Iulai (July) 2025 | Vol. 42, No. 07

# Ka Wai Ola

NEWS FOR THE LĀHUI

kawaiola.news

# Reclaiming Hā‘ena

PAGES 18-20

View from the wao akua (godly realm) of Limahuli in Ahupua‘a Hā‘ena looking ma kai into the valley. Led by lineal descendants, the residents of Hā‘ena, located on the North Shore of Kaua‘i, are reclaiming their kuleana to care for their sacred spaces. - *Courtesy Photo*

## Lā Hoʻihoʻi Ea

*July 31*

Lā Hoʻihoʻi Ea is the Hawaiian Kingdom national holiday that observes the restoration of sovereignty to the Hawaiian Kingdom.

In February 1843, a British officer of the Royal Navy, Lord George Paulet, illegally seized the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi, claiming to protect British interests. This occupation, known as the "Paulet Affair," did not have approval from the British Crown and lasted five months.

On July 26, British Officer Rear-Admiral Thomas arrived in Honolulu to meet with Kamehameha III regarding the Paulet Affair. A new treaty was negotiated with the British government and Thomas ended the illegal seizure and occupation of Hawaiʻi. July 31 was celebrated as the day the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom was restored – Lā Hoʻihoʻi Ea.

The holiday is still commemorated today and was recognized in 2022 by the State of Hawaiʻi as a special day of remembrance.

### EVENTS

**Lā Hoʻihoiʻi Ea Hāmākua**
*July 16, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.*
*Paʻauilo, Hawaiʻi Island*
Celebrate, eat nā ʻono o ka ʻāina, talk story with hoa aloha ʻāina, practice hana noʻeau of our kūpuna, and have a good time! At Paʻauilo School field, 43-1497 Hauola Rd. alaulili.com

**Lā Hoʻihoʻi Ea Honolulu**
*July 27, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.*
*Honolulu, Oʻahu*
EA-ducational event with local vendors, food, live music and more at Thomas Square, 925 S. Beretania St. Details and schedule of Ea events all month-long visit lahoihoiea.org

### OHA Satellite Office Dates – Hawaiʻi Island

OHA Beneficiary Services will be traveling to serve beneficiaries in Waimea, Nāʻālehu and Kona each month. Office hours are **8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.** (closed from 1:00 - 1:45 p.m. for lunch).

***July 3 - Waimea***
*Parker Ranch Center, 67-1185 Hawaiʻi Belt Road*

***July 11 - Nāʻālehu***
*Nāʻālehu Community Center, 95-5635 Māmalahoa Hwy.*

***July 18 - Kona***
*West Hawaiʻi Civic Center,*
*74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy. 1st fl. Bldg. B*

OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Check the schedule at **oha.org/offices**

## ʻALEMANAKA
CALENDAR

**61st Annual July 4th Rodeo and Horse Races**
*July 4, 7:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.*
*Waimea, Hawaiʻi Island*
Gates open at 7:30 a.m. with local food and craft vendors, a petting zoo and pony rides for keiki. The rodeo begins at 9:00 a.m. featuring two jumbo screens for live coverage, replays, and interviews. Tickets available at parkerranch.com.

**Waikīkī Steel Guitar Week**
*July 6-12 | Waikīkī, Oʻahu*
Free performances daily. Hear steel guitar masters, musicians from Japan and upcoming youth at the Royal Hawaiian Center's Royal Grove stage and other locations. Friday and Saturday performances will be livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube @HawaiianSteelGuitarShowcase. hawaiiansteelguitarfestival.com

**Royal Hawaiian Band Performances**
*July 11 & 18, Noon - 1:00 p.m.*
*Honolulu, Oʻahu*
Free concerts on the ʻIolani Palace Grounds most Fridays. rhb-music.com

**Puʻuhonua Mākeke**
*July 12, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.*
*Waimānalo, Oahu*
A marketplace to showcase products, services, and businesses from puʻuhonua across Hawaiʻi. Puʻuhonua o Waimānalo, 41-1300 Waikupanaha St., in the Pavilion. FB/IG @puuhonuamakeke

**Ka ʻAha Hula i Waimea - The Gathering of Hula at Waimea**
*July 12 & 20, 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.*
*Waimea, Oʻahu*
Mele oli and mele hula presented by Hālau Hula ʻo Namakahulali and Hālau Hula ʻo Kawaihoʻomalu waimeavalley.net

**Kamaʻāina Sunday**
*July 13, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.*
*Honolulu, Oʻahu*
Enjoy audio tours of ʻIolani Palace, ʻono food, lively entertainment, and shop local vendors. iolanipalace.org

**48th Annual Prince Lot Hula Festival**
*July 19-20, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.*
*Honolulu, Oʻahu*
Two days of hula and mele at the civic center grounds with cultural activities, local retailers and ʻono food! OHA is a proud supporter of this event. mgfhawaii.org

**50th Annual Liliʻuokalani Keiki Hula Competition**
*July 24-26 | Honolulu, Oʻahu*
Miss and Master Keiki Hula competition, group competitions and awards presentations at the Blaisdell Center. Visit the Pop-Up Mākeke, see state archives' aliʻi treasures and other historic memorabilia, and enjoy live entertainment while shopping. OHA is a proud supporter of this event. keikihula.org

**Summer Concert Series**
*July 26, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. | Waimea, Oʻahu*
Featuring Kainani Kahaunaele, Kalaʻe Camarillo, and Hoʻokena 3.0 with Moon Kauakahi and Nani Dudoit's hālau. waimeavalley.net

**Sounds of the Ocean**
*July 27, 5:30 p.m. & 7:00 p.m.*
*Kapālama, Oʻahu*
Take a deep dive underwater and hear whales, dolphins other ocean creatures in this planetarium program featuring a 4K full-dome immersive video. bishopmuseum.org

**Lanakila Kahoʻolawe**
*July 26, 2:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.*
*Heʻeia, Oʻahu*
Celebrate 49 years of aloha ʻāina with ʻawa, ʻono food, live music, silent auction, raffle prizes, and more! protectkahoolaweohana.org

**Geothermal Energy Panel Symposium**
*July 28, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*
*Waimea, Hawaiʻi Island*
Featuring Cy Bridges, Benson Medina, Malama Solomon and Mililani Trask at Kahilu Town Hall. p4phawaii.com

**Mālama i nā Iwi Kūpuna Workshop**
*August 1, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.*
*Nāʻālehu, Hawaiʻi Island*
*August 2, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.*
*Nāʻālehu, Hawaiʻi Island*
Learn to make hīnaʻi lauhala, kapa, kaula hau or ipu ʻumeke to donate to lineal descendants for reburial of iwi kūpuna. For more info or to register: hawaiianchurchhawaiinei.org

**23rd Heiva I Kauaʻi**
*August 2-3, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.*
*Kapaʻa, Kauaʻi*
Tahitian dance and drumming competitions, Polynesian artisian demos and vendors with an array of Tahitian and Pacific Island gifts, jewelry, art, woodwork, clothing and food at Kapaʻa Beach Park. heivaikauai.net ■

# Owning Our Ea: Reflections From Palau and Aotearoa on Indigenous Self-Governance

Aloha mai kākou,

I was recently blessed with the extraordinary opportunity, as an Omidyar Fellow, to shape a deeply personal and powerful Individual Impact Experience. I journeyed to Palau and Aotearoa, traveling with a singular purpose – to understand how our Pacific cousins have built and sustained successful models of Indigenous self-governance.

I spent a week in Palau, engaged in conversations with traditional leaders. Their wisdom was profoundly rooted in genealogical memory and lived resilience. Each night I transcribed our talks, sorting through their insight to discover what I could carry home to transform the work and kuleana of OHA.

Palau's struggle to retain its ancestral lands, protect its language, and practice its customs is familiar. Yet what struck me most was how vigorously their traditional leaders assert their ea (sovereignty). Their system of co-governance, balancing Indigenous leadership with western political frameworks, proves that both forms of governance can exist in tandem.

In Aotearoa I was welcomed by the leaders of Kiingitanga and Waikato-Tainui. The Māori story of colonization, resistance, survival and revival resonates profoundly with our own.

The Kiingitanga is a powerful cultural force, moving resolutely toward the vision of a unified Māori nation. Waikato-Tainui has leveraged a $150 million settlement into a $2 billion economic powerhouse, one that fuels not only tribal prosperity but the assertion of political sovereignty.

This is economic ea, not for wealth's sake, but as a platform for justice, dignity, and self-rule.

Ea is not lost in Hawai'i, it is very much alive across the pae ʻāina. From Hāʻena to Kāʻū, communities are leading with ancestral intelligence, reviving language, stewarding ʻāina, and reasserting our right to govern ourselves.

We have an opportunity to build regional self-governance rooted in each moku; responsive to local needs, and reflective of our collective ea. OHA has a critical role to play in supporting and resourcing this growth, not as the authority, but as an advocate and provider of infrastructure, funding, and legal support to empower communities charting their own course.

In both Palau and Aotearoa, formalized Indigenous governance structures directly inform and shape local decision-making, natural resource management, and education. Their governance has a physical presence: in Palau, bai (traditional meeting houses) are the sacred spaces for decision-making among chiefs; in Aotearoa, marae function as the epicenter of tribal life and governance.

These spaces are not symbolic, they are essential. They codify the authority of Indigenous governance. We must build our own hale hālāwai (meeting houses) in each moku to ground our ea in place and practice.

In both Palau and Aotearoa there is a fierce reclamation of land and language. And, importantly, their people vote. In both nations, Indigenous communities are powerful voting blocs. They organize, mobilize, and assert their presence within national political systems, not to assimilate, but to influence laws and policies.

In Hawai'i we have everything we need to grow our ea. It begins by believing that our self-governance is not a distant memory, but the work of the present. ■

Me ka haʻahaʻa,

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

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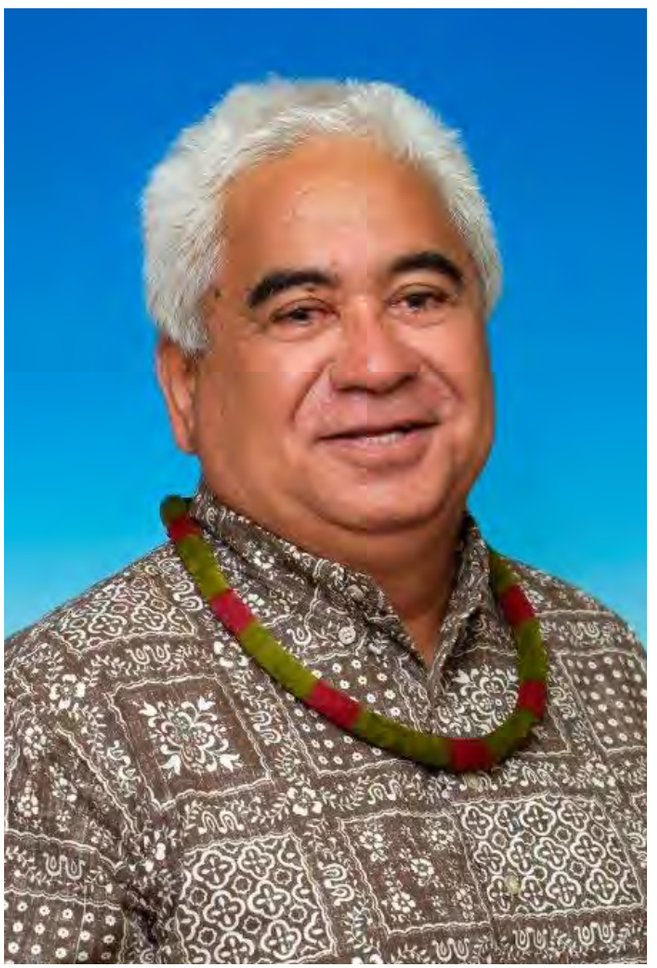
# *"Always With Aloha"*

## *Robert Kamaile "Bob" Lindsey, Jr.*

April 24, 1948 – May 30, 2025

By Kama Hopkins



For more than 40 years, Robert K. "Bob" Lindsey Jr. stood as a trusted steward of Native Hawaiian affairs, especially for his beloved Hawaiʻi Island. A former national park ranger, Kamehameha Schools executive, state legislator, and longtime Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) trustee, Lindsey's life work has reflected deep cultural grounding, political strategy, and a servant's heart.

No matter his role or location – whether on the forest trails of Hawaiʻi Volcanoes National Park, in the halls of the state legislature, in the boardrooms of Kamehameha Schools, or representing OHA in the community – Lindsey's calling remained constant: to serve. His affinity for uplifting others through public service and cultural stewardship defined not only his professional path, but the legacy he leaves behind.

This hoʻomanaʻo honors his journey – from the early days of rural legislative work to his leadership on behalf of the lāhui. Lindsey's public service is rooted in a lifelong love for Hawaiʻi's people and places.

Lindsey was born in Hilo and raised in Waimea on Hawaiʻi Island when it was still a small ranching community. In the ninth grade he became a boarding student at Kamehameha School for Boys, graduating in 1966. He went on to attend UH Mānoa, earning a degree in sociology and, later, two certificates in executive development.

He began his career working within the judicial system on Hawaiʻi Island as a probation officer under Judge Nelson Doi. This role provided him with early insight into the human dimensions of justice, rehabilitation, and the social services that support individuals and families. It also deepened his understanding of how government could serve people with dignity and compassion, an ethos that stayed with him throughout his career.

He later served as a ranger at Hawaiʻi Volcanoes National Park – a kuleana that deepened his connection to the ʻāina. Later, he joined Kamehameha Schools, where he served in multiple roles culminating with his promotion as manager of the Land Assets Division for Hawaiʻi Island. In this capacity, Lindsey oversaw the stewardship of educational lands, agricultural leases, and culturally significant sites – balancing economic use with cultural responsibility and advancing the educational mission of the organization.

His approach combined cultural sensitivity, environmental responsibility, and fiscal discipline and this foundation would later shape his leadership at OHA where he approached every decision through the lens of mālama ʻāina, cultural perpetuation, and long-term sustainability.

Lindsey's entry into government began in the mid-1980s when he was elected to the Hawaiʻi State House of Representatives. From 1984 to 1986, he represented a unique "canoe district" that included parts of Hawaiʻi Island as well as Hāna, Maui – uniting rural communities across islands.

This role deepened his understanding of the needs of residents in rural communities and strengthened his lifelong commitment to uplifting underserved areas. Because he was raised in Waimea, Lindsey brought a personal connection to the rural communities he served and forged early relationships with fellow legislators, many of whom would remain allies throughout his career.

Although his tenure in the legislature was brief it laid the groundwork for the relationships and reputation he would later build upon as an OHA trustee. Lindsey understood that effective leadership required not only cultural sensitivity but also political strategy – skills he would carry with him into his next chapter of public service.

Decades later, as an OHA trustee, Lindsey's early work with lawmakers culminated in a historic milestone: he became the first OHA trustee representing Hawaiʻi Island to be invited to join the Hawaiʻi Island Legislative Caucus as a guest member. This exclusive group of state house and senate members meets regularly to coordinate legislative strategy for Hawaiʻi Island.

Lindsey's inclusion signified more than just personal respect – it marked an institutional shift in how OHA was viewed by state government. It acknowledged the importance of Native Hawaiian representation at the legislative table and reinforced Lindsey's role as a unifier between lawmakers and Hawaiian communities. His participation ensured that beneficiary voices were directly heard in state policy conversations.

Lindsey was elected as the OHA trustee for Hawaiʻi Island in 2007. From the start, he brought not only professional credibility but also a deep understanding of community needs. He served with humility and focus, blending cultural values with strategic planning.

From 2014 to 2016, he served as chair of the OHA Board of Trustees (BOT). Under his leadership, the board worked to strengthen OHA's governance framework, prioritize financial accountability, and expand its community reach.

Lindsey emphasized strategic partnerships – especially with aliʻi trusts, nonprofit organizations, and state agencies – to grow OHA's capacity and better serve Native Hawaiians across sectors like housing, education, and economic development.

He strongly believed that economic sovereignty was

SEE **ROBERT LINDSEY, JR.** ON **PAGE 5**

## ROBERT LINDSEY, JR.

Continued from page 4

Hawai'i Island Rep. Bob Lindsey with his wife, Kathy, on Opening Day of the Legislature in 1985. - *Courtesy Photos*

Trustee Bob Lindsey (standing, far left) with members of the Hawai'i Island Legislative Caucus. Lindsey was the first Hawai'i Island OHA trustee to be invited to join this exclusive leadership group as a guest member.

key to helping Native Hawaiians move forward successfully in today's world. He emphasized that true empowerment required not just cultural knowledge or legal recognition, but access to economic resources and opportunities that could sustain individuals, families, and communities across generations.

After his tenure as BOT chair, Lindsey continued to serve as an active and influential trustee. He chaired the committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment, where he focused on direct community impact – supporting programs to improve education, health, and housing outcomes for Hawaiian families.

Throughout his years of service, one motto defined Lindsey's leadership: "always with aloha." It was a phrase he learned from his mother and one that guided his decision-making and relationships throughout his life. He used it not only in words but in action – at the legislature, in trustee meetings, in the community, and with his staff.

He modeled aloha even when board discussions grew tense. While he and his fellow trustees did not always agree on policy, he firmly believed in keeping differences at the table and never letting them erode personal respect. That principle helped maintain unity and professionalism during pivotal moments at OHA.

Lindsey's commitment to working "always with aloha" wasn't reserved for the boardroom. It extended to his staff. When he was first appointed to the board, Tiona Wailehua served as his secretary, and I (Kama Hopkins) was honored to serve as his aide. Upon Tiona's retirement, her daughter, Kauikeaolani Wailehua, joined the team and became his second aide.

Lindsey had a special way of honoring the people who worked alongside him. One of the most meaningful ways he did this was in how he introduced us. Whenever he met someone new, he would say, "I'm Bob. This is Kama and Kaui. We work together at OHA."

He never said we worked for him. He always said we worked with him.

That distinction, simple but powerful, made us feel seen and valued, and it inspired us to give our best every day to help him help our beneficiaries.

Lindsey also served during times of organizational scrutiny. As with many public institutions, OHA was called to address concerns around transparency and alignment with its mission. Rather than shy away Lindsey leaned in, supporting audits, encouraging open dialogue, and championing reforms that emphasized measurable results and cultural integrity.

He acknowledged that OHA's strategic plan needed revision and modernization, and he called for long-term planning that was both ambitious and grounded in data. He believed OHA's asset base had to grow significantly to fulfill its vision and often called for stronger collaboration across government and community networks to make that happen.

Lindsey's commitment to the community extended far beyond boardrooms.

He served on the boards of Habitat for Humanity West Hawai'i, the West Hawai'i Mediation Center, and Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana. These roles reflect his belief in community-based solutions and culturally responsive systems that uplift families from within.

Whether building affordable homes, resolving community disputes, or supporting Hawaiian-focused charter education, Lindsey's service consistently reflected the belief that change happens closest to the ground.

Lindsey's approach earned widespread community support across Hawai'i Island. In one election, although he placed second in the primary race, he surged in the general election, winning with one of the most decisive votes ever recorded for an OHA trustee candidate from Hawai'i Island. This outcome demonstrated both the trust that constituents had in him and the deep relationships he had built over decades of service.

Voters appreciated his calm demeanor, thoughtful communication, and clear commitment to Hawaiian issues. Many credited his unique blend of executive experience, cultural grounding, and legislative know-how as essential to effective governance for OHA and Hawai'i Island alike.

(L-R) OHA Trustee Bob Lindsey and aides Kau'ikeaolani Wailehua and Kama Hopkins at Zippy's Nimitz - a favorite location for planning meetings during breakfast.

As Lindsey eventually stepped away from public office, his contributions remained visible across multiple sectors. From stronger legislative connections to thoughtful land stewardship and culturally rooted program development, his legacy endures in the institutions and lives he touched.

He helped lay the foundation for a more responsive, transparent, and strategic OHA, one that could evolve while holding firm to its cultural foundations. His inclusion in the Hawai'i Island Legislative Caucus set a new standard for collaboration between Native Hawaiian governance and state lawmakers.

More importantly, his work reflected a lifelong belief that Hawaiian leadership must be accountable not only to history, but to the future.

Lindsey's journey is one of quiet power and steady transformation. From our native forests to executive boardrooms, he brought a consistent sense of kuleana, compassion, and courage.

Beyond his many professional accomplishments, Lindsey was, above all, a devoted family man. He cherished his wife, Kathy, and found great pride and joy in their sons and their spouses. His mo'opuna (grandchildren) were a continual source of love and inspiration. His legacy lives on not only through his public service, but through the values, aloha, and kuleana he instilled in his 'ohana.

His life reminds us that real leadership is not loud. It is consistent, humble, deeply rooted in place, and oriented toward the wellbeing of others. The way Lindsey lived his motto, "always with aloha," is a lesson in grace and humility that continues to guide those who had the honor to work with him.

Hawai'i Island, and the larger lāhui, are better because Robert Kamaile Lindsey Jr. chose to serve. ■

*Kama Hopkins was a senior aide to Trustee Bob Lindsey for 15 years. He currently serves as a cultural advisor at Disney's Aulani Resort & Spa and on Nā Pua a Lunalilo, the nonprofit board of King Lunalilo Trust and Home. He is also a talented musician who has played professionally since 2001 and, as a member of the musical group Holunape, is a multiple Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award winner.*

# Navigating the Muliwai

## OHA seeks housing strategy consultant to advance Mana i Mauli Ola goals

By Elena Farden
OHA Sr. Director of Strategy & Implementation

In the face of Hawai'i's deepening housing crisis, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is charting a path forward rooted in systems transformation, cultural alignment, and community resilience.

Through the Mana i Mauli Ola Strategic Plan, OHA has committed to increasing Native Hawaiian access to high-quality, affordable, and culturally relevant housing options across the pae 'āina. As part of this journey, our Strategy & Implementation (S&I) Division is currently recruiting a housing strategy consultant to help us navigate this critical turning point.

