



Ka Wai Ola

NEWS FOR THE LĀHUI

kawaiola.news

Apelila (April) 2026 | Vol. 43, No. 04

HAWAI'I CAN DO BETTER

REJECTING A MILITARIST FUTURE

PAGES 18-20



The U.S. military controls about 5.6% of the land across the pae āina and, with about 45,000 active duty military stationed in Hawai'i, we are the most militarized state in the union, per capita. The military is a major source of economic revenue for Hawai'i, but what is the cost to the health of our āina and our people - and does the very presence of the military in Hawai'i make us a prime target in the event of a war as it did in 1941 when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor? Here, Marines fire anti-personnel weapons during live-fire training at Mōkapu in Kailua, O'ahu. - Photo: U.S.M.C Cpl. Eric Huynh

Rell Sunn Menehune Contest

OHA SPONSORED

April 4 - 5, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Mākaha, O'ahu

Keiki surf contest founded by the "Queen of Mākaha" Rell Sunn at Mākaha Beach Park. hoomaa.org

Ka 'Aha Hula at Waimea - The Gathering of Hula at Waimea

April 4, 18, 19, 25 & 26, 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. | Waimea, O'ahu

Enjoy hula presentations by a variety of hālau. waimeavalley.net

The 2026 Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival - Keiki Kīne

April 4, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Kapolei, O'ahu

Keiki NextGEN steel guitar players perform Hawai'i's favorite music at Ka Makana Ali'i. Free event. hawaiiansteelguitarfestival.com

Kālai Hawai'i: Youth Council Launch & Advocacy Summit

OHA SPONSORED

April 6 - May 2, Mondays & Wednesdays, 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Hilo, Hawai'i Island

April 11 & May 2, 8:30 a.m. - Noon
Hilo, Hawai'i Island

A leadership and advocacy series to empower Hawai'i Island youth (middle school to young adult) with cultural grounding, civic knowledge, and problem-solving skills to create meaningful community change. awilihawaii.org

Kama'āina Sunday

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

Audio tours of 'Iolani Palace, 'ono food, lively entertainment, and local vendors. A free event. iolanipalace.org

Inaugural 'Imi Ola Canoe Club Long Distance Race

OHA SPONSORED
April 18, registration at 7:00 a.m.
Mauliola (Sand Island), O'ahu

Sand Island Park at the boat launch area. Questions call Lisa at (808) 799-9597. imiolacanoecub.com

Mālama Hulē'ia Community Workday

April 18, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Libu'e, Kaua'i

Every 3rd Saturday volunteer to do conservation work at Alekoko Fishpond. malamahuleia.org

'Ukulele Summit OHA SPONSORED

April 18, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Kāne'ohe, O'ahu

A day of 'ukulele and 'ōlelo Hawai'i workshops, performances, keiki activities and free Tat's Shave Ice from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Pre-register online to attend this free event. fourstringsatime.org.

Aloha Ko'olauloa 2026 OHA SPONSORED

April 18, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Kabuku, O'ahu

A fundraiser for Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Hau'ula and Ke Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i o Kahuku Academy. For more info or to order event bentos or t-shirts email naleokakoo@gmail.com.

Make Music Jamms

April 21, Noon - 1:00 p.m. | Iwilei, O'ahu

A monthly concert hosted by the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame at the second-floor stage at Nā Lama Kukui. IG @nalamakukui

Project Maka'ala: Fraud & Scams Can Happen to Anyone OHA SPONSORED

- April 23, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
Key Project Pavilion, Kāhala'u, O'ahu
- April 30, 10:30 a.m. - Noon
Papakōlea Community Center, O'ahu
- May 5, 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Papakōlea Community Center, O'ahu
- May 7, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Key Project Pavilion, Kāhala'u, O'ahu

Fraud/financial scam awareness and education for kūpuna. Learn to protect yourself. hawaiiancommunity.net

Lā Honua Earth Day

April 25, 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Waimea, O'ahu

Volunteer workday at Waimea Valley to help care for the valley's gardens, cultural sites and natural resources followed by lunch and a community gathering. RSVP at waimeavalley.net/events/earth-day.

Walk for Wai on Earth Day!

April 25, 9:00 a.m. | Honolulu, O'ahu

Meet at Ala Moana Beach Park and walk 3 miles to Kapi'olani Park to raise awareness of ongoing water contamination issues at Red Hill. Wear blue and bring signs. A rally after the park will include info booths and entertainment. walk4wai.com



2026 Merrie Monarch Festival

April 9 - 11,

6:00 p.m. - Midnight, HST

K5 Live broadcast and live stream on merriemonarch.com or on the Hawai'i News Now streaming app.

Waipā Community Workday

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

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

Pu'uhonua Mākeke

April 25, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Products, services, and businesses from Pu'uhonua across Hawai'i. Pu'uhonua o Waimānalo in the Pavilion. FB/IG @puuhonuamakeke

Waimānalo Kanikapila & Limu Festival

April 25, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Enjoy a day of Hawaiian music, community and kanikapila at Waimānalo Beach Park. Free event. cyrilpahinui.com

Nā Pu'uwai Hō'ike Mana 2026

OHA SPONSORED

April 25, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Kaunakakai, Moloka'i

An 'ohana friendly health resource fair with food, keiki games, interactive booths, demonstrations, screenings, and more at Kiowea Park across from Kūlana 'Ōiwi. napuuwai.org

Ke Kumu O Ke Ola OHA SPONSORED

April 25, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Pālehua, O'ahu

Celebrate Native Hawaiian plant month at Pālehua. Conservation booths, food, games, plant giveaways and more. palehua.org

Learn Kōnane

April 25, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Iwilei, O'ahu

Free kōnane classes and on-going games at Nā Lama Kukui with Uncle John Kao-helaulii. IG @nalamakukui

Hot Kūpuna Nights

April 26, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. | Iwilei, O'ahu

Bring your 'ukulele to the second floor of Nā Lama Kukui and join in the kanikapila. Food available for purchase. IG @nalamakukui

Annual Hawai'i Co-op Hui Gathering OHA SPONSORED

April 30, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Bringing together farmers, food producers and cultural practitioners to build skills, pilina, and share strategies for food sovereignty, economic justice and self-governance. RSVP to keoni.defranco@purplemaia.org.

Beneath Our Hawaiian Skies: May Day is Lei Day in Waikīkī

May 1, doors open at 5:30 p.m., showtime at 7:00 p.m. | Waikīkī, O'ahu

An unforgettable evening that will bring together beloved Hawai'i musicians and hālau to celebrate the beauty of Hawaiian culture. maydayinwaikiki.com

105th Annual Kamehameha Schools Song Contest

May 1, Pre-show 6:30 p.m., Competition 7:30 p.m. | K5 Live broadcast
ksbe.edu/songcontest

Kamalehua The Sheltering Tree World Premiere OHA SPONSORED

May 1 & 5, 7:30 p.m. & May 3, 4:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O'ahu

This opera tells the story of Timoteo Ha'alilio's 1842 mission to the U.S., Great Britain, Belgium, and France to secure treaties recognizing Hawai'i as a sovereign nation to protect the kingdom from annexation. hawaiiopera.org

May Day Lei Day

May 2, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Waimea, O'ahu

Celebrate May Day with lei-making, cultural demonstrations, displays, live music and more.
waimeavalley.net/events/may-day ■



Summer L.H. Sylva
Interim Chief Administrator

K. Sean Kekina
Chief Operating Officer

Bill Brennan
Communications Director



EDITOR

Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Kaleena Patcho

STAFF WRITERS

Philamer Felicitas
Kelli Meskin Soileau

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS

Nelson Gaspar
Jason Lees

CONTRIBUTORS

Kalani Akana, Ph.D.
Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

Bobby Camara
Donalyn Dela Cruz

J. Kara Dumaguin
Bryan Esmeralda

Jenny Estrella
Devon Haia

Pelehonuamea Harman
Micah Kahiwa

Lisa Kelekolio
KipuKai Kualii

Leinā'ala Ley
Kaulu Lu'uwai

Kananioheha Māka'imoku
Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH, RDN

Vanessa Lee Miller
Malia Nobrega-Olivera

Kalei Nu'uhiwa, Ph.D.
Jon Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio, Ph.D.

Inam Rahman, MD
Andrew Rosen

Philip Kahaunaele Swain
Mathew Manakō Tanaka

Mahina Tuteur
Brad Ka'aleleo Wong

Ka Wai Ola is published monthly by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to inform, inspire and uplift the lāhui and others by covering issues of concern to the Native Hawaiian community, celebrating successes, and sharing information about OHA programs and efforts. Advertising in *Ka Wai Ola* does not constitute an endorsement of products or individuals by OHA. *Ka Wai Ola* has a circulation of more than 70,000 including direct mail and digital subscribers. Additionally, several thousand more copies are distributed via OHA's neighbor island offices, state and county offices, private and community agencies, and newsstands. Our website, [kawaiola.news](#), has about 16,000 monthly visitors. *Ka Wai Ola* is printed by O'ahu Publications. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs' main office is at 560 N. Nimitz Hwy, Suite 200, Honolulu, HI, 96817. Telephone: 808-594-1835. Email: kwo@oha.org. ©2026 Office of Hawaiian Affairs. All rights reserved.

Ka 'Imi Pono: Charting Our Way Forward Together

Aloha mai kākou,

Ka *Wai Ola* carries many voices – stories of ‘āina, health, culture, business, education, and the world around us. At first glance they may seem separate. Yet together, they point us to a practice our kūpuna knew well: pausing to understand the purpose behind our actions and the collective future we aim to shape.

That reflection is guiding our work on one of the most difficult questions of our generation: the future of military land leases in Hawai‘i.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) remains committed to a deliberate and focused approach to this issue. The Board of Trustees established dedicated working groups to investigate military leased lands and shape negotiating pathways forward – engaging the governor’s Military Advisory Committee, federal leadership, and Hawai‘i’s congressional delegation to affirm OHA’s central role, while drawing on the expertise of stakeholders committed to Hawai‘i’s collective wellbeing.

OHA has also prioritized community engagement. Meetings in Hilo, Mā‘ili, and Kekaha have focused on helping communities understand lease timelines, the Public Land Trust, and what different paths forward could mean. Upcoming meetings in Wahiawā, Kahuku, and Maui will continue this work.

What began as education is evolving into deeper consultation, including plans for Ka Pa‘akai analyses to document impacts on Native Hawaiian cultural practices, water resources, and access to wahi pana.

What we are hearing reflects depth and diversity. Communities are raising concerns about unexploded ordnance, groundwater contamination, and the long-term impacts of destructive live-fire training. Others ask what restoration could look like through conservation, cultural access, or the return of lands once taken.

Expiring in 2029, these leases span thousands of acres across our islands – too interconnected for anything less than a comprehensive approach.

These conversations are not easy. For many, they carry generational memories of displacement, restricted access, and harm to ‘āina. That reality requires care and space for different perspectives, from those who envision continued military presence under stricter conditions, to those who call for its full cessation.

In moments like this, differences can be amplified in ways that suggest division. But what we are seeing is something more grounded: people showing up, asking informed questions, and engaging in a shared process of understanding. That is a form of solidarity worth holding onto.

From that place, empowerment takes shape in the work itself: investing in independent land valuations, documenting cultural and environmental conditions, and grounding decisions in both ‘ike kūpuna and present-day realities. It means understanding the full range of options, including lease conditions and land return, and making decisions from clarity, integrity, and purpose, not fear.

At its core, this is about kuleana to these lands, to our people, and to future generations. If we remain grounded in that responsibility, this moment becomes not only about the future of military leases, but about how we, as a people, shape what comes next. ■

“I ho‘okahi ka mana‘o, i ho‘okahi ka pu‘uwai. Be of one mind; of one heart.”

Summer Lee Haunani Sylva

Ka Pouhana Kūikawā | Interim Chief Administrator



MEA O LOKO TABLE OF CONTENTS

MO‘OLELO NUI | COVER STORY

Hawai‘i Can Do Better PAGES 18-20

By Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio, Ph.D.

FEATURED STORIES

A Call to Return ‘Āina PAGE 9

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

“‘O ke Aloha ho‘i e Ho‘omau ‘ia ana” PAGE 10

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

Ka‘ūpūlehu: Stewardship in Motion PAGE 11

By J. Kara Dumaguin

Ho‘ōpūloa: Village Beneath the Flow PAGE 13

By Micah Kahiwa

Kalā DeSoto: Watching, Learning, and Committing PAGE 14

By Donalyn Dela Cruz

Combining Career and Kuleana on the Continent PAGE 15

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

A Kingdom Crossing Oceans PAGE 16

By Vanessa Lee Miller

Sailing the Wake of the Past PAGE 17

By Philamer Felicitas

OHA IN THE NEWS

OHA Activates Nearly \$4 Million in Disaster Aid PAGE 4

By Bill Brennan

Feasibility Study for Kaka‘ako Makai Cultural Center PAGE 5

By Bill Brennan

2026 Legislative Landscape Raises Concerns PAGE 6

By Leinā‘ala Ley

Expiring Military Leases: The Law is on Our Side PAGE 6

By Kaulu Lu‘uwai and Mahina Tuteur

OHA Briefed on Proposed HMSA-HPH Merger PAGE 7

By Philamer Felicitas

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

E Ola Mau ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i! PAGE 8

By Malia Nobrega-Olivera

A Hawaiian Language Journey to Aotearoa with Hawaiian Airlines PAGE 8

By Mathew Manakō Tanaka

From Speaker to Teacher PAGE 12

By Kananioheha Māka‘imoku

Apelila (April) 2026 | Vol. 43, No. 04

OHA Activates Nearly \$4 Million in Disaster Aid

By Bill Brennan, OHA Communications Director

Following last month's catastrophic back-to-back Kona Low storms, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees has approved the activation of some \$3.96 million in disaster aid to support Native Hawaiian households and communities impacted by devastating floods and storm damage across the pae āina.

"OHA is committed to standing with our lāhui in times of crisis," said Board of Trustees Chair Kaiali'i Kahele. "The storm damage and flooding have caused significant hardship for many families across our islands. By activating these resources quickly and strategically, we are ensuring that our communities have access to immediate relief, recovery support, and pathways to rebuild with dignity and resilience.

"This action mobilizes OHA's disaster aid framework to deliver immediate relief and targeted support to those most affected across the pae āina."

The Board approved the funding in an emergency meeting on March 25. It will be distributed through a combination of emergency assistance, direct grants, and home repair support:

- **Redirecting I Ola Emergency Aid (up to \$3.3 million):**

Through a contract amendment with Hawaiian Council, OHA will reallocate existing funds to provide:

- Up to \$2.9 million to support confirmed Native Hawaiian households in impacted areas
- Up to \$100,000 to support community resource hubs statewide
- Up to \$300,000 in assistance for federal civilian workers affected by the Department of Homeland Security shutdown (e.g., TSA Agents)

- **Direct Disaster Aid Grants (\$410,000):**

Funding will provide direct financial assistance to eligible Native Hawaiian households in impacted regions.

- **Mālama Honua Home Repair Grants (\$250,000):**

Grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$20,000 to support home repairs resulting from storm damage for qualified households who provide verified repair estimates or invoices. ■

For more information go to: oha.org



Wading through flood waters at Hui Mahi'ai 'Āina, a homeless community program in Waimānalo run by Aunty Blanche McMillan. - Photos: Jason Lees



Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Hawaiian Council staff made site visits to various Windward O'ahu communities to talk story with residents and help distribute supplies in Pūpūkea.

HC and HCF Accepting Donations for Flood Relief

The severe weather events that began in mid-March and resulted in catastrophic flooding across the pae āina – and particularly on O'ahu – affected thousands of Hawai'i residents. Early estimates indicated that damages could exceed \$1 billion.

For those wanting to support 'ohana impacted by the floods, safe, tax-deductible donations can be made to both the Hawaiian Council and the Hawai'i Community Foundation.

The **Hawaiian Council** announced a donation campaign, Kāko'o O'ahu, to address evolving needs for affected communities, including housing stability services, direct financial assistance and other critical support. To maximize community impact, the Hawaiian Council will match every donation, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$200,000. All donations will directly support impacted individuals and families, with a portion allocated to cover operational costs required to deliver services effectively and at scale.

Individuals and organizations in supporting Kāko'o O'ahu can donate online at hawaiiancouncil.org, or mail checks to the Hawaiian Council at: 91-1270 Kinoiki St., Bldg 1, Kapolei, HI 96707. Write "Kāko'o O'ahu" on the check memo.

The **Hawai'i Community Foundation** maintains ongoing "strong funds" to build community resiliency through disaster preparedness, rapid relief, response and recovery. The organization has six existing strong funds: Stronger Hawai'i (for statewide support); Hawai'i Island Strong Fund; Kaua'i Strong Fund; Maui County Strong Fund; Maui Strong Fund (for wild-fire recovery); and O'ahu Strong Fund. To donate to a county-specific strong fund, go to: hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/hawaii-strong.

Again, all donations to Hawaiian Council and Hawai'i Community Foundation are tax-deductible. ■

'Ohana wanting to kōkua in the wake of the flooding should be wary about contributing to non-accredited organizations or funds. While disasters bring out the best in most people, there are, unfortunately, some who will try to profit from such events.

HAWAII ISLAND

OHA Satellite Office Dates

OHA's Beneficiary Services travels to serve Native Hawaiian beneficiaries in various communities each month on Wednesdays from **8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** (closed 1:00 - 1:45 p.m. for lunch).



www.oha.org

April 1 - Waimea

Parker Ranch Center Conf. Room - 67-1185 Māmalahoa Hwy.

April 15 - Nā'ālehu

Shirakawa Hotel Unit 10 - 95-6039 Māmalahoa Hwy.

April 22 - Pāhoa

Puna Kai Shopping Center - 15-2714 Pāhoa Village Rd.

April 29 - Kona

La'ī'ōpua 2020 Community Center Lānai - 74-5210 Keanalehu Dr.

Feasibility Study Underway for Kaka'ako Makai Cultural Center

By Bill Brennan, OHA Communications Director

In late February, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) announced its selection of AEA Consulting, an internationally recognized firm specializing in cultural strategy and planning, to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study for the development of a Native Hawaiian Cultural Center in Kaka'ako Makai — a project rooted in community, culture, and the revitalization of a Native Hawaiian presence in urban Honolulu.

Over the next six months, OHA and AEA will undertake a multi-phase process that includes market assessment, extensive community and stakeholder engagement, program and space planning, financial feasibility modeling, capital cost estimates, and an implementation timeline. Central to this effort will be meaningful engagement with beneficiaries, cultural practitioners, community leaders, and partner organizations to ensure the vision reflects shared aspirations and 'ike (knowledge).

“We look forward to gathering input and mana'ō at the outset of this process to ensure the cultural center is guided by community priorities and built upon a foundation of cultural integrity, financial sustainability, and lasting benefits that create enduring value for our ben-

eficiaries,” said OHA Chair Kaiali'i Kahele. “This project is about restoring connection — to place, to culture, and to each other.”

The study supports OHA's long-term vision of revitalizing its 29 acres of Kaka'ako Makai property awarded to OHA in 2012 as a partial settlement from the state for unpaid Public Land Trust revenues.

Kaka'ako Makai was once a thriving coastal area and wahi pana where traditional fishing practices and 'āina stewardship shaped daily life. Today, OHA envisions the area as a vibrant cultural gathering place that strengthens the community's relationship to this history and shoreline.

The proposed cultural center is an opportunity to transform vacant land into a living celebration of Native Hawaiian identity, language, arts, and traditions. Beyond serving as a destination, it is envisioned as a welcoming space for education, intergenerational learning, cultural practice, and community connection — generating lasting social, cultural, educational, and economic benefits for Hawaiians and the broader public.

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs (AOHCC) has expressed strong support for a cultural center at Kaka'ako Makai, recognizing its potential to uplift lāhui, perpetuate culture, and serve as a gathering place for

generations to come. OHA values the partnership and advocacy of the civic club movement and other community organizations that have championed the need for a dedicated cultural space in Honolulu for decades.

OHA approved funding for the cultural center in its biennium budget in June 2025. In September, OHA initiated the process of retaining culture and arts consultants to complete a comprehensive financial feasibility study, business plan, and public-facing presentation. After reviewing proposals, OHA selected AEA Consulting, which has more than 35 years of experience and has delivered over 1,200 strategic and feasibility studies across more than 40 countries. The firm has worked with prominent cultural institutions including the Smithsonian American Art Museum, The Grand Egyptian Museum, the Chickasaw Nation Exhibit C Gallery in Oklahoma, and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center in Athens, Greece.

“The study will equip OHA with the data, community insight, and planning tools needed to make informed decisions about the scope, programming, sustainability, and long-term operations of a Native Hawaiian Cultural Center,” said Kahele. “Most importantly, it will ensure that this center reflects the voices and values of our people.” ■



**Our 'āina.
Our 'ōpio.
Our future.**

A thriving lāhui begins with resilient 'āina. By coming together with our communities to steward 'āina, we help cultivate a vibrant future for our keiki, our kaiāulu and all of Hawai'i.



Ke Kula'o Kamehameha

2026 Legislative Landscape Raises Concerns

By Leinā'ala Ley, OHA Chief Advocate

Aloha mai kākou. April marks the final stretch of the 2026 legislative session, and OHA's Public Policy team continues to work diligently to ensure the voices and rights of our beneficiaries are represented at the Capitol.

This session, a handful of positive measures have advanced. Notably, HB2409 HD3 would increase funding for the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and HB1769 HD2 would bring pa'ahao (inmates) incarcerated on the continent back home to Hawai'i – 30 years after they were sent away (see *Ka Wai Ola's* December 2025 cover story).

However, the broader legislative landscape has been deeply concerning.

For one, we've seen many legislators double down on a false narrative that scapegoats protections for cultural and natural resources as the primary impediment to the construction of affordable housing.

This false framing persists even though the Simplifying Permitting for Enhanced Economic Development (SPEED) Task Force, formed pursuant to Act 133 in 2025, determined that expediting housing development cannot be achieved simply by circumventing regulations. Rather, legislative support for technology upgrades and workforce development are necessary to ensure timely processing of permits.

Of urgent concern on this front are bills that would erode protections for iwi kūpuna (HB1710 HD2); limit citizen rights to sue to enforce environmental review laws (HB1979 HD3); and limit the jurisdiction of the Land Use Commission (LUC), a critical forum for protecting traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices (HB1738 HD2).

The targeting of the LUC is particularly unfounded, given its strong record of processing affordable housing petitions within the legally mandated 45-day timeline.



At the same time, OHA's own legislative priorities have faced significant setbacks.

None of OHA's six package bills were heard or advanced in the Senate, and only three – HB2101 (commercial aquarium collection), HB2103 (historic preservation review), and HB2104 (island burial councils) – successfully crossed over from the House. Their future now rests with the Senate Water and Land Committee and the Senate Hawaiian Affairs Committee.

Two additional bills, HB2582 and HB2584, remain critical to the well-being of the lāhui. Although not part of OHA's package, they address longstanding issues tied to the Public Land Trust.

The Hawai'i State Constitution guarantees Native Hawaiians a pro-rata share of trust revenues, recognized in statute as 20%. Yet OHA currently receives just \$21.5 million annually – far short of the estimated \$80 million identified in a 2016 financial review due to OHA as its share.

This chronic underfunding directly limits OHA's ability to provide essential services, programs, scholarships, and advocacy for our beneficiaries. These bills must be heard by the Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs to advance.

In May, we will provide a comprehensive update on the session's outcomes. In the meantime, we strongly encourage you to stay engaged. If you have not already signed up for OHA's action alerts, please visit oha.org/advocacy. As we approach the 2026 election, OHA will continue holding policymakers accountable through follow-up interviews, issue briefs, and continued public engagement.

To everyone who has responded to action alerts this session – mahalo nui loa for your continued support. Your voice makes a difference. ■

OHA welcomes your feedback at ohapolicy@oha.org and encourages you to remain engaged and involved as we move forward together.

Expiring Military Leases: The Law is on Our Side

By Kaulu Lu'uawai and
Mahina Tuteur

In 1964, the State of Hawai'i leased nearly 23,000 acres at Pōhaku-Loa to the U.S. Army for just one dollar. The state brokered a similar deal across O'ahu at Mākua, Kahuku, and Kawaioloa-Poamoho. These leases expire in August 2029 and renewal negotiations are underway.

