in a program known as Poli's Place, KOKA's first parent participation preschool designed for ʻohana with keiki who have special needs and unique abilities.

That's when she began to understand the value of family-child interaction learning (FCIL), a model for early childhood education that emphasizes both child development and family strengthening.

The "family-child" concept is inclusive of the diverse and multi-generational caregivers for keiki in Hawaiʻi, whether that caregiver is a parent, grandparent, aunty or uncle.

Today, KOKA offers FCIL programs like the Parent Participation Preschool, a program modeled after Kamehameha Schools' traveling preschool program which operated from 1981 until 1996 when the program transitioned to KOKA.

Twice a week, KOKA's preschool teachers set up a "pop-up" preschool at different communities like Waimānalo or Nānākuli, where caregivers and keiki join, participate, interact, and engage in culturally integrated learning.

In Hawaiʻi, there are approximately 154,000 keiki under the age of eight. Equipping Hawaiʻi's families with the tools and resources needed to nurture the growth of a keiki's education yields longterm, positive outcomes. The impact of early education cannot be overstated. Studies show that children who attend high-quality preschools are more likely to finish high school and attend college.

KOKA's FCIL programs are all about setting the foundation for what early learning looks like. For keiki who have never been in a classroom before, that may look like getting used to a routine with protocol and piko, practicing social skills by sitting down together ʻohana style to share snacks and kūkākūkā (talk story), or building independence during quiet time activities like playing games or reading.

What sets FCIL programs apart is their focus on enhancing high-quality early childhood education to prepare young keiki for school success, and providing culturally relevant caregiver education to equip caregivers to support their keiki's education and model these leadership

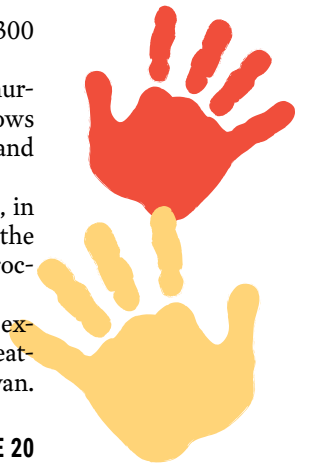
values within their families. Their programs serve approximately 2,300 keiki every year.

"The most important thing is that we're going to provide a safe, nurturing, loving environment for our keiki," said Sullivan. That allows ʻohana to build on what they learn at KOKA and continue nurturing and growing that within their homes.

While the heart of these programs are intended to support ʻohana, in the a'o aku, a'o mai (giving and receiving) of knowledge perspective, the staff are learners, too. For the KOKA Family Learning Centers, reciprocity in teaching and learning is fundamental.

"Families come with so much ʻike of their own and we want an exchange of knowledge, we want to see them building relationships, creating a sense of ʻohana amongst each other, it's a kākou thing" said Sullivan.

SEE PRESCHOOLS ROOTED IN HAWAIIAN CULTURE ON PAGE 20



A mom and her keiki engage in ʻāina-based learning as part of Nā Pono no nā ʻOhana. - Photo: Courtesy of PIDF



This little one explores our natural environment during a Keiki Steps huaka'i. - Photo: Courtesy of INPEACE

PRESCHOOLS ROOTED IN HAWAIIAN CULTURE

Continued from page 19

Hawaiian Culture-Based Education

Caregivers are a child's first and most important teachers so preschool kumu focus their instruction on lessons that help both keiki and caregiver to thrive.

Ka Lama Education Academy is INPEACE's flagship program with a grow-your-own-teacher model developed to loop their early childhood education program in a full-circle approach with kumu who come from the same or similar communities as the keiki and caregivers they serve, and then tailor the curriculum to connect the preschool to the community.

"We know that teachers who are from the community, who are raised in the community can communicate, can relate, can build pilina (relationship) with the students that they are teaching," said Sanoë Marfil, CEO of INPEACE.

Teachers who go through Ka Lama Education Academy graduate with degrees in education through the University of Hawai'i system or other institutions. They choose their own pathway, oftentimes alongside a cohort of other students, and are supported with mentorship and professional training throughout their college career.

When caregivers and keiki can identify with and see themselves in their kumu, they feel safe and are able to trust in them to guide their educational journey. It creates a non-intimidating space to learn, especially for first-time caregivers.

At INPEACE's preschool Keiki Steps program, every day starts with keiki, caregivers and kumu joining together in protocol. They start with kauno'o (learning centers), embedded in Hawaiian culture-based education. For example, a lesson on "transportation" might require keiki to kilo (observe) and think about what different kinds of transportation look like.

In a Western classroom, you would likely hear about buses and airplanes. But at Keiki Steps, they think about what transportation looks like in Hawai'i. That could be a wa'a (canoe), a manu (bird) or even the Kaiāulu wind in Waiānae. It's about shifting perspectives to incorporate a Hawaiian worldview and perpetuate that 'ike and those practices as a people.

'Eleu: Activating and Advocating for Early Childhood Education

Together, INPEACE, KOKA and PIDF make up the 'Eleu consortium, a collective of early childhood education partners that operate both Hawaiian culture-based education and family-child interaction learning programs.

By advocating together, 'Eleu partners deliver high-quality education to communities that often face specific challenges and barriers including lower-incomes, houselessness, lack of transportation and other special needs.

Most FCIL programs in Hawai'i are accredited. For example, the early childhood education programs of both

INPEACE and KOKA are accredited by the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium, and PIDF is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

For more than 15 years, 'Eleu has organized an annual Native Hawaiian Early Childhood Education Consortium Conference. It's an opportunity for each organization to report on successes and advancements in their respective programs, share new information, learn from one another, and build pilina with other early childhood educators – as well as to advocate for community initiatives and government policies that support early childhood learning.

The first five years of a child's life are the most important, with 90% of brain development occurring by the time a child starts kindergarten. These are formative years that are crucial for healthy socio-emotional development and for language learning.

That's why caregivers – as their child's first teacher and the one they spend most of their time with – are encouraged to create the most optimal learning environment possible at their own homes; one that intentionally integrates quality education into daily activities.

At INPEACE, KOKA and PIDF, caregivers are also introduced to curriculum developed to build upon a multi-generational education model deeply rooted in Hawaiian values and practices.

There's a reason why 'ohana like the Fukushimas, a multi-generational household, keep returning to Tūtū and Me: the kumu and friends really make it feel like "family."

"It takes special people to actually want to work with the kids and they really show that they want to be there," said Fukushima. "They're all so sweet and so kindhearted and they're very understanding. My kids love them, we love them." ■



At Tūtū and Me's Ko'olina site, a father and his keiki piece together a plant puzzle. - Photo: Courtesy of PIDF



Kumu La'akea teaches mākuā and their keiki about lo'i kalo during a huaka'i at Keiki o ka 'Āina's culture-based outdoor classroom in Kalihi. - Photo: Courtesy of KOKA



This keiki and her dad work on a math activity together at Tūtū and Me. - Photo: Courtesy of PIDF

Available Family-Child Interaction Learning Programs

INPEACE:

- ▶ Hī'ilei
- ▶ Ho'āla
- ▶ Keiki Steps

Keiki o ka 'Āina:

- ▶ Parent Participation Programs
- ▶ Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters
- ▶ Parent as Teachers
- ▶ Kūlia i ka Nu'u

Partners in Development Foundation:

- ▶ Tūtū and Me Traveling Preschool
- ▶ Nā Pono no nā 'Ohana
- ▶ Ka Pa'alana Homeless Family Education

www.inpeace.org | www.koka.org | www.pidf.org

January: A Time to Remember the People of Kalaupapa



Last year, on January 6, leaders of Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa walked three miles to Kalawao with staff workers of the National Park Service and Department of Health in honor of the first 12 people sent to the peninsula on that date in 1866. - Photo: Valerie Monson

By Valerie Monson

The new year ushers in Kalaupapa Month, a time to remember the people of Kalaupapa, their families and this important history.

In 2021, Ka 'Ohana O Kalaupapa (Ka 'Ohana) proposed to the state legislature that January be designated "Kalaupapa Month" as a permanent way to honor the nearly 8,000 individuals who were taken from their families and sent to Kalaupapa because of government policies regarding leprosy. The legislature unanimously approved the bill that was signed into law by then-Gov. David Ige.

Since then, Ka 'Ohana has urged descendants, friends, schools, churches and the



St. Louis School students of Kumu Kawai Bluhm read "The True Story of Kaluaikoolau As Told By His Wife Piihoni" for Kalaupapa Month last January. - Photo: St. Louis School

general public to observe Kalaupapa Month with reverence and respect.

"Kalaupapa Month is a time to think about our kūpuna, how they were forced to leave their 'ohana, their communities at a time when they needed them most - and how many of them overcame those circumstances," said Charmaine Woodward, Ka 'Ohana president whose great-grandparents were both sent to Kalaupapa and are buried there.

Woodward's kūpuna, David and Alana Ahlo Kamahana, were married on Jan. 1, 1911. They went on to start a business in the settlement that evolved into the Kamahana Store, a general store that sold a variety of merchandise and even offered haircuts. They had nine children, two of whom died in infancy, and seven who were taken from them at birth and raised by relatives or in group homes on O'ahu.

"We often forget how strong and resilient the people of Kalaupapa were and are," said Woodward. "Nainoa (her 13-year-old son) and I are proud to be descendants of Kalaupapa; descendants of these amazing people."

All are encouraged to take time this month to reflect on the hardships - and triumphs - experienced by those separated from their 'ohana and exiled to Kalaupapa. There are many resources, including a website maintained by Ka 'Ohana that includes a recommended reading list. Visit www.kalaupapaohana.org.

Those interested in learning more can also sign up to receive additional information or to register for special webinars during January at: info.kalaupapa@gmail.com. ■

Ua Lele nā Manu i Kahiki



Preston Kaluhiwa



Hiram DeFries-Saronitman

Two young Native Hawaiian pilots lost their lives in a horrific plane crash on December 16 when they apparently lost control of their single-engine Cessna Caravan shortly after taking off on a training flight from Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in Honolulu on route to Lāna'i.

Preston Kaluhiwa, 26, a 2016 Kamehameha Schools Kapālama graduate from Kāne'ohe and Hiram DeFries-Saronitman, 22, a 2020 Punahou Schools graduate from Papakōlea worked for Kamaka Air, an inter-island air cargo service.

The crash is being investigated by both the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to determine the cause of the accident. There has been speculation that the plane experienced engine failure.

Hawai'i State Department of Transportation Director Ed Sniffen said in a statement that the accident was an "absolute tragedy" but noted that it could have been much worse because the pilots appeared to have made adjustments as the plane was going down to minimize impact.

The cessna crashed into an abandoned building near the airport and, incredibly, no one on the ground was injured due to the pilots' courage and quick thinking.

Office of Hawaiian Affairs Chair Kaiālī'i Kahele, himself a pilot, issued a statement saying, "Our 'ohana is heartbroken for their families and loved ones."

Calling the men "extraordinary young Hawaiian leaders," Kahele noted that "commuter planes are lifelines for Hawai'i's small and remote communities," and added that their "commitment to this mission reflects the depth of their character and their aloha for our people."

Kaluhiwa was a seasoned pilot at Kamaka Air. DeFries-Saronitman was set to receive his pilot's wings on Wednesday, December 18. Ke Akua pū. ■



Princess Abigail Campbell Kawānanakoa's Birthday

Jan. 1, 1882

Abigail Wahi'ika'ahu'ula Campbell was born in Honolulu to Abigail Kuaihelani Maipinepine Bright. Her father was James Campbell, one of the wealthiest industrialists in the Kingdom of Hawai'i. She married Prince David La'amea Kahalepouli Kawānanakoa Pi'ikoi, on Jan. 6, 1902 and was bestowed the title Princess Abigail.