Housing in Hawai'i is more than a policy issue; it reflects our collective health, stability, and sovereignty. For many Native Hawaiian 'ohana, secure housing remains out of reach, shaped by decades of dislocation, underinvestment, and systemic inequities.

Hawai'i currently ranks among the most expensive housing markets in the nation, with a median single-family home price exceeding $900,000 and a shortage of over 50,000 housing units statewide (*Hawai'i Business Magazine*, 2024). A recent UHERO report confirmed that while progress is being made, the pace of reform is not yet fast enough to address the scale of need (*Hawai'i News Now*, 2025).

The housing strategy consultant will play a pivotal role in helping OHA shift from reactive responses to proactive, community-informed housing solutions. This is not a conventional consultant role. It is a call for a systems navigator who can bridge innovation, Indigenous frameworks, and strategic planning. The consultant will help OHA strengthen pathways to non-traditional housing, such as 'ohana lots, multi-generational homes, accessory dwelling units, and co-operative land models. They will also support the advancement of policy alignment, inter-agency partnerships, and long-term infrastructure that reflects Native Hawaiian values.

Inspired by the concept of the muliwai – the rich estuaries where freshwater and saltwater meet – our recruitment approach is relational and intentional. We are seeking a collaborator who understands that true housing solutions require both technical skill and cultural fluency. The muliwai is a place of convergence, creation, and clarity. We believe that the right consultant will bring those same qualities to this role.

The consultant will also contribute to the design of scalable pilot programs matched with policy change. These efforts come at a time when small policy wins at the state level are offering renewed hope but require coordinated implementation to benefit Native Hawaiian communities equitably (Hawai'i Appleseed, 2025).

If you, or someone you know, is called to this work, we invite you to consider this opportunity to help shape the future of housing for the lāhui. Together, we can reclaim the systems that were not designed to serve us and transform them into pathways home. ■

*To inquire about this position, please visit our OHA employment opportunities at oha.org/jobs.*

# Auyoung Named OHA Deputy Chief of Staff

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

Alena Auyoung has been named the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) Board of Trustees' (BOT) Deputy Chief of Staff. Her start date was May 1.

As Deputy Chief of Staff, Auyoung will support OHA Board of Trustees Chief of Staff Summer Sylva in coordinating the operations of the board, advancing strategic initiatives, and fostering collaboration between the board, the administration, and community stakeholders – all in service to OHA's mission to improve the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians.

Sylva expressed her excitement about Auyong's onboarding, saying, "Alena's experience in governance, risk, and information management is already proving to be a great asset as we continue to strengthen the operations of the board and advance initiatives that serve the lāhui with integrity and purpose."

Auyoung has more than a decade of experience working in governance, risk management and auditing. She comes to OHA from Kamehameha Schools where she was the enterprise information governance manager with kuleana for the schools' information governance, records and content management, and historical archives within the context of data management.

Prior to that, Auyoung was a risk manager at American Savings Bank overseeing the bank's vendor risk program. She has also worked as a senior audit readiness consultant with consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton, both here in Hawai'i and on the continent.

OHA Deputy Chief of Staff Alena Auyoung. - *Courtesy Photo*

Auyoung, who serves as a key member of Board Chair Kaiali'i Kahele's office, said she joined OHA because being part of a mission-driven organization is deeply important to her. "Given this specific period for change, progress, and continuing the legacy of OHA, I was eager for an opportunity to contribute to the mission to the best of my ability," she said.

"I look forward to helping align the strategic priorities of the board of trustees with the broader mission of OHA, being a key facilitator between the trustees, executive leadership and stakeholders so that collective efforts lead to tangible benefits for the lāhui."

Auyoung has a bachelor's degree in accounting from Towson University in Maryland, and certification in information governance. She was also part of the 2017-2018 cohort of the Hawai'i Asia-Pacific Affairs Leadership Program's Pacific Forum. She lives in Makiki with her husband, Darin, and daughter, Roslyn. ■

# Moriwaki is New OHA IT Director

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) has filled another critical executive leadership position. Long-time IT executive Guy Moriwaki has joined OHA as the organization's Office of Technology Services director, effective May 16.

As IT director, Moriwaki will oversee OHA's technology operations and projects and guide the organization's overall technology direction. This includes the development, execution, support and evaluation of OHA's IT systems, designing and implementing IT strategies for OHA's infrastructure and platforms, and identifying and eliminating IT security risks.

Moriwaki comes to OHA with more than 40 years of experience in information technology. Before joining OHA, he most recently served as the senior manager of information technology at Hawai'i Gas where he led technology and security initiatives that supported capital improvement projects across the pae 'āina.

Prior to that, Moriwaki was with O'ahu Transit Services for 31 years, serving as its director of information technology for the last 26 of those years, leading numerous enterprise-wide initiatives and modernizing critical infrastructure systems. His IT experience includes application development, network engineering, cybersecurity, SaaS solutions, telecommunications and Microsoft technologies.

Moriwaki reports to OHA Chief Operating Officer Kēhaulani Pu'u.

"Nui ko'u hau'oli i ko Guy hana 'ana me mākou ma ke Ke'ena Kuleana Hawai'i (I am delighted to have Guy working with us at OHA)," said Pu'u. "He comes with

OHA Office of Technology Services Director Guy Moriwaki. - *Photo: Jason Lees*

years of technology experience in both government and private agency settings and has worked with large and small teams.

"His knowledge and experience will help us to strengthen and better safeguard our current IT systems, while also bringing new and innovative technologies to help us carry out our work with greater efficiencies. I can already see his passion, enthusiasm, critical thinking and problem-solving skills at work here at the organization. I look forward to the contributions he will make to support OHA's work on behalf of our Kānaka 'Ōiwi."

"I am excited to apply my experience towards advancing OHA's mission," Moriwaki said. "Throughout my career I have long been guided by the belief that the strategic use of technology can empower our communities and improve the ways that we can serve our lāhui."

A graduate of Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, Moriwaki has a bachelor's degree in business administration and computer information systems from Hawai'i Pacific University. ■

# In the Footsteps of the Aliʻi

## UH haumāna explore Kalākaua's and the Hawaiian Kingdom's legacy in Japan

By Brandi Jean Nālani Balutski and Willy Kauai

A group of University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa haumāna and faculty traveled through Japan this spring, following the path of King David Laʻamea Kalākaua's historic 1881 visit as well as other travels by Hawaiian aliʻi and haumāna in the 19th century.

Their nine-day journey in March 2025, part of the UH Mānoa Native Hawaiian Student Services' (NHSS) Hawaiian Youths Abroad (HYA) program, connected them to a pivotal moment in Hawaiian history – one that is being brought back to life.

Japan 1881, Seated L to R: Prince Komatsu Akihito, King Kalākaua, Count Sano Tsunetami; standing L to R: Col. Charles H. Judd, Tokuno Ryosuke, William N. Armstrong.

Kalākaua traveled the world to build diplomatic relationships as well as to reaffirm the relationships that his royal predecessors and other Hawaiian officials had already established. During his visit to Japan in March 1881, he met with the emperor to discuss revising established treaty relations between the Hawaiian Kingdom and Japan. That treaty, stored away for 154 years, was retrieved during the HYA Japan visit, providing a rare glimpse into Hawaiʻi's international past.

"As a Kanaka ʻŌiwi history student, seeing the original treaty between the Hawaiian Kingdom and Japan was a surreal moment," said Kale Kanaeholo, who is pursuing a Ph.D. "I felt a sense of both humility and gratitude: haʻahaʻa for being in the same room as this living document and piece of our history, and aloha for Mōʻī Kalākaua."

### Vision of a Monarch

The NHSS HYA program is a reincarnation of a 19th century program by the same name created by the Hawaiian Kingdom legislature in 1880. The original Hawaiian Youths Abroad program provided funds to support 18 students who were sent abroad to study in six different countries between 1880 and 1892.

The students trained in fields such as engineering, medicine, art, music, military science and foreign languages, with the goal of returning home to serve their nation. Funded entirely by the Hawaiian Kingdom, it was one of the world's first government-sponsored study abroad programs.

UH Mānoa students, staff at the former home of Robert Walker Irwin, Hawaiian Kingdom consul in Japan. - *Courtesy Photos*

NHSS restarted the program in 2018, and has since designed and implemented four HYA program cohorts within UH Mānoa's Hawaiʻinuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge.

This year's cohort of 13 students and six faculty and staff explored Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka. On the journey were two UH Mānoa haumāna with remarkable connections to the past: Kuʻu Lunn, a geography graduate student, and Joy Nuʻuhiwa, an incoming political science graduate student – each of whom are direct descendants of one of Kalākaua's original HYA students.

### Piʻianāiʻa

"The Hawaiian Youths Abroad program has been a tremendous opportunity for me to learn and build upon a legacy of Hawaiian geography. One of the original HYA students was my great-great-grandfather Abraham St. Chad Piʻianāiʻa, who attended St. Chad's College in Denstone, England," said Lunn.

"Years later, he returned to use his education in service to his kingdom. As we explore the world, like our kūpuna did, I hope to share the knowledge and connections we gain with my family and community."

### Harbottle Hakuʻole

Nuʻuhiwa's great-great-grandfather, James Harbottle Hakuʻole, was only 10 years old when he and his brother, Isaac, were chosen to participate in King Kalākaua's visionary program. In 1882, the brothers from Kīpahulu, Maui, embarked on their journey – among the youngest students selected to study abroad.

"It's pretty heavy," Nuʻuhiwa reflected. "I didn't start exploring this history until I heard about this program, so it was incredibly meaningful to be able to do this for my family more than anything."

### Aliʻi footsteps

The NHSS group retraced Kalākaua's steps from 144 years ago, visiting some of the same train stations, temples, and even the former site of the Hawaiian Kingdom's consulate in Shiba.

NHSS hopes to continue to engage future students in international educational experiences around the world in service to the lāhui.

The Hawaiian Youths Abroad program is emblematic of NHSS programming design and philosophy, which engages students in research, history, and the educational excellence of kūpuna who came before.

### Bridging past and present

The inaugural HYA cohort traveled to France and England in 2018, followed by a journey to England and Italy in 2019. In 2024, UH Mānoa students and faculty followed the path of 19th-century Hawaiians in Tahiti.

A fifth iteration of the program is slated for summer 2026 to focus on the Hawaiian footprint in the Pacific Northwest. Each program has a tailored curriculum that explores the themes of Hawaiian education, diplomacy and travel to those countries during the 19th century. To date, 48 Hawaiian undergraduate and graduate students from UH Mānoa have participated. ■

*For more on their journey, visit manoa.hawaii.edu/nhss/learn/.*

*Willy Kauai is the director of UH Mānoa's Native Hawaiian Student Services and Brandi Jean Nālani Balutski is a research specialist. Together, they have kuleana for leading the Hawaiian Youths Abroad program under the umbrella of the Hawaiʻinuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge.*

## Faces of the Diaspora

# Merging Kuleana and Kōkua With a Love of Literature

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

Literature is the connecting line of Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada's most poignant moments.

She recalled the rush of pride and delight when the librarian hung her photo on the wall as the first student to finish the summer reading program. And it was among the shelves of Borders Bookstore that college-aged Pelayo-Lozada got to know her future husband.

Sixteen years later, Pelayo-Lozada worked her way up from library page to president of the American Library Association – the first Kanaka Maoli to hold the position.

"Our Hawaiian values of kuleana and kōkua really were ingrained in me so much," Pelayo-Lozada, 40, said. "To make sure that we're seen and represented in all of those spaces is extremely important to me."

Born and raised in Torrance, California, as a youngster Pelayo-Lozada felt more drawn to reading than anything else. She danced for a couple years in her father's hālau, The Kalani Islanders, but her resolve quickly faded. Instead, family pictures of Pelayo-Lozada often captured her with a comic or chapter book in hand – likely the *Goosebumps* or *The Baby-Sitters Club* series, her childhood favorites.

Her mother worked as a library technician at El Camino College. "My mom always brought us home stacks of books when I was a kid," Pelayo-Lozada smiled.

Her maternal side is Haole, with some of her ancestors arriving in America before the Revolutionary War began in 1765. Meanwhile, her father – a travel agent – claims Hawaiian, Filipino and Portuguese ancestry.

Pelayo-Lozada's paternal grandparents – both Kānaka 'Ōiwi – were born on O'ahu, though they met in Oakland where her grandfather served in the military. After the couple wed, they moved to Santa Monica for her grandfather's career in aerospace. Her grandparents later helped establish the 'Ahahui 'o Lili'uokalani Hawaiian Civic Club of Southern California and the Alondra Park Ho'olaule'a.

Pelayo-Lozada credits her grandparents with keeping her Hawaiian roots close. Every day after school, she spent time at their home with her two siblings and numerous cousins. As a fourth grader, "the library was the first place that I was allowed to go by myself," Pelayo-Lozada said.

Growing up, her community was diverse, which made it easy for Pelayo-Lozada to embrace her identity. At Bishop Montgomery High School, "nobody questioned that I was Hawaiian," she said. "It was pretty normal."

While her Kānaka Maoli peers danced hula, Pelayo-Lozada ran cross country and worked at a fast-food stall in the mall. As a teenager, she hoped to one day be a veterinarian or an elementary school teacher.

After graduating high school in 2003, Pelayo-Lozada attended El Camino College for two years, joining the honor society and serving on its board. She also worked as an administrative assistant at St. Catherine Laboure Church and was employed at Borders Bookstore.

Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada. - *Photo: Alyse Makana Pelayo*

It was at the bookstore that a group of librarians first caught her attention, inspiring her to pursue that as a career path if teaching didn't work out.

Borders was also the place where she first noticed a young part-Filipino man wearing a Hawaiian shirt. When she met Christian Hanz-Lozada, all the pieces fell together: They had similar styles and shared a love of music and literature.

"We called each other soulmates," Pelayo-Lozada said.

She graduated with an associate's degree in philosophy in 2005, pivoting from her pursuit of a teaching degree after realizing it didn't suit her during credential classes. In 2006, she was hired as a library page.

"And that was the start of my library career," Pelayo-Lozada said.

She then attended the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) to obtain a bachelor's degree in sociology. In a seminar course, she wanted her research to focus on Kānaka Maoli. She found a couple books written by 'Ōiwi authors, "but a lot of them are about our people, not by our people or with our people," Pelayo-Lozada said. That inspired her to advocate for the lāhui.

She graduated in 2007 and soon afterwards married Christian at St. Catherine Laboure Church.

At 22, she began dancing hula with Kaulana ka Hale Kula 'o Nā Pua 'o ka Āina under Kumu Hula Randy Kaulana Chang – a commitment that lasted almost a decade.

She later returned to UCLA for her master's degree, attending its library school program. Learning under prominent children's librarians like Virginia Walter and Clara Chu, Pelayo-Lozada said her mentors helped her connect her culture, education, family and community to her work.

Her thesis explored how information is disseminated in the Hawaiian diaspora of Los Angeles.

After graduating in 2009, Pelayo-Lozada worked part-time librarian jobs for three years until 2012, when she secured her first full-time role as the children's librarian at the Glendale Central Public Library. Two years later, Pelayo-Lozada was hired as a librarian by the city of Rancho Cucamonga.

In 2016, she moved to the Palos Verdes Library District to serve as the young readers librarian. She was promoted to adult services assistant manager in 2018 – a role she held until 2023.

Separately, Pelayo-Lozada led the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association as its president from 2016 to 2017 and as its executive director from 2019 to 2022. She became president of the American Library Association in 2022.

"It was a whirlwind year," Pelayo-Lozada said. She gave 44 keynote addresses and panels, plus more than 80 interviews, across 10 states and four countries.

In 2024, the city of Glendale made her its assistant director of library, arts and culture. Last July, she moved to the position of acting director before taking over the job permanently in March.

Pelayo-Lozada and her husband now reside in San Pedro, though they often discuss moving to Hawai'i. "The further I go in my career, the more the calling is for me to potentially go [home] someday," Pelayo-Lozada said.

But today, Pelayo-Lozada is focused on raising scholarship money for Pacific Islander women through the Hawai'i's Daughters Guild of California. And while the couple remains close to their families on the West Coast, Pelayo-Lozada is figuring out her place in its Hawaiian diaspora community. ■

# The Battle for Maui: Part 2

By Kirby M. Wright

*"The Battle for Maui" is a two-part work of creative nonfiction by Kirby M. Wright, an award-winning ʻŌiwi poet, novelist and playwright.*

We make the reef of Kahului Bay. I search for an omen.

A honu surfaces. Our sails crack in the wind. The mountain peaks are hidden by clouds except for ʻĪao, the one shaped like an ihe. Makaʻāinana onshore watch us advance. Kaʻiana, in my lead canoe, finds a reef passage that cuts through the coral. We follow.

The villagers flee from the shoreline. I hold ʻOlopū. This green blade is as sharp as manō teeth. My men shake their spears and knock their clubs against the canoes. They are anxious to fight. The sea here is milky blue. We glide up the sandy shore. Behind the beach is the valley.

Young slides our wide-mouthed Lōpaka across the sand on its koa sled. He is the gunpowder. Smith is the fuse. Kekūhaupiʻo removes the ʻiako (outrigger booms) and the ama (floats) from our canoes.

There will be no retreat, even if our backs are to the sea. Kaʻiana hands me the totem. I raise Kū – the red feathers on his head bristle. This is a good sign. I tell my men, "I mua e nā pōkiʻi, e inu i ka wai ʻawaʻawa. ʻAʻohe hope e hoʻi mai ai." Forward my younger brothers and drink of the bitter waters. There is no hope of retreat.

"The Cannon Lōpaka" by artist Brook Kapūkuniahi Parker. - *Image Courtesy of Brook Parker (hawaiianatart.org)*

My island once tasted defeat on Maui when ʻĪao Stream was clogged with the bodies of Kohala warriors. But our men fought on, even after Kapakahi and his killers joined Kahekiliʻs crescent in the valley. The giant smashed Kohala men with a stone club and broke the backs of so many that they fled for the cliffs. Kapakahi gave chase. He threw our warriors off the cliff into the stream below.

Kekūhaupiʻo tells me we are being watched. He points up. I see a man on the ridge perched on a mānele (palanquin). He has a spyglass. Men support the mānele on their shoulders.

Kalanikūpule, once a master of the pīkoi (tripping club), is now too weak to walk. His lust for rum withered his arms and legs, making him as weak as an old wahine. He must be carried to the battle yet still commands.

I send scouts into the valley and see fear in their eyes when they return. They speak of an army twice our size. But size alone does not win battles.

We march over wet earth shadowed by koa. The ʻauwai (channels) in the earth flow with water meant for loʻi deep in the valley. It troubles me to have my men trample through channels used to grow taro.

We reach an enemy crescent stretched between valley walls. The ground here is soggy and terraced. Rain begins. This soft battlefield favors the defenders. "Makawalu," I call. I want to flank my army with elite koa warriors.

Squads form left and right of my main force. Kekūhaupiʻo brings me the bowl. I drink and share ʻawa with my fellow warriors. If the enemy swarms from the sides, the koa will slaughter them like hogs before they reach my main army. The bowl empties. I order the Hao-

SEE **THE BATTLE FOR MAUI** ON **PAGE 11**

## THE BATTLE FOR MAUI

Continued from page 10

les to sled our cannons forward. Ka'iana joins the front line with his musket men. The cannons are aimed.

Young fills Lōpaka with black powder while Davis sticks in a fuse. The fuse sparks – the big cannon booms. Muskets fire. The small cannons shoot first volleys. The Haoles reload and volley again. Bodies pile up in lo'i. The black fog of gunpowder drifts into the valley.

The enemy crescent breaks, its warriors fleeing for 'Īao Stream. Some claw their way up the valley walls. A few wail war cries and charge. Ka'iana cuts them down. Those reaching us die quickly. Ke'eaumoku plunges his iron dagger into a Maui man's chest.

The fog clears. Scouts spot another crescent waiting deeper in. Maui warriors peer over the top of the pā pōhaku, stonewalls dividing this valley into districts. I order the cannons forward. 'Ō'ō (digging sticks) with sharpened points have been abandoned by the farmers. Our feet trample huli (baby taro). Our attack will hurt the maka'āinana's food supply. For that I grieve.

"Fire!" says John Young. Cannon volleys shatter a stonewall. The second crescent crumbles. They regroup and swarm. I call for the hoahānau (bretheren). My elite charge into this swarm, fighting hand-to-hand. They push the enemy south until their warriors are cornered between valley wall and stream. Most of the enemy have abandoned their weapons and can only hurl stones. Killing them is easy. 'Īao Stream turns red with the blood of Maui men.

And what of Kalanikupule? My half-brother has left the ridge on his mānele. Scouts tell me his bodyguards are paddling him to O'ahu, where our father rules. I must challenge him there. ■

# Wearing Tradition in the Kamehameha Day Parade

By Hannah Ka'iulani Coburn

It was barely 7:00 a.m. and already an excited crowd was forming along the sidewalks fronting 'Iolani Palace in downtown Honolulu. The clear skies and bright sun signaled a very sunny Saturday – a perfect day for the annual King Kamehameha Celebration Floral Parade.

As parade-goers sought their perfect parade-viewing vantage point, inside the palace grounds within the 'Iolani Barracks – which once housed the Hawaiian Kingdom's Royal Guard – 12 kāne were reverently preparing to represent Kamehameha I and his warriors in the parade.

Kamuela Wassman, who portrayed Kamehameha I in this year's parade, is dressed by Ocean Kaowili (left) and Kumu Rick San Nicolas (right), with kōkua from longtime parade participant Makani Tabura (center).

The kāne who represented Kamehameha I, his warriors, and retainers on the "Mō'ī" float in front of 'Iolani Baracks prior to the parade. Those representing ali'i are garbed in authentic feathered 'ahu 'ula and mahiole created by noted master of traditional featherwork Kumu Rick San Nicolas. - *Photos: Hannah Ka'iulani Coburn*

Of any role in the parade, this is the greatest honor and kuleana. And this year, unlike in years past, the attire they donned for the parade took Hawaiian artistry and authenticity to a whole new level.