The future of these 'āina is not merely a policy question but a legal crisis. The law governs what the state can and cannot do with these lands, and the lāhui has a collective kuleana to demand that it be followed.

Since securing the leases, the military has had broad, largely unsupervised control over these lands. But these are not just any state lands – they are unrelinquished crown and government lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom, seized through the 1893 illegal overthrow without consent of the Native Hawaiian people.

Moreover, these lands carry two distinct yet intertwined legal obligations that the state cannot waive, delegate, or ignore.

The first is the Public Land Trust. Under Section 5 of the 1959 Admission Act and Article XII, Section 4 of the Hawai'i Constitution, these lands are held in trust for five explicit purposes, one of which is the betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians.

The second is the Public Trust Doctrine. Under Article XI, Section 1 of the Hawai'i Constitution, all public natural resources are held in trust for the benefit of present and future generations. Significantly, any decision around the use of these lands begins with a presumption in favor of public use, access, and enjoyment, not military utility.

Together, these bedrock principles plainly instruct how the state, as trustee, must proceed; it must show that these lease renewals serve the trust and its beneficiaries, and it cannot satisfy one constitutional duty while ignoring the other.

The Hawai'i Supreme Court made this crystal clear in *Ching v. Case* (2019), a dispute that arose from the Pōhaku-Loa lease.



The court unanimously held that the state had breached its constitutional trust duties – drawing on both the Public Land Trust and the Public Trust Doctrine – by failing to monitor and inspect lands leased to the military and declared that it “may not passively allow [trust lands] to fall into ruin.”

If merely failing to monitor or inspect is a breach, a trustee who negotiates the re-leasing of trust assets behind closed doors before conducting environmental remediation and the constitutionally required Ka Pa'akai cultural impact analysis, or without meaningfully engaging the Native Hawaiian community and general public, surely breaches its trust duties.

Nonetheless, this is the path the governor is taking. Negotiations with federal entities have proceeded under compressed timelines without first addressing these threshold issues. Public Land Trust leases require Board of Land and Natural Resource (BLNR) approval and a legally adequate Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). BLNR has granted neither – in fact, it rejected the Army's EISs for lease renewals at both Pōhaku-Loa and on O'ahu last summer.

This is a once-in-a-generation moment.

For six decades these lands have been degraded, their waters and soils contaminated, their cultural sites rendered inaccessible. With the leases expiring, the law is on our side. The lāhui, as beneficiaries of these trust lands, will not be mere bystanders to these negotiations. We must demand accountability – and a reckoning.

In the words of Skippy Ioane, “Now that you know, do you care?” With knowledge comes kuleana, what we do with it is up to all of us. ■

Kaulu Lu'uawai is a post-JD Legal Fellow at Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law at UH Mānoa. Mahina Tuteur is an attorney, educator and small business owner with certificates in Native Hawaiian and Environmental law. Both Lu'uawai and Tuteur are members of OHA's Technical Advisory Group which provides guidance to the Board of Trustees on matters related to the military in Hawai'i.

OHA Briefed on Proposed HMSA-HPH Merger

By Philamer Felicitas

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees' regularly scheduled meeting on February 19 included an informational briefing on the proposed merger between Hawai'i Medical Service Association (HMSA) and Hawai'i Pacific Health (HPH).

Health care professionals and representatives from The Queen's Health Systems, HMSA and HPH provided trustees with an overview of the proposed consolidation and its potential implications for Hawai'i's health care landscape. Discussion included possible impacts on Native Hawaiian health care, access to care in rural communities across the pae 'āina, cost structures, provider networks and broader effects on service delivery statewide.

The proposed partnership would bring together Hawai'i's largest health insurer, HMSA, and one of the state's largest hospital systems, Hawai'i Pacific Health. Leaders from both organizations said the merger could help stabilize Hawai'i's health care system, reduce administrative costs and invest more resources into primary care and rural health services. They also emphasized the importance of keeping health care organizations lo-



Representatives from the Hawai'i Medical Service Association and Hawai'i Pacific Health briefed OHA trustees on their planned merger on February 19. Also in attendance were representatives of The Queen's Health System and local doctors. - Photo: Nelson Gaspar

cally controlled rather than being taken over by national corporations.

At the same time, some health care leaders and community physicians raised concerns about the potential

impacts of the consolidation. Representatives from The Queen's Health Systems and other providers cautioned that the merger could shift patients and resources in ways that may weaken safety-net providers that serve vulnerable populations. Some independent Native Hawaiian physicians also expressed concern that the proposed partnership could affect access to care, quality of services and the long-term stability of health care providers who support Native Hawaiian communities.

During the briefing, trustees asked questions to better understand how the proposed partnership could affect health care access and delivery across Hawai'i, as well as what it may mean for OHA beneficiaries and the agency's ongoing advocacy and policy efforts. Trustees also discussed the importance of ensuring that any changes to Hawai'i's health care system continue to support equitable care for Native Hawaiians and other underserved communities.

The proposed merger has been submitted for federal review, and regulators will evaluate the potential impacts before any final decision is made. ■

Watch the discussion on OHA's YouTube channel: youtube.com/@OHAHawaii.

A MAY DAY CONCERT!

KUMZ PRESENTS

Beneath Our Hawaiian Skies

Wear a Lei, Make a Lei, Give a Lei

Friday, May 1, 2026, at 7:00 PM (Doors open at 5:30 PM)

Tom Moffatt Waikīkī Shell

Join us for an evening of great Hawaiian music and hula to celebrate May Day is Lei Day 2026!

Tickets are available at Ticketmaster or at the Neal S. Blaisdell Box Office

[MayDayinWaikiki.com](https://www.maydayinwaikiki.com)

Featuring Performers:



KUMZ
NĀ KUMU HULA
VETO BAKER &
MICHAEL LANAKILA
CASUPANG



**HĀLAU I KA
WĒKIU**

Featuring Performers:



**MĀLIE
LYMAN**



**IKAIKA
BLACKBURN**



**IOLANI &
NATALIE
KAMAUU**





He Huaka'i 'Ōlelo Hawai'i i Aotearoa

A Hawaiian Language Journey to Aotearoa With Hawaiian Airlines

Na Mathew "Manakō" Tanaka

Mai ka 'ōhi'a lehua o Hawai'i a ka Pohutukawa o Aotearoa, aloha pumehana e nā makamaka make'e 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

Welo ha'āheo nā mea 'ōlelo makuahine e lawelawe nei i ka hana ma lalo o ka malu o ka Hui Wa'alele 'o Hawaiian, a he keu ho'i nā kuene mokulele no ke kumu, na lākou nō ho'i i mālama mua i ia mea kūikawā 'o ia ho'i ka mokulele 'ōlelo Hawai'i i ka makahiki 2018. Hā'upu wale a'ela ka mana'o i ka lele pū 'ana o lākou kuene mokulele 'ōlelo Hawai'i i ia wā, a no ka laha 'ana a puni ka pae 'āina i lilo ai nā mokulele 'ōlelo Hawai'i i mea kūmau mai kēlā wā a hiki i kēia manawa. A hiki i kēia, ua kipa akula nā manu kūkahekahe, 'o ia ho'i kekahi hea 'ana no ia pū'ulu kānaka kāko'o 'ōlelo Hawai'i, i nā kūlanakauhale like 'ole mai Fukuoka a hiki loa aku i Bosetona.

Penei ke 'ano o nā mokulele 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Ma ke 'ano ho'opū'iwa ho'i ia e mālama 'ia nei i mea e ho'ohau'oli ai i nā 'ōhūa, a ua lako ia mau mokulele me nā kāleka e a'ō aku ana i ua po'e 'ōhūa nei i ka 'ōlelo, a ua mālama 'ia nā kūkala a pau ma luna o ka mokulele ma ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i a me ka 'ōlelo pelekania i mea e ho'okuluma ai i ka 'ōlelo makuahine. He nani mai ho'i kau!

I kēia makahiki i kipa mua akula iā Tāmaki Makaurau i Aotearoa ka mokulele 'ōlelo Hawai'i, a kipa pū ho'i i 'elua wahi kupaianaha, a 'o kekahi he hoa kama'āina. 'Oiai ke ho'omaha akula nā wa'a kūpuna o kākou, 'o ia ho'i 'o *Hōkūle'a* lāua 'o *Hikianalia* ma ia awa kū moku o Tāmaki Makaurau, ua pōmaika'i nā manu kūkahekahe i ka ho'okipa 'ia ma nā papahale ka'apuni honua o ia mau wa'a kaulua. Wahi a Kekai Lum, kekahi o nā manu kūkahekahe, "'O ke aloha 'oia'i'o o ko kākou po'e," a pēlā ko kākou pōmaika'i.

'O ka lua ho'i o nā wahi kipa 'o ia ho'i 'o Whakaata Māori, he kahua ho'olele wikiō ho'i no ka lāhui Māori na lākou ke kuleana o ka ho'olaha mo'olelo ma ko lākou 'ōlelo 'oiwi 'o ia ho'i 'o te reo Māori. Ua pōwhiri 'ia mākou me ka hanohano me ka mōteatea o ko lākou 'āina a me nā ha'i 'ōlelo e pili ana i ka pilina o ko kākou mau 'āina a me nā papahana a lākou e lawelawe nei. Ua ha'āha'a mākou o ka Hui Wa'alele 'o Hawaiian i ko lākou ho'olaha 'ana i kekahi mo'olelo e pili ana i kā mākou mokulele 'ōlelo Hawai'i kekahi, a ke hū a'e nei ka mahalo ma ka na'au o kou mea kākau.

Ua kuleana kākou nā kama'āina i ko kākou 'ōlelo, a he papahana kēia e 'imi ana i ke kūlana 'ae'ōia a mau loa aku no ko kākou 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Ke mahalo a'e nei i nā manu kūkahekahe, 'o ia ho'i nā kuene mokulele i



On Hawaiian Airlines' first "'ōlelo Hawai'i" flight to Aotearoa, the flight crew - all of whom speak Hawaiian - were invited to appear on Whakaata Māori, a television station that offers Māori language programming. The 'ōlelo Hawai'i flights began in 2018 and are randomly scheduled. Previous destinations have included Fukuoka, Japan, and Boston, Massachusetts. - Photo Courtesy of Hawaiian Airlines

waiian language speakers at Hawaiian Airlines, but perhaps none as proud as our flight attendants who began our 'ōlelo Hawai'i flights in 2018. That first neighbor island crew decided to use 'ōlelo Hawai'i one day, and the community responded with great positivity. Since then, our Hawaiian language crews, affectionately known as "manu kūkahekahe," have run 'ōlelo Hawai'i flights to many destinations from Fukuoka to Boston.

These special surprise flights are usually not advertised, and we have evolved to distribute engagement cards to teach passengers 'ōlelo Hawai'i they can use with flight crew. In addition, all announcements are in 'ōlelo Hawai'i and English to help normalize the language. It's a special experience for 'ōlelo Hawai'i families and supporters alike.

This year, for the first time, our Hawaiian language flight took us to Auckland, New Zealand. During our time there, the crew was able to visit *Hōkūle'a* and *Hikianalia* which, was "an expression of the true aloha of our people," in the words of Kekai Lum, 'ōlelo Hawai'i flight attendant. We were fortunate for the experience to be able to board their storied decks in a foreign land.

We were also able to visit Whakaata Māori, a television station that offers programming in the Māori language. We were honored to be welcomed with pōwhiri including chant and an exchange of speeches that celebrated our shared lineage. The station also interviewed some Hawaiian Airlines language speakers about the flight and shared our progress for 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

All people of Hawai'i have responsibility to 'ōlelo Hawai'i, and this flight was one that sought sustained life of our language to help address this kuleana. We thank our Hawaiian language flight attendants at Hawaiian Airlines, our friends from *Hōkūle'a* and *Hikianalia*, as well as our hosts at Whakaata Māori for being so welcoming. May our 'ōlelo Hawai'i thrive in the four pillars of the globe! ■

ka 'auamo 'ana i kēia kuleana a me nā hoa o ka *Hōkūle'a* me *Hikianalia* pau pū me nā 'ohana o ke kahua 'o Whakaata Māori i ho'okipa helu 'ekahi maila. E ola ko kākou 'ōlelo Hawai'i ma nā kūkulu 'ehā o ka poepoe honua! ■

From the 'ōhi'a lehua blossoms of Hawai'i to the pohutukawa flowers of Aotearoa, warm greetings to those who have affection for 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

There are many proud Hawaiian language speakers at Hawaiian Airlines, but perhaps none as proud as our flight attendants who began our 'ōlelo Hawai'i flights in 2018. That first neighbor island crew decided to use 'ōlelo Hawai'i one day, and the community responded with great positivity. Since then, our Hawaiian language crews, affectionately known as "manu kūkahekahe," have run 'ōlelo Hawai'i flights to many destinations from Fukuoka to Boston.

These special surprise flights are usually not advertised, and we have evolved to distribute engagement cards to teach passengers 'ōlelo Hawai'i they can use with flight crew. In addition, all announcements are in 'ōlelo Hawai'i and English to help normalize the language. It's a special experience for 'ōlelo Hawai'i families and supporters alike.

This year, for the first time, our Hawaiian language flight took us to Auckland, New Zealand. During our time there, the crew was able to visit *Hōkūle'a* and *Hikianalia* which, was "an expression of the true aloha of our people," in the words of Kekai Lum, 'ōlelo Hawai'i flight attendant. We were fortunate for the experience to be able to board their storied decks in a foreign land.

We were also able to visit Whakaata Māori, a television station that offers programming in the Māori language. We were honored to be welcomed with pōwhiri including chant and an exchange of speeches that celebrated our shared lineage. The station also interviewed some Hawaiian Airlines language speakers about the flight and shared our progress for 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

All people of Hawai'i have responsibility to 'ōlelo Hawai'i, and this flight was one that sought sustained life of our language to help address this kuleana. We thank our Hawaiian language flight attendants at Hawaiian Airlines, our friends from *Hōkūle'a* and *Hikianalia*, as well as our hosts at Whakaata Māori for being so welcoming. May our 'ōlelo Hawai'i thrive in the four pillars of the globe! ■

E Ola Mau ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i!

Submitted by Malia Nobrega-Olivera

Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i celebrations held across the pae 'āina from late January through early March brought together thousands of 'ohana and community members who actively participated in Hawaiian Language speech competitions, kōnane tournaments, and so much more.

These events uplift 'ōlelo Hawai'i through practice, competition, and community engagement, creating meaningful spaces for learners and speakers of all ages to grow and thrive.

Mahalo nui to all the 'ohana, kumu, and community members who continue to support and celebrate our language. This year's celebrations were especially meaningful as we honored the 200th birthday of Princess Ruth Ke'elikōlani, a steadfast champion of 'ōlelo Hawai'i and Hawaiian identity. E ola mau ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i! ■

SEE MAHINA 'ŌLELO HAWAII' SPEECH WINNERS ON PAGE 9



Some of the haumāna and 'ohana who took part in Ola Ka 'Ī festivities held across the pae 'āina during Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. At Ola Ka 'Ī Kaua'i me Ni'ihau, the late Kumu Punohu Meade was honored. Meade, the lead kumu at Pūnana Leo o Kaua'i for over 30 years, passed away unexpectedly a few months ago. - Photos: Malia Nobrega-Olivera and Kanaekana

E Ho'omaika'i to the first place winners at Mahina 'Ōlelo Hawai'i speech competitions across the pae 'āina!

Ho'okūkū 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ma Ko'olau
lanuali 30

- Kuaola Lum (*Papa Mālaa'o*)
- Ka'aukai Soares (*Papa 1-2*)
- Kamāhana Watson (*Papa 3-5*)
- Ka'io Walk (*Papa 6-8*)
- Melena'a Malohi (*Papa 9-10*)
- Moani Mirafuentes (*Papa 11-12*)

Ho'okūkū 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ma Hilo
Pepeluuli 6

- Makahanaloa Frazier (*Pae Kamali'i*)
- Lunia Damas (*Pae Keiki I*)
- Kamehanaokalā Springer (*Pae Keiki II*)
- Ulu'a'e Keali'ikanaka'oleohalililani (*Pae 'Ōpio I*)

Ho'okūkū 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ma Maui Nui
Pepeluuli 13

- Kamakani Bailey (*Papa M-2*)
- Kaimalino Wai'ohu (*Papa 3-5*)
- Hilina'i Nelson (*Papa 6-8*)
- Lexianne Hökūaonani Carlos (*Papa 9-12*)

Ho'okūkū 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ma Honolulu
Pepeluuli 27

- Keēwe'ula Keala-Quinabo (*Papa M-2*)
- Makamae Tario (*Papa 3-5*)
- Manohā Yen (*Papa 6-8*)
- Ha'alei Lum-Ho (*Papa 9-12*)

Ho'okūkū 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ma Kaua'i
me Ni'ihau
Pepeluuli 27

- Hi'ilani Phuthamma (*Papa M-2*)
- 'Aukai Ka'ahili Leong (*Papa 3-5*)
- Ululena Vincent (*Papa 6-8*)

Ho'okūkū 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ma Kona
Malaki 6

- Kalamakū Kanuha (*Papa Pūnana Leo - 1*)
- Kealaula Perry (*Papa 1-3*)
- Mahina Abril (*Papa 4-6*)
- Hinelī'i Kaho'onei (*Papa 7-12*)
- Ho'omaluhia Kahananui (*Papa 2-6 for Pāleoleo*)
- Kaiwiko'o, Wiwiana, Helena & Kealaula (*Papa 2-5 for Mele*)
- Ke'ala Kahananui (*Storytelling*)

Kōnane Winners

- Steveni Poulivaati & Yuna Inoue – Hilo
- 'Aukai Ka'ahili Leong – Kaua'i/Ni'ihau

A Call to Return 'Āina to Community Stewardship

The 2026 Pi'o Summit

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

Some of the lāhui's most brilliant minds gathered at the East West Center at UH Mānoa for the annual Pi'o Summit on March 4. This year's summit – 'Āinaho'i: Land, Law & Justice – brought together aloha 'āina, community organizers and land stewards from across the pae 'āina to discuss the intersections of land, law and justice in Hawai'i.

'Āinaho'i (land back), the theme for this year's summit, amplified the collective movement to reclaim our 'āina and our future by showcasing some of the creative ways that communities are not just navigating but challenging existing systems through legal frameworks, nonprofit land trusts, and grassroots action. It is a call for 'āina to be returned to community stewardship and the importance of seeing land as 'āina to ensure a regenerative future.

With a focus on micro to macro approaches to 'Āinaho'i – from strengthening relationships to 'āina to advancing self-determined governance rooted in ancestral innovation and courage – the summit featured three panels: Ali'i Trusts and Land Legacy; Nonprofits and Land Trusts; and Community Governance and Land Return.

The day began with mele aloha 'āina by musician Raiatea Helm. Host and emcee, Dr. Kamana Beamer, opened the event with a presentation on Hawaiian Land Tenure, emphasizing that the Kingdom of Hawai'i's original 1840 constitution stated that the people of Hawai'i belong to the land in perpetuity and guaranteed our rights to the 'āina.

Keynote speaker for the event was Justice Joe Williams, Aotearoa's first Māori Supreme Court justice who addressed the colonization of Aotearoa. Referencing his kuleana to oversee the system that has affected so much loss for the Māori people, Williams shared the story of 19th century Māori resistance leader Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Tūriki saying, with regard to using the master's tools to unpick its injustices, "I think the master's tools will do just fine."

The first panel on Ali'i Trusts and Land Legacy was moderated by former Kamehameha Schools executive and Ho'okele Strategies CEO Neil Hannahs. Panelists included Kamehameha Schools Trustee Dr. Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, Office of Hawaiian Affairs Board of Trustees Chair Kaiali'i Kahele, and Hawaiian Homes Commission Chairman Kali Watson.

Panelists discussed the importance of collaboration and synergy between the Ali'i Trusts (to include the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands) providing examples of how that is already happening. During the course of the discussion it was noted that, collectively, our Ali'i Trusts, OHA and DHHL control hundreds of thousands of acres. "When you put it all together, we're talking about nationhood," said Watson.

Nonprofits & Land Trusts, the second panel, was moderated by attorney Mahina Tuteur and included Trust for Public Land Aloha 'Āina Project Manager Reyna Hayashi, Lahaina Community Land Trust Executive Director Autumn Ness, and Ka Huli Ao Center for Excellence in Native Hawaiian Land Director Kapua Sproat.



(L-R): Hawaiian Homes Commission Chair Kali Watson, Kamehameha Schools Trustee Dr. Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, and Office of Hawaiian Affairs Board of Trustees Chair Kaiali'i Kahele served on the "Ali'i Trusts and Land Legacy" panel at the recent Pi'o Summit. Ho'okele Strategies CEO Neil Hannahs (far right) served as moderator.

- Photo: Kelli Meskin Soileau

Their conversation touched on the tension of operating within the American real estate system that views land as a commodity while honoring the Hawaiian worldview wherein land cannot be owned. With goals ranging from preserving conservation lands to protecting residential land from being scooped up by outside investors, panelists talked about various strategies – the most straightforward (and expensive) of which is buying back our lands and placing them in land trusts or conservation easements.

The final panel of the day was Community Governance & Land Return moderated by Beamer. Panelists included NDN Collective Senior Domestic Policy Strategist Davis Price, Ko'i-honua Executive Director Camille Kalama, Nation of Hawai'i Deputy Head of State Brandon Maka'awa'awa, and Hawaiian Studies Professor Kaipu Keala representing the Protect Ka-ho'olawe 'Ohana.

Their discussions centered on resisting militarism and asserting our personal and collective sovereignty. Noting that sometimes, we have to "get in front of the trucks," Kalama said that some of our biggest wins have been when the community shows up. "The ones living in relationships with that 'āina are the fiercest, strongest, most peaceful fighters for those places. There are strategies and tactics for doing that. We can still survive as a people in the face of the biggest, most powerful and lawless military – at this point – on the planet."

Wrapping up the 'Āinaho'i discussions and touching on current community conversations around military land leases, Beamer challenged the audience to question the status quo.

"The military industrial complex creates an economy of death and I believe Hawai'i deserves better," Beamer said. "I believe we can do better to create jobs and wellbeing and life in our islands than to continue to support weapons that destroy our 'āina, that kill and damage ecosystems, and are basically training grounds to kill other people across the planet. We can't be the epicenter of that any longer." ■

Nā Pualei o Likolehua

“‘O ke Aloha ho‘i e Ho‘omau ‘ia ana”

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

Leinā‘ala Kalama Heine, beloved kumu hula and founder of Nā Pualei o Likolehua, left behind an indelible hula legacy that continues to thrive under the leadership of her oldest daughter, Kumu Hula Niuli‘i Heine.

Established in 1976 amid the Hawaiian Renaissance, Nā Pualei o Likolehua is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year – which will include competing at the Merrie Monarch Festival this month.

The story of Nā Pualei, as shared by Niuli‘i, is more than a story about perpetuating hula; it is a story about enduring love.

Trained as a dancer by noted kumu hula like Joseph “Uncle Joe” Kahalelio and sisters Leilani and Puanani Alama, as a young woman in the 1960s Kalama Heine danced professionally at various “lū‘au shows” for popular musicians including Vickie I‘i Rodrigues. When Kumu Hula Ma‘iki Aiu Lake advertised in 1972 that she was starting a kumu hula class, both Kahalelio and Rodrigues urged Kalama Heine to sign up.

“My mom really wasn’t ready,” recalled Heine who was about 8-years-old at the time. “She just liked dancing and traveling. [But] my grandmother, Rebecca Kalama, told her that she needed to become a teacher of hula.”

Kalama Heine ultimately listened to her mother and her mentors, becoming part of Aiu Lake’s first, and largest, master class: Papa Lehua. The class included her close friend, Robert Cazimero. Both Cazimero and Kalama Heine completed their ‘ūniki (graduation) ceremonies in 1973. Another friend, Wayne Keahi Chang, was in Papa ‘Ilima, Aiu Lake’s second master class.