Queen Emma's Birthday

Jan. 2, 1836

Emma Kalanikaumaka'amano Kaleleonālani Na'ea Rooke often called Emalani, "royal Emma," was born in Honolulu to High Chiefess Fanny Kekela-okalani Young and High Chief George Na'ea. Emma was hānai 'ia to her maternal aunt, Chiefess Grace Kama'iku'i Young Rooke, and her husband, Dr. Thomas C. B. Rooke. She married Alexander Liholiho, King Kamehameha IV on June 19, 1856, and became queen of the Hawaiian Kingdom.



King Lunalilo's Birthday

Jan. 31, 1835

William Charles Lunalilo was born in the area known as Pohukaina, now part the grounds of the 'Iolani Palace. His mother was High Chiefess Miriam Auhea Kekāuluohi and his father was High Chief Charles Kana'ina. He was proclaimed eligible for the throne by King Kamehameha III. After the death of King Kamehameha V, he became Hawai'i's first elected monarch and ascended the throne in 1873. Due to his popularity, he became known as "The People's King." He died a year later from tuberculosis.

Royal Hawaiian Band Performances

Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31, 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

Waimea Valley Kama'āina FREE Admission

Jan. 4, 11, 18, & 25, Noon - 3:00 p.m. Waimea, O'ahu

Every Thursday, before the Hale'iwa Farmers Market begins in Pikake Pavilion, Hawai'i residents receive FREE admission to Waimea Valley. www.waimeavalley.net

OHA Investiture Ceremony

Jan. 9, 11:00 a.m., Honolulu, Oahu

Watch the live broadcast of the Investiture Ceremony on OHA's YouTube page @OHAHawaii, Facebook @officeofhawaiianaffairs, and 'Ōlelo 53 www.olelo.org.

Pu'uhonua Mākeke

Jan. 11, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Waimānalo, O'ahu

A marketplace to showcase products, services, and businesses from Pu'uhonua across Hawai'i. Pu'uhonua o Waimānalo (Nation of Hawai'i), 41-1300 Waikupana-ha St., in the pavilion. FB/IG @puuhonuamakeke

Kama'āina Sunday

Jan. 12, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Honolulu, O'ahu

Enjoy audio tours of 'Iolani Palace, 'ono food, lively entertainment, and shop local vendors. www.iolanipalace.org

Hawai'i State Legislature Opening Day

Jan. 15, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Honolulu, O'ahu

Opening day of the Hawai'i State Legislature includes activities and performances. Legislators share priorities for the legislative session. Get involved and meet your representatives. Watch live at www.capitol.hawaii.gov.

'Onipa'a Peace March

Jan. 17, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Honolulu, O'ahu

Observing 132 years since the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy on Jan. 17, 1893. March from Mauna'ala to 'Iolani Palace where there will be entertainment, speeches and educational booths. Bring your water flask. www.kalahuihawaii.net/onipaa

Mālama Hulē'ia Volunteer Day

Jan. 18, 8:00 a.m. - Noon, Līhu'e, Kaua'i

Every third Saturday is a community workday at Alakoko fishpond. Sign up to volunteer peleke@malamahuleia.org. www.malamahuleia.org

Waipā Community Workday

Jan. 25, 9:00 a.m. - Noon, Waipā, Kaua'i

On the fourth Saturday each month. Check in before 9:00 a.m. Bring closed-toe shoes, a water bottle, gloves, hat, rain gear, a towel, a change of clothes, snacks and/or lunch. Lunch is provided if you rsvp in advance to emma@waipafoundation.org.

EXHIBITS

Ka 'Ula Wena: Oceanic Red

May 25 - Jan. 12, 2025

Kapālama, O'ahu

This Bishop Museum exhibit explores manifestations of red across Moananuiākea. www.bishopmuseum.org

'Āina Momona: Lands of the Sea

Ongoing, Honolulu, O'ahu

Exhibit at 'Iolani Palace's Bartels Gallery explores Hawaiian diplomacy across Oceania during the reign of King Kalākaua. www.iolanipalace.org ■

Olopuia: Our Endemic, But Inedible, Olive

By Bobby Camara



(Left): Lau olopuia. Note the "limu" on the back of the lau. Native pūpū, now gone from this area, would have cleaned the lau. - Photo: C.F.P. | (Center): Hua olopuia. - Photo: Forest and Kim Starr | (Right): Pua Olopuia. - Photo: JB Friday.

Found on our main islands, olopuia (*Nestegis sandwicensis*) prefers areas that are "kinda dry, kinda wet, and not too low, not too high." Its pointy lau are on the big side, and attractive for their shiny top surfaces.

For some reason, their undersides host colonies of limu, fungus and algae that, in the past, were kept clean by pūpū kuahiwi (endemic tree snails). Lā'au olopuia is hard and durable, and was used for a variety of purposes, from the handles of ko'i (adzes), to 'ō'ō (digging sticks). Our wide variety of endemic trees were used for a numerous household needs by both ali'i and maka'āinana.

An important footnote to this story is that our pae 'āina once hosted hundreds of species of endemic tree snails, ranging from exotically colored and striped or zigzagged shells to drab li'ili'i ones easily overlooked. Tree snails were tiny vacuum cleaners, their radula, rasping mouth parts, scraping off bits of foods from the lau of plants like the olopuia.

The fanciest pūpū, *Achatinella* species,

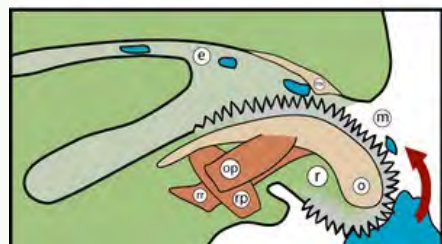
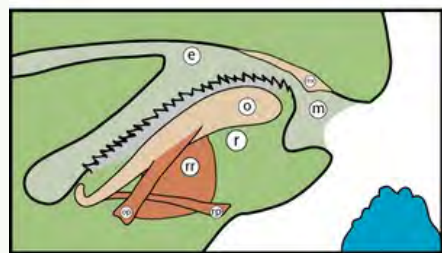


Pūpū li'ili'i. *Lamellidea* sp. from 'Ōhikilolo. Different species were found on Hawai'i; tiny but effective leaf cleaners. - Photo: KMagnacca

dwelt on O'ahu. Valley and ridge, ma uka and ma kai, all had their own households of particular pūpū busily cleaning their favorite lau.

Then came rats and a horrible invasive snail, *Euglandina rosea*, with large appetites for pūpū.

Many, many species of pūpū kuahiwi are nalowalo (lost). Auē. But the Snail Extinction Prevention Program (SEPP) is active, and we mahalo them for their excellently dedicated work. ■



Drawing of Radula (scraping mouth part of snail). - Photo: Wikipedia

Reflecting on 2024, Reinvigorating for 2025



By Kamakanaoakealoha M. Aquino

"He aupuni palapala ko'u; 'o ke kanaka pono 'oia ko'u kanaka" (Mine is the kingdom of education; the righteous man is my man) were words declared by our Mō'i Kau'ikeaouli Kamehameha III, promoting the importance of education and literacy in the Hawaiian Kingdom.

This quote resonates with me, as it speaks to the mission and importance of higher education here in Hawai'i and, in particular, the University of Hawai'i.

Hawai'i's University for Today and Tomorrow (www.hawaii.edu/strategic-plan) is UH's strategic plan for 2023-2029. It is also important to note the university's imperative on kuleana and what it means to be an Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered institution.

This inspired the name of my new monthly column, "He Aupuni Palapala: Native Hawaiian Higher Education," whose purpose is to share and highlight Native Hawaiians, programs, and initiatives throughout the 10 UH campuses that fulfill this kuleana.

There are many newsworthy Native Hawaiian programs and initiatives to share and many Native Hawaiian individuals to highlight.

Hui 'Āina Pilipili, the program I lead at UH Mānoa's College of Social Sciences, is the college's Native Hawaiian Initiative. Its mission is to strengthen ea Hawai'i (Hawaiian sovereignty) in the social sciences through Hawaiian-centered teaching, learning, service, and scholarship while cultivating pilina and kuleana with students, 'āina, and communities to strengthen lāhui and Hawai'i.

The college's signature program is our "Nā Ko'oko'o: Hawaiian Leadership Program." It is for Native Hawaiian students as well as non-Hawaiian students with strong commitments to

Native Hawaiian communities. A key goal is to help participants clarify their kuleana and to see their education in the context of uplifting 'āina and people. Through two courses and immersive community-engaged experiences with Hawaiian community organizations, scholars, and leaders, student participants learn how to meaningfully apply their academic studies beyond the university campus.

Other initiatives include: "Pili i ke Kanaka: Indigenous Social Sciences Speaker Series" (www.youtube.com/@huiainapilipili) that features Indigenous scholars, practitioners, and leaders; curriculum support and development focused on Hawaiian and Indigenous planning; course offerings like "Pilina: Topics in Indigenous Social Sciences" as well as classes in Indigenous research and data, non-profit and public administration, geospatial information science (GIS), and anthropology and archaeology; and our "Keala: Educational Career Pathways" program (funded by the UHM Provost's Strategic Investment Initiative supporting paid-internships with organizations like Lili'uokalani Trust and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands). We also work to support our faculty through professional development in community and 'āina-based engagement, Hawaiian culture and history, and Indigenizing and decolonizing course curriculum development.

We continued to strengthen ea Hawai'i in the social sciences in 2024 and are reinvigorated for what 2025 will bring us as an Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-centered college and university. As we expand our faculty and our programs, we expand and reach out into our communities to provide innovative programs for our students and for our community. ■

Kamakanaoakealoha "Kamakana" M. Aquino is from Waimānalo, O'ahu, and leads Hui 'Āina Pilipili, the Native Hawaiian Initiative in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Early Childhood Program Empowers the Queen's Kamali'i



By Jazmynn Oliveira

Lili'uokalani Trust (Trust) has launched "Ho'okahua," a new program for young families.

Created as a pilot, Ho'okahua supports keiki ages 0-5 and their mākuā who face vulnerabilities — including involvement with systems like child welfare, foster care, or corrections. Such challenges can hinder families from thriving, often perpetuating trauma across generations.

Thriving Hawaiian children was the mission of Queen Lili'uokalani when she established her trust in 1909. Ho'okahua is a modern extension of that mission, empowering families to take charge of their futures.

The name Ho'okahua carries profound cultural significance, meaning "to lay the foundation." This name captures the essence of this area of focus, symbolizing the foundational role that mākuā play in nurturing their keiki.

The Ho'okahua program includes a team of early childhood specialists — all teammates of the Trust — who guide the mākuā in meeting basic needs and securing livable wages through employment and educational opportunities, such as earning a GED or entering higher education.

Additionally, the childhood specialists support the keiki in preparing for preschool and kindergarten by focusing on social and academic benchmarks. A housing navigator from the Trust also helps families find permanent housing. Recently, several families moved from shelters into O'ahu apartments renovated by the Trust.

Parents can also join classes and workshops by LT to address the unique challenges of families. Examples include:

- **Stabilization and Healing:** Mākuā work with the early childhood team to plan their futures, while addressing the childhood, historical, and cultural traumas that may affect their parenting styles.
- **Personal Development and Independence:** Mākuā focus on education and career opportunities, childcare, and housing options while striving toward independence.
- **Transition and Maintenance:** Mākuā evaluate their progress, continue to strengthen their bonds with their children, and set goals for education and workforce development.