Ocean Kaowili has been actively involved with the Kamehameha Day parade for about 45 years – and for more than 20 of those years he has been responsible for the dressing and placement of the warriors on the parade's "Mō'ī" or "King" float.

In previous years, the warriors' parade attire was fashioned from modern synthetic fabrics and materials. This year, however, the warriors were resplendent in feathered 'ahu 'ula (cloaks) and mahiole (helmets) fashioned by, and under the guidance of, Kumu Hulu Nui Rick San Nicolas, a noted master of traditional featherwork.

"I participated in Kumu Rick's feather workshop over a year ago, and while I was in that workshop I was inspired to have a conversation with him," Kaowili recalled.

Knowing that the synthetic cloaks worn in the parade for so many years were in disrepair, Kaowili and San Nicolas began to talk about using authentic 'ahu 'ula and mahiole to dress the men on the parade's Mō'ī float.

San Nicolas began learning the art of feather lei-making in 1999. As a self-taught practitioner, he researched the ancient art form, frequently referring to a book called *Feather Lei as an Art*, written by renowned mother and daughter feather lei-making experts the late Mary Louise Kekuewa and Paulette Nohealani Kahalepuna.

Their dedication and knowledge were instrumental in helping San Nicolas perpetuate the art form. "Featherwork is the most important art form in Hawai'i because it represented the ali'i," San Nicolas said.

Traditionally, feather cloaks were reserved for Hawai'i's chiefly class and were symbols of the utmost ranking. The cloaks were constructed from harvesting the feathers of native birds such as 'i'iwi, 'apapane, mamo, and 'ō'ō, then bundling the feathers and tying them onto netting.

The birds were not killed for their vibrant plumage. They were captured by kia manu, specialized bird catchers, who would release them back into the forest after plucking just a few feathers.

Due to the highly endangered status of the few surviving species of native Hawaiian birds, their feathers are no longer used. Today, San Nicolas ethically sources feathers from Chinese golden pheasants and Lady Amherst pheasants to craft 'ahu 'ula and mahiole.

Inside the 'Iolani Barracks, each warrior waited to be called to be individually dressed by San Nicolas and Kaowili. As each kāne stood proudly, they were garbed in 'ahu 'ula – and some in mahiole – the sacred symbols of Hawai'i's ruling chiefs.

Each individual 'ahu 'ula and mahiole is a masterpiece that requires hours of work.

"It probably takes around 150 hours – and that's after all the prep work – to create an 'ahu 'ula," San Nicolas said. "The feather helmets – once I do the feathering – I can finish in a week's time, but that's working up to 18 hours a day," he added.

"A lot goes into the process [but] it's what I love to do."

Six of the 'ahu 'ula used in the parade were borrowed from the Hawai'i Convention Center. Following the parade, they were returned to their displays.

San Nicolas hopes that since they have established a precedent for having real 'ahu 'ula on the King's float, parade organizers will not go back to using imitation cloaks.

"The biggest part of this was getting the public to see [them] in person, out in the open, to see the 'ahu 'ula in the sunlight," San Nicolas said. "And my words to the warriors before we walked out was 'remember what this is for. You are representing our history, our past, our ali'i.'"

"Ka wela o ka ua" is an idiom in Mary Kawena Pukui's book, *'Ōlelo No'eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings*. Translated it means "rain heated by the sun" – a reference to the warrior chiefs bedecked in feathered 'ahu 'ula and mahiole resembling rainbows.

When the warriors were finally dressed, they stood quietly in formation inside 'Iolani Barracks to receive a ceremonial blessing and a reminder of their kuleana.

Every year, Kaowili said that he tries to leave the kāne with words to inspire them. This year he quoted King Kamehameha. Addressing the men he said, "I mua e nā poki'i, a inu i ka wai 'awa'awa. 'A'ohe hope e ho'i mai ai" - Forward my younger brothers and drink of the bitter water (of battle). There is no hope of retreat.

"In other words, he's saying he is one of them, that we're all brothers, all 'ohana," Kaowili told the men.

"Although at the time, he was using those words to lead his warriors into battle, I use those same words to lead all of us into the future," Kaowili said. "If you think about the symbolism of going into battle, the intent is the future – because at the end of the battle there is something else to move forward to." ■

# Born of Two Oceans: The Life Story of Manuel "Manny" Veincent

By Cedric Duarte

Manuel "Manny" Veincent's *Born of Two Oceans* is a memoir told with the kind of rich, hard-earned clarity only kūpuna can offer.

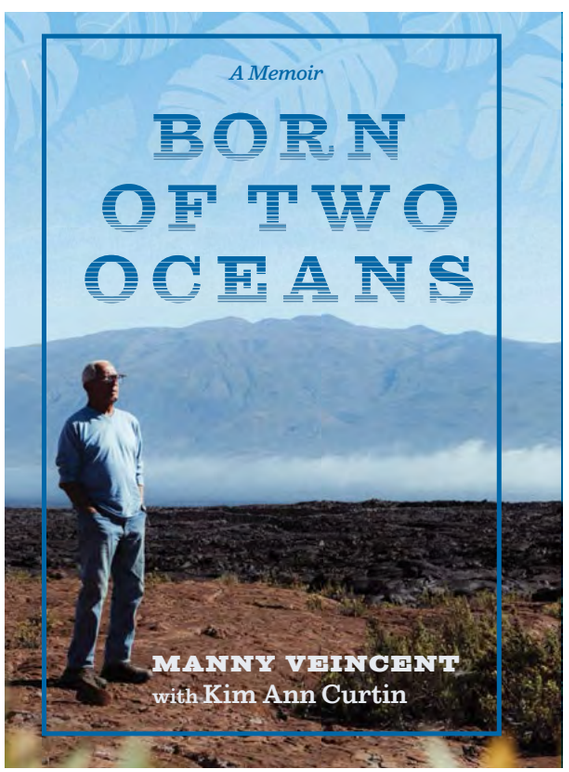
Through nine decades, he has lived many lives. He's been a Marine, mechanic, firefighter, canoe builder, conservationist, rancher, and mentor. Intertwined in each role is his work ethic and unwavering connection to the land, the ocean, and his Native Hawaiian identity.

The result is a powerful memoir that is deeply personal, at times hilarious, often unbelievable, and ultimately unforgettable.

With the help of co-author Kim Ann Curtin, Veincent has captured a life story that feels like sitting at the feet of your favorite uncle as he spins a yarn that leaves you both inspired and in awe.

His voice on the page is unmistakably his voice in real life. It's sharp, direct, and to the point. Uncle Manny, now 94-years-old, shifts effortlessly from memory to reflection. But make no mistake, this isn't just nostalgia. It is a story about a man trying to preserve a lifetime of knowledge and foundational responsibility that is rapidly vanishing.

"I'm one of the last now from the old folks," Uncle Manny said. "And when I go, if I don't document anything, then there's nothing. We're going to have a big zero, a big blank space, and people will never know."




Uncle Manny Veincent's newly published memoir chronicles his nine decades of life on Moku o Keawe during which he's been a mechanic, fire fighter, canoe builder, conservationist, rancher and mentor. It is a deeply personal recollection of a different time in Hawai'i's history presented in an effort to preserve a lifetime of 'ike and his unwavering connection to the land, the ocean, and his identity as Native Hawaiian. - *Photo: Cedric Duarte*

Raised on Hawaiian Home Lands in Keaukaha, in a time before fast food and computers, Uncle Manny walks readers through a Hawai'i that many today have only heard about. From boiling and straining tea to eating poi and canned sardines and sleeping on handmade lauhala mats. The level of detail is remarkable, particularly in terms of food, characters, and daily life.

You can almost taste the linalina pancakes with nucoa butter.

The storytelling is vivid and passionate. Names, personalities, and moments leap off the page with startling precision.

One of the book's greatest strengths is how seamlessly it weaves unrelated experiences into a cohesive life story. At one moment, Uncle Manny is swimming with sharks, and in the next, he is saving the endangered nēnē goose and apprenticing under a kahuna kālai wa'a.

Uncle shows us, with his lived experiences, how everything is interconnected. The logs that would become racing canoes speak to him, the sharks see him, and the mountains keep him safe.

"Firsthand," he says. "Nobody told me this. The land, the ocean, it's my experience. It's not what somebody told me; it's what I experienced myself in my lifetime, and if this is not documented now, we gonna lose all this."

His reflections on Hawaiian identity are timely and grounded. He speaks candidly about what he sees in today's youth. "They gotta push the culture forward themselves, the way it is now."

He offers hard truths about discipline, belief, and self-determination. But this isn't a scolding book. It's an invitation. "Young people, be yourself. Believe in yourself. Your ability. No more end to what you can do," he says.

Curtin, who spent years working with Veincent to shape the book, describes the collaboration as a "sacred journey." She likens it to having "front-row seats to history" and says her biggest challenge was getting Uncle to go beyond "just the facts." The result is a narrative that strikes a balance between humility and weight. Uncle doesn't brag, but his vast experience speaks for itself.

*Born of Two Oceans* is also full of humor and joy. Whether he's recounting a story about his grandfather running away from a hospital or dealing with a particularly difficult horse, Uncle Manny's life has no shortage of adventure. It's no wonder Curtin describes his life as "an orange that he squeezed every drop out of."

Veincent's telling of the early days of canoe paddling in Kawaihae delivers the club's genealogy and 50-year history. As a coach, Uncle Manny established a club reputation for rigorous training and led generations of keiki and adults alike toward a culture of excellence rooted in community pride.

At its core, *Born of Two Oceans* is a call to believe in yourself, in your place, and in your purpose. Throughout the book, discipline is not a lesson Uncle Manny preaches. It's one he lives.

From describing the intense physical preparation for canoe races, the rigor of the fire department, or the grit of ranching, his words return to the idea that success is the sum of personal effort, endurance, and discipline.

Again and again, the book reveals that believing in yourself isn't just about confidence. It's about commitment.

"Your body can do it," he says. "But your brain gotta be stronger."

In a world of shortcuts and easy exits, *Born of Two Oceans* teaches us that success in life resides in discipline and that Hawaiian values can guide us through any obstacle.

It's not just the story of one man. It's a reminder of how things used to be in Hawai'i and perhaps how they should still be. ■

# Living ʻŌlelo Niʻihau in the Diaspora

By Adam Keawe Manalo-Camp

In Kekaha, on the leeward side of Kauaʻi, the students at Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha don't just study Hawaiian culture – they live it, speak it, and write it in a version of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi that thrived uninterrupted throughout the 20th century when elsewhere in the pae ʻāina the Hawaiian language almost became extinct.

As the only Hawaiʻi charter school dedicated to ʻōlelo Niʻihau and the Niʻihau way of life, its mission is unlike that of any other school.

With 50 students from preschool through grade 12, and teachers often covering four grade levels at once, the school is small, but its purpose is expansive.

Every lesson is part of a larger effort to not only preserve ʻōlelo Niʻihau but to sustain the traditions of poʻe Niʻihau. Through fifth grade, ʻōlelo Niʻihau is the primary language of instruction. In sixth grade, English is introduced in half of the subjects.

At the head of this effort is Pootumu (principal) Tia Koerte. Born on Kauaʻi to a mother from Niʻihau, Koerte always wanted to be a teacher. Her original dream was to return to Waimea High School, her alma mater, and start a Hawaiian language program. And, after earning her degree in ʻike Hawaiʻi from UH Mānoa, she did just that. But after just one year, the program was cut and with it, her position.

Pootumu Tia Koerte

Pregnant and approaching her due date, Koerte received a call from the former principal of Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha. She went in for an interview and to her surprise, at nine months pregnant, she was hired on the spot. That was in 2009. She began as a teacher and, six years later, became principal.

"I thought that my dream job would be at Waimea High School, but it turns out [that] this job with my community is my dream job! Growing up, I struggled with my identity," Koerte reflected. "So, I see myself in a lot in the haumana. I am my students. Most of them were raised here in Kekaha and have never been to Niihau, but they are poe Niihau."

Helping to ground students in their identity shows up most clearly in Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha's book project, a schoolwide initiative that invites every student, every year, to write and illustrate a book entirely in ʻōlelo Niʻihau. The project is not only strengthening the students' language skills but also helping to build a growing archive of literature in the language.

"At first, we were using kaiapuni (Hawaiian language immersion) resources, which were okay, but they did not reflect what I call 'Niihauism' – the way that poe Niihau speak, feel, and see the world," Koerte explained. "My favorite example of a 'Niihauism' is poteoteo. The word

Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha haumāna at Puʻupuʻupaʻakai, the school's kai-based wahi pana in Kekaha. - Courtesy Photos

used in kaiapuni texts is pelehū. Both mean 'turkey.'"

ʻŌlelo Niʻihau also differs from standard Hawaiian in its use of the letter "T" and its omission of diacritical marks in its written form (ʻokina and kahakō). These distinctions do not merely reflect linguistic variation, but the language's enduring cultural independence.

To date, more than 450 books have been written by Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha students and staff in partnership with Hamline University. The school plans to expand to develop audio versions to preserve oral traditions as well.

"Most people haven't written even one book in their lifetime, but our haumana have written 13 by the time they graduate," Koerte said proudly.

These books demonstrate both fluency and a deep cultural connection. The school is not merely graduating students – it is graduating scholars grounded in their unique identity.

Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha's long-term goal is to reach 1,000 books and create the world's largest body of literature in ʻōlelo Niʻihau.

This growing archive stands in contrast to a history of erasure.

In 1896, the use of Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction was banned in public schools across Hawaiʻi following the 1893 overthrow of Queen Liliʻuokalani. Yet on Niʻihau, privately owned by the Sinclair-Robinson family, the language endured. Access to the island was, and continues to be, by invitation only. As a result, this unique form of ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi was never silenced.

Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha is carrying that legacy forward. Through the creation of books and community dialogue, the school is helping shape a standard for teaching this form of the Hawaiian language.

Haumāna work during Hale Wili, the school's kalo processing day. This is through a partnership between the school and Yadao Taro Farms in Makaweli Valley.

Community-led gatherings have become spaces for reflection about what it means to be of Niʻihau while living beyond it. "It is important that this process is led by poe Niihau so people within the community can share their manao," Koerte notes.

About 200 native speakers remain on Niʻihau, with another 200 or more living in the Makaweli, Kekaha, and Waimea districts of Kauaʻi. Because many Niʻihau families were awarded Hawaiian Home Land lots in Kekaha, the region has become a stronghold of Niʻihau's diaspora community.

But, like other Kānaka Maoli families, some Niʻihau families are now joining the growing diaspora on the continent.

"There was a tupuna, a manaleo," Koerte recalls. "He was born and raised on Niihau. But he needed someone to take care of him and none of his family lived in Hawaii, so he had to move to the continent. He was uprooted. It's really sad when that happens. Not only is it a loss to the Niihau community, but to all poe Hawaii."

Despite the modern pressures, the voice of Niʻihau remains unbroken. And at Ke Kula Niihau o Kekaha, students are not just learning – they are rewriting the narrative. ■

*Out of respect for the spelling conventions used in ʻōlelo Niʻihau, standard diacritical marks have not been used in quotes attributed to Pootumu Tia Koerte.*

# Restoration Effort Preserves 600-Year-Old Building Traditions

The 20-acre wahi pana of Kānei'olouma includes a heiau, house sites, a freshwater spring, lo'i with both irrigation ditches and above-ground aqueducts, fishponds, a hula mound and an amphitheater that was used for sporting events. This 600-year-old complex is currently being restored. - *Photos Courtesy of Hui Mālama o Kānei'olouma*

The Kānei'olouma restoration project is currently centered on two preservation efforts - clearing decades of debris from its ancient fishponds and restoring its interior walls. In these photos, 20 young apprentices are being trained in the ancient art of uhau humu pōhaku (dry stack masonry) by master stone masons such as Peleke Flores.

## Master craftsmen train next generation in traditional uhau humu pōhaku while an ancient fishpond system emerges from decades of neglect

By Moani Tolentino, Hui Mālama o Kānei'olouma

In a powerful act of cultural reclamation, Hui Mālama O Kānei'olouma (Hui) has embarked on an ambitious restoration project at Ke Kahua 'o Kāneiolouma (The Kāneiolouma Complex) on Kaua'i.

The Hui is simultaneously rebuilding ancient interior walls using traditional Hawaiian building methods, while clearing overgrowth from the complex's long-buried loko i'a (fishponds) – Hawai'i's sophisticated pre-contact aquaculture system. It is the most comprehensive restoration effort within this 20-acre wahi pana in modern times.

The Kānei'olouma Complex is a multipurpose cultural site that dates back to the 1400s. It included a heiau, house sites, a freshwater spring, lo'i with both irrigation ditches and above-ground aqueducts, and fishponds. It also included a hula mound and a large area situated in a natural amphitheater that was used for sporting events during Makahiki.

The restoration project centers on two critical cultural preservation efforts: master stone masons training 20 apprentices in the ancient art of uhau humu pōhaku (dry stack masonry) to restore interior walls, while a parallel effort is underway to clear decades of invasive species and debris from the ancient fishponds in the complex's southwest corner near the Wai'ōhai resort.

Supported by $425,000 in grants – $400,000 from the State of Hawai'i and $25,000 from the Historic Hawai'i Foundation – this work represents Phase III of a comprehensive cultural preservation effort to restore this 600-year-old village to its pre-contact state.

Led by master craftsman Peleke Flores, who trained under renowned Kumu Palani Sinenci, the restoration effort utilizes only traditional materials and protocols, ensuring cultural authenticity across all elements of the ancient village system.

"A lot of people would look at this and see just rocks. They don't know that there were taro patches here, and fishponds, and a whole Makahiki arena," said Flores. "Hopefully we can bring back some of those traditions and be able to teach this to the next generation."

Meanwhile, the fishpond restoration brings to light the sophisticated integration of ancient Hawaiian life, wherein freshwater from the sacred Wai'ōhai Spring once flowed through lo'i kalo before nourishing the loko i'a that provided sustainable protein sources.

After being buried for decades, these engineering marvels, unique to Hawai'i and a testament to the ingenuity of our ancestors, are once again becoming visible.

Kānei'olouma is in Po'ipū on Kaua'i's south shore. Visitors to the area can now witness living Hawaiian culture in action across multiple systems. Unlike museum displays, Kānei'olouma offers authentic cultural experiences wherein visitors can observe traditional building techniques, learn about integrated agriculture and aquaculture systems, and learn about the spiritual significance of this wahi pana.

When fully restored, the village will showcase traditional hale, functioning lo'i kalo connected to the fishponds by ancient irrigation channels, and the only intact sporting arena in the pae 'āina. Plans include an interpretive visitor center offering guided cultural experiences to connect modern audiences with the sophisticated, sustainable practices of ancient Hawaiian civilization.

Hui Mālama o Kānei'olouma Executive Director and Po'o Rupert H. Rowe has been actively working to restore the complex since 1998. "As long as I walk on this land the mission is the complete the past so that we can have a future in our culture; so that we can share the sacred Kānei'olouma Heiau with the world and our island," he said.

The Hui is launching a two-year campaign to raise $5-7 million to complete the restoration of all the village's systems culminating in a statewide Makahiki festival planned for fall 2027. ■

*For more information or to support the restoration effort, visit kaneiolouma.org.*

*Hui Mālama O Kānei'olouma is a nonprofit established to protect, restore, and perpetuate the heiau complex as a living cultural preserve. Under a stewardship agreement with the County of Kaua'i, effective through 2037, the Hui leads all restoration efforts there with guidance from cultural experts, practitioners, and community volunteers.*

# Engaging With the Food We Eat

By Lisa Huynh Eller

A Kaua'i nonprofit focused on increasing local food production and resiliency is turning its attention to partnering with more Native Hawaiian farmers to meet the local food needs of the island's North Shore communities.

'Āina Ho'okupu o Kīlauea (AHK), together with partnering farmers, ranchers and fishermen, produces more than 10,000 pounds of produce, meat and fish each month. That is enough to fill 250 donated farm boxes weekly and serve about 100 to 150 people daily through AHK's retail space, Johnny's Market.

But unless the organization can increase its production or support other farmers, it will not be able to meet the needs of the community.

To address this, AHK is developing an innovative 2-acre model of food production designed to connect Native Hawaiian farmers with AHK's financial resources and agricultural expertise.

The idea is for AHK to partner with grantees of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands' (DHHL) Kuleana Homestead Program, which allows beneficiaries to lease unimproved, off-grid homestead lots for agriculture.

Through the 2-acre model, AHK would provide all the infrastructure needed for farmers to start raising pigs, chicken and sheep and to grow plants like banana, 'ulu and pineapple. The farmers would provide the labor and land. The model is designed to be a high-yield, low-input system, requiring only about 1-2 hours a day of feeding animals and harvesting food, said AHK Executive Director Yoshito L'Hote.

"The goal of this model is for everybody to engage with the food they eat. [The grantees] get to support the community by providing locally grown food. But also, in case of emergency, there'll be up to 100 breadfruit trees planted, hundreds of pigs, and thousands of chickens raised. Those are the elements that provide food resiliency and economy," said L'Hote.

'Āina Ho'okupu o Kīlauea Executive Director Yoshito L'Hote and his 'ohana (l-r): Production Manager Kalei O Ka Lanakila Waipa, Yoshito L'Hote, Yosh's daughter Ililani Tomi L'Hote, wife Jennifer Kainoamakua Waipa, and son Farm Manager Maluhia L'Hote. - *Courtesy Photos*

Based on a recent financial analysis conducted by AHK with support from philanthropic donors and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), the initial start-up cost for each farm is estimated at $80,000, and the investment would pay for itself in about three years.

After this initial period, all the infrastructure is turned over to the farmers. If they choose to continue with the system, there is the potential to generate $50,000 to $60,000 per year in revenues. AHK is coordinating with DHHL to arrange a field visit so the department can provide feedback about the feasibility of their plan.

