



Ka Wai Ola

NEWS FOR THE LĀHUI

kawaiola.news

Waimea Valley A Cultural Treasure

PAGES 21-24

Waimea Valley on O'ahu was known as the "Valley of Priests" for over 700 years and is one of the last intact ahupua'a on the island. Twenty years ago this month, after the North Shore community protested plans to develop the valley, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs was able to acquire this cultural treasure to ensure that it would be preserved in perpetuity. Pictured here is Hale o Lono Heiau near the front of the valley. It is one of several heiau in Waimea and is still used by cultural practitioners today. - Photo: Waimea Valley Hi'ipaka LLC

2026 PRIMARY ELECTIONS
OHA BOARD OF TRUSTEES CANDIDATE SURVEY



See Responses on
PAGES 8-17



One Mission. One Enduring Legacy.

*Hoʻoulu
Lāhui Aloha*

To Raise a Beloved Lāhui

Guided by kuleana, aloha, and a steadfast commitment to our people, OHA remains focused on ensuring that our most meaningful contributions are still ahead of us.



For nearly 50 years, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs has quietly carried out consequential work to strengthen our organization and advance transformative initiatives. In service to our community, we move with shared purpose toward a singular goal: the betterment of conditions for Native Hawaiians.

Our collective commitment continues to advance OHA's mission every day, delivering real milestones that belong to all of us.

CELEBRATING OUR STRATEGIC MILESTONES



INVESTING IN THE LĀHUI

\$136 million Historic Biennium Budget approved for FY2026–2027 to fund statewide community development, housing, and healthcare initiatives.



CHAMPIONING EDUCATION

\$6.88 million OHA's largest-ever single investment in Hawaiian-Focused Charter Schools, safeguarding culture-based education and language immersion.



DIRECT COMMUNITY FUNDING

\$16.73 million Distributed in critical community grants and sponsorships to grassroots nonprofits serving Native Hawaiian families.



DELIVERING A LANDMARK LEGISLATIVE VICTORY

Secured \$55 million in public land trust revenues owed to OHA, protecting critical funding for Native Hawaiian programs at a time of fiscal uncertainty.



SAFEGUARDING HAWAII'S PUBLIC LAND TRUST

Standing at the forefront of federal, state, and community advocacy during the most consequential military land lease negotiations in a generation.



BUILDING FUTURE LEADERS

Restored the 'Aha 'Ōpio (Youth Leadership Summit) and the D.C. Congressional Fellowship to empower the next generation of civic advocates.

Empowering Hawaiians, Strengthening Hawai'i

Learn more at oha.org or scan QR code





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 WRITER
Philamer Felicitas
Kelli Meskin Soileau

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS
Nelson Gaspar
Jason Lees

CONTRIBUTORS
Kau'i Aguiar
Kalani Akana, Ph.D.
Kamakanaokealoha Aquino
Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton
Bobby Camara
Hannah Ka'iulani Coburn
Fox Pōmaika'i Deatry
Austin Haleyalpiy
Ka'imipono Hanohano
Ku'uwehi Hiraishi
Micah Kahiwa
John W. Kaohelauii
KipuKai Kualii
Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH, RDN
Kāhealani Nae'ole, Ed.D.
Kalea Nagasako
Malia Nobrega-Olivera
Kalei Nu'uhiwa, Ph.D.
Lisa Kanani Sarish
Kalaniakea Wilson, Ph.D.

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.

Our Kūpuna Imagined Something Extraordinary

Aloha mai kākou,

I support OHA.
I say that plainly because I believe it sincerely. Not because OHA is perfect. No institution made up of people ever will be.

I say it because I believe in what OHA was created to be. And I hope more of us will say it, too – not because everything is pono, but because what OHA becomes depends on whether we participate in shaping it.

Nearly 50 years ago, Native Hawaiian founders, activists, poets, kia'i, lawyers, kumu, mākua and kūpuna imagined something extraordinary: that Native Hawaiians should have a representative voice in government and an institution dedicated to advancing the wellbeing, self-governance and aspirations of our lāhui.

OHA was born from that vision and from the movement that fought to save Kaho'olawe, stood with Kalama Valley families facing eviction, revived 'ōlelo Hawai'i and Hawaiian culture, and refused to let Hawai'i's history, identity and people become scenery for someone else's prosperity.

Its founders were Kānaka determined to hold the state accountable to the unfulfilled promises of the Admissions Act – and to honor the debt owed for the ancestral lands whose transfer made statehood, and much of its own prosperity, possible.

OHA has always been kū'ē, mālama pono and aloha 'āina made manifest. Those values are its mo'okū'auhau.

Today, OHA is building a trust approaching \$1 billion while investing deeply in our lāhui each year, turning trust assets into opportunity and improving the lives of Native Hawaiians.

And OHA's statewide elected Board of Trustees is chosen by the people it serves. Unlike private ali'i trusts, whose trustees are appointed by judges – who are themselves appointed by governors and political leaders – OHA's trustees are chosen by the people. This is not criticism; it's a distinction that matters.

At OHA, a Kanaka's choice can become a board seat. A board seat can become policy. Policy can become action.

That is an extraordinary expression of public trust; a belief that our people can choose leaders with the vision, qualifications and courage to serve with integrity, and that their collective decisions can reflect the best interests of beneficiaries and the trust entrusted to them.

OHA is not a creature of state government. Native Hawaiian visionaries and allies fought for a different future. OHA is ours because they willed it into being. And it is ours because we have the power to decide what comes next.

OHA is, in many ways, our best efforts and our neglect made visible. Laid bare. That is the truth.

So choose wisely. But more importantly, choose.

Do not walk away. A nearly billion-dollar trust created specifically to advance the needs and aspirations of Native Hawaiians is worth participating in, holding accountable, and guiding.

OHA is still becoming. "I ulu nō ka lālā i ke kumu." The branches grow because of the trunk.

So water OHA. Bring your voice, your vision, your questions, your criticism, your hope, and your kuleana. And begin with something simple: I support OHA.

And then help us make it worthy of saying. ■

Ke aloha nō mau a mau,
Summer Lee Haunani Sylva
Ka Pouhana Kūikawā
Interim Chief Administrator



MEA O LOKO TABLE OF CONTENTS

MO'OLELO NUI | COVER STORY

Waimea Valley: A Cultural Treasure PAGES 21-24

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

FEATURED STORIES

A Denver Dad Carries His Kūpuna With Him PAGE 20

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

Community Seeks Stewardship of Punalu'u PAGE 25

By Ku'uwehi Hiraishi

Miloli'i: Stewardship, Not Ownership PAGE 26

By Micah Kahiwa

A (Mostly) Geological History of Puna PAGE 27

By Bobby Camara

Ka'ū Community Advances Plans for a Cultural Center PAGE 28

By Ku'uwehi Hiraishi



2026 PRIMARY ELECTIONS OHA BOARD OF TRUSTEES CANDIDATE SURVEY | PAGES 8-17

'Aukake (August) 2026 | Vol. 43, No. 08

OHA NEWS

'Aha 'Ōpio: One Stone, One Generation at a Time PAGE 4

By Philamer Felicitas

Ka Wai Ola Among Indigenous Journalism Award Winners PAGE 5

By Kelli Meskin Soileau

Returning to Mākua PAGE 6

By Hannah Ka'iulani Coburn

Dye and Farden Are OHA's Newest Alaka'i Awardees PAGE 7

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

A Time to Remember, Learn, and Celebrate Together PAGE 7

By Malia Nobrega-Olivera

Ha'i Mana'o (OpEds) PAGE 30

'Aha 'Ōpio: One Stone, One Generation at a Time



'Aha 'Ōpio delegates joined hands to sing "Hawai'i Aloha" at the close of the program in the Hawai'i House of Representatives chamber, as 'ohana and community members in the gallery stand and sing along with them. - Photos: Philamer Felicitas



The ahu built by cultural practitioner Kimeona Kane and his hui which remained in the House Chamber throughout the week.

By Philamer Felicitas

Chants echoed through the Hawai'i House of Representatives chamber as 38 Native Hawaiian high school delegates took their seats on the chamber floor, marking the opening of their legislative session. Dressed in business attire, they stood proudly, ready to debate bills, propose amendments and advocate for issues affecting the lāhui.

Just 24 hours earlier, many had been strangers.

Delegates from across the pae 'āina and Native Hawaiian communities on the continent had gathered at Hawai'i Pacific University before traveling to Kāko'o 'Ōiwi where they worked side by side in the lo'i, connecting with the 'āina while beginning to build the pilina that would carry them through the week ahead.

That evening, under the guidance of cultural practitioner Kimeona Kane, each delegate and staff member selected a single pōhaku to help build a traditional ahu that would remain in the House Chamber throughout the program. Stone by stone, the ahu took shape, symbolizing how lasting legacies are built through the contributions of many, each generation strengthening the foundation laid by those before them.

That philosophy has defined 'Aha 'Ōpio since its inception.

The return of 'Aha 'Ōpio marked more than the revival of a beloved youth leadership program. It celebrated the continuation of a legacy first established nearly four decades ago, rooted in the belief that Native Hawaiian youth belong in the spaces where decisions are made and that cultivating future leaders begins long before they are old enough to vote.

Created by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in 1988, 'Aha 'Ōpio was designed to cultivate 'ike, leadership and civic

responsibility through a culturally grounded legislative experience.

Conceived by OHA educators, kūpuna, community leaders and dedicated volunteers, the program blended parliamentary procedure with Hawaiian values, creating a space where 'ōpio could deepen their connection to lāhui, 'āina and kuleana while learning how civic leadership can serve their communities.

Over the years, the program's alumni have gone on to become educators, attorneys, public servants, policymakers and community advocates, carrying the lessons of 'Aha 'Ōpio into careers dedicated to serving Hawai'i and the Native Hawaiian community.

One of those alumni is Nani Medeiros, Hawaiian policy expert and public servant, who first participated in the program in 1989 before returning this year to mentor a new generation of delegates.

"My experience at 'Aha 'Ōpio was life-changing," she said. "It was the first time outside of my family that I truly felt proud of being Hawaiian."

For Medeiros, the experience wasn't simply about understanding government. "We learned about our Hawaiian culture while simultaneously learning about the legislative process," she said. "The program honored both."

She returned to mentor another class of delegates as they embarked on their own experience. "I'm really looking forward to watching this new generation of 'ōpio go through that same transformation."

Before they entered the House Chamber, the 2026 delegates began in the lo'i. Working together at Kāko'o 'Ōiwi, they learned that leadership begins by serving others.

Throughout the week, they visited places central to Hawai'i's history and governance, learned from kūpuna, policymakers and community leaders, and explored the challenges and opportunities facing Native Hawaiian communities today.

By the time they took their seats in the legislature, they had already been reminded who that leadership is meant to serve.

One delegate reflected that the experience in the lo'i revealed how quickly strangers could become a community saying, "Even though we just came together and met each other, we're all connected and grounded by a shared purpose of service and serving our people and our 'āina."

Those relationships became the foundation for thoughtful debate, collaboration and mutual respect as delegates moved through committee hearings and legislative sessions.

OHA Public Policy Advocate Imiloa Borland watched the delegates grow into their roles throughout the week.

"'Aha 'Ōpio is a really fantastic opportunity for our 'ōpio to experience leadership in a different form," Borland said. "They get to take on the role of legislators and advocate for the issues they care about, the issues they see in their communities and that they want to address."

Throughout the week, delegates embraced the responsibilities of public service. They drafted legislation, chaired committees, considered testimony, debated amendments, and guided bills through the legislative process from introduction to final reading.

Borland said she was continually impressed by how quickly they adapted to those roles.

"I was blown away by how quickly they were able to pick up on the legislative process," she said. "They were all super engaged in their issues. They all had such unique perspectives and were really able to have substantive debates."

One legislative session stood out above the rest. During a three-hour committee reconciliation session, delegates challenged one another's language, questioned amendments and defended the intent behind their proposals.

SEE 'AHA 'ŌPIO ON PAGE 5

'AHA 'OPIO

Continued from page 4

By that point, Borland said, staff had largely stepped aside.

"We watched them take the reins themselves and become actual legislators."

The diversity of the delegation strengthened those conversations. Representing communities from across the pae 'āina and Native Hawaiian communities on the continent, delegates brought different lived experiences into discussions while learning to understand perspectives beyond their own.

"Every representative and every senator is from a different geographical area, and their responsibility is to represent the experiences of their constituents," Borland explained. "We were able to replicate that because of the geographic diversity of the 'ōpio."

For many delegates, one of the most meaningful parts of the week wasn't speaking but listening. "To be with people my age that are so intentional, read through all of the bills and recognize even the tiniest things to amend, it really pushed me to be just like them," one delegate reflected.

Another said watching their peers advocate so passionately for their communities fundamentally changed how they viewed the future of the lāhui. "It gave me hope for the future that we, as Native Hawaiians, can share our voice and make changes for the betterment of not only us as a lāhui, but everyone."

Yet for many delegates, the greatest lesson wasn't parliamentary procedure. It was realizing that their voices belonged in the rooms where decisions are made. "I realized that I have a place in all of this," another delegate said. "I will be able to make a difference. I can make a difference. And I actually do have a voice."

For Borland, that realization reflects the true purpose of the program. "People always say young people are future leaders," she said. "But really, what I hope they took away is that they already are leaders of their communities. You already have the capability to make change at your age."

Leadership is no longer something waiting for 'ōpio after graduation or years into the future. It became something they could practice today through service, collaboration and a commitment to their communities. As one delegate reflected, "We're always told we're the future, but this was a good opportunity to be put into action and really understand that we are that change and we are that future."

That sentiment embodies the 2026 pro-



'Aha 'Ōpio delegates work together in the lo'i at Kāko'o 'Ōiwi on their first day. - Photos: Philamer Felicitas

gram theme, E Ho'ounu i ke Ala. Building Indigenous Futures.

Ho'ounu describes the careful work of placing stones together to create a path. Each stone strengthens what came before while preparing the way for those who follow.

Like the ahu that stood in the House Chamber throughout the week, 'Aha 'Ōpio has been built one generation at a time. Since 1988, OHA has invested in Native Hawaiian youth through a program that challenges them to lead with 'ike, integrity and aloha. Alumni have returned as mentors, while former delegates have gone on to become educators, attorneys, policymakers, public servants and advocates.

As this year's delegates returned home to their schools and communities, they carried with them more than an understanding of how laws are made. They carried the confidence to lead, the responsibility to serve and the knowledge that their voices matter.

Nearly four decades after the first class of 'Aha 'Ōpio delegates gathered, a new generation continues to build upon that legacy – one pōhaku, one leader and one generation at a time. ■

Ka Wai Ola Among Indigenous Journalism Award Winners

By Kelli Meskin Soileau

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) monthly publication Ka Wai Ola News has received four Indigenous Media Awards from the Indigenous Journalists Association (IJA), while two Ka Wai Ola News contributors received awards for their excellent work with other media outlets.

The annual media competition recognizes excellence in Indigenous reporting and storytelling. In addition to newspaper writing, IJA also presents awards in categories such as television, radio and podcasts, photography, and multi-media.

Ka Wai Ola News competes in the Large Outlets/Professional Division III for media outlets with circulation exceeding 10,000. Ka Wai Ola News currently has approximately 70,000 direct mail and digital subscribers in Hawai'i and on the continent.

This year, Ka Wai Ola News was honored with a second-place award in the "Best Multi-Media" category for *Restoring 'Āina Momona in He'eia*, a print/video story collaboration by Editor Puanani Fernandez-Akamine and Multi-media Designer Jason Lees.

The print version of *Restoring 'Āina Momona in He'eia* also received a first-place award in the "Best Longform" (longer, magazine-style stories) category, while *Rebuilding Maui*, also by Fernandez-Akamine, took third place in the same category.

Reclaiming Hā'ena, a collaboration between OHA Trustee Dan Ahuna and Fernandez-Akamine received a third-place award in IJA's "Best Shortform" category.

In addition, Ka Wai Ola News freelance writer Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton who writes our "Faces of the Diaspora" series received a third-place award in the "Best Editorial" category for a piece she wrote for the *Seattle Times*.

And Naka Nathaniel, an occasional Ka Wai Ola News contributor, and colleague Mahealani duPont, were honored with a first-place award in the "Radio/Podcast – Excellence in Beat Reporting" category for their story, *Mauna Kea Kanawai*, featured on *Hawai'i Public Radio's* "Hawai'i Radio Hour."

Nathaniel and duPont, along with Kolby Akamu Moser, Mileka Lincoln, and Gilian Santiago, also received a second-place IJA award in the "Radio/Podcast – General Excellence" category for "Hawai'i Radio Hour." ■



'Aha 'Ōpio delegates gather at the base of the koa staircase in 'Iolani Palace during a cultural and historical huaka'i connecting them to the history, leadership and enduring legacy of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

Returning to Mākua

By Hannah Ka'iulani Coburn

The final resting place of Auntie Muriel "Puni" Ioane's ancestors lies at the Mākua Protestant Cemetery, just ma kai of Mākua Valley on O'ahu's leeward coast.

A large yellow gate blocks the road to the cemetery, where a warning sign reads: "Danger. This area is a munitions response site. Munitions may be present." Beyond the yellow gate is a bridge that collapsed during the Kona Low storms earlier this year, making the cemetery inaccessible by car.

Ioane is a direct lineal descendant of Mākua. She grew up on Mākua Ranch, in 'Ōhikilolo, the neighboring valley. Two generations of her family are buried at the cemetery, and for more than two decades, she has been unable to visit the grave sites.

Whether the barrier stems from military restrictions, decisions of the private caretaker of the cemetery, or a combination of both, has been unclear to Ioane.

The author reached out to the U.S. Army multiple times for comment, and no one responded.

While visiting cemeteries is a common tradition in many cultures to honor loved ones, Ioane cannot access the graves of her own ancestors whose ties to Mākua span generations.

In mo'olelo, Mākua (meaning parent) is where Papa (earth mother) and Wākea (sky father) meet, making Mākua a place of deep cultural and spiritual significance.

Before the military's presence in Mākua was established, it was home to many Hawaiian and immigrant families.

Ioane was born in 1950. Her father, William (Willie) Pali Enos, was born and raised in Mākua, where he grew up with his father, mother and seven siblings. She remembers stories her dad used to share of him riding a donkey or taking an old truck to get to Wai'anae Elementary School in the late 1920s.

"On days when the kids wanted to play hooky from school, they would do something to the truck, so no one would have to go," Ioane laughed.

Ioane recalled her dad sharing memories of taking the train to Kawaihāpai to visit his grandma and packing food in burlap bags to share with everyone. Back then, there was no electricity, running water, or telephones.

Her father eventually met her mother, Miriam Akama Enos; she first noticed him while riding the train through Wai'anae.

"She said that she never thought she'd meet him," Ioane recalled. "But back then, all the cowboys used to have a night out and go into a rest camp for dancing. My mom said that's where she saw him again."

The two married in 1949 and raised their family in Mākua.

Growing up on Mākua Ranch in the 1950s, Ioane learned to fish, hunt, ride horses and raise her own pigs. "My dad taught us how to go up in the forest," Ioane said. "He was a hunter, and my mom's thing was the ocean."

Her mother made her own throw nets to catch fish, taught Ioane and her siblings how to catch and clean eel, and kept a vegetable garden that helped feed their family.

Ioane's dad was the ranch foreman at McCandless Ranch in Mākua and a true paniolo. He slaughtered cattle and pigs, hunted goats, and even made his own saddles, ropes, and chaps.

The Enos family lived a subsistence lifestyle, growing and gathering what they needed to feed themselves, their family, and even sharing with other families in the village.

When some Hawai'i residents began living at Mākua Beach, Ioane said that her parents would always take care of them.

"We don't call them homeless; they were just living on the beach," she explained.

"But they didn't have food or any place to go, so my dad and mom used to bring them home to the ranch because we had small houses around they could live in."

They would get their water from wells in Mākua but still did not have any electricity. Ioane said that they had lanterns and kerosene stoves.

During summers, Ioane and her two sisters would work for 32 cents a week helping with the charcoal holes their dad built and they looked forward to saving their money together so that they could visit a store in Mā'ili to buy one can of sardines, one loaf of bread, and one big bottle of strawberry soda.

The military first began using parcels of land for training in the 1920s but seized control of Mākua Valley in 1941. A year later, the military evicted everyone living in the valley. The Army promised those families that their lands would be returned six months later, but that promise was never fulfilled.

In 1964, the Army signed a 65-year lease with the State of Hawai'i for Mākua Valley that is set to expire in 2029. It cost the Army \$1.

Ioane said her father would speak about how Mākua was taken away and never returned. While some families left for different valleys, others had nowhere to go but into the bushes, she recalled him sharing.

Ioane grew up after the evictions, and she recalled the military's presence in Mākua.

She explained that the military had no relationship with the local families. Even as military exercises, live-fire training, and bombing took place in the valley, there was no communication or concern for the damage being inflicted on the land.



Auntie Puni Ioane, a lineal descendant of Mākua Valley, stands outside the gate that blocks vehicle access to the Mākua Protestant Cemetery where two generations of her family are buried.

- Photo: Healani Sonoda-Pale

Ioane and her family remained on Mākua Ranch. After her father died in 1966, they stayed four more years and later moved to their relatives' property in Wai'anae.

Friends have tried to help Ioane make arrangements to visit the cemetery, but confusion over who controls access has made the process difficult.

"According to state park staff, there is another entrance on the north side of Mākua, but access through this entrance has also been compromised by the storm (damaged culvert)," Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) Communications Specialist Ryan Aguilar said in an email. "Currently, the only way to gain access is to walk along the beach."

The Division of State Parks is handling repairs for the damaged bridges, though a

start date has yet to be determined. Aguilar said designs and plans are required first.

For kūpuna like Ioane, who is 75, accessing the cemetery on foot via Mākua Beach is not ideal. The route would require going down a steep, rocky drop-off, walking up from the beach, and locating an unmarked path.

A chain-link fence surrounds the cemetery, with the entrance secured by a dial combination lock. At least 25 burial plots are enclosed. Although access is restricted, the cemetery appeared well maintained.

The caretaker likely keeps the cemetery locked to protect the graves from disturbances and vandalism. However, this also keeps lineal descendants of those buried there, including Ioane, from accessing it.

DLNR did not comment on restoration efforts, though they connected Ioane to the cemetery's private caretaker. She is now one step closer to visiting the cemetery.

"The caretaker of the cemetery called me," Ioane said. "He said anytime I want to visit the cemetery, to give him a call."

The cemetery's presence serves as a reminder of the families who once called the valley home. For descendants like Ioane, it is a connection to generations of her family, history, and place. Ultimately, returning to Mākua, and the cemetery, means returning to her parents.

"When I see Mākua, I see my dad," Ioane said. ■

This story is an adaptation of an article originally published on July 15, 2026, by "Hawai'i Public Radio" under the title "Returning to Mākua: A lineal descendant's journey to revisit her family."

Dye and Farden are OHA's Newest Alaka'i Awardees

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

Congratulations to Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Grants Officer 'Āhia Dye and Strategy & Implementation Senior Director Elena Farden who were named OHA Alaka'i Award recipients for the first quarter of 2026.

OHA's Alaka'i Awards recognition program was established in 2025. Each quarter, two Alaka'i Awards are presented to OHA staff who embody the organization's values through their actions, leadership and decision-making; staff members who consistently demonstrate a willingness and commitment to exceed the expectations of their colleagues and supervisors.

There are awards for both supervisory and non-supervisory staff members. Awardees are nominated by their peers and selected by the Board of Trustees.

At an awards ceremony at Nā Lama Kukui on July 6, Dye and Farden were presented with lei, accolades, and certificates of achievement by OHA's Board of Trustees.

Sharing some of the mana'o included in Dye's nomination, Trustee Keli'i Akina read, "Āhia leads with humility, grace, and genuine servant leadership. She supports others in quiet but meaningful ways. She is deeply trusted by those around her because she shows up with consistency, kindness, and a sincere desire to help."

"Āhia inspires through her cultural knowledge, lived experience, and the way she uplifts people simply by being present. She creates a supportive environment where people feel respected, valued, and empowered. Her approach reminds us that leadership is not always about being the loudest voice in the room. Sometimes, it is about making space for others, building pilina, and helping people feel like they belong."

One colleague wrote (in part) that "When I was new, 'Āhia took the time to share information, answer questions, and help me feel more confident in my role. But beyond that, she made a conscious effort to build connection. She invited



Grants Officer 'Āhia Dye and Strategy & Implementation Senior Director Elena Farden. - Photo: Nelson Gaspar

us to sit together during lunch, helping create a sense of 'ohana, belonging, and community from the very beginning."

Farden's award was presented by Chair-emerita Trustee Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey. Sharing the following mana'o from Farden's nomination Lindsey read, "Elena is the kind of leader who inspires not through ego or attention, but through quiet strength, deep care, and consistent example. She leads with aloha in everything she does. She is thoughtful, prepared, compassionate, and shows up for her team with grace, steadiness, and intention."

"As a leader, she offers thoughtful and helpful feedback, is always open to talking through strategy, and creates space for conversations during difficult work and life situations. Time and again, people walk away from conversations with Elena feeling better, clearer, and more grounded."

"Elena leads by quiet example. She is often the first to volunteer help, even when the task falls outside her direct kuleana. She is truly a wahine koa: strong, compassionate, courageous, and deeply committed to doing what is right. What makes Elena especially remarkable is that she does so much without seeking recognition. She is humble, brilliant, hardworking, and deeply committed to the people and mission of OHA."

E ho'omaika'i and mahalo nui to 'Āhia Dye and Elena Farden, two of OHA's shining stars! ■

Hawaiian History Month

A Time to Remember, Learn, and Celebrate Together

By Malia Nobrega-Olivera

*I ka wā ma mua, i ka wā ma hope.
The future is found in the past.*

This September, communities across Hawai'i are invited to gather for Hawaiian History Month following the passage of Act 167 (2025), which officially designates September as Hawaiian History Month in recognition of Queen Lili'uokalani and the enduring contributions and resilience of Kanaka 'Ōiwi (Native Hawaiians).