Ho'okahua uses a two-generations approach — focusing equally on mākuā and their keiki. This model helps families build the skills and emotional resilience needed to support their families, both financially and emotionally. At the same time, it nurtures the development of strong, healthy relationships between mākuā and their keiki. Secure attachments are foundational for keiki success in school and in life, ensuring long-term wellbeing for both generations.

LT is grateful for its community partners who collaborate with us to support the families of Ho'okahua, especially in employment and education. This collective effort across the pae 'āina reflects our shared mission to support families.

The work done through the Ho'okahua program creates opportunities for young Hawaiian families to reconnect with their culture, strengthen family bonds, and achieve financial stability.

Collectively, we are turning the Queen's dream into reality. ■

Jazmynn Oliveira is the program director, Early Childhood, for Lili'uokalani Trust. She is a graduate of Hawai'i Pacific University and Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue and has been with the Trust since 2019.

DHHL Breaks Ground on Hale Mō'ili'ili



By Diamond Badajos

In a landmark occasion, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) broke ground on its first high-rise rental apartment Friday, Dec. 13, 2024. The event marks the start of a two-year development process to build the state's only affordable housing project exclusively serving DHHL beneficiaries.

"Innovative projects like Hale Mō'ili'ili ensure our Native Hawaiian families have a place to call home," said Gov. Josh Green, M.D. "This opportunity has the potential to empower beneficiaries and create meaningful change. My administration will continue to encourage our leadership to seek bold strategies in the creation of affordable housing options and a project like this deserves our community's support."



Dignitaries representing federal, state, county and private partners participated in the groundbreaking for Hale Mō'ili'ili, DHHL's first high-rise rental project in urban Honolulu. Kahu Kordell Kekoa officiated. - *Courtesy Photo*

Hale Mō'ili'ili includes a 23-story high-rise tower with 271 units comprising 23 studios, 23 one-bedroom units, 203 two-bedroom units and 22 three-bedroom units. The project includes a two-story townhouse with seven three-bedroom units overlooking Old Stadium Park and a 290-stall parking structure.

DHHL beneficiaries opting to rent a unit will retain their position on the waitlist while they await a lease award. Tenant income thresholds will range from 30-100% of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's annual median income (AMI) requirements with rents ranging from \$657 to \$3,460.

"We're delivering on our promise to provide affordable rental housing to beneficiaries on our waitlist," Kali Watson, DHHL director said. "This housing model will serve as a pilot for future developments."

Individuals on the waitlist will be notified of the chance to apply for housing approximately six months before the project's completion. The O'ahu residential waitlist currently stands at more than 11,400, representing the largest need for beneficiary housing of any county in the state.

The project will cost \$155 million to develop.

The Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) Board of Directors assisted the development through the approval of \$41.5 million in low-interest loans (through the Rental Housing Revolving Fund), approximately \$4.7 million in annual federal and state low-income tax credits (through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit or LIHTC program) and \$80 million in tax-exempt private activity bonds.

The Stadium Bowl-O-Drome bowling alley opened its doors in 1955, closed in 2004, and has sat idle since. Originally acquired from the Department of Land and Natural Resources in 1995, the nearly 2-acre parcel borders Old Stadium Park, an area that has raised growing concerns for neighboring residents.

"We strive to build more than just homes, it's our goal to cultivate communities," said Stanford Carr, project developer. "Hale Mō'ili'ili will

empower its residents to take pride in their neighborhood, forge connections, and serve as a catalyst for positive change."

In addition to providing housing, Hale Mō'ili'ili will offer social services like financial literacy courses and keiki programs, and spaces for small businesses to serve the community. All enhancements to the site are designed to rejuvenate the area while honoring the historical significance of the Stadium Bowl-O-Drome. ■

Diamond Badajos is the information and community relations officer for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands

Kuini 'Emalani: Kona Mau Hale



Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

Ua hānau 'ia 'o Kuini 'Emalani ma ka lā 2 o Ianuali ma ka Makahiki 1836 ma Honolulu. 'O Nā'ea a 'o Fanny Kekelaokalani Young kona mau lau'ī mākuā akā ua hānai 'ia e ko Fanny kaikaina 'o Grace Kama'iku'i Young, ka wahine a Kauka Kamuela Rooke. Ua aloha nui 'ia 'o Emma a kapa 'ia 'o ia, 'o ia ka "wahine holo lio," ke "ali'i pī'i kuahiwi," a 'o Kaleleonānani ma muli o ka hala 'ana o kāna keiki 'o Ka Haku o Hawai'i a me kāna kāne ka Mō'īkāne 'o Liholiho 'Iolani, Kamehameha IV.

Ua hānai 'ia 'o 'Emalani ma Ruka Hale. Aia ka hale ma ke kihi o Beretania me ke alanui Nu'uānu ma ka 'ao'ao Waikīkī-ma kai – ma kahi o Mark's Garage i kēia manawa. Noho ka 'ohana ma ka papahēle 'elua a aia nā lumi ke'ena no ke kauka me nā po'e ma'i i kipa iā ia ma ka papahēle mua. 'O kona lau'ī makuahine 'o Fanny, ua noho 'o ia ma Polihale Hale ma ke kula o Kaukeano, kokoke i ke alanui Alakea. Ma hope o ka hala 'ana o kāna keiki me kāna kāne, ua ho'i 'o 'Emalani e noho ma Ruka Hale. Ma laila 'o ia i ha'alele ai ma ka honua nei a hui pū me ke keiki a me ke kāne ma lani. Ua hala 'o 'Emalani ma kekahi Pō'ano, ma ka hola 'ekahi 'auinalā ma ka lā 25 o 'Apelila, 1885.

Inā luhī ke kuini i ka wela o Honolulu me ka pūehuehu o ka lepo mai nā alanui ma Ruka Hale, ua hiki iā ia ke hele i kona hale ma Hālawā Kai, O'ahu, ma kahi o ka 'āina koa 'o Hickam. 'Olu'olu ka makani Moa'e ma laila a kokoke nō i ke awa 'o Pu'uloa me ka loko i'a 'o Lelepaua ma ke ahupua'a o Moanalua. Ua puni ke kuini i ke kanu mea kanu, a ma laila 'o ia i kanu ai i nā pua a me nā kumu lā'au like 'ole e like me ka 'alani, ka pea, a me ka manakō. I nā manawa a 'Emalani i kipa ai iā Kaua'i. 'o ke kanu mea kanu kāna hana punahele.

'O ka home kaulana nō na'e o 'Emalani, 'o ia 'o Hānaiakamalama, ka home i makana 'ia iā 'Emalani e kona makuakāne 'ohana 'o Keoni Ana. Ma muli o ka 'olu'olu

o Nu'uānu ma nā kau wela, he hale i kipa a noho 'ia e ke kuini ma kona noho 'ana i mō'ī wahine o Hawai'i mai 1855-1863.

He ali'i i aloha nui 'ia 'o 'Emalani ma muli o kona aloha menemene nui kona lāhui i hā'ule i ka ma'i e like me ka ahulau ma'i pu'upu'u li'ilī'i o 1853. Ma muli o ia ma'i, ua koi 'ia ka 'Aha'ōlelo e kukulu i haukapila e ka Lani 'Iolani me Kuini 'Emalani a ua hō'ulu'ulu kālā lāua ma kahi o \$13,000 kālā, Na lāua i hā'awi \$2,000 pākahi (\$82,000 pākahi i kēia manawa). No laila ua kuku-lu 'ia ka Haukapila 'o ka Mō'ī Wahine ma Manamana, kekahi 'āina a Kapa'akea. 'O "Queen's" ka inoa o ka haukapila a hiki i kēia lā.

'A'ole i kana mai ke aloha o 'Emalani no kona lāhui. Ma kona wā kānemake, ua ho'ouna 'ia 'o ia e kona kaiko'eke 'o Kalani



Ruka Hale, kahi a Kuini 'Emalani i hānai 'ia ai a i ku'u ka luhi ai.
- Courtesy Photo

Kapuāiwa i 'Eulopa me 'Amelika i mea e ho'onā ai ke kaumaha lu'ulu'u o ke kuini. Iā ia ma Lākana, Beretania Nui, ua hō'ulu'ulu i kālā a ua kū'ai i palapala kūkulu no ka ho'omaka 'ana i hale pule 'Anekalikana ma Hawai'i, kapa 'ia ka Luakini o Hawai'i.

'O nā hale a 'Emalani i noho ai, 'o Hānaiakamalama wale nō i koe ma O'ahu. Aia kekahi hale ma Lāwa'i, Kaua'i e kū nei. Akā 'o ka haukapila a me ka hale pule 'Anekalikana ('Epikopalīa i kēia manawa), he mau hale a Kuini 'Emalani i kūkulu ai no ka lāhui a ke mau nei nō. ■

Kalani Akana, Ph.D., is a kumu of hula, oli and 'ōlelo Hawai'i. He has authored numerous articles on Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.

To read the English translation go to kawaio-la.news

Happy 100th Anniversary Keaukaha!



By KipuKai Kualii

Congratulations to Keaukaha homesteaders who recently celebrated their 100th anniversary as a homestead!

What follows is the Keaukaha Community Association's Nov. 29, 2024, update.

Keaukaha Community Association Election Results – 11/20/24

On Nov. 20, 2024, our kaiāulu (community) came together to vote in a pivotal election for our community association. This election was for four important positions, each with a three-year term: president, secretary, and two community board members.

The results are in, and we are excited to announce the newly elected individuals who will lead and guide our community over the next three years: President Kaaka Swain; Secretary Mona Ubedei; Community Board Members Kihei Ahuna and Teresa Agpoon. These individuals were selected through a democratic voting process by our residents, ensuring that our community continues to have strong, trusted leadership. We congratulate each of them on their successful election and look forward to the work they will do for the betterment of our kaiāulu in the coming years.

A Look Ahead: 2025 Election

In 2025, we will have another opportunity to shape the future of our community association. The following positions will be up for election: vice president (currently held by Mapu Waipa); treasurer (currently held by LaRae Mortensen); and one community board member (currently held by Kalani Kahalioumi). The election will be held in November, and we encourage all eligible residents to participate. Your voice is vital in keeping our association strong and vibrant, and every vote makes a difference in the direction we take as a kaiāulu.

A Heartfelt Mahalo

As we usher in new leadership, we would like to take a moment to mahalo the outgoing board members who have dedicated their time and effort over the past years, and for some, lifelong. Their contributions have made a lasting impact on our community, and we are grateful for their service. As they step down, we recognize their hard work, commitment, and dedication. Mahalo to outgoing President Patrick Kahawaiola'a, and outgoing community board members Peter Akoni and Hans Mortensen. Your contributions have helped strengthen the foundation of our community, and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors. We hope that you will continue to stay involved in our community and share your 'ike (wisdom) with us.

A Final Word

Ho'omaika'i kākou i ka pōmaika'i o kēia election! 'O ka hālāwai me nā kānaka o kō kākou kaiāulu i mea nui e ho'omai ai i nā hana maika'i a e ho'opili pū iā kākou i ka wā e hiki mai ana. Mahalo i nā po'e a pau i komo i kēia wā o ka ho'ōla 'ana o ka hui. (Congratulations to all! The gathering of our community members is important to continue our positive efforts and unite us for the future. Thank you to everyone who participated in the growth of our association.)

We look forward to working together with the newly elected leaders to continue making our community a place we can all be proud of. Thank you again to all who voted, and remember, your participation is key to the success of our future elections! Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to build a better community for all! Aloha! ■

Founded in 1987, the Sovereign Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations (SCHHA) is the oldest and largest governing homestead association registered with the Department of Interior, exercising sovereignty on the trust lands established under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920. For information contact policy@hawaiianhomesteads.org.