A key part of the model is being in proximity to a retail and processing space – which is where Johnny's Market comes in, said L'Hote. The market, which opened in 2023, was a critical piece of making AHK's operations financially viable. Johnny's Market, which sells only Hawai'i-grown products, has helped shift the center's funding from 80% grants and philanthropy to 80% earned income.

"The biggest change since we opened the market [has been] financial relief. It's the final piece to the puzzle," said 25-year-old Kalei Waipa, AHK's production manager and field supervisor for the past six years. "We finally have a store that has allowed us to sell our vegetables and bring in financial income to supplement everything."

Johnny's Market is part of AHK's Kīlauea Community Agricultural Center (KCAC), which includes a 75-acre farm, education center, pavilions and food processing facilities. The property, acquired by the Kīlauea community through a contested case hearing, is now owned by the County of Kaua'i and leased by AHK.

The market is named after the late Johnny Akana, a founding member and president of Kīlauea Agriculture Association, who pushed for the community to be able to farm the 75 acres. Thanks in part to Akana's efforts, AHK has been farming the area for the past decade.

"We have discovered how much everybody wants to buy local, fresh, high-quality produce and, because there's nobody between the farmers and the customers, 60-70% of the money made from the sales of produce is going to the farmers – which is not the case in a regular grocery store. It's more like 15%," said L'Hote.

"We've also eliminated so much of the waste of transportation, the carbon footprint, the plastic wrapping, the cardboard, and the fuel to distribute. We're creating a way healthier food system that takes into consideration the impact on the 'āina and the people."

Part of cultivating sustainability for such a system is to empower the next generation of farmers and local food advocates, according to L'Hote. "It's that generation that needs to see the value and push the boat forward." By design, the team at AHK is comprised mostly of employees in their 20s and 30s – including L'Hote's son and daughter.

Waipa said engaging the younger generation in farming is important. He is already seeing a shift in how his peers value local food and local food systems. This, coupled with a growing dissatisfaction with higher-paying but less-satisfying jobs, may push more people from "Generation Z" (those currently ages 13-28) to return to the land.

AHK's vision is to give the upcoming generation access to land and housing, allowing them to farm and mālama 'āina not as a job, but as a lifestyle that increases food availability, economic diversity and security for generations to come.

"You can only do a job that makes you money, but doesn't make you happy, for so long," said Waipa. "I have a friend in construction who I worked with before on a farm. He says he's not nearly as satisfied with his job. He's making more money, but he's not feeling fulfilled and happy. I think that's been a huge thing for our generation." ■

Because they've eliminated so many "middle-men" 60-70% of the money made from the sale of produce at Johnny's Market goes back to the farmers. In regular grocery stores, farmers get around 15% of the profit.

Johnny's Market, which opened in 2023 and only sells Hawai'i-grown products, has made AHK's operations financially viable, shifting their funding to 80% earned income.

## The Wai'ale'ale Project

# Breaking Down Educational Barriers on Kaua'i

By Donalyn Dela Cruz

"I never thought college was for me."

It's a sentiment shared by many high school graduates who lack the support or encouragement to see college as a real option. It's something that Vanessa Visitacion believed too when she graduated from Waimea High in 2014, until the Wai'ale'ale Project showed her what was possible.

A referral from 'Ahahui Ka'ahumanu on Kaua'i led Visitacion to the Wai'ale'ale Project at Kaua'i Community College (KCC), marking the beginning of path forward. The program supports high school graduates and adults who may not have otherwise considered college, helping them pursue and complete their first year of higher education.

The Wai'ale'ale Project creates a more accessible path to educational success by providing participants with financial support that covers tuition, books, and fees, along with mentoring, personalized counseling, and advising.

Program Coordinator Lahea Salazar explains, "Our motto is just come and try college. Give us a year."

After her first year in college, Visitacion became a peer mentor. It was an experience that sparked her interest in a career centered on helping others. Attending KCC helped her realize how much she enjoyed guiding those who, like her, faced difficult circumstances but still hoped for something more.

Today, she holds a master's degree in social work from the University of Hawai'i.

"As I went through the social work program, I realized I wanted to improve the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians. So, I thought I was going to go into healthcare as a social worker, but instead, my path led me toward higher education," Visitacion said from her office at KCC, where she now works as an academic counselor.

Her story underscores the persistent barriers to higher education for Native Hawaiians – and the life-changing impact of programs designed to break them down.

According to a 2023 report by the Native Hawaiian Education Council, nearly 65% of Native Hawaiians aged 25 and older cited financial need as a barrier to further education. Within the University of Hawai'i system, only 41% of Native Hawaiian students earn a degree within six years, compared to nearly 73% of their Asian peers.

These disparities are compounded by the practice of grouping Native Hawaiians under the broader "Asian/Pacific Islander" label, which obscures their distinct needs.

Programs like the Wai'ale'ale Project are vital for addressing these gaps by offering culturally grounded and comprehensive support.

The Wai'ale'ale Project began in 2010 with the support of UH Foundation Board of Trustee Jim Lally, along with Kaua'i Community College, the Hawai'i Community Foundation, and several individual and community donors. In a past interview with the UH Foundation, Lally explained his motivation:

"Because I was a disadvantaged kid, all I needed was a little help, just a little help and a little encouragement and it went a long, long way. That's the same thing here. Here are all these resources, all this talent, all these amazing people. All they need is to understand that people believe in them and will give them a chance."

A chance is not a one-time occurrence in the Wai'ale'ale Project, which values one-on-one support.

Wai'ale'ale Project mentors with Program Coordinator Lahea Salazar (seated, center front). (L-R) Siera Alaibilla-Lagunding, Sierra Cun-Lara, Janine Salud, Kamalewa Diego, Joshua Pappas, Precious Kahokuloa, and Ku'ulei Palomares. - *Courtesy Photos*

Vanessa Visitacion (r) as a student back in 2017 with her peer mentor, Momi Ka'ahanui (l).

"We use hānai aku, hānai mai," said Salazar. "So, first we pull them up. 'Okay, you can do this!' We're like their best cheerleaders and guides. And then next year, we want them to be able to help themselves and also help others."

Visitacion is a powerful example of how far a Wai'ale'ale Project participant can go when given the right support. Her educational journey has been shaped and sustained by the encouragement that she now hopes to emulate.

"I want to help open and introduce opportunities for Native Hawaiians to reach their educational and career goals. I want to help them navigate the complexities of higher ed and provide them with intentional advising and not just transactional advising," said Visitacion.

"I want them to know that even if they graduate from KCC, I will still be a resource they can come to just like how Lahea was my resource I went to when I decided to go back to school to pursue a higher degree."

While it is commonly known that college credentials open pathways into living-wage careers, studies also show a correlation to better health.

The Wai'ale'ale Project serves individuals from Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, with Native Hawaiians making up an average of 70% of each cohort. Participation is by referral, followed by an application process. The program has grown significantly over the years from about 40 students in its first cohort to 127 in its most recent.

Among the Wai'ale'ale Project's older participants, Salazar recalled a 56-year-old woman who earned her associate degree and was then able to step into a managerial role.

"It helped her excel and feel better about her work — she had already been doing the job, just without the title or the pay," Salazar said.

There are many examples where Salazar is overwhelmed with pride when thinking of those who are not only succeeding in their careers but making a difference for others, like Visitacion.

"What a gift to be a part of a young life, who graciously nurtured the seeds planted, growing up into an 'Ōiwi leader in our community," she said.

The Wai'ale'ale Project has inspired similar outreach efforts across the University of Hawai'i system. It's a testament to what is possible when students are seen, supported, and believed in, no matter their circumstance. ■

# Kaua‘i’s Musubi Movement: Small Bites, Big Dreams

## Kaua‘i resident Andrew Kakalia talks about The Musubi Truck’s success and feeding the island’s keiki

By Christine Hitt

A Kaua‘i food truck is gaining popularity as it has added two new locations within one year’s time. The Musubi Truck, located in Kapa‘a, Kōloa and Līhu‘e, has a nicely sized menu, with musubi, a poke bowl and bentos. But it’s the assortment of musubi, such as ‘ahi katsu, miso chicken and kalbi beef, that makes you want to try them all. There’s even a deep-fried Spam musubi.

“Our vision pretty much was to just create a kind of basic food truck that kind of just put a little spin onto what we all grew up eating,” says co-owner Andrew Kakalia, who is also the chef at the Kōloa location. The idea also seemed fitting for Kaua‘i, since the island is said to be the birthplace of the Spam musubi.

“We just wanted to produce good food at an affordable cost, because everything is so expensive here on island,” Kakalia adds.

He was a fulltime lifeguard, when he and his wife, Kelly, opened the first location in Kapa‘a in 2020. They own the business with another Kaua‘i couple, Nicolette and Jeffrey Aguinaldo, the chef who came up with the recipes. “I call him ‘Food Lord,’” Kakalia says. “That guy is a genius with food.”

Although they had a well thought-out plan, Kakalia admits he had some doubts at first. “I was like, ‘What are we doing? This is crazy.’ The pandemic hit and I was like, ‘see, I knew it.’”

But instead of giving up, the owners stuck through it. Kakalia quit his job as a lifeguard to go full time and then COVID shut everything down. “It was logistically the worst time to quit my job, but I knew The Musubi Truck was going to work out,” he says.

Kakalia was right. When the shutdown ended, sales picked up. Last year, they added a second Musubi Truck in Kōloa. Within six months of that, they opened a third — their first brick-and-mortar location — near Kalapakī Beach in Līhu‘e.


The Musubi Truck team includes (l-r) co-owners Nicolette and Jeffrey Aguinaldo, co-owners Andrew and Kelly Kakalia, and Katelynn and Johnny Rapozo - Johnny is their general manager. - *Courtesy Photos*

There are now three The Musubi Truck locations: Kapa‘a, Kōloa, and a new storefront in Līhu‘e.

It had always been a goal for them to expand, and they are living their dream. Now, they are looking into franchising the business. “Brah, honestly, our vision is to expand globally. I see a musubi truck, no joke, everywhere,” Kakalia says.

### Feeding the keiki

Born and raised on Kaua‘i, Kakalia sees and recognizes the importance of improving the island’s food security. When The Musubi Truck first opened, he felt a desire to help the community. They started a Feed Our Keiki program three years ago and recently founded a nonprofit by the same name.

“When we first opened, I would just drive to the skate park every day and hook up all the kids with musubis,” he says. “And then we got a little smarter, and we started just printing out tickets.” Kids could then take the ticket and redeem a meal at one of their locations. One keiki meal consists of an OG Spam musubi with chips or mandarin orange and juice.

Donations of $5 feed one meal to keiki, who are in need. “We had someone donate, like, 1,000 bucks, so we got to go and give hundreds of cards to different people,” he says. Sometimes they’ll give a stack of cards to local school principals.

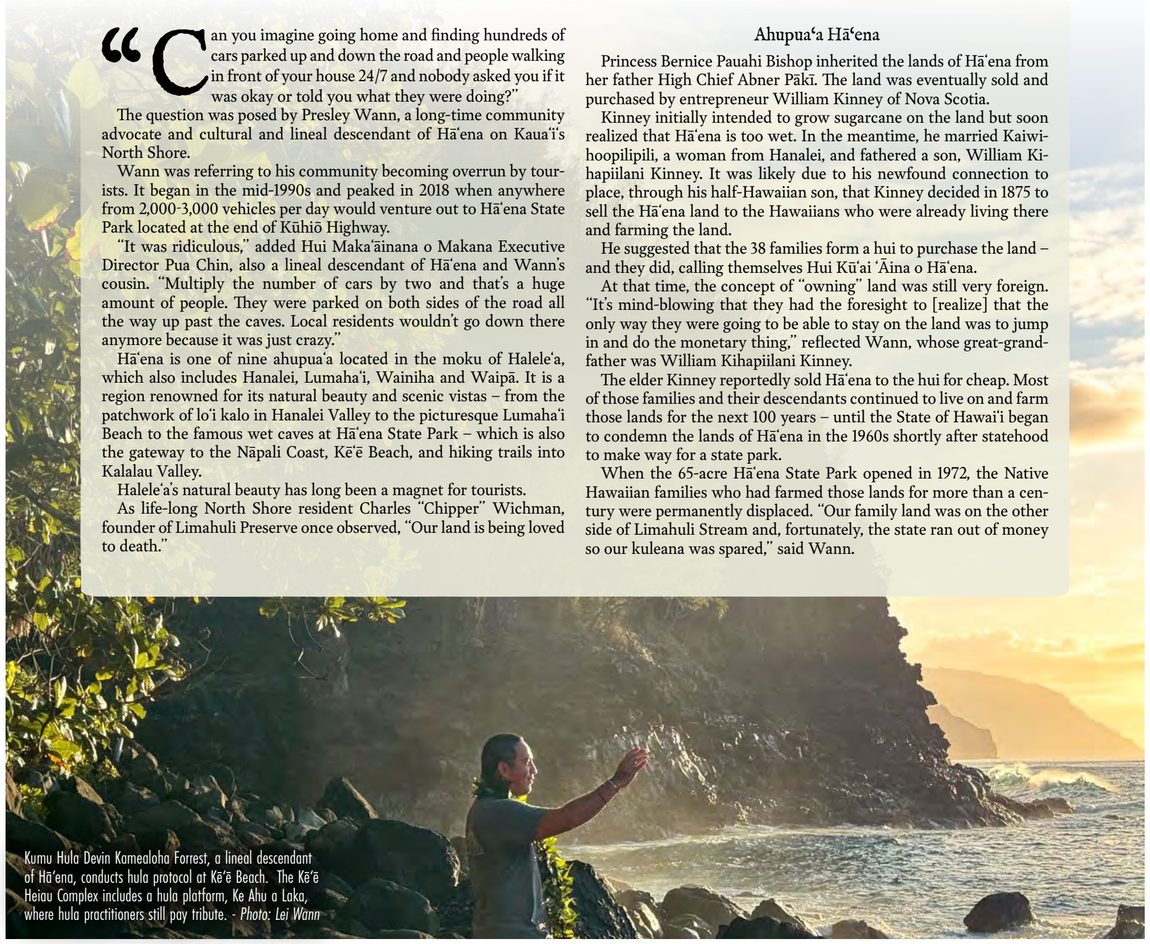
“Just the little smiles, just the smiles that you see on kid’s faces you know. It’s pretty radical,” says Kakalia, who is also a father of four. “You can see a little bit of shame in the family, sometimes in the parents, but you don’t see any of that in the kids. They’re just smiling ear to ear and the joy is radiant.”

The program, which is now in its fourth year, has served over 10,000 meals. “You know, a lot of people, this is local style, they’re not going to say they need a hand, you know. Most people they [tend to say], ‘Don’t help me, I got this,’” Kakalia says. “When our heart is like, ‘No, brah, we want to bless those that need it.’” ■

Some of the delectable items on The Musubi Truck's menu include (l-r): Miso Happy Chicken musubi, Chicken Katsu musubi and their fresh ahi poke bowl available three ways - "local" style, "spicy mayo" and "ginger soy."

# Reclaiming Hāʻena

By Dan Ahuna, OHA Trustee for Kauaʻi & Niʻihau and Puanani Fernandez-Akamine



Kumu Hula Devin Kamealoha Forrest, a lineal descendant of Hāʻena, conducts hula protocol at Kēʻē Beach. The Kēʻē Heiau Complex includes a hula platform, Ke Ahu a Laka, where hula practitioners still pay tribute. - *Photo: Lei Wann*

"Can you imagine going home and finding hundreds of cars parked up and down the road and people walking in front of your house 24/7 and nobody asked you if it was okay or told you what they were doing?"

The question was posed by Presley Wann, a long-time community advocate and cultural and lineal descendant of Hāʻena on Kauaʻi's North Shore.

Wann was referring to his community becoming overrun by tourists. It began in the mid-1990s and peaked in 2018 when anywhere from 2,000-3,000 vehicles per day would venture out to Hāʻena State Park located at the end of Kūhiō Highway.

"It was ridiculous," added Hui Makaʻāinana o Makana Executive Director Pua Chin, also a lineal descendant of Hāʻena and Wann's cousin. "Multiply the number of cars by two and that's a huge amount of people. They were parked on both sides of the road all the way up past the caves. Local residents wouldn't go down there anymore because it was just crazy."

Hāʻena is one of nine ahupuaʻa located in the moku of Haleleʻa, which also includes Hanalei, Lumahaʻi, Wainiha and Waipā. It is a region renowned for its natural beauty and scenic vistas – from the patchwork of loʻi kalo in Hanalei Valley to the picturesque Lumahaʻi Beach to the famous wet caves at Hāʻena State Park – which is also the gateway to the Nāpali Coast, Kēʻē Beach, and hiking trails into Kalalau Valley.

Haleleʻa's natural beauty has long been a magnet for tourists.

As life-long North Shore resident Charles "Chipper" Wichman, founder of Limahuli Preserve once observed, "Our land is being loved to death."

## Ahupuaʻa Hāʻena

Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop inherited the lands of Hāʻena from her father High Chief Abner Pākī. The land was eventually sold and purchased by entrepreneur William Kinney of Nova Scotia.

Kinney initially intended to grow sugarcane on the land but soon realized that Hāʻena is too wet. In the meantime, he married Kaiwihoopilipili, a woman from Hanalei, and fathered a son, William Kihapiilani Kinney. It was likely due to his newfound connection to place, through his half-Hawaiian son, that Kinney decided in 1875 to sell the Hāʻena land to the Hawaiians who were already living there and farming the land.

He suggested that the 38 families form a hui to purchase the land – and they did, calling themselves Hui Kūʻai ʻĀina o Hāʻena.

At that time, the concept of "owning" land was still very foreign. "It's mind-blowing that they had the foresight to [realize] that the only way they were going to be able to stay on the land was to jump in and do the monetary thing," reflected Wann, whose great-grandfather was William Kihapiilani Kinney.

The elder Kinney reportedly sold Hāʻena to the hui for cheap. Most of those families and their descendants continued to live on and farm those lands for the next 100 years – until the State of Hawaiʻi began to condemn the lands of Hāʻena in the 1960s shortly after statehood to make way for a state park.

When the 65-acre Hāʻena State Park opened in 1972, the Native Hawaiian families who had farmed those lands for more than a century were permanently displaced. "Our family land was on the other side of Limahuli Stream and, fortunately, the state ran out of money so our kuleana was spared," said Wann.

Hui co-founder and CBSFA lead Presley Wann.

Limahuli Preserve and Hui co-founder Charles "Chipper" Wichman.

Limahuli Garden and Preserve Director Lei Wann.

Joel Guy of Hanalei Initiative with (l-r) Paula and Vena Chandler.

## A Wahi Pana Overwhelmed

Hāʻena is a wahi pana that features prominently in the moʻolelo of Pele and Lohiʻau; it is at Hāʻena that Lohiʻau lived – and where the foundation of his home still stands.

When Lohiʻau died from grief after being separated from Pele, he was buried in a cave on the cliff overlooking Kēʻē. Pele sent her sister, Hiʻiaka, to Kauaʻi to retrieve Lohiʻau. Finding him dead, Hiʻiaka and her companion, Wahineʻōmaʻo, restored him to life and took him to Pele.

Hāʻena is also the location of Ka Ulu o Paoa, part of the Kēʻē Heiau Complex. Within the complex is Ke Ahu a Laka, a hula platform where contemporary hālau hula still pay tribute. Hāʻena is also famous for its wet caves, Waikanaloa and Waikapalaʻe.

As has happened elsewhere, unchecked tourism in Hāʻena eroded both the natural environment and the community's patience. "A lot of our woe is from the visitor industry," noted Wann. "They were promoting tourism without looking at the impact to the people or to the environment."

In 2018, Hāʻena State Park was attracting about 5,000 visitors per day, creating a traffic nightmare for residents. - *Courtesy Photos*

"They were all coming in to hike and swim, which is fine – it's a beautiful place," said Chin. "But it wasn't being cared for. It was being overrun."

When Hāʻena State Park opened, about half a million tourists traveled to Hawaiʻi each year. By the late 1980s, that number had increased to more than 6 million. And as Hāʻena grew in popularity as a tourist destination, the local people were squeezed out.

By the mid-1990s, "some of the people in our community were ready to drop trees across the road," Wann said. "The feeling was that if we can't go down there [to Hāʻena] then nobody can."

Instead, the lineal descendants of the original hui that purchased the Hāʻena land in 1875 decided to regain control of their ancestral land in a more proactive way. In 1998 they formed nonprofit Hui Makaʻāinana o Makana (Hui) to mālama the natural and cultural resources within Hāʻena State Park.

## Creating the Hāʻena CBSFA

"One of the most significant things the Hui did after its founding was to begin the process to establish Hāʻena as a community-based subsistence fishing area (CBSFA)," said Chin.

"Our kūpuna who were on our Hui advisory committee told us – at that time we were the younger generation – that we had to get back on the land. That we were losing our ability to feed ourselves. Because we're so isolated, our kūpuna had to sustain themselves from the land and the sea," Wann said.

"They told us we had to watch the fishing, that the area was being overfished, and they didn't see the biomass they used to see when they were growing up."

It took about nine years but, with the Hui leading the charge, in 2015 Hāʻena became the first CBSFA in Hawaiʻi. It wasn't just a policy measure in response to overfishing or unchecked tourism. It was a statement of self-determination – an assertion that Native Hawaiians possess both the right and the responsibility to steward the resources of their ancestral homeland.

Hāʻena had become overwhelmed by commercial activity and unmanaged visitation – and the burden fell on the community. Unregulated tours, congestion, and ecological damage threatened both livelihoods and sacred sites. Creation of the CBSFA re-centered decision-making back into the hands of the people. Now, local rules, education, and monitoring have transformed the landscape – restoring both marine life and community voice.

"A CBSFA is one of the few tools that actually gives Native Hawaiians a way to exercise real leadership outside of elected office," said Kevin Chang, executive director of nonprofit Kuaʻāina Ulu ʻAuamo (KUA), which was instrumental in helping the Hui through the process. "Self-governance gives you a model that works beyond just fisheries. It empowers people."