At the time, both Cazimero and Chang were working at Kamehameha Schools (KS), training haumāna in the schools’ Concert Glee program to dance hula. Because of her close friendship with them, Kalama Heine agreed to train the female students while they concentrated their efforts on the boys.

Heine says that her mother initially envisioned establishing a hālau together with Cazimero and Chang, but in 1975 they formed Nā Kamalei o Lililehua – an all-male hālau comprised of their KS students. Instead, Cazimero urged Kalama Heine to form her own hālau and Nā Pualei o Likolehua was born on February 24, 1976.

The handful of young women she was training from KS Concert Glee, formed the core Kalama Heine’s original group of dancers, along with some of the other women from Aiu Lake’s Papa Lehua and Papa ‘Ilima classes. “Lahela Ka‘aihue, Aunty Vicky (Holt-Takamine), Jade Hind and Tootsie Cazimero, Uncle Robert’s sister. They had ‘ūniki from Aunty Ma‘iki but hadn’t yet formed their



Kumu Hula Leinā‘ala Kalama Heine (center) with 10 of the 13 women who were part of her first ‘ūniki class in 2009. The hālau celebrates its 50th birthday this year. - Photos Courtesy of Nā Pualei o Likolehua



Kumu Hula Leinā‘ala Kalama Heine.



Kumu Hula Niuli‘i Heine.

own hālau(s) so they gravitated to my mom because they all hung out together,” Heine said.

“From that point on it was like a brother-sister hālau because Uncle Wayne and Uncle Robert and my mother were so close,” she added. “That’s how it always was through the years.”

Under Kalama Heine’s guiding hand, the hālau blossomed. In 1977, Kalama Heine took her new hālau to the Merrie Monarch Festival. The caliber of Nā Pualei’s debut performance at the festival was such that they took first place in Hula Kahiko, receiving a perfect score, and winning first place overall in the Wāhine Division.

For Heine, who was there and witnessed the perfor-

mance, the experience was life changing. She had quit dancing hula several years earlier when she was about 10 years old. “I didn’t want to dance hula. I told my mom, ‘I’m over it. I’m going to play sports,’” Heine admitted.

“But then, after the performance, I told her, ‘Mom, I want to dance hula, and I want to dance for you.’ It was because I had seen excellence on that floor and it shocked me into doing something better.”

One of the things that set the hālau’s kahiko performance apart were their ka‘i (entrance dance) and ho‘i (exit dance). Instead of a traditional ka‘i, Kalama Heine composed an original ka‘i, *Panaewa*.

Their ho‘i was also special. It was a portion of a 9th century Tahitian migration chant, *Nu‘umea Lani*, gifted to Kalama Heine by Kumu Hula John Ka‘imikaua. “This chant has a thousand lines, but he gave us a section and said, ‘this is what you use to take your women offstage,’” Heine remembered. Nā Pualei has been using it as their ho‘i for 50 years now.

From the beginning, Nā Pualei and Nā Kamalei were regular collaborators who were making an impact in the hula community. “Their thinking was so progressive that they kind of pushed the envelope,” said Heine. “It kind of forced all the other young, up-and-coming hālau to think outside the box, yet stay within the [required] boundaries and parameters. They were always learning, improving and just sharing.”

Decades passed, and while some haumāna came and went, the core group of women who had been with Nā Pualei from the beginning remained intact through graduations, marriages, careers, parenthood and loss; more than a hālau, they were ‘ohana. Pilina built on aloha and a shared passion for hula, enduring through all seasons of life.

In the mid-2000s, Kalama Heine was determined to form an ‘ūniki class for 13 of her students – one of whom was her daughter. Like her mother before her, Heine initially hesitated, reluctant to take on the kuleana. “I knew that, eventually, hālau would come to me,” she said.

Some of her hula sisters were also reluctant to ‘ūniki, but for a different reason. They did not want to leave the hālau that was also ‘ohana. “But my mom allowed everyone to stay until they were ready to leave.”

In 2009, Heine and 12 of her hula sisters completed ‘ūniki ceremonies and Nā Pualei continued to evolve.

NĀ PUALEI O LIKOLEHUA

Continued from page 10



Kumu Hula Leinā'ala Kalama Heine. - Photo Courtesy of Nā Pualei o Likolehua

Then in 2012, the hālau that had been exclusively for women for 30 years opened a class for keiki-kāne – in part because so many of the haumāna had young sons. And as those boys grew up, a kāne class was added as well.

When Kalama Heine passed in 2015, she was in the process of training a second ūniki class. Heine assumed leadership of Nā Pualei, and completed their training in 2018 – a class that included her sister, 'Auli'i Heine Hirahara, who has since started her own hālau. Heine is now training her youngest sister, Heali'i Heine, to become a kumu hula as well.

In all, Nā Pualei has graduated 16 kumu hula and birthed eight new hālau. However, some remain at Nā Pualei, content to kāko'o Heine with running the hālau, teaching its classes, and helping to build a vision for the next 50 years.

Beyond training young people to preserve and perpetuate hula as a living art, Kalama Heine wanted to instill in her haumāna a love for all that is Hawaiian and determination to uphold their kuleana to our people – whatever that might be.

“One of my mom’s goals for Nā Pualei was to train young people to be future leaders and to move our lāhui forward,” Heine reminisced. “She was a mana wahine. Even today people speak highly of her. It’s like she never left; a name that is not forgotten. She touched a lot of people.” ■

Ka'ūpūlehu: Stewardship in Motion

Part 2 of a two-part series

By J. Kara Dumaguin

Adaptation is often spoken about as something new, a response to climate change, declining fisheries, or shifting policy. But for places like Ka'ūpūlehu, adaptation has always been part of how people relate to land and sea.

Long before the language of “adaptive management” entered environmental discourse, our kūpuna practiced stewardship guided by pono and balance, shaping when and how resources were taken – not because a model told them to, but because responsibility to 'āina and kai commanded restraint and care.

At Ka'ūpūlehu today, this way of responding continues not as theory, but as daily practice.

Hui Kahuwai does not operate from a fixed rulebook. Its work is guided by kilo, careful and intentional observing over time, of the coastline, the currents, the i'a, and the subtle changes that signal when the place is thriving and when it needs rest. Decisions are shaped by what is seen and felt on the shore, not only by what appears in reports.

These observations are made with an awareness that what flows from ma uka to ma kai carries with it the health of the entire ahupua'a, reminding the community that nearshore stewardship is inseparable from the care of lands and waters above it.

Hui Kahuwai's work is guided not only by what can be measured, but by what is remembered. Mo'olelo passed through families and tied to specific places along the coastline carry lessons about abundance, loss, and responsibility. These stories do not sit apart from governance. They inform it, reminding the community how previous generations responded when the place was stressed and how balance was restored.

In this way, adaptive stewardship is not only about responding to present conditions, but about carrying forward what has already been learned through story, experience, and place.

This is what adaptive stewardship looks like on the ground. A cycle of paying attention, acting with care, reflecting, and adjusting. Not as a rigid plan, but as a living relationship with place.

In this sense, what contemporary systems now call “adaptive management” looks, in many ways, like a return to something much older. Konohiki did not govern through fixed prescriptions, but through responsiveness to the rhythms of land and sea, guided by deep knowledge of place and responsibility to community. Hui Kahuwai's approach today echoes that logic, not by replicating the past, but by carrying forward its principles in a modern context.

One of the strengths of Hui Kahuwai's work is its refusal to separate ike Hawai'i from contemporary science. Fish counts, spawning observations, long-term monitoring, and community-based research are all part of how Hui Kahuwai understands what is hap-



Pono stewardship at Ka'ūpūlehu has allowed the near-shore environment to thrive. Pictured here are 'opihi and hā'uke'uke. - Courtesy Photos



Well-camouflaged reef fish feed on limu.

pening along the Ka'ūpūlehu coastline. But these tools are not treated as replacements for lived knowledge. They are companions to it.

This allows stewardship to remain grounded in relationship rather than be reduced to metrics alone. Data informs decisions, but it does not displace kuleana.

Adaptive stewardship also requires navigating worlds that were not designed with Indigenous governance in mind. Hui Kahuwai works with agencies, researchers, and conservation partners, not as a stakeholder group seeking permission, but as a community asserting responsibility for place. These relationships are not always simple. They require translation, patience, and a constant re-centering of community values.

As the Try Wait period moves toward its next phase, Hui Kahuwai is working not toward an end, but toward continuity. This includes engaging in a formal rulemaking process, not to replace community stewardship, but to protect it within systems that have rarely been built to recognize Indigenous authority. In doing so, the community is not relinquishing its role. It is extending it into another arena.

Here again, adaptation is not about yielding tradition to modernity, but about allowing tradition to remain alive and effective in changing conditions.

Perhaps what is most powerful about Ka'ūpūlehu's approach is that it refuses the idea that stewardship belongs only to experts or institutions. It is carried through 'ohana, la-

wai'a (fishers), cultural practitioners, and those who carry kuleana to place over time. Stewardship here is not a project. It is a practice.

In this way, lāhui is not only remembered as identity or ancestry, but enacted through collective responsibility, through people choosing, again and again, to place care for 'āina and kai at the center of how they live together.

It is sustained through aloha kekahi i kekahi, the reciprocal care that allows people to hold one another accountable to the work, even when it is slow or difficult. And like all practices, it depends on people being willing to show up, to learn, to adjust, and to care even when the outcomes are uncertain.

What Ka'ūpūlehu offers Hawai'i is not a template to be copied, but a way of being that invites us all to slow down, listen more deeply, and remember that caring for 'āina and kai is inseparable from caring for each other.

In a time when solutions are often framed through speed, scale, and efficiency, Ka'ūpūlehu reminds us that endurance is built through relationship. Through patience. Through restraint. Through the quiet and persistent work of stewardship in motion, carried forward so that those who come after us may know how and why care was given. ■

From Speaker to Teacher

Sustaining Hawaiian-Medium Education

By Kananinohea Māka'imoku

Few can deny the impact Hawaiian-medium education has had in reviving 'ōlelo Hawai'i. With the re-establishment of Hawaiian-medium schools beginning with Pūnana Leo and kula kaiapuni sites, these educational programs elevated the Hawaiian language movement and helped restore Hawaiian as a language of daily life.

In the early 1980s, most people who reported using 'ōlelo Hawai'i at home were primarily kūpuna (i.e., over the age of 50) and/or from the Ni'ihau community - although it should be noted that the data reflects overall home language use, not necessarily the respondents' level of fluency.

Alarming, however, fewer than 35 children outside of the Ni'ihau community spoke Hawaiian fluently - highlighting the generational gap that existed and the urgency that led to the development of Hawaiian-medium education.

Today, an estimated 4,423 students across the state are educated through Hawaiian at Pūnana Leo and Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i sites.

These schools were created not simply to teach the language, but to restore 'ōlelo Hawai'i as a living language. Hawaiian was once the language of all sectors of society - including education, commerce, and government - and was spoken by people of many ethnicities who called Hawai'i home.

That vision of an 'āina la'ela'e, where 'ōlelo Hawai'i thrives across all areas of daily life, remains the future many continue to strive toward.

Census data further reflects this progress: the number of people using Hawaiian at home increased from 9,060 in 1980 to 27,611 in 2023 - an increase of more than 200%, representing a tripling of the speaker population. This

growth reflects the success of language revitalization efforts through education.

While these achievements demonstrate the power of education in revitalizing 'ōlelo Hawai'i, they also point to an ongoing challenge: ensuring that our growing number of Hawaiian-speaking students are supported by a new generation of fluent speakers prepared to become Hawaiian-medium educators.

As one example, kula kaiapuni sites have grown from two programs in their inaugural year in 1987 to 33 sites today. Over the past decade, student enrollment has increased by 67%. However, growth in student enrollment also requires growth in the number of highly fluent teachers.

During this same period, the ideal number of Hawaiian-medium teachers has increased from approximately 59 to 100, representing nearly a 70% increase in workforce demand. The need for Hawaiian-medium teachers is rising as quickly as the programs themselves.

Yet the pool of potential teachers remains limited to the number of highly fluent speakers of 'ōlelo Hawai'i. In many language-medium and immersion programs around the world, schools can recruit fluent speakers from the homeland of the language - for example, fluent speakers of Japanese from Japan or Mandarin speakers from China who can become teachers in those programs. For 'ōlelo Hawai'i, however, Hawai'i is its homeland.

As a state with two official languages and two language-medium education pathways - Hawaiian and English - the challenges facing Hawaiian-medium education are distinct. Unlike English-medium programs, which can draw from a vast and continually replenished global pool of English speakers, Hawaiian-medium education must grow its own speaker base while cultivating the teacher pipeline to ensure that our growing number of haumāna in the Hawaiian-medium pathway are sup-

ported by a new generation of fluent speakers prepared to become Hawaiian-medium educators.

Hawaiian-medium educators have been recruited from among Hawaiian language college and university programs, from kaiapuni graduates of Hawaiian-medium and immersion schools, from parents within immersion communities, and from community speakers. Every fluent speaker represents a potential future kumu.

Fluent teachers create environments where Hawaiian becomes the natural language of learning and communication. In these spaces, 'ōlelo Hawai'i becomes the language of relationships, spoken among students, classmates, teachers, and others within the school community.

Hawaiian-medium sites function as language ecosystems that influence both families and communities, encouraging the use of Hawaiian at home and expanding the presence of the language beyond the classroom: developments reflected in census data.

For this reason, the future of kaiapuni education depends on strong speaker-to-teacher pathways that cultivate fluent speakers and prepare them to become the next generation of kumu for Hawaiian-medium education. ■

Kananinohea K.C. Māka'imoku is an associate professor at Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani UH Hilo College of Hawaiian Language and the program coordinator for the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program.

Na Hawai'i nō e Ho'oulu i nā Kumu 'Ōlelo Hawai'i

He kanahā makahiki aku nei i ho'ohuli 'ia ke kānāwai e pāpā ana i ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i ma nā kula. Ua paio nā alaka'i, nā 'ohana, a me nā kākō'o o ke aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i no ka wehe 'ia o nā kula Pūnana Leo a me nā kula o ka Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i. Ua puka 'elua mau hanauna mai ia mau kula aku a ke ānehe nei i ka hanauna 'ekolu e ho'ona'auao 'ia nei ma o ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Ua laha ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i ma nā moku pūni a pau o ka pae 'āina e noho 'ia nei e kānaka i kēia mau kula.

Eia na'e, i ka ulu 'ana o ka nui o nā haumāna e komo nei i ia mau kula, ulu pū ka nele o nā kula i ke kumu 'ole. 'A'ole i like ka ho'omākaukau 'ana i ke kumu no ke ala kaia'ōlelo Hawai'i me ke ala o ke kaia'ōlelo kū'ono'ono e like me ka Pelekānia. Ke nele ia mau kula i ke kumu, ua hiki ke paikomo i nā kumu mai ke one hānau a me nā 'āina ho'okama o ia 'ōlelo kū'ono'ono. No ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i, 'o Hawai'i nō kona one hānau, 'o Hawai'i nō kona kulāiwi. No laila, na Hawai'i nō e ho'oulu i nā kānaka poeko o ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i e lilo i kumu no nā hanauna e hiki mai ana.



Graduates from multiple generations of the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo gather at Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau on March 5, 2026. Current teacher candidates observed classrooms and learned from Kahuawaiola graduates teaching in maui ola Hawai'i educational settings, including Hope Kahu Kameha'ililani Waiua, a graduate of the program. - Courtesy Photos



Graduates from multiple cohorts of the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo gather at Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Maui in Lahaina on April 18, 2023. Current teacher candidates observed classes and met with Kahuawaiola graduates teaching in Hawaiian-medium and immersion settings. The visit is part of Kahuawaiola's annual huaka'i for teacher candidates.

Ho'ōpūloa: Village Beneath the Flow

By Micah Kahiwa

On the morning of April 18, 1926, a wall of lava – nearly 30 feet high and more than 1,000 feet wide – advanced on the fishing village of Ho'ōpūloa. Moving at roughly 7 feet per minute, it swallowed homes, overtook the school and church, and buried the shoreline community in a matter of hours.

Before the flow, Ho'ōpūloa was one of many thriving fishing communities along the Kona Coast. The village may have even predated western contact, stretching as far back as the first millenia.

According to, “Kīpāhoehoe ma Kapalilua– Kona Hema, Hawai'i: A Cultural Study of Kīpāhoehoe and Neighboring Lands in Kapalilua, South Kona, Island of Hawai'i,” researchers Kepā and Onaona Maly note that the people of Kona Hema (South Kona) thrived from fishing, but also cultivated 'uala (sweet potatoes) and coconuts and further ma uka they cultivated dryland kalo, bananas, and 'ulu (breadfruit). “Fresh water came from either springs [or] water caves, or procured by rain catchment and dewfall. Back then, the forests extended further seaward, drawing the kēhau and kēwai (mists and dew) from the upper mountain slopes to the low lands.”

By the 19th century, Ho'ōpūloa had emerged as an active hub of coastal trade. Steamships moved regularly along the Kona coast, stopping offshore as goods and passengers were ferried in and out. Roads connected upland agricultural fields to the harbor, allowing farmers to bring their crops to the shoreline for exchange. For a time, Ho'ōpūloa drew both Kānaka and settlers, serving as a connection between land and sea.

The village rested below an old 'a'a flow. A small cove created a natural harbor where a wharf was constructed. Kiawe, monkey pod, and coconut trees were scattered throughout the village. Homes were equipped with water catchment tanks, collecting rainwater from their corrugated metal roofs.

At the center of the village stood a convenience store (its largest structure), alongside a schoolhouse, a church, and a post office. A road ran north to south, connecting Ho'ōpūloa to the neighboring village of Miloli'i. Offshore, a rock called Kakakohola marked the boundary between them.

The disaster began eight days earlier. In the early hours of April 10, 1926, a series of earthquakes shook the summit of Mauna Loa. Engineers from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), who were camped on the mountain at the 11,400-foot elevation, witnessed the first signs of eruption.



In the middle of the night, on April 10, 1926, Mauna Loa began to erupt and soon rivers of molten lava were burning their way through the upland forests, advancing towards the Kona Coast. Eight days later, on April 18, a wall of lava swallowed the entire fishing village of Ho'ōpūloa. When the eruption ended, all that remained of the village was the cross atop the roof of the buried Catholic Church. - Photo: Public Domain, U.S. Army Air Corp., 1926



Residents of Ho'ōpūloa and onlookers watch as the lava meets the sea on April 18, 1926, shortly after sunrise. - Photo: Tai Sing Loo

According to USGS volcanologist Tom Jaggard, about an hour after the initial earthquake, glowing lava spouted immediately south of Moku'āweoweo, the summit crater. “A crack only 1-3 feet wide opened [and] vomited out pumiceous silvery pāhoehoe froth lava,” he wrote.

What began as a narrow vent quickly widened. The lava changed character from smooth pāhoehoe (unbroken lava) to jagged 'a'a (rough lava).

Over the next several days, the eruption would build in strength. Rivers of molten lava poured from Moku'āweoweo down the slopes of Mauna Loa, cutting through ma uka forests, and moving resolutely toward the Kona Hema (South Kona) coast.

On April 16, the lava crossed the main road of South Kona. Crowds of onlookers gathered to watch its descent

toward the Hawaiian fishing villages of Miloli'i and Ho'ōpūloa. The lava pooled behind Ho'ōpūloa for two days, until it made its final descent.

On April 18, at approximately 3:00 a.m., evacuated residents and spectators watched helplessly as the lava flow consumed their homes. Mere hours later the destruction of the village was complete; the lava piling over itself as it met the ocean. When it ended, Ho'ōpūloa was buried under approximately 50 feet of newly formed pāhoehoe.

Fortunately, the neighboring village of Miloli'i was spared, allowing the residents of Ho'ōpūloa to find refuge there. Families whose lineage was rooted along that coast continued to live a subsistence lifestyle as their ancestors did.

Today, Miloli'i is referred to as the “last Hawaiian fishing village,” in part because it absorbed the people and traditions of Ho'ōpūloa. But the community's connection to this coastline has yet to be translated into legal ownership.

In 1982, the State of Hawai'i attempted to address the presence of the families residing in Miloli'i by passing legislation to establish long-term residential leases. The state retained the land as part of the public trust but allowed families with historical ties to the area – including the descendants of those displaced by the eruption – to remain on their ancestral land.

The policy was intended to recognize the community's generational connection to the coastline while maintaining the land under state stewardship. However, continued state ownership raises questions about long-term security for these families.

A century later, the name Ho'ōpūloa remains on maps of the island, marking the approximate location of the former village. The flow can still be traced from the summit of Mauna Loa to the sea, visible from satellite images as it cuts across the landscape.

The village of Ho'ōpūloa remains an important part of the history of South Kona. Although the lava covered its homes and roads, it did not bury its people, their knowledge, or their connection to the land.

Ho'ōpūloa lives on through the people of Miloli'i, who continue to fish the waters, mālama 'āina, and carry forward the 'ike of those who came before them. This centennial is not only a remembrance of Ho'ōpūloa, but a commemoration of the resilience of the people who have always called this place home. ■

Micah Kahiwa was born and raised on Hawai'i Island. As a lineal descendant of the Ho'ōpūloa–Miloli'i area, he draws from a deep connection to land and culture to guide his work. He is pursuing a legal career focused on Native Hawaiian rights, land use, and community advocacy.

Kalā DeSoto: Watching, Learning, and Committing

By Donalyn Dela Cruz

At 4 years old, Kalānōweo DeSoto loved to skateboard. His mom would take him and his siblings to the Hickam Skate Hangar, where they spent hours skating the mini ramps. But DeSoto was focused on something bigger: the action taking place at the towering 12-foot vert ramp at the front of the hangar.

He would watch teens drop into the ramp again and again. After about eight months of observation, the young DeSoto committed.

“He went up there to the top of the vert ramp, probably a dozen times before he dropped in,” said his mom Mālia Ka’aihue. “He watched it and looked at it and walked back down, and then finally, one day he just did it.”

He was the youngest to ever do it.

That willingness to study, wait, and then commit carried over the years from dropping into vert ramps at skate parks to riding mountain-high waves at some of the world’s most challenging surf breaks.

Now at 18, DeSoto is the youngest invitational surfer ever to win the Da Hui Backdoor Shootout and the only competitor in event history to win titles in two disciplines at Pipeline: the longboard and shortboard.

At the 2026 Da Hui Backdoor Shootout in January, 40 of the world’s top shortboard surfers gathered at the iconic Banzai Pipeline on O’ahu’s North Shore for the invitational competition. DeSoto delivered a standout performance, earning Best Overall Performer and Shootout Champion honors, along with Best Barrel Ride.

“The Backdoor Shootout has always been about honoring surfers who truly understand Pipeline, not just how to ride it, but how to carry themselves in the lineup,” said Kū’i o’okalani Young, who coaches DeSoto.

Hosted by Da Hui, in collaboration with Hui o He’e Nalu, the annual invitational is held in memory of Duke Kahanamoku.

“It’s such an important contest that it just meant so much to me to win that,” said DeSoto. “It was a big goal of mine for a really long time. Just to even be in a contest at Pipe was a big goal, and winning one was just crazy.”



In January, 18-year-old surfer Kalānōweo DeSoto from Mākaha, O’ahu, became the youngest invitational surfer to ever to win Da Hui Backdoor Shootout held at the Banzai Pipeline on O’ahu’s North Shore - and the only competitor in event history to win titles in two categories: longboard and shortboard. - *Courtesy Photo*

It’s an achievement that DeSoto has been working towards since being inspired by his older sister, Puamakamae, a nine-time National Scholastic Surfing Association National Champion.

“At first it was for fun and everything, and then I started taking it seriously maybe when I was like 13,” DeSoto said. “I still love it and have so much fun doing it.” Just being in the ocean, you really can do anything you want. It’s freedom. You can be so creative, you can do so many different things.”

His parents say that the ocean has been a part of their eight children’s lives from the time they were “in the womb.”

Born and raised in Mākaha on O’ahu’s West Side, DeSoto comes from a deep waterman lineage as the son of world champion longboarder Duane DeSoto, who described watching his son as one who is aligned with the ocean.

“That is always the best surfer, the one who’s able to naturally just do their art on the wave - and the wave is it’s like a relationship right, the wave and the person is totally in sync,” said Duane DeSoto.