Is Semaglutide the Right Solution for Native Hawaiians?



By Jodi Leslie Matsuo,
DrPH

As the New Year begins, many set health goals, including weight loss. One treatment gaining significant attention is semaglutide, a medication originally developed for type 2 diabetes. It is now the most widely prescribed treatment for weight loss and is sold under brand names like Ozempic, Wegovy, and Rybelsus.

Semaglutide mimics a natural hormone in the body called GLP-1, largely produced in the intestines. It aids in weight loss through a triple effect: it lowers blood sugar levels; reduces hunger by acting on the brain's appetite centers; and slows digestion, prolonging feelings of fullness and reducing overeating. These combined effects make it effective for both managing diabetes and promoting weight loss, thus it has gained attention beyond its original purpose.

One study showed people on semaglutide lost 7-8% of their body weight in the first 6.5 months, with weight loss plateauing at around 10-11% after 16 months. It also can lower hemoglobin A1C in people with diabetes and reduces cardiovascular risks.

However, semaglutide comes with challenges. Common side effects include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, fatigue, headache, bloating, and stomach pain. These symptoms may be temporary or persist throughout treatment.

Muscle loss has been reported, with one study estimating that approximately 38% of the total weight lost may come from muscle mass. Weight re-gain often occurs after discontinuing the medication, particularly among those who do not maintain lifestyle changes in diet and exercise. Additionally, the cost – exceeding \$1,000 a month without insurance – places it out of reach for many.

Semaglutide offers significant benefits, but it is not a universal solu-

tion, especially for Native Hawaiians who face unique health challenges influenced by social determinants of health. Issues such as potential side effects, high costs, and reliance on medication instead of sustainable lifestyle changes, highlight the need for a culturally rooted approach to weight loss.

While semaglutide can be a helpful tool for managing obesity, it should never replace healthy habits. Before turning to semaglutide, consider natural alternatives that stimulate the body's own GLP-1 production. Berberine, a compound found in herbs like goldenseal, Oregon grape, and barberry, has shown potential for activating GLP-1 pathways. You can also enhance GLP-1 activity through dietary choices.

Teas made with ginger, 'ōlena (turmeric), and cinnamon may promote GLP-1 secretion, as well as bitter melon, which can be added to soups or stir-fries. Fermented foods like sour poi, kimchi, natto, and yogurt help support a healthy gut microbiome, essential for healthy GLP-1 function.

Additionally, tailor your weight loss journey to reflect your values and lifestyle. Focus on incorporating traditional Hawaiian and other cultural foods, like fresh fish, fruits, and vegetables. Engage in enjoyable physical activities such as hula, surfing, walking, or even a high-intensity interval (HIIT) workout.

Prioritize spiritual and emotional wellbeing through prayer, ho'oponopono, and spending time in nature. Make it a collective effort by involving your 'ohana to strengthen support and accountability.

Ultimately, the best approach to weight loss is one that aligns with your needs, values, and culture, blending tradition, sustainability, and modern knowledge for lasting health. ■

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

Navigating Papahānaumokuākea as Cultural Liaisons

By Pīkake Kuniyoshi and
Kalau'ihilani Robins

As cultural liaisons aboard the *Okeanos Explorer* through a partnership between NOAA Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM) and the Papahānaumokuākea Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group, we were honored to bridge traditional Hawaiian knowledge and scientific exploration within Papahānaumokuākea. Our role offered a unique platform to merge 'Ōiwi perspectives with marine research, reminding us that these realms can harmonize to steward our ocean heritage.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this journey was creating culturally grounded educational materials for crew members. These materials showcased 'ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledge), emphasizing place-based knowledge through 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Together, we explored themes such as island names, hana hei (string figures used for storytelling and mapping), kilo hōkū (stargazing), ulana lau hala (weaving), lei-making, and even taught two mele/oli (*Mai Lalo A'e Ka Moana O'o* and *Puka Mai Ka Lā i Kumukahi*) to those aboard.

We aimed to provide everyone aboard a lens through which to view our ocean as more than a resource – it is an ancestor, a kumu, and a living archive of our heritage.

Our daily life aboard the *Okeanos* was dynamic and rich with cultural exchange. We engaged with crew members, learning about their roles in ocean exploration while sharing Hawaiian 'ike on the same topics. From translating job titles into 'ōlelo Hawai'i, to making a collaborative kīhei (ceremonial shawl), celebrating Makahiki, and constructing a new 'ōlelo no'ēau, our kuleana underscored the importance of fostering mutual respect and reciprocal knowledge exchange between Indigenous and scientific communities.

One particularly moving experience was witnessing bioluminescent phytoplankton at night. Watching the ocean glow under the starlit sky was a visceral reminder of the



interconnectedness between kānaka and kai. Those of us present had unique interpretations of this phenomenon. This experience of witnessing the shimmering phytoplankton was ethereal, and inspired a new 'ōlelo no'ēau capturing the awe and reverence these moments evoked – a feeling that still resonates deeply within us. These experiences reaffirmed that cultural practices remain invaluable in interpreting the natural world.

Now that we have returned home, our role as cultural liaisons serves as a reminder of our responsibility to protect Papahānaumokuākea and our kuleana to perpetuate 'ike kūpuna. We were fortunate to have taken Hawaiian studies 365 (Pana Paemoku o Kanaloa) from Carlos Andrade and Kekuewa Kikiloi, respectively. A major takeaway from the class is that it was a common practice for alii to voyage up to Papahānaumokuākea as a rite of passage.

We couldn't help but feel as if this was a rite of passage for ourselves as well. We are both so humbled and honored to have been a part of the weaving and passing down of multigenerational 'ike and look forward to seeing our haumāna huaka'i (journey) up to Papahānaumokuākea one day, too.

Through partnerships, both old and new, we can ensure the preservation of our cultural and ecological treasures for future generations.

I ulu no ka lālā I ke kumu. ■

Pīkake Kuniyoshi is a project manager for the UH Sea Grant College Program, board member for Ka Lau o Ka Lāhui, and kama'āina to Waip'ō, O'ahu. She has a deep passion for mālama 'āina and her work is grounded in interdisciplinary biocultural approaches encompassing marine biology, botany, education, and graphic design. Kalau'ihilani Robins is a kumu at Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, specializing in 'ōlelo a mo'omeheu Hawai'i. Guided by a deep commitment to perpetuating 'ike kūpuna, she develops curriculum rooted in Hawaiian culture, creating opportunities for students to connect with their heritage in contemporary ways to strengthen their Hawaiian identity.

Mark Your Calendars for Ho'okipa Hawai'i Weekend



By Mālia Sanders

Aloha a me Hau'oli Makahiki Hou! On behalf of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA), we are humbled and

excited to announce a free upcoming community event: Ho'okipa Hawai'i Weekend, a two-day cultural festival happening on Feb. 15 and 16, 2025, at Helumoa, Royal Hawaiian Center in historic Waikīkī.

This family-friendly event is curated by NaHHA and celebrates Hawaiian culture and traditional knowledge through the medium of cultural practitioners, interactive exhibits, demonstrations, and vendors, and is designed to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of Native Hawaiian culture among both residents and visitors.

Ho'okipa Hawai'i Weekend specifically highlights Native Hawaiians and their contributions in small business, cultural education, preservation, and traditional practices. Together, we celebrate the connections to our culture, land, and community, embracing the essence of ho'okipa – the reciprocal value of hospitality, our care and passion for culture, and the honor we have for one another in connection with our shared values.

Daily programming highlights include interactive exhibits and hands on demonstrations, a vendor marketplace, all-day stage programming and cultural entertainment, storytelling, food, art and fashion. The event will include sharing of traditional practices including mele, hula, ulana (weaving), kapa-making, kōnane (the strategy game), nā mea kaua (weaponry), nā mea makua (fishing), hōlua (sledding), loko i'a (fishponds), lei-making, nā wai ho'olu'u (natural dye-making), kilo hōkū (celestial observation), hulu (featherwork), lei pūpū (shell lei-making), 'ōlelo Hawai'i, 'ohe kapala (stamping), mea kanu Hawai'i (native plants), pahu (drum), and more!

We anticipate 10,000+ attendees visiting 100+ participating Native Hawaiian vendors, cultural practitioners, and non-

profit organizations. This gathering aims to deepen our community's connection to Hawai'i through workshops, cultural experiences, and learning opportunities, inspiring meaningful interactions that uplift Native Hawaiian voices and promote responsible, authentic tourism.

Hawai'i stands at a pivotal moment to reimagine the visitor industry as a force for cultural and environmental preservation. Join NaHHA in this shared vision, on February 15–16 at the Royal Hawaiian Center.

Me ke aloha pumehana on behalf of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association.



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 Follow NaHHA on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @nahha808 and @kuhukuhi808.

The Struggle for Recognition



By Pa'ahana Bissen

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs is organized into five councils: Moku o Keawe (Hawai'i Council), Nā Hono a'o Pi'ilani (Maui Council), Ke One o Kākuhihewa (O'ahu Council), Moku o Manokalanipō (Kaua'i Council), and Nā Lei Makalapua (Mainland Council).

At the 65th Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AHCC) Annual Convention at the 'Alohilani Resort in Waikīkī this past November, it went mildly unnoticed that Mainland Council of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (MCAHCC) had received its charter some 35 years prior at the same location – at the time it was known as the Pacific Beach Hotel.

The chartering of MCAHCC on Nov. 15, 1989, claimed a historical moment as the AHCC became the first Native Hawaiian community-based organization to authorize jurisdiction over Hawaiian civic club (HCC) membership clubs to an organization outside of the State of Hawai'i. The MCAHCC incorporated in the State of California and planted its Hawaiian Flag on the continental U.S.

The journey to the prized charter was arduous and often disheartening for the founders of the MCAHCC.

On May 14, 1983, members from 'Aha-hui Kalākaua HCC 1975 (CA-San Francisco), 'Aha-hui o Lili'uokalani HCC 1977 (CA-Los Angeles), and 'Āinahau o Kaleponi HCC 1982 (CA-Orange County) met in Buena Park, Calif. Steering the meeting, Victor L. Jarrett, Sr. of 'Āinahau o Kaleponi HCC presented the case to establish a district council:

"If a Hawaiian Civic Club was organized primarily to remain in its own local level of operation, not planning to be a part of the convention of the association in the State of Hawai'i, then there is no advantage whatsoever to establish a district council for California or even being chartered by the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs in the State of Hawai'i."

Civic clubs formed on the "mainland" were under the jurisdiction of the Board

of AHCC separated from civic clubs belonging to district councils of Hawai'i, Maui, O'ahu and Kaua'i. Mainland clubs sat idle at association board directors meetings with no recognition or the elective priority rights given to district councils.

The 1983 May reception was lukewarm. Representation would incur substantial costs for component club travel at the required convention and quarterly meetings. From the perspective of the AHCC delegations, the mainland would have too large of a presence and overpower the other district councils.

Undaunted, Uncle Victor moved forward with avid support from 'Āinahau o Kaleponi HCC. Through six years of correspondence with AHCC presidents Benson Lee and Jalna Keala, the chartering of the mainland district council came with five component clubs: 'Āinahau o Kaleponi HCC, 'Aha-hui o Lili'uokalani HCC, Hui Hawai'i o Utah, Nā Po'e o Hawai'i Colorado, and Las Vegas HCC.