Hāʻena lineal descendant Lei Wann is director of the Limahuli Garden and Preserve and Presley Wann's daughter. "The significance of what Hui Makaʻāinana o Makana did is that it showed how communities can lead," she said. "We weren't asking for permission. We were asking for support to make our kuleana whole again."

## Reclaiming Hāʻena Ma Uka to Ma Kai

Establishing the CBSFA was just the beginning for the Hui. Reclaiming and restoring the loʻi kalo within the boundaries of the state park was also critical to the Hui's holistic view of mālama ʻāina for Hāʻena.

Early on, they established a productive working relationship with DLNR archaeologist Alan Carpenter (now the Hawaiʻi State Parks assistant administrator). This relationship has enabled the Hui to restore and manage some 6 acres of loʻi kalo in Hāʻena State Park.

These loʻi are fed by Limahuli Stream which originates deep in Limahuli Valley, the largest valley in Ahupuaʻa Hāʻena. It was once owned by Juliet Rice Wichman, a botanist from a Kauaʻi kamaʻāina family. In 1976, Wichman gave 13 acres to the National Tropical Botanical Garden (NTBG) to establish Limahuli Garden. These lands included extensive archaeological sites and ancient loʻi terraces.

Then in 1994, to protect the land from development, her grandson "Chipper" Wichman donated another 989 acres of the valley to the NTBG, creating the 1,006-acre Limahuli Garden and Preserve.

Today, under the leadership of Lei Wann, Limahuli is not just a place of conservation – it is a center of intergenerational cultural learning. "In Hāʻena, conservation isn't a concept," she said. "It's who we are. We don't ask whether to protect the land. We ask how to do it better."

SEE **RECLAIMING HĀʻENA** ON **PAGE 20**

One of the first things that Hui Makaʻāinana o Makana did was to establish Hāʻena as a community-based subsistence fishing area (CBSFA), the first one in Hawaiʻi.

Volunteers plant hōlei, a small native tree, at Limahuli Garden and Preserve.

## RECLAIMING HĀ‘ENA

Continued from page 19

Hui Maka‘āinana o Makana Executive Director Pua Chin and her granddaughter, Kaulana, at Hā‘ena State Park with Limahuli Valley behind them.
*- Photo: John Wehrheim (wehrheimphotography.com)*

The staff at Limahuli cultivate native species, restore lo‘i, and teach youth the intimate relationship between culture, food systems, and biodiversity. This work complements the CBSFA, creating a comprehensive stewardship model that spans from mountain to sea.

Because the valley is properly managed, by the time the water travels from up ma uka down to the kula lands through the lo‘i kalo, to the muliwai and finally into the ocean it’s clean with very little silt and so the reefs are healthy. “We are fortunate. We have one of the most pristine streams in Hawai‘i,” said Presley Wann.

### Floods, a Pandemic, and Opportunity

In April 2018, a series of supercell thunderstorms over Kaua‘i resulted in massive flooding and landslides. Kaua‘i’s North Shore was hardest hit, with a rain gage at Waipā measuring nearly 50 inches of rainfall in a 24-hour period. Damage to Kūhiō Highway was so extensive that access to the community was cut-off – and later restricted to residents – for a year afterwards.

Despite the damage it wrought, the storm provided an opportunity.

In the decade leading up to the 2018 storm, the community had worked with the state to develop a master plan for Hā‘ena that reflected the Hui’s vision of limiting the daily number of visitors to 900 and establishing a reservation system. Just a month after the floods closed the road, the Board of Land and Natural Resources adopted the master plan allowing the county to reduce the number of visitors from approximately 5,000 per day to a maximum of 900.

“The floods were a big opportunity because the complete shutdown allowed the state and the community to reopen the park in a different way,” Chin said.

As they prepared to reopen Hā‘ena, the Hui reached out to the community for help managing the new system. Artist and photographer Joel Guy, who is kama‘āina to Hā‘ena, stepped up.

He formed a nonprofit called the Hanalei Initiative, which in partnership with the Hui would take on management of the online reservation booking system (gohaena.com) and utilize funding from the county to begin running shuttle services to Hā‘ena State Park.

Needing a place to pick-up and drop-off visitors, Guy approached Stacy Sproat-Beck, executive director of the Waipā Foundation. Ahupua‘a Waipā is about six miles east of Hā‘ena. Sproat-Beck was able to make some of the foundation’s land available to set up parking for visitors taking the shuttle to the park.

A second vendor was chosen to manage the limited parking at Hā‘ena – which became problematic. “We had an outside vendor running the parking lot trying to maximize their profit and increase the number of people parking, and a community-run shuttle system trying to take more cars off the road,” Chin said.

That conflict was short-lived because the next year the COVID-19 pandemic brought tourism to a grinding halt.

When the worst of the pandemic abated and plans to reopen began, the Hui partnered with Hanalei Initiative to set-up a different agreement with DLNR. “By now the Hanalei Initiative had experience running the shuttle, so the state agreed to establish an all-inclusive reservation system for parking, entry and shuttle,” Chin said.

“What’s nice is it’s self-sustaining,” she added. “The revenue it generates feeds back into the system and our organizations.”

### The Shutdown Brings Clarity

But something even more transformational happened during the pandemic – it gave every community across the pae ‘āina a once-in-a-lifetime respite from the pressures of tourism.

“Everyone who was taking care of ‘āina or ocean saw the recovery of our resources while we were shut down,” Chin recalled.

“Our rivers ran clear, our beaches were clean, and our families gathered in the road to eat together,” remembered Hanalei kupuna Moku Chandler. “For once, it felt like home again.”

That period of isolation provided both clarity and inspiration. For Kaua‘i’s North Shore community, beleaguered by decades of over-tourism, seeing the healing power of rest firsthand – not just for the land, but for their people – raised a new question: how can we manage these spaces in a way that restores harmony rather than reactionary control?

Inspired by Indigenous ranger programs in Australia and at Maunakea, a movement of Kānaka Rangers emerged from within the community at Wainiha in the aftermath of the pandemic. The rangers serve Kaua‘i’s North Shore as caretakers, educators, and peacekeepers grounded in local genealogy and culture.

Trained in conservation practices, cultural protocol, visitor engagement, and first response, Kānaka Rangers offer a new kind of public presence – one rooted in pilina (relationship). They are lineal descendants fulfilling a mandate passed down through generations.

“We don’t need outside law enforcement to protect our ‘āina,” said community advocate Nancy Chandler. “We need our own people, rooted in place, who understand the land and carry its stories.”

### Collaboration and Shared Vision

What binds Hui Maka‘āinana o Makana, Limahuli Gardens and Preserve, Hanalei Initiative, Waipā Foundation, and the Kānaka Rangers is not just protection of place but a shared vision of kuleana in action. Their stewardship is a lifestyle. A daily practice of mālama ‘āina, recalling mo‘olelo, guiding visitors and holding space for ‘ohana to reconnect with the land.

This work also involves engaging with government, translating ancestral priorities into modern policy, creating access to land that educates rather than exploits, and activating the community.

“We have this huge volunteer base,” Chin pointed out. “Massive numbers of people would come out on workdays to help clear the land. We don’t ever forget how much our community has given.”

Presley Wann said the biggest take-away from his community work over the past 30 years is the power of collaboration – not just within the community or with like-minded organizations, but with the county and state government as well. “One of the keys to our success – even with our CBSFA – was we were able to get connected and build networks,” he said.

The success these organizations have achieved individually and collectively is an example of what is possible when our communities are empowered take the lead in visioning, planning and managing.

It’s not just about conservation, mālama ‘āina, sustainability or a regenerative economy – although it is all of that; it’s also about reclaiming our kuleana, rebuilding our lāhui, and taking care of our places for the generations to come. ■

Staff from Hui Maka‘āinana o Makana, Hanalei Initiative, Limahuli Garden and Preserve, and Waipā Foundation at their annual Makahiki celebration.

## U.S. Navy Pacific Missile Range Facility and NASA Kōkeʻe Park Geophysical Observatory Real Estate Environmental Impact Statement

**The Navy and NASA invite you to participate in the environmental planning process and submit comments.**

The U.S. Department of the Navy (Navy) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) have jointly prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of proposed real estate agreements with the State of Hawaiʻi for the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) and the Kōkeʻe Park Geophysical Observatory (KPGO). **The Navy and NASA invite you to review the Draft EIS and provide public comments.** The Navy proposes to retain the use of 8,172 acres of State of Hawaiʻi lands on Kauaʻi in support of continued military training, testing, and facility operations at PMRF. The Navy operates on approximately 410 acres of the total acres leased from the state. The majority of the leased and easement areas remain intentionally undeveloped as they are used as an encroachment buffer and security for the facility's mission. NASA proposes to retain the use of 23 acres of State of Hawaiʻi land on Kauaʻi in support of maintaining data collection efforts of global and local significance at KPGO. The Proposed Action is needed because existing real estate agreements for these state lands are set to expire between 2027 and 2030.

**The Navy and NASA will host public meetings at three locations on Kauaʻi. Each meeting will include a live online broadcast and public comment opportunity. Attend any of the public meetings to talk story, learn more, and submit written or oral comments. Meetings will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. HST at the locations listed below. To participate online, register at PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com.**

**PUBLIC MEETINGS**

| Tuesday, July 15, 2025 | Wednesday, July 16, 2025 | Thursday, July 17, 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Kauaʻi Veterans Center<br>3215 Kauaʻi Veterans Memorial Hwy,<br>Līhuʻe | Kekaha Neighborhood Center<br>8130 Elepaio Road,<br>Kekaha | Sheraton Kauaʻi Coconut Beach Resort,<br>Makai Ballroom<br>650 Aleka Loop,<br>Kapaʻa |

**AGENDA**

| 5 to 6 p.m. | 6 to 6:30 p.m.<br>Presentation by Navy and NASA.<br>6:30 to 8 p.m. |
|---|---|
| Information stations – meet the project team, talk story, and ask questions. Visit the comments station to provide a written or oral comment. | Oral comments from the public in person and online. |

These public meetings will be conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and in support of Hawaiʻi Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343 to receive comments on the Draft EIS. Members of the public are encouraged to participate in the environmental planning process by providing input on the proposed real estate action including on the environmental impacts of the alternatives, environmental or cultural concerns, information the public would like the Navy and NASA to know, and any other information the public would like to see addressed in the Final EIS. The public meetings will also serve as an opportunity to obtain public input concerning potential effects to historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and HRS Section 6E-8. Your voice is important to this planning process.

The public review and comment period begins *June 20, 2025, and ends August 7, 2025.* Please attend a public meeting and visit the project website to learn more. For language assistance or special accommodations, contact the PMRF Public Affairs Officer at (808) 335-4740 or PMRFPublicAffairs@us.navy.mil. Requests for language assistance or special accommodations should be made at least 7 days prior to the public meeting. *Submit Comments by August 7, 2025, 11:59 p.m. HST.* The public may submit comments in any of the following ways: In person or online at a public meeting, through the project website at PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com, by email to info@PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com, or by mail postmarked by *August 7, 2025*, to the following address: Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, Environmental OPHEV2, Attention: PMRF and KPGO RE EIS Project Manager, Ms. Kerry Ling, 400 Marshall Road, Building X-11, Pearl Harbor, HI 96860. **For more information and to view a copy of the Draft EIS, visit PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com.**

# Kalima Lawsuit Update: The Probate Process

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

Identifying and distributing all payments to the correct heirs of Deceased Class Members is now the focus of the Kalima claims payment process. Probate Special Master Emily Kawashima and Probate Special Counsel Scott Suzuki have completed 20 probation petitions covering the claims of nearly 600 deceased class members. To date, nearly $35 million has been disbursed to the survivors of the deceased class members.

Under the Probate Plan, the court evaluates approximately 30 estates in a single hearing. This process is more efficient than processing each estate separately and costs are divided proportionately between the estates of the deceased class members.

### Missing Family Information Forms

The Probate Plan ensures that the correct people receive the correct proportion of the settlement proceeds. This requires Ms. Kawashima and Mr. Suzuki to locate and verify all survivors of the Deceased Class Members. Family members can advance this work by completing Deceased Class Member and Family information Forms (downloadable from the kalima-lawsuit.com website). Families who complete the forms are prioritized in the probate process. If you have information regarding a Deceased Class Member and/or their family members, fill out these forms as completely and accurately as possible.

### Probate Hearing

The court's final review of each petition will be at a Probate Hearing. Hearing notices are posted to the website and published in the newspaper. Heirs are not required to attend the hearing, but the court does appreciate their participation.

Once the hearing is completed, a proposed order will be drafted for the Court to review and approve. This process usually takes two months, but may take longer for complex estates. The order is not final until 30 days after the court signs it, giving parties the opportunity to file an appeal.

At the end of the appeal period, payments will begin to be processed, which may take two months or more. This is necessary to ensure that proper payments are made to each heir and that all amounts due are fully paid to the correct people.

If you believe your relative was a class member, contact the Claims Administrator at 1-808-650-5551 or 1-833-639-1308, by email info@kalima-lawsuit.com or by mail at P.O. Box 135035 Honolulu, Hawaiʻi 96801.

For more information, the next Attorney Talk Story will take place on July 14, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Go to kalima-lawsuit.com for the Zoom link. ■

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

# ʻOHAna we have lost

## *Honoring former Office of Hawaiian Affairs Employees*

### Irene Maile Michiko Pauole Kaahanui

**March 7, 1943 – May 13, 2025**

Irene Maile Michiko Pauole Kaahanui, 82, passed away on May 13, 2025, at, Hoʻolehua, Hawaiʻi, surrounded by her ʻohana. She was a U.S. Army veteran, director for Maui Economic Opportunity on Molokaʻi, and retired as the Molokaʻi community outreach coordinator for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Irene Pauole Kaahanui - *Courtesy Photo*

Irene was preceded in death by her parents, Robert and Helen Pauole; her sister Annette Pauole-Ahakuelo; and her stepdaughter Charmaine Davis.

She is survived by her husband Charles A. Kaahanui Jr; sons Kelly Pauole, Justin Kaahanui, Jonathan Kaahanui, Charles (Alice) Kaahanui III, Chad Kaahanui, and Shannon Kaahanui; daughter Sherry (Ronald) Sasada; sisters Roberta "Cookie" (Greg) Helm, Beverly Pauole (Dale) Moore, and Melinda Talon; brother Mickey (Nadine) Pauole; moʻopuna Kellysa-Michiko (Namaka), Brennan, Kaya, Charice, Bryson, Jarian, Braeden, Ikaika, Kaleikamaka, Yukiko, Sumiko, Brandon, Matthew, Jewel, Lahela, Alicia and Amber; 19 great-grandchildren; plenty of nieces and nephews; and her loving pet companion Shushu.

Irene was a strong advocate for her Molokaʻi community, focusing on public safety and the rights of veterans. She was a Hoʻolehua homesteader with a strong appreciation for Prince Jonah Kūhiō, a member of the Molokaʻi Veterans Caring for Veterans organization, and a member of ʻAhahui Kaʻahumanu.

Irene's services will be held Saturday, July 26, 2025, at Hoʻolehua Congregational Church located at 2205 Lihipali Ave. in Hoʻolehua (behind Molokaʻi High School). Family viewing is 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. and public viewing is 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Service is 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. with luncheon to follow at the on-site church pavilion. ■

### John Kamikakeahonui Matsuzaki

**Aug. 11, 1972 – May 20, 2025**

At the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), our tightly knit communications team sat together, fostering spontaneous collaboration and high productivity which resulted in numerous advertising, design and journalism awards. John Matsuzaki was the heart and soul of that team.

John Matsuzaki (kneeling, center front) worked at OHA from 2005-2017. He is pictured here with some of his OHA communications colleagues from that time: (L-R) Nelson Gaspar, Francine Murray, Lisa Asato, and Garret Kamemoto. - *Courtesy Photo*

John was always kind and helpful, often going above and beyond to help others, while being welcoming, funny and creative. People often called him ʻoluʻolu (amiable). He embodied the aloha spirit.

Even with all the prestigious awards and accolades, John was always very humble while quietly helping everyone behind the scenes. As a natural leader, people gravitated towards him and followed his lead. He was incredibly generous, often sharing his lunch and gifts like Hawaiian salt that trustees brought for him from the neighbor islands.

With so many great stories about John, it's hard to choose one. Once a coworker came to ask for help. We replied, that's not us, maybe Board Services can help you. But John said, "Brother tell us more about what you need, and we'll see what we can do."

It may sound cliche, but we are truly better for knowing John, a great friend, mentor and upstanding person. He was the ALOHA at OHA and will be missed tremendously.

**Me ka haʻahaʻa,**
**Lisa Asato, Nelson Gaspar, Francine Murray and Treena Shapiro**

*After working at OHA for 12 years, John and his ʻohana relocated to California in 2017. He was a Kamehameha Schools Kapālama graduate and had a degree in graphic arts and print production from Honolulu Community College. John is survived by his wife Juli, sons Jonah, Jonas and Joss, and daughter Julia, his four siblings and a large, loving extended ʻohana.* ■

# E NHLC...

## Is there a way to prepare a will if you are unable to afford an estate planning attorney?

By Devin Kamealoha Forrest, Esq., NHLC Staff Attorney and Research Specialist

In Hawai'i, wills are governed by The Uniform Probate Code under Hawai'i Revised Statutes ("HRS") §560. This law generally outlines three criteria which are necessary for a document to be considered a valid will.

First, the document must be in writing. Second, the document must be signed by either the testator (person making the will) or by some other individual at the direction of the testator and while in the testator's presence. Third, the document must be signed by at least two individuals within a reasonable time after they witnessed the signing of the will or after the testator has acknowledged their own signature on the will and/or has acknowledged the will itself.

While this may seem complex for some, the Uniform Probate Code also provides a more straightforward process through the creation of a holographic will. A holographic will need only be in the testator's own handwriting and must clearly indicate that the testator intended the document to be a will. This type of will may be a workable alternative for those who want to have something in writing to protect their assets, but do not want or are unable to afford estate planning with an attorney.

Creating a will in one of these ways does not prevent you from later amending your will or creating other estate planning documents with an attorney to protect your assets, if desired.

Any form of estate planning has become a vital tool in the preservation of 'ohana property interests. Without such planning, a common problem that can occur is real property not being conveyed in the manner an owner originally intended.

When there is no clear will or conveyance, the property will be conveyed through intestate succession, which can fracture the real property interest of an 'ohana and, in some instances, could result in the division of the real property interest in a manner not originally desired.

However, it is also important to note that you may only convey interest in land that you actually own; title or an interest in the title must already be in your name in order for the will to convey the real property interest. ■

*E Nīnau iā NHLC provides general information about the law. E Nīnau iā NHLC is not legal advice. You can contact NHLC about your legal needs by calling NHLC's offices at 808-521-2302. You can also learn more about NHLC at nativehawaiianlegalcorp.org.*

*The Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation (NHLC) is a nonprofit law firm dedicated to the advancement and protection of Native Hawaiian identity and culture. Each month, NHLC attorneys will answer questions about legal issues relating to Native Hawaiian rights and protections, including issues regarding housing, land, water, and traditional and cultural practice. You can submit questions at NinauNHLC@nhlchi.org.*



# From Ni'ihau to Kaua'i

## Nurturing culture and language through education

Na ke kime Ho'oka'a 'Ike

Nou ke aloha nui e Aunty Hedy Leilani Sullivan. We fondly remember the steadfast po'o of Kula Aupuni Niihau A Kahelelani Aloha (KANAKA) Public Charter School (PCS). For 25 years, her aloha nurtured haumāna, 'ohana and 'ōlelo Ni'ihau. Her legacy and spirit will continue to live on in every heart she touched.

Continuing her legacy, KANAKA PCS is developing a new bilingual curriculum and relocating their elementary program to the campus' Waimea wing. The school will continue to propagate makaloa and ipu wai. The school is searching for new land access opportunities to enrich 'āina-based, hands-on learning to strengthen students' cultural and environmental connection.

Hedy Leilani Sillivan - *Courtesy Photo*

Meanwhile, Ke Kula Niihau O Kekaha celebrated their 7th Annual Hoolaulea Pute, featuring the work of their haumāna who authored and published books in 'ōlelo Ni'ihau. The school continues its work dedicated to strengthening and perpetuating 'ōlelo Ni'ihau. To learn more, visit kknok.org.

Kanuikapono PCS and Kūkulu Kumuhana o Anahola's Resilient Leader and Food Security Program came full circle at their Hō'ike, honoring the class of 2025's deep connection to 'āina, culture, and community.

Kawaikini PCS is a K-12 Hawaiian-medium charter school dedicated to fostering 'ōlelo Hawai'i, cultural grounding, and academic excellence. Founded in 2008, Kawaikini offers a Kaua'i-based, values-driven curriculum rooted in health, 'āina, and college-career readiness. Learn more at kawaikini.com.

E Heluhelu Kākou – Mele: Celebrate the rhythm of stories! Join the Hawai'i State Public Library System through July 31 for the 2025 Summer Reading Challenge and explore the poetry, chant, and music that connects us all. Get more info at librarieshawaii.org/summerreading. ■

*View or share upcoming educational opportunities on our education webpage at oha.org/education-2.*

# A Recreational Economy by and for Anahola Homesteaders

By KipuKai Kuali'i

The Anahola Hawaiian Homes Association (AHHA) through its nonprofit development arm, the Homestead Community Development Corporation (HCDC), together with Group 70, is working with our homesteaders to plan for and design a multi-phase, multi-year project to create a recreational economy for Anahola, Kaua'i.


DHHL has made 139.5 acres available for the Anahola recreational economic project. Outlined in blue are 95.2 acres ma uka of the existing Anahola Marketplace & Kitchen. Outlined in pink are another 44.3 acres ma kai of the highway.

We're looking to honor the rural nature, culture and values of Anahola as a viable approach to the economic development planning articulated in our Anahola regional plans, as well as at the numerous homestead visioning sessions we've hosted over the years. Homesteaders remain interested in job creation that matches our values, needs and priorities, as well as having more shared spaces to work, gather and play.