DeSoto, who first surfed with his dad as an infant, finds purpose in the ocean beyond competition.

Whether surfing, bodysurfing, paddling, or any other ocean discipline, DeSoto seems limitless. When not training, he is often fishing or volunteering with youth at Nā Kama Kai Ocean Safety & Conservation Awareness Clinics. He also serves as an ambassador for the Smile Wave Fund.

“It’s also like just continuing on my culture and surfing is a cultural practice, not just sport,” explained DeSoto who hopes to achieve a world title. “It’s both - the end goal is a world title and to show the world our cultural practice.”

Part of that practice is displayed in the way DeSoto will kilo (observe). Just as he did as a 4-year-old studying older skaters perform 12-foot drops down a vertical ramp, DeSoto is always studying the ocean.

“His intellectual IQ in the ocean is insane because he’s so observant and is kiloing all the time,” said Ka’aihue. “Even if he’s dropping into a 30-foot wave, it’s calculated, it’s processed. He’s already seen himself come out of it before he’s dropped in.”

That may explain DeSoto’s quiet demeanor. He’s what Ka’aihue describes as a “silent observer.”

“He has like very much a kupuna spirit where he’s not always talking and saying a lot, but he’s thinking,” she added.

And, he’s learning.

“[Surfing] has taught me a lot about respect, like respect for the ocean, respect for the people,” said DeSoto. “You also have to have respect in the lineup to be respected.”

Surfers advance through a competitive qualification system, beginning with regional World Surf League (WSL) Qualifying Series (QS) events, progressing to the Challenger Series, and ultimately earning a place on the elite Championship Tour, where the world’s best compete for a world title.

DeSoto hopes to one day win a world title on the WSL Championship Tour and perhaps represent Hawai’i in the Olympics, but his immediate focus is the next QS event.

Another contest is always on the horizon. DeSoto’s approach remains the same: watch, learn, and when the moment comes, commit. ■



**HO’ĀKOAKOA
LĀHUI**
EVENT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Providing funding support to nonprofit organizations hosting events that foster cultural connection and benefit the Native Hawaiian community.

Learn more & Apply today!

www.oha.org/hoakoakoa-sponsorship-program/

Email sponsorships@oha.org for any questions or concerns

Combining Career and Kuleana on the Continent

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

The center of the universe for a young Jessica Ka'ūlani Hilo was a wholesale flower shop in San Francisco that specialized in tropical, Hawai'i-grown plants. The business, Hilo Inc., was established by her Kanaka Maoli grandfather and passed down to her father, Lance Hilo, and his siblings.

There, Hilo did her part by hauling flora, making lei and filling buckets. The spot in the historic San Francisco flower market not only developed her work ethic; it also imbued her with a sense of being Hawaiian.

She watched her makuakāne build a network of Bay Area Kānaka, serving local hālau hula through the late 1980s until the store shuttered in the mid-1990s.

"This small shop in the wholesale flower district in San Francisco was kind of the footprint for my identity," Hilo said. "For being in the diaspora, I very much lucked out in still being very connected to the culture."

Hilo, now 42, has established a successful career in media, having worked at powerhouse outlets such as *CBS Interactive*, *NBC News* and *USA TODAY*. The Los Angeles resident found that her strength lies in intertwining her career goals with her Kanaka identity.

"Journalism is part of our culture," Hilo said, referring to the plethora of Native Hawaiian newspapers – numbering over 100,000 pages – that were published by Kānaka Maoli writers between 1834 and 1948. "That is [often] forgotten."

Born in Burlingame, California, Hilo is the eldest of three children. Her father claims Kānaka Maoli roots from both of his parents, plus Chinese and Japanese on his mother's side. Hilo's mom, Marcia Rapozo-Hilo, was raised by her Austrian Jewish mother who was displaced by World War II. Her Kaua'i-born father was a descendant of Portuguese plantation workers.

Beginning at age 4, Hilo learned hula under nā Kumu Hula Esther Correa and Renee Price of Hālau Hula 'o Ku'uleinani in San Mateo. For the next 14 years, she regularly performed and competed at continent-based festivals like Iā 'Oe E Ka Lā Hula Competition and Festival. Hilo recalls long days and demanding practices.

Other interests blossomed, too. In fourth grade, Hilo began playing saxophone, and she added 'Ori Tahiti to her middle school routine. After watching an episode of the TV series *Matlock*, Hilo set her sights on becoming a lawyer. She also served as the editor-in-chief of her middle school's newspaper.

As a teenager, Hilo took advanced placement classes at Carlmont High School in Belmont, California, and joined mock trial. She also played soccer, swam on the varsity team, and continued to dance hula, earning a scholarship worth one year of hālau tuition when her family fell on hard times.

For a child from a working class 'ohana, academics



Jessica Hilo and her 'ohana at her wedding in 2017. (L-R): Brother Christopher Hilo, mother Marcia Rapozo-Hilo, husband Matthew Andersen, Jessica Hilo, father Lance Hilo, and sister Jocelyn Hilo. - Photo: Michelle Warren Photography

were Hilo's key to success. Though she excelled at math, she was enamored with history and English. "You can see the connective tissue between that and journalism," she quipped.

After graduating in 2001, she attended University of California, Santa Barbara. Hilo pursued a double major in political science, with an emphasis in international relations, and English, plus a minor in music.

But by the end of college, she was disenchanted with her legal aspirations. In a mock Congress class, she assumed the role of a journalist and unlocked a new passion. When she graduated in 2005, she was faced with a decision: enroll in a graduate program in English literature or focus on freelance writing?

Freelance journalism won. At first, Hilo was "writing for beer money," publishing stories with local news outlets. She supplemented her income with a job at the Santa Barbara Symphony.

During that season of her life Hilo met her future husband, Matthew Andersen, at a party in 2008.

Soon afterwards, she enrolled in a master's degree program focused on specialized journalism at the University of Southern California finishing in 2010. Later that

year, she wrote stories for *Patch.com*, a local news platform, which took her to Connecticut for a three-month internship.

After returning to the West Coast, Hilo was hired in 2012 by Yahoo! as a content producer and social media editor. The following year, she secured a role in media outside of journalism at *CBS Interactive*. Hilo spent four years producing live social and digital events, leading marketing campaigns and creating editorial content.

Galvanized by the state of the press and democracy, in 2017 Hilo pivoted joining *NBC News* as a social media editor. She rose through the ranks and became the senior manager of social programming and specials in 2021. Hilo led the coverage of historic events like presidential elections and spearheaded DEI initiatives, which helped her reconnect with her Kanaka identity.

Often, she was the only Native Hawaiian in the newsroom. "We're just not there," Hilo said about those spaces. "It's so hard to find that community."

Beyond her professional ventures, Hilo was growing her family. She married Matthew in 2017. Their eldest son, Clifford, was born in 2020, followed by Charles in 2023.

Following layoffs at *NBC* in 2024, Hilo was hired by *USA TODAY* as the deputy managing editor of social. That year, she also founded *Nā Lei Hilo*, a monthly newsletter and digital community that strives to connect Kānaka in the diaspora.

In 2025, Hilo found herself drawn to academia after teaching a semester course in public relations at Santa Barbara City College. Today, in addition to publishing *Nā Lei Hilo*, she works as a part-time lecturer on cross-cultural journalism at California State University, Dominguez Hills.

Returning to Hawai'i someday feels like a colossal decision to Hilo, but she's open to it, particularly as she dives further into her genealogy. "I've been listening more to my ancestors," she said. "Now, I have the bandwidth to really hear them when they're saying hello." ■



Hale Kama'āina

Down Payment Assistance Program

This is one of our many programs that help local buyers secure affordable financing while reducing upfront costs - making it easier to **stay, invest, and build a future in Hawai'i.**

CALL TODAY TO LEARN MORE:

808.823.8050



Malama Kealoha

NMLS# 1502632



A Kingdom Crossing Oceans

By Vanessa Lee Miller

This January, an exhibit entitled “Hawai‘i: a kingdom crossing oceans,” opened at the British Museum in London. The museum stewards of one of the world’s largest collections of *nā mea kūpuna Hawai‘i* outside of our *pae ‘āina*. The Hawai‘i collection ranges from the most diminutive Ni‘ihau shell leis and fish hooks to an imposing statue of Kū.

As I climbed the museum’s grand pillared entrance, a peregrine falcon on the hunt swooped down from a high balcony and flashed past me. Perhaps a *hō‘ailona*? At the entrance I’m greeted by a massive image of Kū, finely carved from ‘ulu wood, his mouth gaping and legs flexed, seeming to ask, “dare you enter?”

It is a step back in time. The exhibit centers around the brief and turbulent reign of King Kamehameha II, Kalani-nui-kua-liholiho-i-ke-kapu (the great chief with the burning back kapu) better known as Liholiho. The young monarch, only four years into his reign, endeavored to negotiate, in person, a solid, long-lasting alliance with King George IV, the British monarch.

Liholiho set off for London in May 1823 accompanied by his favorite wife, Kamāmalu, and a delegation of his most trusted retainers led by Chief Boki and his wife, High Chiefess Liliha. It was a time of uncertainty; the arrival of aggressive foreign merchants, deadly epidemics, and Christian missionaries were upending Hawaiian society.

Upon entering the exhibition space, one is immediately struck by a sense of the past and the present moving in an interwoven path of time, history and generations of Kānaka. All that we see before us has crossed oceans to be here.

Alice Christophe, the exhibit’s curator, said she envisioned the exhibition as a “mechanism that could trigger loans and movements outwards, including towards Hawaiian shores.”

Arguably, the exhibit’s showstopper is a brilliant assembly of featherwork: *mahiolo*, *lei po‘o* and ‘ahu ‘ula arranged as a gathering of *ali‘i* that conjures visions of *ali‘i* on the battlefield. A nearby exhibit of *nā mea lua*, warfare crafts, complement the ‘ahu ‘ula.

An example of hula is presented in a video display. Accompanied by *oli* and the steady beat of *pahu* drums, the dancers demonstrate the use of ‘*ulī‘ulī*. A few steps away, visitors can view similar instruments on display. A traditional puppet, used for hula *ki‘i*, is displayed wearing a *malo* of *kapa*, made expressly for this exhibition by Kumu Auli‘i Mitchell.

The exhibition follows a chronological path highlighting the museum’s world-famous *kapa* collection: vivid colors, geometric patterns and smooth textures are carefully hung, without the glare of a glass window, enabling a view of the *kapa* as it was meant to be appreciated.

A fascinating conversation recorded in a video, covers the sourcing of materials like ‘*ie‘ie* vine, while a showcase nearby displays modern *pāpale* next to a *mahiolo kahiko*,



This ‘ahu ‘ula, associated with Chief Kahekili, is featured at the “Hawai‘i: a kingdom crossing oceans” exhibit at the British Museum. - Photos Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum



(Left) This *ki‘i* representing Kūka’ilimoku stands nearly 9 feet tall. (Right) Sophisticated examples of Hawaiian *kapa*.

enhancing the visitor’s understanding of the crafting of both objects.

The exhibition reflects the intersection of *ka wā kahiko* and modern Hawai‘i; the museum’s collection of centuries-old artifacts complemented by gifts from today’s cultural practitioners such as ‘Umi Kai, Kana‘e Keawe, Kumulā‘au and Haunani Sing, and the late Rocky Jensen.

Cultural practitioners and scholars have been welcomed to visit this collection and share their ‘*ike* as a bridge of collaboration. A new and refreshing perspective has been added to the conversation of *kuleana* for *mea kūpuna* as well as *mea hou*. The ‘*ike* of both the past and the present now cross oceans in both directions.

A touching message of *aloha* guides the visitor out of the exhibit space. A large screen projects a video of a group of ‘*ōpio*, reciting a poem; a firm and diplomatic statement reflecting love for our ‘*āina*. May you hear these islands breathe with you.

I left the exhibition feeling proud of the past and present, and hopeful for the future.

Before leaving London, my curiosity led me to the

Strand District on the River Thames, where the Caledonian Hotel once stood. There, on July 14, 1824, Liholiho and Kamāmalu spent their last hours surrounded by their loyal retainers who kept vigil in the dim candlelight. I imagine that the clamor outside – street peddlers shouting, horseshoes clattering over cobbled streets – provided a stark contrast to the quiet sorrow of the moment.

It fell to Boki to bring the bodies of his king and queen back to Hawai‘i and relay the *mo‘olelo* of Liholiho’s experiences and the outcome of this diplomatic mission.

This voyage across oceans took courage, determination and wisdom on the part of young Kamehameha II whose thoughts are eloquently expressed in this ‘*ōlelo no‘eau*: “*Na wai ho‘i ka ‘ole o ke akamai, he alanui i ma‘a i ka hele ‘ia e o‘u mau mākua.*” (Why shouldn’t I know, when it is a road often traveled by my parents?). ■

Vanessa Lee Miller is a haumāna ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i and writer of poetry, drama and fiction. In 2013, she founded a project called “Lost and Found: a virtual repatriation.” It’s a bridge-building project where nā mea kahiko, primarily those in the British Museum and the British Library, are returned to our pae ‘āina through images and mo‘olelo, re-opening pathways of exchange between Hawai‘i and Great Britain.

The British Museum’s exhibit, “Hawai‘i: a kingdom crossing oceans” opened January 15 and will run through May 25, 2026. The exhibit showcases about 150 Hawaiian cultural items, from traditional artifacts to contemporary artwork, including an *ahu ‘ula* (feathered cloak) gifted to King George III in 1810 by King Kamehameha I along with a letter requesting an alliance with the British Crown. It is the first time the *ahu ‘ula* has been displayed in more than a century.

A number of Native Hawaiians were included in the museum’s Exhibition Stewardship Group, providing ‘*ike kūpuna* and ensuring the authenticity of the project.

The contributors were Bishop Museum Library & Archives Collections Manager Leah Caldeira; UH Mānoa American Studies Department associate specialist and curator Noelle Kahanu; cultural practitioner and master craftsman Umi Kai; and Kamehameha Schools English kumu Jshnel Pacarro. They not only helped to develop the exhibit; through their work they also helped to revitalize and perpetuate the centuries-long relationship between the United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

Building on years of collaboration with Native Hawaiian artists, practitioners and scholars, the exhibit centers on Indigenous knowledge and shines new light on this collection of exceptional objects and extraordinary stories.

Sailing the Wake of the Past; Charting the Next Voyage

By Philamer Felicitas

Fifty years ago, there was only one wa'a kaulua across the pae 'āina.

That canoe, *Hōkūle'a*, was built for a single purpose: to sail from Hawai'i to Tahiti and back, proving that Polynesians did not aimlessly drift across the vast seas. Guided by the knowledge of Satawalese master navigator Mau Piailug, that historic 1976 voyage helped reignite traditional voyaging across Hawai'i and the Pacific.

Today voyaging looks very different.

What began as a single wa'a has grown into many sailing wa'a across our pae 'āina. Today, more than 20 wa'a travel Hawai'i's waters: some large double-hulled voyaging canoes capable of crossing the Pacific and other, smaller canoes, that sail between our islands, train new voyagers and navigators, and reconnect communities to the ocean. Some cross the channels between our islands, while others have sailed the ancestral routes across Moananuiākea more than once.

Visitors to Bishop Museum can now experience that story in an immersive way through a new, interactive exhibit housed within the museum's planetarium, *Wayfinders: He Wa'a He Moku, He Moku He Wa'a, We Are One and the Same*. The grand opening of the exhibit coincided with *Hōkūle'a's* 50th Birthday | E Ola Mau celebration during Bishop Museum's "After Hours" event on March 14, 2025.

The exhibition celebrates the resurgence of wayfinding, the ancient practice of navigating vast oceanic distances using the stars, winds, and waves.

Created in partnership with 'Ohana Wa'a, Arizona State University, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other voyaging organizations, the exhibit takes visitors on a huaka'i to the past while inviting them to imagine the future of voyaging.

The exhibit is especially meaningful for Bishop Museum, as it shares the history of Nainoa Thompson's early training in celestial navigation inside the museum's planetarium under the guidance of Will Kyselka, a former lecturer at the planetarium, which helped shape the revival of traditional navigation in Hawai'i.

Inside the planetarium lobby, the exhibit surrounds visitors with the sights, sounds, and mo'olelo of captains, navigators, and voyagers whose journeys would not have been possible without the 'ike of their kumu and ancestors.

Several interactive experiences in the circular space bring the practice of wayfinding to life. Visitors can explore the "Hall of Teachers," which shares the stories of key figures who helped revive traditional navigation; steer a digital *Hōkūle'a* using a star compass through Kilo Hōkū; or recreate the calls of seabirds



Young visitors to the "Wayfinders" exhibit hold shells to their ears to hear the sound of the ocean. Located in the Bishop Museum planetarium lobby, the interactive experiences in the circular space help bring the art of wayfinding to life. - Photos: Philamer Felicitas

used by navigators through Kani Nā Manu.

Guests are also invited to kilo the ocean: observing how waves move across open water, browsing a curated library on navigation, and watching interviews with cultural practitioners and crew members who share their journeys and explain how they mālama our waters. Through these activities, visitors will gain a deeper understanding of the awareness, observation, and discipline required to guide a wa'a across the Pacific.

The *Wayfinders* Exhibit was created by Bishop Museum exhibit designer Michael Wilson who is also a Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) crew member. Wilson worked closely with his PVS mentors, navigators Ka'iulani Murphy and Bonnie Kahapea-Tanner, both of whom helped curate the exhibit and have sailed Moananuiākea aboard *Hōkūle'a* and *Hikianaalia*.

Together, the team translated the rich history and complex knowledge of voyaging into an interactive experience that blends science, storytelling, and 'ike Hawai'i to demonstrate how Pacific voyagers navigated Earth's largest ocean.

The exhibit emphasizes the vast repository of 'ike that lives within the practice of wayfinding; it is sci-



The exhibit honors the kūpuna and kumu who helped revive Hawai'i's voyaging traditions.

ence, it is observation, but above all, it is pilina to our environment.

Those who guide wa'a must build intimate relationships with the natural world, learning to understand the language of the ocean, the songs of the wind, and the writings in the skies. That knowledge cannot be rushed. It develops over years of mentorship, practice, and time spent at sea. Those journeys are never taken alone.

The exhibit also honors the elders and kumu who helped revive these voyaging traditions including Mau Piailug, Herb Kane, and Ben Finney, along with the many kumu who sailed unfamiliar waters so that others could follow. And it highlights inspirational captains such as Chad Paishon, Billy Richards, and Bruce Blankenfield whose leadership continues to guide crews at sea and inspire the next generation of voyagers.

Today, as more voyaging canoes sail throughout Hawai'i and across the Pacific, this tradition continues to evolve.

Communities across the islands are building wa'a, training new voyagers and navigators, and reacquainting themselves with the ocean pathways that once linked the island nations of Moananuiākea.

The *Wayfinders* Exhibit captures the spirit of our voyaging renaissance – a reminder that our culture is alive – not something frozen in the past.

As our islands and people sail toward destinations both familiar and unknown, the challenge is to ensure that our stories, culture, and knowledge continue to live on so that future generations – like the generations of navigators who crossed Moananuiākea before us – will continue to find their way, guided by the stars, the ocean and the 'ike of those who came before. ■

"Wayfinders: He Wa'a He Moku, He Moku He Wa'a, We Are One and the Same" is at the Bishop Museum planetarium and admission is included with general museum admission. More information about exhibit hours, tickets, and showtimes can be found at bishop-museum.org.



HAWAI'I CAN

DO BETTER

REJECTING A MILITARIST FUTURE

BY JONATHAN KAY KAMAKAWIWO'OLE OSORIO, PH.D.

From Kaho'olawe to Pōhaku'loa to Mākuā to Kapūkākū (Red Hill) our 'āina and people have suffered from the outsized military presence in Hawai'i. And now the military wants to further expand its footprint by manufacturing weapons here in the "Aloha State." The military invests millions into our economy, but is it worth it? Instead of 'āina being used to grow food and house our people, the military is abusing and contaminating thousands of acres of our homeland to practice killing other human beings. In this photo, Marines fire an M224 60 mm mortar system at Mōkapu in 2024. - Photo: U.S.M.C Cpl. Joseph Helms

On February 16 the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* announced that the U.S. Department of Defense intends to make Hawai'i a key player in arms manufacturing and distribution.

Though its title, "Hawai'i could be key hub for Pacific arms manufacturing" made the plan seem more aspirational than real, the article revealed that several years of planning have already resulted in an Advanced Manufacturing Program Facility at Honolulu Community College and a new facility at Schofield Barracks called "The Forge" capable of "rapid prototyping," presumably of military hardware.

Nothing in this article reveals what could be - or already is being - designed and produced at these installations. But that will not surprise anyone with roots in Hawai'i.

On O'ahu, especially, secured gates and armed guards are only the most obvious signs of the military's sense of privilege when it comes to surrounding communities. But so is the U.S. military's position that its security and its mission entitles it to share information with the public solely at its own discretion.

And yet, an assistant secretary of the Department of Defense (or is it War?) speaks so glibly of a "partnership" while others in the article try and persuade the reader that this industry will reduce Hawai'i's overdependence on tourism.

This is just an old and familiar rationale for Kānaka Maoli and the other Hawai'i residents whose heritages trace back to 19th and 20th century plantation workers: We will be given the chance to work and provide goods and services for an industry dedicated to the welfare of a nation that has taken hundreds of thousands of acres of our lands, obscured and obstructed our right to restore our national government, and routinely treated us as trespassers on 'āina that Kamehameha III designated as our birthright more than 175 years ago.

These should be reasons enough for every Kanaka Maoli to oppose this latest proposed industry or, at the very least, to subject it to intense scrutiny.

But when it comes to the U.S. armed forces, State of Hawai'i government agencies and even the general public have historically given them a pass on the grounds of "national security" and because of an unwillingness to interfere with the revenue stream of military spending.

The Board of Land and Natural Resources' May and June 2025 rejections of the Environmental Impact Statements submitted with the Army's applications for lease extensions at Pōhaku'loa and on O'ahu are reassuring to Kānaka, especially those concerned with the impacts of military training on 'āina and those who continue our cultural practices and efforts to resettle 'āina from which our people were evicted.

But the larger resident community seems to have little appetite for scrutinizing the military's claimed prerogatives.

After running the story on potential arms manufacturing in Hawai'i, the *Star-Advertiser* conducted its usual survey of public opinion. Seventy-three percent of those responding to the "Big Q" survey on February 18, answered "Yes" to the question, "Should Hawai'i play an increased role in the military supply chain?"



A High Mobility Artillery Rocket is fired into the ocean from the Pacific Missile Range Facility at Barking Sands on Kaua'i during the 2024 RIMPAC exercises. RIMPAC began in 1971 and is held every two years in Hawai'i for about 4 weeks. In 2024, 29 nations participated. - Photo: U.S. Army Sgt. Perla Alfaro

“”

There are better uses for our 'āina, and far better uses for our labor and intelligence.

To be fair, these results may have been affected by the phrasing of the selected answer: "Yes: more tech/research programs for Hawai'i." It is possible that many respondents saw "tech/research," and approved of such programs - regardless of what they produced or for whom, simply because they would presumably help diversify the state's economy.

So, it is crucial for Kānaka Maoli to lead the public conversation on the military's future in Hawai'i because we know, from long ancestral and personal experience, that producing food, shelter, medicines, and textiles are far better uses of our lands economically than contributing to the U.S. government's ability to threaten and exploit nations and governments in Oceania and Asia.

One way we can begin to shape a different future for Hawai'i is to remember our history with the United States.

Though the Mōi Kamehameha I built a fleet of warships and trained an army in firearms to keep both rival ali'i nui and foreign adventurers in check, within a few years after his death this navy and army had nearly disappeared. Thus, under the regency of Ka'ahumanu, Hawai'i had few means to resist demands by Britain, France, and the United States.

Between 1826 and 1839, all three countries pressured the Kingdom to agree to treaties that privileged foreign trade at the expense of the Kingdom's own economy, and in some cases, even our own laws.

Through threatened military intervention, these European powers and the United States coerced favorable trade access to Hawai'i as it had with other large and prosperous countries like India, China, and Japan.