The designation represents years of advocacy led by the Hawai'i Pono'i Coalition in partnership with organizations throughout the pae 'āina, including the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs.

More than a commemorative month, Hawaiian History Month is an invitation for all who call Hawai'i home – and those who visit – to deepen their understanding of the people, places, and events that continue to shape these islands.

This year's observance begins on Sunday, August 30, with Eō E Lili'u, a concert at Kawaiaha'o Church celebrating the life, music, and enduring legacy of Queen Lili'uokalani.

Throughout September, residents and visitors will have opportunities to experience Hawaiian history through walking tours, theatrical performances, panel discussions, music, films, and cultural presentations that bring history to life.

One of this year's special collaborations honors another milestone in our community. The Hawai'i Pono'i Coalition is proud to partner with Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ōhana in celebrating 50 Years of Aloha 'Āina — *La'a, Mā'a, Pa'a* (Sanctify, Familiarize, Solidify).

For five decades, the 'Ōhana has demonstrated unwavering aloha kūpa'a i ka 'āina 'o Kohemālama, inspiring generations through the restoration of Kaho'olawe and reminding us that aloha

'āina is both a value and a lifelong commitment. Together, we invite communities throughout Hawai'i to recommit themselves to mālama 'āina, ea, and the stewardship of our islands.

The month also celebrates Hawai'i's remarkable cultural landscapes. In partnership with the Friends of Honolulu Botanical Gardens and the City and County of Honolulu, audiences are invited to experience *The Beginning of a Garden*, the acclaimed living history play by Hawaiian playwright Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl presented at Foster Botanical Garden.

As participants walk through the garden, they will meet historical figures including Dr. William Hillebrand, Mary Mikahala Foster, and Dr. Harold Lyon, whose stewardship helped establish what became Honolulu's oldest botanical garden. The performance beautifully reminds us that Hawai'i's history is not only preserved in books, but also in the trees, landscapes, and places we continue to care for today.

Whether you attend one event or many, Hawaiian History Month offers opportunities to listen, learn, reflect, and celebrate together. Each gathering reminds us that history is not simply something we remember, it is something we continue to shape through our actions and our commitment to one another.

We invite everyone to join us throughout September as we celebrate Hawaiian History Month and honor the stories, people, and places that continue to guide Hawai'i's future. ■

A complete calendar of events, registration information, and updates is available at hawaiianhistorymonth.org.



WRITE-IN QUESTIONS

- 1

OHA's mission is to improve conditions for Native Hawaiians. What unique skills and/or experiences do you bring to this kuleana to help OHA fulfill its mission?
- 2

What is your understanding of the role of an OHA trustee and their kuleana within the agency and to the lāhui?
- 3

Share your mana'o on the military's use of crown and government lands in Hawai'i given the impending expiration of multiple military land leases and the fact that OHA derives an annual pro rata revenue share from the military's use of those lands.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

- 1

Do you support mandatory federal consultation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on all federal actions and processes concerning Native Hawaiian affairs?
- 2

In light of major cuts to Native Hawaiian-serving programs and OHA's finite trust resources, do you believe OHA should play a role in helping address resulting Native Hawaiian community impacts through advocacy, partnerships, or other mitigation strategies?

EXERCISE YOUR VOTE AND
CHOOSE WISELY

Being an informed voter has always been – and will always be – important.

Voting based on name recognition, rigid partisanship, or by simply checking off the first name on your ballot's list of candidates is as bad as not voting at all.

The only way to vote responsibly is by educating ourselves about the candidates running for office: their skills and experience; what they have already accomplished; their past and present contributions to our community; their demonstrated character and values; their platforms; and what they believe in and how this aligns (or does not align) with your own values.

No matter your political leanings – Democrat, Republican, Independent, Green, or Sovereign – voting in your respective county, state, and

federal elections is a tool for change available to every Hawaiian over the age of 18.

As Kānaka 'Ōiwi, we owe it to ourselves, to our 'āina, and to the generations that will follow to elect individuals who will champion and create laws and policies that protect our people, our land and our culture.

Opting out is not a proactive option and does not serve the best interests of our lāhui.

Our kūpuna voted. They elected Prince Kūhiō as their delegate to the U.S. Congress. Had they not, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands would not exist, and far fewer Hawaiians would have homes today. If we want change, we need to vote for the people who will best represent us.

Hawai'i's August Primary Election is upon us, and in 2026 being an informed voter is more important than ever.

Our world is beset by war, militarism, racism, resource hoarding, high costs of living, climate

change, catastrophic environmental degradation, and policies enacted based on the whims of billionaire leaders the world over who have risen to power on the shoulders of imperialism, colonialism, and dark money.

No matter our grievances, one way to change corrupt systems is through grassroots mobilization. Indigenous people everywhere need to rise up and use every tool at our disposal. For Native Hawaiians that includes exercising our vote.

Since OHA trustee candidate races are not covered extensively in our local mainstream media, *Ka Wai Ola* surveyed the 19 candidates running as trustees for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to help our lāhui make informed decisions ahead of the Primary Election. All but one responded.

This year, five of the nine board positions are open: O'ahu, Maui, and three At-Large seats. Read ahead to learn more about this year's candidates. ■

VOTE

IT'S OUR

KULEANA

Primary Election

AUG

8

Mail-in Voting

Ballots must be received by the County Elections Division by close of voting, 7:00 p.m. Get your ballot in the mail at least 8 days prior to ensure that your vote is received and counted by Election Day.

In Person Voting

Centers are open 10 business days prior to the election offering accessible voting, in person voting and same day registration.

Find a voter service center near you!

NO RESPONSES

On June 16, all candidates running for OHA's Board of Trustees were contacted via email and invited to respond to *Ka Wai Ola's* 2026 Primary Election candidate survey. We followed up with reminders on June 29 and again on July 2. Eighteen of the 19 candidates responded. At-Large candidate Kalena Parish did not participate in *Ka Wai Ola's* candidate survey.

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE

KALENA PARISH

YES/NO QUESTIONS *cont.*

- 3

Should telescope/observatory development on Maunakea and Haleakalā be stopped at least until mismanagement and legal claims to summit lands have been resolved?
- 4

In its role as an asset manager, OHA currently utilizes funds to purchase land with particular cultural, historical or ecological importance for their protection and preservation as needed. Do you believe OHA should continue investing in these legacy land acquisitions when it determines those investments meaningfully advance its fiduciary obligations and long-term benefits to Native Hawaiian communities, even alongside other pressing beneficiary needs?
- 5

Should the U.S. military be prevented from live-fire training in Hawai‘i – both on land and in the surrounding ocean? Do you believe OHA should actively challenge or seek changes to military training activities in Hawai‘i when those activities are perceived to negatively impact Native Hawaiian trust interests, cultural resources, environmental health, or access to culturally significant lands and waters?

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



ADRIAN KEALI‘I AKINA

AGE | 48
 OCCUPATION | Educator
 WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Kāne‘ohe, O‘ahu and all around the world
 SCHOOLING | Kamehameha, UH Mānoa, Western Governors University
 CURRENT RESIDENCE | Waimānalo, O‘ahu
 WEBSITE | kealiiakina.com

- 1- My skill set is varied. As an educator for over 30 years, communication is one of my main strengths. I communicate with parents, stakeholders, community partners, and students to help people think and make decisions. I teach Hawaiian history and understand OHA, its origins, and the concepts like Native Hawaiian versus Kānaka. I bring a 10,000-foot perspective to create innovative programs. I have a master's in technology and learning and have led tech initiatives at my current position. We can use technology the way Kamehameha used governance to move our people forward.

I bring financial budget experience for managing programs; working for an institution with a core mission with finite resources to last in perpetuity. I also look at kingdom foundations that still work today to solve homelessness, job gaps, and banking. The kingdom had its own stock market. I bring historical research to decisions that support Kānaka now and in the future.
- 2- Rights: The trustee role is making the best decisions for the use of resources the trust cares for. The kuleana is to be that conduit who holds the mission of what is best for the people and the ‘āina at the center of every decision. One cannot do that without knowing what people want, need, or what the land is going through. A trustee needs to be on the ground, in the community, on the mountain, in the kai, and able to empathize with our people. Our people are in diaspora, so it is not about not leaving but whether the opportunity to return exists. Do we have industries to keep our brightest students here? Do we have financial stability to make decisions because it is the right thing to do? Are we in control of government systems? Are we ready to empower the next generation? The power of the written word moved our people to nearly universal literacy. Strive to support our people to be better each generation.
- 3- Protection: Given expiring leases and OHA's revenue share, we have to think about what is best for our people and ‘āina, not just the money. If we cannot drink the water we will perish, if the air is full of depleted uranium our health is depleted, if the waters are filled with metal and chemicals the cancers will take hold. At minimum we should ask for fair market value for the leasing of land as well as the removal of the civilian population of military dependents to help ease the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. Think about the next 300 to 500 years. That means understanding history, how the US got control; on Jan. 18, 1893, Queen Lili‘uokalani surrendered executive powers to the U.S. As a trustee, these considerations matter for land management in perpetuity for everyone who lives in Hawai‘i. We have to protect our ‘āina, protect our people, and preserve our way of life in perpetuity. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



IKAIKA ANDERSON

AGE | 48
 OCCUPATION | Consultant Principal
 WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Waimānalo, O‘ahu
 SCHOOLING | Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, University of Hawai‘i Mānoa
 CURRENT RESIDENCE | Waimānalo, O‘ahu
 WEBSITE | ikaika4hawaii.com

- 1- I bring a unique combination of public policy, land use, and governance experience to OHA. During 11 years on the Honolulu City Council, including serving as council chair, I oversaw land use development policy, infrastructure planning, budgeting, and major public investments. That experience provides the ability to identify opportunities to maximize OHA's land and financial assets for the direct benefit of OHA beneficiaries. OHA must be transparent, accountable, and focused on measurable results, with a strong emphasis on improving the quality of life for our beneficiaries. I'll advocate for responsible stewardship of our cultural and natural resources while expanding opportunities for housing, education, economic self-sufficiency, healthcare, legal assistance, and other direct beneficiary services. The goal is to ensure OHA fulfills its mission by making decisions that honor our culture while improving beneficiaries' quality of living for generations to come.
- 2- An OHA trustee’s kuleana is to faithfully serve Native Hawaiian beneficiaries by providing responsible governance, sound fiscal oversight, and strategic leadership. Trustees have a fiduciary duty to protect and maximize OHA's assets while ensuring every decision advances OHA’s mission of improving conditions for Native Hawaiians. That requires transparency, accountability, and measurable results. Trustees must also honor and perpetuate our culture by responsibly stewarding our lands and natural resources for future generations. Equally important is maintaining a strong focus on quality-of-life issues that directly affect beneficiaries, including housing, education, healthcare, economic opportunity, and legal assistance. An effective trustee listens to beneficiaries, collaborates with fellow trustees and community partners, and makes informed decisions that place the long-term interests of the lāhui above politics or personal agendas.
- 3- OHA must have an active role at the decision-making table in every discussion involving military leases on state ceded lands. Native Hawaiian beneficiaries deserve more than consultation after decisions have already been made. The starting point must be an end to token \$1 annual leases, with the understanding that continued military use of some parcels may be entirely unacceptable and inappropriate. OHA has a fiduciary duty to ensure public trust lands are managed responsibly and that beneficiaries receive fair value if any lands are used, while balancing cultural stewardship, environmental protection, the long-term interests of the lāhui, and national security. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

WRITE-IN QUESTIONS

- 1

OHA's mission is to improve conditions for Native Hawaiians. What unique skills and/or experiences do you bring to this kuleana to help OHA fulfill its mission?
- 2

What is your understanding of the role of an OHA trustee and their kuleana within the agency and to the lāhui?
- 3

Share your mana'o on the military's use of crown and government lands in Hawai'i given the impending expiration of multiple military land leases and the fact that OHA derives an annual pro rata revenue share from the military's use of those lands.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

- 1

Do you support mandatory federal consultation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on all federal actions and processes concerning Native Hawaiian affairs?
- 2

In light of major cuts to Native Hawaiian-serving programs and OHA's finite trust resources, do you believe OHA should play a role in helping address resulting Native Hawaiian community impacts through advocacy, partnerships, or other mitigation strategies?

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



KARL VETO **BAKER**

AGE | 67
OCCUPATION | Mortgage Banker/Kumu Hula
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Nānākuli, O'ahu
SCHOOLING | Kamehameha/USC/UH Mānoa
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Pauoa, O'ahu
WEBSITE | karlvetobaker.com

- 1-

With 38 years of experience as a mortgage banker, I possess deep insight into budgets, tax returns, profit and loss statements, and balance sheets. This financial expertise will allow me to make sound decisions that support the financial wellbeing of our people. Additionally, an extensive management background has equipped me to guide others toward excellence, always striving for the wēkiu. Furthermore, my 30 years as a kumu hula ensures that my decision-making is rooted in my na'au and the traditions of my kūpuna.
- 2-

The role of an Office of Hawaiian Affairs trustee is to help develop and support policies, programs, and initiatives that improve the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians and the broader Hawaiian community. Key areas of responsibility include advocating for affordable housing opportunities, expanding access to higher education and vocational training, promoting workforce development, and supporting access to quality health-care. Trustees are entrusted with ensuring that OHA's resources are managed in ways that strengthen the social, economic, educational, and cultural wellbeing of current and future generations.
- 3-

Regarding the Public Land Trust, by law, 20% of these crown lands should benefit the Hawaiian people. As OHA is entitled to one-fifth of these funds, the organization must have a seat at the table to negotiate in the best interest of our community. Many of these lands are currently leased by the military at inappropriately low rates and should be renegotiated to market value. I also firmly believe that there should be no live explosives on any land in Hawai'i. ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



SHELBY PIKACHU **BILLIONAIRE**

AGE | 43
OCCUPATION | OHA Trustee At-Large Candidate
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Wai'anae, O'ahu
SCHOOLING | Aiea HS, LCC, Air Force College, UH Mānoa, Central Michigan U
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Wai'anae, O'ahu
WEBSITE | shelbybillionaire.com

- 1-

I bring a lifelong commitment to public service, community advocacy, and civic engagement. I have spent years attending government meetings, submitting testimony, researching public policy, and helping community members navigate issues affecting their daily lives. I am not a career politician. I am a grassroots advocate who believes OHA must remain accountable, transparent, and accessible to its beneficiaries.

My strength is listening. Whether in urban Honolulu or rural communities across Hawai'i, people want to be heard and respected. I will bring an independent voice, a willingness to ask difficult questions, and a commitment to ensuring OHA's resources are managed responsibly for both present and future generations.
- 2-

An OHA trustee is both a fiduciary and a servant leader. Trustees are responsible for protecting trust assets, establishing policy, providing strategic direction, and ensuring OHA fulfills its mission to improve conditions for Native Hawaiians.

Trustees must think beyond election cycles and focus on long-term outcomes in housing, education, health, economic stability, culture, and stewardship of 'āina. Equally important is maintaining regular communication with beneficiaries, listening to community concerns, and ensuring decisions are guided by transparency, accountability, and aloha for the lāhui.
- 3-

The discussion surrounding military use of crown and government lands must balance cultural, environmental, economic, and national security considerations. Any future agreements should include meaningful consultation with Native Hawaiian beneficiaries, strong environmental protections, accountability for stewardship obligations, and fair compensation for the use of trust lands.

The people of Hawai'i deserve transparency regarding lease terms, land conditions, remediation responsibilities, and long-term impacts. OHA should advocate for the protection of cultural resources and ensure that decisions involving trust lands prioritize the interests of beneficiaries while considering the broader needs of our islands and future generations. ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

YES/NO QUESTIONS *cont.*

- 3

Should telescope/observatory development on Maunakea and Haleakalā be stopped at least until mismanagement and legal claims to summit lands have been resolved?
- 4

In its role as an asset manager, OHA currently utilizes funds to purchase land with particular cultural, historical or ecological importance for their protection and preservation as needed. Do you believe OHA should continue investing in these legacy land acquisitions when it determines those investments meaningfully advance its fiduciary obligations and long-term benefits to Native Hawaiian communities, even alongside other pressing beneficiary needs?
- 5

Should the U.S. military be prevented from live-fire training in Hawai‘i – both on land and in the surrounding ocean? Do you believe OHA should actively challenge or seek changes to military training activities in Hawai‘i when those activities are perceived to negatively impact Native Hawaiian trust interests, cultural resources, environmental health, or access to culturally significant lands and waters?

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



JACKIE KAHO‘OKELE BURKE

AGE | 74
OCCUPATION | Artist-Planner-Entrepreneur
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | and Pālolo, O‘ahu
SCHOOLING | Kamehameha Schools and University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Honolulu, O‘ahu
WEBSITE | Burke4Aloha.com

- 1-

I consider myself a solution seeker, a strategist that strives to bring common ground with all parties in decision-making for planning from short to long term goals and objectives. To fulfill OHA's mission is a complex collection of power, people and political alignments. To balance and incorporate cultural values and ancestral DNA that works for the present and into the future is a part of the mission. This needs all of Hawai‘i's people to work and believe in Hawaiian spiritual values and guiding principals for leadership.
- 2-

The OHA trustee is entrusted with the leadership path that brings the best results of benefits for the Hawaiian community. Using the ceded money revenue they are the creators for change and opportunity to raise the standards in all areas of life for the Hawaiian community. Health care, education, housing, social support services sustaining existing and developing opportunities as well as constantly building up the resource are all part of the being an OHA trustee.
- 3-

The military needs to pay the value of the land as it has a huge impact on all of Hawai‘i. They need to reduce use of our lands for training purposes and also pay more for the use of our lands, especially those with live training that permanently damage our ‘āina, ocean and air. We need an accurate inventory on the “status” of those lands. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



MICHELLE (MIKALA) COSTELLO

AGE | n/a
OCCUPATION | Development/Asset Management Consultant
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Waimea, Kaua‘i
SCHOOLING | University of San Diego
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Waimea, Kaua‘i
WEBSITE | fixoha.com

- 1-

Before seeking office, I safeguarded the interests of others. For 40 years I served as a fiduciary protecting land, financial, and development assets, where every decision demanded integrity, judgment, accountability, and vision. These also define an OHA trustee. I earned dual degrees: international relations concentrating in diplomacy/negotiation; and design, concentrating in construction management/planning. As a fiduciary and owner’s representative, I protected the interests to \$500 million on a U.S. consulate project on behalf of the Office of the Emir of Qatar. I have negotiated complex agreements, managed capital investments, secured regulatory approvals, mitigated risk, evaluated consultants, and led major land, infrastructure, construction, and real estate initiatives. My experience enables me to strengthen governance, exercise disciplined fiduciary oversight, evaluate complex proposals, and ensure trust resources produce measurable benefits for OHA.
- 2-

Serving as an OHA trustee is not about holding office, it is about accepting a profound kuleana. Trustees are temporary kia‘i of a legacy shaped by our ali‘i, preserved by our kūpuna, and entrusted to us for our mo‘opuna. We do not own this trust, we strengthen it before passing it forward. Like the ahupua‘a, where resources were stewarded from ma ukā to ma kai so the whole could flourish, trustees must govern with pono, mālama, and aloha. The Board's duty is to establish sound policy, safeguard trust assets, provide strategic oversight, and ensure accountability while respecting the distinct roles of governance and administration. Absolutely every dollar entrusted to OHA should advance its mission and produce measurable results for beneficiaries through responsible stewardship. My goal is to minimize waste, maximize the impact of every resource entrusted, and ensure decisions being made reflect the best interests of the lāhui today and for generations to come.
- 3-

The impending expiration of military leases is not merely the end of a contract, but the dawn of an extraordinary opportunity. Moments like this come rarely. They invite us to remember who we are, and boldly imagine what Hawai‘i can become when we lead with courage, wisdom, and aloha. Crown and government lands are not only assets that generate revenue, they are the living soul of our lāhui, which felt the footsteps of our ancestors, and echoed the voices of our kūpuna. Our generation will soon be able to honor them with what they deserve. OHA must ensure if military use continues, it must be earned through meaningful consultation, fair compensation, environmental stewardship, cultural protection, and benefits for Native Hawaiians. We will be deciding the future of this land along with the legacy we will leave. May we meet this moment with humility, steadfast purpose, and an unwavering commitment to the ‘āina and our people. What an exciting time. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

WRITE-IN QUESTIONS

- 1 OHA's mission is to improve conditions for Native Hawaiians. What unique skills and/or experiences do you bring to this kuleana to help OHA fulfill its mission?
- 2 What is your understanding of the role of an OHA trustee and their kuleana within the agency and to the lāhui?
- 3 Share your mana'o on the military's use of crown and government lands in Hawai'i given the impending expiration of multiple military land leases and the fact that OHA derives an annual pro rata revenue share from the military's use of those lands.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

- 1 Do you support mandatory federal consultation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on all federal actions and processes concerning Native Hawaiian affairs?
- 2 In light of major cuts to Native Hawaiian-serving programs and OHA's finite trust resources, do you believe OHA should play a role in helping address resulting Native Hawaiian community impacts through advocacy, partnerships, or other mitigation strategies?

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



KANEKOA (KOA) CRABBE

AGE | 47
OCCUPATION | Self-Employed
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Mililani, O'ahu
SCHOOLING | Mililani High School
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Makiki, O'ahu
WEBSITE | KOA4OHA.com

- 1- I have firsthand experience living and working alongside Native Hawaiians across the Hawaiian Islands. I was born in Honolulu, raised on O'ahu, and have lived in Hilo (Hawai'i Island), Kahului (Maui), Ho'olehua (Moloka'i), and Hanapēpē (Kaua'i) through various educational and professional opportunities. These experiences have given me a deep understanding of the diverse needs, priorities, and perspectives of Native Hawaiian communities statewide. I earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree in communication and have applied my education in various community service endeavors and community planning efforts statewide. I have provided public testimony opposing unsustainable development proposals that do not benefit Native Hawaiians or the people of Hawai'i. I want to bring OHA a voice that reflects the broader Hawaiian community, including many individuals and families who feel they have been overlooked by OHA for years.
- 2- OHA trustees have the important responsibility to assist and support Native Hawaiian individuals, families, and communities. Their kuleana is to make decisions that enhance the wellbeing of their beneficiaries. Trustees are fiscally obligated to ensure that OHA's resources are utilized in the best interests of Native Hawaiians. They are also morally obligated to uphold the rights of the Hawaiian people to land access, ocean access, cultural practices, self-sufficiency, self-determination, and sovereignty. It is in the best interest of the Hawaiian community that all OHA trustees collaborate and cooperate to ensure beneficiaries receive high-quality resources, services, and opportunities in a timely and effective manner.
- 3- I believe the military leases scheduled to expire in 2028 and 2029 should be allowed to expire and should not be renewed until the needs of the Hawaiian people are fully addressed. Since 1875, military activities have destroyed, polluted, and damaged important cultural sites, fishponds, lo'i kalo, natural waterways, and other irreplaceable resources across the islands. Reclaiming these lands for housing, agriculture, cultural practices, recreation, and greater self-sufficiency is more valuable than the revenue OHA receives from military leases. OHA must be a strong advocate at the negotiating table with the State of Hawai'i and the military to ensure that environmental restoration, cultural preservation, public access, and the long-term interests of Native Hawaiians are prioritized before any future military leases are considered. ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



BRICKWOOD GALUTERIA

AGE | 70
OCCUPATION | OHA Trustee-At-Large; musician; cultural practitioner; advocate
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Kapahulu, Kaka'ako, Moanalua, and Kāne'ohe, O'ahu
SCHOOLING | Kamehameha Schools, Pacific University, Harvard
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Palolo, O'ahu
WEBSITE | wearekupuna.com

- 1- I bring more than four decades of service in government, culture, and community advocacy shaped by work across public institutions, cultural organizations, and media. As an OHA Trustee-at-Large, I help guide beneficiary advocacy, resource allocation, and policy oversight for Native Hawaiian wellbeing. My decade in the Hawai'i State Senate, including service as Senate Majority Leader, strengthened my ability to navigate complex systems and build coalitions that support Hawai'i's people. Culturally, I have long been entrusted with roles that protect and uplift Hawaiian identity, including service with the O'ahu Island Burial Council, Kawaiaha'o Church, the Polynesian Voyaging Society, and the Hawaiian Music Hall of Fame. As a Nā Hōkū Hanohano Award-winning musician and longtime broadcaster, I've amplified Hawaiian language and values. These experiences strengthen my ability to steward resources responsibly and support the wellbeing of our lāhui.
- 2- A trustee is a fiduciary - legally and morally responsible for protecting trust assets, advancing beneficiary wellbeing, and ensuring decisions are made with care, transparency, and accountability. My understanding of the role begins there. As a trustee, I steward Public Land Trust revenues, oversee programs and policies, and ensure OHA's resources are used wisely for Native Hawaiians. Within the agency, a trustee helps set direction, uphold governance standards, and insist on clear reporting, responsible budgeting, and disciplined oversight. Trustees guide policy rather than administration, requiring collaboration, patience, and the courage to ask difficult questions. Within the lāhui, the kuleana is deeper. A trustee must listen to community voices, understand lived realities, and carry forward values such as respect for kūpuna, protection of iwi kūpuna, and care for 'āina. Leadership is service, and I approach this kuleana with steadiness, humility, and commitment to our people.
- 3- My mana'o on the military's use of crown and government lands begins with a simple truth: these lands are part of the Public Land Trust, and Native Hawaiians are entitled to a fair pro-rata share of revenues. The military's one-dollar-a-year leases are neither fair nor reflective of the cultural and historical significance of these 'āina. With leases expiring in 2029, we must secure agreements grounded in fairness, transparency, environmental restoration, cultural protection, and a robust community benefits package shaped with beneficiaries. OHA's Military-Leased Lands Working Group helps ensure Native Hawaiian interests, cultural sites, iwi kūpuna, and future land use are fully represented. My approach is balanced and pono: insist on accurate inventories, clear reporting, and revenue structures that reflect true value while advancing community wellbeing and long-term stewardship of our 'āina and lāhui. ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

NO

4

YES

5

YES

YES/NO QUESTIONS *cont.*

- 3

Should telescope/observatory development on Maunakea and Haleakalā be stopped at least until mismanagement and legal claims to summit lands have been resolved?
- 4

In its role as an asset manager, OHA currently utilizes funds to purchase land with particular cultural, historical or ecological importance for their protection and preservation as needed. Do you believe OHA should continue investing in these legacy land acquisitions when it determines those investments meaningfully advance its fiduciary obligations and long-term benefits to Native Hawaiian communities, even alongside other pressing beneficiary needs?
- 5

Should the U.S. military be prevented from live-fire training in Hawai‘i – both on land and in the surrounding ocean? Do you believe OHA should actively challenge or seek changes to military training activities in Hawai‘i when those activities are perceived to negatively impact Native Hawaiian trust interests, cultural resources, environmental health, or access to culturally significant lands and waters?

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



CLIFFORD K. **KAUAULA**

AGE | 57

OCCUPATION | Social Services

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Kingdom of the Hawaiian Islands

SCHOOLING | (Nanaz-Nānākuli), LCC Wai‘anae Moku

CURRENT RESIDENCE | Ke Aupuni o kō Hawai‘i Pae ‘āina (O‘ahu)

WEBSITE | n/a

1- Aloha mai kākou. ‘O Clifford Kanihonui Moi Kaawa Keawepooole Punihaole Kauaula ko‘u inoa.

I just goin speak my mind and heart. I not going to sugah coat anything. I come as is. From head to toe and in breath of spirit-HĀ.

I’ve worked in the field of social services as a case manager, counselor, community health worker II and as a CSAC for over 20 plus years. I’ve gotten my certification and so forth pertaining to these areas while I was attending college. I’ve worked with clients in providing programs designed to assist vulnerable individuals, families, and communities in meeting basic needs, improving wellbeing, achieving self-sufficiency and also in providing resources, referrals and also by networking with various service providers.

2- To provide for the wellbeing of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. To carry the flame of the torch of our ancestors and kūpuna that came before us; pertaining to our Kānaka Maoli, our ‘āina, wai, kai, our culture and our way of life in a mālama, lōkahi, pono and aloha way.

3- The portion of money that OHA receives from the pro-rata revenue share goes to helping with business startups or issuing grants and so forth. The one thing about these land leases for military use, for example the military grade ammunition used at Pōhakuloa and so forth, the damage to the lands, aquifer and ecosystems has already been done. The Red Hill incident where the jet fuel leaked, has already caused damage.

The question is how are we going to make what works in a pono, lōkahi, mālama and aloha way for us Kānaka Maoli and our generations?
Answer: Hawai‘i Loa kūlike kākou. We hoe - paddle the canoe as one and have AKUA be the Ho‘okele, the navigator and steersman, to head us in the right-eous direction we need to go. Aloha a hui hou - (K-den). ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



BRENDON KALEI‘ĀINA **LEE**

AGE | 57

OCCUPATION | Consultant

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Pacific Palisades, O‘ahu

SCHOOLING | Kamehameha Schools

CURRENT RESIDENCE | Pacific Palisades, O‘ahu

WEBSITE | kaleiainalee.com

1- As a lifelong member of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs I have been immersed in Native Hawaiian issues my entire life. As a former trustee I am a graduate of Com-monFund Investment Stewardship Academy at Yale University’s School of Business. As a trained parliamentarian I understand process and am able to navigate the complexities of communicating with both a board and administration within the confines of sunshine law and state ethics laws.

2- OHA trustees’ kuleana is to set policy for administration to follow to carry out OHA’s mission and strategic plan. Trustee’s kuleana to the lāhui is to engage in meaningful conversations through community outreach to ascertain what is most important to Native Hawaiians so the strategic plan is addressing these issues to the best of their ability.

3- Receiving 20% of \$1 is not much of a pro rata revenue. While I understand the importance of the military bases in Hawai‘i I am not convinced of the importance of the multiple live-fire ranges across the state. The military once claimed that Kaho‘olawe and Mākua valley were necessary and indispensable, yet Kaho‘olawe and Mākua valley are once again in Native Hawaiian hands. ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

WRITE-IN QUESTIONS

- 1

OHA's mission is to improve conditions for Native Hawaiians. What unique skills and/or experiences do you bring to this kuleana to help OHA fulfill its mission?
- 2

What is your understanding of the role of an OHA trustee and their kuleana within the agency and to the lāhui?
- 3

Share your mana'o on the military's use of crown and government lands in Hawai'i given the impending expiration of multiple military land leases and the fact that OHA derives an annual pro rata revenue share from the military's use of those lands.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

- 1

Do you support mandatory federal consultation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on all federal actions and processes concerning Native Hawaiian affairs?
- 2

In light of major cuts to Native Hawaiian-serving programs and OHA's finite trust resources, do you believe OHA should play a role in helping address resulting Native Hawaiian community impacts through advocacy, partnerships, or other mitigation strategies?

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



PHILIP (KAWIKA) MARTIN

AGE | n/a
OCCUPATION | System Administrator
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | n/a
SCHOOLING | n/a
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Honolulu, O'ahu
WEBSITE | n/a

- 1- I bring a systems focused approach to solving the structural failures that hold our communities back. Across Hawai'i, too many projects stall because agencies lack staff, permits sit for years, and directives go unimplemented. My focus has centered on diagnosing these bottlenecks and designing practical, workforce driven solutions. My proposal: a Guaranteed Work Initiative. Mission critical work crews trained to restore watersheds, strengthen food systems, protect cultural resources, and move long delayed projects forward.
- Hawai'i thrives when small communities thrive, and I've focused on ways OHA can activate its lands to support cultural identity, local enterprise, and long term stewardship. Whether restoring streams, supporting small farms, or creating daily economic activity through cultural hubs, my plan emphasizes solutions that uplift people while protecting 'āina. OHA's mission requires more than vision, it requires execution.
- 2- A trustee's kuleana is to uphold fiduciary duty, set clear policy, and ensure OHA's work advances Mana i Maui Ola's foundations of 'ohana, mo'omeheu, and 'āina. That requires aligning OHA's land decisions with beneficiary needs, not with plans that stall or fail to deliver daily value. OHA's long-standing focus on condos in Kaka'ako Makai does not match its mission or strategic plan. Housing alone cannot activate the land, strengthen cultural identity, or create economic stability for Native Hawaiians. Trustees must correct this by guiding OHA toward development that serves beneficiaries every day. My view is that Kaka'ako Makai should become a cultural and economic hub: a multi-story cultural center, daily markets, artisan and food-producer spaces, workforce and business development programs, legal advocacy offices, and community services. This model generates recurring revenue, strengthens cultural visibility, and fulfills OHA's kuleana to uplift the lāhui.
- 3- For generations, Hawai'i has suffered from deeply undervalued public land leases, including military occupied crown and government lands. Some parcels were taken or leased under conditions that would not meet modern standards of consent, and several pre-statehood agreements (including \$1 leases) raise serious questions about whether they reflect fair value or were negotiated under coercive controlling political circumstances. These historic shortfalls have deprived Native Hawaiian beneficiaries of resources they should have received. OHA must insist on independent valuation, full environmental review, and terms that reflect true market rates. Culturally significant lands and lands not essential to military missions should be returned. Correcting past undervaluation and ensuring fair compensation going forward is one of the most fiscally responsible ways to strengthen long term revenue for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries without raising taxes on local families. ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



R. KŪNANI NIHIPALI SR.

AGE | 76
OCCUPATION | Mahi'ai with Niu Now Moloka'i; Retired Honolulu Police Officer
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Honolulu, O'ahu
SCHOOLING | DOE public elementary schools, Kamehameha Schools
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Ho'olehua Homestead, Moloka'i
WEBSITE | nihipali.org

- 1-Born and raised in the 50s urban ghettos of Honolulu, I experienced firsthand the historic social and economic challenges as a Kanaka Maoli Hawai'i. Educated in the Territorial public schools, I graduated from Kamehameha. As a retired police officer, I utilized that experience writing grants, curriculum, and reports to help organize community activities and projects. An educator, artist, inventor, and 'AHO elected delegate, I've held numerous leadership and supportive roles in political, economic, social and cultural organizations locally, nationally and internationally, organizing, participating in community meetings, beneficiary initiatives, iwi repatriation, restoring 'ike niu, 'āina momona, wai and kai, and lā'au lapa'au methods that establish food and water security and sovereignty.
- 2- The Hawai'i State Constitution 48 years ago created a governing board of nine trustees to set up OHA policy managing the Native Trust Ceded Lands assets. OHA never received its equity of 20% revenues, causing systemic economic and social inequalities of physical, psychological and spiritual trauma and dislocation within the general population of Hawai'i. A semi-autonomous state entity, OHA nation building initiatives of self-determination/governance were abandoned, defaulted on its primary, inherent, and fundamental economic and political sovereign rights for Kānaka to govern our own affairs.
- The U.S. Congress Apology Law guaranteed a process of reconciliation with the Native Hawaiian people, directly. Studies, findings and recommendations by the DOI, DOJ, and state government task forces created guidelines for implementing steps of reconciliation, ho'opono. We must huliau, think as beneficiaries, stop living an illusion of reality and assimilation of americanism. Remember, we are the host culture, the native people, not a racial minority; we are houseless, not homeless. We can overcome these social and cultural stigmas through an economic realignment, kuleana waiwai like whereby our Native Trust assets can be invested in a CDFI, a Native Hawaiian Bank, that can overcome this economic/social disenfranchisement towards a better future for all of Hawai'i.
- 3- U.S. military leases of 46,000 acres of Hawaiian land which expire in 2028, but costs Islanders in historical land use, unaddressed toxic legacy of environmental harm and contamination. Native Hawaiians need to decide our future of our ka pae 'āina o Hawai'i. "Aloha 'āina reminds us that land is not a commodity to be exploited but a living relationship to be honored and sustained," said Vicky Holt Takamine. *Keep Hawaiian lands in Hawaiian Hands. E huliau kākou a pau - change we must!* ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

YES/NO QUESTIONS *cont.*

- 3

Should telescope/observatory development on Maunakea and Haleakalā be stopped at least until mismanagement and legal claims to summit lands have been resolved?
- 4

In its role as an asset manager, OHA currently utilizes funds to purchase land with particular cultural, historical or ecological importance for their protection and preservation as needed. Do you believe OHA should continue investing in these legacy land acquisitions when it determines those investments meaningfully advance its fiduciary obligations and long-term benefits to Native Hawaiian communities, even alongside other pressing beneficiary needs?
- 5

Should the U.S. military be prevented from live-fire training in Hawai‘i – both on land and in the surrounding ocean? Do you believe OHA should actively challenge or seek changes to military training activities in Hawai‘i when those activities are perceived to negatively impact Native Hawaiian trust interests, cultural resources, environmental health, or access to culturally significant lands and waters?

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



KEONI SOUZA

AGE | 41

OCCUPATION | OHA Trustee At-Large

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Kapolei, O'ahu

SCHOOLING | Kamehameha Schools

CURRENT RESIDENCE | Kapolei, O'ahu

WEBSITE | souzaforoha.com

- 1-

Serving the lāhui has been one of the greatest privileges of my life. I'd like to strengthen the way OHA serves Native Hawaiians through greater transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship. As OHA trustee, vice chair of the board, and chair of the Investment and Land Management Committee, I bring leadership, sound judgment, and a collaborative approach to solving complex challenges. My background in business, real estate, and negotiations has helped me build partnerships and make informed decisions that balance cultural values with long-term financial sustainability. During my first term, I helped strengthen governance and responsibly steward the Native Hawaiian Trust Fund, which has grown to approximately \$917 million, the highest balance in its history. I remain committed to protecting our trust resources, creating opportunities for Native Hawaiians, and ensuring future generations can live, work, raise their families, and thrive in Hawai‘i.
- 2-

An OHA trustee’s role and kuleana is to be a trusted steward of the Native Hawaiian Trust Fund and a servant of the lāhui. That means making decisions that protect our resources, strengthen OHA as an institution, create housing and economic opportunities that will benefit Native Hawaiians and preserve our culture. It is about setting a clear vision, asking the difficult questions, and ensuring every decision reflects our fiduciary responsibility to the beneficiaries we serve. I understand the importance of balancing today’s needs with long-term stewardship. A trustee’s kuleana goes beyond the board room, it also requires us to be present in our communities. We must listen one-on-one, and in groups to our people, build relationships, and earn trust through transparency, accountability, and action.
- 3-

As a member of the Military Leased Lands Technical Advisory Group for leases expiring soon, Hawai‘i has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future of these crown and government lands. OHA must ensure Native Hawaiian interests are fully represented, protect the Public Land Trust, and respect the cultural and environmental significance of these lands. By working collaboratively with state and federal partners, we can pursue outcomes that strengthen the trust and benefit future generations. OHA has not received its full pro-rata share from the Public Land Trust for decades. The legislature’s approval to release approximately \$55 million in previously withheld Public Land Trust revenues, pending Gov. Green’s approval, is meaningful progress, but more work remains to ensure beneficiaries receive the revenues they are owed. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

AT-LARGE CANDIDATE



JOHN D. WAIHE‘E IV

AGE | 55

OCCUPATION | OHA Trustee At-Large

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Kalihi, O'ahu

SCHOOLING | University of Hawai‘i Mānoa, HCC

CURRENT RESIDENCE | Kaka‘ako, O'ahu

WEBSITE | n/a

- 1-

The upcoming years will be pivotal ones for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and our beneficiaries. With recent federal policy decisions set to defund many programs currently serving Native Hawaiians, while anti-Hawaiian forces attack Hawaiian-serving institutions like the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and Kamehameha Schools, it will be imperative for OHA to stand ready to offset the negative impacts expected to arise.
- 2-

Furthermore, because the majority of OHA’s budget is currently derived from the Native Hawaiian Trust fund earnings, we must also continue to focus on the overall performance of our whole portfolio to produce the best results. I believe that my years of experience at OHA in a variety of capacities, dealing and succeeding with issues such as these, will be pivotal in addressing these significant issues.
- 2-

I believe our role is to protect and expand our Native Hawaiian Trust Fund and our beneficiaries’ proprietary interest in it. Simultaneously, we must create programs for our beneficiaries and advocate for them at all levels of governmental and private sectors, to improve their quality of life and protect their traditional cultural and natural resources.
- 3-

I believe that OHA’s position on this issue should be motivated first and foremost by the recognition that our lands and water are trusts for our people and champion strongly for their protection as such. In situations where the military is mismanaging these precious resources, OHA should advocate for the termination of their leases. I also believe OHA needs to advocate for an equitable share of revenue using a fair pro-rata formula and based on an accurate accounting of the military lands and the revenue generated from them. I disagree with this question's assertion that we currently "derive" one. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

WRITE-IN QUESTIONS

- 1

OHA's mission is to improve conditions for Native Hawaiians. What unique skills and/or experiences do you bring to this kuleana to help OHA fulfill its mission?
- 2

What is your understanding of the role of an OHA trustee and their kuleana within the agency and to the lāhui?
- 3

Share your mana'o on the military's use of crown and government lands in Hawai'i given the impending expiration of multiple military land leases and the fact that OHA derives an annual pro rata revenue share from the military's use of those lands.

YES/NO QUESTIONS

- 1

Do you support mandatory federal consultation with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs on all federal actions and processes concerning Native Hawaiian affairs?
- 2

In light of major cuts to Native Hawaiian-serving programs and OHA's finite trust resources, do you believe OHA should play a role in helping address resulting Native Hawaiian community impacts through advocacy, partnerships, or other mitigation strategies?

MAUI TRUSTEE CANDIDATE



KE'EAUMOKU KAPU

AGE | 63
OCCUPATION | Self employed
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Honolulu, O'ahu
SCHOOLING | McKinnley High
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Lahaina, Maui
WEBSITE | n/a

- 1-

I've sat on boards and commissions for over 27 years. I also held the position of chair for the Native Hawaiian Historic Preservation Council, an advisory for the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.
- 2-

To advocate for the betterment of conditions thru section 5(f) of the Hawai'i Admission Act establishes the state's Public Land Trust, which holds roughly 1.4 million acres of Hawaiian crown and government lands.

It mandates the state to use these lands and their revenues for five specific purposes including the betterment of Native Hawaiians and support for public education.

The State of Hawai'i serves as the trustee of these lands. Historical disputes over the trust management have revolved around them.

Key specifications of the 5(f) Public Land Trust includes:
1. Public schools and educational institutes.
2. Betterment of the conditions of Native Hawaiians.
3. Development of farm and home ownership.
4. Public improvements.
5. Lands for public use.

The pro-rata shares: by state laws and the Hawai'i State Constitution, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs is entitled to 20% of all 5(f) ceded land revenues.
- 3-

The U.S. military occupies over 250,000 acres in Hawai'i, largely on seized Kingdom of Hawai'i crown and government lands (ceded lands). While major training leases for 46,000+ acres expire in 2029, recent renewals and state negotiations face intense local scrutiny over environmental degradation and Indigenous rights. Which more shows that the U.S. military has failed their fiduciary duties to protect our land and ocean resources with mandates that they be used to benefit the general public and Native Hawaiians - which they have not. ■

1

UNDECIDED

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

MAUI TRUSTEE CANDIDATE



CARMEN "HULU" LINDSEY

AGE | n/a
OCCUPATION | OHA Maui Trustee since 2012; Owner of Lindsey Realty since 1973
WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Kohala and Keaukaha, Hawai'i; also lived on O'ahu
SCHOOLING | Farrington High School and Cannon's School of Business
CURRENT RESIDENCE | Waiohuli, Kula, Maui
WEBSITE | hululindsey.com

- 1-

Throughout my service, I have worked to protect and grow OHA's trust resources while ensuring those resources are directed toward improving conditions for Native Hawaiians. My professional experience as a businesswoman and real estate broker has strengthened my understanding of land stewardship, asset management, and long-term planning.

Most importantly, I remain grounded in the voices of beneficiaries. I believe trustees must listen, engage, and remain accountable to the lāhui. My goal has always been to ensure OHA fulfills its responsibilities with integrity, transparency, and a commitment to future generations.
- 2-

Our kuleana extends beyond OHA itself. Trustees have a responsibility to advocate for Native Hawaiian rights, protect trust resources, preserve culture and traditions, and help improve educational, economic, housing, and health outcomes for beneficiaries.

Trustees must make decisions that balance present needs with the interests of future generations. Every decision should be guided by OHA's mission, fiduciary responsibility, and commitment to the lāhui we serve.
- 3-

The expiration of military leases presents an important opportunity for meaningful discussions about the future of these lands. Crown and government lands carry deep cultural, historical, and trust significance for Native Hawaiians. Decisions regarding their future should include meaningful consultation with Native Hawaiians and careful consideration of cultural, environmental, and community impacts.

It is important to clarify that OHA does not receive a pro-rata share of revenues generated from the military's use of these trust lands. For decades, the military has occupied certain crown and government lands under leases that have provided the state with only nominal compensation - reportedly just \$1 for approximately 65 years. This longstanding arrangement raises important questions about fairness, accountability, and the state's obligations regarding the Public Land Trust.

As these leases approach expiration, we have an opportunity to reevaluate how these lands are managed and whether their use continues to serve the best interests of Hawai'i and Native Hawaiians. Financial considerations are only one part of the discussion. Stewardship, access, environmental restoration, cultural preservation, and the long-term interests of beneficiaries must also be central to any decision-making process.

I support a transparent and balanced process that ensures Native Hawaiian voices are heard, trust obligations are honored, and future generations benefit from responsible stewardship of these lands. ■

1

YES

2

YES

3

YES

4

YES

5

YES

YES/NO QUESTIONS *cont.*

- 3

Should telescope/observatory development on Maunakea and Haleakalā be stopped at least until mismanagement and legal claims to summit lands have been resolved?
- 4

In its role as an asset manager, OHA currently utilizes funds to purchase land with particular cultural, historical or ecological importance for their protection and preservation as needed. Do you believe OHA should continue investing in these legacy land acquisitions when it determines those investments meaningfully advance its fiduciary obligations and long-term benefits to Native Hawaiian communities, even alongside other pressing beneficiary needs?
- 5

Should the U.S. military be prevented from live-fire training in Hawai‘i – both on land and in the surrounding ocean? Do you believe OHA should actively challenge or seek changes to military training activities in Hawai‘i when those activities are perceived to negatively impact Native Hawaiian trust interests, cultural resources, environmental health, or access to culturally significant lands and waters?

O‘AHU TRUSTEE CANDIDATE



KALEI AKAKA

AGE | 43

OCCUPATION | OHA O‘ahu Trustee

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Kona, Hawai‘i Island, and Honolulu, O‘ahu

SCHOOLING | Chaminade University

CURRENT RESIDENCE | Honolulu, O‘ahu

WEBSITE | ShakaVoteAkaka.com

- 1-I am honored to serve as your OHA O‘ahu trustee since 2018. Born and raised in an ‘ohana dedicated to service to community, deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture, arts, values and ‘ōlelo mākuahine. Time spent on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., as my grandfather served as U.S. representative and as the first Native Hawaiian U.S. senator gave me a unique understanding of government, the power of relationships and the spirit of aloha to advance our people. My experience at the Hawai‘i State Legislature in both the house and senate as a legislative aide and legislative researcher, in the senate committees on Judiciary and Government Operations and Higher Education, taught me how to review legislation and advocate effectively, applying these skills as I’ve chaired and vice chaired the OHA Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment Committee to review and recommend bills, positions, testimony, strategize and advance OHA’s mission and Mana i Maui Ola strategic plan. I continue to strengthen OHA’s connection to our beneficiaries having established OHA O‘ahu Island community meetings and site visits and bettering internal to external communications having established committee leadership meetings alongside administration. With Hawai‘i in my heart, I humbly ask for your vote in my re-election as OHA O‘ahu trustee. Please Remember to SHAKA and VOTE AKAKA!
- 2-An OHA trustee has fiduciary responsibility, obligation to the beneficiaries’ trust, Hawai‘i constitutional kuleana, furthering OHA’s mission and Mana i Maui Ola strategic plan, advocating in Native Hawaiian rights and care of Kō Hawai‘i Pae ‘Āina. I connect with beneficiaries by staying on the pulse of the needs, concerns, and celebrations, which guides my advocacy at the county, state, and federal levels of government with humility, steadfast commitment and dedication to making decisions that are pono for our beloved Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. I see my role as being a bridge. I connect our beneficiaries with government, I connect our cultural values with policy, and I connect the work we do today with the future we want for the next generations through guidance and ‘ike of our kūpuna.
- 3- OHA has constitutional kuleana to advocate for Hawaiian people to receive the 20% of revenues and proceeds from Hawaiian Kingdom crown and government Lands also known as the ceded lands of the Public Land Trust, including the share from the military’s use of these lands, waters and skies. I continue to advocate for fair market value compensation and respectful processes, land acknowledgments of history and restoration of original Hawaiian names, proper stewardship of ‘āina, wai, iwi, meaningful access for lineal descendants and ending live-fire training. These lands remain Hawaiian Kingdom crown and government Lands regardless of current management, including lands via Executive Order. Mahalo to all advocating alongside OHA. Let’s work toward fair and pono solutions. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES

O‘AHU TRUSTEE CANDIDATE



KUMU HINALEIMOANA WONG

AGE | 54

OCCUPATION | Cultural Specialist and Educator

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP | Pu‘unui , O‘ahu

SCHOOLING | University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

CURRENT RESIDENCE | Pu‘unui , O‘ahu

WEBSITE | kumuhinawongforoha.com

- 1-For 36 years I have served the lāhui in public service, the private sector, and nonprofit leadership. Thirteen of those years were spent on the O‘ahu Burial Council, 11 as its chair. This work demanded thoughtfulness, patience, community advocacy, and the ability to hold space for a range of voices all at once. In every space I have entered, I have worked to listen first and build understanding before seeking agreement. Across my roles across our community, I have served as a connective presence and leader who can bring people and institutions back to a shared center. OHA’s Board deserves trustees who have active experience across our lāhui not confined only to the boardroom. I believe I bring that experience.
- 2-A trustee’s fiduciary duty is the baseline, not the standard. The deeper work is understanding the difference between kulana and kuleana. Kulana is the position, the title, the seat at the table. Kuleana is what that position demands of you, and it cannot be fulfilled from behind a desk or only at the board table. It requires being present where our people actually are, not simply holding the title that says you represent them. My calling has always been to where our people are. A trustee who confuses kulana for kuleana cannot claim to represent a community they are not part of. Real transparency means inviting beneficiaries into the decision-making process, not simply reporting outcomes after the fact. The boardroom should function as a classroom, where our people can witness how the decisions that affect their future are made.
- 3- These are ceded, Hawaiian lands held in public trust for the benefit of our lāhui, not commercial real estate. OHA carries a constitutional fiduciary responsibility over their future, and no lease negotiation should move forward without OHA’s full agreement. The military speaks of fair market value, but no appraisal accounts for the cultural cost of continued alienation and desecration of sacred land. With leases at sites like Pōhakuloa and Mākua approaching expiration, this is not a distant policy question, it is happening now. OHA must show up prepared. The revenue OHA receives does not change this obligation. We do not let income determine our position on what is best for our ‘āina and our lāhui. Any path forward, including the terms of continued use or return of these lands, must be set by beneficiaries. ■

1

2

3

4

5

YES

YES

YES

YES

YES



Kamehameha III
August 11, 1813

Kauikeaouli Kaleiopapa Kuakamanolani Mahinalani Kalaninui-waiakua Keaweawe'ulaokalani was born at Keauhou Bay, Kona on Hawai'i Island. His mother was Keōpūalani, the highest-ranking wife of Kamehameha I, his father.

He was the longest reigning monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom. He became King Kamehameha III in June 1825 at 11 years old with Kuhina Nui (co-regent) Ka'ahumanu and reigned for 29 years until his death in 1854.

During his reign he established Hawai'i's declaration of rights, the first Constitution of the Hawaiian Kingdom and Kumu Kānāwai (foundational laws) that were primarily based on Hawaiian values and practices. He established treaties with other nations that recognized the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom as an independent nation state – the first non-European country so recognized.

August 9, 9:30 a.m.

Kawaihae'o Church
Ali'i Sunday Worship Service

Royal Hawaiian Band

August 7, 14 & 28, Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O'ahu

The Royal Hawaiian Band holds free concerts on the 'Iolani Palace Grounds most Fridays. rhb-music.com

Ipuaeahu and Mele in the Forest 🌿

August 8, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Kealahakua, Hawai'i Island

Learn about Hawaiian forest plant dyes and listen to and sing along to mele about Kona. hikiola.org

Kama'āina Sunday

August 9, 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

Mele After Hours

August 14, 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Kapālama, O'ahu

An evening of music and hula at Bishop Museum hosted by Mele Apana.

Duke Kahanamoku OceanFest 🌿

August 14 - 24 | Waikiki, O'ahu
A week-long celebration of ocean sports cultural events and aloha in honor of Duke's life and legacy.
dukekahanamokuoceanfest.com

Mālama Hulē'ia Community Workday

August 15, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Līhu'e, Kaua'i

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

Waipā Community Workday

August 15, 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 provided if you RSVP in advance. waipafoundation.org

Pu'uhonua Mākeke

August 15, 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

🌿 Ho'ākoakoa Lāhui Events are sponsored by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to support nonprofit organization events that offer significant benefit to the Native Hawaiian community. For more information visit OHA.org.

Ko'olau Limu Festival

August 15, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Anahola, Kaua'i

A celebration of limu and our ocean resources. Music and dance, limu sampling, local food vendors, conservation groups and more.
hosealovellfoundation.com

I Ola Kanaloa: 50 Years of Aloha 'Āina Exhibition

August 17 - October 12 | Honolulu, O'ahu

A multi-site exhibition of contemporary art by Hawai'i artists about Kaho'olawe to be shown at Honolulu Hale, Aupuni Space, Native Books, Kīpuka – Makers Space. Public programs, film screenings, panel discussions, and guided tours will complement the exhibitions.
protectkahoolaweohana.org

Make Music Jamms

August 21, Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O'ahu

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

Moloka'i Paniolo Heritage Festival & Rodeo Round Up 🌿

August 22, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Ho'olehua, Moloka'i

Rodeo competition, paniolo cultural exhibits, food, entertainment, and more.
hoolehuahomesteaders.org

Kū I Ka Welo 🌿

August 22, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Kea'au, Hawai'i Island

An event to uplift 'ohana and connect community through music, hula, workshops, and family traditions.
welofoundation.org

Emma Farden Sharpe Hula Festival

August 22, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Lahaina, Maui

A celebration of hula 'auana and kahiko in honor of Emma Farden Sharpe. Free keiki activities, workshops, artisans, and a lifetime achievement award dedicated to a pillar of the hula community.

NextGEN Hawaiian Steel Guitar Festival

August 22, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Kapolei, O'ahu

Featuring select youth steel guitar students of Ke Kula Mele performing at Ka Makana Ali'i. Watch the livestream on FB or YouTube @hawaiiansteelguitarshowcase.
hawaiiansteelguitarfestival.com/km

E Ulu a Pa'a 2026 Fundraiser Gala 🌿

August 22, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Kapālama, O'ahu

Bishop Museum's annual fundraiser dinner and auction honors Nālani Kana'ole. Online auction opens August 13 at bishopmuseum.org/euluapaa.

Hot Kūpuna Nights

August 23, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O'ahu

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

Ho'omālamalama 'Ohana 🌿

August 28, 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Kaunakakai, Moloka'i

An event to encourage youth with disabilities and their families highlighting possible pathways within and beyond Moloka'i. facebook.com/ldahawaii.pti

Summer Concert Series

August 29, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. | Waimea, O'ahu

Live Hawaiian music and hula featuring Mark Yamanaka, Herb Ohta Jr., Jon Yamasato and Norm Thompson.
waimeavalley.net

50th Annual Honolulu Intertribal Powwow

August 29 - 30 | Honolulu, O'ahu

A free event at Ala Moana Beach Park/Magic Island. Experience Native American dancing, drumming and singing. Enjoy Navajo frybread and tacos, local food booths, vendors, keiki activities and more. htchawaii.org

Hawai'i Swim Show 🌿

Aug 29 - 30 | 'Ewa Beach, O'ahu

Vendor Pop up 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. and Showcases 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

Two days of runway shows featuring local designers and businesses. Shop local vendors, food and drink, and enjoy Hawaiian music and dance.
hiswimshow.com

Ka Mai'a Ho'olaule'a - Banana Festival

August 30, 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.,
Kāne'ohe, O'ahu

A celebration of all things banana at Windward Community College. Discover the versatility of bananas with tastings, textile and dyeing workshops and a lecture. slowfoodoahu.com ■

Kuleana grows leaders

K-12 APPLICATION WINDOW

August 15 to September 30, 2026

PRESCHOOL APPLICATION WINDOW

August 15 to October 31, 2026

LEARN

MORE



Kamehameha Schools' admissions policy is to give preference to applicants of Hawaiian ancestry to the extent permitted by law.



Ke Kula 'o Kamehameha

A Denver Dad Carries His Kūpuna With Him

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

At Honolulu's Punahou School, Timothy Lot Kamaka Kamanā was christened with the nickname, mo'o (lizard), by his peers. From an early age, as a mixed-race person, he learned adaptability.

Among the student body's homogenous population, he didn't feel white enough. Among the Polynesian minority, Kamanā didn't feel brown enough.

But by overcoming imposter syndrome and embracing himself, "that in-between made me who I am," he said.

Kamanā, 31, is a son, a brother, a husband and a father. He's a former Division 1 college football player and a corporate recruiter. Throughout it all, he's Kanaka Maoli, whether he's in his hometown of Honolulu or his current city of Denver, Colorado.

"As far back as I can remember, I have deeply associated my identity with being Hawaiian," Kamanā said.

His mother, Heidi Kamaka, met his father, Carter Kamanā, as haumāna at Kamehameha Schools. Both sides have Kānaka ancestry. Heidi is also Chinese, German and Dutch.

Kamanā is the second born of four. He remembers naturally gravitating toward his grandmothers.

As a keiki, Kamanā was drawn to art, which counted as his favorite class. He loved drawing and painting. His 'ohana founded Kamaka Hawai'i, the storied 'ukulele company and Kamanā also felt connected to music, especially singing in the choir.

Growing up, he often heard anecdotes about the football careers of his father, a former Michigan State Spartan, and his uncle, John Kamanā, who played for the University of Southern California like their father before them. John later advanced to the NFL.

By grade school, Kamanā dreamed of being a professional athlete. "In a sense, that part of my life was charted out for me," he said.

His football aspirations kicked off in fifth grade. He began learning offensive positions like running back and wide receiver. But a coach reminded him of Kamanā's father's defensive legacy, which stuck with him.

At Punahou, Kamanā joined the football team. During his sophomore year, he was moved to defensive back – a position he would play for the rest of his career. Kamanā also ran track, participating in sprint and long jump events.

Throughout high school, a long-term plan developed: Clench a football scholarship and go to college outside Hawai'i. It was a path forged by those before Kamanā. His mother played soccer at Washington State Universi-



Tim Kamanā and his son, Cannon. - Courtesy Photo

ty, and his aunt attended the University of Notre Dame.

"I always just had this belief in my mind – right, wrong or indifferent – that you have to leave Hawai'i to be able to do the things that you want to be able to do," Kamanā said.

The U.S. Military Academy at West Point offered him a scholarship first, followed by the University of Wyoming. University of Hawai'i at Mānoa made a last-minute push, but, by Kamanā's senior year, he described himself as "itching" to explore beyond the islands.

He graduated in 2012 and headed to West Point, New York. Kamanā was captivated by the university's prestige. But he felt that, even with his preparations, he wasn't ready for the grim reality.

"You're gonna get kicked in the teeth," Kamanā said. "It's a grind."

There, two aspects of student life came first: the military and academia. That didn't ultimately align with Kamanā's goal to focus on football.

After his first semester at West Point, the University of Wyoming extended him another athletic scholarship. So, in the dead of winter, he left the East Coast for the Cowboy State in 2013.

"Talk about choosing the most polar opposite places that you possibly could from where we grew up," Kamanā said.

Once he accepted those differences, though, Kamanā took full advantage of Wyoming as a building block. He majored in finance and marketing. As a football player, he played various positions on defense. In 2014, Kamanā "made a career-high 10 tackles against San Jose State and recorded a career-high eight solo tackles against the

Spartans," according to his football biography.

His final college game took place in December 2017.

On his graduation weekend in 2018, Kamanā met Trae Pierce through a friend, and the first tendrils of love unfurled. Being both Black and white, Trae could relate to Kamanā's lived experiences.

But at that point, he was across the Moananuiākea in Hawai'i. Kamanā stayed home for almost a year, in the hopes that he would get a call for NFL tryouts. Once he finally hung up his cleats, he did some soul searching.

"My entire identity was football up to that point," Kamanā said.

Later that year, Trae flew out to the islands to visit him, and they officially started dating. A friend suggested an interview with his employer, and Kamanā was offered a job at Addison Group in Seattle. Trae joined him soon after.

Kamanā served as an executive recruiter for two years before moving to a branch manager role in 2020. In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Trae was hāpai with the couple's first child, Cannon.

The next year, with a new baby, the pair got engaged. Kamanā proposed to Trae with his college bowl game ring in Hawai'i. He also took on a new remote job at Cedar, a healthcare financial experience platform.

Kamanā and Trae were married on Seattle's Alki Beach in 2022. They moved to Cheyenne, Wyoming, that fall to be closer to Trae's loved ones.

Just weeks ago, Kamanā's young 'ohana resettled in Denver. His daughter, Coast, will be born sometime soon (her inoa Hawai'i has yet to be determined). Kamanā recently accepted a role in talent acquisition at Candid Health.

With all these new developments, a return to the 'āina isn't imminent, but it remains the target – particularly for the benefit of his keiki.

"I know who came before me, and I carry them with me," Kamanā said. "That's what makes me me and helps me to stay rooted." ■

**EVERY GREAT JOURNEY
STARTS WITH ONE
CONVERSATION.**



It begins with people coming together, sharing knowledge, supporting one another, and moving in the same direction.

Visit **LendingWithAloha.com** to connect, learn, and discover mortgage solutions designed for Hawai'i families. **Because every journey home starts somewhere.**



SecurityNational Mortgage
Local families. Local homes.
Mortgage solutions for all
Hawaiian Islands.

808.823.8050

WAIMEA VALLEY

A Cultural Treasure *of the* Highest Order

BY PUANANI FERNANDEZ-AKAMINE

It has been 20 years since the Office of Hawaiian Affairs acquired the wahi kapu of Waimea to preserve its natural and cultural resources in perpetuity

Culturally, historically, and spiritually Waimea, O'ahu, is a Native Hawaiian cultural treasure of the highest possible order.

During the 11th century the ahupua'a of Waimea was set aside for the kahuna nui (high priests). Known for over 700 years as the "Valley of Priests," Waimea includes three major heiau (temples) and scores of archaeological sites within the valley and along its perimeter including the formidable Pu'u o Mahuka Heiau located atop Keanalua, Waimea's northern ridge.

For centuries the 'aina momona of Waimea supported a population of at least 600 people. Kalo terraces built centuries ago still shape the valley floor and foothills. It is one of the last intact ahupua'a remaining on the island of O'ahu, and generations of kūpuna sleep there undisturbed, secure in the valley's embrace.

Ever a storied and sacred place, today Waimea is mostly known for her unspoiled beauty and famous 45-foot perennial waterfall that plunges into a 30-foot-deep natural pool. But Waimea is so much more. Over the last two decades, Waimea Valley has become a contemporary pu'uhonua, a place where all are now welcomed to visit.

Few people know, or remember, that this wahi kapu (sacred place) was nearly lost to development.

FROM HEWAHEWA TO OHA

The last kahuna nui to steward the valley was Hewahewa, high priest to both Kamehameha I and II, who died there in 1837. Following Hewahewa's death, stewardship of Waimea passed to his granddaughter, Pa'alua.

In the mid 19th century, Waimea supported a population of hundreds. But after a series of devastating floods between 1884-1898 destroyed homes and crops, many residents were driven from the valley.

During the same period, Pa'alua foreclosed on Waimea, unable to pay the land tax. Before the century ended, Hawaiian title to Waimea Valley was lost.

The valley changed hands several times until Castle & Cooke purchased Waimea in 1929 and leased it to cattle ranchers. In 1941, the U.S. military took over the valley for training until the end of World War II.

In 1973, Waimea was purchased from Castle & Cooke by Hawai'i-based Bishop Corporation (not to be confused with Bishop Estate) to establish Waimea Falls Park as a botanical garden and entertainment venue. Ownership of the valley was later transferred to Associates Four, a partnership comprised of the same shareholders of Bishop Corporation. Associates Four operated Waimea Falls Park for 25 years, but in the 1990s, due to declining revenue, a decision was made to sell Waimea to avoid bankruptcy.

New York investor and theme park developer Christian Wolfer swept in and purchased Waimea in 1996. He envisioned turning the storied valley into an "adventure park" but his project failed and in 2001 he placed the valley in bankruptcy protection.

Around the same time, an increasingly concerned North Shore community began organizing to oppose further development in Waimea.

After the bankruptcy filing, the City & County of Honolulu initiated condemnation proceedings, taking possession of Waimea in 2002 and leasing the valley to the National Audubon Society to operate an ecological and cultural visitor center.

In 2005, to resolve the condemnation issue, Wolfer proposed a plan to subdivide Waimea and build a commercial attractions park near the front of the valley and luxury homes in the back. Hoping to avoid a lawsuit, the city council gave the plan its preliminary approval.

But when news of this became public it triggered vocal and widespread community protests, including a march on City Hall. Community opposition to the development was so compelling that when the council met to vote on the plan on Dec. 7, 2005, they unanimously rejected it.

A month later, after discussions with city officials, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees au-



The Office of Hawaiian Affairs' acquisition of Waimea Valley in 2006 was commemorated with a pūlama ceremony and plaque dedication near the entrance to the botanical gardens. Pictured (l-r) are Ka'ula Chun, Kanani Awai, OHA Trustee Oswald Stender, OHA Board Chair Haunani Apoliona, OHA Trustee Boyd Mossman, OHA Trustee Colette Machado, Betty Jenkins, Honey Awai-Lennox and Maile Agader. - Photo: Waimea Valley Hi'ipaka LLC

SEE A CULTURAL TREASURE ON PAGE 22





Hi'ipaka has restored a traditional kauhale (grouping of houses) in Waimea Valley and incorporated it as part of Ka'apuni o Waimea, an educational walking circuit through the valley that encourages visitors to learn and engage with Cultural Programs staff at interpretive sites throughout the valley. - Photo: Waimea Valley Hi'ipaka LLC

A CULTURAL TREASURE

Continued from page 21

thorized the purchase of Waimea Valley.

In August 2006, under the terms of a court settlement with Wolffer, the joint purchase of Waimea by OHA, the City & County of Honolulu, the state Department of Land and Natural Resources, the National Audubon Society, and the U.S. Army was finalized.

Title to Waimea went to OHA to ensure the preservation of the valley in perpetuity.

HI'IPAKA ESTABLISHED TO STEWARD WAIMEA

In addition to 1,875-acre Waimea Valley, in 2006 OHA also acquired 25,856-acre Wao Kele o Puna on Hawai'i Island. Both acquisitions were made to protect these lands from development. Suddenly, OHA was a major landowner with a new kuleana for land stewardship.

In November 2006, OHA established a Land Management department and contracted the Hawai'i Audubon Society to temporarily manage the valley.

In 2007, OHA formed Hi'ilei Aloha LLC (limited liability company) a nonprofit legally separate from the agency to manage its community assets. Then in 2008, OHA formed Waimea Valley Hi'ipaka LLC (Hi'ipaka) as a nonprofit subsidiary of Hi'ilei Aloha specifically to manage the valley. Upon its formation, title to Waimea was transferred from OHA to Hi'ipaka.

Hi'ipaka, led by a series of managers, assumed stewardship of the valley in 2008 under OHA's oversight. In 2012, when OHA was ready to launch Hi'ipaka as an independent venture and hire an executive director, trustees looked within the organization to chief operating officer and interim CEO Richard Pezzulo.

Originally from Connecticut, Pezzulo was hired as OHA's chief financial officer three years earlier. With business and leadership skills honed over two decades of work in the South Pacific as a small business advisor – including for the United Nations – Pezzulo had all the skills necessary to take the helm at Hi'ipaka.

Despite some initial uncertainty, a visit to the valley brought Pezzulo clarity; he knew Waimea was where he was meant to be.

The kuleana for Hi'ipaka was multi-faceted: preserve the cultural and natural resources of the valley while simultaneously building a self-sustaining business operation to support those efforts. It was no small



Richard Pezzulo



Josie Hoh



Kimo Jenkins



Dr. Alana Kanahele



Ka'umealani Diamond

Photos: Philamer Felicitas



Waimea's famous waterfall and deep natural pool is the only thing that most people know about the valley. But Waimea is a wahi kapu with a storied history that dates back a thousand years. An understanding of this is what Hi'ipaka hopes to share with those who visit the valley - and what they hope that those who visit will take home. - Photo: Waimea Valley Hi'ipaka LLC

task. “When I started, this place was losing about \$1 million a year,” Pezzulo recalled.

“That first year the focus was on organizing – getting everybody on the same page and making sure everybody had input into developing a good strategic plan. One of the main things was watching our spending,” he added.

They also optimized their social media presence, supercharged their branding and marketing, reorganized, made some staffing changes, and then made sure that the people who visited the valley had a really good experience.

“We actually ended up making some money that first year. It wasn't very much, but since then we've generated revenue to sustain our conservation efforts.”

Over the past 14 years, Hi'ipaka has not only generated revenue sufficient to support its stewardship of the ahupua'a and meet its payroll, it has also been able build financial reserves to prepare for emergencies.

“We now have about \$11 million in an investment fund that is there for emergencies because anything can happen in the valley, like floods and rockslides,” Pezzulo said. He is proud that even when Waimea Valley was closed during the pandemic they were able to continue providing medical insurance coverage for all employees.

Hi'ipaka currently employs 86 people to support its cultural and conservation kuleana. Another 100+ staff are subcontracted to provide a range of guest services and operational support.

“We contracted out the food service – that's 50 people. We have a lū'au – 50 more people. We have a lifeguard service, that's 10 staff. We contracted out the gift shop and they have 10 staff. So well over 200 families now rely on Waimea,” said Pezzulo.

He notes that balancing cultural preservation and conservation efforts with the commercial aspects of Waimea Valley can be challenging and he's had to say “no” to many people pitching activities for the valley that simply aren't appropriate.

“It's about the impact on this valley rather than profit or revenue. It's looking at everything we do and making sure it supports our mission to preserve and perpetuate the human, cultural and natural resources of Waimea Valley for future generations,” Pezzulo said.

“When I started, the visitor count was about 400 people a day. Now it's about 1,300. That's our average. During the summer it's usually around 2,000 per day, which is about the max we want in here.”

STEWARDSHIP INFORMED BY RESEARCH

The educational and conservation programs core to fulfilling Hi'ipaka's kuleana are supported by ongoing research. Pezzulo and his team uniformly point to the decades of historical, cultural and archaeological work conducted by Waimea historian Rudy Leikaimana Mitchell beginning in the mid 1970s until his passing in 2008.

So profound was Mitchell's impact in Waimea that Hi'ipaka dedicated its outdoor amphitheater to honor his memory. Located toward the back of the valley the amphitheater is where Hi'ipaka hosts its weekly Ka 'Aha Hula i Waimea (the gathering of hula at Waimea) featuring hālau from around O'ahu.

“Uncle Rudy Mitchell was an amateur archaeologist who uncovered a lot of the cultural sites and developed a lot of the cultural programming here at Waimea,” Pezzulo shared.

Building on the work that Mitchell began is Hi'ipaka Research Direc-

tor Dr. Alana Kanahele. She and her team are responsible for researching and documenting the valley's cultural, historical, botanical, and archaeological 'ike. Their work supports multiple departments including Cultural Programs, Botanical Conservation, Education & Training, and Marketing & Communications.

Although she now lives in Honolulu and commutes to Waimea each day, Kanahele grew up in Waialua and her pilina to the valley is lifelong. “My parents were married here 47 years ago right at the upper meadow,” she smiled. “This place has always been really important to my family.”

In addition to supporting the programming efforts of other Hi'ipaka departments, Kanahele and her team also collaborate with outside researchers and write for academic publications.

“We're bringing researchers into the valley from BYU-Lā'ie and UH Mānoa for a number of different studies. It's been a really exciting time,” Kanahele said. “We have a herbarium and library here on site, so we are bringing the community in to use these resources.”

Noting that Waimea is steeped in mo'olelo Kanahele points out that, “We have three different major heiau: Pu'u o Mahuka which is up above us on Keanaloo; Kahōkūwelowelo which is a navigational heiau; and Kūpopolo.”

Other important, but smaller, cultural sites in the valley include Hale o Lono Heiau which is still used by cultural practitioners; Ku'ula Shrine dedicated to the fishing god, Ku'ula; and Hale Iwi believed to be a burial temple for an individual of high-rank.

“Waimea is a very special place,” Kanahele added. “We think of it as a pu'uhonua, a place of healing, a place of refuge, a place for high priests. This has always been a place for education.”

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR EVERYONE

Hi'ipaka offers a range of cultural educational programs, including school-based experiences that bring about 6,000 haumāna from 135 O'ahu schools to the valley each year.

Literally building on this momentum, Hi'ipaka has just completed a new traditional hale under the direction of master builder Kumu Francis Palani Sinenci near the entrance to the valley.

The hale is sited on a 4-acre parcel, Pu'ukua, and was built to support a new K-12 education-



Located on the north shore of O'ahu, the ahupua'a of Waimea encompasses 1,875 acres. It includes three major heiau and several smaller ones as well, plus scores of archaeological sites including house sites, lo'i terraces and shrines. Known as the "Valley of Priests" it was home to O'ahu's high priests for more than 700 years and generations of iwi rest undisturbed in its walls. - Photo: ©Adobe Stock/jerzy

al program that Hi'ipaka is developing. The area will be planted with native trees like koa, an agroforest with food-producing trees like 'ulu, and a lei garden.

Purchased in 2016, Pu'ukua was the last remaining privately-owned parcel on the valley floor and Hi'ipaka's first land acquisition using money from its Legacy Fund.

In addition to offering a variety of school programs, Hi'ipaka also offers family-focused programs suitable for any age, a program designed for kūpuna, and another for teachers. They also have a resident cultural artisan program that brings in practitioners from the community to teach on topics like launiu and lauhala weaving, kapa making, and 'ukulele.

Hi'ipaka Cultural Programs Manager Ka'umealani Diamond has worked in the valley for 17 years. She began working at Waimea after OHA reopened the valley and likes to say, “I sleep in Mililani, but I live in Waimea.”

A natural born storyteller, Diamond is passionate about sharing Waimea's history along with its cultural and spiritual importance but finds it difficult at times to protect the sanctity of this wahi kapu while welcoming visitors who may not comprehend the valley's significance.

“That is why education is really important to help them understand where they are,” she said. “I'm a true believer that you cannot fault people for what they don't know. But once they do, it becomes their kuleana to behave and carry themselves in a way [that is appropriate] in a sacred valley.”

To manage the ongoing challenge of being culturally authentic in a commercial setting, Diamond believes it's important for the Cultural Programs team to truly understand Waimea Valley. “I mean, take your shoes off. Walk in these places. Sit in these places. And listen. We are in service to this place. I know she will feed us, but we give first. That's how it works,” she said.

“I am just trying to hold space here for all of the kūpuna. It's not about us. It's about all those who came before us and what footprint are we leaving for those who will follow.”

BUILDING PILINA THROUGH SHARING

For Hi'ipaka Cultural Programs Coordinator Kimo Jenkins, working at Waimea in the late 1970s was life changing. Born and raised on the North Shore, he was about 19 when took a job at Waimea as a tour guide and met Rudy Mitchell, the valley's celebrated historian.

A CULTURAL TREASURE

Continued from page 23

"Uncle Rudy took me under his wing, trained me, and forced me to be a man," Jenkins laughed.

"I owe a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid. I worked in the valley with him. Did a lot of archaeological work. Ran the chainsaw. I did what Rudy instructed me to do and looking back it was the best time of my life. When we discovered something, Rudy would say we didn't discover anything; that the valley had allowed us to see what it is.

"I had my cultural rebirth during that time. He took me to Kaho'olawe. Made me read David Malo and John Papa Ii and then tested me. I was getting educated and working at the same time."

Jenkins worked with Mitchell for three years before leaving and starting his own company. Decades later, he was semi-retired when he happened to come to Waimea for a luncheon. "I walked around and the valley tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'come home,'" he smiled.

When he returned to Waimea in 2022, Jenkins said it took a while to figure out what his kuleana should be. Observing that so many visitors made a beeline for the waterfall without "seeing" rest of the valley, he came up with a plan to encourage people to slow down.

"They were missing the opportunity to engage with us, to see the kauhale (group of houses) and our other sites, so we instituted Ka'apuni o Waimea, a walking circuit through the valley," Jenkins said.

Ka'apuni o Waimea encourages visitors to learn and engage with Hi'ipaka's Cultural Programs staff at interpretive sites throughout the valley. Seated in the hālau wa'a (canoe house) that is part of the kauhale site, Jenkins explained that when people stop by, he talks about wayfinding, canoe building, and Hawaiian values.

"Nothing scripted. It's just talking story with guests and answering the questions they have. Some people will stay with us for a couple minutes, some people will stay for half a day. The engagement is equally important."

Jenkins adds, "Waimea is like a chameleon. It can be different to different people. The valley will guide them if they're willing to listen; if you're willing to listen to the valley you go to special places."

Guests who complete the Ka'apuni circuit are called "ho'okipa ambassadors" and receive a special pin. "We share Hawaiian values with them – kuleana, pono, mālama – they're taking the values we teach them back to wherever they are from around the world," he said.

"I think the valley wants to be loved. Respected. Held. I tell people all the time, learn the names of the ridges. Learn the names of the streams. Speak the names and connect with them and that's when the valley comes alive. It's a moving, living, breathing organism and it needs to be cared for. And we're the kia'i."

FROM THE VALLEY FLOOR TO ITS RIDGELINE

Hi'ipaka's Botanical Conservation department has kuleana for managing, maintaining and restoring Waimea's remaining native forests, endangered species habitats, and botanical gardens, while also cultivating and cata-



Hi'ipaka staff and volunteers restore the amphitheater in the back of the valley. It took nearly four months of Saturdays to complete. - Photo: Waimea Valley Hi'ipaka LLC

logging the valley's extensive botanical collections. They are responsible for all 1,875 acres – from the valley floor to its ridgeline.

The botanical gardens were established in the early 1970s after the Pietsch family acquired the valley. Today, they feature over 50 plant collections across 60 themed gardens, showcasing thousands of plant species from tropical and subtropical regions around the world. The garden is home to about 280 threatened or endangered species.

Hi'ipaka Botanical Manager Josie Hoh has worked in Waimea Valley longer than most. Originally from Malaysia, she attended college in California, completed an internship in plant conservation at Waimea in 1990, was hired in 1991, and has been caring for Waimea's botanical resources ever since.

"Hi'ipaka is such a blessing for Waimea Valley. Our mission is nonprofit which is very ideal for conservation, botanical projects and growth," she said.

Responsible for managing Hi'ipaka's botanical gardens and nurseries, Hoh describes the gardens as living museums. "They hold about 4,000 different types of plants. It's cataloged and there is a number for each plant, and everything is logged in our National Resources Data Solutions database. We have a data collection specialist who does the cataloging."

Catalog entries include information about where the plant was obtained, where it is originally from, why it needs to be in the nursery, and its required propagation methods. Hoh said that thousands of plants go through their nursery because Hi'ipaka has become a hub for plant propagation.

"Nonprofits that have conservation projects have come to us and asked for our help to grow, for example, coastal native plants for a restoration project on the North Shore," she said.

Hoh notes that the non-native plants in Hi'ipaka's botanical gardens were grandfathered in and are included for educational purposes, "so people don't have to travel to different countries to see a certain endangered plant. They can just come to Waimea."

She said they often get inquiries from researchers looking for plant specimens for medical or DNA studies. "Our inventory is included in the Botanical Garden

Congress International website. It's really wonderful that Hi'ipaka can help."

The department's conservation team is led by Conservation Manager Parker Powell. They work in the ma uka regions of the valley, monitoring native plants, removing invasive species, weeding, collecting seeds, and taking volunteer groups up to their restoration site.

Hoh's team cultivates both native and non-native plants. "The majority of the native plants are planted up in our restoration site which is up at Kalāhe'e Ridge. We also have four native Hawaiian gardens down here in the valley for educational purposes. But up there, it's real restoration of the 'āina and the forest."

Hi'ipaka currently has five ma uka restoration sites with 100 acres of forest fenced in. To date, about 100,000 native species have been outplanted.

PREPARING FOR THE NEXT DECADE

As OHA and Hi'ipaka celebrate 20 years of stewardship in Waimea Valley, the milestone is also notable for the transitions that it will bring; Pezzulo has announced his retirement at the end of 2026 and a search is now underway for his successor.

Reflecting on the changes ahead, Pezzulo is optimistic and unwavering in his aloha for the community and his hope that more kama'āina will come visit Waimea. "The community is so important. They're the ones that got the city council to change their mind and make sure that the valley is preserved in perpetuity," he exclaimed.

"So we really want to make sure that our community knows that this treasure is here for them. We offer a lot of free days for kama'āina. We have annual passes that are heavily discounted. Our admission is heavily discounted. We have Keiki Wednesday when children are free. Lots of 'ohana days, activities and summer concerts."

Hi'ipaka is also looking forward to facility upgrades including expansions of both the gift shop and pavilion, and renovation of their resource center thanks to a nearly \$4 million economic development grant.

Another key element of Hi'ipaka's transition into this next season will be the completion of their new educational program at the 4-acre Pu'ukua site. Through the site's volunteer work days, 'ohana who participate will have the opportunity to care for dedicated garden spaces, allowing them to build an ongoing relationship with the land.

Over the last few years, Pezzulo has also focused on staff development and training. All Hi'ipaka managers have completed a management certificate program, while staff identified as emerging leaders participate in leadership training. Hi'ipaka also has a college tuition assistance program.

"And to make sure our staff are really knowledgeable about Waimea Valley, every month we do an 'ike training, alternating botanical and cultural, so they know – and can share – the valley's cultural significance and beauty with our visitors," Pezzulo said.

"Young people are a really, really important part of this transition. We have a lot of bright young staff right now – and a lot of staff who we know at some point will be moving on and retiring like myself – we need to make sure they're prepared to take over." ■

Community Seeks Stewardship of Punalu'u

By Ku'uwehi Hiraishi

Earlier this summer, dozens of Ka'ū families gathered at Punalu'u Beach Park holding handmade cardboard signs reading "Respect Our Wahi Pana" and "Public Lands Not Private Hands." They were rallying under the weight of a sudden, quiet crisis: the county's lease for the beach park was about to expire on June 30.

For generations of Ka'ū 'ohana, Punalu'u has been a vital source of subsistence and the ultimate gathering place for life's major milestones. The community's cultural identity is anchored here.

"Especially for me, born and raised on this beach. Lived down here. Fished down here. Worked down here. Everything down here," says Ka'ū community leader Guy Enriques, "If you throw me in the water up there in the middle of the night, if I look at the bottom, I'll know where I am."

Ka'ū native Kurt Dela Cruz made the hour-long drive to the rally from Hilo, where he now lives in what he calls "economic exile" – a familiar reality for locals forced to leave their hometown in search of better-paying jobs.

"First thing you do is jump in Punalu'u. The waters hug you," says Dela Cruz, "Ka'ū is medicine. The barren landscape, mountains, winds – that's us, that makes us. It's about protecting that medicine."

For seven decades, public access to that medicine has hung on a fragile administrative thread. While a two-month extension was reached to temporarily keep the park gates open until September 1, the scare served as a sharp wake-up call.

Hawai'i County has operated the park under a \$1-a-year lease agreement with private landowners since 1954. The lease covers 6.8 acres, and includes the pavilions, parking areas, and campgrounds. This park, however, is just a fraction of the nearly 150 acres in Punalu'u that has been under private ownership since the plantation era.

Long before sugar plantations and resort developers, Punalu'u was a place of profound communal abundance. Even after the Māhele of 1848, the majority of the land remained in Hawaiian hands.

Lot Kapuaiwa (Kamehameha V) claimed the more than 5,300-acre Punalu'u ahupua'a, while kuleana parcels within the beach park area were awarded in the early 1850s to names like Kanekoa, Nawali, Kekapa, and Makaha.

The landscape shifted significantly after the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. The loss of political power allowed corporate interests to systematically consolidate individual family lands, with entities like Hutchinson Sugar Plantation and Hilea Sugar Company absorbing most of these kuleana parcels.

When sugar collapsed a century later, corporate entities departed, leaving local families to absorb the economic shock. Then came tourism – promised as an economic savior but often leaving behind little more than broken promises and decaying structures like the empty



Ka'ū families rallied in June 2026 to demand the preservation of Punalu'u for future generations. After more than 150 years of private ownership, these 'ohana are seizing a critical window of opportunity to transition these ancestral lands back into community hands. - Photos: Ku'uwehi Hiraishi



The collapsing A-frame of the Punalu'u Village Restaurant from the 1970s sits overgrown and neglected on private parcels ma uka of the beach. When Hawai'i's sugar industry began to collapse in the 1970s, landowners shifted focus to resort and tourism ventures.

Punalu'u Village Restaurant sitting just ma uka of the beach.

For decades, a revolving door of investment firms bought and sold the land, bringing an exhausting cycle of ambitious resort plans, permit battles, and local resistance.

"What chapter is this, chapter six?" asks Dela Cruz.

First came C. Brewer's Sea Mountain golf course community in the 1970s. Then came Punalu'u Development in the early 90s which ran into fierce community resistance that tied up their permits in court. The land was sold in 1994 to SM Investment Partners, which ended up withdrawing its permits five years later under intense community pressure.

Then in 2006, a new developer proposed Sea Mountain Village with 1,500 condo units and 300 hotel rooms.

Ka'ū mobilized once again in opposition. But this time, the strategy shifted from defensive resistance to permanent protection.

"I don't want my five boys to have to fight this in their lifetime," said Enriques

Ka'ū fought in 2007 to add Punalu'u to the county's Public Access, Open Space, and Natural Resources Preservation Commission (PONC) list.

This history of extraction has occasionally sown friction in tight-knit Ka'ū, as families wrestled with the desperate need for local jobs versus preserving their rural lifestyle.

"I'm tired of the division that developers bring into Ka'ū," shared long time community leader Earl Louis, "but we need the support of the community."

For community leaders, healing that division means recognizing that decades of commercial interests have returned virtually nothing of long-term value to Ka'ū. Instead of pitting neighbor against neighbor over resort jobs, Ka'ū families are focusing on a permanent alternative: protection through community stewardship.

"Punalu'u is just not my home," says Enriques, "It's everybody's who lives in Ka'ū. It's our home."

For two decades, Punalu'u has lingered on the PONC priority list – until now. For the first time in over a century, there is a very tangible pathway for local families to step in and steward Punalu'u into perpetuity.

With the lease extension set to expire on Sept. 1, 2026, Hawai'i County is actively working through the PONC process. The county faces an incredibly tight timeline to secure an appraisal, negotiate the acquisition, and close the deal.

For the families of Ka'ū, the stakes are too high for another chapter of defensive waiting. The push to permanently return Punalu'u to the hands of the community is happening right now. ■

Miloli'i: Stewardship, Not Ownership

By Micah Kahiwa

If you grew up in Miloli'i, you did not know poverty – at least not in the way Western society defines it. There, wealth is measured by the company you keep, the fish you reel in, and your willingness to give back to community. In Miloli'i, abundance is rooted in kaiāulu. Neighbors look out for one another. No one called it generosity; it was simply a way of life. Care for the kai, care for each other, and in return they will take care of you.

This reciprocity has been the foundation of Miloli'i; enduring for generations and defining the place that has been called the "Last Hawaiian Fishing Village."

To outsiders, Miloli'i can appear quiet, isolated, even forgotten. However, those who know it understand that its greatest treasures cannot be measured by western standards of living.

The richness of Miloli'i is found on an open chair on a neighbor's lanai, in the sound of keiki jumping into the bay from the docks, or in the sound of singing from the village church on a Sunday morning.

It is also found in the 'ike of our kūpuna; knowledge as old as the 'a'ā. Spend enough time in Miloli'i and you will see the relationship between 'āina and 'Ōiwi is so deeply intertwined that one cannot exist without the other.

The people of Miloli'i have spent decades protecting not only their fishing traditions but their very place on the land.

After the 1926 Mauna Loa eruption buried the nearby fishing village of Ho'ōpūloa, many families relocated to Miloli'i. Four years later, the territorial government designated the area as a public park, with the vision of creating a "Hawaiian Village."

Post-statehood, in 1968, that designation was rescinded and the land reverted to the ownership of the state. It was later slated for transfer to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL). However, that exchange never happened, as DHHL guidelines dictate they can only lease to Native Hawaiian beneficiaries with a blood quantum of 50% or more.

Decades of uncertainty over land tenure would follow, though the community endured.

In 1982, legislation finally recognized residents' long-standing ties to the area, authorizing long-term leases for the residents of Miloli'i displaced by the lava flow. Today, those leases continue to provide stability for many families but they carry an underlying problem: they have an expiration date.

Many of these leases were structured as 65-year terms beginning in the early 1990s and set to expire in the late 2050s. This means that within one more generation, the leases that have kept Miloli'i's families on their land will be at risk.

At the time, a long-term lease was the most workable compromise available to both the state and residents. It provided stability after decades of uncertainty and recognized the historical displacement caused by the eruption.



The adjacent private community known as "Miloli'i Beach Lots" are made up of individual parcels mostly owned by out-of-state buyers. The influx of these new homeowners coincide with noticeable damage to the surrounding reef, and excessive wastewater runoff. - Photo: ©Adobe Stock/norinori03



In 1868, a tsunami carried Hau'oli Kamana'o Church over 900 feet from its original location. Today, it still stands as one of Miloli'i's most historic landmarks. - Photo: Yoshi Canopus/Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

tion. But because lessees do not own the land they live on, their long-term security depends entirely on lease renewal.

Though this may sound like nothing more than a land-ownership issue, it is anything but.

When people speak of Miloli'i, they speak of the ocean and the people in the same breath. The two have never been separate. Remove one, and the other inevitably withers.

Proof of this is right next door. The community adjacent to Miloli'i Village, known as "Miloli'i Beach Lots," is a private community. The land there was developed and sold as individual parcels. The parcels were mostly purchased by out-of-state buyers seeking (relatively) inexpensive land in Hawai'i.

That influx of new homeowners has coincided with damage to the surrounding reef, a result of excessive

wastewater runoff that state water-quality monitoring has linked to the area.

Furthermore, state lawmakers have continued to toy with legislation that would allow aquarium fishing in Hawai'i waters, directly threatening the accomplishment of Miloli'i residents' to establishing the area as a Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area (CBSFA) - state-protected fishing reserve.

The question facing the people of Miloli'i is not simply who will own the land decades from now, it is whether an established community can continue to exist if its foundation remains unsettled. That question deserves thoughtful discussion now, not when the leases expire.

More than mere land title, this issue is about whether future generations of the families who have sustained Miloli'i for more than a hundred years will continue to have a place within it. Whether those lands remain under state stewardship or are entrusted to another entity, the outcome has the potential to shape Hawaiian land rights, even beyond the village shores.

Across Hawai'i, we celebrate places like Miloli'i because they remind us of the past. We photograph them. We tell visitors about them. We call them "cultural treasures" and invoke their preservation.

But real preservation demands more than protecting cultural or natural resources, it demands protection of the people who have sustained that culture for a century.

Their future should not depend on a lease's expiration date, but on the principles of stewardship.

Mālama those who gave their hearts and bodies in service of Miloli'i. Its people have cared for this place without owning it, loved it without possessing it, and protected it since the days of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

If Miloli'i is a treasure worth protecting, then so, too, are the people who have stewarded it. ■

A (Mostly) Geological History of Puna

By Bobby Camara

In his 1823 book, *A Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii*, British missionary and writer William Ellis described Kea'au thusly:

"Soon after five p.m. we reached Kaau (sic), the last village in the division of Puna. It was extensive and populous, abounding with well-cultivated plantations of taro, sweet potatoes, and sugarcane; and probably owes its fertility to a fine rapid stream of water, which, descending from the mountains, runs through, it into the sea. It was the second stream we had seen on the island."

The "fine, rapid stream of water" Ellis describes likely referred to the outflow of Kea'auloa, the large fish-pond at Hā'ena in the ahupua'a of Kea'au, rather than a stream.

In a 1982 report on Kahauale'a, Puna, Hawai'i by waterman and Polynesian Voyaging Society co-founder Tommy Holmes, he cited E.S.C. Handy, who wrote that "one of the most interesting things about Puna is that Hawaiians believe, and their traditions imply, that this was once Hawaii's richest agricultural region and that it is only in relatively recent time that volcanic eruption has destroyed much of its best land."

Geologist Clarence Edward Dutton recorded in his travels through Puna in the early 1880s that, "the traditions of the natives declare that no King ever reigned in Puna without seeing large parts of his dominion overflowed."

While probably an exaggeration, the statement nevertheless illustrates the fact that the Puna's allegedly fertile lands were as much threatened and scourged in pre- as in post-contact times.

According to available scientific data, for the past 2,500 years Kīlauea has alternated between explosive and lava-flow-dominated activity. A prolonged, 1,200-year-long episode of explosiveness ended around 1000; the next began in 1500 and lasted about 300 years.

Puna, with an abundance of rain, is able to clothe relatively fresh lava flows with vegetation very quickly. Residential lots on Kualoa flows, bulldozed for building, have excellent, though alien, vegetative cover growing out of bare rock a year later.

Lava flows between 1410 and 1470 destroyed Hi'iaka's beloved 'ōhia forests and buried Puna from what is now Kīlauea Iki to the coast, from Hā'ena to Hawaiian Beaches. The largest remaining kīpuka is Wao Kele o Puna, stewarded by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Starting about 1500, Puna experienced another period of explosiveness that lasted till about 1800. After massive explosions at Kaluapele o Kīlauea in 1790 resulted



On March 31, 1987, the ongoing eruption of Kīlauea destroyed the beloved wahi pana known as "Queen's Bath" a freshwater pool supplied by a natural spring that formed within by a collapsed lava tube. In this photo, onlookers watch helplessly as Queen's Bath is filled in by molten lava. - Courtesy Photo



An archival photo (date uncertain) of Pohoiki Beach in the moku of Puna. - Photo: Lyman House Memorial Museum

in many deaths – including warriors from the army of Ka'ū Ali'i Keōua Kūahu'ula – lava flows returned to Puna ma kai.

Few people understand our geologic history. Even when looking at recent flows while driving around, most don't realize that the rocky landscape is our gift from Pele. It is important to understand that those of us in Puna live on an active volcano. There can be long periods of stability, when flows don't threaten homes or livelihood, but there are times when Pele is very active.

Pelehonamea is the eruptive energy of Hawaiian volcanism. She reveals herself to us in the form of flowing molten lava. Pele has created all of our pae 'āina, the archipelago that is Hawai'i. After Pele does her work of creation her sister, Hi'iaka, begins to clothe fresh lava with vegetation. The cycles of eruptive growth and plant growth have gone on since time immemorial. Those who understand that fact realize that we and our modern works are only here temporarily.

Puna may have indeed been a very rich agricultural re-

gion, if we take 1,500 – 3,000-year-old kīpuka as clues. Older lava + rain = excellent growth. For example, the rain forest on the rim of Kaluapele o Kīlauea is less than 235 years old, its summit having been devastated in 1790.

More recently, Kīlauea has been very active. On the lower East Rift Zone, there were eruptions in 1790, 1840, 1955, 1960, 1977, and from 1983 to 2018 – the latter, from three separate vents: Pu'u'ō'ō, Kupaianaha, and Fissure 8 mā buried all but our memories.

Gone are the Kamoamoā beach of black sand, Kamoamoā campground, Waha'ula Heiau and Visitor Center, Punalu'u (Queen's Bath) pond and heiau, Wai'ākōlea ponds, Harry K. Brown Park and ponds, the canoe landing at Kalapana, "Drainpipe" surf spot, Kaimū beach, Pohoiki Boat Ramp, Ahalanui warm pond, Kapoho tide pools, Kapoho

town, Warm Springs at Kapoho, and Higashi Pond at Kumukahi – all are gone, along with hundreds of homes and many businesses. In 1955, one of the flows created the black sands that now form Kehena, one of the last beaches in Puna.

Life is cyclical. We are born, live lives, then die. The 'āina, the land, on active volcanoes also goes through cyclical processes. It is born during lava flows, clothed with vegetation and soils, 'āina supports and sustains residents, and eventually, on Kīlauea, it is reburied.

Hawaiians have lived in Puna for a thousand years. They learned about, and understood, their 'āina and their resources. They lived within their limits and knew their places on the land. Residents fished the waters of their ahupua'a using a variety of methods, including pole fishing from shore, nets cast or laid, canoes slid in on sand beaches or on canoe ladders lashed to the tops of low sea cliffs. Shellfish, crabs, and limu were gathered along the shore by residents of adjoining ahupua'a.

These days, traditional konohiki management practices have nearly been abandoned. But more importantly, there seems to be a collective amnesia, a forgetting, of our history. Our histories of living with, rather than in opposition to, our circumstances and environment must be acknowledged.

Understanding centuries of change is critical. Especially in these times of instant gratification and speedy communications, we must all remember that the land is the chief and we are its servants, Ke ali'i ka 'āina, he kauā ke kānaka. We should not attempt to exert our will on Pele. She must be accommodated, and we are the ones who must adjust to new realities. ■

Ka'ū Community Advances Plans for a Cultural Center



For the past 10 years, Hana Laulima Lāhui o Ka'ū has coordinated its annual Prince Kūhiō Festival at Nā'ālehu County Park in Ka'ū. The event not only unifies the community, it helps to raise funds for the planned Ka'ū Hawaiian Cultural Center that is gaining momentum after 30 years. - Photo: Ku'uwehi Hiraishi

By Ku'uwehi Hiraishi

Plans for the Ka'ū Hawaiian Cultural Center are regaining significant momentum after being on hold for more than three decades.

"Back in the day the first time we started, the whole idea was for keep our people here," says Ka'ū native Dane Shibuya, "We had kūpuna, so their grandbabies, they no like them move away. Us, we had small kids growing up, we no like them move away. So, we gotta come together as one."

It was 1994 and the Ka'ū Sugar Plantation had announced its impending closure after more than a century of operation. Shibuya and other Native Hawaiians from across Ka'ū founded the nonprofit Hana Laulima Lāhui O Ka'ū.

"The whole point was that we had one guy from each town," says Shibuya, a third-generation pig farmer and retired county police officer from Nā'ālehu.

Hana Laulima's mission was to build a sustainable, community-driven economy while preserving the cultural integrity and environmental resources of Ka'ū. The Ka'ū community saw a need for development and jobs that work in harmony with the people, for the people, and by the people. The group gathered community input and the Ka'ū Hawaiian Cultural Center was born.

By 1997, Hana Laulima secured partial funding and drawn up plans for the project as a community-centered facility designed to revitalize the economy and preserve Native Hawaiian culture. Due to circumstances beyond the group's control, the work on KHCC halted in the late 90s.

That didn't stop Shibuya and his wife, Terry-Lee, from continuing to provide cultural workdays for keiki and 'ohana at their family business, Masazo's Pig Farm, in Nā'ālehu.

"We get our program with the kids here; our own local kids do the imu. They tell me, 'Oh Uncle, first time I see one imu.' Right there, hurt me because 90% [of these

kids] never see one imu!" Shibuya says "The cultural preservation is a must because we're losing the culture."

Native Hawaiians living in Ka'ū today are descendants of some of the most resilient, and fiercely independent people on Hawai'i Island. The rugged landscape and bountiful shores have provided generations with a lifestyle closely tied to the land and sea.

Today, Ka'ū remains one of Hawai'i's most underserved communities with a little more than 9,400 residents spread out across 922 square miles. More than 34% of residents live in poverty, with limited access to education and health resources, and a complete absence of Hawaiian language or culture-based schools. As a designated food desert and rural community, Ka'ū also lacks infrastructure to support small business development and workforce training, particularly in culturally aligned and environmentally sustainable sectors.

The Ka'ū Hawaiian Cultural Center may be the answer.

Hana Laulima is currently seeking legislative support for Phase 1 of the Ka'ū Hawaiian Cultural Center. This first phase would include the construction of a Community Learning Center equipped with technology and learning labs, a Certified Teaching and Production Kitchen to support food entrepreneurs, and a Cultural Art Gallery and Community Store for local artisans and microenterprises.

The group is working closely with state Sen. Dru Kanuha and state Rep. Jeanne Kapela on the \$7.5 million state Grant-In-Aid request for Phase 1.

"They are onboard and they are trying to help us build this Ka'ū Cultural Center at the Wai'ōhinu area," says Terry-Lee.

Hana Laulima is also in lease negotiations with the state Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for 10.4 acres in Wai'ōhinu, Ka'ū.

"[In May], we find out about locking the lease. We're hoping long-term for the people of Ka'ū," says Terry-Lee.

Kapela called the project a "truly transformational opportunity for Ka'ū."

"Ka'ū is one of the most remote regions in the state,

and our residents are incredibly resilient," says Kapela, "Beyond the cultural center itself, there is exciting potential to expand its impact through the development of a certified kitchen and a value-added facility. These efforts could create a lasting legacy, positioning our rural community as an economic and entrepreneurial hub for farmers, ranchers, and small business owners across Hawai'i Island."

Shibuya says, "We wanna do that value-added one they have in Waipahu. We want to bring that model down here right next to our cultural center. They can package their products, label it, and sustain their families."

Terry-Lee says the best part is that the cultural center can sustain itself economically by leveraging Wai'ōhinu's proximity to the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

"Get the malihini, the tourism. A million something people pass through Ka'ū on their way to go to Volcano. Even if they spend one dollar, that's one million dollars," says Shibuya.

For Shibuya, the project is about more than just infrastructure and tourism; it is a promise kept to the kūpuna of 1994. By building a place where the culture is lived rather than just remembered, Hana Laulima is ensuring that youth of Ka'ū no longer have to leave their roots to find their future. ■

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 3:30 p.m.**

Locations subject to change

August 5 - Waimea

Parker Ranch Center
66-1185 Hawai'i Belt Rd. 96743

August 12 - Nā'ālehu

Shirakawa Hotel Unit 10
95-6039 Māmalahoa Hwy. 96772

August 19 - Pāhoa

Puna Kai Shopping Center
15-2714 Pāhoa Village Rd. 96778

August 26 - Miloli'i

Canoe Club Table - 89-1151 Miloli'i Rd. 96704



oha.org | 808-594-1835

KOHOPONO26

HE KULEANA KĀKOU

He kuleana kākou — and knowing where candidates stand is where it begins. Koho Pono is a voter education initiative created by and for Lāhui. This season, the Hui Kalai‘āina of Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i asked candidates for Lieutenant Governor and the Hawai‘i State Senate and House four questions on issues vital to our lāhui: iwi kūpuna, Mauna Kea, the US military leases on our ‘āina, and Hawaiian Home Lands funding. Responses are printed as given. Full results at kalahuihawaii.net. E koho pono — choose wisely.

Q1	Do you support the protection of ancient Hawaiian burials?
Q2	Do you support the building of the TMT on Mauna Kea?
Q3	Do you support ending the US Military leases on O‘ahu and Pohakuloa?
Q4	Do you support fully funding the Department of Hawaiian Homelands so that the waitlist can be addressed?

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR CANDIDATES	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Daniel Anthony (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
Della Au Bellati (D)	YES	YES	NO	YES
John Choi (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
Hopelin Crecensia (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
Ku Cuadra (D)	YES	NO	NO	NO
Kilakila Kamau (NP)	NR	NR	NR	NR
Derek Kawakami (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
Rose Margarte Mejia (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
Robert Peters (R)	YES	YES	YES	YES
Sam Puletasi (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
Register to Vote: olvr.hawaii.gov				
Hawai‘i State Election Day Primary: SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2026 General: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026				
Voter Service Centers Open 10 business days before each election and offer accessible voting, in-person voting, and same-day voter registration through Election Day.				

SENATE CANDIDATES		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
DISTRICT 2 Puna	Tanya Yamanaka Aynessazian (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Frederick Fogel (L)	YES	YES	NO	NO
	Joy San Buenaventura* (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
DISTRICT 13 Dowsett Highlands, Puunui, Nuuanu, Pacific Heights, Pauoa, Punchbowl, Palama, Liliha, Iwilei, Chinatown, Downtown	Leina‘ala Ahu Isa (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Wallyn Kanoelani Christian (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	James Logue (D)	YES	YES	NO	YES
	Tricia Kwai Lin Nakamatsu (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Jordan Nakamura (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Lyn Vasquez (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
DISTRICT 17 Mililani, Mililani Mauka, Waipi‘o Acres, Launani Valley, Wahiawa, Whitmore Village	Nani Brown (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Donovan Dela Cruz* (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
HOUSE CANDIDATES		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
DISTRICT 8 Hawi, Halaula, Waimea, Makahalau, Waikii, Waikoloa, Kawaihae, Mahukona	Hope Alohalani Cermelj (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Sharon L. Olson (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Monique Perreira (R)	YES	NO	NO	YES
	David Tarnas* (D)	YES	YES	NO	YES
DISTRICT 12 Portion of Keahua, Haliimaile, Pukalani, Makawao, Pulehu, Waiakoa, Kula, Keokea, and Ulupalakua	Brad Bowen (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Dan Johnson (R)	YES	NO	NO	YES
	Keoni Kuoha (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Kyle Yamashita*	NR	NR	NR	NR
DISTRICT 13 Molokai, Lanai, Kahoolawe, portion of Kahului, Haiku, Peahi, Huelo, Nahiku, Hana, Kipahulu	Mahina Poepoe* (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Robin D. Vanderpool (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
DISTRICT 14 Kahakuloa, Waihee, portions of Waiehu and Maalaea, Olowalu, Lahaina, Lahainaluna, Kaanapali, Mahinahina Camp, Kahana, Honokahua	Kanamu Balinbin (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Elle Cochran* (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Paele Kiakona (G)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Ashley Olson (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Sne Patel (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	David Asing (R)	YES	NO	NO	NO
DISTRICT 20 Leahi, Kahala, Waialae, Kaimuki, Kapahulu	Tina Nakada Grandinetti* (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Janel Fujinaka (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
DISTRICT 26 Makiki, Punchbowl	Tony Silva (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Robyn McCreary (R)	YES	YES	NO	YES
	Jonathan Kennealy (R)	YES	NO	NO	NO
	Reno Abihai (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
DISTRICT 28 Sand Island, Iwilei, Chinatown	Nadia Alves (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Ernest Carvalho (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Anthony Nagatani (R)	YES	NO	NO	YES
	Michael Ratcliffe* (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Faatea S. Faatea (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Kekoa o pololū Kealoha (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
DISTRICT 30 Kalihi, Kalihi Kai, Ke‘ehi Lagoon, and Hickam Village	Shirley Ann Templo* (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Amanda Ybanez (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Angela Melody Young (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Eric C. Barsatan (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Daisy Hartsfield* (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
DISTRICT 36 Waipahu	Maurice Morita (D)	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Danny Degracia (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Loren Doctolero (D)	YES	NO	NO	YES
DISTRICT 39 Royal Kunia, Village Park, Honouliuli, Hoopili, and portion of Waipahu	Wayne Kaiwi (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Corey Rosenlee (D)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Sheila Medeiros (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
	Kanani Souza* (R)	YES	NO	YES	YES
DISTRICT 43 Kapolei, Makakilo	Kalehua Kaopua (D)	YES	NO	YES	YES
	Chris Muraoka* (R)	NR	NR	NR	NR
DISTRICT 45 Waianae, Makaha					

THIS IS A PAID ADVERTISEMENT

KEY: *=Incumbent | (D)=Democrat | (R)=Republican | (G)=Green Party | (L)=Libertarian | (NP)=Non-Partisan | NR=No Response

West Maui's Water Supply

By Kalea Nagasako

West Maui's water supply remains at a dangerous flow level. For residents in Honokōhau, their water source is their rivers. The Maui Land & Pineapple Company is diverting the water to hotels for tourism. The problem residents are facing is that their rivers aren't flowing how they used to. Water is the main resource for their livelihood and is getting taken away from them.

Wili Wood, who restores taro patches, echoed the community's concerns and recounted an incident where a sudden automatic release of a "small wave of water" from a "Taro Gate" dam washed nearly a dozen children about 100 yards downstream. Luckily, because they were familiar with those rivers, they were all okay.

Wood was born and raised in Kahana, Maui, but currently lives in Honokōhau Valley. Who's getting affected by this situation? We are all affected in both positive and negative ways by this situation.

The positive effect is that everyone gets all their municipal waters in West Maui from the Honokōhau streams. Years ago, the Lahaina and the Honokōhau streams would mix with the water streams in Kahoma. Today, Honokōhau streams only flow through the Mahinahina water treatment plant. Kapalua has their own water treatment purification facilities.

Why do you think this is happening? Originally it was for agricultural reasons. The Honokōhau Ditch was built in the late 1890s. It was created to lease the water to the Pioneer Mill, so that they were able to grow sugar.

According to the Fleming's Journal, at the time Maui Land and Pine owned land which was Royal Patent 8130 belonging to Moses Kekuaiwa, grandson of Kamehameha I. Leasing the water to Pioneer Mill, Maui Land and Pineapple were able to gain resources from Makaluapuna all the way to the north end of Honokowai Valley.

The ditch system fills three reservoirs: Plantation, Village, and Mahinahina water treatment. The water travels through watersheds. All but the Village reservoir have been taken care of. It's a big hold. A plastic liner was placed over this hold and shredded pieces of plastic have been floating around in it for over 30 years now.

Anytime there is a high river flow in Honokōhau, they don't take any water; they let all the water rush out into the ocean. Which is good for the stream, so debris can flush out. But it would be good to capture this high water, when it's abundant, you could store it into those different reservoirs. During drought conditions in the summer there is very little water flow. There is barely enough to feed the taro system.

Effort should be put in, even if the entire water system has to be redone. It is on the edge of catastrophic failure. Nobody is going to get any water – again you only have 10 days once it fails. We are trying to sound the alarm prior to the catastrophic failure. ■

Kalea Nagasako is a student at Lahainaluna High School.

Pelehonuamea's Workplace Handbook

By Lisa Kanani Sarish

Fire me for reading
for asking questions and finding out
Fire me for thinking
for taking issue for questioning clout

Please! Hire another colonizer!
he'll smooth it over make it right
of squat, he's seen and done it
his experience will be your might

Please! Hire another colonizer!
make sure he's fat and sweats
connect him to your network
make sure he's Proud of vets

ensure he has philosophy
from a people not his own
to soothe his fears from his founding
father never being home

shame will drive him to performance
Our language on your signs
to mark the trails you don't return
to bring you peace of mind

you took from us our words
our medicine our land
you blessed us with the choice
of death or joining hands

Fire me for reading
in the key you gave us knew
for unlocking the fiefdom
for becoming sharp and shrew

Fire me for reading
I'll collect the pyre's wood
and we'll work to build together
to advance the common good

She will Fire me like olive,
like pōhaku pele 'ōma'o.
She will pour me out like rain
we've watched you and your
weaknesses
and know the pink flab of your shame

Send for my termination
as you would my sister Maus
Fired stronger than the masters' tools
we can indeed tear down the house ■

Lisa Kanani Sarish is working on a master's degree in history. Although she currently resides in Pembroke, Maine, her roots are in Waimānalo, O'ahu.

Road to \$7 Billion to Stop the Economic Genocide

By Kalaniakea Wilson, Ph.D.

The State of Hawaii's projected 2027 GDP (gross domestic product) is \$136.9 billion. Seven billion dollars represents only 5% of the 2027 GDP, yet economic genocide policies continue to target wait listers for elimination.

A 2024 book titled *Unconquered Non-European States* published by Oxford University Press confirms that the Hawaiian Kingdom is the longest "illegal belligerent occupation in the world."

In 2017, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) hosted wait listers and homestead association presidents at Humuula, Mauna Kea. Their vote supported security, gorse removal, ungulate management, and wait lister initiatives.

Jan. 13, 2018, at 8:08 a.m., a ballistic missile threat alarm sounded throughout the archipelago inciting pandemonium. I believed a nuclear strike was inbound and realized the Hawaiian race could end. After internalizing death for 30 minutes, we learned it was a false alarm. Following this event, 700 wait listers donated one dollar each to initiate the Kanaka Ranger program.

On March 26, 2018, Hale o Kuhio was erected in C1 of the Aina Mauna Legacy. The state approved Kanaka Ranger native ecosystem management on Mauna Kea, in Hana, Haena, then Waimanalo, collect-

ing data to study visitor impacts.

Thousands of visitors and government officials stopped by to kukakuka including current OHA Chair Kai Kahele. His father, Gilbert Kahele, a civil servant legend for 33 years, died while waiting for a homestead. Another OHA trustee's parent passed only days after receiving a lease. Examples of continued state-sponsored physical genocide.

June 2019: Hale o Kuhio was destroyed and replaced by a state law enforcement blockade a month later.

July 17, 2019: kupuna were arrested on Mauna Kea access road. Traffic tickets immediately targeted Kanaka protester vehicles adding to political and economic genocide.

In 2022, DHHL was awarded \$600 million. DHHL Chair Watson has said that \$6 billion is needed to house the entire wait list. In 2023, \$328 million was awarded to Kalima case plaintiffs.

On March 26, 2026, Hale o Kuhio was rebuilt after a business plan was submitted in October 2025. The plan includes a toll booth, gift shop, parking lot, cultural eco-reforestation tours, food trucks, bathrooms, and a Kanaka Ranger training facility. A portion of the revenue will be used to stop the genocide. Wait lister and Kuhio organizations are working together inspired by Chair Watson and an all-star lineup of commissioners supported by Gov. Green. Mahalo to Makai Freitas, now serving as UH Board of Regent and head of the democratic party, for supporting \$7 Billion to Stop the Genocide.

In the 2024 Kanahele case, the supreme court ruled the DHHL transfer of Mauna Kea Access Road to the Department of Transportation was invalid. The illegal transfer occurred a day after wait listers erected Hale o Kuhio.

All East Hawaii Homestead Associations and Commissioner support Hale o Kuhio to receive a commercial lease for Mauna Kea toll booth.

Why does Waimea Nui Homestead Association continue to compete with wait listers? Waimea Nui has homes with multiple projects supported by DHHL and already manages the Waimea side of Mauna Kea. Wait listers have no homes or projects. ■

Dr. Kalaniakea Wilson is a scholar of Indigenous politics, Hawaiian Kingdom law and genocide. He chooses not to use diacriticals. For more information contact: kupaiiwaloha@gmail.com.

My Greatest Teacher

By Kau'i Aguiar

I have had the immense honor and privilege of being able to work in Papahānaumokuākea with the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project since the summer of 2023. I am deeply grateful for the time I have spent there because every experience I have had in Pō has brought me closer to myself and, ultimately, closer to my home and my kūpuna.

It may sound cliché, but I feel as though I carry this place within me now. Everywhere I go, I experience the world differently because of my time in Papahānaumokuākea. It has changed the way I see, the way I listen, and the way I understand my relationship to 'āina and my heritage. In September, I will be going on my ninth mission and am very eager to get back to Pō.

There is a palpable shift in 'ano the moment you cross Ke Ala Polohiwa a Kāne. The clouds are bigger and bolder. The water is sweeter and brighter. We commune with mōlī and 'iwa and watch as they raise their young and those young learn to fly.

As we swim the reefs, giant ulua come to inspect our alien frames clumsily splashing, reminding us we are not alone. We've seen monk seals wean their pups, fight for dominance, or, more often, rub their sandy bellies as they warm themselves on shore. Every return deepens my appreciation and understanding of the sanctity of this place and the kuleana I have to it.

In my first year working in Papahānaumokuākea, I was so excited but also incredibly nervous. I was constantly thinking and then overthinking. I found myself



reflecting a lot on what it meant to be there for me, for my coworkers, and the loved ones we represented.

More than anything, I thought about my kūpuna. I wondered if they could see me and if they were proud to see me giving back to our home. I wondered if they laughed when I laughed and if they cried when they saw me cry. In those

quiet contemplative moments, surrounded by a place that had sustained generations before me, I felt closer to them than I ever had before.

Through my time in this sanctuary, I have become more confident not only in my abilities as a diver and marine debris technician but also in my identity as a Kanaka 'Ōiwi. The experiences I have had there have strengthened my relationship with where I come from and the kuleana I carry, both in Pō and at home on Hawai'i Island.

Papahānaumokuākea has taught me how to find peace in times of turmoil and to reach for my voice even when it is difficult. I am grateful for this place, and for the ways it continues to shape and reshape who I am. It has shown me how to move through the world with greater humility and curiosity. I hope to remember the lessons I have learned, hold them close, and to carry them with me always. ■

Kau'i Aguiar is a Big Island girl, born and raised. She is very proud of where she comes from and wants to spend her life giving back to her home and community in any way she can. Kau'i is a marine debris technician with the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project and will be with them for a fourth season this summer.



Glassy day at Manawai. - Photo: Kau'i Aguiar

Our Oceans of Islands

By Kalei Nu'uhiwa, Ph.D.

Aloha kākou! If you are heading to Aotearoa (New Zealand) between Aug. 14, 2026, and March 2028, visit the New Zealand Maritime Museum|Hui Te Ananui A Tangaroa to experience the Our Oceans of Islands exhibit. Curated by Lagi-Maama Academy & Consultancy, the exhibition explores the Indigenous languages, knowledge systems, and maritime practices of 24 Moana Nui (Oceania) nations, including Hawai'i.

Lagi-Maama Academy & Consultancy is an education and cultural organization that advocates for projects driven by Moana Nui communities in Aotearoa for Moana Nui communities. Dr. Kolokesa Uafā Māhina-Tuai of Lagi-Maama explains that this exhibit is "genuinely informed by 24 island nations." Each contribution is narrated in the featured nation's Indigenous language and English, something that has not likely happened previously in Aotearoa.

An invitation arrived in Hawai'i in April 2025, requesting an Indigenous Hawaiian lens to add to a collective working concept equivalent to the Samoan and Tongan examples of 'fanua' and 'fonua' that speaks to the inseparability of environment focusing on maritime connections of the Moana Nui peoples. My first thought was, "Hawaiians would say Honua."

While most would think of celestial navigation and open ocean voyaging as an easy cross ocean connection, the Makahiki ceremony came to mind. To my knowledge, it is the only ceremony that Hawaiians still collectively practice, waiting for the right honua (earth) and lani (sky) alignments that alert our



communities to the arrival of Lono, sent to us from our Moana Nui cousins below the equator.

Then, when the Makahiki ceremonies are completed, a wa'akea canoe for Lono is carved, loaded with provisions, and sent back below the

equator to navigate its own way to our Oceanic cousins. It is an excellent example of our conscious effort to symbolically remain connected to the rest of our Moana Nui 'Ohana.

The Hawaiian contribution highlights the concept of Honua (the inseparability of land, ocean, and environment) through the Makahiki ceremonies. Featured artifacts include, an Akua Loa: A travel-sized deity carved by Andre Perez and the Kūpa'aikē Society, guided by Master Carver Dr. Lyonel Grant. It is adorned with a black lei hulu (feather lei) made by artist JoAnna Kaho'owahaokalani Maine.

An 'umeke in kōkō, a wooden calabash held in a Nāhuihui knotted net, is suspended next to the akua loa representing the Makali'i star constellations. They were crafted by Master Kā Kōkō Keali'i Reichel and Kapua Ka'au'a. To each of these artisans my undying gratitude for their contributions.

My thanks to Jaqui Knowles, Emily Nicholson and staff of the New Zealand Maritime Museum, Toluma'anave Barbara Makuati-Afitu, Dr. Kolokesa Uafā Māhina-Tuai, and Meleseini Tuai of Lagi-Maama Academy & Consultancy for inviting Hawai'i as one of the participating nations and for being such gracious hosts.

Our Oceans of Islands invites visitors to experience the diverse Indigenous perspectives and languages that continue to shape communities across the Moana Nui today. Go check it out Gang! ■

What Hurricane Prep Looks Like Here

By Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH, RDN

In August 1871, a hurricane tore through Waipi'o Valley, destroying nearly 30 homes in about 90 minutes. A storm so intense it's still studied by meteorologists today. Hawai'i has weathered storms like this for centuries, but the way we live here is different from most of the country, and that means hurricane preparedness should look different too.

Plan for the whole household, not just a family of four. Hawai'i has the highest rate of multigenerational households in the nation, 9% statewide and 16-18% among Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander families. A lot of mainland disaster advice assumes one small family unit. Here, an emergency plan often needs to cover grandparents, parents, and grandkids all under one roof.

List out every medication in the house, not just your own, and think through mobility differences. Can everyone in the house move quickly if you need to evacuate, and if not, what's the plan? Decide in advance who in the household is responsible for helping an older or less mobile family member move quickly if evacuation becomes necessary.

Stock up like the barge might not come. Everything shipped to Hawai'i arrives by boat or plane, and a storm can disrupt that supply chain here or wherever the shipment is coming from. That makes "two weeks of food" more than a suggestion. Aim for at least two weeks of shelf-stable food per person - rice, oatmeal, canned goods, a manual can opener - plus one gallon of water per person per day. Rotate your supply so older items get used first and check



expiration dates twice a year.

The same shipping risk applies to prescription medications. Ask your pharmacy about an early refill before a storm rather than waiting until supplies run low.

Know your one road out and know each other. Some communities, like Waipi'o,

have a single access road, no cell service, and terrain that washes out easily. In places like this, professional disaster relief can take longer to arrive than it would in town, with neighbors often ending up relying on each other first.

Know who has a truck, tractor, or chainsaw that could help clear a blocked road, who has medical training, and where people would gather in person if phones and power are both down. Talk about this with your neighbors now, not after the road is already gone.

Make sure everyone can reach everyone else. Write down phone numbers for your whole 'ohana, including hānai family and the aunties and uncles who are family to you. Give a printed copy to everyone in the household, so a dead phone battery doesn't mean losing access to someone's number. Also pick one contact on another island or the mainland. Local lines jam up after a storm, but a distant call usually still goes through. Other family members can then check in with that person for updates.

Hawai'i has weathered storms for centuries. Preparing for the next one means planning around how we actually live here. ■

Follow Dr. Matsuo on Facebook @DrJodiLeslieMatsuo, and on Instagram and Twitter/X @foodrxblueprint.

I Ulu nō ka Lālā i ke Kumu The Branches Grow Because of the Trunk

By Fox Pōmaika'i Deatry

"I ulu nō ka lālā i ke kumu." Our kūpuna remind us that every branch draws its strength from its trunk. We flourish because those before us chose to preserve, practice, and pass forward what mattered most. Their 'ike became our foundation. Our kuleana is to ensure it does not end with us.

For many Hawaiians, home is no longer measured only by geography. It is found in the language we speak, the stories we remember, the songs we sing, the hula we dance, and the relationships we nurture. Yet distance can quietly separate us from these gifts if we do not intentionally return to them.

That is why Ka 'Aha Ho'olauna Aloha (KAHĀ) exists.

From June 26 - 28, KAHĀ 2026 welcomed kumu, loea, educators, cultural practitioners, artisans, and families to Las Vegas under the theme, "O'ahu ka 'Ōnohi o nā Kai."

Inspired by O'ahu as a place where people and 'ike have converged for generations, the gathering created space for learning through ola pono, hana no'ēau, 'ike Hawai'i, and hula. More importantly, it created space for pilina.

"Distance creates a sense of separation from culture, language, and community," reflected Kumu Ku'ualohanui Kauli'a, founder and president of KAHĀ. "KAHĀ exists to close that distance. We gather to reclaim 'ike, strengthen identity, and build relationships grounded in aloha, ensuring that 'ike Hawai'i continues to thrive."

His words speak to something greater than a single weekend. Hawaiian culture has never endured through places alone. It has endured because each generation chose to become both student and teacher, understanding that 'ike is not something we own, but something entrusted to our care.



Throughout the gathering, conversations became mentorship, introductions became friendships, and learning extended well beyond the classroom. Culture was not simply discussed. It was lived.

Reflecting on the weekend, Kumu Kanani Cadoas, luna ho'okele of KAHĀ 2026, shared, "KAHĀ is more than an event. It is a place where aloha is shared, 'ike is exchanged, and our culture is celebrated. As we return home, it is our kuleana to mālama the knowledge we have received, nurture the pilina we have created, and continue sharing aloha wherever our journeys may lead."

Perhaps that is the true legacy of KAHĀ. Not measured by attendance or the number of workshops offered, but by every relationship strengthened, every lesson carried forward, and every person inspired to live aloha more deeply.

As long as there are places where 'ike is shared, pilina is nurtured, and each generation reaches back to lift the next, Hawai'i will forever live within her people.

As Queen Lili'uokalani reminded us, "Never cease to act because you fear you may fail." May we carry that courage with humility and aloha, ensuring that the 'ike entrusted to us today becomes the inheritance of generations yet to come. ■

Fox Pōmaika'i Garcia-Deatry is the chief marketing and philanthropy officer for Ka 'Aha Ho'olauna Aloha (KAHĀ). An experienced communications and nonprofit executive, he has held senior leadership positions with Al Jazeera Media Network, the Movember Foundation, Outright International, and the National Institutes of Health. He currently serves as a board advisor to the Society of LGBTQ Entertainment Critics (GALECA) and holds a graduate degree in political management from The George Washington University.

PAPAKILO
DATABASE

Papakilo Database has:

- › Mahele Records
- › Hawaiian Language Newspapers
- › Ali'i Letters
- › Historic Images and Documents

And so much more!

Start your research today!

papakilodatabase.com

OHA
OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Supporting Community Recovery after the Maui Wildfires

By Ka'imipono Hanohano, Kāhealani Nae'ole
and Austin Haleyalpiy



In the aftermath of the August 2023 Maui wildfires, thousands of residents needed greater access to mental health care. In response, the Hawai'i State Department of Health contracted with Papa Ola Lōkahi to provide resources to community organizations and mental health providers through funding from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Supported by the SAMHSA Emergency Response Grant (SERG), Papa Ola Lōkahi launched Maui SERG in 2023 to coordinate mental health services and support community recovery for those impacted by the wildfires. Working in partnership with state agencies, community organizations, and service providers, Maui SERG has spent the past three years expanding behavioral health resources and fostering resilience across Maui communities.

In June 2026, Maui SERG convened providers, partners, and community organizations to reflect on what supported healing after the fires, share lessons learned, and strengthen relationships to carry this work forward.

The Maui SERG 2026 Convening brought together mental health practitioners, cultural healers, community navigators, and organizations serving individuals and families affected by the fires. Participants shared their experiences supporting community recovery and highlighted diverse pathways to healing through cultural practice, community connection, and clinical care. The gathering uplifted ongoing efforts across Maui and reinforced collaboration beyond the immediate response period.

Maui SERG providers have played a unique role in supporting healing within the community. By meeting individuals where they are and adapting services to evolving needs, they have remained trusted, front-line partners throughout the recovery process. Their compassionate, culturally grounded approach continues to support individuals, families, and communities as they move forward. ■

To learn more about Maui SERG providers, hear their stories, and learn the impact they have had, visit polhi.org/MauiSERG.

Ka'imipono Hanohano, from Kula, coordinates the Maui SERG program, working closely with partners and the Department of Health. D. Kāhealani Nae'ole, EdD, also from Kula, is director of Ka Pūnana, overseeing community investment, collective impact and other innovative initiatives at Papa Ola Lōkahi. Austin Haleyalpiy, from Wailuku, also helps to coordinate Maui SERG and Papa Ola Lōkahi's network of community health workers.



Maui SERG Year 3 Providers share a commitment to continue to support healing across the community. - Courtesy Photo

Protecting Kūhiō's Promise

By KipuKai Kuali'i



For over 100 years, Prince Kūhiō's Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) has represented a promise by the United States to the Native Hawaiian people recognizing that our rehabilitation required returning us to our 'āina. That promise remains as important today as ever.

For more than 10,000 of us homesteading families, the HHCA is not simply a housing program. It is the foundation for rebuilding our families, preserving our culture, strengthening our communities and ensuring that future generations remain connected to our ancestral homeland and culture.

For the more than 30,000 still waiting, it represents hope that one day, they too, will be awarded a land allotment.

Today, that promise is under attack with the *Ryan v. Watson* lawsuit which argues that the HHCA's eligibility requirements violate the Equal Protection Clause because they are based upon Native Hawaiian ancestry (race) instead of being available to everyone.

The lawsuit is part of a broader national legal movement that has increasingly challenged programs associated with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), affirmative action, and other initiatives designed to remedy historic injustice.

Native Hawaiian institutions have become frequent targets.

Recent lawsuits have challenged admissions policies at Kamehameha Schools, Native Hawaiian health scholarship programs of Papa Ola Lōkahi, and now our Hawaiian Homes trust.

While each case involves different legal questions, they share a common theme: treating programs created to address the unique history of Native Hawaiians as ordinary racial classifications rather than as the political and trust obligations established by Congress.

We, at the Sovereign Council for

Hawaiian Homestead Associations and other HHCA supporters, argue that this comparison misses a fundamental point: the Hawaiian Homes trust was created by federal law, incorporated into Hawai'i's Admission Act, and has been reaffirmed repeatedly through federal legislation

recognizing the United States' special trust responsibilities toward Native Hawaiians.

From this perspective, the HHCA is not merely a race-conscious housing program, but part of a longstanding federal trust relationship with Hawai'i's Indigenous people.

Defending the HHCA will require more than courtroom arguments. Native Hawaiian organizations, homestead associations, beneficiaries, elected officials and community leaders must continue educating the public about why the HHCA exists and the historical injustices it was intended to address.

Congress should reaffirm its trust responsibilities through additional legislation where appropriate. Our Kaua'i County Council unanimously passed a resolution introduced by me and Chair Mel Rapozo. Other counties are doing so as well. The State of Hawai'i and all counties should continue filing strong legal defenses and supporting amicus briefs that explain the unique political and historical status of Native Hawaiians.

Finally, the best defense of our trust is fulfilling its promise by reducing the waiting list and delivering more homesteads to beneficiaries.

The HHCA has never been about granting special privileges. It was created to remedy the devastating dispossession of an Indigenous people whose population, land base, language and culture had suffered extraordinary loss.

Protecting the HHCA means protecting Prince Kūhiō's solemn promise – not only for today's homesteaders and waitlisters, but for every eligible Native Hawaiian that he intended forever. ■

Ka Pepehi Kanaka Haole 'ana ma Waimea, O'ahu

Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

Ma ka lā 7 o Mei 1792, ka makahiki like o ka ho'ola'a 'ia 'ana o Pu'ukoholā e nā kahuna a Kamehameha, ua pae ka moku a Kapena Keoki Vanakua ma Waimea, O'ahu no ka huli 'ana i wai a i lako no ka moku.

'O kēia hono a me ke awāwa o Waimea, kekahi o nā ahupua'a i hā'awi 'ia e Kamehameha i ka 'oihana kahuna a ma laila i noho ai ke kahuna nui 'o Hewahewa. I ka holo 'ana o kahi wa'apapa mai ka moku *Daedalus* e ki'i i lako, ua 'ākoako lili'i nā kākā ma nā pali ma lalo o Pu'u o Mahuka, ka heiau po'okanaka ma laila. Ua kau lili'i pū nā kākā ma ka muliwai o Waimea a puni. Ua noho 'umikūmākahi kākā mai ka *Daedalus*.

'A'ole i ho'i mai 'ekolu – 'o 'alihikaua Lukānela Likeke Hegeseth, kilo hōkū Wiliama Gooch, me kekahi kanaka Pūkiki, nā kanaka i hā'ule i ka pō'ino. 'A'ole i ho'okipa 'ia kēia mau kanaka hao-le. Ua ho'omake 'ia.

He aha ke kumu o kēlā pepehi kanaka? Eia ke kumu, ma mua o kēlā hanana, ua pae kekahi moku kālepa, ka *Grace*, ma O'ahu. Ua koi kekahi haole ma ka inoa 'o Ridley i ke kapena o ka moku e kīpū a make i kekahi ali'i ma ka moku. 'O kēia Ridley, he kauleo 'o ia no nā ali'i o O'ahu akā he i'a alo lua i ka moana 'o ia. Ua 'auhe'e e hui pū me nā haole o ka moku *Grace*. Ma muli o kēia hana, ua hele a kānalua nā kākā o Waimea i nā moku nona ka hae Pelekania. Pēlā lākou i 'ike



he haole Pelekania nō.

'A'ole na'e 'o Vanakua ma Waimea ma kēlā manawa pepehi. Ma Maui 'o ia me Kahekili a me ia 'o Vanakua i kama'ilio ai e pili ana i ka hana 'ino ma Waimea. No laila, ua ho'ouna 'o Kahekili i kona kaikaina 'o Tamohomoho e kōkua iā Try-too-boo-ry (Kalanikūpule), ke kia'aina o O'ahu, e 'imi i kaulike no Vanakua. Ua lohe 'ia, aia nā kākā hewa ma Waikiki.

No laila, ua hopu 'ia 'ekolu kanaka ma Waikiki a ua ho'omake 'ia lākou. Akā, ua hewa 'ole lākou. I ka hiki 'ana o nā miki-oneli, ua mihi nā po'e i ho'olawehala (accuse) i nā kākā i pepehi 'ia. Ua hewa 'ole nā kupa o Waikiki.

Ma mua o 1792, ua lohe nā Hawai'i e pili ana i ka 'ino o kēia po'e Pelekania. 'O ka mea kaulana loa ka pepehi 'ana iā Kapena Kuke ma Ka'awaloa. Ua ho'ohaunāle 'o Kuke i nā ali'i me nā koa no ka mea ua hopu 'o ia iā Kalani'ōpū'u i kanaka pāna'i (hostage) no kekahi wa'a papa a kekahi mau kākā i lawe. Ma ka makahiki 1779 nō kēlā.

'O kekahi hana 'ino kaulana 'o ia nō ka luku kanaka ma 'Olowalu, Maui ma ka manakahiki 1790. Ua lohe paha ko Waimea po'e i ka pō'ino. He mo'olelo 'oko'a kēlā no kēia pukana a'e. ■

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.

HYA Goes to Keomolewa-Kapalakiko

By Kamakanaoakealoha Aquino

About eight years ago, Native Hawaiian Student Services (NHSS) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa restarted the Hawaiian Youths Abroad (HYA) program.

The program dates back to King Kalākaua's reign, when the king, with the support of the Hawaiian Kingdom Legislature, supported sending 18 Hawaiian youth to travel abroad between 1880 and 1892.

The Hawaiian Youths Abroad program sent young Hawaiians to Italy, Scotland, England, China, Japan, and the United States.

Personally selected by Kalākaua himself, these young people were to become the future leaders of the Hawaiian Kingdom and were sent out to study engineering, medicine, art, music, military science, and foreign languages. They would acquire foreign knowledge and bring those skills back to serve their country.

The recently revived Hawaiian Youths Abroad program started by taking students to Paris and London in 2018. Then in 2019, students traveled to London, Turin and Naples. In 2024 program participants traveled to French Polynesia, and to Japan in 2025.

This summer, they traveled to Keomolewa through Kapalakiko (from Vancouver, Canada, to San Francisco, California) for 10 days to retrace the 19th century connections between the Hawai-



ian Kingdom and the Pacific Northwest.

With two tuition-free courses (six credits), students learned about labor settlements, Hawaiian diplomacy and education, and engagement with the 19th-century world. The travel itinerary included visiting locations such as Vancouver (City), Salt Spring Island, and Victoria Island in Canada; Seattle, Tacoma, Kalama, and Fort Vancouver in Washington State; and San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Cruz in California.

The focus of Hawaiian Youths Abroad has been retracing the path of our ali'i, diplomats, and citizens to engage students in different educational experiences and training around the world.

Priority considerations for student participation include undergraduate UH Mānoa students who have at least one or more semester remaining; and past or current NHSS students who have participated in prior programs, show promise for advancing in leadership, are interested in advanced graduate studies and research engagement at UH Mānoa, and who have a demonstrated record of interest and engagement in Hawaiian education and research. ■

For more information, go to: manoa.hawaii.edu/nhss/learn/hawaiian-youths-abroad-program.

To read the experiences of student participants, go to: manoa.hawaii.edu/nhss/learn/hawaiian-youths-abroad-program/hya2026.

GET REGISTERED TODAY!

A Native Hawaiian Registry Card offers:

- A form of verification of Native Hawaiian ancestry & Indigenous Status.
- Faster application process for OHA Loans & Grants.
- Eligibility for OHA-Sponsored Programs and for various organizations that serve Native Hawaiians.



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



Māmaki

Along with olonā, 'opuhe, Hesperocnide, endemic nettles all

By Bobby Camara



All in a row: pua wahine, pua kāne, hua o'o. - Photo: G.D. Carr, UH Mānoa

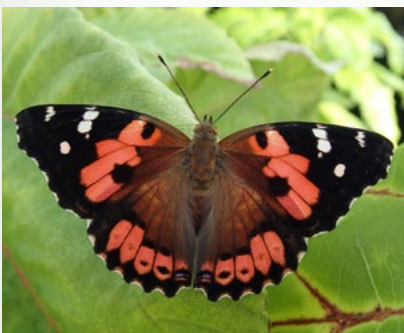
Got tea? Need tea? One of our most used and useful lā'au, māmaki (*Pipturus albidus*), is mostly made into tea "for what ails you." A general tonic, hot, warm, cold. Available in lots of markets.

When I was coming up as a naturalist in the 70s, Bill Mull was a mentor. He and his wife, Mae, "retired" to Volcano, where he embarked on a second career as a naturalist photographer. Spectacular closeups of the wonders of Native Hawaiian endemicity: spiders, tree snails, cave invertebrates, all were lovingly and passionately captured on film.

On walks, he often referred to nettleless nettles, mintless mints, pred-leps (carnivorous caterpillars), and our famed happy-face spiders. Māma-

ki, a Hawai'i version of stinging nettles found on the continent, doesn't sting. Rather, it provides us with tonic tea, with ripe, white fruits rubbed into the mouths of babies to ease 'ea (thrush), and with food for pe'elua pulelehua Kamehameha (Kamehameha butterfly caterpillars).

As with many lā'au 'āpa'akuma, māmaki is variable: lau soft, pale green and sandpapery, or sturdy, glossy, dark green with red veins, or ... and some are monoecious (separate male and female flowers on the same plant – see pictures) and some dioecious (separate male and female plants). Sometimes stem fibers were a constituent of kapa, especially in 'Ōla'a on Hawai'i. Shrubs or small trees grow in the open or in subcanopy dappled shade. ■



Resting on māmaki, a resplendent pulelehua Kamehameha, one of our two endemic flutterbys. - Photo: Will Haynes, Hawai'i DLNR-DOFAW



Rising from a rain forest tangle of uluhe, a classically red-veined māmaki. - Photo: Wikipedia

Leadership Begins with Kōnane

By John W. Kaohelauii

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 impact as contributing members of the Native Hawaiian community.



must be cared for together.

Unlike chess or checkers, kōnane is not confined to a single 64-square board. Every papamū is unique, much like every ahupua'a. Success comes from reading the papamū, understanding relationships, and making wise use of what is available.

Perhaps its greatest lesson is found in the board itself. The pieces begin interwoven, not separated into opposing sides. That lesson remains relevant today. Hawai'i's future will not be strengthened by an us-versus-them mentality, but by recognizing our interconnectedness.

Leadership requires balance, thoughtful action, and decisions that strengthen the whole community. I believe our next great Hawaiian leader will draw upon these lessons learned on the papamū to help unite our people for a stronger future.

My kuleana has been to find creative ways to teach kōnane and encourage its use in classrooms, homes, and boardrooms. Somewhere in Hawai'i today is a child who may become our next great Hawaiian leader. That future leader could be walking among us. Someone simply needs to teach them kōnane.

I made my move. What will yours be?

Since 2011, John W. Kaohelauii has dedicated himself to putting Kōnane back into the hands of our people. Learn more and download his free "Teaching Papamū" guide at konanegear.com

WHERE HAWAII COMES ALIVE

WAIMEA VALLEY
HIIPAKA LLC

20 YEARS

FINAL SHOW!

SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

AUG 29

Norm Thompson
Mark Yamanaka
Herb Ohta Jr. & John Yamasato

Landgraf Named a Guggenheim Fellow

Kapulani Landgraf, a professor of art at Windward Community College, has been named to the 101st class of Guggenheim Fellows (2026) for her creative work in photography.



Kapulani Landgraf
- Courtesy Photo

Landgraf's artwork is included in collections locally, on the continent and around the world. Her major projects include "Piliāmo'o" the documentation,

in collaboration with photographer Mark Hamasaki, of the construction of the H-3 freeway and the destruction it left behind.

Landgraf is also the director of Gallery 'Iolani, which recently concluded a special exhibit about musician, composer and Kumu Hula Robert Cazimero. Her books, *Nā Wahi Pana o Ko'olau Poko* (1994) and *Nā Wahi Kapu o Maui* (2003) both received Ka Palapala Po'okela awards for excellence in illustrative books.

Guggenheim Fellows receive grants ranging from \$40,000 - \$55,000 to pursue "scholarship in any field of knowledge and creation in any art form, under the freest possible conditions."

Landgraf's fellowship will be applied to her project, "What Was Taken What Remains," which confronts colonial histories and will include archival research, photographic interventions, 'ōlelo Hawai'i, and mo'olelo to reframe dominant narratives.

Landgraf is one of 223 individuals selected in 2026 from a pool of nearly 5,000 applicants. Since its establishment, the Guggenheim Foundation has granted fellowships to more than 19,000 individuals including at least 125 Nobel laureates.

More than 2,000 Attend the 25th Annual Native Hawaiian Convention



The Hawaiian Council's 25th Annual Native Hawaiian Convention welcomed more than 2,000 attendees, including 300 youth, to the Neal S. Blaisdell Exhibition Hall July 20–22. Guided by the theme "Ho'olōkahi. Ho'okūpa'a. Ho'oholomua," the gathering brought together leaders, cultural practitioners, educators and community members to share 'ike and explore issues shaping the future of the lāhui. OHA Chair Kaiālī'i Kahele moderated a panel that included Kali Watson (DHHL), Dr. Sheri Daniels (Papa Ola Lōkahi), and Jack Wong (Kamehameha Schools) to discuss growing legal threats targeting Native Hawaiian trust programs and what is at stake for Native Hawaiian self-determination, equity and community wellbeing. OHA also participated in panels addressing sustainable computing, artificial intelligence and 'Ōiwi data sovereignty, as well as the future of lands under expiring military leases, including restoration, remediation, return, stewardship and the exercise of sovereignty. - Photo: Philamer Felicitas

DHHL Awards More Than 1,000 Lots in July



Hundreds gathered at the Hawai'i Convention Center on July 18 for Department of Hawaiian Home Lands O'ahu residential project lease awards. DHHL awarded 815 project leases: 400 in Waimānalo; 400 in 'Ewa; and 15 in Nānākuli. The previous weekend, on July 11, DHHL awarded 200 residential project leases in Pana'ewa on Hawai'i Island. Under the leadership of DHHL Director Kali Watson, the department has stepped up its process, awarding leases before houses are built, to provide hope and security to long-time waitlisters and ensure that they can name their successors. DHHL plans to award another 200 residential leases in Pana'ewa in August, and 541 residential leases on Kaua'i in October. - Photo Courtesy of DHHL

Community Protests Kalaupapa Tours

On July 9, several dozen Moloka'i residents gathered at the Kalaupapa trailhead to prevent the reopening of ranger-led public hiking tours by the National Park Service which launched two days earlier.

Following the peaceful standoff, the park service announced that Kalaupapa National Historical Park was "temporarily pausing future public tours while it reassesses the feasibility of visitor access."

The settlement of Kalaupapa was established in 1866 to quarantine Hawaiian citizens, mostly Native Hawaiians, believed to have contracted Hansen's disease (leprosy). Kalaupapa National Historical Park was established in 1980 to preserve the village and its history.

Small commercial tours to Kalaupapa were led for years by resident and patient Meli Wata-

nuki (Kalaupapa Saints Tours), however, Watanuki passed away in June and her company ceased operations. Shortly afterwards, the park service announced it would begin offering its own tours twice a week.

At issue is the fact that the park service did not engage in public consultation prior to launching the tours. According to Maui County Councilwoman Keani Rawlins-Fernandez who is from Moloka'i, even the residents of Kalaupapa did not know about the tours until they read about it on a flyer posted to a building.

Tours to Kalaupapa remain on hold while the park service completes its review.

Noh Named ED of U.S. VETS Barber's Point



Tamah-Lani Noh
- Courtesy Photo

Tamah-Lani Noh has been named executive director of U.S. VETS Barber's Point. Noh is a retired veteran with 30 years of enlisted and commissioned service in the Hawai'i Air National Guard and the U.S. Air Force.

Noh brings extensive experience in nonprofit leadership, community partnerships, and program development to her new role, which involves overseeing services supporting veterans including housing, workforce development, and case management.

Throughout her career, she has held numerous leadership roles, including serving as the counter-drug coordinator with joint command time, where she managed a statewide drug program to support law enforcement agencies.

She has also been active in advocating for and establishing

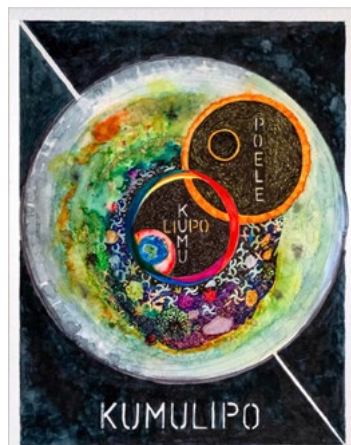
NEWS BRIEFS

Continued from page 36

various prevention programs, including the Hawai'i Youth Challenge Academy, the Elementary School Attendance Program and the Kōkua, 'Ohana, Aloha Program – programs developed in collaboration with the Hawai'i National Guard, Honolulu Police Department, Department of Education, and Department of Health. For years, Noh ran the Hawai'i Guard's drug interdiction programs.

As the homeless community engagement specialist for former Gov. David Ige, Noh was responsible for engaging community members and agencies, facilitating training, and addressing homeless issues statewide.

Lum Ho Solo Art Exhibit



Kumulipo by artist Wahineka'iu Rie Sharon Lum Ho. - *Courtesy Photo*

Commons Gallery at UH Mānoa will present a solo exhibition, *Emergence – Puka Mai*, featuring the work of artist Wahineka'iu Rie Sharon Lum Ho. Curated by J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, Ph.D., the exhibit will run from Aug. 25 - Sept. 6, 2026.

Emergence – Puka Mai spans several decades of Lum Ho's art practice, which primarily draws on the *Kumulipo*. This epic chant delineates complicated interrelationships and enumer-

Ei Nei Wins Big at the 2026 Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards



Congratulations to Ei Nei, who took home six Nā Hōkū Hanohano Awards at the Hawai'i Academy of Recording Arts annual celebration of Hawaiian and Island music on July 11. Ei Nei, a musical trio comprised of Dane Fujiwara, Grant Kono and 'Ekolu Chang, have performed together since 2016. This year they took home awards for Island Music Album of the Year (*Ei Nei, Look At Us*); Single of the Year (*Hawai'i Forever*); Favorite Entertainer of the Year; Group of the Year; Song of the Year (*Hawai'i Forever* Composer's Award); and Album of the Year (*Ei Nei, Look At Us* – Producer's & Artist's Award). Other multiple-award winners that evening included Kimié Miner who took home three Hōkū Awards for Female Vocalist of the Year, Extended Play of the Year (*Ku'u Hawai'i*), and Hawaiian Single of the Year (*Ku'u Hawai'i*); Izik (Isaac Moreno) was named Male Vocalist of the Year and also took home a Hōkū for Alternative Album of the Year (KŌWĀ). Newcomer Baba (Joshua) Tavares received two Hōkū Awards for Most Promising Artist of the Year and for Extended Play of the Year (*Hanohano Hānau*).

- *Photo Courtesy of Ei Nei*

ates thousands of deities and ancestors.

"It begins in deep darkness and moves to light, to the beginnings of life forms, the cyclical nature of evolution and the profundity of dualisms connected to the universe," Lum Ho explains. "The oneness of all inspires me; we are observers and stewards of emergence."

Lum Ho grew up in Wailuku, Maui, and has a BFA from the UH Mānoa, an MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art, and a JD from John F. Kennedy School of Law. Kauanui is a new art curator and established activist-scholar whose work focuses on Hawaiian sovereignty and cultural politics. She directs the Native American and Indigenous Studies Program at Princeton University.

A special walk-through of the show will be held August 20 from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m., followed by a panel on Global Indigenities in Kuykendall room 410. A reception will be held at Commons Gallery on Aug. 29, 2026, from 12:00 noon - 4:00 p.m., with an artist-curator dialogue at 2:00 p.m.

For more information, visit: Hawaii.edu/art/exhibitions-events-museum.

Pregnant and 'Ono for Poi?

A new study called "Poi for Māma" (POM) will explore how eating poi may support overall health during pregnancy by improving digestion, balancing blood sugar, and enhancing overall wellbeing. Eligible participants

will receive one pound of locally produced poi per day for 28 days.

During the project, participants will complete health and food surveys and have their physical measurements (i.e., height, weight, blood pressure) taken. Swab samples will also be collected to examine changes in pregnancy and gut health. Compensation will be provided for participants' time and contributions.

The research team is from the

University of Hawai'i Cancer Center. Pregnant women from the windward side of O'ahu (from Ko'olaupoko to Ko'olauloa) are invited to participate in the 4-week project.

Scan the QR code to see if you're eligible or contact the research



Scan QR Code

team at poi-forma@cc.hawaii.edu or call 808-586-3007 or text 808-353-5537. ■

'Ōiwi Representation at National History Day Competition



(Top Photo) 'Ānelalani Suapaia, a rising senior at Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, took home a third-place award in the Senior Individual Exhibit category of the National History Day National Competition June 14-18 for her project "Revolutionizing Native Hawaiian Nutrition: The Impact of Claire Ku'uleilani Hughes." Held at the University of Maryland, nearly 3,000 students competed in the national competition – selected from a pool of about 500,000 students who participated in local events. (Bottom Photo) In addition to Suapaia, five students from Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo Public Charter School in Hilo also qualified for the national competition. However, because there are no Hawaiian-speaking judges at the national level, the haumāna showcased their projects at the University of Maryland as well as at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian "In Language There is Life: I ka 'Ōlelo nō ke Ola" exhibit. The haumāna included Uluā'e Keali'ikanaka'olehaililani, Ka'ie Martin, Pūnua Gomes, Pikake Evans-Barnes and Mana Inoue. They are pictured here with their kumu, Māhealani Lono. - *Top Photo Courtesy of National History Day; Bottom Photo Courtesy of Hawai'i Council for the Humanities*



Community Briefing & Listening Session on

MILITARY LEASED LANDS

Community informational briefing to raise awareness about Public Land Trust lands currently leased by the U.S. military on Hawai'i, O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i, and Ni'ihau that will expire between 2028 - 2031.

Wahiawā, O'ahu

Tuesday
August 18, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Leilehua High School
Cafeteria

1515 California Avenue
Wahiawā, HI 96786

For more information, go to:

oha.org/aloha-aina

TUNE IN LIVE!

This event will broadcast live. To watch, go to oha.org/live or go to OHA's Facebook and Youtube pages.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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

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, Kaua'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. Waihee IV
Trustee, At-Large
Tel: 808.594.1876
Email:
TrusteeWaihee@oha.org

Narrative Sovereignty

One of the greatest losses in Hawai'i's history was not only political sovereignty, it was narrative sovereignty.

Before the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, Native Hawaiians built one of the world's most vibrant Indigenous Hawaiian language newspapers, preserving mo'olelo, debating public policy, recording history, and shaping the future of the Kingdom. Native Hawaiians were not merely the subjects of the news; they were its publishers, editors, writers, and critics.

Over time, those voices diminished. As political power shifted so, too, did control over Hawai'i's dominant narratives.

For generations, stories about Native Hawaiians have increasingly been filtered and illustrated through non-native institutions and worldviews, rather than through Native Hawaiian voices and lived experience.

Media does far more than report facts. It shapes what society values, whose voices are trusted, and how communities understand one another. Today, narrative is often shaped through quieter editorial choices: headlines, photographs, cartoons, and the stories that receive attention. Individually, these decisions may appear insignificant. Collectively, they influence public perception.

One need not look only at headlines to see this. Even positive stories celebrating Native Hawaiian youth have, at times, been paired with imagery that many reasonably viewed as diminishing rather than uplifting the very people the stories sought to celebrate.

I cannot know the intent behind those editorial decisions, but intent and impact are not always the same. Editorial judgment carries weight.

The recent discussion surrounding the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' exploration of acquiring KITV and KIKU provides another example. OHA's proposal deserves rigorous public scrutiny, and reasonable people can disagree about whether it represents a wise investment of trust resources.

But much of the conversation quickly shifted from evaluating the proposal on its financial and strategic merits to questioning whether Native Hawaiians were seeking to "influence" public opinion through media ownership.

That framing deserves reflection.



Kaiali'i Kahele

CHAIR
Trustee,
Hawai'i Island

Every media organization is shaped by its ownership. Across America, much of the media landscape is concentrated among corporations, nonprofits, investment groups, and billionaire owners. Their priorities, investments, and editorial judgments inevitably influence the public conversation. Ownership has always mattered.

Yet when Native Hawaiians seek to participate in that same landscape, not to silence others, but to become owners themselves, the conversation often

changes.

Suddenly, questions are raised about "influence," motive, and objectivity in ways that are rarely applied to those who already possess enormous influence over public discourse. If ownership matters when Native Hawaiians are involved, then intellectual honesty requires acknowledging that it matters for everyone.

Political cartoons deserve broad protection as expressions of free speech. They challenge elected officials, institutions, and ideas, and they should. But they also shape public perception.

When Native Hawaiian institutions are repeatedly portrayed through ridicule or caricature without equal attention to the historical context in which they exist, those portrayals become part of a broader narrative.

None of this is an argument against criticism. OHA should be scrutinized. Its trustees should be questioned. Public institutions earn trust through transparency, accountability, and results.

Native Hawaiians are not seeking to control the narrative. We are seeking something our kūpuna once exercised freely: the opportunity to help tell our own story.

The question is not whether Native Hawaiians should own media, but whether they deserve a meaningful place within it. If we accept concentrated media ownership by wealthy individuals, powerful institutions, and national organizations as an ordinary feature of our modern media landscape, then Native Hawaiian ownership should not be viewed through a fundamentally different lens.

Reclaiming narrative sovereignty is not about diminishing anyone else's voice. It is about ensuring that Native Hawaiians are no longer merely the subjects of Hawai'i's story, but once again among its authors. ■

OHA Governance Dispute

Aloha a nā hoaloha, e nā 'ohana o ka lāhui. I'm going to speak to you plainly and from my pu'uwai (heart) because it's the only way I know how.

This situation among our Board members has left me confused. It has left me saddened and, frankly, a bit embarrassed. Not because of disagreement. Disagreement can be healthy and productive. What concerns me is how far some of this information has traveled without real understanding. More importantly, I'm concerned about the cost to our lāhui.

I pray that what you take away from this column is that nobody has been silenced.

Our trustees and our procedures are structured to ensure that when we disagree, we bring those disagreements to one another first – in our meetings, in the open, where our beneficiaries can see them and weigh them for themselves. That's not silence. That's accountability.

What troubles me is that several of our trustees chose to put their names on a court filing containing legal admissions without first bringing the matter before the full Board.

When statements are made that could affect OHA's legal position or expose the trust to potential liability, those decisions deserve to be discussed by the full Board – not developed privately and then presented in a courtroom or through the local news.

I worry about the precedent that's being established right now. The same trustees who have criticized the Board for not being open enough in its discussions have themselves coordinated a legal filing without first convening a Board discussion.

If openness is the standard we expect of one another, then it must be the standard to which we hold ourselves. Every one of us.

Another important detail that hasn't gotten enough attention is that the requirement to attempt mediation before



Dan Ahuna

Trustee,
Kaua'i and
Ni'ihau

litigation has existed for years. It was included in the former CEO's employment agreement before our current chair ever joined the Board.

Although the agreement was executed by then-Chair Hulu Lindsey on OHA's behalf, the mediation provision reflected a policy decision approved by the Board at the time. That context is important as we consider today's disagreement.

The fact that some who supported that framework are now challenging its application naturally invites questions about why a process once considered appropriate is now being criticized.

I know this has been difficult for our community to watch. It has been difficult for me as well. But this is still your trust. It is a kuleana passed down to us by those who came before and entrusted to us for those who will come after.

Right now, we have real work before us: representing our beneficiaries during the military land lease negotiations, re-establishing the I Ola Relief Fund to help families in times of need, and ensuring that the \$55 million in Public Land Trust revenues owed to OHA is secured and re-invested into programs and opportunities for our people.

Every hour and every dollar spent fighting a personnel dispute that already has an established process for resolution is time and money diverted from the mission OHA was created to fulfill.

Here's what I'm asking – not only of my fellow trustees, but of all of us – let us bring our disagreements home, to the Board table, in front of the people we serve, the way we have always been entrusted to do. That is not weakness. It is accountability. It is respect. It is good governance.

Not I. Not me. Us. We. Lāhui.

That is a principle I believe in and one I hope will guide us toward healing, resolution, and a renewed focus on serving the Native Hawaiian people.

'O wau nō me ke ha'aha'a. ■

Oswald Stender: A Model of Fiduciary Duty

The first person to ask whether I would ever consider becoming an OHA trustee was Oswald Stender, who himself served as an OHA trustee from 2000 to 2014. Uncle Oz, as he was affectionately known, regularly welcomed me and my students from the Center for Tomorrow's Leaders (CTL) to OHA's offices. During those visits, he generously shared his time and spoke with us about leadership and public service.

It was in these meetings with Trustee Stender that I learned my first lessons about OHA. Uncle Oz passed on his mana'o about the Public Land Trust, the Akaka Bill, Hawaiian nationhood, and a concept essential to being a trustee: fiduciary duty.

A trustee's fiduciary duty is the legal obligation to act in the best interests of the trust and its beneficiaries, rather than in the trustee's own interests. This is one of the highest duties recognized by law.

Stender was the epitome of fiduciary duty throughout his service as a Kamehameha Schools Bishop Estate (KSBE) trustee from 1990 to 1999. His story is chronicled in *Broken Trust: Greed, Mismanagement & Political Manipulation at America's Largest Charitable Trust* by Randall Roth and Samuel P. King.

Many remember 1999 as the year KSBE imploded. Four of the five trustees overseeing the \$6 billion trust were ultimately removed for breaching their fiduciary duties. Uncle Oz took a different path. He voluntarily resigned, walking away from his \$1-million-a-year salary because protecting Princess Pauahi's legacy mattered

more than holding office.

That decision taught me the first and perhaps most important fiduciary duty: loyalty.

The duty of loyalty means putting beneficiaries' interests above your own. Personal ambition, prestige, and compensation must take a back seat to the purpose of the trust. When the IRS threatened Kamehameha Schools' tax-exempt status, Uncle Oz didn't fight to keep his job. He offered to resign if it meant protecting the trust.

Uncle Oz also exemplified the fiduciary duty of care.

The duty of care means a trustee doesn't look the other way when there's wrongdoing, even within the board. When he believed fellow trustee Lokelani Lindsey was mismanaging Kamehameha Schools and misusing trust assets, he didn't stay silent. He sued to have her removed, and the court ultimately agreed.

He understood the duty of obedience as well.

The duty of obedience means carrying out the trust exactly as its creator intended. Uncle Oz tested every decision against Princess Pauahi's vision for educating Native Hawaiian children.

Finally, Uncle Oz demonstrated the fiduciary duty of good faith.

The duty of good faith means taking responsibility to protect the trust. Although Uncle Oz tried to stop the board's misconduct, he still accepted responsibility in the IRS settlement, paying excise taxes that helped Kamehameha Schools recover millions of dollars. That sacrifice, along with voluntarily resigning from his position, was an act of good faith.

Uncle Oz demonstrated that fiduciary duty is much more than a legal obligation. It's about making difficult decisions when they're unpopular. It's about putting beneficiaries first. And it's about having the courage to speak up when something is wrong. Those lessons have shaped my understanding of what it means to serve as an OHA trustee. ■



Keli'i Alkina, Ph.D.

Trustee,
At-Large



One of the most cherished photos in my OHA office, featuring Oswald Stender with the 2005 class of CTL Fellows. A gift from Lei-Ann Stender Durant, Uncle Oz's daughter. - Courtesy Photo

**BISHOP MUSEUM:
NOTICE OF INTENDED REPATRIATION**

Excerpts from Published Notice N7299 in the Federal Register on July 15, 2026. The full notice is available here: www.federalregister.gov/d/2026-14162.

Dates: Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice may occur on or after August 14, 2026.

Summary: In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum (BPBM) intends to repatriate certain cultural items that meet the definition of unassociated funerary objects and that have a cultural affiliation with the Native Hawaiian organizations and nā 'Ohana in this notice.

- A total of approximately 687 cultural items identified collectively as "Lots 10-83 (with additional pieces)" or "Lots 10-83+," from the Honoko'a Cave Complex, also known as Forbes, Kawaihae, and Mummy caves, have been requested for repatriation.
- The BPBM has determined that there is a connection between the cultural items described in Published Notice N7299 and the Mary Kawena Pukui Cultural Preservation Society; the 'Ohana Diamond; the 'Ohana Kekumano; the 'Ohana Keohokālole; the 'Ohana Olds; and the Temple of Lono.

Requests for Repatriation: Additional requests for repatriation may be submitted by any lineal descendant or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice who shows, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the requestor is a lineal descendant or a culturally affiliated Native Hawaiian organization. Send additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to NAGPRA Coordinator, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, 1525 Bernice Street, Honolulu, HI 96817, or email to BM.NAGPRA@bishopmuseum.org.

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:
INTER-ISLAND SUBMARINE FIBER
OPTIC CABLE PROJECT
WĀKIU, HĀNA, MAUI.**

SWCA Environmental Consultants is preparing Cultural Impact Assessments (CIAs) and Ka Pa'akai Analyses for the proposed Kūnoa North Inter-Island Middle Mile submarine fiber optic cable (FOC) project. This project will establish six cable landing sites designed to bring fast, reliable broadband to rural areas across the Hawaiian Islands.

The planned Hāna High and Elementary School landing site is located within the ahupua'a of Wākiu TMK (2)-1-3-006-008, adjacent to the school's southern boundary. The proposed alignment for this segment consists of a submarine FOC that will make landfall via a horizontal directional drilled (HDD) borehole and conduit placed

beneath the shoreline. The submarine cable will connect to the terrestrial FOC at a beach manhole (BMH), which will serve as the transition point between the offshore and onshore segments. From the BMH, the terrestrial FOC will continue along an overland route via a buried trench, underground HDD, or on overhead utility poles for connection to existing telecommunications infrastructure. On Maui, this project is set to benefit the communities of Waiehu, Ke'anae, and Hāna, as well as the Hawaiian Home Land communities of Waiehu, Paukūkalo, Ke'anae, and Wailua.

SWCA is seeking community input regarding cultural knowledge of the area, including past and present land use, cultural traditions, gathering practices, and any concerns related to cultural resources or practices near the project area. Please contact SWCA at hawaiculturalconsultation@swca.com or (808) 437-8974 by Aug. 28, 2026, for more information or to share insights. Your input will help ensure cultural practices and concerns are properly considered.

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:
WAILANI AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PROJECT PONAHAUAI AND PUNAHOA
SOUTH HILO DISTRICT, HAWAII ISLAND**

On behalf of Wailani Development, LLC., ASM Affiliates (ASM) is preparing a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) for the proposed Wailani Affordable Housing Project (TMK parcels [3] 2-3-044:019 and 023-025) within the ahupua'a of Ponehawai and Punahoa 1 and 2, South Hilo District, Island of Hawai'i. The proposed 162-acre project consists of the development of 700 single and multi-family residential units as well as commercial areas, open space, a medical park, and associated infrastructure.

The purpose of the CIA is to inform the environmental review process by identifying and assessing the potential effects the proposed Wailani Affordable Housing Project may have on significant cultural, natural, and historic resources, as well as traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices. ASM is seeking consultation with cultural practitioners, kama'āina, lineal and cultural descendants, and community members who have knowledge of cultural resources and past or present traditional customary practices within the proposed project area and Pu'u Honu, in particular. ASM also welcomes input regarding strategies to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts to culturally valued resources and/or traditional practices. If you have and are willing to share such information with ASM, please contact Teresa Gotay via email at tgotay@asmaffiliates.com, phone (808) 854-0553, or mailing address ASM Affiliates 507-A E. Lanikaula Street, Hilo, HI 96720. Mahalo.

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
& KA PA'AKAI ANALYSIS:
HDOA PANA'EWA IRRIGATION WELL
PROJECT WAIĀKEA AHUPUA'A, SOUTH
HILO DISTRICT HAWAII ISLAND**

On behalf of Akinaka & Associates, Ltd., ASM Affiliates (ASM) is preparing a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) and Ka Pa'akai o ka 'Āina Analysis (KPA) for the proposed Pana'ewa Irrigation Well Project that consists of drilling three non-potable irrigation wells on three separate properties (Tax Map Key parcels [3] 2-2-056:039 and 054, and [3] 2-4-049:026) in Waiākea Ahupua'a, Hilo District, Island of Hawai'i. The proposed well installations are part of a Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) pilot program to improve irrigation infrastructure and provide a reliable non-potable water source for agricultural operations within the HDOA-leased project areas.

The purpose of this CIA and KPA is to inform the environmental review process by identifying and assessing the potential effects the proposed Pana'ewa Irrigation Well Project may have on significant cultural, natural, and historic resources, as well as traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices. ASM is seeking consultation with kama'āina, lineal and cultural descendants, cultural practitioners, and those who may have knowledge of cultural resources or past and present traditional cultural practices within the proposed project areas. ASM also welcomes input regarding strategies to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts to culturally valued resources and/or traditional practices. If you have and are willing to share such information with ASM, please contact Candace Gonzales via email at cgonzales@asmaffiliates.com, phone (808) 969-6066, or mailing address ASM Affiliates 507-A E. Lanikaula Street, Hilo, HI 96720. Mahalo.

**KA PA'AKAI ANALYSIS: KAWELA MICRO-
WAVE TOWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Cultural Surveys Hawai'i (CSH), at the request of HHF Planners, on behalf of the City and County of Honolulu, Department of Design and Construction (DDC), is conducting a Ka Pa'akai Analysis for the Kawela Microwave Tower Replacement Project, Kawela and Hanaka'oe Ahupua'a, Ko'olauloa District, O'ahu, TMKs: (1) 5-7-004:002 and 5-8-002:005. The proposed project consists of the following components:

- Demolish existing 90-foot tower and transfer all City and Army antennas to new 180-foot tower
- Construct new 180-foot microwave tower and harden existing Building 84 to withstand a Category IV hurricane
- Provide new dedicated power directly from Hawaiian Electric Company

PUBLIC NOTICES

Continued from page 40

- Provide concrete sidewalks around front and both sides of Building 84
- Provide driveway and turnaround area
- For safety reasons the proposed project will:
 - Remove all trees within communications compound
 - Remove all trees within a 25-foot radius of compound's perimeter fence
- CSH seeks your knowledge, insight, and input on the following topics:
- Your knowledge of traditional cultural practices within the proposed project area and Kawela and Hanaka'oe Ahupua'a
- The different natural resources associated with your specific cultural practice
- Referrals to other kūpuna, kama'āina, and traditional cultural practitioners knowledgeable about the proposed project area and Kawela and Hanaka'oe Ahupua'a
- Your comments or thoughts on the potential impacts the proposed project may have on cultural sites, practices, and resources within the proposed project area and Kawela and Hanaka'oe Ahupua'a

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact CSH Cultural Researcher, Kellen Tanaka at ktanaka@culturalsurveys.com.

FIRST CIRCUIT COURT NOTICE: KALIMA CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT TRUST DATED JUNE 23, 2023

FILED, a Petition for Approval of Second Interim Accounting by Emily H. Kawashima, Esq., Probate Special Master, whose address is 700 Bishop Street, Suite 1700, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 (808) 744-4688, seeking approval of the Trustee's second interim accounting for THE KALIMA CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT TRUST DATED JUNE 23, 2023.

A copy of said petition, along with the accounting and a copy of the Trust are all available at www.kalima-lawsuit.com. The accounting covers the period from January 1, 2025 through and including December 31, 2025, and includes those who received settlement awards during the same period.

The date, time and place for hearing said Petition shall be Friday, October 2, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the courtroom of the Judge of the above-entitled Court who shall be sitting in probate, in Ka'ahumanu Hale, 777 Punchbowl Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813. Parties interested in this Petition have the right to be represented by a private attorney, at said party's own expense.

DATED: Honolulu, Hawaii, June 12, 2026.
R. SO Clerk of the Above-Entitled Court
SCOTT C. SUZUKI, Probate Special Counsel
(808) 983-3850

SEE PUBLIC NOTICES ON PAGE 42



NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY U.S. NAVY AND NASA RELEASE FINAL EIS FOR PROPOSED CONTINUED USE OF STATE LANDS ON KAUA'I FOR THE NAVY'S PACIFIC MISSILE RANGE FACILITY AND NASA'S KŌKE'E PARK GEOPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY

The U.S. Department of the Navy (Navy) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) jointly prepared the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to support analysis of potential environmental effects of proposed real estate agreements with the State of Hawai'i for the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) and the Kōke'e Park Geophysical Observatory (KPGO). The Navy proposes to maintain the use of 8,172 acres of State lands on Kaua'i in support of continued and ongoing military training, testing, and facility operations at PMRF. NASA proposes to maintain the use of 23 acres of State land on Kaua'i in support of maintaining data collection efforts of global significance at KPGO. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing real estate agreements for these State lands are set to expire between 2027 and 2030.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Navy and NASA held a public comment period on the Draft EIS from June 20, 2025, to August 7, 2025. During the public comment period, the Navy and NASA held three public meetings in July 2025 at three locations on Kaua'i (Līhu'e, Kekaha, and Kapa'a) to provide project information to the public and to receive public comments on the Draft EIS. The meetings were also available online. The Final EIS includes responses to comments received on the Draft EIS.

NEXT STEPS

The Notice of Availability of the Final EIS will be published in the Federal Register on August 21, 2026. Following publication of the Final EIS in The Environmental Notice on August 23, 2026, the Board of Land and Natural Resources will determine acceptability of the Final EIS in accordance with the Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act (HEPA) and publish their determination in The Environmental Notice. The Board of Land and Natural Resources meeting will be held on September 11, 2026. A 60-day HEPA wait period follows the Board of Land and Natural Resources' publication of determination. The Navy and NASA will publish their own Record of Decision following a 30-day wait period. The Record of Decision is a concise public record that will address the Navy and NASA decisions, respectively.

FINAL EIS AVAILABILITY

The Navy and NASA encourage the public to view the NEPA version of the Final EIS and HEPA version (showing changes from Draft to Final) of the Final EIS. Both the NEPA and HEPA versions of the Final EIS are available on the project website at PMRF-KPGO-EIS.com. A copy of the HEPA Final EIS will be available on the Environmental Review Program's website at <https://planning.hawaii.gov/erp/> and at the Waimea Public Library (Kaua'i) and the Hawai'i Documents Center (Hawai'i State Library, O'ahu).

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: PMRF-KPGO-EIS.COM

PUBLIC NOTICES

Continued from page 41

HUMAN HAIR
SAMPLES REPATRIATED

In May 2026, Hui Iwi Kuamo'o, a Native Hawaiian organization, repatriated ancestral Hawaiian human remains from the Harvard University Peabody Museum in Cambridge, MA, that included several samples of human hair belonging to living Hawaiian individuals. According to Harvard University records, the hair samples "were likely acquired in 1916 from the Industrial and Reformatory School for Girls located at Mō'ili'ili, O'ahu island."

We are reaching out to the families of the following nine (9) Hawaiians who were between the ages of 13-16 at the time to return these hair samples to their descendants: ANNIE HENU, EMILY PAIKALANI, MARIA KAIHANA, AGNES KALUNA, E. CUMMINS, A. KAOLA EHU, E. KAPIO, M. KALAIKINI, and PAUALIWA.

Please contact Edward Halealoha Ayau at huiiwickua@gmail.com or call (808) 646-9015.

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE
RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
STATE OF HAWAII COMMUNITY NOISE
CONTROL VARIANCE APPLICATION

Pursuant to Ch 342F-5(h), Hawaii Revised Statutes, State of Hawai'i, Department of Transportation (HDOT) seeks comments regarding the Department of Health (DOH) Community Noise Variance Application for the Kea'au-Pāhoa Road Intersection Improvements at Maku'u and Orchidland Drive Project. The HDOT, Hawai'i District, 50 Maka'ala Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720, applied to DOH for a variance from Hawai'i Administrative Rules, Chapter 11-46, Section 11-46-6(a).

HDOT plans intersection improvements along Kea'au-Pāhoa Road (Route 130) at the two intersections of: 1) Maku'u Drive in Hawai'i Paradise Park and 2) Orchidland Drive in Orchidland Estates located in Puna, Hawai'i. The proposed project involves the construction and installation of two roundabouts and will feature share used paths, bus pullouts, concrete splitter and central islands, and street lighting improvements to increase safety and multimodal accessibility.

The applicant proposes to perform the work from Dec. 28, 2027, to Nov. 24, 2030, (excluding holidays) on Sunday (12:01 a.m. - midnight), Monday - Thursday (6:00 p.m. - 6:59 a.m.), Friday (6:00 p.m. - Saturday 8:59 a.m.), and Saturdays (6:00 p.m. - Sunday 12:00 a.m.).

HDOT will accept written public comments through Sept. 1, 2026. Submitted written comments should reference Variance Application No V-1491 Docket No. 26NRVN-26 and be directed to: Courtney Supe, HDOT Project Manager, 50 Maka'ala Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720, Email: courtney.k.supe@hawaii.gov. The DOH may hold a public hearing regarding the noise variance request prior to making a decision. ■

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

HUKIKU/KEULUA - The 'ohana of Moke Hukiku and Kapali Keulua is having a family reunion on August 15, 2026, at Mā'ili Beach Park. The 'ohana includes the descendants of James Moses, Mary Kiko, Annie Flores, Jack Moses, Joseph Kaahanui Moses, Frank Moke, Louise Larinaga, Kalei Tisalonga, and Malia Santiago, as well as those of Pio Anakolio, Lokalia Anakolio Holt, James Lawrence Holt, Kaluna Keawekane, Malia Kaneaiakala, Keolas/Ahsings, and Kaahanuis. Contact Hukiku.Keulua@gmail.com for further information.

KINIKAHIKOAINOA-PAHANE - 'Auhea 'oukou e nā mamo a Kanialama? Calling on the direct descendants of Kinikahikoainoa and Poouli Pahane, along with Kaianui and Nakahili, parents of Kanialama and Kaohuaino Kaianui, respectively. This includes ka 'ohana Long, Kahanu, Gooman, and the descendants of Kelupaka Kaianui and Pila Kauahiokona. Join us at our biennial reunion for mele, mo'olelo and mo'okū'au-hau... and of course, le'ale'a! For more information, email: pukanaokanialama26@gmail.com E ola ka hā loa o ka 'ohana!

KA'AUHAUKANE - Na Lālā O Ana Lumaukahili'owahinekapu Ka'auhaulkane will celebrate our 'Ohana Reunion - Potluck Lunch on Sunday, August 9, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Bellows Air Force Station, Picnic Pavilion 5-A. Deadline to register, Sunday, July 12, 2026. To ensure base access, please contact your family representative: Peter Machado 808-282-3732 (Kapiko and Quinn); Linda Ho 808-239-8081 (Iseke); Louie Peterson 808-216-9331 (Isaacs and Iseke); Colleen Tam Loo 808-729-8662 or Puanani Orton 808-381-3510 (McKee).

PIO - Descendants of Kepio and Keoahu of Kaupō, Maui, are having a family reunion on Maui, Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4-6, 2026, at Pukalani Community Center. Their six children used the surnames Kepio or Pio: Sampson Kahaleuahi (Anadasia Kealoha); Victoria Nakoaelua (Kahaleauki); Maria Malaea (Keahi/Adams, Sam Akahi Sr.); Samuel Kaukani (Mele Kakaio, Rebecca Malulu); Ipoaloha (Kalalani Kekiwi); and Joseph Kaleohano (Elizabeth Nakula, Minnie Aloiau). Contact: Ka'apuni Peters-Wong 808-375-4321; Toni Kowalski-Dacquel 808-436-1845; Valda Baisa Andaya 808-572-9245; Ululani Opiana Glass 808-446-9309; Kapiolani Adams 808-778-6383; or email pioohana@gmail.com. ■

E Ō Mai,
e Kuleana Land Holders!

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

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

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/

OFFICE
LOCATIONS

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

All Offices are closed on
State holidays

Main Phone (all islands):

808.594.1835

Email:

info@oha.org

HONOLULU

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

EAST HAWAII (HILO)

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

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.

HAULING WITH ALOHA - Piliialoha Trucking LLC offers reliable container hauling and freight transport on O'ahu. Pier-to-pier, local delivery, construction support. (808) 630-0554 | Mahalo

HISTORIC RARE VINTAGE HAWAIIAN STAMP BUSINESS FOR SALE. Great for fundraisers! More info at www.iraono.com/hawaiianstampc

HOMES WITH ALOHA-Kaumana/ Hilo- Single level 3bed/ 2.5 baths. Built 2009 Lot size 11,900. \$350,000 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. \$425,000 This is a leasehold property -Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB- 15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303

HOMES WITH ALOHA- Waimanalo Single level 3 bedrooms/1 baths \$380,000 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.

LOOKING TO SWAP A HAWAIIAN HOMESTEAD LEASE, MAUI TO KAUAI - I have a lease in Waiehu, Maui that I would like to swap for a lease in Hanapepe, Kauai. Email: kaunalewa@gmail.com

PANAWEA FARMLOT WANTED: WTB/WTT for Keaukaha. Need 5 AC minimum. Grandson wants farm, and go to UH to become volcanologist. Please consider this request. Home in Keaukaha is newer 2012/2022 and 1000 ft. from water, raised with garage. Mahalo. Theresa @ 808-938-1445 or talani@hhsc.org

SEEKING A PROFESSIONAL TO HELP GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE REAL ESTATE PROCESS? Buying, selling or investing in real estate, 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 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 40 years.

UNDIVIDED INTEREST IN MAUI LAND FOR SALE - Kīpahulu, Hāna, Maui. 13.47-acre parcel. Currently occupied. For sale to relatives only. Please inquire at: puawai@myyahoo.com ■

HomeswithAloha

590 Farrington Hwy, Ste 537 Kapolei, HI 96707

Serving local families for 40 years

Your Kamaaina Real Estate Professional

Hawaiian Home Lands Resales & Fee Simple Properties

“Have questions about the
Hawaiian Home Lands resale
market and process?”

*Value comes from experience and
knowledge to best negotiate and
advocate on your behalf.*

Contact

Charmaine Quilit Poki

REALTOR®, Certified Residential Specialist

808-295-4474 charmaine.quilitpoki@kw.com www.HomeswithAloha.com 

REALTOR - RB-15998

kw KELLER WILLIAMS.
HONOLULU RB-21303
Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated.

Be Part of
Our 'OHAna!
Apply today!

See a list of our current openings at:

www.oha.org/jobs

Scan QR code



Empowering Hawaiians, Strengthening Hawai'i





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

PROTECT OUR IWI KŪPUNA

Serve on an Island Burial Council

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is seeking qualified candidates to fill vacancies on Island Burial Councils throughout the pae 'āina.

Island Burial Councils are tasked with convening interested stakeholders and descendants of iwi discovered within the bounds of planned development projects. These councils 'auamo (carry) the important kuleana of determining whether these previously identified burials must be preserved in place or relocated. The councils also make recommendations to the Department of Land and Natural Resources regarding the appropriate management, treatment and protection of iwi kūpuna.

There are five island burial councils:

Hawai'i Island | Maui/Lāna'i | Moloka'i | O'ahu | Kaua'i/Ni'ihau

Each council consists of at least nine members (with the exception of Moloka'i which consists of five) who represent the various moku of each island. Council membership also includes representatives of

development or large landowner interests (this group gets no more than three seats on the nine-member councils, and no more than one seat on the Moloka'i council).

Island Burial Council nominees are approved by the governor. Regional representatives are selected from the Hawaiian community based on their understanding of culture, history, burial beliefs, customs and practices of Native Hawaiians.

OHA is currently accepting applications
until **October 1, 2026**

To learn more or to submit your
name for consideration go to:

www.oha.org/burialcouncils/

Empowering Hawaiians, Strengthening Hawai'i