We've acquired access to 139.5 acres from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) to develop a sports complex. Thus far, the components envisioned for our project include:

- A sports club with pickle ball and tennis courts, fitness areas and swimming pools.
- Two covered basketball courts, or gymnasiums, that can also serve as futsal (indoor soccer) courts, volleyball courts, or even an Emergency Disaster Evacuation Center & Resiliency Hub.
- Three baseball/softball diamonds with a shared concession stand and restrooms.
- A rodeo arena and ranch facility that can also serve as an events venue and an Emergency Disaster Evacuation Center & Resiliency Hub. The adjacent ranch area may include riding trails, paddocks, pastures and areas for rodeo and ranch-type mercantile services.
- Four sand volleyball courts and a surrounding "Kumu Camp" ma uka campground. With the sand courts as the central focus, the campground would be modeled after our successful Kumu Camp at Anahola Bay. Also, with its very small carbon-footprint, the campground could provide convenient and affordable accommodations for visiting teams and other users of our sports complex.
- A skatepark developed in partnership with another nonprofit and the County of Kaua'i.
- A path for walking and biking with a fitness par course.

The project also includes plans for up to 90 garden/courtyard community affordable rental units; possibly duplexes with studio and 1-bedroom units developed in three different phases of 30 units. We're wanting to make the units available first to our kūpuna, then to young folks just starting out, and workers in our new recreational economy.

These are preliminary concepts based on prior input from homesteaders. We'll continue working on all possible outcomes as we complete our planning and due diligence. Please bring your ideas and energy to our project! ■



# Kuleana in Pō

## Healing Papahānaumokuākea from the world's debris

By Ka'ehukai Goin

Traveling into the Pō is a conflicting experience because we have been taught that this is a place of our ancestors, our akua, and the realm we return to when we leave our physical bodies. That being said, to travel this path for the sole purpose of cleaning up trash from around the world is disheartening. How can a place with nearly no human presence become so damaged?

As a Kanaka 'Ōiwi, I am very humbled, blessed, and grateful for all the experiences and knowledge I have gained in this space; however the reason for my hana in Papahānaumokuākea always lurks over my head.

I work as a marine debris technician with the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project, and I'm currently gearing up for my fifth mission, which will take place this August. For me, this is more than a job. It is an honor to mālama one of the most sacred places of our genealogy.

When we consider the term 'āina, it goes far beyond just meaning "land." It represents the very source of our resources for sustaining life and embodies our familial ties. As a family, it is the kuleana of all members to mālama one another. This bond is rooted in love and protection, flourishing through unconditional reciprocity.

The resources provided by 'āina including the land, sky, ocean, and freshwater are essential elements that nourish our bodies and wellbeing, having nurtured our people for over a millennium. To kōkua this 'āina akua is a privileged kuleana of Kānaka 'Ōiwi, continuing a cycle that has, for a long time, been altered due to political oversight and undermining of lāhui.

In taking care of this place, we are not just simply cleaning up the world's neglect, we are reconnecting with our genealogy, reestablishing relationships with kūpuna who have not seen our presence in a long time.

As we transition into Pō at Ke Ala Polohiwa a Kāne, there's an undeniable shift in your na'au that resonates throughout your being. When we invoke our akua and kūpuna, speaking the language of our 'āina, we allow our ancestors to recognize us and our connection to this space.

During this ho'okupu it always creates that "chicken skin" moment for me. Then the thoughts of what our kūpuna must have seen and felt – the star lines shifting, the fluorescent glow of plankton hitting against the bow of the boat in the dark, the brushing of a subtle breeze against your face, and the scent of the ocean that rises with the mist – always impacts me differently on these huaka'i.

As I gaze into the sky, I try to remember the lessons and knowledge gained from previous missions and what this new mission will bring. When daybreak hits, we see Mokumanamana and the anticipation of our kūleana sets in for me, that we are finally here. Greeted by 'ā birds, the focus sets in that we are here to help heal this sacred space from the pollution of convenience.

These trips have shown how accustomed we are to a consumer lifestyle. Many of us forget about the impact of waste when it's out of sight. My mālama 'āina experiences highlight the resilience of our oceans; despite the trash, life continues to thrive.

Papahānaumokuākea reminds us of past abundance and challenges us to balance our surroundings. How can we foster coexistence with nature like our kūpuna did in a sustainable way? ■

*Ka'ehukai Goin is a young 'Ōiwi who is trying to navigate modern day obstacles while being rooted in mālama 'āina. He is a student of life and draws upon 'ike kūpuna, field experiences, and continually tries to expand his knowledge of Hawai'i and resource management.*

# No ka Hawai‘i na ka Hawai‘i

By Kawena Komeiji, Shavonn Matsuda and Kapena Shim

As we celebrate Lā Hoʻihoʻi Ea this month, Kānaka ʻŌiwi librarians in the University of Hawai‘i (UH) System have been working towards restoring Hawaiian knowledge sovereignty to the lāhui Hawai‘i, with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

A new initiative launched this past December, Kahoʻiwai: Reclaiming Hawaiian Knowledge Sovereignty, focuses on improving access to Hawaiian resources in libraries and archives. The project will integrate ʻōlelo Hawai‘i and kuanaʻike Hawai‘i into the ways we categorize, organize, and search for information in libraries.

Part of a collaborative effort by three UH campuses, Kahoʻiwai is led by Kānaka librarians at UH Mānoa, UH Maui College, and UH Hilo. This work builds upon previous groundbreaking work of the Ka Wai Hāpai project, which set the foundation and methodology for development of a Hawaiian Knowledge Organization System (HKOS) intended for implementation across libraries and archives with responsibilities for the preservation of Hawaiian knowledge.

Expanding on this work, Kahoʻiwai will also partner with Hawaiian language experts and scholars to create a Hawaiian language newspaper index from community-indexed information found in nūpepa, enhance 7,500 library catalog records with table of contents and descriptions, and revise incomplete and/or harmful descriptions in archival finding aids to provide better, Hawai‘i-centered context, to Hawaiian collections at UH Mānoa.

As testament to the work of Kānaka librarians, Kānaka scholars and allies, particularly in recent years, UH Mānoa’s Hamilton Library has created two dedicated tenure-track faculty librarian positions to bolster Hawaiian knowledge sovereignty and ensure the long-term sustainability of this initiative.

Similarly, librarians at the UH West Oʻahu, UH Maui College, and UH Mānoa have been building a social media archive rooted in community and ʻāina.

Kaʻohipōhaku will consult with Kānaka activists and web archiving experts to identify tools and priorities for archiving social media content and to help establish culturally relevant practices for Hawai‘i, culminating in a report that will be available to the public.

By shifting autonomy of collection development back into the hands of our people, we will empower the people of today to preserve their leo for the generations to come, much like our kūpuna did in the Hawaiian language newspapers.

Both the Kahoʻiwai and Kaʻohipōhaku projects are supported and strengthened by funding from the Mellon Foundation’s Public Knowledge Program. Kahoʻiwai was awarded $3.22 million over three years (2024-2027) and Kaʻohipōhaku was awarded $150,000 as part of a 1-year planning grant.

Libraries and archives are critical spaces for our lāhui to connect to and engage with. Through these efforts, we seek to center Hawai‘i and improve libraries and archives in meaningful ways so that Kānaka feel welcomed and empowered to research, learn, and engage in these spaces and with the waiwai housed within these institutions.

While libraries are not commonly considered in the movement for ea, these efforts highlight our role as just one of the many pathways in furthering ea for the lāhui Hawai‘i. ■

*The guest co-authors of this column are all Kānaka ʻŌiwi librarians. Kawena Komeiji is the Hawaiian initiatives librarian at UH Mānoa’s Hamilton Library, Shavonn Matsuda is the head librarian at UH Maui College, and Kapena Shim is the Hawaiian collection librarian and archivist at UH Mānoa’s Hamilton Library.*





# Strength from Within: Muscle as Medicine

By Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH RDN

When we talk about health, we often focus on weight, blood pressure, or lab results. But there’s another factor that quietly shapes how we age, recover, and thrive - muscle.

Muscle isn’t just for athletes or bodybuilders. Skeletal muscle is a functional organ, essential for movement, balance, and stability. It’s also an endocrine organ, an internal health regulator that helps manage how many calories and fat we burn, balance blood sugar, and control inflammation.

Understanding this helps explain why low muscle mass is strongly linked to a higher risk of chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, obesity, Alzheimer’s disease, osteoarthritis, and even cancer and its recurrence.

Muscle mass also plays a vital role in recovery from illness and resilience during stress or trauma. During illness or injury, the body breaks down muscle protein to fuel healing and support immune function. People with greater muscle reserves tend to recover faster and more fully.

Effort is necessary to preserve and build muscle. We lose 1-2% of muscle per year after age 50 and 3% per year after age 60 unless we take steps to maintain it. This age-related decline, called sarcopenia, contributes to frailness, falls, and loss of independence. This decline can mean the difference between recovering from a fall or never walking again. And it’s not just a concern for kūpuna; early signs of frailty are increasingly seen in younger people, often due to inactivity, stress, or chronic illness.

Despite its importance, many people don’t participate in strength training, as they believe that cardio or aerobic exercise is enough. While aerobic activity benefits heart and lung health, resistance training goes further. It improves mitochondrial function, essential for converting nutrients into energy and cell repair. It builds bone density, helping prevent osteoporosis. It also helps lower inflammation, further reducing risk of disease.

The idea that you need heavy weights to build strength is a myth. Studies show that lighter weights lifted to near fatigue can build just as much strength as heavier loads. That makes strength training safe and effective for kūpuna, beginners, and those with limited mobility. It’s never too late to start, as even people in their 80s and 90s can build muscle and regain strength in just a few months of consistent effort.

Supporting this with both high-quality protein and complex carbohydrates is essential, as both are needed to effectively build and maintain muscle, along with fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats to support overall muscle health.

Muscle health can be tracked in simple ways. Grip strength, measured by squeezing a handheld device, is one of the best predictors of overall strength. Other tools include calf circumference, mobility tests, and basic strength questionnaires.

Many of our favorite hobbies and activities such as hula, paddling, diving, surfing, fishing, or farming naturally build strength and preserve health. Depending on the frequency and intensity, these may need to be supplemented with bodyweight exercises, resistance bands, or hand weights.

Muscle isn’t about how we look; it’s about how we live. ■

*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*
*X @DrLeslieMatsuo.*

# Kōkī nā Mahiole

Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

Aloha e nā makamaka heluhelu i neia kolamu nūpepa. I kēlā pukana aku nei, ua nānā kākou i ka noʻeau me ka mākau heona o nā kūpuna ma ka hana ʻie me ka ʻieʻie koe ka mahiole. No laila, eia kākou ke nānā nei i ka mahiole. Ma waena o nā hoahānau Polenekia, ʻo ka Hawaiʻi wale nō i hana i ka mahiole, he pale poʻo a he hōʻailona ia no nā aliʻi.

Ua hōʻomoʻomo ʻia ke kino o ka mahiole ma ke poʻo me nā aʻa o ka ʻieʻie, kekahi mea kanu o ka waonahele. Aia kekahi mau kino o ka mahiole: 1) ka mahiole me ka haka haʻahaʻa; 2) ka mahiole me ka haka keikei; 3) ka mahiole me ka haka keikei a me nā koʻo; 4) ka mahiole lauoho; me ka 5) ka mahiole me nā pōheoheo ma kahi o ka haka – ʻaʻole i hoʻohulu ʻia kēia ʻano mahiole.

Aia ʻelua kiʻina hana no ka hoʻohulu ʻana i ka mahiole. ʻO ka hana maʻa mau ʻo ia ka ʻuo ʻana i nā ʻuo hulu ma ka nae. A laila, ua humuhumu ʻia ka nae i hoʻohulu ʻia ma ke kino o ka mahiole. ʻO kekahi kiʻina hana i ʻike ʻole ʻia e aʻu, ʻo ia nō ka wili ʻana i nā ʻuo hulu ma kekahi ʻaoʻao o ke kaula mānoanoa e like me ka ʻaha a laila ua humuhumu ʻia nā ʻaha hulu ma ke kino o ka mahiole (nānā i ke kiʻi no ka mahiole Kauaʻi). Kupaianaha nō hoʻi ka noʻeau a me ka ʻike kōliuliu o nā kūpuna.

E like me kaʻu i wehewehe ai i kēlā pukana aku nei, aia ʻelua kumu ke aʻo nei i ka hana ʻoaina ʻieʻie, ʻo ia ʻo Kumulāʻau lāua ʻo Haunani Sing. Aia lāua ke aʻo nei i nā haumāna i ka hoʻokikino ʻana i nā mahiole like ʻole. Inā hoihoi ʻoe i kēia hana noʻeau poʻokela e nāna iā kekumuhawaii.com. ■

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

*To read this in English go to kawaiola.news*

Mahiole no Kauaʻi me nā kaula hulu. - *Mahalo: HH Pīhopa*

Mahiole pōheoheo & mahiole lauoho. - *Mahalo: HH Pīhopa*



# Ka Lāhui ʻIhi: Strength in Unity

## Uplifting the Lāhui on the Continent

By Lono Kollars and Lehua Hawkins

*"ʻAʻohe ʻulu e loaʻa i ka pōkole o ka lua; No breadfruit can be reached when the picking stick is too short." – There is no success without preparation.*

Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole founded the Hawaiian civic clubs to prepare Kānaka ʻŌiwi to engage in governance, represent our lāhui with dignity and impact, and familiarize our people with Western systems of rule-making to prepare us to have a seat at the table where decisions are made by, and for, our people.

That kūleana continues today among our Southern California Hawaiian community, where we are actively cultivating the next generation of leaders. It is a kuleana born with superlative leadership by civic clubs, hālau hula, social clubs, Native Hawaiian health organizations, and emergency response groups. We hana pū – work together.

In the 1970s, our community came together to form a unifying body: the Hawaiian Inter-Club Council of Southern California (HICCSC). This umbrella organization was born out of the need to preserve and sustain our Hawaiian cultural identity socially, spiritually, and civically here on the continent.

HICCSC has served the Native Hawaiian community in Southern California for nearly 47 years.

It currently includes 19 Hawaiian and Pacific Islander member organizations (there are no individual memberships). Among these are four recognized Hawaiian civic clubs and their Council: ʻĀinahau o Kaleponi; ʻAhahui Kīwila o San Diego; ʻAhahui o Liliʻuokalani; Kaha i ka Panoa Kaleponi; and Nā Lei Makalapua, the Mainland Council of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs.

Unity meets culture each July when HICCSC hosts the annual Alondra Park Hoʻolauleʻa, a beloved cultural festival that also serves as the primary fundraising opportunity for many of its member clubs. HICCSC offers the infrastructure and opportunity for each organization to raise funds to support their respective cultural and educational programs.

The hoʻolauleʻa showcases the best of Hawaiian and Pacific Islander hula, music, food, and most importantly, hana noʻeau (traditional arts and knowledge). This year, featured presenters include Leon Siu of Ke Aupuni o Hawaiʻi on United Nations strategies for Hawaiian sovereignty and Ed Kaʻānehe sharing Kahikolu, an Indigenous learning concept, with lei-making and lau hala weaving workshops.

These experiences are powerful tools for cultural transmission and pride in our community.

Due to limited resources or capacity, most member organizations could not organize an event of this scale, but in the spirit of laulima, they come together and everyone thrives.

Encouragingly, our youth are increasingly involved in the civic club movement as volunteers, observers, and participants, being exposed to the logistics, values, and teamwork that sustain our community events. We uplift each other not for personal gain, but for the good of the lāhui.

The ʻōlelo noʻeau, "ʻAʻohe ʻulu e loaʻa i ka pōkole o ka lua" reminds us that success cannot be reached without preparation. Through HICCSC, our lāhui on the continent continues to prepare. We create space for our people, grow future leaders, and strengthen the bonds that connect us across oceans.

Together, we holo mua with aloha, integrity, and a deep commitment to the generations who will follow. ■

*Lono Kollars is pelekikena of Kaha i ka Panoa Kaleponi Hawaiian Civic Club and Lehua Hawkins is pelekikena of Hawaiian Inter Club Council of Southern California.*

# Nā Pali ʻŌahi o Makana

*The cliffs of Makana, where fire was hurled forth*

By Bobby Camara

Plate 44, "Pāpala," in "Indigenous Flowers of the Hawaiian Islands," a drawing by Mrs Francis (Isabella) Sinclair of Kauaʻi, published in 1885. - *MA 1771365, TePapa, Aotearoa*

On the south slope of Haleakalā, pāpala once grew in forests. Now it clings to life in a pasture. - *Photo: Forest & Kim Starr*

From the Hawaiian Dictionary, the quote above tells of a practice on Kauaʻi wherein bonfires on pali-top of Makana were shoved off and cascaded to the ocean near Kēʻē. Some say watchers in waʻa would attempt to catch the burning sticks, lending a definition to "firebrand." Pāpala (*Charpentiera obovata*) and/or hau were apparently both used to produce the spectacle.

Pāpala is a shrub or tree of mesic (not too dry, not too wet) forests. It blooms as very loose panicles (branched clusters of flowers) that are nearly thread-like, with tiny pua. And although they're pink, because they're so delicate, you may miss them if you don't pay attention.

The very large ahupuaʻa of Kapāpala on the southeast flank of Maunaloa on Hawaiʻi was perhaps named for the plant. Perhaps. We often ask "why?" as we wonder, and although uncommon these days, maybe pāpala was once plentiful enough, or had other uses, commemorated by the name of the land division. ■

Pink inflorescence, smooth lau. - *Photo: iNaturalist*



# Kahoʻolawe: Reclaiming Sovereignty Through Ceremony

By Kaulu Luʻuwai, Esq.

*NaHHA would like to share an article from one of our Lamakū Hoʻokipa, our Beacons of Hospitality, who are making a positive impact through the value of mālama and as a contributing member of the Native Hawaiian community.*

On January 4, 1976, nine brave individuals landed on the shores of Kahoʻolawe with a single purpose: to stop the bombing.

Guided by a deep sense of kuleana, their stand against U.S. military occupation sparked a movement that awakened the consciousness of the Hawaiian people. Their legacy continues through the Protect Kahoʻolawe ʻOhana (PKO), also known simply as "the ʻOhana." Its mission is to perpetuate aloha ʻāina through cultural, educational, and spiritual practices that restore Kahoʻolawe's natural and cultural resources.

Three interconnected elements guide the ʻOhana's work: hana kaulike (work which restores the ʻāina), kilo (observation), and ʻaha (ceremony). For the ʻOhana, ceremony is essential, summoning elemental forces needed for restoration after decades of abuse.

Two ceremonies, Makahiki and Ipu A Kāne, are regularly practiced on Kahoʻolawe. Revived by the ʻOhana in 1982, the Makahiki ceremony "calls upon Lono to bring the winds that bring the rains, that raise the water table so new plants on Kahoʻolawe can grow," said the late Dr. Noa Emmett Auwae Aluli.

Ipu A Kāne honors the relationship between Kahoʻolawe and Maui, calling upon Kāne to send moisture across the ʻAlalākeiki Channel through clouds, wind, and rain. For the ʻOhana, ceremony is as vital as removing invasives or planting natives. These ceremonies are uniquely Kānaka solutions rooted in ancestral knowledge and adapted to solve modern problems.

Since the first landing nearly 50 years ago, the island has transformed from a barren landscape to growing stretches of native vegetation. This renewal shows that cultural practice and land stewardship are inseparable. As Dr. Aluli reminds us, "The health of the land, is the health of the people, is the health of the lāhui (nation)." Restoring ʻāina restores the wellbeing of Kānaka. In practicing our traditions on Kahoʻolawe, we further exercise our ea (sovereignty) as a lāhui.

Today, Kahoʻolawe stands as a powerful example of potential for healing when we look to cultural practice. Ceremony, once nearly lost, is now an essential tool of healing, resilience and resistance.

While we continue to strategize against the abuse of our precious natural resources, such as the reclamation of thousands of acres of land under military exploitation, Kahoʻolawe is a reminder that reviving something as practical as a ceremony is a radical act of self-determination. Let us continue to draw strength from our traditions, restore what is damaged, and reclaim our ea as a lāhui grounded in aloha ʻāina. ■

*Kaulu Luʻuwai is an attorney whose ʻohana is deeply committed to healing Kahoʻolawe under the leadership of the Protect Kahoʻolawe ʻOhana. To join this inter-generational effort to reclaim, restore, and reawaken ea, visit www.protectkahoolaweohana.org.*

*The ʻOhana is planning a fundraiser on July 26, 2025. Email lanakila.kahoolawe@gmail.com if you are interested in supporting.*

Members of the Protect Kahoʻolawe ʻOhana participating in the Makahiki ceremony on Kahoʻolawe in the 1980s.. - *Photo: Franco Salmoiraghi*

# Mūkīkī i ka Wai ʻŌhā

By Lisa Kapono Mason

In the forests of Kōkeʻe, clever ʻiʻiwi are spotted nectar robbing ʻōhā wai, a native lobelia, for a drink. Nectar robbing happens when birds bypass the flower's pollen and pierce straight into the nectary. This behavior is more commonly seen with invasive plants like banana poka, but even native species aren't off-limits.
- *Photo: Bret N. Mossman, Pihea Trail, Kauaʻi*

Native plant nectars are an essential and nutritious food source for Hawaiian "honey" creepers.

Produced by flowers in their nectary to attract visitors, nectar isn't just a sugary treat in exchange for pollination. It's a complex and hydrating drink that provides a massive burst of energy for those who partake.

In the nectary, flowers break down sucrose from their sap into two simple sugars: glucose and fructose. The higher amounts of glucose in ʻōhiʻa lehua nectar may be a preference for honeycreepers while, for some reason, also causing the nectar to crystalize. If you have ever purchased lehua honey, you may have noticed that it tends to harden on the shelf compared to other honey varieties.