The adoption of a constitutional government and international recognition of Hawai'i as a nation-state in

1843 brought an end to such military-backed extortion for the next 40 years.

But in 1887, the Kingdom experienced a renewed threat from the U.S. Navy when Mōi David Kalākau refused to lease Pu'uloa (Pearl Harbor) to the United States in exchange for a renewal of a reciprocity treaty that had greatly benefited the sugar plantations for over a decade.

This was because a lasting U.S. naval presence in the Kingdom was extremely unpopular among Hawaiian citizens.

Fourteen years earlier, when Mōi William Charles Lunalilo proposed a long-term lease of Pu'uloa for a naval harbor in exchange for a reciprocity treaty with the U.S. in 1873, the unhappiness and the open and widespread protests by the lāhui were so great that Lunalilo withdrew his support for the treaty - much to displeasure and scorn of the Kingdom's business community.

When Lunalilo died a year later, David Kalākau campaigned for the throne by promising to secure a reciprocity treaty without sacrificing the "Pearl River Lagoon." In 1875 he did as he promised and, from 1877 on, the sugar industry enjoyed a ten-fold annual increase (1,000%) in profits, in land under sugar cultivation, and in the number of laborers - most of them under indentured contracts and working for meager wages.

Forcing the acceptance of a foreign naval installation to maintain these economic advantages was ominously

SEE HAWAI'I CAN DO BETTER ON PAGE 20

“”

The people of Hawai'i need to decide if we want to implicate ourselves in America's accelerating commitment to menacing other nations at will.

MADE IN
HAWAI'I?

MILITARY ARMS
MANUFACTURING IN HAWAI'I
HAS ALREADY BEGUN

Although it was only widely reported in February that the U.S. military wants Hawai'i to be a "hub" for arms manufacturing in the Pacific, unbeknownst to most Hawai'i residents that effort is well underway.

With the support of Hawai'i's Congressional representatives, state leadership, the University of Hawai'i, and the Hawai'i Chamber of Commerce, many key components of this effort are already in operation.

- "The Forge" is a new advanced manufacturing facility at Schofield Barracks in central O'ahu. It is equipped with 3D printing, precision machining and rapid prototyping technology, producing replacement parts and prototypes for the U.S. Navy and Joint Forces. A variety of firearms can already be produced using 3D technology.

- Operating in conjunction with The Forge at Schofield Barracks is the "Lightening Lab." In November 2025, the *Wall Street Journal* published a story describing how the U.S. Army is using 3D technology at the Lightening Lab to design, manufacture and test lethal drones here in Hawai'i.

- "Ku'i Ha'o" is an "advanced manufacturing training facility" that opened last year at Honolulu Community College to equip students, incumbent workers and active duty military with "industry-ready skills." The program includes an internship to job program, providing students with hands-on experience at Department of Defense commands and in private sector companies to build a local weapons manufacturing workforce.

- UH Mānoa's College of Engineering is partnering with the military on defense-related research, while researchers at the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) are using bio-printed organ models to test chemical compounds for the Department of Defense.

HAWAI'I CAN DO BETTER

Continued from page 19

“”

Our best choices are always guided by our ancient wisdom and aloha for our 'āina. To transform our lands and our society into instruments for better lives and a healthier environment, we find ourselves squarely in opposition to U.S. military objectives and operations here in Hawai'i.

clarified when the United States warned the Hawaiian government in 1885 that no renewal of the reciprocity treaty would be possible without a long-term deal for Pearl Harbor.

Kalākaua's refusal to budge angered the sugar planters – not only because their sales would suffer – but also because they would still have to pay the laborers under contract and would still be liable for the purchases and leases of lands they had added for increased cultivation. Even some of the larger plantations could have faced ruin.

Their response was to organize a secret society called the “Hawaiian League.”

With almost no Hawaiians in the organization, many of its members also enlisted in a militia known as the “Honolulu Rifles.” In the summer of 1887, Hawaiian League leaders used the threat of the Honolulu Rifles to force the Mō'i to replace the ministers of his own cabinet with Hawaiian League members.

That same threat led to Kalākaua signing a constitution that removed almost all the King's executive power, reduced the number of eligible Native Hawaiian voters, denied citizens of Asian ancestry the right to vote, and through high property requirements virtually guaranteed the white business community control of the legislature. The lāhui overwhelmingly disapproved of these new laws and the way they were extorted, calling the result the “Bayonet Constitution.”

When in 1892, with the support of the lāhui, Queen Lili'uokalani attempted to mandate a more equitable constitution, U.S. naval forces supported haole insurgents who declared themselves the de facto government of Hawai'i. This military action led the Queen to temporarily yield her authority to the United States on January 17, 1893.

The American military has historically deployed several types of intimidation against other nations. The most “traditional” has been the threat of violence against our people or our sovereign.



U.S. Marines fire an M2 .50 caliber machine gun at Pōhakuloa on Hawai'i Island in 2016.
- Photo: U.S.M.C. Lance Cpl. Jesus Sepulveda Torres



A Royal Canadian Naval ship fires Harpoon Surface to Surface Missiles into Hawaiian waters during the RIMPAC exercises in 2020. - Photo: Royal Canadian Navy MS Dan Bard

But a longstanding and equally coercive strategy has been to insist on our “dependence” on the American armed forces and on our acceptance of their whims and prerogatives due to the economic subsidies and supposed protection they provide.

If, like our kūpuna, we are indeed a nation of intelligent Kānaka – and I know that we are – then we, too, should always be examining closely the intentions of anyone, any organization, or any nation that proposes to use our 'āina and our labor for any enterprise that suits their purposes.

The fact that military hardware can be produced in Hawai'i does not mean it should be. And we are not just entitled, but required to ask of every new initiative: “What will this mean for our lāhui and for our residents, and what will this mean for our 'āina?”

The U.S. military buildup in the Pacific about a hundred years ago was made possible by America's seizures of the Philippines, Guam, and Hawai'i. And while historians might not agree on the details, there is a general consensus that the vastly greater presence of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, when added to the already significant British naval presence in Southeast Asia, helped provoke the rise of national resentment and militarism in Japan that eventually resulted in their decision to attack these western powers in 1941.

The consequences of creating the Pearl Harbor naval

base were, therefore, not just the thousands of American deaths on December 7, 1941, but the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Japanese men, women, and children in Tokyo, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki in 1945 and perhaps a million other Japanese and American deaths in the four years between.

To bring us up to the present, the current U.S. president's unleashing of military actions in Yemen, Venezuela, and Iran demonstrates that the new national “diplomatic” strategy is threat, destruction and death for any country that stands in the president's way.

The people of Hawai'i need to decide if we want to implicate ourselves in America's accelerating commitment to menacing other nations at will.

Our lāhui was unable to stop the U.S. takeover in the 1890s, or its seizure of our crown and government lands for military bases and training grounds during the territorial era and even after statehood. But we should refuse to participate in this new manufacturing undertaking and we can urge Hawai'i residents to condemn this scheme as courageously and unwaveringly as possible.

But above all, the people of Hawai'i – Native Hawaiian and resident alike – must recognize and embrace the vast possibilities of restoring 'āina to health and with it ourselves, our families, and our communities.

There are better uses for our 'āina, and far better uses for our labor and intelligence. Climate change and the increasing impoverishment of peoples can only be counteracted by our communities becoming more self-sufficient, innovative, and agile as producers of food and protectors of water.

We can decide to go along with the plunder of other nations as other empires have done in the past, or we can insist on contributing to the future of life and resiliency on this planet.

We know what our kūpuna thought about this: 'Oni-pa'a. 'Au'a 'ia. E ui ē. They told us to stay together, to persist on the land, and above all, to treat ourselves and others with aloha.

The United States has set a new and violent path for itself. That nation's fate is uncertain.

Our choices are clearer and our best choices are always guided by our ancient wisdom and aloha for our 'āina. To transform our lands and our society into instruments for better lives and a healthier environment, we find ourselves squarely in opposition to U.S. military objectives and operations here in Hawai'i.

And that opposition begins with remembering our kūpuna and their bravery:

'A'ole mākou a'e minamina
I ka pu'ukālā o ke Aupuni.
Ua lawa mākou i ka pōhaku
I ka 'ai kamaha'o o ka 'āina.

Aloha nō. ■

Protecting Land, Water, and Health A Shared Responsibility for Hawai'i's Future

By Inam U. Rahman, MD

In Hawai'i, public policy is never just policy. It is about land, lineage, and legacy.

When Native Hawaiian families struggle to remain in their communities, when kūpuna face chronic illness, or when water systems are at risk, these are not isolated issues. Housing, health, environmental stewardship, and cultural preservation are deeply interconnected. To honor our shared kuleana, they must be addressed together.

The housing crisis continues to disproportionately affect Native Hawaiians. Long waiting lists for Hawaiian Home Lands leases reflect decades of underinvestment. Recent legislative funding to accelerate homestead development is an important step, but implementation must move with urgency, transparency, and accountability.

Beyond DHHL, housing strategies — including affordable development and use of public lands — must center community voices. Policies should prioritize multigenerational living, protect residents from displacement, and discourage speculation. Housing is more than shelter; it sustains culture, family, and belonging.

Health disparities remain a serious concern. Native Hawaiians experience higher rates of diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, and other chronic conditions. Addressing these inequities requires sustained investment in Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems and community-based care. Expanding telehealth, mobile clinics, and school-based wellness programs can improve access while reducing long-term costs.

As a physician, I see prevention as both medically effective and fiscally responsible. Early screening, culturally grounded education, and outreach must be prioritized alongside acute care. Health equity is foundational to a resilient Hawai'i.

The Red Hill fuel contamination crisis underscored the fragility of our aquifers. Legislative efforts to strengthen water infrastructure, monitoring, and regulation of contaminants must be guided by transparency and scientific integrity. Clean water is not negotiable. Protection of wai is inseparable from protection of life.

The principle of mālama 'āina must guide climate resilience and infrastructure planning. Environmental safeguards are not barriers to growth; they are essential for sustainability.

Cultural preservation must remain central. Policies affecting Island Burial Councils should strengthen Native Hawaiian decision-making authority. Cultural consultation must be meaningful. Respect for iwi kūpuna reflects respect for the people of Hawai'i.

At the same time, economic opportunity must expand with integrity. West O'ahu communities need diversified growth and stronger small business support. Workforce development in healthcare, renewable energy, agriculture, and technology should prioritize local residents and create pathways for young people to build their futures at home.

Hawai'i's future depends on integrating housing stability, health equity, environmental protection, and cultural stewardship into a unified vision. These priorities reinforce one another.

Public policy must reflect not only efficiency, but responsibility. The choice is whether we act with foresight and unity or continue reacting after damage is done. The time for coordinated, community-centered action is now. ■

Dr. Inam U. Rahman is a physician and longtime West O'ahu resident. His work focuses on preventive healthcare, housing stability, and community-driven policy solutions that strengthen families across Hawai'i. He is a past president of the Hawai'i Medical Association.

Sweet Lei Mokihana, 'Auhea 'Oe?

By Bobby Camara



Mokihana sprawls at Koke'e on Kaua'i. - Photo: Lincoln Tyler



A small handful of cube-shaped mokihana capsules on Kaua'i. - Photo: Lincoln Tyler

But ... which one? Of our mea 'āpa'ākuma, endemic things, those found only in our pae 'āina, we have 50 species of *Melicope*. Fifty. According to geneticists, one propagule, a seed or plant, arrived here millions of years ago and evolved into our 50 different 'alani, of which the mokihana (*Melicope anisata*) of Kaua'i is one. Relatives are found on nearly all other islands.

Part of the citrus family, 'alani are scented like anise, which make their lau a favorite for tucking into layers of kapa. I used to love picking up fallen lau and hand-crushing them to surprise walking companions.

As the floral "symbol" of Kaua'i, lei are made with green, cube-shaped seed capsules of mokihana. Please remember to be frugal and take only enough so they are symbolic. Let most remain on the sprawling shrub or small tree so they can ripen and perhaps start new plants. Excessive use of resources, whether it's 50 strands of lei pūpū, or 25 strands of pīkake, or 20 strands of maile draped to the floor does not help to conserve and preserve mea makamae.

Mokihana seed capsules contain a chemical, furanocoumarin, that, upon contact with perspiring sunlit skin, can cause a rash. Entwined with maile lauli'i, as they often are, our skin is partially shielded from lei mokihana, but in any case, be aware, and be careful. ■



An amazingly detailed botanical sketch of *Melicope stonei*, a plant first seen on Kaua'i in 1988 by staff at the National Tropical Botanic Garden. - Illustration by Alice Tangerini

Kamalei Support and Healing Programs at LT

By Bryan Esmeralda

Lili'uokalani Trust (LT) is best-known for offering culturally grounded social work services. In recent years, however, LT has expanded its services to invite more kamalei (the Queen's beneficiaries) for unique experiences designed just for them.

LT Ranch in Kamuela, Hawai'i Island, offers nature-based programs in a residential camp, and after school and alternative learning programs, services, and support formats that promote meaningful connections through 'āina, animals, and art. These experiences are designed to support social-emotional growth, healing, and cultural identity within LT's 10-acre experiential ranch setting. All activities reinforce the five Ranch Pillars: ho'omalū (regulation), maka'ala (awareness), hō'ihi (boundaries), pili-na (relationships), and hilina'i (confidence).

The Early Childhood initiative at LT supports children ages 0-5 and their 'ohana (mākua ages 18-26) statewide through culturally grounded programs that strengthen relationships, promote healthy development, and foster stability. Key programs and services



include counseling, parenting support and skill-building resources, residential housing, and case management.

Older youth (ages 15-19) can benefit from Pu'u Lei O Lili'u in Kapolei, O'ahu, which offers group programs rooted in cultural traditions

and trauma-informed healing practices. Together, youth develop work-force skills, build leadership skills, and learn through service. The staff who lead this effort approach their work through a framework built upon four interconnected kahawai (rivers), which serve as the kahua (foundation) for this program.

Anxiety and depression are serious challenges for many of our youth today, but too often youth fall through gaps in receiving services due to limited access from private practitioners, long waitlists at community providers, or groups not accepting new clients. LT's statewide virtual counseling program Wai Aka supports kamalei experiencing mental health issues through short-term, mental health counseling offered through the Zoom Healthcare platform, making it easy to access. ■

Bryan Esmeralda is the director of external relations at Lili'uokalani Trust.



Kamalei participating in LT Ranch's 2025 summer camp in Kamuela, Hawai'i Island, benefit from equine-assisted learning and beginner horsemanship opportunities to build empathy, awareness, emotional regulation, and trust. - Courtesy Photo

Nā Mea Makamae Hawai'i ma Lākana

Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

Aia kekahi hō'ike'ike hou ma ka Hale Hō'ike'ike 'o Pelekania i kapa 'ia "Hawai'i: a kingdom crossing oceans." No kēlā hō'ike'ike, ua hō'ili'ili 'ia nā mea makamae Hawai'i mai nā waihona 'ohina Pelekania like 'ole: nā 'ahu'ula, kapa, kāhili, mea kaua a me nā mea makamae 'ē a'e like 'ole, kekahi ua kākā'ikahi laha'ole. Ua hō'ili'ili 'ia ia mau mea makamae e nā po'e 'Eulo i kipa iā Hawai'i Nei e like me Kapena Kuke me Kapena Vanekouwa. 'O nā mea makamae 'ē a'e, ua makana 'ia e ka Mō'i Lih-



'O ka hope loa o nā mea makamae i hana 'ia e nā mamō o ia au 'o ia hō'i ke ke ki'i kū no Kekuaokalani i kālai 'ia e ka mea kālai kaulana 'o Rocky Jensen. He mau lima 'ami 'oni ko ke kia a ua like ia me nā ki'i kū ma Ahu'ena.

Mahalo nō i ka Hale Hō'ike'ike 'o Pelekania i kēia hō'ike'ike hou no ka mea, hiki hou iā kākou Hawai'i ke 'ike aloha a hō'opili hou me ua mau mea makamae Hawai'i. Eia ka mahalo ho'i i ke kono 'ana i nā mamō Hawai'i, e nānā a hui a kama'ilio pū, i mea e mo'olelo pono ai no nā mea ma ua hō'ike'ike la.

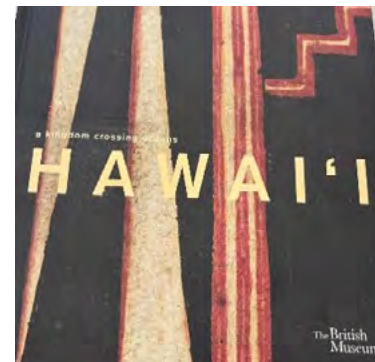
Mahalo ho'i iā Alice Christophe me kāna pū'ulu hui hana i ka hō'ili'ili 'ana i nā mea



Akua Hulu me ka leiomano a 'Umi Kai.



Pāpale (ma ka 'ākau) i hana 'ia e Haunani Sing.



Ka Puke no ka hō'ike'ike hou.

liho ma kāna huaka'i 'imi ku'ikahi i Pelekania ma ka Makahiki 1824.

'O ka mea ko'iko'i o kēia hō'ike'ike hou, 'a'ole nō ia ka hō'ike wale 'ana i nā mea makamae, 'oi ai kupaianaha lākou pākahi, akā aia nō ma ka lawelawe huliāmahi 'ana me nā po'e 'Ōiwi Hawai'i nona ka 'ike e pili ana i kēlā me kēia mea makamae.

Eia kekahi, ua kupaianaha ho'i ka hō'ike pū 'ana i nā hana no'eau a nā kūpuna a me nā hana no'eau a nā mamō Hawai'i e like me ka pāpale i ulana 'ie 'ia e Haunani Sing a me ka mahi'ole i hana 'ia e kāna kāne 'o Kumulā'au Sing. Eia hou, aia kekahi mau pahu li'ili'i, he mau lapaiki, i kālai 'ia e ka mea kālai kaulana 'o Dennis Kana'e Keawe ma ka hō'ike Pelekania: 'o Akeanalii me Mr. Lapaiki nā inoa.

Inā nānā 'oe i nā ki'i o ka wehena i ho'oili 'ia ma Facebook, aia kekahi leiomano i hana maiaua 'ia e 'Umi Kai. Aia ho'i kekahi ki'i kū o kekahi mea i no'ono'o 'ia he ki'i hana keaka nō ia. Na Auli'i Mitchell, ke kumu o ka hana ki'i hana keaka, i kuku i kapa no ua ki'i kū

makamae a pau i loa'a iā lākou a i ho'opa'a pono 'ia ma kekahi puke, *Hawai'i: a kingdom crossing oceans*. E like me ke kono 'ana i nā 'Ōiwi Hawai'i i makana aku i mea makamae hou, ua kono ho'i iā Christophe i nā po'e Hawai'i e kākau i mokuna no ka puke: 'o Kau'i Sai-Dudoit, Dennis Kana'e, Hina Kneubuhl, Kapulani Landgraf, Akoni Nelsen, Kalei Nu'uhiwa, Haunani me Kumulā'au Sing, a me Ha'a'ililo Solomon kekahi o nā mea kākau 'Ōiwi i ka puke.

'O ka hana huliāmahi ma waena o ka Hale Hō'ike'ike Pelekania me nā po'e hana no'eau 'Ōiwi Hawai'i he 'oni huli lua o ka hana a ka hale hō'ike'ike ma mua. 'A'ole lākou no ka hō'ike wale i nā mea makamae i kiahai (trophy) o ka wā 'imi 'āina akā he wā no ke kauka'i 'ana i nā po'e 'Ōiwi no ko lākou 'ike. ■

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

To read this in English go to kawaiola.news.

He Huaka'i i Landana

By Kalei Nu'uhiwa, Ph.D.

He mo'olelo pōkole kēia no kā mākou huaka'i 'ana i Landana i Ianuali aku nei. Ua kono 'ia au e ka Hale Hō'ike'ike o Beretania no kekahi wehena no ka exhibit 'o "Hawai'i: a kingdom crossing oceans." Ua huaka'i pū au me ka'u mau kaikamahine 'elua. Ua pihoihoi nō mākou e 'ike maka i nā mea ho'oilina Hawai'i.

I ka pae 'ana ma ke kāhua mokulele 'o Heathrow, ālai ko'u mau maka i kekahi pelaha ho'olaha me nā hulu ho'oheno o ko mākou wao nāhele aloha ma kekahi 'ahu'ula kahiko loa. Hālo'ilo'i ko'u mau papalina ma muli o ka nani kamaha'o o ua 'ahu'ula ala a i ka noho ka'awale 'ana mai Hawai'i aku.

Iā mākou e holo 'ana mai ke kāhua mokulele a hiki akula i kō mākou hōkele, ua 'ike pinepine mākou o ua ki'i ala. Aia kēlā pelaha ma ke "Tube," ma kekahi paia i ke kaona, ma kēlā me kēia holowē like 'ole a ma nuna o nā taxi e ho'olaha ana i nā lā e kipa aku ai i ka hō'ike.

Ma ke ahiahi o ka wehena, ua piha pono ka papahale mua o ka Hale Hō'ike'ike o Beretania me nā kānaka like 'ole i ho'onaninani 'ia mai ko lākou po'o a ka hi'u me nā lōle fancy. Komo 'ia kekahi kānaka i ka pā'ū Scotland, 'o kekahi me ka pāpala silika, a kekahi Kānaka 'Ōiwi me nā lōle 'ōiwi like 'ole no ka ho'ohano-hano 'ana i nā mea Hawai'i o ka hō'ike. Wahi a ka lohe, ua kono 'ia he ho'okahi kaukani mau kānaka mai nā aupuni like 'ole o ka honua e 'ike maka i ka wehena o ka hō'ike.

Ua ho'omaka pono ke ahiahi me kekahi mau oli, hula, a kūka'ōlelo. Ua



hōlo pono nā mea a pau. Inā hiki, e hele 'oe a 'ike maka o ua mea waiwai Hawai'i ala. ■

This is a short story about my trip to London this past January. I was invited by the British Museum to the opening of the "Hawai'i: a kingdom crossing oceans" exhibit. I traveled with my two daughters. We were so excited to see our valuable Hawaiian heirlooms.

When we landed at the Heathrow Airport, my eyes caught a glimpse of a particular poster with the colorful treasured feathers from our beloved Hawaiian forests on a luxuriantly ornate cloak. It immediately took my breath away. My eyes began to well up with tears that cascaded down my cheeks due to the cloak's beauty and because it resides separated from Hawai'i.

While we were traveling from the airport to our hotel we often saw the same poster. We saw it on the "Tube," on various walls in the city, in all kinds of hallways, on top of taxis publicizing the days to visit the exhibit.

On the night of the opening, the first floor of the British Museum was full with people that were adorned from head to toe. Some wore kilts, some top hats with coat tails, and others wore Indigenous finery worthy of honoring our cherished items. It was said that a thousand people from all over the world were invited to the opening.

The evening started with some oli, hula, and speeches. Everything went well. If possible I highly encourage you all to go and see it. ■

Legislative Housing Support for Hawai'i

By KipuKai Kualii

Hawai'i continues to face one of the most severe housing shortages in the nation. What gives me hope is learning about a few housing-related bills introduced by my good friend, state Rep. Luke Evslin. These bills which recently crossed over from the House to the Senate include efforts to increase housing supply, reduce regulatory barriers, fund infrastructure, and ensure that more homes remain available for local residents.

HB2049 HD2 "Relating to the Conveyance Tax and Housing Infrastructure" restructures Hawai'i's conveyance tax into a marginal rate system for residential property transactions. Conveyance taxes would be reduced for median-priced homes and multifamily housing while higher-value transactions would see higher tax rates.

The bill would create predictable, recurring funding for housing priorities by dedicating \$60 million annually to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) to help address our Native Hawaiian homestead waitlist and \$40 million annually for housing infrastructure statewide. It would also help ensure long-term funding for both homestead development and the public infrastructure needed to support new housing.

HB1725 HD1 "Relating to Building Codes" seeks to streamline construction regulations and reduce costly delays. The bill locks in the applicable building code at the time a building permit is issued, preventing mid-project changes that can require expensive redesigns.