Present at the chartering were Andy and Brucie Berard, Victor and Jane Pang, Ellen Selu, Kalima Yadanza, Dewey Clark, John Jensen, Diane Simms, Kathy Frink and the tenacious corresponding secretary Jackie Judd. Aha-hui Kalākaua HCC resisted being part of the mainland district council and withdrew before the chartering.

In 1990, at the 31st Convention of AHCC, first elected MCAHCC Pele-kikena (President) Victor Kaiwi Pang delivered his council report "Pūpūkahi i Holomua (Unite to Progress)" to a delegation of 600.

Today, MCAHCC includes 16 clubs in 11 States: California, Utah, Nevada, Alaska, Colorado, Virginia/D.C., Illinois, Washington, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Missouri. ■

Pa'ahana Bissen served as the third Pele-kikena (president) of the Mainland Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs from 1995-1998 and the first female elected. She also served as the second vice president of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs from 2000-2004 – the first non-Hawai'i resident elected to the AHCC. She currently serves as a board member of the Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club.

He Ho'oku'u Hou i ka 'Alalā ma Maui

By Lisa Kaponon Mason



'Alalā are in the wild again. One of five newly released birds on Maui. Colored bands help researchers identify each bird. - Photo: Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project

On Nov. 11, 2024, five juvenile 'alalā (native crows) were released from the Hawaiian Endangered Bird Conservation Program into the forests of Southeastern Maui.

Since the 1990s, birds from the 'alalā breeding program were released exclusively on Hawai'i Island, where they were historically found. However, this marked the first-ever release of 'alalā to the forests of Maui, where threats like 'io (native hawks) do not exist. The group consists of two females and three males, selected from seven potential candidates, and all hatched in the summer of 2023.

As juveniles, the birds learned to forage for native fruits like 'ōlapa, 'ōhelo, and pūkiawe. Each bird underwent pre-release training to help them respond defensively to potential predators, such as cats and barn owls. This involved pairing these threats with intense 'alalā alarm

calls. Understanding their social hierarchy was also important to reinforce healthy bonds once in the wild.

Students from five different Maui schools gifted unique names to each of the five 'alalā, reflecting aspects of each bird's personality and Maui's remarkable natural environment. The release cohort was moved to a temporary forest aviary several weeks before the official release. The doors were opened and they flew free! Tiny backpack trackers will help researchers, and us, follow the 'alalā on their Maui journey. ■

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.



Hawaii-California Training and Testing Draft EIS/OEIS Available for Public Review and Comment

The Department of the Navy (including both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps), as the lead agency, jointly with the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army, and U.S. Air Force, has prepared the Hawaii-California Training and Testing (HCTT) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Overseas EIS (OEIS). The Draft EIS/OEIS includes an analysis of the potential environmental effects associated with conducting at-sea training and testing activities, and modernization and sustainment of ranges within the HCTT Study Area. The purpose of the Proposed Action is to conduct military readiness activities in the HCTT Study Area to ensure the U.S. military services are able to organize, train, and equip service members and personnel, needed to meet their respective national defense missions.

In-Person Public Meetings*

The Navy is holding three in-person public meetings during the public review and comment period from Dec. 13, 2024, to Feb. 11, 2025. The public meetings will include informational poster stations staffed by Navy representatives who can answer questions about the Proposed Action and environmental analysis. At approximately 5 p.m., the Navy will give a brief presentation followed by a public oral comment session. Comments will also be accepted in writing at the in-person public meetings.

San Diego, California Monday, Jan. 13, 2025

4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/Comment Session
Portuguese Hall
2818 Avenida de Portugal

** all times are local*

Honolulu, Hawaii (Oahu) Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2025

4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/Comment Session
Ke'ehi Lagoon Memorial
Weinberg Hall
2685 N. Nimitz Hwy.

Lihue, Hawaii (Kauai) Thursday, Jan. 16, 2025

4 to 7 p.m. Open House
5 p.m. Presentation/Comment Session
Kauai Veterans Center
3215 Kauai Veterans Memorial Hwy.

Virtual Public Meeting

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2025

3 to 4 p.m. HST/5 to 6 p.m. PST/8 to 9 p.m. EST

The Navy is also holding a virtual public meeting (VPM), consisting of a presentation and question-and-answer session. Questions concerning the Draft EIS/OEIS will be accepted in advance through **Jan. 15, 2025**, via the question form on the project website. Questions may also be submitted in writing during the VPM. Questions submitted as part of the question-and-answer session are not official public comments. Visit www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/ for more information.

Draft EIS/OEIS Public Review and Comment

The public is invited to review the Draft EIS/OEIS and provide substantive comments on the Proposed Action and the environmental analysis, as well as the project's potential to affect historic properties as it relates to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Comments may be submitted at the public meetings, online at www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/, or by mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific
Attention: HCTT EIS/OEIS Project Manager
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134

The Draft EIS/OEIS public review and comment period also supports consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA and its implementing regulations, as members of the public are invited to participate, provide comments, or raise concerns about potential effects on historic properties.

The Draft EIS/OEIS is available online for download or in print at the public libraries listed on the project website at www.nepa.navy.mil/hctteis/.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by 11:59 p.m. HST on Feb. 11, 2025, for consideration in the Final EIS/OEIS.

Pu'uhonua Society Grants for Visual Artists

Community arts and culture nonprofit Pu'uhonua Society announced they are accepting applications for Ho'ākea Source (a partner in the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts' Regional Regranting Program since 2023).

Ho'ākea Source funding helps support artists living and working in Hawai'i. In its first grant cycle (2023-2024), Ho'ākea Source awarded \$60,000. Artists receiving grants had a year to bring to life projects centered around 'āina (that which feeds), pilina (relationality), and huli (change). These projects took many forms, celebrating the diverse practices of Hawai'i's artists.

In the upcoming 2024-2025 grant cycle, over \$90,000 will be disbursed with awards ranging from \$2,000 to \$10,000, thanks to additional financial support from the Laila Twigg-Smith Art Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation.

In its inaugural two-year grant period, visual artists, collaboratives, and collectives living and working across the island of O'ahu will be prioritized.

Pu'uhonua Society exists to create opportunities for Native Hawaiian and Hawai'i-based artists and cultural practitioners to express themselves and engage with and impact audiences. At the intersection of contemporary art, traditional cultural practices, environmental stewardship, and transformational education, these artists and makers serve as translators, mediators, and amplifiers of social justice issues in the community.

Grant applications must be submitted by January 31. For more information or to apply, go to: www.hoakeasource.org

DHHL Awards 68 Ag Lots on Hawai'i Island

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) awarded 68 agricultural lots on Hawai'i Island on Nov. 23, 2024, marking

OHA Trustees Sworn into Office



In a small ceremony at its Honolulu offices at Nā Lama Kukui, newly elected and re-elected Office of Hawaiian Affairs trustees were sworn into office on December 4. Presiding over the swearing in was the Honorable Todd Eddins, an associate justice on the Hawai'i State Supreme Court, who administered the oath of office. Immediately following the ceremony, the four newly installed trustees met with their colleagues to select a chair and vice chair for the board of trustees. Trustee Kaiali'i Kahele (Hawai'i Island) was elected chair by his peers, and Trustee Keoni Souza (At-Large) was elected vice chair. Pictured (l-r) are Trustee Dan Ahuna (Kaua'i/Ni'ihau), Trustee Keli'i Akina (At-Large), Hon. Todd Eddins, Trustee Luana Alapa (Moloka'i/Lāna'i) and Trustee Kaiali'i Kahele (Hawai'i Island). A formal investiture is scheduled for January 9 at Central Union Church. - Photo: Joshua Koh

the largest agricultural lot offering by the department since the late-1980s.

Located in Hilo, the Honomū and Maku'u homestead lots range in size from one to five acres. In Honomū, 16 1-acre subsistence agricultural lots were offered. In Maku'u, 32 2-acre subsistence agricultural lots and 20 5-acre agricultural lots were offered.

"These lots are more than pieces of land, they're oppor-

tunities for our beneficiaries to reconnect with the 'āina," said DHHL Director Kali Watson.

With both lot types, beneficiaries have the option of constructing a single-family home or supplemental dwelling unit.

Subsistence ag lots are less than three acres in size and near existing infrastructure, a model that allows beneficiaries to grow food on their lots for home consumption or small-scale economic agricultural activity.

Beneficiaries who opt to grow produce and other crops commercially must create a farm plan, like a business plan, as part of their lease, and lessees must cultivate at least two-thirds of the land.

An additional 40 subsistence agricultural lots are slated for development in Honomū within the next two years. More than 1,600 lots are planned for various homesteads across Hawai'i Island including La'iōpua, Kaumana, Honoka'a, Pālanuanui and Pana'ewa.

Funding for Conservation Projects

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in the Pacific Islands Area is accepting a second round of applications through Jan. 31, 2025, for agricultural producers seeking funding for conservation projects in 2025.

NRCS, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, offers technical and financial as-

sistance through conservation programs.

While NRCS accepts applications year-round, applications submitted after the program ranking will automatically be considered during future funding cycles.

Funding is available from both the Biden administration's Farm Bill and Inflation Reduction Act, to provide additional resources to help producers expand conservation efforts that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase storage of carbon in their soil and trees. In many cases, applications for eligible practices meeting or exceeding state-determined minimum ranking thresholds will automatically be considered for priority funding.

Applications and more information are available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/get-started-with-nrcs.

Vares-Lum the New Director of DKI APCSS



Maj. Gen. Suzanne Puanani Vares-Lum - Courtesy Photo

Maj. Gen. Suzanne Puanani Vares-Lum was named the new director of the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (DKI APCSS) under the Department of Defense (DoD).

Vares-Lum, a retired Major General with the U.S. Army with 34 years of service, was president of the East-West Center on the UH Mānoa campus, a position she held since January 2022. Vares-Lum was the first Native Hawaiian woman promoted to the rank of Major General; she was also the first Native Hawaiian woman to lead the East-West Center.

Following her retirement from the Army and prior to join-



(L-R): Rep. Darius Kila, Sen. Kurt Fevella, O'ahu HHC Commissioner Sanoë Marfil, DHHL beneficiary Gabriel Kealoha, DHHL Director Kali Watson, and East Hawai'i HHC Commissioner Michael Kaleikini celebrate at Keaukaha Elementary School after the 68 lots were awarded. - Photo: DHHL

NEWS BRIEFS

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ing the East-West Center, Vares-Lum served as a consultant on Indo-Pacific issues. She has been an outspoken advocate for education and building bridges across the Indo-Pacific and has led collaborative initiatives in the region.

Vares-Lum has a BA degree in journalism and a master's degree in teaching from UH Mānoa. She also has a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College, was a National Security Fellow at Syracuse University, a National Academy of Public Administration Fellow, and a graduate of the DKI APCSS.

DKI APCSS is the DoD's premier institution dedicated to scholars and practitioners focused on the Indo-Pacific region.

HT25 Art Exhibit to Open in February

Hawai'i Contemporary, presenter of Hawai'i Triennial (Hawai'i's largest thematic exhibition of contemporary art), announced more than a dozen sites of exhibition and programming for ALOHA NŌ, Hawai'i Triennial 2025 (HT25).

Bringing together the works of 49 artists and art collectives, HT25 will be on view Feb. 15 to May 4, at art spaces and public places across O'ahu, Hawai'i Island and Maui.

Additional synergies are found in HT25's intersection with Nā Wahi Pana, a temporary public art project in Honolulu developed by the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts (MOCA). Nā Wahi Pana (storied places) expounds upon traditional mo'olelo, re-framing our collective understandings of frequented sites on O'ahu.

Hawai'i Contemporary and MOCA are collaborating on three HT25 x Wahi Pana projects to further explore the importance of meaningful relationality to place and its histories.

Co-curated by Wassan

Al-Khudhairi, Binna Choi, and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu, HT25 considers local-global dialogues through a Hawai'i- and Pacific-focused lens. ALOHA NŌ challenges commonly held notions of aloha, reclaims it as an active cultural practice, and situates it as a transformative power that is collectively enacted through contemporary art.

HT25 will also offer free public programs and audience-engagement events, including participatory art projects, workshops, artist talks, film screenings, panel discussions, tours, and more. For more information visit: www.hawaiiicontemporary.org.

McNamara Wins the Eddie

The 2024-2025 Rip Curl Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational was held on December 22 – only the eleventh time that the “Eddie” has been held since it was established in 1984.

This year, both the first and second place winners of the Eddie are Native Hawaiians from legendary big wave surfing families. Taking first place with a total of 135.8 points was Landon McNamara, while runner up Mason Ho took second with 120.9 points.

Ho had a solid performance, in Ho family style, charging waves throughout the day. He was theatrical, having fun switching his foot stance and later, riding a wave so close to shore he was launched into the air from the



Surfer Landon McNamara holds The Eddie Big Wave Invitational perpetual trophy dubbed “The Claw” after his first-place victory. - Photo: Rip Curl The Eddie Big Wave Invitational

OHA COO Pu'u Named to BWS Board

Kēhaulani Pu'u, OHA Ka Pou Nui/Chief Operating Officer, was recently appointed to serve on the City & County of Honolulu's Board of Water Supply (BWS). She was sworn in at a City Council meeting on Dec. 11, 2024. The board includes seven members, each with staggered 5-year terms. Five members are appointed by the mayor and approved by the City Council. The remaining two board members serve by virtue of their office. In addition to Pu'u, current board members include Board Chair Na'alehu Anthony, Vice Chair Jonathan Kaneshiro, Bryan Andaya and Lance Wilhelm. Ex-officio board members are Gene Albano (City Department of Facility Maintenance Chief Engineer) and Ed Sniffen (State Department of Transportation Director). Pu'u is the only female on the board. Pictured here are BWS Manager & Chief Engineer Ernie Lau, Pu'u and City & County Managing Director Michael Formby. - *Courtesy Photo*

huge backwash off the beach.

McNamara paddled into what initially looked like a close-out wave in the second round. It turned out to be the perfect ride of the day. He made a beautiful drop and stayed solid on his board as the wave broke and pushed him out in front of the monster whitewash, earning him a perfect score of 50/50 and the contest's “Wave of the Day” prize.

McNamara won \$50,000 and 350,000 Hawaiian Airline miles.

“This is a childhood dream, something I've been working at since being a little kid on the beach here,” said McNamara his voice heavy with emotion.

“They say Eddie picks the winner and I'm so grateful he picked me,” said McNamara, crediting a turtle out in the water he followed as a hō'ailona (omen) he believed was Eddie guiding him.

The Eddie Big Wave Invitational celebrates the current lineage of big wave surfers, as well as the ones that came before and is the premier event in the sport of surfing.

Eddie Aikau was a championship athlete, waterman, and family man who truly cared for others. He braved waves when no one else would go out. He was the North Shore's first lifeguard and saved more than 500 people during his career.

Ed Lindsey 'Ohana to be Honored

Nonprofit Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT) will honor the Ed Lindsey 'ohana at its 23rd Annual Buy



Ed and Puanani Lindsey - *Courtesy Photo*

Back the Beach benefit lū'au on Jan. 25, 2025.

Each year HILT recognizes a person, group, or organization that has made a substantial impact on land conservation in Hawai'i. Edwin “Ed” Lindsey Jr. and his wife, Puanani, established Maui Cultural Lands (MCL), a nonprofit grassroots land trust, in February 2002.

Ed, a lifelong teacher, envisioned involving Maui residents and visitors with the restoration of Honokōwai Valley. Since his passing in 2009, Puanani and their eldest son, Edwin “Ekolu” Lindsey, have continued his legacy.

MCL works across three main cultural landscapes on Maui: Honokōwai Valley, Mālama Launiupoko, and Mālama Kaheawa-Hana'ula, through reforestation, archaeological stabilization, and education. In Honokōwai Valley alone, volunteers have cleared and restored more than 10 acres.

“Hawai'i Land Trust is honored to recognize the Lindsey 'ohana for its continued, multi-generational efforts to preserve, protect and steward Maui lands and cultural sites,” said Olu Campbell, President and CEO of HILT.

Buy Back the Beach is an island-style sunset pā'ina hosted by the Old Lāhainā Lū'au. The event helps raise vital operational support for HILT's mission to protect and steward the lands that sustain Hawai'i. A performance by Maui's Kamalei Kawā'a, a Top 20 finalist on Season 25 of *The Voice*, will be the featured.

For more information go to: hilt.org/events/buy-back-the-beach-2025. ■

Empowering Kānaka Maoli Through Civic Engagement: A Call to Action for the Upcoming Legislative Session

As we approach the Hawai'i State legislative session, OHA must confront a concerning trend: the decline in Kānaka Maoli knowledge of democratic citizenship, government, and Hawaiian history. This reflects the diminished priority of civic education in our schools.

While STEM (Science Technology Engineering & Math) has taken precedence, civic engagement and aloha 'āina (patriotism) have been sidelined. This neglect fosters apathy about the democratic process, disengagement from voting, and detachment from governance.

It is alarming that many in Hawai'i do not know who their elected leaders are – let alone their state representatives. Such disengagement erodes the political influence of Native Hawaiians.

When we, as Kānaka Maoli, fail to engage in shaping policies, we forfeit opportunities to protect our rights, advocate for resources, and ensure our voices are heard on critical issues impacting our lāhui.

To address this, we must renew our commitment to civic education and engagement, recognizing these as tools for preserving our heritage, fostering self-determination, and advancing the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians.

Political advocacy is vital to empowering Kānaka Maoli to influence policies impacting our cultural, economic, and social wellbeing. When we engage with civic processes, we strengthen our ability to protect sacred lands for future generations, advocate for culturally relevant curricula and equitable resources for Native Hawaiian students, shape policies that prioritize affordable housing solutions, and champion legislation reflecting mālama 'āina.

Active participation amplifies Native Hawaiian voices and ensures our perspectives are represented in legislative and administrative decisions. It also helps build a thriving Hawaiian Nation rooted



**Kaiali'i
Kahele**

CHAIR
Trustee,
Hawai'i Island

in self-governance, economic resilience, and cultural sovereignty.

To reverse the trend of disengagement, we must take a proactive approach to civic education by integrating it into schools, communities, and cultural practices. A statewide effort must emphasize citizenship, government, and history in public, private, and charter schools.

The responsibility to inspire civic engagement extends beyond classrooms. We must engage Hawai'i's youth, weaving civic responsibility into their cultural identity. By fostering leadership and providing opportunities to participate in the legislative process, we cultivate a generation of Kānaka Maoli leaders committed to building a better future for Hawai'i.

In 1991, as a high school junior, I attended 'Aha 'Ōpio, sponsored in part by OHA. This tremendous opportunity to learn about civic responsibility, the legislative process, and cultural education at the state capitol shaped the person I am today. Similar programs can inspire the next generation to lead with vision and purpose.

The upcoming session offers a critical opportunity for Kānaka Maoli to advocate for policies uplifting our people. I urge you to find out who your elected leaders are at elections.hawaii.gov and capitol.hawaii.gov. Register with the Hawai'i State Legislature, track bills, submit testimony, attend hearings, and engage with legislators to ensure Native Hawaiian perspectives are front and center.

Whether the issues concern land rights, housing, education, or environmental stewardship, your voice matters. Active participation in the democratic process allows us to protect our rights and preserve our cultural heritage.

This session, let us not merely observe the democratic process but actively shape it. Together, we can revitalize civic engagement, empower our lāhui, and advance a vision for Hawai'i rooted in cultural sovereignty, self-governance, and aloha 'āina.

The time to act is now. Let us stand united to ensure the values and interests of Kānaka Maoli are not only preserved but amplified for generations to come. ■

Inspired by a New Year and New Possibilities

Aloha mai kākou a Hau'oli Makahiki Hou. This is an exciting new year for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs as we continue to mālama the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians and strengthen connections to our 'ohana, mo'omeheu and 'āina.

With a renewed focus on advancing economic self-sufficiency, educational opportunities, and the preservation of 'ike kūpuna, OHA is committed to building on past successes while forging innovative pathways for the future. Together, we stand ready to make 2025 meaningful and impactful for our lāhui.

I would like to extend a warm aloha to our newly elected Hawai'i Island Trustee and Board Chair Kaiali'i Kahele. He brings a wealth of experience from serving in the Hawai'i State Senate and the U.S. Congress, combined with a deep passion for and dedication to the lāhui.

His leadership philosophy, rooted in aloha, empowerment, responsibility, shared vision, and diverse perspectives will surely guide us toward a brighter future. I look forward to working alongside him and the entire board as we embrace this new chapter of leadership, with a shared commitment to serving our beneficiaries.

I also wish to express my deepest gratitude to Outgoing Chair Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey for her unwavering dedication and remarkable contributions. She championed initiatives that bolstered cultural preservation, especially for Maunakea,



**Keoni
Souza**

VICE CHAIR
Trustee,
At-Large

and strengthened advocacy efforts for Native Hawaiians. Her institutional knowledge is valued, and we appreciate her service.

I am humbled and honored to serve as the newly elected vice chair of OHA's Board of Trustees. I approach this role with gratitude and a deep sense of kuleana to our community. I am also privileged to serve as chairperson of the committee on Investment and Land Management (ILM).

As ILM chair, my commitment is to research thoroughly, engage transparently, and make educated recommendations to the board. ILM Vice Chair Trustee John Waihe'e and I will work together to ensure that our Native Hawaiian Trust Fund (NHTF) and real estate land assets are managed responsibly and strategically to maximize their impact.

The ILM committee is tasked with the stewardship of NHTF's nearly \$600 million portfolio and of OHA's land assets, with a focus on Kaka'ako Makai, Iwilei, and Nā Lama Kukui, as well as our legacy lands.

My vision, guided by data-driven solutions and collaborative decision-making, is to grow and optimize OHA's resources to better address the needs of our lāhui. The NHTF sat dormant for several years, but with our newly adopted investment policy statement, we are poised for strong returns in the years ahead as we are now able to make decisions about the portfolio with confidence.

I believe that if we prioritize OHA's land assets and focus on affordable workforce housing, a Hawaiian Cultural Center, and partnering with the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, we can expand OHA's real estate strategies and enhance the services we provide.

I am inspired by the possibilities this new year brings and the opportunity to work with an exceptional team of leaders dedicated to our shared mission and Mana i Maui Ola Strategic Plan.

E holo mua kākou me ke aloha a me ka ha'aha'a – let us move forward together with love and humility. ■



OHA Vice Chair Keoni Souza, DHHL Chair Kali Watson and Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole at the DHHL Hale Mo'ili'ili Groundbreaking.

- Courtesy Photo

Our Kuleana to You

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) holds a unique and vital role in the State of Hawai'i. Established in 1978 through a constitutional convention, OHA was created to serve as a semi-autonomous state agency with the mission of improving the betterment of conditions for Hawaiians. This mission is codified in Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 10, which outlines OHA's purpose, responsibilities, and obligations. The fulfillment of these duties is a legal mandate and a moral imperative to assist all Hawaiians now and to come.



Dan Ahuna

Trustee,
Kaua'i and
Ni'ihau

tices, including the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893, which led to our ongoing colonization. OHA's duty under HRS Section 10 includes addressing these inequities through targeted programs and initiatives.

For example, OHA has helped fund 17 Hawaiian-focused charter schools to increase access to education for Hawaiian students, supported health programs tailored to the specific needs of our communities, and provided grants to organizations working on affordable housing solutions. By fulfilling these responsibilities, OHA plays a crucial role in empowering Hawaiians and improving our quality of life.

The Legal Framework for HRS § 10

HRS § 10 delineates the foundational purpose and functions of OHA by providing OHA with the authority to manage resources and programs aimed at benefiting Hawaiians. Central to OHA's responsibilities is the management of a pro rata portion of all funds derived from the Public Land Trust, which shall be held and used solely as a public trust for the betterment of the conditions of Hawaiians. OHA must administer all trust resources effectively while also advocating for the rights of Hawaiians. Failure to fulfill these duties undermines the trust established between OHA and Hawaiian beneficiaries.

In addition, HRS § 10-6 charges OHA with developing and continually updating a strategic plan. Under OHA's 15-year Mana i Maui Ola Strategic Plan, OHA fulfills HRS § 10-6 by affecting change in the areas of education, health, housing, and economics for the protection and preservation of Hawaiian families, culture, and 'āina. In recent years, OHA has supported initiatives for traditional healing practices, the protection of iwi kūpuna, the revitalization of 'ōlelo Hawai'i, and has been a vocal advocate for the protection of sacred places such as Mauna a Wākea. These initiatives emphasize the need to protect our language, culture, and 'āina for the betterment of our people as an integral aspect of our mandate.

Addressing Socioeconomic Disparities and Health Disadvantages

As Hawaiians, we are forced to endure socioeconomic disparities and health disadvantages that stem from historical injus-

Accountability and Transparency

To effectively fulfill our duties, OHA must operate with the highest standards of accountability and transparency. As a steward of public trust resources, we are obligated to ensure that these funds are used efficiently and ethically. This includes undergoing regular audits and actively engaging with the lāhui to understand what is needed while also providing clear and accessible reports on our activities and expenditures. Addressing these issues is essential for maintaining the trust of our people. By adhering to our statutory obligations and prioritizing accountability, we strengthen our role as effective advocates and stewards.

OHA has a profound responsibility under HRS Section 10 to advance the betterment of conditions for all Hawaiians. This duty encompasses addressing socioeconomic disparities, health disadvantages, the preservation of our culture, and managing trust resources with integrity. By fulfilling these responsibilities, we not only honor our legal obligations but also contribute to the restoration of justice and equity for all Hawaiians. As we move forward, we must remain steadfast in our mission, ensuring that a thriving and empowered lāhui endures for generations now and to come. ■

OHA Trustees Swear to Uphold Two Constitutions

"Ua hana mai ke Akua i nā lāhui kānaka a pau i ke koko ho'okahi, e noho like lākou ma ka honua nei me ke ku'ikahi, a me ka pōmaika'i." - Opening words of the 1840 Hawaiian Constitution



Keli'i Akina, Ph.D.

Trustee,
At-Large

Last month, the newly elected and re-elected trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) were sworn in by Hawai'i Supreme Court Justice Todd Eddins. Along with my fellow trustees Dan Ahuna, Luana Alapa and Kaiali'i Kahele, I pledged to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i."

In doing so, we affirmed our duty as government officials to abide by and uphold the laws of this country and state. More than that, we affirmed our parts in a rich and long history between the U.S. Constitution and the constitutions of Hawai'i, from kingdom days to statehood.

In 1840, the Kingdom of Hawai'i adopted a constitution with strong parallels to the United States Constitution and Declaration of Independence.

Under the leadership of King Kame-

hameha III, the framers were concerned with more than the laws or structure of government. They wanted to make certain that the philosophy of God-given rights would guide the interpretation of law. So, they combined into one document the philosophical ideals found in the Declaration of Independence with laws and government structures found in the U.S. Constitution.

We are familiar with the profound philosophy of the Declaration of Independence expressed in the following statement: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

That same philosophy of the equality and unity of all people, endowed by Ke Akua with God-given rights, can be found in the opening paragraph of the 1840 Hawaiian Constitution.

"God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the earth, in unity and blessedness. God has also bestowed certain rights alike on all men and all chiefs, and all people of all lands. These are some of the rights which He has given alike to every man and every chief of correct deportment; life, limb, liberty, freedom from oppression; the earnings of his hands and the productions of his mind, not however to those who act in violation of laws."

The oath of office taken by duly elected trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs represents more than just a legal responsibility. It is a commitment to uphold the deep-rooted principles at the heart of two constitutions, the American and Hawaiian.

While the primary duty of OHA trustees is the betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians, we are to fulfill this purpose with the good of all people in mind. As the 1840 Hawaiian Constitution states, all people are made from one blood (ke koko ho'okahi) to dwell on the earth, in unity and blessedness.

E hana kākou! (Let's work together!) ■



Trustee Keli'i Akina and the Honorable Associate Justice Todd Eddins at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' trustee swearing in ceremony. - Courtesy Photo

Looking Back on 2024; Looking Forward to 2025

As 2025 begins, I want to take a moment to reflect on the previous year. First, I am grateful to God for His guiding hand and unwavering love that have anchored me through the highs and lows – especially during a challenging re-election season. I am grateful to Him, who knows my truth, and understands my divine purpose in serving our lāhui.

Despite personal challenges, I found ways to give back. Last year, through Ke Akua's blessing, I formed Ho'ohana Moloka'i, an organization designed to support nonprofits. Thanks to a generous funder, Ho'okahua, and support from other entities, I have been blessed to help our Moloka'i community benefit from:

- \$20,000 in toys for an Easter giveaway at Lanikeha Center.
- \$3,000 to the Moloka'i Rodeo Scholarship Fund benefiting two Moloka'i High students.
- \$600 worth of gingerbread houses for a holiday gingerbread house decorating event.
- \$500 in gifts personally donated to the Ho'olehua Homestead Association's (HHA) annual Christmas pā'ina.
- \$500 for Kualapu'u Charter School's annual fundraiser.
- Establishment of the Aloha Diaper Bank – Moloka'i for struggling families, the physically challenged, and seniors.
- \$2,000 for HHA's Scholarship Fund.



Luana Alapa
Trustee,
Moloka'i and
Lāna'i

My personal contributions via Ho'ohana Moloka'i provided awards for:

- \$20,000 to HHA for kūpuna home repairs.
- \$30,000 to Moloka'i Baptist Church nonprofit home repairs project for Hawaiian homesteaders.
- \$1,000 to HHA's scholarship fund, benefiting two high school seniors.
- \$1,000 for the Moloka'i High School Culinary Student Scholarship fundraiser.
- \$1,000 to purchase a VIP table for HHA's Scholarship lū'au.
- \$5,000 to Aloha Diaper Bank – Moloka'i.
- \$1,000 to Youth in Motion Moloka'i football team.
- \$1,000 for Aloha Diaper Bank fundraiser.
- \$2,000 for Nā Wāhine o ke Kai canoe races - Koa canoe division.
- \$500 to Kualapu'u Charter School fundraiser.
- \$5,000 to HHA for its kūpuna home repairs project.
- Donated gifts for the 2024 HHA Christmas pā'ina.

Focusing on service to others has reinforced my commitment to our lāhui and enriched my understanding of the needs and struggles faced by Moloka'i residents. Each initiative, every dollar raised, and every moment spent, has been a testament to the power of community support. I, too, want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed to these initiatives – our volunteers, donors, and community partners. Together, we are building a brighter future for Moloka'i, one meaningful contribution at a time.

As I turn the page on 2024, I am proud of the opportunity to serve in 2025 as the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee under our newly elected chair of the Board of Trustees, Kaiali'i Kahele. I am committed to ensuring that we manage our resources effectively while prioritizing the needs of our community. With God's blessing, I am hopeful for what lies ahead in 2025. I believe that with our collective efforts and a shared vision for progress, our new leadership will thrive. Here's to a prosperous and impactful 2025! Hau'oli Makahiki Hou!

Trustee Luana Alapa ■



(L-R) Trustees Dan Ahuna, Luana Alapa, Keli'i Akina and Kaiali'i Kahele were sworn into office on Dec. 4, 2024. - Courtesy Photo



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



**RONALD NOLAN
MAKAULA DELA CRUZ**
APRIL 9, 1945 – SEPT. 20, 2024

Ronald Nolan Makaula Dela Cruz was born in Honolulu and passed away at Queen's North Hawai'i Community Hospital. Ron lived in Honolulu, on Maui, and for the past 30+ years in Kamuela on the island of Hawai'i. He was preceded in death by his hānai parents Primentivo Dela Cruz and Mary Rego

Dela Cruz, and by his birth parents Moses Kaluna Makaula and Miriam Lei Kua Makaula. Ron is survived by his wife, Mary L. Andrews of Kamuela; his stepchildren Ginger (Rick) Gelke of New York and Scott (Aya) Andrews of Panama, Central America; and step-grandchildren Ellie Gelke and Keats and Witt Andrews. He is also survived by his sisters Lorraine Daley of Kamuela; Elizabeth (Rick) Ahina of O'ahu; Bernadette (Sterling) Nii of O'ahu; by his brother Anthony (Malia) Koko of O'ahu; and by numerous nieces and nephews. Ron graduated from Farrington High School and the College of San Mateo and attended UC Berkeley. He played football from junior high through college and was a junior All-American football award recipient. Ron appeared in several movies including *Hawai'i*, *The Hawaiians*, and *King Kong* and in the original *Hawai'i 5-0*. He worked in security was security manager at Parker Ranch for years. He later founded and operated Security Solutions. Almost full-blooded Hawaiian, Ron was a high chief in the Royal Order of Kamehameha and founder of the order's North Hawai'i chapter. He was also a licensed kahu. Celebration of Life is Jan. 18, 2025, at Mana Christian/Kahilu Town Hall in Kamuela at 1:00 p.m. ■

Eō Mai, e Kuleana Land Holders!

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

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

**CONSULTATION –
SECTION 106 OF THE
NATIONAL HISTORIC
PRESERVATION ACT
– KEKAHA, KAUA‘I**

Notice is hereby given that the County of Kaua‘i seeks to utilize funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Program to conduct a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) at the Kekaha Sugar Mill Lot B, Waimea Ahupua‘a, Waimea District, Kaua‘i, TMK: (4) 1-3-007:104.

The project will involve surface and near-surface soil sampling within the approximately 10-acre Area of Potential Effects, bounded by Kekaha Road (north), residential subdivisions (east and south), and the former Kekaha Sugar Mill Lot A (west), which contains nearly all former mill buildings including the iconic smokestack. Project ground disturbance will include soil sampling via direct-push borings (2-inch diameter, 4.5 feet maximum depth) and limited hand auger borings (2-inch diameter, 6 inches maximum depth).

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Native Hawaiian Organizations and Native Hawaiian descendants with ancestral, lineal, or cultural ties to, cultural and historical property knowledge of and/or concerns for, and cultural or religious attachment to the proposed project area are requested to contact the County. Other individuals and organizations with demonstrated legal, economic, or historic preservation interest in the undertaking are asked to contact the County and share information you may have on historical and cultural sites.

Please submit responses by Jan. 30, 2025. Contact Ana Española at aespanola@kauai.gov or Daniel

Moher at Moher.Daniel@epa.gov or by mail to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency- Region 9, 75 Hawthorne Street (LND-2-1), San Francisco, CA 94105.

**CONSULTATION FOR
SECTION 106 OF THE
NATIONAL HISTORIC
PRESERVATION ACT OF
1966 AS AMENDED (2006)**

Aloha e nā kupa o Kohala nui, o Kohala iki, o Kohala loko, o Kohala waho, o Kohala makani Āpa‘apa‘a, o Pili o Kalaāhikiola, o Nā-pu‘u-haele-lua. ‘Oia ho‘i! ‘Oia la! O nā ‘ōkina iho la ‘ia o ka ‘āina ha‘aheo i ke kāhili a ka makani Āpa‘apa‘a e ho‘olā‘au mai ana mehe ipo ala ka nē hone i ka poli o ke aloha.

The U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration awarded funds to the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation for critical infrastructure upgrades to modernize Kawaihae Commercial Harbor in South Kohala. This project is considered a federal action and undertaking, as defined by Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations, § 800.16(y) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (2006). In summary, work involves roadway/entrance improvements at the Main Gate of the Harbor, repaving portions of the harbor, replacing 40’ light poles with 80’ light poles, and relocating existing offices to an existing maintenance building within the harbor.

Pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA, Native Hawaiian Organizations/Descendants with ancestral, lineal, or cultural ties to, cultural and historical property knowledge of and/or concerns for, and cultural or religious attachment to the proposed project area are requested to respond by Feb. 15, 2025.

Please contact Mr. Mark

Kawika McKeague, AICP, of G70 via email at KawaihaeHarborS106@g70.design, or via U.S. mail to 111 S. King Street, Suite 170, Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813.

**CULTURAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT AND KA
PA‘AKAI ANALYSIS:
O‘AHU SUBSEA CABLE
TELECOMMUNICA-
TIONS PROJECT, ‘EWA
MOKU, O‘AHU ISLAND**

Pacific Legacy, Inc., on behalf of Humuhumu Services LLC and Starfish Infrastructure, Inc., is conducting a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) and Ka Pa‘akai Analysis for the O‘ahu Subsea Cable Telecommunications Project, located in Honouliuli Ahupua‘a, ‘Ewa Moku, O‘ahu Island [TMKs: (1) 9-1-026:027 (por.); (1) 9-1-016:179 (por.); Olai St ROW; Kalaeloa Blvd ROW; Kamokila Blvd ROW; Farrington Hwy ROW]. The project includes subsea cable installation, a cable landing site at Barbers Point Beach Park, and an underground conduit system to be installed in public road rights-of-way between the cable landing site and a telecommunication facility to be located at the University of Hawai‘i – West O‘ahu Campus.

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

- Cultural associations, mo‘olelo, or legendary accounts associated with Honouliuli Ahupua‘a.
- Past and present land use or traditional gathering practices within and near the project area.
- Cultural resources which may be impacted by the proposed project, including traditional resource gathering sites, traditional access trails, wahi pana, and/or burials.
- Any other cultural concerns related to traditional Hawai-

ian 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 Honouliuli Ahupua‘a.

Those interested in participating are invited to contact Dr. Jillian Swift at 808-263-4800 or swift@pacificlegacy.com.

**CULTURAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT; PROPOSED
WAHIKULI SUBDIVISION
GRAVITY SEWER SYSTEM**

SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) is conducting a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) for the proposed Wahikuli Subdivision Gravity Sewer System Project. The Wahikuli subdivision is located north of Lahaina Town within the ahupua‘a of Wahikuli in the moku of Lahaina. This is a joint project between the Environmental Protection Agency and the County of Maui. Funding is through the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s mission authority.

The project seeks to replace existing cesspools and septic systems with a gravity sewer system in the subdivision’s approximately 231 single-family lots. This upgrade will reduce environmental impacts from cesspools and leaking septic systems while providing a more resilient and sustainable wastewater management system, better equipped to withstand climate impacts and disasters, supporting Lahaina’s rebuilding efforts. The project aligns with Act 125, as amended by Act 87, requiring statewide cesspool replacement by 2050.

SWCA is seeking community input regarding cultural knowledge of the area, including past and present land use, place names,

cultural traditions, gathering practices, and any concerns the community might have related to cultural practices within or in the vicinity of the project area. You can contact SWCA at Wainani. Traub at Traub@swca.com or (808) 646-6309 for more information or to share insights. Please respond by Jan. 31, 2025. Mahalo nui loa for your assistance.

**KUKUI FAMILY BURIALS,
KALAMA 5 AHUPUA‘A,
SOUTH KONA, ISLAND
OF HAWAII**

All persons having information concerning Kukui family burials within TMK: (3) 8-2-006:011, a .23-acre parcel in Kalama 5 Ahupua‘a, South Kona District, Island of Hawai‘i are hereby requested to contact Christian Omerod, Cultural Historian, State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD), (808) 294-9573, 40 Po‘okela Street, Hilo, HI 96720; or Kaulana Eli, (808) 630-5619, P.O. Box 381, Mountain View, HI 96771. The land is associated with L.C.A. 8538 to Kukui (k). Treatment of the burial will occur in accordance with HRS, Chapter 6E. The applicant, T. M. Kaulana Eli Jr., proposes to preserve the burial in place in accordance with a burial treatment plan prepared in consultation with any identified descendants and with the approval of the Hawai‘i Island Burial Council. All interested parties should respond within thirty (30) days of this notice and provide information to SHPD adequately demonstrating lineal descent from the Native Hawaiian remains, or cultural descent from ancestors once residing or buried in the same ahupua‘a. Historical document research shows families associated with Kalama 5 Ahupua‘a include: Kalua, Lua-hine, Kekuapuhi, Nahuanoni, Manu, and Kualau. ■



OFFICE LOCATIONS

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

All Offices are closed on State holidays

Main Phone (all islands):

808.594.1835

Email:

info@oha.org

HONOLULU

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

EAST HAWAII (HILO)

2100 Kanoelehua Ave.,
Unit 9 & 10
Hilo, HI 96720
Phone: 808.204.2391

WEST HAWAII (KONA)

75-1000 Henry St., Ste. 205
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
Phone: 808.327.9525

MOLOKA'I / LĀNA'I

(Temporarily closed until further notice)

Kūlana 'Ōiwi, P.O. Box 1717
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
Phone: 808.553.4640

KAUA'I / NI'HAU

4405 Kukui Grove St., Ste. 103
Līhu'e, HI 96766-1601
Phone: 808.241.3390

MAUI

1887 Wili Pa Loop, Ste. 1
Wailuku, HI 96793-1400
Phone: 808.873.3364

www.oha.org/offices

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

AINA REALTOR - New Year - New Goals - Lets make a plan to get into the real estate industry this year!! Call me to talk story and we can plan together to make owning a reality. If you have questions, I can help you get the answers you are looking for. I help with both Hawaiian Homestead as well as residential properties on all islands. One of my missions as a Realtor is to keep native Hawaiian Families in Hawaii. Let's work together to find housing solutions and build a better future for our younger generations. Please call me with your ideas and questions and we can figure out a way. Jordan Aina - RS-85780 Cell: (808) 276-0880 - Locations Hawaii LLC, RB-17095

AINA REALTOR - Real Estate Seminars - Oahu - A great way to start learning about Real Estate is to come and attend one of Locations Educational Seminars. We offer seminars that cover topics such as First Time Home Buying, Investing and Senior Real Estate Planning. Call me to reserve a spot for the next one. Spots are limited. Don't wait. Jordan Aina - RS-85780 Cell: (808) 276-0880 - Locations Hawaii LLC, RB-17095

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THINKING OF BUYING OR SELLING A HOME? CALL THE EXPERT. Call Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (R) 808-295-4474 RB-15998. Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303. To view current listings, go to my website HomeswithAloha.com. Call, text or email Charmaine@HomeswithAloha.com to make an appointment to learn more about homeownership. Mahalo nui! Specializing in fee simple & homestead properties for over 38 years. ■

GET REGISTERED TODAY!

For more information please visit www.oha.org/registry

OHA OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

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. E ola nā mamo a Hāloa!

SEARCH

AEA-ANDERSON REUNION - Descendants of Carrie Kahunui Aea and Francis Halupo Anderson and their children Winifred, Dorcas, Arnold, Carrie, Kawai Cockett, Francis, Andrew, Manly and Melvin Mahuiki invite 'ohana to join in planning or two reunions: October 2025 in California and Summer 2026 on O'ahu. For more info and to be added to the mailing list, provide your name, phone number (include area code), email, and how you are related to L. Reyes at (916) 606-8405 or email aeaandersonreunion@gmail.com.

HOLT - The Holt 'Ohana (descendants of Robert William Holt and Tuwati Robinson and their three sons John Dominis Holt I, James Holt and Owen Holt) is planning a reunion for June 11-20, 2025 on O'ahu. If you are interested in attending the planning meetings (held via Zoom), or being updated on the details, please email ahulii.holt@gmail.com. Mālama pono!

DUVAUCHELLE - Aloha e Duvauchelle 'Ohana! Plans are underway for a long-awaited family reunion in 2026 or 2027! Stay connected and be part of the planning. Register you and your 'ohana at: www.duvauchelleohanareunion.org or email: ohanaduvauchelle@gmail.com. The first planning meeting (online & in-person) is Feb. 8, 2025, location TBD. 'Ohana who have registered will receive an email with details and an invitation to participate. We need to form committees for fundraising, logistics, food, genealogy/oral history, and more. Let's grow our planning team!

HAUPU-KUALU - Descendants of Helen Liawahine Haupū and William Nuiāola Kualu are planning a family reunion Friday, Aug. 29 – Monday, Sept. 1, 2025 in Kekaha, Kaua'i. For more information and to be added to our mailing list contact Christine Chow (Labanon) at hau-pukualuohanafamilyreunion@gmail.com with the following details: Name; Phone Number (please include area code); email Address; and how you are related. We look forward to seeing all of you there! ■

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'Onipa'a Peace March

Marking the 132nd Year Since the Illegal Overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy

FRI. | JAN.17/2025

MAUNA'ALA TO 'IOLANI PALACE

SCHEDULE

7AM OPEN - Gates Open
MAUNA'ALA ROYAL MAUSOLEUM

8:30AM Protocol Begins at Mauna'ala

9:45AM MARCH BEGINS
Led by the QUEEN'S COURT

10:50AM MARCH ARRIVES at 'Iolani Palace
'Oli Komo by HĀLAU PUA ALI'I 'ILIMA

11AM PULE & LUNCH
'IOLANI PALACE

11:30am EŌ E KA LĀHUI Hula led by Kumu
Kawaikapuokalani Hewett

12PM SPEECHES & MUSIC
'IOLANI PALACE

4:30PM CLOSING 'AHA
'IOLANI PALACE

*Shuttles available from 'Iolani Palace on Richards street to Mauna'ala Royal Mausoleum 7:45 am - 9:15 am.



1st Place: Anailah T. 7th Grade 'Ewa Makai Intermediate

Speeches • Mele
KŪ'Ē Petitions
Educational Booths
EA • Aloha 'Āina
Ola I Ka Wai
Art Space • Ku'i 'Ai

MC: **Cyd Rosa**
MUSIC:
Sudden Rush
Lionfiyah
The Vitals 808
and More

**Hear from Aloha
'Āina protectors on
the frontline:**

Paula Akana | Paele Kiakona | Kainoa Azama | Kamakanalani Gomes
Keeaumoku Kapu | Kauwila Mahi | Walter Ritte | Courtney Keakahuilani Lazo
Laulani Teale | Ernie Lau | Megan Wong | Reni A'ia'i Bello and More.

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