The sweetness and abundance of nectars are influenced by many things: who visits the flower, available water, and the shape of the flower itself. Generally, flowers pollinated by insects have more concentrated nectar. In contrast, flowers pollinated mostly by birds have more diluted nectars. It seems that the brushy stamens of ʻōhiʻa lehua blossoms help reduce evaporation from their open nectar cups, and the long floral tubes of ʻōhā wai protect their nectar from rain.

While savoring sweet libations, birds inevitably consume specks of plant pollen, as well as any wandering insects, both of which serve as delicious sources of protein at the flower and essentially serving up a complete meal.

Environmental and ecosystem changes do impact nectar quality. Despite a growing awareness of the importance of Hawaiian plants and nectars as staples in the diets of Hawaiian honeycreepers, there is still much to learn.

Research into Hawaiian nectars isn't just a scientific question; it is part of securing ʻāina momona for the future of our manu mūkīkī (nectar sippers). ■



# More Info Isn't Always a Good Thing; and Our Ancestors Knew It

By Kainoa Horcajo

Access to education, the internet, and smartphones were supposed to cure our ills, banish our evils, enlighten the masses, and transform every individual into an informed and educated voter, altruistic human, and decent citizen.

It has undoubtedly done a lot of that for many. Across the world, access to education and technology and information has pulled millions out of poverty, increased the median quality of life, and given hope to the downtrodden.

We are also now seeing the dark side of this unfettered access: The rise of Alt-Truth, Alternative Facts, legions of keyboard experts and warriors, and the death of true mentorship. Every Merrie Monarch, thousands of hula experts emerge. Post-COVID, the world is suddenly filled with infectious disease and vaccine experts. And you wouldn't believe how many constitutional law and tariff experts there are now.

Hawaiians, like all humans, are knowledge-seeking organisms. We yearn to know, to understand, to decipher, to comprehend. But our kūpuna also understood the need for limits. They understood that not all knowledge and wisdom are for everyone, all the time. There was a deep understanding that information, knowledge, and wisdom can, and sometimes SHOULD, have restrictions placed upon it.

The Hawaiian world separated knowledge into two categories – that which is noa and that which is kapu (forbidden) or huna (hidden).

Noa is the concept of being "free from restriction." Kapu and huna are the concepts related to restriction. It doesn't necessarily mean specific knowledge is top secret or highly classified. It could simply mean that there are a few prerequisites you need to fulfill before it is shared. Hawaiian historian and Lua Master Charles Kenn had a saying that he passed down to his students: "Hūnā nā mea hūnā." Keep secret that which is sacred.

Nowadays, it's easy enough to find a peer-reviewed study of some insanely complex theory or law online. But just because we can read the words, doesn't mean we can accurately understand their implications or conclusions.

Most of us drastically overestimate our abilities. And as any recent scroll of the polarized arguments on social media shows us, this is across the board for all subjects.

What if, instead of demanding the right to access all information all the time, we asked ourselves what good it would do?

Our ancestors knew the power of information (and the use of it) when they said, "I ka ʻōlelo i ke ola, i ka ʻōlelo i ka make (in words there is life, in words there is death) – a reminder that information, knowledge, and wisdom carry great power.

This isn't wholesale advice to blindly trust any papered expert. It's a reminder that sometimes more information isn't a good thing. That when considering something, we should seek to verify the source (nānā i ke kumu) and ask ourselves whether we have the intellectual and emotional capacity to comprehend it. ■

*Kainoa Horcajo is a writer, speaker, storyweaver, cultural practitioner, steward of his ʻohana's regenerative farm in ʻĪao Valley on Maui, and principal owner of The Moʻolelo Group, a multidisciplinary consultancy.*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### A Manaʻo on Healing

Native Hawaiians are knowledgeable because of their greatness in human interaction. Hoʻoponopono frames this interaction in familial settings with the spiritual content needed for one to always be in the truth at all times.

Thus, the spiritual healing that is needed in producing mana is a source for Native Hawaiians. But how do you heal an entire nation? Needless to say, Native Hawaiians have been healing themselves for years on their own, waiting to rise-up and KŪ I KA MANA!!

We have made great strides since the overthrow and should be respected for the qualities we have perpetuated. The strength to endure and the humility to build from, united all Native Hawaiians to their ancestors of long ago.

*Mahalo nui loa,*
***David V. Kahalewai, III***
***Pālolo Valley***


**COMMUNITY MEETING**

**Tuesday, July 15, 2025**

**5:30 p.m.**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**Wednesday, July 16, 2025**

**9:00 a.m.**

*Both meetings will be held at:*

**Waiwai Collective**
**at Kalukalu at 1624**

1624 Kūhio Hwy., Kapaʻa, HI 96746

***TUNE IN LIVE!***

*All meetings will be available via livestream. To watch and see a complete schedule of future meetings please visit* ***www.oha.org/BOT***

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# Community Stewardship at the End of the Road

**Kaialiʻi Kahele**
CHAIR
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Hāʻena, located at the end of the road on Kauaʻi's North Shore, is one of Hawaiʻi's most iconic and sacred places. But beyond its scenic beauty lies a living landscape of cultural history, ecological abundance, and resilient community care. At the center of that care is Hui Makaʻāinana o Makana, a Native Hawaiian nonprofit working to restore and steward Hāʻena as a living ahupuaʻa.

I've had the privilege of visiting Hāʻena several times – including as a member of Congress – where I spent time with Uncle Presley Wann and the Hui Makaʻāinana o Makana ʻohana. Their deep kuleana and vision for self-determined stewardship left a lasting impression on me. It's a model rooted in ancestral wisdom and built for modern resilience.

Trustee Kahele had the opportunity to volunteer at the loʻi at Hāʻena with lineal descendants of the land including pulling kalo with Loʻi Complex Manager Eric Hansen (top photo). - *Courtesy Photos*

Founded in 1998 by lineal descendants of Hāʻena, the Hui was created in response to decades of ecological degradation and cultural erasure. By mid-century, Hāʻena's loʻi systems had fallen into disrepair, and traditional knowledge of land management had been marginalized. In 1999, the Hui signed a curatorship agreement with the state to care for over 15 acres of cultural sites, loʻi kalo, and burial grounds within Hāʻena State Park.

Since then, the Hui has led loʻi restoration, educational programs, and monthly volunteer workdays. Their efforts have not only restored native food systems and cultural landscapes, but also strengthened generational knowledge transfer.

One of their most groundbreaking achievements is the creation of the Hāʻena Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) – the first of its kind in Hawaiʻi. Like the recently designated CBSFA in Miloliʻi, this initiative blends traditional Hawaiian practices with modern science to regulate fishing in a way that restores abundance and puts management power back in the hands of local communities.

After the devastating 2018 floods, the Hui played a critical role in reshaping the future of Hāʻena. They helped implement the Hāʻena State Park Master Plan, which now includes a reservation system, daily visitor caps, shuttle access, and community-led management of park entry operations. It's one of Hawaiʻi's most successful examples of balancing cultural preservation with visitor impact.

Hāʻena is not just a place of natural beauty – it is a piko, a spiritual and ecological center. From the legendary cliffs of Makana to the remnants of loʻi kalo and ancient springs, it is a place of deep stories and living traditions.

The work of Hui Makaʻāinana o Makana reminds us that the best models for conservation are led by the people who know the land best. And when those people are empowered, supported, and trusted, the results can transform not just a place, but a future. ■

# Lighting the Path Home: AHO and DHHL bring new hope for Hawaiian housing

**Keoni Souza**
VICE CHAIR
Trustee, At-Large

For generations, returning home to our ʻāina has been a long-awaited dream in the hearts of Native Hawaiians. Finally, that vision is beginning to take shape in new and meaningful ways.

With bold new programs from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), the long-awaited path to homeownership is becoming clearer, more accessible, and filled with renewed hope for our lāhui. We still have a long way to go to shorten the waitlist and put more Kānaka back onto our lands, but it's a step in the right direction.

In March 2025, DHHL awarded 665 leases in Kapolei. Projects are also underway in every county, with DHHL actively developing 29 new projects across the pae ʻāina with a goal to issue more than 2,600 leases by the end of this year.

For our kūpuna, DHHL launched a $10 million Kūpuna Rental Subsidy Program in partnership with the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement. Funded by the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act, it supports kūpuna still on the waitlist by covering most of their rent, while providing housing counseling.

On Oʻahu, Hale Mōʻiliʻili, a 23-story, 278-unit tower, is scheduled to open this summer 2025, providing affordable rentals for low-income Native Hawaiian elders in a central location close to health and transit services.

OHA's Mana i Mauli Ola Strategic Plan, Strategy 6 is "Support implementation of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and other efforts to meet the housing needs of ʻohana."

Specific tactics include: 6.1. Increase affordable non-traditional housing options (accessory dwelling units/tiny homes, large multi-generational lots or homes) in communities of ʻohana's choice; 6.2. Increase housing unit supply on Hawaiian Home Lands; and 6.3. Decrease rate of Native Hawaiian out-of-state migration.

In February, OHA launched its Access to Home Ownership (AHO) program – a powerful new tool in this effort. Backed by $1.5 million in loan guarantees through American Savings Bank, AHO breaks down financial barriers that have long kept Kānaka Maoli from owning homes.

By eliminating private mortgage insurance, reducing down payments, and lowering interest rates, AHO saves families hundreds each month. Within weeks of launching, OHA received more than 240 inquiries and several families are in escrow or have closed on their new homes already, proof of the urgent need for more programs like this.

Eligible applicants for AHO must be Hawaiʻi residents, registered with OHA's Hawaiian Registry Program (HRP) and committed to owner-occupancy. Applicants can receive assistance in applying first for the OHA Hawaiian Registry Program and receiving an HRP card (which has many other benefits). American Savings Bank loan agents will then help secure financing, ensuring that the journey is both pono and supportive.

AHO applies to both DHHL properties and homes on the open market, allowing ʻohana to remain in Hawaiʻi, resisting displacement and reclaiming stability. AHO's early success makes it clear: we must expand this program. More funding, more outreach, and community input will be key to scaling it for greater impact – from urban Honolulu to rural communities across the islands.

While AHO is opening doors to immediate ownership, DHHL also continues to press forward with large-scale development to address the long-standing waitlist. Together, these programs represent a new era of collaboration, compassion, and commitment.

We look forward to creating more innovative developments to push for progress, amplify the needs of our lāhui, and make sure that housing for Native Hawaiians remains a top priority. ■

# Kānaka Rangers: Restoring Balance on Kauaʻi's North Shore

**Dan Ahuna**
Trustee, Kauaʻi and Niʻihau

Nestled in the rugged and stunning ʻahupuaʻa of Wainiha on Kauaʻi's North Shore, a quiet but powerful movement is underway - one led by local communities, rooted in Native Hawaiian values, and strengthened through an innovative collaboration with The Hanalei Initiative, a local nonprofit stewarding land management effort in the region.

For decades, residents of Wainiha and surrounding North Shore communities have shouldered the burden of over-tourism - an influx of millions of visitors drawn to the majestic cliffs of Kalalau, the serenity of Kēʻē Beach, and iconic locations such as Lumahaʻi, Hanakāpīʻai Falls and Hāʻena State Park. With narrow roads, minimal infrastructure, and a single restroom facility at the end of the highway, the environmental and cultural toll has been enormous.

Wainiha community advocate Nancy Chandler. - *Courtesy Photo*

But in 2018, nature – and circumstance – pressed pause. Severe floods isolated the community. Then in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic brought travel to a standstill. For the first time in generations, Wainiha stood still – untouched by visitors, freed from traffic and cleared of the litter.

"Our rivers ran clear, our beaches were clean, and our families gathered in the middle of the road to eat together. For once, it felt like home again," said kūpuna Moku Chandler through tears. "These tears on my face are tears of joy."

This unplanned isolation was a revelation: without constant external impact, the land began to heal. And the people began to reflect deeply on what real stewardship could look like moving forward.

Hawaiian tradition emphasizes a reciprocal relationship between people and the land. As one ʻōlelo noʻeau reminds us: "He aliʻi ka ʻāina, he kauwā ke kanaka" — The land is chief, and the people are its servants.

With that in mind, the Kānaka Rangers program was born.

Inspired by the Aboriginal ranger model in Australia and first seen in action atop Maunakea during the kiaʻi movement, Kānaka Rangers are community-based cultural and environmental stewards – locals trained to manage, protect, and educate others about the land from a Native Hawaiian worldview. Their guiding mantra: "'Āina Needs Kānaka."

Through The Hanalei Initiative, a formal Kānaka Ranger program has emerged. While similar in function to a traditional forest ranger – carrying out law enforcement, conservation, and education – Kānaka Rangers infuse these duties with the cultural protocols, moʻolelo, and stewardship practices unique to Hawaiʻi.

"Instead of forest rangers, we call them Kānaka Rangers," says Nancy Chandler, a longtime community advocate. "Out here, we're just trying to follow the same conservation frameworks already in place. But our people must be part of the solution. Who better to protect this ʻāina than those whose families have lived here for generations?"

The initiative embodies the belief that Hawaiʻi's people are not passive observers of change, but active agents of restoration. By blending Western conservation science with traditional ʻike kūpuna, this grassroots movement is redefining how we manage high-impact natural areas.

In the aftermath of the pandemic, Native communities across the pae ʻāina are urging decision-makers to rethink what pono management truly means.

I support this vision wholeheartedly. The restoration witnessed during the pandemic was a glimpse into what's possible when our communities lead. Programs like Kānaka Rangers are not only about protection, they are about reclaiming kuleana. Our future depends on this balance."

In Wainiha and beyond, the message is clear: ʻĀina needs Kānaka. And the time is now. ■

# Mālama ʻĀina through Culture and Technology

**Keliʻi Akina, Ph.D.**

Trustee, At-Large

Last month, during the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) annual neighbor island visit to Maui, my fellow trustees and I had the honor of touring the Waiheʻe Coastal Dunes and Wetlands Refuge.

While the thrill of riding in an ATV was an unforgettable experience, it was not the adrenaline that left the deepest impression; it was witnessing the integration of contemporary science and engineering with traditional Native Hawaiian stewardship practices. This synthesis is revitalizing the land and ecosystems of Waiheʻe, enriching the local community, and reawakening the flow of life-giving water to wetlands that have long been dry.

Kiaʻi Collier provides an ATV tour of the Waiheʻe Coastal Dunes and Wetlands Refuge on June 4. (Front, l-r): Trustee Akina, Chair Emerita Lindsey, and HILT educator and steward Kiaʻi Collier. (Back, l-r) Trustee Akaka and her daughter, Trustee aide Carina Lee, Trustee aide Kanani Iaea. - *Photo: Kelli Meskin Soileau*

Our tour was led by Hawaiʻi Land Trust (HILT) educator and steward Kiaʻi Collier. "We are moving into functionality and regenerative resourcing," he said. "It's even more than sustainable; sustainable is breaking even."

His words struck me. In our current climate, both environmental and political, the goal should not merely be to sustain what we have, but to restore, to regenerate, and to uplift. What is happening in Waiheʻe is a shining example of that vision in action.

One of the most inspiring projects Kiaʻi showed us was the restoration of the Waiheʻe loko iʻa. In the 1800s, the fishpond had dried up and fallen into disuse. But thanks to the efforts of Kiaʻi and a dedicated network of volunteers, new piping has been installed to once again channel water from the Waiheʻe River to the fishpond. This effort is reawakening a traditional Hawaiian food system that once sustained entire communities.

As the HILT team integrates modern science into restoring historical landmarks, they stay committed to cultural sensitivity. When laying down new infrastructure, they take care to catalog known burial spaces and reroute development plans to minimize disruption to these sacred sites. This process of conscious alteration proves that respecting the iwi kūpuna can go hand in hand with forward progress.

"With projects like this, it [allows] people to give back, to do aloha ʻāina if they can't do that in their own space," Kiaʻi shared. "It also gives a sense of empowerment to Kānaka, especially when they... do cultural protocols, work with pōhaku, [and] work on a site that our kūpuna used to use."

It is a model of how Hawaiian values of aloha ʻāina and mālama iwi can coexist with technological innovation. It reminds us that advancement need not come at the expense of our cultural heritage.

Kiaʻi emphasized that "being a part of the restoration...really gives people a sense of empowerment." In doing so, they are not only protecting our land and water for future generations but also reaffirming our people's resilience, ingenuity, and deep spiritual connection to ʻāina. Waiheʻe is a beacon of what is possible when tradition and innovation walk hand in hand.

What I witnessed at Waiheʻe was a vision of the future rooted in the wisdom of the past. I am deeply moved and encouraged to see how Hawaiians today are living out their legacy as masters of sustainable harvest, environmental stewardship, and the careful cultivation of natural resources. ■

# Reflecting on the Life of Kamehameha the Great

**Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey**

Trustee, Maui

Kamehameha the Great remains one of the most revered figures in Hawaiian history. Through wisdom, courage, and vision he accomplished what no one before him had: unifying the Hawaiian Islands under one rule. His leadership brought peace, laid the foundation of a resilient kingdom, and continues to inspire generations.

Born around 1758 in Kohala on Hawaiʻi Island, Kamehameha's birth coincided with the appearance of Halley's Comet, which was interpreted as a sign of a great leader's arrival. Fearing threats from rival chiefs, his birth was kept secret, and he was raised in seclusion. From early on, he showed great strength, intelligence, and a strong sense of purpose.

He was trained in warfare and educated in spiritual and cultural traditions, gaining a deep respect for the gods, the land, and his people. This grounding shaped a leader who balanced diplomacy with battle skills.

Kamehameha rose as a skilled warrior and strategist. His first major victory came in 1782 at the Battle of Mokuʻōhai, securing control of Hawaiʻi Island. Over time, he built alliances, strengthened his forces, and adopted Western weapons and strategies while preserving Hawaiian values.

His most renowned triumph was the 1795 Battle of Nuʻuanu on Oʻahu, where he drove opposing forces up the cliffs of Nuʻuanu Pali. The peaceful surrender of Kauaʻiʻs King Kaumualiʻi, in 1810 completed the unification of all major islands. This ended decades of conflict and ushered in peace and prosperity.

But his legacy extends beyond conquest; Kamehameha established a system of governance that balanced local leadership with central authority. One of his most enduring contributions was the Kānāwai Māmalahoe (Law of the Splintered Paddle) which protected civilians in times of war and remains part of Hawaiʻiʻs State Constitution today.

Kamehameha nurtured agriculture, encouraged trade, and carefully managed foreign relations. His decisions were guided by kuleana, with a focus on protecting the ʻāina and the wellbeing of his people.

Kamehameha was a servant leader who led with humility, wisdom, and strength. He valued restraint, chose diplomacy over vengeance, and always considered the needs of his people. He listened to multiple perspectives and acted with fairness and empathy. His leadership was rooted not in domination, but in care, justice, and aloha.

His aloha for his people defined his reign. He sought to uplift their lives, ensure peace, and preserve cultural traditions. In turn, the people saw him not only as a king but also as a protector and father figure. He walked among them, understood their struggles, and governed with genuine compassion.

Stories of his humility and generosity live on through Hawaiian oral traditions and mele. He unified not just islands, but hearts.

When Kamehameha died in 1819, he left a unified and sovereign Hawaiian Kingdom that endured for nearly a century. In keeping with custom, his bones were hidden to protect his mana.

Statues of Kamehameha stand proudly throughout Hawaiʻi and even in Washington, D.C. Each year on June 11, Hawaiʻi celebrates Kamehameha Day, honoring his enduring values of unity, justice, and leadership.

King Kamehameha was more than a conqueror, he was a visionary, a just ruler, and a beloved leader. His greatness came not only from what he accomplished, but how he accomplished it – with strength, humility, and love for his people.

"'O ke aliʻi nō ke aliʻi i ke kanaka; a chief is truly a chief because of the people." Kamehameha was truly Ke Aliʻi Nui – the great chief – because his people loved him as deeply as he loved them. ■

*Adapted from my remarks at the lei-draping of King Kamehameha's statue in Washington, D.C., on June 8, 2025.*

# Kaua‘i’s Kaina Makua Portrays Kamehameha

Kaina Makua, a kalo farmer, cultural practitioner, community educator and the owner of Aloha ‘Āina Poi Company will portray Kamehameha ‘Ekahi in the highly anticipated series, Chief of War premiering August 1 on Apple TV+. The series is a passion project for ‘Ōiwi creators, co-writers and executive producers Jason Momoa and Thomas Pa‘a Sibbett. Makua was cast in the pivotal role after a chance meeting with Momoa at a canoe regatta on Kaua‘i three years ago. The nine-episode series, based on true events leading up to the unification of the Hawaiian Kingdom, follows the warrior Ka‘iana (portrayed by Momoa) who was key to Kamehameha’s military success. The series’ cast is primarily Polynesian, with Kānaka Maoli and Māori actors in most of the lead roles. In this “first look” image, Kamehameha sits with Ka‘ahumanu, his future queen, portrayed by Aotearoa-born actress Luciane Buchanan, who is of Tongan descent. - *Photo: Courtesy of Apple TV+*

## Moloka‘i Wins Culture of Health Prize

The island of Moloka‘i was recently selected as a 2024 Culture of Health Prize winner by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). The Culture of Health Prize honors communities at the forefront of addressing structural racism and other injustices to advance health, opportunity and equity. The prize comes with a $250,000 award.

Dr. Kawaipuna Kalipi, general manager of the Moloka‘i Heritage Trust, and Momi Afelin, a Ph.D. candidate at Harvard, co-wrote the Culture of Health Prize application in honor of Dr. Noa Emmett Aluli, the beloved Moloka‘i family physician and Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana co-founder who passed away in 2022.

The application highlighted efforts on the island of Moloka‘i that include establishing a nonprofit to buy back land; place-based partnerships that are restoring/reclaiming Moloka‘i’s shoreline; promoting locally sourced produce to reinvest profits into Moloka‘i’s food system; developing a portfolio of clean energy projects to achieve 100% renewable energy for the island; and creating a visionary plan to foster resilience in the face of climate change and rising sea levels.