It also establishes a six-year statewide building code update cycle and allows the more affordable International Residential Code to be used for smaller multifamily housing projects such as triplexes and fourplexes. These changes are intended to reduce uncertainty and lower development costs for



builders pursuing middle-density housing.

HB1739 HD1 "Relating to Transit-Oriented Development" encourages counties to allow higher housing densities near major transit hubs such as rail stations and key bus corridors. The policy is designed to support more walkable, transit-friendly communities while reducing reliance on cars and lowering infrastructure costs. More homes near transit hubs can help accommodate population growth while making better use of existing transportation investments.

HB2476 HD2 "Housing Infrastructure Growth Bonds" proposes a constitutional amendment that would authorize counties to issue bonds specifically for housing-related infrastructure. These bonds could help finance essential improvements such as roads, water systems, and wastewater facilities needed to support new housing developments. By providing counties with additional financing tools, the bill aims to remove a major obstacle to housing construction.

Finally, **HB1740 HD1** "Relating to Resident-Only Housing Programs" promotes the creation of deed-restricted housing reserved for Hawai'i residents by expanding regulatory incentives for projects that include perpetual resident-only deed restrictions and streamlines ownership and buyer qualification processes that can slow housing transactions. The goal is to encourage the development of homes that remain permanently available to local residents and workforce families rather than being purchased by outside investors.

Please join me in pushing for the passage of these bills which represent a brave, new, multi-faceted approach to our housing challenges. Approaches that could accelerate housing production and help ensure housing for generations to come, as well as establish a significant regular annual investment to our Native Hawaiian homesteads! ■

GET
REGISTERED
TODAY!



For more information, visit:
www.oha.org/registry

'A'ohe Hana Nui ke Alu 'ia

No task is too big when done together by all

By Jessica Wong

NaHHA is proud to share an article from one of our Lamakū Ho'okipa – Beacons of Hospitality – who exemplify the value of mālama and are making meaningful impacts as contributing members of the Native Hawaiian community.



beyond clothing. My husband and I felt a calling to create opportunities for other small businesses like ours. That calling eventually became Kāko'o Hawai'i.

The word kāko'o means to uphold, support, and assist. Kāko'o Hawai'i began as a small pop-up market with a simple purpose: to give local artisans and entrepreneurs a place to share their work and connect with the community.

Today it has grown into a vibrant marketplace rooted in collaboration and the spirit of ho'okipa. Many of the businesses that participate are Native Hawaiian-owned and incorporate the 'ike, values, and stories of this place, along with a broader community of local makers who celebrate and respect Hawaiian culture.

During Merrie Monarch week that sense of community becomes even more meaningful. We are deeply grateful for the Merrie Monarch Festival and the way it brings people from across Hawai'i and around the world to Hilo to celebrate hula and Hawaiian culture.

My husband and I believe the marketplace can also be ministry. When we choose collaboration over competition, we strengthen one another. Leading with faith and

aloha means creating opportunities, mentoring where we can, and remembering that success is meant to be shared. With faith, hard work, and a community that believes in you, even the smallest idea can blossom into something meaningful. ■

Jessica Wong is the founder of KAMEA and co-founder of Kāko'o Hawai'i along with her husband, Kamealoha Wong. She is a mother of three. Grounded in faith and guided by the values of our culture, Kāko'o Hawai'i will host the Kāko'o Hawai'i Market – One Merrie Event at Sangha Hall in Hilo from April 9–11, 2026. For more info and for ways you can support local and buy Native Hawaiian-owned products, visit kakoohawaii.com.

KAMEA began in the summer of 2014 when our oldest child was just one year old. In 'ōlelo Hawai'i, mea can refer to "things" or "creations," the many expressions that come from our hands through 'ike, mana'o, and lived experiences.



Although her business has grown, KAMEA founder Jessica Wong still feels the most creative and connected when she designs and sews garments for her clothing line. - *Courtesy Photo*

Sewing and crafting had always been part of my life, and in many ways, KAMEA grew from that simple idea: creating with care and intention. I never attended fashion school or earned a degree in design. When I first started, I only knew how to sew one style of dress. With patience, practice, and faith, that single design slowly grew into the collection we create today.

In the early days, I did everything myself, from cutting fabric and sewing each piece to tagging garments and shipping orders one by one. As the business grew, I began working with trusted manufacturing partners. Even now, designing and sewing remain deeply personal to me and where I feel most creative and connected.

Over time, our journey began to grow

E NHLC...

March was Disaster Resilience Awareness Month: how can I be "legally" prepared for a disaster?

By Devon Haia, NHLC Staff Attorney



If you or family members are on medication or have medically necessary equipment lost in a disaster, having a copy of the medical records for these items that you can provide to disaster relief organizations may help you access to replacements faster.

Keep originals of these documents in a secure, easily accessible

location to ensure they can be quickly retrieved during an evacuation. Choose a document-storage method that fits your needs and keeps your information safe while still easy to access in an emergency.

Original documents that are not used regularly can be stored in a home safe or a bank safety deposit box. In case originals are lost or destroyed, keep digital copies, like photographs or scans, securely saved to a password-protected cloud service. For documents, like insurance policies, that are accessible online, save your login information for the relevant online systems.

Evacuating promptly and safely is the top priority during a disaster. Ensuring that these legal documents are organized and easily accessible will help reduce stress and support a smoother recovery process. Be disaster resilient by keeping these legal documents prepared and accessible.

I ka moana nō ka i'a, liuliu 'ia nā pono lawai'a; While the fish are still in the sea, get your gear ready. - 'Ōlelo No'eau #1184 ■

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 nativehawaiianlegal-corp.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.

Disasters are occurring more frequently and with greater intensity in Hawai'i and around the world. If disaster impacts your 'ohana, recovery is easier when your legally important documents are accessible. Here is a list of the most commonly needed documents:

Personal identification documents including: 1) driver licenses; 2) social security cards; 3) birth certificates; 4) passports; and, 5) state issued identification cards. School identification and yearbooks can also be helpful. Identification documents can be replaced if lost or destroyed, but it can take time (standard processing is 4-8 weeks). Without identification, your access may be delayed to some financial assistance. Relatedly, consider safe storage of family genealogy research and records.

Land ownership, personal property ownership, rental/tenancy, and insurance policy documents. These may be necessary after a disaster to establish eligibility for some forms of disaster assistance. Whether you rent or own, the following documents will help prove ownership or residency so you can file claims if there is damage to your home following a disaster: 1) a property deed; 2) a mortgage agreement or note; 3) a lease or rental agreement; 4) an insurance policy. Similarly, if you own any automobiles or watercraft, you will need the title, registration, and insurance policy to make any claims if there is damage.

Documents regarding trusts, estates, and familial relationships. If you or a family member currently have any of the following legal instruments, it is important to keep them accessible: 1) a last will and testament; 2) a power of attorney; 3) adoption papers; 4) orders of protection against domestic violence; or, 5) child custody or visitation agreements.

Medical Prescriptions and Equipment.

NHO = Native Hawaiian Opportunity How reinvesting federal success uplifts the lāhui

By Andrew Rosen

In recent months, Native Hawaiian Organization (NHO) 8(a) enterprises have appeared in national headlines, often without much explanation of what they are or why they exist.

Lost in much of that coverage is the real story: organizations quietly doing exactly what the program was designed to do, reinvesting proceeds from federal contracting back into Native Hawaiian communities, expanding opportunity for the lāhui.

Many may have never heard of NHOs. But these nonprofit organizations have supported scholarships, built workforce pathways, partnered with schools, and invested in the next generation of Native Hawaiian leaders.

One example is The Hawai'i Pacific Foundation (HPF), which uses revenues generated through federal contracting to support education, workforce development, and community initiatives across the islands.

HPF President and CEO Jeanine DeFries explained that the goal is simple: create opportunity that flows back to the lāhui. "Our businesses participate in the federal SBA 8(a) program and compete for contracts. When those companies succeed, the resources generated are reinvested into programs that support Native Hawaiian students, families, and communities."

Education has been one of the foundation's key priorities. Through partnerships with the University of Hawai'i and other institutions, HPF has invested more than \$5 million into programs that expand opportunities for Native Hawaiian students in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. But the impact goes well be-



yond scholarships.

Between 2018 and 2024, NHOs reinvested more than \$125 million into the community. Those funds have supported everything from rural water systems and youth summer camps to university partnerships and workforce training. These dollars stay local, hire local, and strengthen local institutions.

According to DeFries, "It's not just the money. NHOs show up. They're on boards, in classrooms, at community meetings. They mentor students, partner with nonprofits, and stay connected to the work long after the check is signed. That kind of investment doesn't show up on a budget line, but it's real."

The NHO model was designed to create stability. Federal contracting provides a consistent revenue stream tied to performance and expertise. That stability allows them to invest in long-term solutions that strengthen families and

communities. Those investments address one of the most difficult challenges: the migration of Native Hawaiians out of Hawai'i.

By supporting education, career pathways, and leadership development, NHOs increase the likelihood that Native Hawaiians can build successful futures while remaining connected to their communities, culture, and 'āina.

When opportunity is reinvested with purpose, it becomes more than economic success, it becomes a commitment to mālama i ka lāhui and helps ensure that future generations of Native Hawaiians can thrive in the islands they call home. ■

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



The Hawai'i Pacific Foundation President and CEO
Jeanine DeFries - Courtesy Photo

Chronic Stress and Disease Prevention

By Jenny Estrella

During the week of the Merrie Monarch Festival, kama'āina and visitors alike come together for hō'ike, craft fairs, music, and the celebration of hula. Beyond the stage, Merrie

Monarch reflects something deeper about health: cultural connection, movement, and community help restore balance.

Native Hawaiians continue to face higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension. We often focus on diet, exercise, and medication – and those matter. But lasting change also requires looking upstream.

Chronic stress is one of the most powerful drivers of long-term disease.

When the body stays in a constant state of stress, blood pressure rises, blood sugar becomes harder to control, inflammation increases, and sleep suffers. Over time, this increases risk for heart disease and Type 2 diabetes. This is not about willpower – it is about physiology.

For many in our communities, stress is not occasional. It includes financial strain, caregiving responsibilities, housing challenges, work demands, food security, and generational trauma. When stress becomes constant the body adapts in ways that protect survival, but harm long-term health.

Reducing chronic stress is not a luxury. It is prevention. Simple protective steps can make a difference:



- Consistent sleep and meal routines
- Daily movement, even short walks
- Slow breathing or quiet reflection
- Time connected to 'āina
- Strengthening 'ohana and community ties

Cultural practices like hula, along with strong social connections, help stabilize the nervous system. When we reduce stress load, blood pressure improves. Blood sugar becomes more stable. Energy increases. Prevention becomes possible.

Clinical care remains essential. Screenings, medication, and regular check-ins save lives. But pairing medical care with stress reduction – and with cultural practices that strengthen identity and belonging – can improve long-term health.

Chronic disease develops over time, reflecting the cumulative load we carry. Merrie Monarch reminds us that health is also nurtured through culture, movement, and community. By lowering that load – through connection, predictability, and community – we support healthier futures for Native Hawaiian families.

Ho'oulu ka lāhui. When we protect the whole person, we protect the generations to come. ■

Jenny Estrella is a project manager with Hui Mālama Ola Nā 'Ōiwi, a Native Hawaiian Health Care System serving Hawai'i Island and operating under the umbrella of Papa Ola Lōkahi.



PAPAKILO
DATABASE

Papakilo Database has:

- > Mahele Records
- > Ali'i Letters
- > Hawaiian Language Newspapers
- > Historic Images and Documents
- > And much more!

Start your research today!

www.papakilodatabase.com



Kaulana e ka Holo

Voyaging journal archive, *Hikianalia* 2015

By Brad Ka'aleleo Wong

Day 0. It was a whirlwind day packing for this huaka'i to Nihoa, with the added kuleana of preparing the wa'a and serving as a watch captain for this voyage. Our tradewinds disappeared last week and we are supposed to meet up with the vessel, *Searcher*, in a few days to assist with 'opihi and nearshore fish surveys. Hopefully we get there in time. Captain Kaleo is confident, so holomua! It's exciting to get back on the moana, especially to Papahānaumokuākea and aboard *Hikianalia*.

Day 1. Sailing off Wai'anae was fantastic. We got all the way to Ka'ena last night, but the wind died again and now we're stuck in the middle of Ka'ie'iewaho. It's HOT today and the ocean is flat, a complete mirror. Earlier, a school of nehu took refuge under the wa'a as aku darted nearby. Isn't that what happened in the mo'olelo of Pa'ao when he was traveling from Kahiki to Hawai'i? Not even a single bite either. Hopefully better luck with fish and wind tomorrow.

Day 2. We made it to Lehua! A little bit of south wind off Kaua'i, though it died earlier this evening. We'll drift here overnight. Duane made saimin for dinner, so 'ono! With the weather really nice, Kaiwi and I brought out the 'ukulele for some post-meal kanikapila. Shoutout to Bones on the harmonica! Not sure if we'll make it to Nihoa with 120 miles to go and no wind, but we're making the best out of the less-than-ideal conditions.



The crew of *Hikianalia* gaze toward the island of Lehua, an important stopover and navigational marker for voyaging to Nihoa and beyond. - Photo: Brad Ka'aleleo Wong

Day 3. The akua heard our pule and gifted us a perfect wind coming from the southwest



and we are making way at around 4-6 knots. Perfect conditions to get there by tomorrow morning! It's an epic evening. Stars everywhere and minimal clouds. Excellent for navigation! Kaleo and Jason are giving lessons. I noticed how prominent 'iwa keali'i is during this time of year – a great navigation tool going to these islands. Riding the 'iwa to Kuaihelani like in Keaomelemele perhaps?

Day 4. Aue ua hiti e ua hiti e *Hikianalia* e! We made it. Sighted Nihoa off our starboard manu in the dim light of pre-dawn, right on target. It'll be a long day today with the intertidal monitoring crew. We'll also have dinner on the *Searcher* with them, complete with ice cream! Guess it's nice to have motored vessels sometimes.



The west pali of Nihoa rises above *Hikianalia* and the *Searcher*. Kū pākū ka pali o Nihoa i ka makani—the cliffs of Nihoa stand firm against the wind, an 'ōlelo no'eau honoring resilience in the face of adversity." - Photo: Kaipo K'raha

Day 5. We left last night a few hours after dinner. The current on the west end of Nihoa switched directions and we were drifting. It's slow going with south winds and we can't really go the direction we want. At sundown we saw another sailboat on the horizon – *Makani 'Olu* returning from Mokumanamana. Kekuewa mā were on-island for Ke Ala Polohiwa a Kāne, the most mana-ful way to experience the island. We greeted them with oli and mele. It was my favorite experience to see them, another group of Kānaka traveling the ocean. What was awesome were the two captains, Kaleo of *Hikianalia* and Kalei of *Makani 'Olu*, conversing over the radio in 'ōlelo Hawai'i. A powerful moment for the lāhui.

The winds turned more favorable the next day, and we were able to sail directly to Lehua and return home safely. There were so many hō'ailona on this trip and many good laughs with great friends. ■

Kānaka ma nā Mauna Pōhaku

Hawaiians in the Rocky Mountain Region

By Philip Joseph Kahaunaele Swain
with Lisa Kelekolio

Years ago, as our kūpuna voyaged across the moana to the western edge of the continent, some ventured further into the vast Americas settling in the Rocky Mountain area and what is now the state of Colorado.

In 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani and her retainers crossed the Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains on route to Washington, D.C. Others, like George Makalena and John Kulia Mokumaia, were recruited to join the touring Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Rough Riders Shows in 1899.

Later, Ikuwa Purdy and his paniolo companions traveled in 1908 to compete in the famed Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo. In honor of their winning performances, the mele, *Waiomina* (Wyoming), was composed by Helen Lindsay Parker.

Today, some 10,000 Kānaka and Pacific Islanders live in Colorado, with at least 15,000 in the Rocky Mountain Region (which includes Colorado, Utah, Montana and Wyoming). Many came for college and stayed. Others came to serve at military bases, for job opportunities, or for affordable housing. Some kūpuna have moved to mālama their mo'opuna who reside here.

Pi'ilani Hawaiian Civic Club of Colorado was formed in 1998 by a group of Kānaka Maoli who had migrated from Hawai'i. At the time, Pi'ilani was the easternmost Hawaiian civic club on the continent. The founders were determined to carry their heritage and culture with them from Hawai'i and preserve it for future generations.

In the 28 years since, Pi'ilani has advocated for the Hawaiian Community in Colorado and the larger region. Major activities include our annual Ho'olaulē'a, scholarship fundraising activities, partnering with AAPINH (Asian American Pacific Islander Native Hawaiian)



events, and participation in cultural activities.

To this end, we have sponsored workshops on lei-making, 'ukulele, Hawaiian films, 'ōlelo Hawai'i, slack key, hula, lei hulu, lauhala weaving, and more.

Over the years we have learned about our kuleana and kulana from our club founders, leaders, kūpuna and members. Some have passed on, and some still paddle the wa'a with us. We are also grateful to the Hawaiian community here that supports our efforts to exist as Hawaiians in this place even as we support efforts back home to uphold our native rights.

And we are proud of our 'ōpio who have embraced their culture and have gone on to reach for excellence in their educations and careers.

These include a graduate of the UH Mānoa Richardson School of Law now employed at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; an educator at Cherry Creek Schools Colorado pursuing an educational doctorate at the University of Colorado; a graduate of Colorado State serving in the Native American Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps; a graduate of UC Santa Barbara pursuing a masters in sustainable environmental systems; and a Hawaiian fashion and lifestyle designer creating sustainable clothing on Maui. ■

Philip Joseph Kahaunaele Swain is 1st vice president and Lisa Kelekolio is president of Pi'ilani Hawaiian Civic Club of Colorado.

Why Weight Loss Isn't Just About Willpower

By Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH, RDN

For years we have heard the advice to eat healthier and exercise more to lose weight. These habits remain the foundation of good health. Yet many people find that even after improving their diet and becoming more active, losing weight is still very difficult. Why?

For many of these individuals, the liver and pancreas are not working together the way they should. The liver may produce more glucose than the body needs. In response to this, the pancreas releases more insulin to control it. High insulin levels signal the body to slow fat burning and store more fat.

These imbalances are often linked to lifestyle factors, including diets high in added sugars and highly processed foods, too little physical activity, chronic stress, and inadequate sleep. Over time, these factors can contribute to conditions such as prediabetes, fatty liver disease, and insulin resistance, which further worsen the imbalance and create a self-reinforcing cycle.

Some researchers believe that certain populations, such as Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, may have a slightly higher genetic risk for these imbalances as well. When this higher risk is combined with unhealthy lifestyle patterns, weight gain may occur more easily, and weight loss may become more difficult for some individuals.

Healthy lifestyle changes - improving diet quality, increasing physical activity, getting adequate sleep, and managing stress - can help break this cycle. In some cases, this process can be accelerated with GLP-1 medications, especially tirzepatide (also known as Zepbound or Mounjaro). While sema-



glutide works mainly by regulating hunger and fullness signals, tirzepatide works additionally by normalizing glucose production in the liver.

Losing just 5-10% of body weight can begin improving how the liver and pancreas function.

Many obesity researchers say that GLP-1 medications create a "behavioral window." As patients will find it easier to develop new habits and healthier eating patterns when their appetite is controlled. If these habits are not built during treatment, weight regain becomes more likely once the medication stops.

While I do not promote unnecessary reliance on prescription medications, there are times when they can be useful tools to help people regain control of their health until lifestyle changes can take over. GLP-1 drugs are one example that can help when other approaches have not worked. However, they should never be relied on to support unhealthy habits.

Certain foods and nutrients can help the body maintain better metabolic balance when transitioning off GLP-1 medications. Eating more soluble fiber supports healthier glucose regulation in the liver and helps manage appetite. Traditional starches, kalo (taro), 'uala (sweet potato), and 'ulu (breadfruit), as well as oats, tofu, and other beans are good sources.

These foods, along with omega-3 fatty acids from fish and limu (seaweed), to also help reduce liver fat. Adequate protein helps preserve muscle during weight loss, making weight loss easier to maintain after stopping medication. Combining these foods with healthy lifestyle changes can lead to even greater improvements.

Modern medicine can offer support, but lasting health still grows from daily habits. ■

Merrie Monarch Returns to Hilo

UH Hilo's Enduring Connection to Culture, Kuleana and Community

By Pelehonuamea Harman

Each spring, the Merrie Monarch Festival returns to Hilo, where the celebration has become inseparable from the identity of the town itself. Often described as the "Olympics of hula," Merrie Monarch is synonymous with Hilo, just as Hilo is synonymous with the Merrie Monarch Festival.

For decades, the University of Hawai'i at Hilo has stood alongside the community in supporting the festival and uplifting the cultural traditions that Merrie Monarch helps to perpetuate. As the home campus of po'e hula, UH Hilo continues to play an important role in honoring and engaging with the festival each year.

The roots of this relationship stretch back to the earliest days of Merrie Monarch. The festival began in 1964 following the devastating 1960 tsunami that reshaped Hilo. Community leaders envisioned a celebration that would restore pride in the town, revitalize the local economy, and bring people together. What began as a lively community festival eventually evolved into the internationally respected hula competition known around the world today.

When the festival nearly dissolved in the late 1960s, Auntie Dottie Thompson stepped forward with a powerful vision inspired by the cultural renaissance of King David Kalākaua.

With guidance from respected hula masters such as 'Iolani Luahine and Edith Kanaka'ole, the festival shifted toward a deeper commitment to traditional hula. The first hula competition debuted in 1971 with nine hālau and the first Miss Hula, now known as Miss Aloha Hula.

Last November, members of the Hilo community had the opportunity to hear more about the festival's history and evolution during UH Hilo's Kuleana & Community Talk Story series, a weekly campus gathering that invites community stewards to share the kuleana they carry in their professional and personal lives.

Festival President Luana Kawelu and Festival Vice President Kathy Kawelu (Associate Pro-



fessor of Anthropology at UH Hilo) reflected on their family's longstanding stewardship of the Merrie Monarch Festival and the deep connection between the festival and the Hilo community that sustains it.

UH Hilo's connection to Merrie Monarch continues through educational programs, student involvement, and community partnerships. This spring semester, UH Hilo students are exploring the legacy of King Kalākaua through a special topics course examining the monarch whose cultural vision helped inspire the festival itself.

During Merrie Monarch week, the university will host presentations and cultural gatherings that invite students and the broader community to deepen their understanding of hula, mele, and Hawaiian cultural revitalization.

Many of these events will take place at the university's 'Imiloa Astronomy Center, including a panel titled "Cultural Renaissance in Motion: Merrie Monarch's Enduring Influence on 'Ōlelo, Mele, and Hula." UH Hilo professors Dr. Kalena Silva, Dr. Larry Kimura, and Dr. Kekoa Harman will reflect on the festival's role in strengthening key pillars of Hawaiian cultural resurgence.

Across campus, Merrie Monarch week is also marked by cultural performances and student engagement. Visiting hālau share special presentations, international students offer cultural performances celebrating their own traditions, and UH Hilo student-athletes volunteer during the festival by helping to operate concession stands that serve thousands of attendees. These campus events, branded Kahikuonālani in honor of King David La'amea Kalākaua, exhibit UH Hilo's ongoing commitment to connecting learning, community, and aloha.

In Hilo, the Merrie Monarch Festival is not simply an event. It is a reminder that culture lives through the people who carry it forward. ■

Pelehonuamea Harman is the director of Native Hawaiian Engagement at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.



Pelehonuamea Harman, Kimo Alama Keaulana, and Dr. Kekoa Harman after their presentation about the hula tradition of Kumu Joseph Ilalā'ole at the Kahikuonālani Series last year. - Photo Courtesy of UH Hilo 'Imiloa Astronomy Center

EPA Gives Navy a Pass on Red Hill

The *Star-Advertiser* reported last month that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that the U.S. Navy is no longer required to meet with the community regarding the Red Hill water crisis – an announcement that came as a surprise to members of the Community Representation Initiative (CRI). The CRI is a panel comprised of 10 community members – formed under a 2023 EPA consent order – who were tasked to engage directly with the Navy in the aftermath of the water crisis. The consent order was issued as an enforcement action against the Navy in response to its handling of the 2021 crisis during which some 20,000 gallons of jet fuel were released into the environment from the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. The fuel spill contaminated the drinking water of some 93,000 O’ahu residents, sickening people and killing pets. Per the consent order, the CRI met weekly and the Navy was required to attend one meeting per quarter (four per year). However, the Navy did not attend any of the required meetings in 2025. According to the article, CRI member Michell Poppler said she felt that the EPA allowed the Navy to pull out of the meetings because the Navy did not like answering challenging questions. Former CRI Chair Marti Townsend added, “this really cements the EPA as an apologist and a shield for the Navy as opposed to a regulator [that] holds them accountable.”

Daniel New Ke Ola Mamo ED

Ke Ola Mamo, the Native Hawaiian Health Care System serving O’ahu, has named Maile Daniel as its new executive director. Daniel has nearly two

‘Ōiwi Women Who Mean Business



For 28 years, *Pacific Business News*' Women Who Mean Business program has honored some of the outstanding women shaping Hawai'i's business landscape. To mark the award's 28th anniversary, this year, 28 women were honored representing a range of industries, from finance to education. Among these mana wāhine are seven 'Ōiwi whose professional excellence, vision, and commitment to their organizations and communities are creating lasting, positive impacts. The honorees were celebrated at a gala on March 12. The Hawaiian women in the 2026 cohort of Women Who Mean Business include (top row, l-r): Lindsay Ah Loo, executive director of The Nakupuna Foundation; Phyllis Freitas, director of sales at Hawaiian Telcom; Charmaine Hauanio-Kuewa, divisional director of development at The Salvation Army Hawaiian and Pacific Islands Division; Jan Kaeo, owner and master trainer for Dale Carnegie Training Hawai'i and Guam; (second row, l-r): Genesis Nicklaw, senior vice president of operations at Hawai'i State Federal Credit Union; Makana Reilly, director of advancement and communications at Hawaiian Community Assets; and Attorney Crystal Rose, founding partner of the legal firm Lung Rose Voss & Wagnild, who was named PBN's 2026 Career Achievement Honoree. - Photos: Courtesy of PBN



Maile Daniel - Courtesy Photo

decades of leadership experience in nonprofit service, behavioral health, and program administration.

Prior to joining Ke Ola Mamo, Daniel served as program administrator for Steadfast Housing Development Corporation, overseeing statewide programs, supervising multidisciplinary teams, and working with government agencies and community partners to support housing stability and behavioral health services.

“Maile brings both heart and

experience to this role,” said Karen Fetzer, chair of the community relations committee. “Her commitment to serving Oahu’s Native Hawaiian communities, combined with her proven leadership and insight into the challenges facing the individuals and families in Hawai’i, make her exceptionally well-suited for this position.”

Daniel holds a bachelor’s degree in business management, and master’s degrees in social work and business administration from the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa. She is also a licensed social worker and a certified psychiatric rehabilitation practitioner.

Under her leadership, Ke Ola Mamo will build on its foundation to expand access, elevate care, and strengthen community – ensuring that Native Hawaiian health and wellbeing are supported through culturally

grounded services and strategic partnerships.

Yeaman Selected as Newest KS Trustee



Eric Yeaman - Courtesy Photo

Eric Yeaman has been selected by the state Probate Court as the newest member of Kamehameha Schools’ Board of Trustees. He fills the vacancy created upon the closing of Robert Nobriga’s term, which ended on June 30, 2025.

Yeaman has more than three decades of executive and board leadership experience across

Hawai’i’s financial services, telecommunications, energy, healthcare, real estate and investment sectors. He is currently the founder and managing partner of Hoku Capital LLC, a firm that provides strategic advisory services and pursues strategic investments in Hawai’i-based companies as well as national private equity and real estate funds.

Previously, Yeaman served as president and CEO of First Hawaiian Bank, as president and CEO of Hawaiian Telcom, and as chief financial officer at Kamehameha Schools. He has also held senior leadership roles at Hawaiian Electric Company and Hawaiian Electric Industries.

In addition to his professional experience, Yeaman currently serves on the boards of the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, Friends of Hawai’i Charities, and the Hawai’i Asia Pacific Association. He previously served on the Kamehameha Schools Audit Committee and on the boards of The Queen’s Health Systems and The Queen’s Medical Center.

Born and raised in Kona, Yeaman is a graduate of UH Mānoa, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting with distinction. He is a certified public accountant in the State of Hawai’i.

Avian Malaria Affects All Birds

A new UH Mānoa study shows that avian malaria can be transmitted by nearly all forest bird species in Hawai’i, which explains why the disease is present almost everywhere mosquitoes are found. The research, published February 10, found avian malaria at 63 of 64 sites tested statewide, including areas with very different bird communities.

“Avian malaria has taken a devastating toll on Hawai’i’s native

SEE NEWS BRIEFS ON PAGE 29

NEWS BRIEFS

Continued from page 28

forest birds, and this study shows why the disease has been so difficult to contain,” said Christa Seidl, mosquito research and control coordinator for the Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project, who conducted the research.

Avian malaria damages birds’ red blood cells, leading to anemia, organ failure, reduced survival and, in some species, death. Studies show that ‘iwi have a 90% mortality rate if infected.

“We often think first of the birds when we think of avian malaria, but the parasite needs mosquitoes to reproduce and our work highlights just how good it has gotten at infecting them through many different birds,” Seidl said.

The study analyzed blood samples from more than 4,000 birds across Kaua‘i, O‘ahu, Maui and Hawai‘i Island.

The broad ability of avian malaria to infect and spread explains why the disease is so widespread. The findings also suggest there are few, if any, mosquito-infested habitats free from transmission risk. Worse, mosquito-free habitats are rapidly disappearing as warming temperatures allow both mosquitoes and avian malaria to develop in former refuges.

IJA Fellows Arakaki and Chai-Andrade



(L-R) Connor Arakaki and Kalani Chai-Andrade. - Courtesy Photos

Two ‘Ōiwi, Connor Arakaki and Kalani Chai-Andrade, are among the nine emerging jour-

nalists selected to the Indigenous Journalists Association’s (IJA) 2026 Indigenous Journalism Fellowship cohort for undergraduate and graduate students from Indigenous communities who aspire to careers in broadcast, radio, print, visual and digital media.

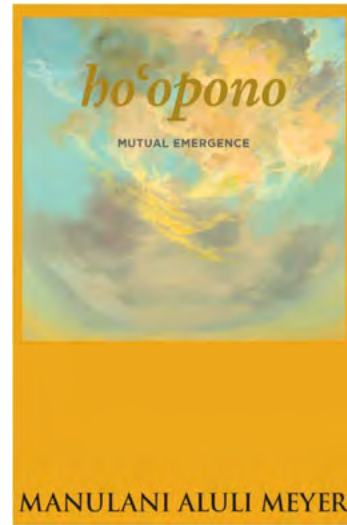
Each student is paired with an experienced Indigenous journalist as their mentor. Over the course of the program, fellows receive virtual training and mentorship designed to strengthen reporting skills, build confidence and prepare them for their careers.

Arakaki, from ‘Ewa Beach, O‘ahu, is a student at Yale University double majoring in ethnicity, race, and migration and English. During the 2024-25 school year, Arakaki was editor-in-chief of the *Yale Herald*, the university’s weekly magazine, and more recently, was a reporter for *Honolulu Civil Beat* and the Yale Investigative Reporting Lab. Their writing can also be found in *The Nation*, *The New Journal*, *Hawai‘i News Now*, *DIAGRAM*, *HIFILM*, and elsewhere.

Chai-Andrade, from Kea‘au, Hawai‘i Island, is a photojournalist at *KVAL-TV* based in Eugene, Oregon. He received his bachelor’s degree in journalism and cinema studies from the University of Oregon and is currently pursuing a master’s in advertising and brand responsibility. He specializes in sports photography and has also worked with the Northwest Indigenous Language Institute in Eugene and reported on local communities in Accra, Ghana (West Africa).

The fellowship culminates at the 2026 Indigenous Media Conference in Portland, Oregon, where fellows will create content across digital, social, and multimedia platforms highlighting the importance of the ongoing work of Indigenous media.

A Collection of Writings by Meyer



Ho’opono: mutual emergence is a collection of writings and ruminations by Indigenous scholar, Hawaiian systems thinker, and author, Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer.

Since 1998, Meyer has shared her Indigenous knowledge-based concepts and lived principles with thousands of people through hundreds of talks, gatherings and conferences. Her teachings and ideas have been published, cited and delivered through a variety of national and international journals, books, lectures, videos and conferences around the globe.

The mana‘o shared in this touching and meaningful collection helps “ground us” in this fluid time of global uncertainty. From a Hawaiian perspective, Meyer posits that we are in a species-based “huliau,” an opportunity for humanity to welcome change, and experience a shifting of priorities and possibilities that seeks a “mutual emergence” of our best and most generous and joyful selves in relationship to the living world.

The articles and writings in *ho’opono: mutual emergence* lay the foundation for an expansive and inclusive system of thinking, being, and doing based on ‘ike

Hawai‘i. The book also includes photographs, tables and content that triangulate and unpack a variety of comparisons and observations. Her writings encourage readers to believe in their own capacity to internalize ideas and welcome change, growth and inclusion.

Published in 2025 by ‘Ai Pōhaku Press, *ho’opono: mutual emergence* is available at Native Books.

Chief of War Wins at Spirit Awards

The cast of the Apple TV series *Chief of War*, headlined by Jason Momoa and co-written by Momoa and Pa‘a Sibbett, was named “Best Ensemble Cast in a New Scripted Series” at the 41st Annual Spirit Awards Ceremony at the Hollywood Palladium in Los Angeles, California, in February.

The Spirit Awards are presented by Film Independent, a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering independence and inclusivity in visual storytelling, and in amplifying the voices of independent storytellers and celebrating their diversity, originality and uniqueness of vision.

The award celebrated the predominantly Pacific Island cast that includes, in addition to Momoa: Charlie Brumbly, Luciane Buchanan, Cliff Curtis, Brandon Finn, Siaosi Fonua,

Roimata Fox, Ioane Goodhue, Moses Goods, Te Ao o Hinepelinga, Benjamin Hoetjes, Siua Ikale‘o, Keala Kahuanui-Paleka, Mainei Kinimaka, Kaina Makua, Temuera Morrison, Branscombe Richmond, Te Kohe Tuhaka, and James Udom.

Curtis, Goods and Kahuanui-Paleka were on hand to accept the award. Curtis read a statement by Sibbett that said, in part, “Quite often, Pacific artists are asked to play a background role in other people’s stories ... with *Chief of War* we weren’t asked to play small-time criminals or hula dancers. We weren’t cast as ‘Bouncer Number Two’ or as musicians. We were asked to showcase people [and] language never [before] captured on screen in this way.”

Toves Named a Champion for Change

Kaylah Toves from O‘ahu has been named one of six 2026 Champions for Change (CFC) - a Native youth leadership initiative of the Center for Native American Youth designed to highlight positive stories of impact from Indigenous communities.

Toves, who is Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and Acoma Pueblo, is a senior at Cornell University double majoring

SEE NEWS BRIEFS ON PAGE 30



The cast of *Chief of War* won “Best Ensemble Cast in a New Scripted Series” at the 2026 Spirit Awards in Hollywood in February. - Photo: IMDB/FB

NEWS BRIEFS

Continued from page 29

Kaylah Toves - *Courtesy Photo*

in government and American studies with a minor in American Indian and Indigenous studies.

At Cornell, she serves as a student leader and advocate, acting as co-president of the university's American Indian Science and Engineering Society and its Hawai'i Club, and as a student ambassador for the Brooks School of Public Policy's Cornell in Washington program. She also conducts legal research with Cornell Law School's Legal Information Institute analyzing gender-based inequities across the United States.

During Fall 2024, Toves served as a legislative intern in Sen. Brian Schatz's Washington, D.C., office supporting policy research and constituent services on issues impacting Hawai'i and Indigenous communities. She aspires to pursue a career in public policy in Washington, D.C.

Use of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i in Homes Increasing

A recent column submitted by UH Hilo's Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani to the *Star-Advertiser* notes that 'ōlelo Hawai'i is the fastest-growing non-English language spoken in Hawai'i homes according to U.S. Census Bureau data.

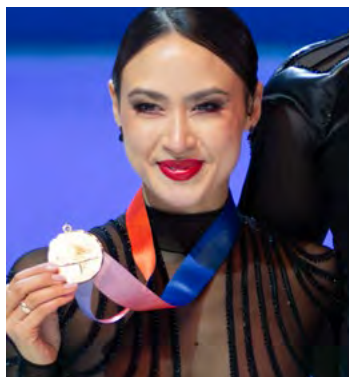
From 2016 to 2024, the number of residents age 5 and older speaking Hawaiian at home rose from 18,400 to 27,338 – a 48% increase (+8,938 speakers).

No other non-English language matched this growth.

The surge is most dramatic in Hawai'i County, where speakers jumped 125.6% (from 5,000 to 11,279). Maui and Kaua'i counties combined grew 48.3% (3,500 to 5,191), while O'ahu saw a 9.8% rise (9,900 to 10,868). Among children ages 5-17, Hawaiian now ranks as the most spoken non-English home language across the pae āina.

This revival began in 1983 with 'Aha Punana Leo preschools, operating in defiance of the 1896 law banning the use of Hawaiian as a medium of instruction in schools. After the ban's repeal in 1986, Hawaiian medium pathways expanded from Pūnana Leo into public schools via kula kaiapuni (Hawaiian immersion) programs.

Chock Wins Olympic Medals for Skating

Madison La'akea Te-Lan Chock
- *Photo: SpiritedMichelle, Wikimedia*

Olympic ice dancer Madison La'akea Te-Lan Hall Chock is the first and only Native Hawaiian to ever win a medal at the Winter Olympics.

At the 2026 Winter Olympics in February, she and Evan Bates, her husband and skating partner, took the silver medal in ice dancing. The couple was just 1.34 points behind the gold medal winners, France's Laurence Fournier Beaudry and Guillaume Cizeron – a ranking that was dis-

11th Annual Manu o Kū Festival

Manu o Kū (white tern) is an endangered native seabird that breeds only on O'ahu and, unexpectedly, is known to nest in trees throughout urban Honolulu. In 2007, Manu o Kū was designated as the official bird of the City & County of Honolulu and, for the past 17 years, the Conservation Council of Hawai'i (CCH) has celebrated these remarkable, adaptive seabirds with a free 'ohana event on the grounds of 'Iolani Palace. Combining education and fun, the event includes activity booths, art workshops, speakers, music, hula, a bird walk, lively costumed characters, and a nature-themed costume contest for keiki. There will also be spotting scopes set up so guests can get a close-up view of Manu o Kū nesting in trees on the palace grounds. In addition to providing educational fun, the Manu o Kū Festival provides a platform to highlight other native, threatened or endangered species of Hawai'i. This year, the Manu o Kū Festival will be on Saturday, May 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The keiki costume contest is at 11:30 a.m. For more info go to: conservehawaii.org/events/manu-o-ku-festival/2026-manu-o-ku-festival. - *Photo: Chris McDonough Photography*

puted by fans.

This was not Chock's first Olympic medal. She is also a two-time gold medalist in the team event at both the 2022 and 2026 Olympics. Since she began competitive skating in 2006 at the age of 14, Chock has won more than 40 medals for skating – 24 of which are gold medals. She is a seven-time U.S. Champion and a three-time World Champion.

Born in Redondo Beach, California, Chock began skating at the age of 5, and, as her interest and prowess developed, her 'ohana moved to Michigan so she could receive top tier coaching. In a *USA Today* article, Chock expressed her joy at being able to be part of the Winter Olympics as a Hawaiian saying, "It means so much to have that representation of Hawai'i on the ice."

traditional Hawaiian practice, western research now recognizes the complex interactions between crops in polyculture systems.

However, the infinite variations in crop combinations, spacings, timing, and management mean that a western science framework will never be able to examine all options. This is where farmer observations and accumulated knowledge play a critical role.

To identify how intercropping indigenous plants affects Hawaiian cultivation characteristics such as soil water retention, crop yield, soil fertility and input requirements, University of Hawai'i student researcher Ella Hazen, supported by Dr. Noa Lincoln of the Indigenous Cropping Systems Laboratory, has developed a 10-minute survey and is seeking responses from mahi'ai (farmers) and others who plant traditional Hawaiian crops together (co-crop) here in Hawai'i.

This voluntary survey is anonymous and open to individuals 18 years or older. Survey responses will help researchers compile high-quality data, which will be distributed back to the community to make traditional Hawaiian co-cropping information more accessible.

To participate in the survey go to: surveymonkey.com/r/6RQZXFZ ■

UH Survey Seeks Input from Mahi'ai

Co-cropping – the cultivation of multiple plant species in the same field to increase yields and increase biodiversity – is at the cutting edge of science. Long a

Sun 4/19: Lā 'Ōhana Day
50% off kama'āina admission

Sat 4/25: Lā Honua Earth Day Volunteers Wanted!
Mālama 'āina worksites, hālau hula, sustainability village, and more;
free lunch for the first 200 volunteers

New Hours of Operation
Open Tue – Sun, 9 AM – 4 PM
(closed Mondays)

Kalima Lawsuit Update: Probate Process

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

The focus of the Kalima class-action claims payment process at this point is to identify the correct heirs and devisees of Deceased Class Members, so that payments can be made to them under the court-approved Probate Plan.

Probate Special Master Emily Kawashima and Probate Special Counsel Scott Suzuki have presented 27 Petitions to the Probate Court as of March 9, 2026. These petitions have collectively paid nearly \$53 million to the estates of over 700 Deceased Class Members.

Approximately \$180 million has been paid to the 1,301 Living Class Members, a 99.7% claims payment rate. Typical class actions have payment rates of approximately 10%.

Complex Probate Process

Under the court-approved Probate Plan, the Court has ordered the Probate Special Master and Probate Special Counsel to review the estates of every Deceased Class Member. Approximately 30 estates are reviewed each month by the Probate Court. Many of the Deceased Class Members passed away years ago. Records of estate plans and the whereabouts of their heirs are difficult to determine because of the passage of time. Additional time and research is needed for the estates of the Deceased Class Members who have not yet been included in a probate petition to be sure all procedural safeguards are thoroughly addressed.

If you have information regarding a Deceased Class Member and/or their family members, please complete the following two forms: the Deceased Class Member Information Form and the Detailed Family Information Form. These forms, as well as other information about this case, are available at the kalima-lawsuit.com website. Please also be sure to update the records if any information you submitted before has changed. You can also call the Claims Administrator at (808) 650-5551 or 1-833-639-1308 (Toll-Free), to obtain or provide information.

Attorney Talk Story

For more information about the probate process and the case status, interested persons are invited to attend a Talk Story with Class Counsel Thomas Grande and Carl Varady, as well as with Probate Special Master Emily Kawashima and Probate Special Counsel Scott Suzuki. The next Talk Story will take place on Tuesday, April 14, at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom or by telephone. Go to kalima-lawsuit.com for the Zoom link and telephone information. ■



Scan QR code or go to kalima-lawsuit.com for more information and future Talk Story Sessions.



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

Kaiali'i Kahele
Chair | Trustee, Hawai'i
Tel: 808.594.1855
Email:
TrusteeKahele@oha.org

Keoni Souza
Vice Chair | Trustee,
At-Large
Tel: 808.594.1857
Email:
TrusteeSouza@oha.org

Dan Ahuna
Trustee, Kaula'i and
Ni'ihau
Tel: 808.594.1751
Email:
TrusteeAhuna@oha.org

Kaleihikina Akaka
Trustee, O'ahu
Tel: 808.594.1854
Email:
TrusteeAkaka@oha.org

Keli'i Akina, Ph.D.
Trustee, At-Large
Tel: 808.594.1859
Email: TrusteeAkina@oha.org

Luana Alapa
Trustee, Moloka'i and
Lāna'i
Tel: 808.594.1874
Email: TrusteeAlapa@oha.org

Brickwood Galuteria
Trustee, At-Large
Tel: 808.594.1860
Email:
TrusteeGaluteria@oha.org

Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey
Trustee, Maui
Tel: 808.594.1858
Email:
TrusteeHuluLindsey@oha.org

John D. Waihe'e IV
Trustee, At-Large
Tel: 808.594.1876
Email:
TrusteeWaiheee@oha.org

From Ho'ōpūloa to Miloli'i: Carrying the Legacy of Our Kūpuna Forward

This month, Trustee Kaiali'i Kahele invited Leivallyn Kaupu and Ka'imi Kaupiko, lineal descendants of Miloli'i, to write a mana'o to share via his regular column.

We humbly offer this mana'o on behalf of the lineal descendants of Ho'ōpūloa and the greater Miloli'i community of Kapalilua, South Kona. Our families have lived along this coastline for generations, sustained by the ocean, the land, and the 'ike passed down by our kūpuna.

In 1926, the eruption of Mauna Loa dramatically changed the lives of our people.

The lava flow destroyed the thriving fishing village of Ho'ōpūloa, covering homes, fishing grounds, the local post office, and places of deep genealogical and cultural significance. Many families were forced to relocate along the coast to nearby areas, including Miloli'i, carrying with them their traditions, 'ike lawai'a, and enduring connection to this place.

Although the eruption displaced our families physically, it did not sever our ties to our ancestral homeland. The descendants of Ho'ōpūloa remain here today, and the knowledge, practices, and identity rooted in that village continue through the people of Miloli'i and the surrounding Kapalilua region.

In the 1980s, recognizing the unique needs of this rural Hawaiian fishing community, the state enacted Act 62 to support housing opportunities for families in Miloli'i. These efforts acknowledged the importance of allowing families to



Kaiali'i Kahele

CHAIR
Trustee,
Hawai'i Island

remain on their ancestral lands and maintain their traditional way of life. While these initiatives provided support, many challenges remain today.

Miloli'i, often referred to as the last Hawaiian fishing village in Hawai'i, continues to uphold fishing traditions, mālama our nearshore waters, and teach the next generation their kuleana to land and sea. Home to roughly 200 residents, the village includes the local congregational church of Hau'oli Kamana'o, the county park, and the cultural

and historical community center. Many families continue to live largely off-grid, relying on subsistence practices, strong family networks, and the passing down of traditional fishing knowledge and lifeways.

At the same time, Miloli'i faces ongoing challenges common to many rural Native Hawaiian communities, including limited infrastructure, housing shortages, economic hardship, and access to educational and career opportunities for our youth. Despite these obstacles, our community remains resilient, guided by the strength and 'ike of our kūpuna.

Looking ahead, we believe there is great potential for Miloli'i to continue thriving as a culturally grounded community rooted in 'ike Hawai'i and environmental stewardship. Our vision is to strengthen opportunities for our youth, support community-based education, mālama our natural resources, and create pathways for families to remain in the village for generations to come.

We respectfully ask the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to continue standing with communities like Miloli'i by supporting initiatives that address housing, education, economic opportunity, and cultural preservation. By uplifting community-led efforts and honoring our genealogical ties to this place, we can ensure that the legacy of Ho'ōpūloa and Miloli'i continues.

Our kūpuna endured displacement yet remained steadfast in their commitment to this 'āina. As their descendants, we carry that kuleana forward.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our voices. ■



"The Destruction of Ho'ōpūloa." Photo: Tai Sing Loo

Part 1: Mahalo e nā Kūpuna

Serving as an at-large trustee for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) over the past four years has been one of the greatest privileges of my life. But more than anything, this work has reminded me that none of us walks this path alone. We bring our kūpuna with us.

During this time, I have had the honor of meeting with beneficiaries, community leaders, cultural practitioners, government officials and 'ohana across the pae 'āina.

Some conversations happen in formal spaces: community meetings, legislative briefings or public hearings. But many of the moments happen in quieter ways: talking story with kūpuna after a gathering, walking the land with cultural practitioners, or working alongside volunteers during mālama 'āina workdays.

In those moments people speak openly about their hopes for our lāhui. Time and again I hear the same messages: our people want opportunity, stability and the ability for Native Hawaiians to live, raise families and thrive in our homeland.

Whenever I think about our kuleana, I also think about the kūpuna who helped guide my path, the people whose values and example continue to shape how I approach service.

My grandma Mona; my great-great-grandfather Rev. Isaac Iaea; mentors like Ainsley Haleamau and the many other kumu I have worked closely with all helped shape how I understand leadership and kuleana. Each of them, in their own way, taught me what it means to serve with humility, integrity, and deep love for our people.

Grandma Mona carried herself with true ha'aha'a – a humility grounded in caring for family and community and remembering where you come from. She reminded me that leadership is not about recognition, but about service.

It is easy to become consumed by responsibilities, but our kūpuna teach us that the strongest leaders remain root-



Keoni Souza

VICE CHAIR
Trustee,
At-Large

ed in their values, culture and community. The most meaningful work is often done quietly through listening, helping others, and simply showing up for our people.

Mentors like Ainsley Halemanu also taught me the importance of cultural grounding. Cultural practitioners remind us that 'ike Hawai'i is not something confined to history books. It is living knowledge that continues to guide how we care for 'āina, sustain community, and move forward as a people.

Although I never met my great-great-grandfather Rev. Isaac Iaea, his legacy resonates with me every day. Our kūpuna lived through immense change. They witnessed the loss of lands, the suppression of our language, and the many challenges that threatened the survival of our culture. Yet they never stopped believing in the strength and resilience of the lāhui. Because of them, our language lives, cultural practices continue, and our communities endure.

One of the greatest lessons our kūpuna teach us is patience. The work of strengthening our lāhui is generational work. The changes we seek today may take years, sometimes decades, to fully take root. Yet our kūpuna planted seeds without knowing if they would ever see the harvest.

This reminds me that the work we do today is not only about the present moment. We are not the beginning of the story, and we are not the end. We are simply one generation entrusted with continuing the journey and I am here to serve the lāhui on this journey.

If we remain grounded in our culture, lead with humility, and remember the wisdom of our kūpuna, the path ahead will always be guided by those who walked it before us.

In that way, our kūpuna are never truly gone. They walk beside us in every decision, every act of service and every seed we plant for the future. Mahalo e nā kūpuna. ■

Demonstrating Mālama 'Āina Through Pilina

Aloha 'āina kākou. Across our pae 'āina, the strength of our lāhui continues to be carried forward with the 'ike, kuleana, and relationships we nurture with one another and with our 'āina.

At the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), we recognize that one of the most meaningful ways we can support our communities is by uplifting the work already happening on the ground. By sharing our platforms and creating space for these stories, we help strengthen the connections that bind our po'e and places together.

On the island of Kaua'i, two Native Hawaiian organizations — Ka Hale Manu o Lono and Ka Hale Papa o Anehola — are demonstrating what it means to mālama 'āina through collaboration, humility, and deep cultural commitment. Their work reminds us that meaningful stewardship is rooted not only in restoring landscapes, but in restoring the pilina between people, place, and ancestral knowledge.

Pilina, the relationships we cultivate with each other and with our environment, is foundational to who we are as Kānaka. It guides how we gather, how we advocate, how we work together in meetings and collaborations, and how we remain present and accountable to our kānaka kaiāulu.

Spaces - like those being stewarded in Anahola - are powerful reminders that when relationships are nurtured with intention, they create pathways for 'ike, healing, and collective responsibility.

Restoration work being led in Moku Ko'olau on Kaua'i, reflects this spirit of shared kuleana.

"In the Ko'olau district of Kaua'i, Ka Hale Manu O Lono and Ka Hale Papa O Anehola, are collaborating to revitalize and restore with profound respect and humility an ancient Hawaiian village at the base on the slopes of Kalalea and Konanai/Koanai mountains, a very large heiau complex with numerous native trees and ferns," said practitioner Noa Mau.

"As invasive trees like albezia, African tulip, java plum, Christmas berry and guinea grass are cut back and removed, the pōhaku (stone) work of this sacred



Dan Ahuna

Trustee,
Kaua'i and
Ni'ihau

wahi kapu is now being discovered and revealed to be much larger than expected."

Mau adds that, according to legend, "in the Anahola ahupua'a there is a mo'o named 'Anehola' who could appear on land as human and in water as a mermaid, and that Kalalea was the first-born child to Kapaopao and Kahala, whose birth was accompanied by famous birthing kahuna Kanoealakai.

"Kalalea then married Koanai/Konanai and had 'A'ahoaka, a warrior of Kaua'i who later

settled in Wailua ahupua'a. Kalalea is the tall upright mountain and Konanai/Koanai is the rounded mountain next to it, with Kalalea representing Kū (masculine) or Wākea (sky father), and Konanai/Koanai representing Hina (feminine) or Papa (earth mother).

"Kalalea mountain is also associated with a famous maka'ūla (prophet) of Kaua'i named Hulumaniani who constructed heiau and could predict events. The term 'kalalea' translates to the dorsal fin of a shark. Both Ka Hale Manu O Lono and Ka Hale Papa O Anehola are led by women. Ka Hale Manu O Lono has stewardship paperwork from OHA and also cares for other wahi kapu in Wailua ahupua'a. Ka Hale Papa O Anehola has stewardship paperwork from the Department of Hawaiian Homelands. Mahalo nui."

The 'ike and leadership guiding this work demonstrate the power of community-driven stewardship and the importance of supporting Native Hawaiian organizations who are caring for our sacred places.

As trustees, it is our responsibility to ensure that OHA continues to uplift and amplify these efforts. By sharing our platforms and honoring the work of our communities, we strengthen the 'ike, pilina, and kuleana that will sustain our lāhui for generations to come.

Mahalo to nā po'e and organizations who continue to mālama 'āina and mālama each other. ■

According to Mary Kawena Pukui, in the old days many kūpuna from the area pronounced "Anahola" as "Anehola." In this column, "Anehola" references the legendary mo'o, while "Anahola" references the ahupua'a.

When Healthcare Feels Like an Ocean Away

For a pregnant mother on Moloka'i, giving birth can mean having to leave home weeks before her due date. In many cases, the island simply does not have the resources needed for safe delivery. So, she travels to another island, often alone, and waits for her baby to arrive.

This means time away from her family, her job, and her usual support system. It is expensive, disruptive, and emotionally challenging. Yet for many families, it is the only practical option.

This experience highlights a broader challenge. Hawai'i doesn't have enough doctors, nurses, and specialists to meet the needs of our population. The state-wide shortage of physicians is estimated to exceed 800. The gaps are especially severe on the neighbor islands, where access to specialty care can be limited or unavailable.

These shortages affect everyone. But the impact is not evenly distributed. Native Hawaiians, in particular, experience higher rates of chronic illness and lower life expectancy than many other groups in Hawai'i. When healthcare access is limited, these disparities worsen. Delays in diagnosis and treatment can lead to preventable complications and poorer outcomes.

Recently, leaders from Hawai'i Pacific Health and HMSA met with Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) trustees to discuss the future of healthcare in Hawai'i. Leadership from Queen's Health Systems joined in as well. The discussion reflected an important fact: our healthcare system must evolve if it is going to serve the people of Hawai'i effectively.

The proposed merger between Hawai'i Pacific Health and HMSA could reduce administrative duplication, such as pre-authorization processes, and create a more streamlined system that can better serve the public. At the same time, Queen's shared that such a partnership could bring reduced competition and the possibility that rural communities would have fewer choices for care.

Both perspectives deserve thoughtful consideration. Each organization has a



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

Trustee,
At-Large

long history of serving Hawai'i and contributing to community health. And they are making a sincere effort to deal with problems in healthcare delivery that are structural and long-standing.

Whatever solution prevails, there are meaningful steps that can be taken right now to respond to the current medical care-provider shortage.

First, Hawai'i and the federal government should reduce the regulatory and financial barriers that make it harder for providers to practice here. Hawai'i's

General Excise Tax on medical services, coupled with low Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates, make it difficult to recruit and retain healthcare professionals, especially those in private practice.

Reforming the state's certificate-of-need laws is another important step. These laws require healthcare facilities to go through an often-burdensome process to obtain state approval before expanding services or adding equipment. Simplifying these rules could help communities to respond more quickly to local needs, especially in areas that lack adequate services.

Expanding telehealth is also a practical solution. By allowing Hawai'i residents to receive care from qualified physicians located out-of-state, we could significantly increase access to specialists. For neighbor island residents, it could mean fewer long-distance trips and faster access to expert consultation.

None of these ideas is extreme. Many have been implemented successfully in other states without compromising patient safety. Together, they could help reduce delays, increase competition, and expand access to care across our islands.

For women on Moloka'i preparing to give birth – and for families throughout Hawai'i – the quality of healthcare should not depend on geography. Access to timely, reliable medical care is not a luxury. It is a basic need.

Healthcare should not feel like an ocean away. It should be available, dependable, and within reach on every island, for every Native Hawaiian and for every resident. ■

Blessed to Call Hawai'i Home

There is a special feeling that comes with living in Hawai'i. It is not just the warm ocean breezes, or the breathtaking mountains and valleys, it is the people, the culture, and the traditions that bind us. I feel deeply blessed to live in a place where community, respect, and cultural identity remain at the heart of daily life.

One of the first things people notice when they arrive in Hawai'i is the difference in the personalities of the people. Life here moves with a spirit of aloha – kindness, patience, humility, and genuine care for one another – neighbors helping one another and communities coming together during both joyful and challenging times.

Unlike places where people are rushed and disconnected, the people of Hawai'i often take time to acknowledge one another. There is an understanding that relationships matter and a sense that everyone is connected through the shared experience of island life.

This spirit is deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture and traditions. For generations, Native Hawaiian values such as mālama 'āina and kuleana have guided the way people live. These traditions remind us that we are not separate from the land or from each other; we are part of a larger family that includes our ancestors, our community, and the 'āina that sustains us.

Nowhere is the beauty and strength of our culture more visible than during the annual Merrie Monarch Festival, the world's most prestigious celebration of hula, held each spring in Hilo on Hawai'i Island.

For the kumu hula who guide their hālau, Merrie Monarch is more than a competition. It represents decades of dedication to preserving Hawaiian traditions. For the haumāna, performing on the Merrie Monarch stage is a life-changing experience. Preparation



**Carmen
'Hulu'
Lindsey**

Trustee,
Maui

begins months, often years, before the festival. Through long nights of practice, dancers learn discipline, humility, respect, and commitment which not only strengthens their skills, but their character, and develops deeper understanding of their cultural heritage.

When dancers finally step onto the stage in Hilo, they carry with them the pride of their families, their teachers, and their communities. Each gesture of the hands, each step, and each chant tells a story passed down

through generations. In that moment, hula becomes more than performance, it becomes a living expression of Hawaiian identity.

The impact of the Merrie Monarch Festival extends far beyond the competition itself. For many dancers, it inspires a lifelong commitment to culture and tra-



Dancers from Hula Hālau 'o Kamuela perform at the 2025 Merrie Monarch Festival. - Photo: Merrie Monarch Festival/Bruce Omori

dition. Former haumāna often become teachers themselves, ensuring that the knowledge and practices of their ancestors continue to thrive for future generations.

We are fortunate to be from a place where culture is not simply remembered, it is lived every day. From the aloha we share with one another to the traditions celebrated through art forms like hula, we are reminded that what truly matters is community, respect, and heritage.

It is easy to understand why we feel so blessed. Here, the spirit of aloha and the strength of our culture continue to guide us, connecting past, present, and future in a way that is both meaningful and enduring. ■

**BURIAL NOTICE:
WAI'AKA 2ND AND KAU-
NIHO AHUPUA'A, SOUTH
KOHALA, HAWAII**

All persons having information concerning the inadvertent discovery of human skeletal remains on TMK: (3) 6-5-001:003 por., Waimea, South Kohala, Island of Hawaii are requested to contact Traven Apiki, DLNR-SHPD Burial Sites Program traven.apiki@hawaii.gov, (808) 933-7653, 40 Po'okela St., Hilo, HI 96720. Names historically associated with the general area include: Iese Aa, Kauhine, Kupa, Kanehailua, Kuli, Ka'ilianu-Bell-Lindsey. Appropriate treatment of the remains will occur in accordance with HAR §13-300-40. The remains will be preserved in place following the preparation of a burial site component of a preservation plan in consultation with any identified descendants. All interested parties should respond within thirty (30) days of this notice and provide information to DLNR-SHPD demonstrating lineal descent from these specific Native Hawaiian remains, or cultural descent from ancestors once residing or buried in the same ahupua'a.

**CULTURAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT:
MĀHUALAUHĪNANO -
KEAUKAHA RESILIENCY
CENTER FOR LEARNING**

On behalf of Hui Ho'oleimaluō and Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo Public Charter School, Hoa'aina Heri-

tage Services (HHS) is conducting a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) study to inform an Environmental Assessment (EA) being prepared pursuant to HRS Chapter 343 for the proposed Māhualauhīnano - Keaukaha Resiliency Center for Learning. The project is planned within a 10.001-acre area comprising a portion of TMK: (3) 2-1-013:146 and the entirety of 2-1-015:010 and 011, all of which are owned by Kamehameha Schools located in the 'ili kūpono of Honohononui, Waiākea Ahupua'a, South Hilo District, Island of Hawaii. As part of this CIA, Hoa'aina Heritage Services, LLC is seeking to consult with kama'aina who are familiar with the project area and who may have knowledge of cultural or historical resources, as well as traditional and customary practices (past or ongoing) associated with the area, or that may be affected by the proposed project. If you are willing to share such information, please contact Lokelani Brandt at lbrandt@hoainaheritage.com. Mahalo.

**CULTURAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT AND
KA PA'AKAI ANAL-
YSIS NOTICE:
PIA VALLEY EDU-
CATION CENTER,
NIU 'ILI, WAIKĪKĪ
AHUPUA'A, O'AHU**

On behalf of Protect and Preserve Hawaii, Inc., and Group 70 International, Inc. (G70), SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) is preparing

a Cultural Impact Assessment and Ka Pa'akai Analysis for the proposed Pia Valley Education Center Project. As part of this work, SWCA seeks consultation with individuals and organizations knowledgeable about the past and present cultural uses of the project area. The proposed Pia Valley Education Center will be located on approximately 3 acres in the 'ili of Niu, within the ahupua'a of Waikīkī in Kona Moku on O'ahu, within tax map keys (TMKs) (1) 37003:076 and (1) 37015:063. The project is intended to support ongoing biocultural restoration efforts in Pia Valley, including invasive species removal, native plant restoration, and expanded community engagement. Planned facilities include an education center, visitor center, warehouse/shop, caretaker residence, nursery, parking area, and related infrastructure. SWCA is seeking community input regarding cultural knowledge of this area, including past and present land use, cultural traditions, gathering practices, and any concerns the community might have related to cultural practices in the vicinity of the project area. Your input will help inform the study and ensure that traditional and customary practices are considered during the environmental review process. Please contact Tamara Luthy, SWCA, at hawaii-culturalconsultation@swca.com, (808) 892-3432 ext. 17902. Mahalo for your kōkua. ■

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

SEARCH

AKAU - Descendants of Sen Kau Ching Akeni/Kamakahemali'ili'i Awa Kepe'a are having a family reunion in Waimea, Hawaii on June 26-28, 2026. Calling all descendants of their three children (1) William Paul Mahinauli Akeni Akau/Roseline Kealohapauole Kalaluhi and William Paul Mahinauli Akeni Akau/Lydia Awaa Kahookano (2) Pekina Akeni/Goo Kim Seu (3) Apikai (Aptai) Akeni/Kahana Maluwaikoo. For more info and to register visit: akaohana.org/2026reunion email: huiohanaokau@gmail.com or call: 808-444-5756.

KELEPOLO - Calling the descendants of Maika'aloa and Annie (Kumulau) Kelepolo of Kainaliu, Kona, Hawaii and their seven keiki: Albert, Peter, Josephine, William, Joseph, Isabella, and Lillian. We are planning an 'ohana reunion for July 17-19, 2026, in Kona, Hawaii. Contact Monico Galieto (grandson of William Kelepolo) at kelepohana@gmail.com or call (808) 936-5682. When emailing, provide your name, phone number, mailing/email addresses, and how you're related, I will send an information packet.

KUPIHEA - 'Ohana of Solomon N. Kupihea and M. Hattie Kuapahi Kupihea: Join us on Kauai July 12-19, 2026! Daily planned activities to strengthen bonds and learn faces. Evening potluck dinners for genealogy and talk story. Visit our website for more information. <https://bit.ly/Kupihea-Kuapahi-reunion-2026>. Email: kupihea.reunion@gmail.com

MAR - Descendants of Yuen Mar and Annie Moi Lau - Join us for our 'ohana gathering on Sat., June 27, 2026, at 'Aina Moana Park (Magic Island), in Honolulu, Hawaii. For more information, email Aina at: jsimkings77@icloud.com. Please provide your name, contact info and your 'ohana relationship.

WONG-HAM - I am searching for members from the Wong-Ham 'ohana for genealogy purposes. There were four siblings: Gordon, Hymen, Melba and Eldora. Before Auntie Eldora passed, she turned over the genealogy information that she collected over the years to 'ohana "Kalahiki." As we are unable to identify who this is, we are reaching out and asking that you contact me. My name is Keola Leong. I can be reached at (808) 284-2211 or email me at rleong04@yahoo.com. ■

AINA REALTOR

ROOTED IN HAWAII'
Your Real Estate
Professional

Specializing in:

- Hawaiian Homestead
- First-time Homebuyers
- Keeping Locals in Hawaii'i

Not sure where to start in this housing market? Call me—let's talk story and map out your next move.

JORDAN AINA

Phone: 808-276-0880

jordanaina@gmail.com

RS-85780

Eō Mai, e Kuleana Land Holders!

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

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





OFFICE LOCATIONS

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

All Offices are closed on State holidays

Main Phone (all islands):

808.594.1835

Email:

info@oha.org

HONOLULU

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

EAST HAWAII (HILO)

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

MOLOKA'I / LĀNA'I

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

KAUA'I / NI'HAU

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

MAUI

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

www.oha.org/offices

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

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

AINA REALTOR - BIG ISLAND DHHL LOT - 236 Lyman Ave, Keaukaha - 3 bedroom, 1 bath Fixer upper, Half Acre lot - Leasehold - Call Jordan Aina (Realtor) for details - 808-276-0880. I service Homestead on all islands. I also have buyers ready on each island.

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

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

FIRST-TIME BUYER, INVESTOR OR REFINANCE? Build your legacy through homeownership. Start today. We can help with homestead or fee simple. SecurityNational Mortgage 808.823.8050

HAULING WITH ALOHA - Pili Aloha Trucking LLC offers reliable container hauling and freight transport on O'ahu. Pier-to-pier, local delivery, construction support. (808) 630-0554 | Mahalo

HAWAIIANS LIVING ON THE MAINLAND OR OVERSEAS ALWAYS FLY HAWAIIAN FLAGS. Americans living in other countries almost never fly American flags. Why? Because Hawaiians have no fear anywhere to show their pride of being Hawaiian. Americans do. Order Hawaiian flags for yourself or your hoā at www.hawaiiansovereignty.etsy.com and you'll get the story too.

HEARD ABOUT HALE KAMA'ĀINA? Is Down Payment Assistance an option for your family? We can help. Call SecurityNational Mortgage Company to find out more 808.823.8050

HOMES WITH ALOHA-KAUMANA/ HILO- Single level 3bed/ 2.5 baths. Built 2009 Lot size 11,900. \$380,000 This is a leasehold property -Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB-15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303

HOMES WITH ALOHA- KEAUKAHA/ HILO- Single level 5 bedrooms/2 baths on 21,155 sq ft lot. \$450,000 This is a leasehold property -Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB-15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303

HOMES WITH ALOHA-KAUPE'A/KAPOLEI- Single level 3 bedrooms/2 baths \$650,000 This is a leasehold property -Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB-15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303

Talk Story with Charmaine

What to expect when purchasing Hawaiian Home Lands properties.

The home buying process
The home selling process
The Loan process
Q & A (question & answer)

WHEN:

April 17, 2026 | Friday | 6:00-8:00 pm

WHERE:

Kapolei Heritage Center (in Back of the DHHL building)
91-1270 Kinoiki St. Kapolei, HI 96707

RSVP: (808) 295-4474



Charmaine Quilit Poki
REALTOR

(808) 295-4474

charmaine.quilitpoki@kw.com

www.HomeswithAloha.com



HOMES WITH ALOHA-WAIMANALO - Single level 3 bedrooms/1 baths \$425,000 Major repairs needed. Lot size 7,525 sq. ft. This is a leasehold property -Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB-15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303

LET'S MAKE HOMEOWNERSHIP HAPPEN! I can help with Hawaiian Homestead and residential properties. Let's talk story! Call/Text Shavon Aluli, Realtor RS-87524 (808) 630-0554. Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303

LOOKING FOR HAWAIIAN HOMESTEAD PROPERTIES FOR SALE ON O'AHU? Helping clients find their homestead lot with care and Aloha! Call/Text Shavon Aluli, Realtor RS-87524 (808) 630-0554. Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303.

SEEKING A PROFESSIONAL TO 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.

THINKING OF BUYING OR SELLING A HOME? CALL THE EXPERT. 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 40 years. ■

Join our 'OHAna!
Apply today!

See a list of our current openings at: www.oha.org/jobs



Scan QR code





Get your **FREE** subscription to **Ka Wai Ola** Go to kawaiola.news to sign up

FREE

Please check one: New subscriber Change of address

Email: _____

Name (First, Last) _____

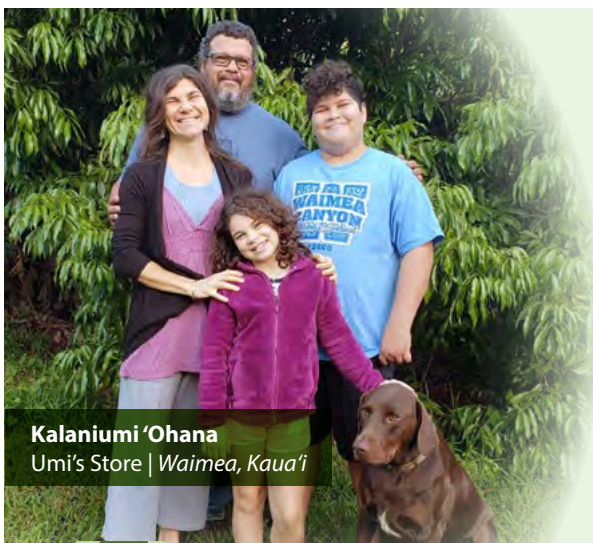
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Fill out form online at kawaiola.news/subscribe or

Clip this coupon, fill in and mail to: **Ka Wai Ola, 560 N. Nimitz Hwy., Suite 200, Honolulu, HI 96817**

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



Kalaniumi 'Ohana
Umi's Store | Waimea, Kaua'i

Give Your Life a Fresh New Start!

Whether you need a personal loan or business loan, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs can help you realize your dreams! For nearly 35 years, OHA has provided Native Hawaiians with low-interest loans for education, home improvements, debt consolidation, and their businesses.

Let us help you and your 'ohana!



Kanani Miner
Hina Hawai'i | Pearlridge, O'ahu



Malama Education

Help with tuition and other fees for preschool, K-12, trade school, and undergraduate and post-graduate college.

Loan amounts:
\$2,500 - \$20,000 | **5% TO 6% APR**



Mālama Home Improvement

Expand your home or make repairs.
Loans over \$50,000 require non-real estate collateral.

Loan amounts:
\$2,500 - \$100,000 | **5% TO 6% APR**



Mālama Debt Consolidation

Consolidate and pay off existing debts.
Loans over \$20,000 require non-real estate collateral.

Loan amounts:
\$2,500 - \$20,000 | **5% TO 6% APR**



Mālama Business

Purchase equipment or inventory, or obtain working capital.
Loans over \$50,000 require non-real estate collateral.

Loan amounts:
\$2,500 - \$149,999 | **4% APR**



Hua Kanu Business

Whether it's to purchase equipment or inventory, or you need a loan for working capital.

Loan amounts:
\$150,000 - \$1,000,000 | **4% APR**



For eligibility requirements
visit our website or contact us.

loans.oha.org | **808.594.1888**

*Interest rates may be subject to change.

Apply for an OHA Hawaiian Registry Card at: www.oha.org/registry