Caption: (L-R) Kawaipuna Kalipi, Robert Nerveza Shizuma and Zhantell Dudoit Lindo at a Maui County budget hearing in Kaunakakai, Moloka‘i. — Photo: Courtesy of RWJF

Unlike on other mokupuni, the people of Moloka‘i have long rejected economic dependence on tourism. With a priority on mālama ‘āina, the community is working to address ongoing issues such as limited healthcare services, economic self-sufficiency, and threats to its environment.

Moloka‘i was one of nine recipients of a 2024 RWJF Culture of Health Prize.

## Wai Bill Becomes Law

Nearly four years after the 2021 Red Hill fuel spill, and after several years of steadfast community advocacy and legislative effort, the Water Alliance Initiative (WAI) Act was signed into law as Act 197 by Gov. Josh Green on June 6.

The landmark law requires the creation of a WAI policy coordinator position under the Department of Land and Natural Resources and establishes a Red Hill Remediation Special Fund to support long-term clean-up, monitoring, public education and restoration of O‘ahu’s primary aquifer in the wake of the Red Hill disaster.

According to the Red Hill Water Alliance Initiative’s 2023 report, up to 1.94 million gallons from the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility may have leaked into the ground over the 80 years that it was in use. The facility, located just 100 feet above the island’s main aquifer, has posed an existential challenge for Oahu’s water security.

“It took over two years of determined community organizing and relentless testimony to push this bill through the Hawai‘i State Legislature,” said Healani Sonoda-Pale of Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i.

“Act 197 is more than a policy win – it’s a testament to the people’s power. We know that restoring our aquifer and holding the federal government accountable will be a marathon, not a sprint.”

## Consultation for Act 80

On June 3, the Sovereign Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations (SCHHA) opened a Homestead and Beneficiary Associations (HBA) Consultation on Act 80. It will close at midnight on September 15.

Act 80 is a 2017 amendment to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) enacted by the Hawai‘i State Legislature that changes the eligibility from one quarter (1/4) to one thirty-second (1/32) Hawaiian ancestry for Hawaiian Homes lease successors.

Act 80 only affects inheritance. It does not change the eligibility to receive an initial homestead award. A minimum blood quantum of 50% is still required.

Although Native American Tribal governments have the autonomy to determine eligibility for their beneficiaries seeking land allotments; eligibility for HHCA beneficiaries is determined by Congress.

SCHHA Policy Director Robin Puanani Danner said that Act 80 has “languished for eight years at the State DHHL (Department of Hawaiian Home Lands) and Federal DoI (Department of the Interior) agencies” since Gov. David Ige signed it.

The consultation will compile the mana‘o of beneficiaries and other interested parties to advance the process and urge the U.S. Congress and DoI to approve the amendment. SCHHA will accept written testimony and comments until Sept. 15, 2025.

Virtual briefing sessions are scheduled for July 22 and August 26 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom (hawaiianhomesteads-org.zoom.us/j/83031175093).

Written testimony can be emailed to policy@hawaiinhomesteads.org, or mailed to 3375 Koapaka St., Suite D-124, Honolulu, HI 96819.

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# Salis Solo Paddles Ka‘iwi Channel

On May 25, 11-year-old ‘Ōiwi paddler Ayden Salis became the youngest person ever to solo paddle across the 32-mile Ka‘iwi Channel. Salis made the crossing from Moloka‘i to O‘ahu in 5 hours and 4 minutes. Ayden started paddling in six-man canoes at the age of 8. In 2024, his dad, Harley Salis, and Keone Loo started an oc1/oc2/v1 (one-man outrigger canoe/two-man outrigger canoe/rudderless one-man canoe) paddling program called No Nā Keiki. That same year, at the age of 10, Ayden crossed the Ka‘iwi Channel in an oc2 relay which included three adults and three keiki. After paddling in an oc1 for a year, Ayden felt ready to try paddling the 32 miles across the Ka‘iwi Channel solo. His ‘ohana rallied to support him, making sure he got in sufficient practice (both miles and water time) before the race. Pictured here, after his triumphant arrival on O‘ahu, is Ayden and his ‘ohana (l-r): Ayden, Anaiya, Harley and Kiana Salis.
- *Photo Courtesy of the Salis ‘Ohana*

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### Green Signs Green Bill

On May 27, Gov. Josh Green signed Act 96 into law, establishing the nation's first-ever climate impact fee, or "Green Fee" to build resiliency against climate change impacts by providing a regular source of funding for environmental stewardship, hazard mitigation and sustainable tourism.

"Hawai'i is at the forefront of protecting our natural resources. [We] cannot wait for the next disaster. We must build resiliency now, and the Green Fee will provide the financing," Green said.

Following the 2023 Maui wildfires, Green established a Climate Advisory Team (CAT) to develop community-informed policy recommendations – one of which was to establish a dedicated funding source for climate change mitigation and disaster resilience via the transient accommodations tax (TAT).

"Using the TAT to fund resiliency projects ensures that the financial burden of safeguarding our 'āina and people doesn't fall upon residents alone," said CAT lead Chris Benjamin.

The new law increases the TAT rate by 0.75% beginning in 2026 and levies, for the first time, the TAT on cruise ships that port in the state, ensuring that all Hawai'i visitors contribute.

"Climate change is here and has been a huge challenge for all of us. The impacts are real. This bill shares the responsibility of caring for our home with those who come to visit," said Sen. Lynn DeCoite.

The Green Fee is projected to generate $100 million annually.

### Dalire Named Miss Hawai'i 2025

E ho'omaika'i to Emalia Dalire who was named Miss Hawai'i 2025 at the Miss Hawai'i pageant at the Hawai'i Theatre in Honolulu on May 31.

Competing as Miss Kāne'ohe, Dalire prevailed over 12 other hopefuls. She will go on to compete in the Miss America pageant in September in Orlando, Florida. First runner up was Tatia Denis-McRight, who competed as Miss Moku o Keawe. She will inherit the title of Miss Hawai'i should Dalire win the title of Miss America.

Emalia Dalire - *Courtesy Photo*

Dalire, 19, is a graduate of Damien Memorial School. While still in high school, she took college courses at Windward Community College allowing her to graduate from high school a year early and earn two associate degrees later that year. She went on to UH West O'ahu, graduating with a bachelor's of business administration last December.

Dalire is the daughter of Kumu Hula Keolalaulani Dalire, youngest daughter of renowned Kumu Hula Aloha Dalire. She dances for Keolalaulani Hālau 'Ōlapa o Laka under her mother and Kumu Hula Regina Māka'ika'i Igarashi Pascua.

This past April, Dalire also competed in the Miss Aloha Hula competition at the Merrie Monarch Festival, placing third.

### Fiorello Receives Social Justice Award

Ramsey Fiorello, a math and science kumu at Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School was named a 2025-2026 Hawai'i Social Justice Award recipient. Presented by the Social Justice Education in Hawai'i Project, the award honors educators who promote equity, cultural pride and community empowerment in their classrooms.

With more than 20 years in education, Fiorello was recognized for her ability to blend math, science and 'ike Hawai'i to create hands-on, place-based learning experiences for her haumāna. Her award project will expand Hālau Kū Māna's "Kū'i at the Capitol" initiative – a project centered on perpetuating traditional practices of kalo cultivation, poi pounding and 'ike kūpuna while fostering social justice through food sovereignty and sustainable stewardship.

Fiorello will use the award to develop educational resources on kalo diversity, mo'olelo and sustainable lo'i practices.

"This project is not just about teaching students how to ku'i (pound poi), its about grounding them in 'ike Hawai'i, strengthening their pilina to 'āina, and empowering them to reclaim their ancestral knowledge as a means of resistance, identity and self-sustainability," said Fiorello.

### Kahale Wins Poster Contest

Hilina'i Kahale, a fifth grader from Ke Kula Kaiapuni 'o Pū'ōhala in Kāne'ohe, O'ahu, is the Hawai'i State winner of the 42nd Annual National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest.

The nationwide contest promotes awareness and engages students, parents, guardians and teachers in discussions about child safety and preventing incidents of lost, runaway and abducted children. Since 1983, National Missing Children's Day has been observed on May 25.

Hilina'i Kahale - *Courtesy Photo*

The Department of the Attorney General's Missing Child Center - Hawai'i (MCCH) is the state contest manager for the annual poster contest with the theme: Bringing Our Missing Children Home.

Describing her poster Kahale wrote, "The picture shows a girl crying because she misses her family. Her tears make a big puddle showing how many other kids are missing and just want to feel safe and loved."

"I congratulate and thank Hilina'i for shining a light on child safety through her creative art work and powerful message

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## OHA Moloka'i Office Blessing

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) celebrated the renovation and reopening of its Moloka'i office at Kūlana 'Ōiwi in Kaunakakai with an office blessing and reception on June 18. Uncle Jimmy Duvauchelle from Ierusalema Pomaika'i Church performed the blessing. Hosted by Moloka'i and Lāna'i Trustee Luana Alapa, the blessing was timed to coincide with OHA's annual Moloka'i Community Meeting and was attended by dozens of community representatives as well as a small contingent of OHA staff. Pictured (l-r): BOT Vice Chair Trustee Keoni Souza, Uncle Jimmy Duvauchelle, Trustee Luana Alapa, Trustee Kalei Akaka, Trustee John Waihe'e, IV, and BOT Chair Trustee Kaiali'i Kahele and his daughter, Nāmaka. - *Photo: Kevin Chak*

## OHA Trustees Visit Maui's Paeloko Learning Center

During a recent visit to Maui for their annual island community meeting, Office of Hawaiian Affairs trustees visited the Paeloko Learning Center in Waihe'e, a Native Hawaiian education center that provides hands-on learning opportunities through Indigenous ancestral arts, culture and language to the Maui community. Their program offerings include school field trips, professional development, hana no'eau and community workdays with instruction in both English and Hawaiian. Pictured (l-r) are Paeloko Program Coordinator Trina Sanders, Board Chair Trustee Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair Emerita Trustee Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey, Paeloko Kapa Practitioner Dr. Lori Lei Ishikawa, Trustee Keli'i Akina, Ph.D., Trustee Kalei Akaka, and Paeloko Kumu 'Ōlelo Hawai'i Leilei Ishikawa. - *Photo: Kelli Meskin Soileau*

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of love, hope and awareness," said Hawai'i Attorney General Anne E. Lopez.

"Preventing incidents of missing and abducted children is fundamental to MCCH's mission. This is a reminder to strengthen our efforts and honor the exemplary service of the professionals whose work helps to protect missing children and bring predators to justice."

### 'Ōiwi Teachers Recognized

This past March, the Hawai'i House of Representatives, along with the Commission to Promote and Advance Civic Education (PACE), recognized five exemplary teachers for their work in civic education.

Ric Hanale Ornellas - *Courtesy Photo*

The honorees include 'Ōiwi educators Ric Hanale Ornellas from Moloka'i High School and 'Īmaikalani Winchester from Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School.

Ornellas has taught social studies and special education at Moloka'i High School since 2008. He serves as a class advisor, is on the Youth Civil Rights Committee, and takes a leadership role in organizing the Moloka'i Youth Summit and the School Community Council. He also served for three years as the school's Close-Up advisor.

'Īmaikalani Winchester - *Courtesy Photo*

Winchester has taught high school social studies at Hālau Kū Māna Public Charter School for more than 20 years. He emphasizes traditional Native Hawaiian cultural practices and engages his haumāna in contemporary issues, empowering them to become advocates in their own communities.

"The work of the commission underscores that democracy requires the active participation of informed citizens, and that foundation is laid in our classrooms by dedicated educators," noted Rep. Amy Perruso, PACE Commission vice-chair.

"These teachers are cultivating an interest in civic engagement," added Hawai'i Supreme Court Justice Lisa Ginoza, PACE Commission chair. "They are empowering students to be informed, thoughtful, and active participants in democracy. The commission is happy to celebrate these wonderful educators."

The other honorees are Jessica dos Santos of Hawai'i Technology Academy, Denise Mazurik of Waiākea Intermediate School, and Janyce Omura of Maui High School.

## Hawaiian Who Helped Found Downtown San Diego Honored


'Ōiwi in the San Diego area celebrated the unveiling of a monument in downtown San Diego on May 10 that honors the Native Hawaiian gentleman, William Heath Davis, Jr., who helped to found downtown San Diego in the late 1800s. Known during his time as "Kanaka Davis," he traveled from Hawai'i to California as a teenager and through hard work, ingenuity, business acumen and luck rose to become a prominent civic leader in the state. He is remembered for his vision of a thriving waterfront town and his efforts laid the groundwork for the major urban center that San Diego has since become. The monument honoring Davis, pictured above, is in Pantoja Park in downtown San Diego. It is a 7,000 lbs. solid granite stone with four bronze plaques describing his accomplishments. The Hawai'i diaspora came out in force to celebrate the monument's unveiling and dedication with music, hula and presentations – including a monologue by Kanaka Davis lookalike, Bob Crawford, who is also of mixed Hawaiian and Haole ancestry. Moderator for the festivities was Dr. Gil Ontai, originally from Pālolo, who serves as chair of the Kanaka Davis Trust Group. - *Courtesy Photo*

### Scherzinger Wins Tony Award

On June 8, Nicole Elikolani Scherzinger became the first Native Hawaiian to win a Tony Award. She received the award for Best Performance by a Leading Actress in a Musical for her role as Norma Desmond in the Broadway revival of *Sunset Blvd*.

Nicole Scherzinger - *Photo: © Glenn Francis, www.PacificProDigital.com*

Scherzinger is a singer, songwriter, dancer, actress and television personality who rose to fame as the lead singer of the R&B-pop group the "Pussycat Dolls" (2003-2009) – one of the world's best-selling girl groups of all time, selling over 55 million records worldwide. She is a versatile performer and multiple award-winning singer and songwriter whose film credits include voicing Sina (the mother of Moana) in Disney's *Moana* and *Moana 2* films.

In addition to being the first Native Hawaiian to win a Tony Award, Scherzinger – who is also part Filipino – is the third Asian to win a Tony Award. The first was Lea Salonga in 1991 and the second was Ruthie Ann Miles, also from Hawai'i, in 2015

### NSF Cuts Funding for TMT

Due to federal budget cuts, the National Science Foundation can fund only one "extremely large" telescope project and so it will pursue building the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT) in Chile, South America – meaning funding for the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) has been cut.

The NSF's decision is likely due in part to widespread community opposition to TMT and the 2019 peaceful occupation of Maunakea that halted construction efforts and brought worldwide attention to Maunakea as a sacred space, elevating conversations about Indigenous rights and mālama 'āina.

Kia'i mauna are counting this decision as a "win" by default, although there are no illusions that the decision was pro-Hawaiian or pro-environment.

Healani Sonoda-Pale was quoted in a June 1 *Star-Advertiser* article saying, "It just so happened that the stars aligned and this was a win for Hawaiians. This decision will empower Kānaka Maoli to keep moving forward and remain vigilant to protect Maunakea and all sacred places in Hawai'i."

Gov. Josh Green has deferred comments regarding the funding cuts to the Maunakea Stewardship and Oversight Authority. On March 27, the National Park Service listed Maunakea on the National Register of Historic Places, listing the mauna as a Traditional Cultural Property and District by the United States government. ■

## Kīlauea Summit Reopened

An observation deck at Uēkahuna, the highest point on Kīlauea's summit has reopened in Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. Uēkahuna is a wahi pana steeped in centuries of Hawaiian tradition. This vantage point provides an exceptional view of Halema'uma'u crater but has been closed since May 2018 following the catastrophic eruption and summit collapse that triggered thousands of smaller earthquakes over a four-month period. A new path now connects the observation deck to Crater Rim Trail along the rim of the caldera, and the area is replanted with native shrubs, grasses and trees near the observation deck. The renovated Kīlauea Visitor Center will reopen by summer 2026. - *Photo: National Park Service, Janice Wei*

## MĀKEKE
THE MARKETPLACE

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

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**AINA REALTOR -** Do you or someone you know own a property in the Waimānalo or Papakōlea Homestead areas and are open to selling? I represent a Native Hawaiian buyer, currently on the Hawaiian Homes waitlist, who is ready, willing, and able to make a serious offer. If you've considered selling or know of a property that might become available, please reach out. This is a special opportunity to help a fellow Hawaiian return to the ʻāina. All inquiries will be handled with care and confidentiality. Jordan Aina Realtor RS-85780 - Cell: 808-276-0880 Email: jordan.aina@locationshawaii.com

**AINA REALTOR -** Call me to talk story and let's make homeownership a reality. If you have questions, I can help with both Hawaiian Homestead and residential properties on all islands. One of my missions is to keep native Hawaiian Families in Hawaiʻi. Let's build a better future for the next generation. Call me: Jordan Aina - RS-85780 Cell: (808) 276-0880 - Locations Hawaii LLC, RB-17095

**HAWAIIAN MEMORIAL PARK -** 1 grave with single bronze marker and vase included. $8,000. For inquiries please call 808-696-3484.

**HOMES WITH ALOHA -** Nanakuli (Valley) - Single level 4 bedrooms/ 2 bath 7,500 sf lot in a Cul-desac $560,000 This is a leasehold property -Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB-15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303.

**HOMES WITH ALOHA -** Waianae - 3 bedrooms/ 1.5 bath $495,000 Move in ready.Beautiful landscaped yard fully fenced. This is a leasehold property – Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB-15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303.

**RESEARCH RECRUITMENT -** Native Hawaiians 18–65 without prediabetes/diabetes. Earn $25–50 if eligible! Contact: alabore@arizona.edu for information.

**SEEKING A PROFESSIONAL TO HELP GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE REAL ESTATE PROCESS?** Buying, selling or investing call Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) 808.295.4474 RB-15598 Homes with Aloha - Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303

**SELLING PROPERTY ON ANAHOLA AND LĪHUʻE?** Interested in anyone selling their property in Anahola and Līhuʻe Hawaiian Homes. Contact Tracy Waialae Cell: 808-557-9949. Landline: 808-238-0386. Email: tracyrivera1962@yahoo.com.

**THINKING OF BUYING OR SELLING A HOME? CALL THE EXPERT.** Call Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (R) 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! Specialize in Fee Simple & Homestead Properties for over 38 years.

**WAIʻANAE VALLEY HAWAIIAN HOMESTEAD RARELY AVAILABLE** excellent condition 4bed/2bath fully refreshed with new paint inside and out, new flooring, new carpet, new fixtures, new kitchen appliances, clean, ready to move in. For more information contact Tiffany Kekumu, Realtor 808-542-6555 Locations, LLC RS-78035 ■



## HOʻOHUI ʻOHANA
FAMILY REUNIONS

*E nā ʻohana Hawaiʻi:* 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!

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### SEARCH

**KAʻAUHAUKANE –** Na Lālā O Ana Lumaukahiliʻowahinekapu Kaʻauhaukane will celebrate our ʻOhana Reunion - Potluck Lunch on Sunday, August 3, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Bellows Air Force Station, Picnic Pavilion 5-A. Deadline to register: Sunday, July 13, 2025. To ensure base access, please contact your Family representative: Peter Machado 808-282-3732 (Kapiko and Quinn); Linda Ho 808-239-8081 (Iseke); Louie Peterson 808-216-9331(Isaacs and Iseke); Colleen Tam Loo 808-729-8662 or Puanani Orton 808-235-2226 (McKee).

**NAEHU-SAFFERY REUNION 2025 -** Descendants of Edmund Saffery and his wives, Kupuna and Waiki Naehu, are invited to the 2025 Naehu-Saffery Family Reunion on Saturday, Aug. 30, 2025, (Labor Day Weekend) in Hauʻula, Oʻahu. Connect with family, share stories, and celebrate our heritage! For more info contact: Dayton Labanon: 808-232-9869, dlabanon@gmail.com, Manu Goodhue: 808-551-9386, manu_losch@hotmail.com, Naomi Losch: 808-261-9038, nlosch@hawaii.edu. Visit the NSOA website: tinyurl.com/NSOASite. T-shirt orders due: June 30 and Registration due: Aug 1. Download registration packets at tinyurl.com/NSOAReunion25. ■


OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

## 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 HAWAIʻI (HILO)**
2100 Kanoelehua Ave.,
Unit 9 & 10
Hilo, HI 96720
Phone: 808.204.2391

**MOLOKAʻI / LĀNAʻI**
Kūlana ʻŌiwi, P.O. Box 1717
Kaunakakai, HI 96748
Phone: 808.582.0516

**KAUAʻI / NIʻIHAU**
4405 Kukui Grove St., Ste. 103
Līhuʻe, HI 96766-1601
Phone: 808.241.3390

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

oha.org/offices

OFFICE of HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
560 N. Nimitz Highway, Suite 200
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

# Community Members Needed to Help Improve Iwi Kūpuna Protection

## *The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is currently recruiting ʻŌiwi for a working group*

This past legislative session, the House and Senate passed resolutions recognizing that the state had failed to adequately manage its burial law responsibilities, including failure to provide adequate resources to administer burial laws and a lack of will to fulfill its kuleana. They also recognized that laws affecting burial sites are inadequate.

- OHA has been tasked to convene a working group to consider whether any portion of the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) burial sites program should be transferred to OHA as well as other changes that might better protect iwi kūpuna.
- The working group will meet provide recommendations to the legislature in advance of the 2027 legislative session.
- Membership will include: 2 OHA representatives; 2 SHPD representatives; 1 representative from each of the five Island Burial Councils (IBCs); 1 Hui Iwi Kuamoʻo representative; and up to 4 additional community representatives (total of 14 members).

Community and IBC participants will receive a small honorarium per meeting for their participation. Monthly meetings will run from October 2025 to October 2026.

To learn more and to apply for one of the 4 community seats, go to:

**www.oha.org/IwiWorkingGroup**

*For further questions please email bswg@oha.org*

**Accepting applications till September 1, 2025**

*Empowering Hawaiians, Strengthening Hawaiʻi*

OHA
OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS