



Ka Wai Ola

NEWS FOR THE LĀHUI

kawaiola.news

Kepakemapa (September) 2026 | Vol. 43, No. 09



He Aupuni Palapala kō Kākou

PAGES 18-20



Within a generation after the introduction of the printing press in 1820, the Kingdom of Hawai'i had adopted this new technology and become the most literate nation in the world. Today, the new technology on our shore is artificial intelligence (AI) a powerful tool with the potential for great good and great harm. Will we be able, as our kūpuna did, to adopt this new technology for the benefit of our lāhui and come out the other side still Hawaiian? - These images were AI-generated

Special Hawaiian History Month insert inside!



Lili'uokalani
September 2, 1838

Lydia Lili'u Loloku Walania Kamaka'eha was born on Sept. 2, 1838, to Analea Keohokālole and Caesar Kapa'akea at Puowaena in Honolulu, O'ahu. Shortly after her birth, she was given to Abner Pākī and Laura Kōnia and raised with their daughter Bernice Pauahi. Her memoir, *Hawaii's Story by Hawaii's Queen*, is an autobiography. She discusses her rise to the throne, the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893, and her arrest and trial in 1895 for treason. She spent the rest of her life fighting for Native Hawaiians to regain power and autonomy over their land. She passed away in 1917 at the age of 79.

August 30, 9:30 a.m.
Kawaiaha'o Church
Ali'i Sunday Worship Service

Queen Lili'uokalani's Birthday
September 2, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | Waimea, O'ahu

Kama'āina receive FREE admission to Waimea Valley. Present a valid State ID at the ticket booth. waimeavalley.net

Nā Mea Kanu 'Ai Celebrating 25 years of the Paniolo Preservation Society 🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 2, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
September 3, 4:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Waimea, Hawai'i Island

Two days of music, food, storytelling, community and the Aloha Vaqueros Exhibit. malamakoaloha.com

Royal Hawaiian Band

September 4, 18, 25, Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O'ahu
Free concerts on the 'Iolani Palace Grounds. rhb-music.com

Hula 'Oni E Hula Festival

🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 4, 4:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
September 5 - 6, begins at 9:00 a.m.
Waikiki, O'ahu

A three-day celebration and premier Hawaiian cultural event. HulaOniE.com

Hawai'i Songwriting Festival

2026 🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 10 - 12, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
South Kohala, Hawai'i Island

Workshops and panels featuring music industry professionals. hawaiiisongwritingfestival.com

'Ai Mama Exhibit Artists Reception

September 11, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Kāne'ohe, O'ahu

Explore the transmission of 'ike through the lifework of 'Ōlohe G. 'Umi Kai and Sulu'ape Keone Nunes. Exhibit open through Dec. 11 at Gallery 'Iolani at Windward Community College. gallery.windward.hawaii.edu

Lights for Lahaina 2026 🌿 OHA SPONSORED

Lahaina, Maui

September 11, 4:30 - 8:00 p.m.
Entertainment, food, activities, games and Our Lahaina Story exhibit.
September 12, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
An evening march through Lahaina Town followed by kanikapila and talk story. lightsforlahaina.org

19th Annual MAMo Wearable Art Show

September 11, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Waikiki, O'ahu

Native artistry and fashion at Hawai'i's premier Indigenous wearable art event. paifoundation.com

Kalo & 'Awa Festival

September 12, 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Waimea, O'ahu

Honor kalo, 'awa, and traditional practices with activities, giveaways, tastings, and vendors. waimeavalley.net

2026 Māhū Madness Unapologetically Māhū

September 12, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Waikiki, O'ahu

World-class entertainment celebrating the artistry, resilience, and legacy of māhū. paifoundation.com

Kama'āina Sunday

September 13, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O'ahu

Audio tours of 'Iolani Palace, food, entertainment, and vendors. Free event. iolanipalace.org

2026 Hawaiian Home Lands Sovereignty Conference 🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 15 - 17 | Waikiki, O'ahu

Hear from local and national policy-makers, leaders in Native community development, affordable housing, grant writers, lenders, and more. Register at bit.ly/HHLConf26

74th Annual Paniolo Parade 🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 19, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Waimea, Hawai'i Island

10:00 a.m.: Parade - Waimea Park to S.K. Schutte Waimea District Park
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.: Ho'olaule'a - music, paniolo fair, petting zoo, vendors and more. alohafestivalsislandofhawaii.com

Pa'ūpili Saturday: Ho'omau - Resilience and Rebuilding

🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 19, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Lahaina, Maui

An inclusive space for healing, storytelling and pilina for wildfire survivors. festivalsofaloha.org/paupili.html

Pu'uhonua Mākeke

September 19, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Products, services, and businesses from across Hawai'i. Pu'uhonua o Waimānalo Pavilion. FB/IG [@puuhonuamakeke](https://www.instagram.com/puuhonuamakeke)

'Ulu Ho'olaule'a and the Global Breadfruit Summit

September 19 - 24
South Kona, Hawai'i Island

An international celebration of breadfruit and gathering of farmers, researchers, chefs, educators, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and food systems leaders from across the Pacific, the Caribbean, and beyond. 2026Celebration. BreadfruitPeople.com

'Ulu Festival 🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 19, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Captain Cook, Hawai'i Island

Celebrate the culinary versatility of breadfruit. Demonstrations, food, and music. amygreenwell.garden

'Ulu: 'Ike Kūpuna, 'Ike Honua

🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 20 - 21, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. | Kahalu'u, Hawai'i Island

Indigenous knowledge exchange among cultural leaders from across Oceania. exchangeulu.coop

Global Breadfruit Summit

Sept 22 - 24 | Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i Island

Agroforestry, propagation, innovation, climate adaptation, and food sovereignty solutions.

Edible Showcase

September 23, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. | Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i Island

'Ulu-centered dishes from chefs, producers, and food innovators across Oceania.

La'a: Consecration of Aloha 'Āina in 'Aha

September 24, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Kaiwi'ula, O'ahu

Learn what it means to hold 'āina as sacred and stand in principled relationship with it. bishopmuseum.org

Moloka'i Canoe Festivals - 2026 Kulāia Celebration 🌿 OHA SPONSORED

September 25, 5:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Kaunakakai, Moloka'i

Block festival includes Moloka'i to O'ahu race, music, vendors, artisans, and more. kulaia.wix.com/kulaiamolokai

Celebrating 80 Years of Aloha

Our Culture, Our Stories, Celebrating Our Island Home. alohafestivals.com

Royal Court Investiture & Opening Ceremony

September 5, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Waikiki - Helumoa Gardens at Royal Hawaiian Center

72nd Annual Waikiki Ho'olaule'a

September 19, 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. | Waikiki - Kalākaua Ave.

78th Annual Floral Parade

September 26, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | From Ala Moana Park, along Kalākaua Ave. to Kapi'olani Park

Kanaloa ka La'a o Kohemālamalama at Bishop Museum

September 24 - December 31 | Kaiwi'ula, O'ahu

A Treasure Case exhibit documenting 50 years of spiritual ceremonies on Kaho'olawe. bishopmuseum.org

Moonwalk

September 26, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Waimea, O'ahu

Enjoy the valley under the moonlight. waimeavalley.net ■



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Our Kuleana Remains

Natural disasters reveal us. They reveal compassion and self-preservation. Resilience and vulnerability. The instinct to help and the impulse to isolate. Generosity and scarcity. Our response to disaster is never simple, nor are the choices we make in its aftermath.

In the days before Lala reached our shores, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) prepared for what might come and how we could meet the needs of our beneficiaries in ways uniquely ours to answer.

Then the rains came.

Biblical floods struck a community where Native Hawaiians comprise more than 35% of the population. Roads disappeared. Families and neighborhoods became landlocked and fragmented. A life was lost. And the devastation only deepened with the disinterment of iwi kūpuna, as communities struggled to reach one another and secure their families, homes, and lands.

There are moments when leadership becomes less theoretical.

Perhaps it was knowing that one of our own, along with his ‘ohana, was among those cut off by the disaster. Perhaps it was the security of our own health and safety reminding us of those more exposed and vulnerable. Whatever the combination of circumstances, there was an unmistakable urgency to act. Act quickly. Act generously. Act with the right intentions.

Even in suffering, comparisons can emerge: “Who received more? Who received first? What is my fair share? Why aren’t my needs being met, too?” Those questions are understandable amid uncertainty and loss – and we should hear them.

We can respond immediately where need is clear, while recognizing that the first response need not be the final one. We can phase our re-

covery efforts, learn from experience and sound data, and pledge to do more, for more, as time, resources, and opportunity align. An initial boundary on assistance need not be the boundary of our concern.

This is only the beginning of OHA’s response. Our work is never truly done; we will continue to learn alongside our beneficiaries how best to serve them, inspired by their perseverance.

Rooted in the same kanaka values that teach us to care for one another, we will endure, serve, lead and heal, drawing strength from what has carried us this far.

At a recent board meeting, Uncle Louie Pelekai reflected on an earlier column, “Our Kūpuna Imagined Something Extraordinary.” With humor and humility, he shared a life of teaching, service and quiet care for others.

In an unhurried, storytelling way he spoke of his work as a plumber, the wife he lovingly cares for, and the hope with which they await news of a homestead award, I was reminded that resilience, grace, and aloha are often embodied without fanfare. His is a life well lived – a continuum of kuleana and endurance for the better that lies ahead.

Our post-Lala recovery can be similarly instructive. We can meet immediate needs while building toward a recovery that reaches beyond the first days or first program.

And we can remember that our kuleana remains long after the floodwaters recede. ■

Ke aloha nō me ka mālama pono,

Summer Lee Haunani Sylva

Ka Pouhana Kūikawā | Interim Chief Administrator



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OHA PRIMARY RESULTS AND GENERAL ELECTION INFORMATION

By Kelli Meskin Soileau

There were 15 candidates on the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) At-Large primary ballot. The top six moving on to the General Election in November are (in alphabetical order): Adrian (Keali'i) Akina; Ikaika Anderson; Kanekoa (Koa) Crabbe; Brickwood M. Galuteria; Keoni Souza; and John Waihe'e IV.

With only three At-Large seats available, the race between incumbent At-Large Trustee Keoni Souza and candidate Ikaika Anderson will be the race to watch in the upcoming General Election.

OTHER OHA ELECTION RACES

The Maui and O'ahu trustee races have just two candidates each and will be on the General Election Ballot. The Maui race is between Ke'eaumoku Kapu and Carmen Hulu Lindsey. Both have competed for the Maui seat in prior elections in 2012 and 2018.

The O'ahu race is between Kalei Akaka and Hinalaimoana (Hina) Wong.

OHA candidate forums will air in October so voters can hear from the candidates on issues relevant to the community. Candidate surveys and other information can be found at oha.org/vote.

To receive details on the OHA Candidate Forums, sign up to receive emails at oha.org. ■

At-Large Trustee Primary Election Results

GALUTERIA , Brickwood M.	74,671
WAIHE'E , John, IV	70,622
ANDERSON , Ikaika	58,782
SOUZA , Keoni	57,811
AKINA , Adrian (Keali'i)	43,891
CRABBE , Kanekoa (Koa)	30,213
PARISH , Kalena A.	28,210
LEE , Brendon Kalei'āina	23,434
COSTELLO , Michelle (Mikala)	22,675
BAKER , Karl Veto	19,920
NIHIPALI , R. Kūnani, Sr.	19,137
BURKE , Jackie Kaho'okele	14,451
BILLIONAIRE , Shelby Pikachu	11,418
MARTIN , Philip (Kawika)	9,096
KAUAULA , Clifford K.	9,042

Dates to Remember

OCT
16

General election
ballots will arrive
in mailboxes

OCT
20

Voter service
centers open
statewide

NOV
3

General
Election Day
All ballots need to be
received by 7:00 p.m.

Lala Emergency Relief

By Bill Brennan, OHA Director of Communications

On August 17, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees approved emergency assistance for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries and communities impacted by the Lala weather events, with initial priority given to the severely affected Ka'ū region of Hawai'i Island.

The Board's action included the immediate redeployment and carry-over of \$184,511 in remaining I Ola Emergency Aid funding, the distribution of 244 unused Foodland gift cards and 218 KTA gift cards totaling \$123,550, and the use of \$30,407 in remaining 'Ina'i Kōkua Gift Card Program funds.

In total, the Board action made \$338,468 in existing funds and gift-card resources available for immediate emergency response and assistance.

That same day, OHA Hawai'i Island staff traveled to Ka'ū and joined Vertical Worx Precision Aviation Services, which had already begun conducting independent, self-funded relief efforts. Together, they conducted reconnaissance to identify Native Hawaiian communities that were both severely impacted by the hurricane, and underserved by existing relief efforts, with four priority areas identified: Wood Valley, Kala'iki/Makanau, Lower Moa'ula and Ha'ao Springs.

Kapapala Ranch provided the use of its property as a base of operations and safe, accessible helicopter landing zone. Before deliveries began, OHA staff participated in an aerial reconnaissance flight to verify community drop locations and assess safety conditions.

Then on August 19, OHA staff and Vertical Worx completed an emergency helicopter operation that delivered approximately 1,500 pounds of critical supplies to some of Ka'ū's most remote communities.

Working in coordination with the County of Hawai'i, the Three Mountain Alliance, KTA Superstores, Home Depot and the Ka'ū community, emergency supplies including drinking water, water for hygiene, fuel, perishable and nonperishable food, hygiene products, diapers, cleaning supplies, batteries and other necessities were delivered, with supplies entrusted to Native Hawaiian representatives in the affected areas for distribution to their 'ohana and surrounding community members.

Despite the devastation, community members have remained hopeful, resourceful and focused on helping one another.

OHA's ability to respond quickly was strengthened by the relationships its Hawai'i Island staff have developed with Native Hawaiian beneficiaries and community leaders throughout Ka'ū. Those connections helped staff identify families in remote locations, assess immediate needs, coordinate safe landing areas and place supplies directly into the hands of trusted community representatives.

"This work could not have happened without the generous and intentional collaboration of our partners," said OHA Board of Trustees Chair Kaiali'i Kahele. "When disaster strikes, our responsibility is to listen to our communities, understand where the gaps are and act where OHA can make a meaningful difference. We mahalo everyone who rallied together to ensure our most isolated 'ohana were not forgotten." ■

Why Are IBC Seats Still Unfilled?

None of OHA's suggested and vetted Island Burial Council nominees for 2026 advanced to the senate and no one ever said why

By Kamakana Ferreira, OHA Compliance Archaeologist



Members of the Burial Sites Working Group are welcomed with protocol to OHA's headquarters at Nā Lama Kukui in February 2026. The working group is comprised of Island Burial Council members, the State Historic Preservation Division, OHA, Hui Iwi Kuamo'o, and other community representatives. Per resolutions passed in 2025, the working group is exploring ways to improve the burial sites program and administration of the IBCs, and to determine whether some of this kuleana should be transferred to OHA. - Photo: Jason Lees

Each year, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) conducts Island Burial Council (IBC) recruitment to provide the governor with a list of qualified candidates to represent each island/moku. Under the law, both OHA and the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) are required to provide the governor with such a list.

Typically, the governor reviews the list and then advances names forward for senate confirmation. However, in 2026, none of the nominees submitted by OHA in advance of the legislative session were advanced for senate confirmation.

Following the annual 60-day solicitation published in our *Ka Wai Ola* monthly newspaper (normally August 1 to October 1), candidates are vetted internally by staff based on the qualifications established in statute.

The top five candidates from each respective IBC are then submitted to OHA's Board of Trustees for review and approval during an open meeting during which the public has an opportunity to observe and testify.

The 13 nominees that OHA advanced to the governor in late 2025 were qualified candidates representing all five IBCs: O'ahu, Hawai'i, Kaua'i-Ni'ihau, Maui-Lāna'i, Moloka'i.

OHA also conducted additional recruitment in Spring 2025 in response to concerns about vacancies and quorum on the Kaua'i-Ni'ihau and Moloka'i IBCs.

In fact, the inability to meet quorum is the reason that the Moloka'i IBC has not been able to meet for at least two years – although it does retain a single holdover functioning as chair who remains dedicated to mālama iwi kūpuna and stays engaged with project reviews.

There are also unresolved holdover appointments on several other IBCs, including the Kaua'i-Ni'ihau, Maui-Lāna'i, and O'ahu councils. These vacancies can affect continuity and the councils' ability to operate at full capacity.

Despite the recent statutory amendment made through Act 96 addressing IBC quorum - and OHA's 2026 package bill to define IBC "quorum" as a majority of appointed members with a minimum of three - Moloka'i still cannot meet this bar without additional appointments.

By law, each IBC must retain at least two regional representatives from OHA's list. Notably, both the Moloka'i and Kaua'i IBCs do not currently meet this requirement despite OHA providing qualified candidates to the governor.

On April 28, 2026, OHA Interim Administrator/CEO Summer Sylva wrote directly to Green regarding the status of OHA's nominees and the operational consequences of the vacancies. The letter requested that OHA's nominees be advanced for senate consideration so that the councils could be properly constituted and carry out their statutory responsibilities. To date, OHA has not received a response to that inquiry.

The issue is ultimately one of ensuring that the IBCs are properly constituted and able to fulfill their responsibilities under the law. Beyond statutory compliance, timely appointments are essential to maintaining public confidence and ensuring continuity in council operations. When IBCs are unable to meet or operate at full capacity, core statutory duties - including the review of burial treatment plans and the recognition of lineal and cultural descendants - may be delayed or left unfulfilled, directly affecting the protection of iwi kūpuna and the certainty relied upon by affected communities and land users alike.

Many of the nominees have inquired directly with OHA regarding the status of their respective nominations. Unfortunately, we have little to tell them aside from the fact that their names were vetted and approved through OHA's process and forwarded to the governor. OHA does not control the subsequent appointment and confirmation process.

Now that OHA has begun its 2026 recruitment cycle for 2027, OHA has taken the additional step of reaching out to our 2025 nominees to determine whether they remain interested in having their names considered again through the current recruitment process. This provides those individuals an opportunity to reaffirm their interest while allowing OHA to continue its regular recruitment and vetting process.

Selection of IBC moku representatives is a shared responsibility between the governor, OHA, and DLNR with senate confirmation required for appointments. OHA has fulfilled its part of the process by providing nominees as set forth in the law and remains committed to working with the governor, DLNR and senate to support the appointment process and ensure that the councils are properly constituted.

The IBCs play a crucial role in the historic preservation process and protection of iwi kūpuna. That responsibility is especially consequential in the wake of recent floods and severe weather events which have affected burial sites and underscored the need for timely access to the cultural knowledge and subject-matter expertise necessary to respond appropriately and mālama iwi kūpuna. Absent fully functioning IBCs, these responsibilities can be compromised while projects - including much needed housing and iwi kūpuna-related disaster response and recovery - may be delayed or left in limbo.

We hope that Gov. Green will correct this issue without any further delay so that the IBCs can function as intended under our laws. ■

OHA Moves Forward After Court Decision

By Bill Brennan, OHA Director of Communications

At a hearing on August 6, Judge Steven Nichols ruled on five pending motions in *Ferreira v. Office of Hawaiian Affairs, et al.*

In particular, the court issued four rulings of significance to the case's path forward, dismissed all claims against OHA's trustees in both their individual and official capacities, and established OHA as the sole remaining defendant.

On the principal motions, the court ruled as follows:

The court dismissed all claims against trustees and the interim CEO in both their individual and official capacities. The dismissal removes the individual trustees from the case entirely, resolving the claims that had named them personally as well as in their roles on the Board. OHA is now the sole defendant allowing the Board and its chosen counsel to direct the agency's litigation moving forward.

The court granted OHA's motion to strike the June 26, 2026, Answer filed by four trustees because the plaintiff lacked a legal basis to sue the named defendants in either their individual or official capacities.

In addition, the court denied the motion to disqualify Dentons US LLP, which will continue to represent OHA.

"Today's court rulings are an important moment for OHA, not because of what they mean for the litigation, but because they allow us to move forward together," said Kaiali'i Kahele, Chairperson and Hawai'i Island Trustee for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

"Our beneficiaries can be confident that the trust remains protected, our employees can remain focused on serving our mission, and OHA can move forward united in service to our lāhui. We are all in one wa'a, bound by our collective responsibility to protect Native Hawaiian resources and faithfully serve our beneficiaries. That responsibility remains unchanged." ■

Ishihara and Hostetter Honored with Alaka'i Awards

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

Strategy & Implementation Strategy Consultant Maki'ilei Ishihara and Research & Evaluation Director Carla Hostetter are the most recent recipients of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) quarterly (April - June 2026) Alaka'i Awards.

Ishihara and Hostetter were honored on August 13 for their outstanding service to OHA.



(L-R) Strategy Consultant Maki'ilei Ishihara and Research & Evaluation Director Carla Hostetter are OHA's latest Alaka'i Award recipients. - Photo: Nelson Gaspar

Two Alaka'i Awards are awarded each quarter: one for non-supervisory employees, and one for supervisors. The award honors staff members who demonstrate commitment to OHA's mission and values, and who consistently go "above and beyond." Awardees are nominated by their peers and selected by the Board of Trustees.

Ishihara, whose focus in the Strategy & Implementation division is on education, was recognized for her aloha, creativity and deep sense of pono. Trustee Luana Alapa, who presented Ishihara's award, read, "whether developing curriculum, supporting communications projects, sharing her talents in 'ōlelo Hawai'i, music and storytelling, or simply encouraging those around her, Maki'ilei brings excellence and intention to everything she does."

Special note was made to Ishihara's work over the past months in spearheading the successful revival of OHA's 'Aha 'Ōpio, an immersive, week-long youth leadership and civic engagement program held in June for the first time in more than two decades.

With few existing resources to build upon, Ishihara helped reconstruct the program from the ground up – planning, coordinating, and developing content to create a meaningful, 'ōpio-centered experience.

Hostetter, was lauded for her exceptional leadership, steadfast commitment to OHA's mission, her professionalism, integrity, collaboration and genuine care for her team that has created an environment where people feel supported, valued and empowered to do their best work.

Presenting Hostetter's award, Trustee John Waihe'e read the following ma'ō: "Carla's leadership has produced significant results ... she championed the establishment of the Research System Program, helping to build greater technical capacity and organizational self-sufficiency, and has provided strategic direction across a wide range of research initiatives.

"She has skillfully managed complex budgets, contracts and project timelines. From island community reports to the Native Hawaiian Data Book, and work related to the Public Land Trust, Carla brings both strategic vision and operational excellence to an incredibly diverse portfolio."

E ho'omaika'i 'ana iā kō OHA wāhine mana Maki'ilei Ishihara a me Carla Hostetter! ■

Patel Named OHA CFO

By Bill Brennan, OHA Director of Communications

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dhiren Patel as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), who brings more than two decades of executive leadership experience in finance, strategic planning, accounting, treasury management, compliance, and business operations across several of the world's leading media, entertainment, technology, and financial services organizations.

Patel joins OHA following an accomplished career that includes executive leadership positions with Sony Pictures Entertainment, Twentieth Century Fox, Deloitte, and ROW8, where he led complex financial operations supporting multi-billion-dollar organizations. Throughout his career, he has overseen budgeting and forecasting, financial reporting, treasury operations, mergers and acquisitions, enterprise risk management, SOX compliance, internal controls, financial systems implementation, and strategic planning initiatives designed to improve operational performance and strengthen organizational accountability.

As Chief Financial Officer, Patel will oversee OHA's financial management, budgeting, accounting, treasury functions, financial reporting, investments, internal controls, and long-range financial planning. He will work closely with OHA leadership and the Board of Trustees to ensure the responsible stewardship of the agency's resources in support of its mission to improve the wellbeing of Native Hawaiians.

"Dhiren brings exceptional financial expertise, strategic judgment, and a genuine warmth and understanding of people and organizations," said Summer Sylva, OHA Interim Chief Administrator.

"That matters at OHA because fiscal stewardship is about far more than mastering numbers. It is fiduciary integrity made visible in every decision – large



Dhiren Patel - Photo: Nelson Gaspar

and small – concerning the trust assets entrusted to us. Dhiren understands that the work of finance must be grounded in mission, guided by values, and focused on creating lasting benefit for Native Hawaiians and generations to come. We are very fortunate to welcome him to OHA.

"He brings the rare combination of technical financial expertise, strategic vision, and executive leadership that will help position OHA for continued success," Sylva added. "His experience leading finance organizations at globally recognized companies, coupled with his commitment to accountability, transparency, and operational excellence, will strengthen our ability to responsibly steward the resources entrusted to OHA. We are excited to welcome Dhiren to our leadership team as we continue advancing our mission on behalf of Native Hawaiians and future generations."

Patel's extensive background includes leading cross-functional teams, developing sophisticated financial models to support executive decision-making, implementing enterprise financial systems, strengthening governance and compliance frameworks, and driving operational improvements through data-informed financial management.

"I am honored to join the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and contribute to an organization with such an important mission," said Patel. "I look forward to working alongside the Board of Trustees, leadership, and staff to ensure OHA's financial resources are managed with integrity, transparency, and strategic purpose in long-term stewardship in service to Native Hawaiian beneficiaries."

Patel's appointment reflects OHA's continued commitment to attracting experienced executive leadership that supports sound fiscal management, organizational excellence, and mission-aligned stewardship of resources entrusted to the agency for the benefit of Native Hawaiians. ■

Honolulu-Born Band Director Brings Hawaiian Music to World Stage

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

Rickey Hau'oli-De Ponte Badua first sat in front of a piano at age 4. His teacher and babysitter, Estrellita Goulart, instructed him on notes and keys, chords and hand positions.

"That started my musical career," Badua said.

Today, at 41 years old, he's the director of bands and professor of music at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. The Pasadena resident serves as a music adjudicator in Drum Corps International and the SoCal state chair for the College Band Directors National Association. Badua's students leave rave reviews for him online.

"One of the kindest and most caring professors I have ever had," a pupil wrote. "He truly wants his students to succeed and is always happy to help."

Badua is also involved with Nā Koa Ali'i Hawai'i All-State Marching Band and co-founded Aloha Music, a music education nonprofit. He created the Hawai'i wind band consortium to commission James M. David to compose *E Ala Ē: Arise and Awaken*, a song that is now played worldwide. He's traveled to Thailand, Costa Rica, Australia and Spain as a guest conductor.

But Badua's litany of accomplishments all started with one question. Goulart asked Badua, then 5, if he wanted to continue his piano lessons.

"I was confused because I was just like, 'Well, why wouldn't I continue?'" he said. "That's how I knew music was an innate thing inside of me that I've always loved and was drawn to."

Born in Honolulu, Badua's earliest memories are of living in Kalihi with his maternal grandparents. "I remember being happy in that space," he said.

The kūpuna of his mother, Elizabeth De Ponte Costa, immigrated to Hawai'i from Funchal, Madeira, and Porto, Portugal, to work in the sugar industry. Many relatives became paniolo in Waimānalo and Wai'ānae.

His father, Remigio Badua, was a descendant of Filipinos, Kānaka Maoli, Ukrainians and Poles.

After his parents divorced, Badua's mom worked two jobs as a waitress and a bartender to support his 'ohana. He is one of four, plus has two half-sisters.

Throughout his childhood, Badua enjoyed music classes and soccer and dreamed of becoming a conductor one day. When he took part in the Kamehameha Schools Explorations Series, Badua relished learning how music, art and mele intersect with Hawaiian culture.

After his mother married Badua's stepfather, Alan Costa, they moved to the suburbs of Waipio Gentry. Costa, who was a Kamehameha Schools alumnus, encouraged



Dr. Rickey Badua - Courtesy Photo

Badua to apply to the school. He was admitted and started at the Kapālama campus in seventh grade.

"That completely changed everything else in my childhood," Badua said. "It opened up so many cultural pathways that also fed my musical talents."

He immersed himself in choir and band, playing trombone and serving as a drum major. Badua's budding musical pursuits took him to the American West Coast and Europe. He recalled his first visit to Pasadena for the Rose Parade in his junior year. Marching down Colorado Avenue on the parade route, Badua admired the city.

He thought: "I would love to someday live here when I grow up."

Badua's career goals evolved into being a band director. He hoped to lead and support great musicians. Taking honors and advanced placement courses, he was set on attending college outside Hawai'i.

"I knew I wanted to get out and learn more about who I was and to see more of the world," Badua said.

He applied to Boston University in Massachusetts, Ithaca College in New York, and the University of Puget Sound in Washington. After graduating from KSK in 2003, Badua was bound for the Pacific Northwest.

In Tacoma, Washington, he pursued a Bachelor of Music in music education. Badua studied conducting and performed as a trombonist with the orchestra, the jazz band and the wind ensemble. But it was in the school's Hawai'i Club where he met his first friends.

"I can't lose who I am," Badua said.

Despite a heavy course load, he finished his undergraduate studies in three years. Badua's mentor, Robert Taylor, encouraged him to pursue higher education to fine

tune his musicianship. Badua earned his Master of Arts in teaching in 2007.

"I knew what I wanted to do, and I didn't want to wait," he said.

From there, Badua taught at Peninsula High School in Gig Harbor, Washington, as its band director. The community was hugely supportive of his aim to build out a music program. Badua also faced a cultural learning moment as an educator: better understanding socioeconomic diversity among his pupils.

Pursuit of a Doctor of Musical Arts in wind conducting – and another mentor, John Lynch – led him to the University of Georgia in Athens. There, he worked as a teaching assistant, traveling to Russia for research and accompanying the college marching band around the U.S.

But differing cultural norms, including blatant racism, challenged Badua during his three years there.

"I've learned how to adapt to survive," Badua said.

After graduating in 2014, he secured a job as a tenure-track faculty member at Cal Poly Pomona. "It's like winning a lottery ticket in academia," Badua said. He was hired as an assistant professor and director of bands.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Badua marinated on how to bring more meaning to his work, concluding that "there aren't enough Native Hawaiian voices in the work that I do."

Five years ago, Badua stepped up to the challenge. He's commissioned new music featuring Kānaka. His nonprofit, Aloha Music, is focused on creating spaces for haumāna across Hawai'i.

"Not every island has the same opportunities," Badua said. "There is a need for more support and opportunities for neighbor island students."

For now, he is focused on growing away from the 'āina, to bring that 'ike back.

"I was born on the island, and I will die on the island," Badua said. "When I do come home eventually, I can give a wealth of things that will only elevate the future of Hawai'i." ■

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E Ho’iho’i i ka Nani o Lahaina

The Fight for Justice in Lahaina Three Years After the Fire

By Kanoelani Steward, Kalama’ehu Takahashi, Kawaiuluhonua Scanlan, and Bella Wong

Three years after Lahaina burned, public attention is fixated on residential and commercial rebuilds. Although imperative, housing fire victims cannot alone repair the harm of plantation disaster capitalism, the exploitation of moments of extreme collective trauma to rapidly push through unpopular laws that benefit a few elites with plantation roots. Amidst these efforts lies a persistent question: what is Lahaina’s water future?

Lahaina, once a verdant food basket and home to generations of ali’i, was ravaged by sugar plantations that first appeared in the mid-1800s across Maui Komohana (West Maui). These corporations seized control of the region’s resources by diverting entire streams, draining aquifers, burning the massive breadfruit grove to fuel mills, disrupting the ability for Kānaka to feed themselves which led to displacement, and clearing upland forests. Plantations maintained control following the industry’s decline in the 1960s by redirecting water toward



Mayor Richard Bissen has advocated for public control of water diversion systems on Maui, about 75% of which are still privately owned - a remnant of the plantation era. - *Courtesy Photo*

luxury developments and resorts. Abandoned agricultural lands overrun by invasive grasses, coupled with a lack of water, created the conditions that fueled the tragic 2023 Lahaina Fire.

Still, modern enterprises descending from these plantations, known as legacy corporations, continue to use water for hotels, golf courses, and gentlemen’s estate pools while local residents endure drought restrictions and fear.

Hawaii’s Constitution mandates that the state safeguard water resources for present and future generations – a duty entrusted to the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM).

In 2022, CWRM petitioned for the designation of Maui Komohana’s ground and surface water – a legal tool to reevaluate all water uses through a mandatory permitting process – to more equitably allocate threatened water resources.

Now more than ever, designation offers a chance to dismantle the systemic legacy of plantations. Embracing this opportunity, the Lahaina community has championed a movement to revive the once abundant capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

The Maui County Mayor’s Office has answered the call by advocating for public control of diversion systems –

SEE JUSTICE IN LAHAINA ON PAGE 9

Kuleana grows leaders

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PRESCHOOL APPLICATION WINDOW
August 15 to October 31, 2026

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

Ke Kula ‘o Kamehameha



Nā Mamo Aloha 'Āina o Honokōhau group photo taken during the 2024 Legislative Session when the kumu of kula kaiapuni across Maui brought their students over to testify about the Water Code reform bill.

- Courtesy Photo

JUSTICE IN LAHAINA

Continued from page 8

75% of which are still privately owned. But these initiatives continue to face corporate push back and administrative delays.

As the third anniversary of the fire passes, everyone with kuleana to Maui Komohana must heed the wisdom of the kupa 'āina. They have continuously warned that reinvesting in tourist playgrounds rather than restoring indigenous management systems increases the risk of repeated catastrophe and fails to deliver justice to a community that has suffered immeasurable loss for 150 years.

Post-Fire Political Pollution: Obstructing the Restoration of Wai

While cleanup has progressed, water access has been repeatedly hampered by the Green Administration's prioritization of profits over people. Politicking began just days after the fire with the "redeployment" of CWRM's Deputy Director Kaleo Manuel who had led the charge to designate Maui Komohana.

Gov. Josh Green then suspended water protection laws, endorsed corporate water grabs, and erroneously blamed the fire on designation and kalo farmers, all before sending any real aid.

Next, Green hijacked CWRM's loa seat, reserved for an expert in Native Hawaiian water management techniques, by nominating a candidate sympathetic to legacy corporations.

Progress has most recently been stalled by lawsuits between TY Management and Maui Land & Pineapple (MLP): enterprises that profit daily from the extraction of Maui Komohana water. Their legal battles have spilled into CWRM's boardroom, consuming valuable time that should be used to make determinations on water permits that have been pending since 2023.

MLP is now in negotiations with the County of Maui to ex-

change its centuries-old infrastructure for water credits and entitlements for future development, a deal that would shift the cost of fixing the neglected system to taxpayers. Meanwhile, TY continues to pump precious drinking water to irrigate its golf courses.

These tactics intentionally favor legacy corporations: every day the permits remain unsettled is another day of profits.

The Community Pushes Back: Recent Victories

In the aftermath of the fire, the community was forced to confront the fallout of plantation disaster capitalism. Hotels prematurely evicted fire survivors for visitors, foreigners tried buying burned lands for cheap, and the government allowed diverters to take more water.

Instead of conceding, however, the community fortified their determination to resist the status quo, securing critical wins.

When Green pressed to reopen tourism, for example, Lahaina Strong led advocates in a 175-day beach occupation to highlight the exacerbated housing crisis. After a

successful protest, Maui County enacted Bill 9 to phase out short-term rentals that use twice as much water as local homes. Groups like the Lahaina Community Land Trust also stepped up to shield Lahaina lands from outside investors.

Concurrently, Nā Mamo Aloha 'Āina o Honokōhau raised awareness of the politics polluting water governance and worked with Maui students to advocate for water reform at the Hawai'i Legislature. The momentum built at the capitol led to the appointment of a community-recognized expert to CWRM's loa seat.

Following the loss of its headquarters, Nā 'Aikāne o Maui Cultural Center reinvigorated aspirations to restore Lahaina's historic royal complex, Lua'ehu, and the 17-acre inland fishpond, Mokuhinia, at the center of Lahaina Town.

These are just a few examples of community groups committed to defending wai and 'āina – the resources that sustained the practices of our kūpuna – as part of the collective struggle for ea and true self-governance.

Their work honors the natural and cultural resources of Lahaina that enabled 'ohana to thrive for generations. A growing population fed by streams that once permeated lo'i kalo through extensive, Kānaka-designed channels and flowed ma kai to sustain flourishing fishponds demonstrate that pono water governance benefits everyone.

For these groups, the path forward is clear: the achievements, histories, and stewardship practices of our kūpuna provide a blueprint to secure a brighter future beyond our present-day struggles, ultimately returning the glory of Lahaina.

As restoration efforts continue, CWRM must fulfill its kuleana to protect our wai through urgent action, thereby advancing long-overdue justice for the Maui Komohana community. ■

Since 2021, OHA has funded the Native Hawaiian Rights Clinic at the William S. Richardson School of Law to co-power kupa 'āina from Honokōhau to Ukumehame in their fight to restore streamflow, regain public control of water, and eliminate centuries of injustice.

Kanoelani Steward and Kalama'ehu Takahashi currently reside in the Ka'anāpali Moku after the 2023 Lahaina Fire and continue to advocate for pono water management. Kawaiuluhonua Scanlan, a licensed-attorney, and Bella Wong, a second-year law student, both work with the Native Hawaiian Rights Clinic.

HAWAII ISLAND

OHA Satellite Office Dates

OHA's Beneficiary Services travel 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

September 2 - Waimea

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

September 9 - Nā'ālehu

Shirakawa Hotel Unit 10
95-6039 Māmalahoa Hwy. 96772

September 23 - Pāhoa

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

September 30 - Kawaihae

Pua Ka Ilima O Kawaihae Surf Park -
61-3651 Kawaihae Road, Waimea, HI 96743



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The Revival of Ulana 'Ie as a Living Artform

By Kelli Meskin Soileau

By the turn of the 20th century, ulana 'ie – the traditional art of weaving using the aerial roots of the indigenous 'ie'ie vine – had nearly disappeared from common practice. Today, that 'ike is once again taking root across the pae 'āina as more Kānaka learn the practice and carry it into their own communities.

Leading the revival are Lloyd Kumulā'au Sing and May Haunani Balino-Sing, who have spent the last two decades teaching ulana 'ie classes and workshops. Over the years, their work has evolved beyond preserving the art form; it has become an effort to restore relationships with 'ike kūpuna, the wao akua, and with one-another.

Much of what is known about ulana 'ie survived through museum collections and the research of Sir Peter Buck (Te Rangi Hīroa), the Māori anthropologist and former director of Bishop Museum. In *Arts and Crafts of Hawaii*, Buck wrote that the twined 'ie'ie baskets once made in Hawai'i surpassed comparable work elsewhere in Polynesia. His documentation later became a key resource in helping Native Hawaiian practitioners reconnect with the tradition.



Artisans Kumulā'au Sing and Haunani Balino-Sing. - Courtesy Photo

For Kumulā'au, his journey began after seeing the work of artisan Patrick Horimoto, who perpetuated ulana 'ie in the 1980s and 90s through research, museum study and careful replication of ancestral pieces. Inspired to weave a personal mahiole (chiefly helmet), Kumulā'au began by learning to weave hīna'i (fish traps) before attempting more complex forms.

When another artisan, Raymond Nakama, saw Kumulā'au demonstrate his work at Native Books and Beautiful Things and offered to mentor him, it was a turning point. For the next 14 years, Nakama shared his knowledge and encouraged both Kumulā'au and Haunani to continue weaving and teaching so ulana 'ie would never again become a lost practice.

That encouragement became their kuleana.

In 2018, the couple began devoting more time to perpetuating ulana 'ie. They have taught workshops and completed five cohorts to date; establishing weaving communities on Maui, Hawai'i and O'ahu. They welcome haumāna with little or no weaving experience.

"We take them wherever they're at," Haunani said. "A lot of times they don't know anything and we build from there."

Students spend 14 months together, meeting monthly while completing projects between classes. They learn foundational weaving techniques, create several styles of



Hīna'i (baskets and fish traps) on exhibit at Capitol Modern during FestPAC 2024 were created by artisans Kamuela Chun, Tyrone Makaakalani, Mahi La Pierre and Kumulā'au Sing. - Photos: Kelli Meskin Soileau

hīna'i and gain an understanding of harvesting and caring for 'ie'ie.

'Ie'ie (*Freyinetia arborea*) is related to the hala (pandanus) tree. It is considered a kinolau (a physical form) of the god Kū. The thin-stalked, woody climber is found on all islands in wet forests on mountain ridges and slopes. Attaching itself to a host tree, it climbs using aerial roots up into the forest canopy seeking sunlight.

Because 'ie'ie are difficult to find and steward due to invasive species, the student weavers primarily use rattan which is the closest medium to 'ie'ie rootlets and allows learners to develop their skills while protecting native resources.

Although requests for traditional mahiole have increased in recent years, the Sings reserve harvested 'ie'ie for select cultural works only.

"We're very firm about it," Kumulā'au said. "When we do commissioned work for people, we make it out of rattan. We don't use the 'ie'ie."

Each cohort culminates with the creation of a large woven ki'i (figure). While traditional akua hulu manu were constructed of 'ie'ie and covered with feathers for ceremony and warfare, today's ki'i are more varied in form and may include male and female akua, mo'o, 'aumakua, kupua and kūpuna.

The Sings describe their teaching approach as "neo-traditional" meaning that while the weaving methods remain rooted in ancestral practice, student practitioners are encouraged to create works that express themselves as contemporary Hawaiians. And the ki'i they create are



Ki'i (figures) depicting deities are the work of haumāna of Kumulā'au and Haunani Sing and were displayed at Capitol Modern during FestPAC 2024. These are made with rattan, shells, seeds and dog teeth.

intentionally left uncovered to highlight the beauty of the weaving.

"We're creating ki'i for our Kānaka today," Haunani said. "To uplift our people."

Each cohort concludes with a hā'ike (closing ceremony same as a hō'ike) to honor the work and learning of the haumāna as well as to dedicate, name and enliven the ki'i.

"They are living, in a sense, and become a part of the family," Kumulā'au said.

The elevation of ulana 'ie as a living artform was visible during the Festival of Pacific Arts & Culture (FestPAC) held in Honolulu in 2024, when dozens of the Sings' haumāna carried their completed ki'i in a procession before placing them on display at Capitol Modern (Hawai'i State Art Museum). The exhibit reflected not only the skill of the weavers but also the growing strength of a cultural practice returning to the lāhui.

Significantly, while only 17 traditional akua hulu manu are known to exist in museum collections, approximately 60 contemporary ki'i have already been created by haumāna from the Sings' five cohorts.

"There are more contemporary ki'i 'ie today than there are stored in museum collections around the world," noted Kumulā'au.

The ki'i have become familiar sights at community events, marches and ceremonies. For the past four years, haumāna have participated in the Merrie Monarch Hula Festival kuahu opening ceremony, carrying the towering woven figures in the procession.

ULANA 'IE

Continued from page 10

This year, the National Endowment for the Arts is honoring the Sings with a National Heritage Fellowship for their work in supporting the revival and perpetuation of ulana 'ie. Presented exclusively to folk and traditional artists, the prestigious National Heritage Fellowship is the American government's highest honor and includes a \$25,000 lifetime achievement award.

"There are many other people who are worthy of this kind of recognition," Kumulā'au said. "For us to receive this award is very humbling."

Reflecting on this honor, the Sings are quick to acknowledge the many practitioners, mentors and kūpuna whose work made the revival of ulana 'ie possible.

For Haunani, the recognition also reinforces the importance of continuing to share the 'ike. "It was a dying practice, so we took on the kuleana to share this 'ike with those interested in learning."

That kuleana is already being carried by others. Graduates from the first Maui cohort have begun teaching ulana 'ie in their own communities with continued support from the Sings.

Looking ahead, the couple hopes to offer workshops for Kānaka living on the continent, creating opportunities for members of the Hawaiian diaspora to reconnect with home through ulana 'ie.

As more teachers emerge and more haumāna become practitioners, ulana 'ie continues to move beyond revitalization. It is once again a living tradition – strengthened through community, guided by kūpuna and carried forward by the hands of the lahui. ■

This month, the Sings will travel to Washington, D.C., to receive the NEA Heritage Fellowship Medal at an award ceremony on September 30 at the Library of Congress. The ceremony will be livestreamed on the NEA website.

Clean Slate Law Would Help Provide Second Chances

Submitted by Clean Slate Hawai'i

"Have you ever been convicted of a felony?" That one question, posed on an application for a pharmacy technician position, dashed any hopes Michelle Manalo had for getting the job.

After working at her local pharmacy for several years as a cashier and in the photo department, Manalo's manager encouraged her to pursue the pharmacy's technician program as a pathway to advance within the company. Manalo studied for months before preparing to fill out an application.

But a past conviction record meant Manalo would almost certainly be rejected, despite the fact she'd completed her sentence several years prior.

"My boss supported me and was behind me 100%, even knowing about my history," said Manalo, who now works at Going Home Hawai'i, an organization that supports formerly incarcerated people as they reenter society. "I had the full support of the administration, but unfortunately, my record prevented me from pursuing that goal."

Michelle's experience is not uncommon: one in four adults in Hawai'i has an arrest or conviction record that creates a barrier to getting a job, securing housing, or pursuing educational opportunities. This makes it difficult for people to earn a dignified living and provide for their 'ohana.

A coalition of community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and directly impacted individuals called Clean Slate Hawai'i is working to change this. The coalition, which includes the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), is advocating for a so-called "Clean Slate" law in Hawai'i's next legislative session, which would shield or expunge past arrest or conviction records from most background checks.

Outside of Hawai'i, 14 states and Washington, D.C., have passed Clean Slate laws to make second chances more accessible to people with records. As a result, over 18 million people are on the pathway to a meaningful second chance.

Clean Slate laws streamline the process of shielding eligible arrest or conviction records for people who have paid for their past mistakes and remained crime-free for several years.

When a record is shielded, it no longer appears on background checks used for jobs, housing, or school. Record shielding doesn't erase the record, however; law enforcement and courts can still access shielded records when needed.

While it's currently possible to petition the Hawai'i Criminal Justice Data Center or the courts to shield an arrest or conviction record, the process is complicated and costly. Fewer than 1% of people who are eligible for records relief receive it.

Advocates say that establishing a record-shielding system, supported by technology with human oversight, would cut red tape, improve efficiency, and reduce the chances that someone reoffends.

"Record shielding actually keeps people out of the system, because they have a fair shot at finding work or stable housing," said Jamee Miller, president of 'Ekolu Mea Nui and an advocate for a Clean Slate law in Hawai'i.

"Research from outside of Hawai'i shows that people whose records get shielded are much less likely to reoffend, which makes our communities safer."

As Michelle Manalo experienced, having a record can make it dif-



Members of Clean Slate Hawai'i plan to introduce a bill during the 2027 legislative session to expunge past arrest or conviction records from most background checks. - Courtesy Photo

ficult to find a good-paying job.

New research from The Clean Slate Initiative finds that people with arrest and conviction records experience a combined \$440 billion in lost annual earnings nationwide – economic activity that could otherwise strengthen communities and drive growth. In Hawai'i alone, these earnings losses total an estimated \$2.2 billion each year.

Employers are also impacted. With Hawai'i's low unemployment rate, businesses struggle to fill open positions and miss out on qualified candidates, simply because of their record.

Advocates with the Clean Slate Hawai'i coalition are working to get a bill introduced during the 2027 legislative session. It would build on earlier efforts to reform Hawai'i's record shielding system.

In 2024, Hawai'i's legislators established the Clean Slate Expungement Task Force. The task force is responsible for making recommendations to the legislature for a state-initiated record-shielding program ahead of the next legislative session.

Legislators also established a pilot project in 2024 to shield certain arrest records for Hawai'i Island residents with low-level drug offenses, particularly for marijuana which was decriminalized in 2019. More than 1,300 people's records were shielded without having to go through the court petition process, according to a report by the Department of the Attorney General.

Rep. David Tarnas, who represents North and South Kohala and serves as the chair of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs, introduced the bill that established the Hawai'i Island pilot project. In an interview with *Hawai'i Public Radio* in 2025, he shared, "I'm a firm believer in second chances and redemption, and expungement and record clearance is part of that."

In many ways, Clean Slate reflects the spirit of ho'oponopono: making things right, restoring relationships, and allowing people to move forward in harmony with their community. Clean Slate is about restoring balance, strengthening 'ohana, and ensuring that every person can contribute to a thriving Hawai'i.

Clean Slate Hawai'i, the coalition fighting for a Clean Slate law locally, believes everyone deserves a second chance to rebuild their lives. ■

To learn more, go to cleanslatehawaii.org. Share your support for Clean Slate legislation with your state representative and senator.

A Board and Stone in Every Home

By Kelsey Kukaua Medeiros

For nearly two decades, Kumu Earl Kawa'a, 81, has offered Board and Stone cultural workshops for 'ohana across sites on O'ahu, where he currently resides – and most recently on Moloka'i, where he was born and raised.

Growing up in Hālawā Valley, the Moloka'i High School graduate said, "Cultural 'ike and connection to the land and ocean has served me well. Otherwise, I wouldn't have had the depth, which is something I realized later in life.

"I left Moloka'i [when] I needed to. I didn't want to be the best pineapple picker, but I was headed that way," Kawa'a said with a laugh, noting that soon after he served in the Moloka'i National Guard and in the Peace Corps.

He received a bachelor's in psychology and master's in social work by 1982 and followed his passion working with nonprofits and schools, serving as a cultural specialist for Kamehameha Schools for 18 years. Later, he went on to help address public housing, homelessness and economic development, particularly advocating for Native Hawaiians.

In 2010, the cultural practitioner started teaching Board and Stone out of a garage. It took a couple years to formalize the program, which teaches families how to carve a wooden board (papa ku'i 'ai) and shape a stone poi pounder (pōhaku) using only hand tools. Its mission – his life's work – is to put at least "one board and one stone in every home," Kawa'a said.

Across the Islands, Board and Stone gatherings take place weekly over about four months. Classes are primarily for instruction, including some outings on weekends, while most of the work on the boards and stones is done at home.

"Board and Stone is a class I offer, but people have to make the choice to do it," Kawa'a said. "The orientation is designed to give them enough information. But they have no idea what they are in for – and that's when the learning takes place."

Alaka'i Eric Keawe said of his own upbringing, his parents taught Hawaiian music more than culture, language and religion. "I've been here at Board and Stone for at least 10 years, so have some of the other alaka'i (leaders), who are all like family. Because of his [Kawa'a's] 'ike, I have gained knowledge and skills, even in public speaking, that I didn't have before. I'm always learning and relearning."

Beneath the surface, the classes perpetuate Hawaiian language, culture and traditions – showcasing Kawa'a's other skills in hale and rock wall construction, ca-



Cultural practitioner and pioneer of the Board and Stone project Uncle Earl Kawa'a - Courtesy Photo

noe building, farming, and fishing, learned from his parents and community. His latest venture is learning the healing practice of ho'oponopono, which his parents, Walter and Georgina Kawa'a, were known for.

"I am the only one left in my family, my two sisters died and my brother," Kawa'a added. "My wife [Patricia] has always been my rock." The pair have a daughter, Yahna.

Looking back, "the 60s and 70s were the best time of my life, and what that means is that the knowledge and skills that I had, even teaching, was being refined. Of course, that was about when I met my wife."

Today, Kawa'a continues to be recognized for his work, which has reached thousands of people through various speaking engagements and teaching opportunities. "I love telling stories; but I am also learning to not talk so much."

In April, the Hawai'i House of Representatives honored Kawa'a during the 2026 legislative session "for dedicating his life to preserving Hawaiian language and culture, mentoring future generations, and strengthening communities throughout Hawai'i."

This was not something he was expecting.

Rep. Lisa Marten of District 51, which includes Waimānalo, Keolu Hills, Lanikai and a portion of Kailua, experienced Kawa'a's expertise in traditional hale building firsthand, which she shared briefly with lawmakers on April 2.

Kawa'a asked four individuals to join him on the House floor to be recognized: Board and Stone Alaka'i Kekipi Imamoto, a retired combat soldier who lives in Papakōlea with his 'ohana; Board and Stone Alaka'i Kahiau Paik, a 2025 Kamehameha Schools graduate who works with Ho'okua'aina; Keoni Peters, a hale builder who worked on Marten's project in Hāmākua; and longtime partner, Jenna Umiama, human resources director at Keiki O Ka 'Āina.

What's next for Board and Stone? Expansion, both nationwide and globally, Kawa'a said, noting that it's his dream to bring the classes to Japan, though, it will take sponsorship to help make this a reality.

And eventually, who will take over? "There are several people in place. The opportunity is in their hands," he added. "The foundation is already solid."

"E ola mau ka hana a me ka 'ike o nā kūpuna.' The work and the knowledge of our ancestors must live on." ■

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Author's Note: My Board and Stone Mo'olelo

I graduated from Board and Stone in spring 2021, invited by a former co-worker and alaka'i, Roger Vistart. I started at Keiki o ka 'Āina (KOKA) but finished with the Papakōlea class, due to restrictions to gathering sizes during the COVID-19 pandemic. What would have been a four-month class was extended to nearly one and a half years. But in that season, I never felt forgotten.

Kawa'a was, and is, my kumu – and Keawe and Imamoto are my alaka'i, among others. What I took away from their guidance, patience, selfless service and humility both in class and beyond was newfound confidence as a Hawaiian and a contributing member of this community.

Last April, I visited KOKA's Board and Stone class, greeted by the sound of metal hitting wood, warm embraces and the aroma of blooming puakenikeni. It was good to be home.

A circle of alaka'i had formed around Kawa'a, who was hunched over a wooden board, sharing the technique of shaving down its rough corners using a ko'i (axe). He invited some of them to try and gently corrected, as needed. The shavings should "curl," he explained, while tapping lightly on their backs to help them keep rhythm.

Meanwhile, 'ohana were arriving with their own papa and pōhaku; parents set up their work stations and greeted one another, while keiki played together throughout the evening.

At the call of "Hūi!" kāne and wāhine lined up for Hawaiian protocol and pule. Next came instruction from alaka'i about inoa and mo'olelo, in which 'ohana will call their boards and stones and share their journeys at an upcoming hō'ike.

The hana began and Kawa'a, along with the alaka'i, dispersed to assist families. Class concluded with mo'olelo presented by keiki in both 'ōlelo Hawai'i and English.

Afterwards, the alaka'i-led debrief meeting allowed for reflection on their own personal growth, in addition to observations from those with whom they worked. The overall sentiment was gratitude for kumu's "master class" in working the board and celebrating "how far the families have come along."

Board and Stone has taught me the importance of 'ohana, finding beauty in imperfection and finishing what you start through hard work, self-discipline and perseverance. I also learned how to pule and respect the 'āina, honoring Ke Akua, those who came before me and those journeying alongside.

Everyone has a mo'olelo that can be used to uplift and bring value to one another's lives.

Those interested in learning more about Board and Stone can visit koka.org

Kānāwai Kaiāulu i Mea e Ho'omalu ai kō Kākou 'Āina Kūpuna

Act 203: A new legal pathway authorizing community co-management agreements

By Hawai'i Conservation Alliance, Hui Maka'āinana o Makana, and Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo

OKa'aona ka malama, 'o 'Olepa ka mahina, 'o Kona ka moku, 'o Honolulu ke ahupua'a, 'o Ha'imoeipo ka 'āina, 'inana i ke Kukalahale. The sun was shining, the lei were vibrant, and the distinctive clack of rubber slippers resounded in the halls on July 8, 2026, when Gov. Josh Green signed House Bill 2218 into law as Act 203.

Community leaders, governmental officials, and advocates from across Hawai'i gathered at the ceremonial signing room on the fifth floor of the Hawai'i State Capitol to celebrate this momentous occasion that many had been working on for the past year, and many more have been working to realize for much, much longer.

Honoring the time-tested Native Hawaiian practices of mālama 'āina and ahupua'a-based management and acknowledging that the state alone cannot sustainably manage all the public trust lands and waters within its purview, Act 203 creates explicit legal authority for the state's Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) to enter into long-term community co-management agreements with community-based organizations.

In *Ching v. Case*, 145 Hawai'i 148 (2019), the Hawai'i Supreme Court reiterated that the state has an affirmative, actionable duty to mālama 'āina, preserve, and protect public trust lands and waters under its care for current and future generations of Native Hawaiians and kama'āina to love and enjoy.

Article XI, Section 1, and Article XII, Section 7, of our Hawai'i State Constitution likewise affirm that the state must restore and protect public trust lands and waters for generations to come, including for subsistence, cultural, and religious purposes.

Community-led mālama 'āina efforts with the state have been growing for decades through various means including Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Areas (CBSFAs), rights of entry, curatorships, and revocable permits to name a few.

However, as an ever-increasing number of community groups embrace their kuleana to mālama 'āina by functionally operating as co-managers, therein lay the challenge to explicitly define their co-management functions and responsibilities with the state.

Act 203 aims to do just that – uplift current efforts and lead the way for more effective and secure relationships by explicitly authorizing long-term community co-management agreements for up to 65 years.

These agreements can be executed by BLNR with "community co-managers," defined as Hawai'i incorporated nonprofits with the mission, capacity, and commitment to mālama 'āina. Community co-managers must



On October 17, 2002, 'Onipa'a Nā Hui Kalo brought 'ohana from across the pae 'āina to Hā'ena to assist Hui Maka'āinana o Makana in restoring water flow back into the ancient lo'i that had fed their community for 600 years. - Photo by Hau'oli Wichman, courtesy of Hui Maka'āinana o Makana



On July 24, 2003, just 9 months after the water was restored, kalo is thriving in Hā'ena State Park, soon after harvested, and distributed to 'ohana in Hā'ena and Wainiha, providing food security in these communities. - Photo by Hau'oli Wichman, courtesy of Hui Maka'āinana o Makana

engage in community-driven planning, including potential revenue generation and other management efforts and projects that benefit public trust lands and waters.

This new legal tool was initiated by the trailblazing Hui Maka'āinana o Makana (the Hui) which, since 1998, has led the ho'omalu of their sacred 'āina kūpuna at the Hā'ena State Park on Kaua'i.

Although the legislation was born from a decades-long struggle for a long-term lease in Hā'ena specifically, it quickly illuminated a shared opportunity for a clarified legal pathway to empower and increase community co-management across the pae 'āina.

Act 203 is intended to give established mālama 'āina communities real, dedicated seats at the table with the state as the true co-managers that they are and always have been – despite it all – since time immemorial. A distinct and exciting highlight of Act 203 is that it covers

co-management of 'āina in its broadest sense; from our fisheries ma kai to inland ma uka public trust lands.

Over the past year, a working group of representatives from the Hui, Hawai'i Conservation Alliance, Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, Hanalei Initiative, Mālama Pūpūkea-Waimea, and Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) informed and developed House Bill 2218, utilizing lessons from the CBSFA movement and other community-centered mālama 'āina efforts across Hawai'i.

The working group led robust community engagement, outreach, and agency inreach that were essential aspects in the creation and passage of this new law. House Speaker Rep. Nadine Nakamura and her staff were also extremely instrumental, advocating from within the state legislature to keep the bill alive during session.

The huge support from fellow community groups, partners, and individuals across the pae 'āina was also a critical factor in this legislative success. Some key supporters were the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development, Hawai'i Community Foundation, Sierra Club of Hawai'i, and Kaua'i Mayor Derek Kawakami.

The new law, of course, is not intended to be an easy "quick fix" for the myriad of complicated issues facing our people and the state, and its true effectiveness will be tested as time goes on. Simply put, Act 203 serves as another community-crafted "tool in the toolbox" to strengthen and increase community-based mālama 'āina across Hawai'i.

A larger vision of this new legal pathway is to help decrease our dependence on outside resources and the centralized governing systems that are unable to sustainably manage and ho'oulu all the waiwai held in our public trust lands and waters.

Act 203 was intended from the start to uplift resilient community groups that have demonstrated for years the technical, organizational, cultural, and community competencies necessary to act as co-managers with the state.

As such, the communities that will most immediately benefit from this new legal framework are those that have already been functionally operating as co-managers with the state over an extended period.

Several community groups have started drafting their own community co-management agreements and implementation plans, and we all look forward to seeing these agreements formalized and passed by BLNR through the public hearing process in the near future.

E mālama 'āina kākou no nā kau ā kau, mau ā mau. ■

For more on the origins of Act 203: kuahawaii.org/community-resources/co-management/. Interested community groups should reach out directly to DLNR for up-to-date guidance on implementation.

Who Owns the East Maui Irrigation System? And Why Does That Matter?



'Aha Wai o Maui Hikina board members. - Courtesy Photo

By Jonathan Likeke Scheuer, Ph.D.

Four times over the last two years, proposals have been placed on the agenda of the state's Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) authorizing a 30-year East Maui water license to a foreign corporation – the \$300 billion Canadian Public Sector Pension Investment Board doing business as (dba) “Mahi Pono.”

A recent plot twist to this 150-year-old fight might change the dynamics of this struggle. The state has been confronted with a long-ignored issue: “Who actually owns the East Maui Irrigation (EMI) System?”

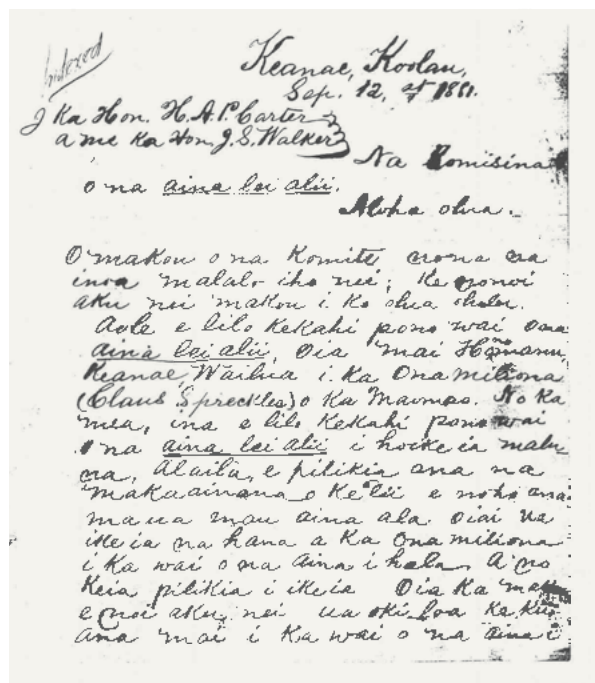
The system was built from the 1870s to the 1920s across Hawaiian Kingdom crown lands and private land. It has over 400 stream intakes, 50 miles of tunnels, and 24 miles of open ditches, siphons and flumes. Operated by Alexander & Baldwin (A&B) for decades, it was sold in two transactions in 2018 and 2025 to dba Mahi Pono, giving them ownership over 41,000 acres of land and the EMI Company.

To allow private access of the water off these crown lands, the Kingdom of Hawai'i, and then the Territory of Hawai'i, issued long term licenses. For the last few decades, BLNR has issued month to month, annual revocable permits. Much of the litigation for the last 30 years has been over these permits and how much water should be diverted.

Wary of the change in the ownership, Maui voters in 2022 created the East Maui Water Authority (EMWA) in a Maui County charter amendment that passed with 64% of the vote.

The 'Aha Wai o Maui Hikina – the EMWA Community Board – governs the Authority and is mandated to acquire the East Maui water licenses. The 'Aha is composed of stakeholders in the source and delivery areas including kalo farmers, watershed experts, and a representative for the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

Less than one month after the first 'Aha meeting, a letter was sent to then BLNR Chair Dawn Chang, asking that “DLNR (Department of Land and Natural Resources) initiate the processes for the East Maui Water



Part of an 1881 crown lands water rights petition pertaining to Maui Hikina. - Courtesy Photo

Authority to acquire and manage the East Maui water license and systems ...”

Replying 4-1/2 months later, Chang said, in part, that “It is important to note that [DLNR] does not own the water diversion and transmission system, [which] is privately owned by the East Maui Irrigation Company, LLC ...”

While Chang was absolute in her statement, DLNR, the state's attorneys, A&B, and now dba Mahi Pono have been saying much the same thing for many years.

- A&B's final EIS for a proposed 30-year water license was approved by BLNR in 2021 and states “The EMI Aqueduct System is owned and operated by the EMI.”
- In February 2026, the legislature considered House Bill 2434, which would have given a “right of first refusal” to the county for this system. In opposition, the state's Deputy Attorney General said that “... these are not public infrastructure [so the county would] have to prove that one they are in the process of eminent domain ...”
- In April 2026, dba Mahi Pono testified to BLNR that “EMI owns the Ditch System and has no intention of selling it.”

However, records held by DLNR – the department governed by BLNR – contradict this.

The territory's previous long-term licenses all expired decades ago: Ke'ānae in 1971, Nāhiku in 1976, Huelo in 1981, and Honomanū in 1986. Each lease contains lan-

guage providing that, upon termination, the entirety of the system on those lands would revert to and become the sole property of the territory.

These important points have been raised occasionally before. However, since much of the debate for the last three decades has been focused on how much water should be taken from East Maui, less attention was paid to who owns the system. That changed in April when the EMWA and the 'Aha presented this information to the BLNR.

This issue matters right now. These are not merely historical or academic questions.

In their most recent proposed action in August 2026, the DLNR only recommends a 30-year license to dba Mahi Pono and argues against issuing a set-aside of the system to Maui County.

DLNR uses the lack of ownership of a portion of one ditch as its reason to deny county management, even as they ignore the fundamental questions of ownership of the majority of the EMI System.

Ownership also matters to all beneficiaries of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), and the public.

Even if a license is issued to dba Mahi Pono, under the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 30% of revenues from these licenses go to DHHL, and 20% to OHA because the revenues derive from “ceded” lands. The remaining 50% goes to the public.

If the state owns more of the ditch system than it currently recognizes, the license price should be much higher.

Perhaps most importantly, this confusion about ownership reflects a fundamental problem with the current bodies controlling the crown lands.

If BLNR, DLNR, and dba Mahi Pono do not even know what is owned on these lands, how well are they stewarding them for the future?

The EMI remains central to how water moves across Maui. Before BLNR decides who should control it, they should first establish who actually owns it. ■

Update: At its August 14 meeting, BLNR voted unanimously to reject the proposal to initiate a public auction and the set-aside of land to Maui County. A contested case on the matter, requested by Sierra Club of Hawai'i, is still pending.

Dr. Jonathan Likeke Scheuer's firm Kahālāwai Consulting helps clients embroiled in environmental conflict seek shared, sustainable prosperity for the communities and 'āina involved. He currently is Vice Chair of the 'Aha Wai o Maui Hikina (East Maui Regional Community Board). He is coauthor of the 2021 book, “Water and Power in West Maui,” has numerous published essays on public policy issues, and has been quoted as a water policy expert in the “New York Times,” the “Washington Post,” the “Guardian” and other media.

What's in a Name?

By Dr. Ronald Williams, Jr.

I ka 'ōlelo nō ke ola, i ka 'ōlelo nō ka make.

The power to name, and in doing so create identity, in most instances lies close to home. A parent names a child, an artist names their work, a community names its streets, physical resources, and valued sites.

In contested situations, however, naming can become an instrument of control. It's one of the spoils of war. To the victor goes the writing of history, not only in general ways, but also in the ability to represent identities.

On 17 January 1893, a committee of 13 men – supported by a private militia and U.S. troops brought ashore on orders of a rogue U.S. consul – proclaimed themselves to be the lawful government of the Hawaiian Islands.

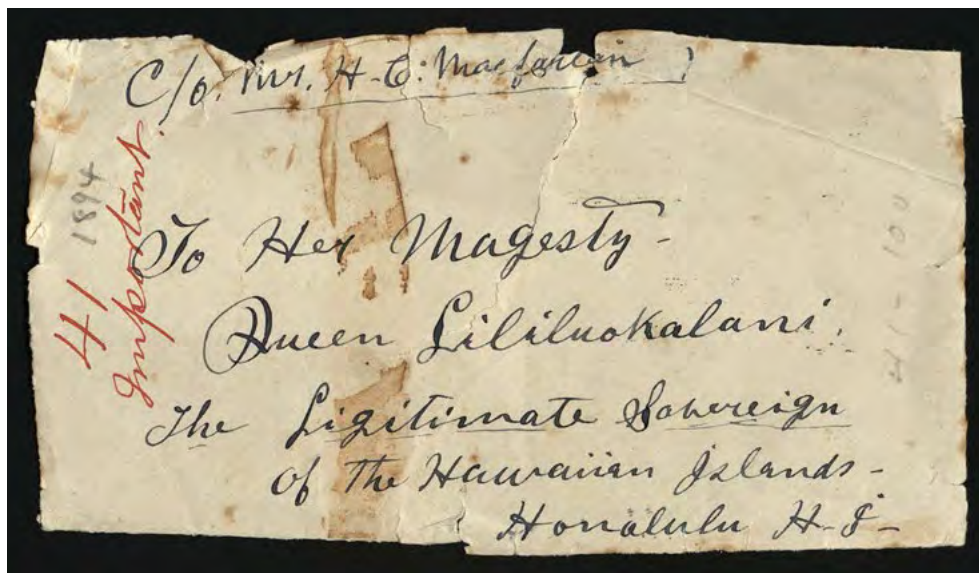
Within hours, Queen Lili'uokalani authored an official protest to the president of the United States asking that he undo the unauthorized actions of his diplomatic minister.

Less than 24 hours later, with the queen's protest weeks away from reaching Washington, the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* reported on the events, referring to Her Majesty as “the Late Queen.” *The Hawaiian Gazette* published a large photograph of the queen on its front page with the caption, “Liliuokalani, Ex-Queen of the Hawaiian Islands.”

The Daily Bulletin, on the other hand, referred to her as “Her Majesty the Queen” while *Hawaii Holomua* made their stance clear, designating her, “Aliiaimoku” (supreme leader). A battle was underway to shape the current and future identity of Queen Lili'uokalani.

S. Percy Smith, head of the Polynesian Society in Aotearoa, wrote to William D. Alexander of the Hawaiian Historical Society in June 1894. The two institutions were founded concurrently in December 1892, and both had requested Queen Lili'uokalani to do them the honor of being their founding matron. Her Majesty agreed, supplying the fledgling institutions with gravitas, personal funds, and critical connections.

Smith's correspondence asked what should be done considering the ongoing political struggle in Hawai'i and the queen's position within the two societies. Alexander



Following the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893, international supporters of Queen Lili'uokalani made their thoughts known in various ways. This envelope containing a letter of support was sent to the queen in 1894 by a self-declared “right thinking American” who offered to take up arms to help return her to her throne. - Courtesy Photo

replied, “I think it will be wise to relegate her name to the place of an honorary member, minus the title of “Her Majesty.”

Alexander's own institution had already elided the queen from their published record. Although the cover page of the group's 1892 constitution reads, “PATRON, HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN,” that designation disappears in the society's annual report.

In fact, Queen Lili'uokalani is not mentioned anywhere within the Hawaiian Historical Society's Annual Reports of 1893-1902; not as matron, benefactor, nor even as a member.

International supporters of the queen made their thoughts known in varied ways. One of the more original was an April 1894 letter mailed by a self-declared “right thinking American” who offered to take up arms and help the queen return to her throne. The envelope bore the recipient's name and title, and while the author's spelling may not have been on point, his message was clear. The letter was addressed to “Her Majesty Queen Liliuokalani, The Legitimate Sovereign of The Hawaiian Islands.”

Those opposed to the queen could be just as deliberate.

Rev. Sereno Bishop, well-aware of the innate Hawaiian belief in the power vested in a full and correct pronunciation of a name, took to referring to Queen Lili'uokalani as “Lil.”

In a letter to businessman Gorham Gilman, Bishop wrote, “My sister in N.Y. sends me a story clipping of a most sickening laudation of Lil and her talk about Hawaiians. What Lil calls the ‘downfall of her nation’ due to the missionaries is really a redeeming movement for them. But for the missionaries, L. herself would have rotted away early as a common low creature.”

During its reporting on the 1895 imprisonment of Queen Lili'uokalani within a room of 'Iolani Palace, *Ke Aloha Aina* made a statement on the identity issue that relied on style rather than content. The paper began capitalizing all pronouns referring to the queen; a distinct move that went beyond the common capitalization of pronouns within royal titles such as “Her” Majesty or “His” Honor. In one example, the paper declared, “E pono e hoihoi hou ia ka Moiwahine

o Hawaii ma Kona kulana maoli.” (The Queen of Hawai'i should be restored to Her rightful position).

In another, the paper insists that Her rank and station have remained the same and will until the last days of Her life: “He oia mau no Kona kulana kapukapu alii, a aole loa e hiki ke hoololi ia ae ia mea mai laia ae, a hiki i na la hope o Kona ola ana.”

Despite more than five years [1893-1898] of near-constant attempts to delegitimize the queen, and a century of false histories that elided her true actions, Her Majesty Queen Lili'uokalani continues to retain her rank and station in the eyes of her lāhui.

In 1982, a statue of the queen was erected on Palace Walk in Honolulu. A plaque at front reads, “Ola mau ko kākou Mō'i Wahine i ke aloha 'onipa'a ma nā pu'uwai o kāna po'e aloha 'āina. Our Queen lives forever with steadfast devotion in the hearts of her loyal people.” The statue's base holds the inscription, “Queen of Hawai'i 1891-1917.”

The 'ōlelo no'ēau, 'onipa'a ka 'oia'i'o, reminds us that the truth is indeed steadfast and once again we find ourselves looking back in gratitude to those who fought to record it.

Perhaps it was the *Home Rule Republican* of that era that made the issue most clear when they proclaimed: “Her Majesty Queen Liliuokalani will be addressed as above by every true Hawaiian and don't you forget it.” ■



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Hawaiian Stamps and the Making of a Nation

By Adam Keawe Manalo-Camp

In 1853, the Hawaiian Kingdom issued a 13-cent postage stamp bearing the portrait of King Kamehameha III, likely making him the first Indigenous sovereign depicted on the national postage of an independent state.

At the time, adhesive postage was still a relatively new technology. Britain had issued the world's first stamp only 13 years earlier, followed by the United States in 1847 and Hawai'i in 1851. Over the next four decades, Hawaiian postage would carry the faces of our ali'i across the islands and through postal systems around the world.

Hawaiian postage emerged from a national postal system established by Kamehameha III by royal decree on Dec. 21, 1850, among the earliest national postal administrations in the Pacific.

Its first stamps, issued in 1851, were later nicknamed the "Missionaries" because of their association with surviving missionary correspondence. These early issues were part of a much larger expansion of Hawaiian national infrastructure and connected Hawai'i materially to the 19th century family of nations.

The introduction of Kamehameha III's portrait in 1853 began a succession of ali'i images on Hawaiian postage. Eventually, Kamehameha III, Kamehameha IV, Kamehameha V, Victoria Kamāmalu, Mataio Kekūanaō'a, William Charles Lunali, Queen Emma Kaleleonālani, David Kalākaua, William Pitt Leleiohoku, Miriam Like- like, Queen Kapi'olani, and Queen Lili'uokalani would all appear on stamps. Kamehameha I was represented through his statue.

Together, they formed a visual genealogy of Hawaiian political authority. Some stamp issues also carried inscriptions in 'ōlelo Hawai'i, making the language itself part of how the Kingdom represented the Hawaiian nation internationally.

The prominence of Hawaiian ali'i is unusual within 19th century philately, when Indigenous people rarely appeared on postage. Hawaiian stamps presented successive generations of aboriginal political authority, includ-



ing reigning and former monarchs, royal consorts, heirs, the Kuhina Nui, and other senior ali'i.

Native Hawaiians appeared on Hawaiian stamps because Hawaiians ruled Hawai'i and represented themselves to the world, rather than appearing through a colonial gaze as objects of ethnographic curiosity.

Hawaiian stamps became paper emissaries of the kingdom, circulating the faces of Kānaka Maoli leaders across the Pacific, the Americas, Europe, and Asia. For Kānaka at Sutter's Mill, in the Pacific Northwest, sailors in distant ports, and Hawaiians studying abroad, those same stamps could carry another meaning: a small piece of the homeland.

The postal service also intersected directly with the political career of King Kalākaua. Before being elected as king, he served as Postmaster General under Kamehameha V, working within the bureaucracy responsible for domestic and international correspondence.

Kamehameha V subsequently gave that bureaucracy a permanent home. Construction of the kingdom's first purpose-built post office began in 1870 at Merchant and Bethel Streets in downtown Honolulu and was completed the following year. The Kamehameha V Post Office pioneered concrete-block construction in Hawai'i and remains a surviving part of the government district developed under the monarchy.

By then, postal administration had become inseparable from Hawai'i's foreign relations. International mail required agreements governing rates, transit, and postal revenues.

Under Kalākaua, the Hawaiian Kingdom joined the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in 1882. Created through the 1874 Treaty of Bern, the UPU established an international framework for exchanging mail among member countries and later became a specialized agency of the United Nations. Hawaiian postage now moved through foreign postal systems under common international rules recognizing the postal authority that issued it.

The illegal overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani on Jan. 17, 1893, produced an immediate and literal change in this

philatelic record.

The Provisional Government overprinted existing royal stamps with "PROVISIONAL GOVT. 1893." One of the most poignant material symbols of the overthrow remains Lili'uokalani's portrait bearing the name of the government that removed her, imposed directly across the face of the queen.

The overprints were followed by a deliberate reworking of Hawaiian postage. The Provisional Government ordered the destruction of plates and dies used for earlier issues as new designs were prepared.

Republic of Hawai'i stamps introduced a new political vocabulary, including Sanford Dole and, on official issues, Lorrin Thurston, while selectively retaining Hawaiian national imagery such as the statue of Kamehameha I.

The result reflected the republic's political contradiction: a government seeking American annexation that nevertheless depended upon existing Hawaiian symbols to represent the country it now governed.

Kānaka Maoli figures largely disappeared from postage after American annexation.

Under the Organic Act, Hawaiian stamps ceased to be valid for postage on June 14, 1900, as the islands were incorporated into the U.S. postal system. In 1937, the U.S. Post Office depicted the statue of Kamehameha I on a stamp commemorating Hawai'i as an American territory.

Duke Kahanamoku followed in 2002. The kingdom placed Hawaiian rulers on its stamps as representatives of a living Hawaiian nation and people, while the United States later returned Hawaiian figures to postage as subjects of territorial commemoration and historical memory.

Today, stamps of the Hawaiian Kingdom are generally encountered as collectibles or in museum collections. That context can obscure what they originally were: instruments of Hawaiian statecraft and communication that connected a recognized Hawaiian government and its people to a wider international network.

What began in 1853 with an Indigenous sovereign on the postage of an independent Hawaiian Kingdom ended in 1900, when Hawaiian postage was absorbed into the postal system of the nation that had seized Hawai'i. ■



The first Hawaiian Kingdom stamps were issued in 1851 (see image above). In 1853, a stamp was issued featuring the image of Kamehameha III and for the next 40 years, the likenesses of a succession of ali'i represented the sovereignty of Hawai'i internationally. Following the overthrow, existing stamps were overprinted with the words "Provisional Govt. 1893" over the visages of our ali'i as in this example (second from the right) of a stamp bearing the image of Queen Emma. Thereafter, new stamps - such as the one on the far right - featured the image of kingdom traitor and insurrectionist Sanford B. Dole. - Images Courtesy of Wikipedia

Waimea: Valley of Priests

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

The history of Waimea Valley as a place set aside for the kahuna nui of O‘ahu dates to about 1092 A.D. Tradition holds that it begins with the arrival in Hawai‘i of Māweke, a high chief from Kahiki. Like so many human stories, it is a tale of jealousy, betrayal, political ambition, and power that spans generations.

In one version of the story, Māweke had two sons: Olopana and Kahikiula. Olopana became high chief of O‘ahu. However, Olopana’s wife loved his brother, Kahikiula, and the two conceived a son they named Kamapua‘a.

In a jealous rage, Olopana threatens to kill the child (his nephew) but ultimately does not and Kamapua‘a grows to adulthood. However, years later when Kamapua‘a is a young man, Olopana conspires to murder him, enlisting the help of the high priest, Lono-a-wohi. In an unexpected plot twist, however, Lono-a-wohi betrays Olopana, saves Kamapua‘a, and kills Olopana instead.

Kamapua‘a then becomes high chief and, for saving the chief’s life, Lono-a-wohi was initially awarded all ahupua‘a on O‘ahu that included the word “wai” in their names.

Kamapua‘a later travels to Kahiki and his father, Kahikiula steps in as high chief of O‘ahu. To ensure that maka‘āinana (commoners) had sufficient lands to farm, he redistributes the lands of O‘ahu, assigning four especially sacred and resource-rich ahupua‘a to the kahuna class: Waimea, Pūpūkea, Hakipu‘u and Waiāhole.

The ahupua‘a of Waimea would stay with the kahuna nui class for roughly 700 years through the time of Kamehameha III.

In the 1770s, the high priest Ka‘opulupulu, a powerful prophet from Waimea, rose to prominence. He was chief advisor and priest to Kahahana, then the ali‘i nui of O‘ahu. Ka‘opulupulu was the last true kahuna nui from the O‘ahu line of priests.

It was a time of political turmoil. Kahekili, the ruthless and brilliant ali‘i nui of Maui, coveted O‘ahu. After a failed invasion of O‘ahu in 1775, cunning Kahekili – who was also Kahahana’s uncle – asked Kahahana to give him the wahi kapu of Kualoa.

However, the Kahuna Nui Ka‘opulupulu strongly advised Kahahana to deny Kahekili’s request.

Kualoa was an especially sacred land where the bodies of sperm whales often washed ashore. From the teeth of sperm whales came the ivory prized for lei niho palaoa (the whale tooth pendants worn by ali‘i). Ka‘opulupulu warned Kahahana that giving Kualoa to Kahekili would be like giving him the power of O‘ahu.

So Kahahana denied Kahekili’s request.

Seeing Ka‘opulupulu as an obstacle to his ambitions, Kahekili skillfully manipulated Kahahana into believing



Waimea Valley on the island of O‘ahu was set aside for the exclusive use of the kahuna class for 700 years. It is a wahi kapu with a storied history. Pictured is Hale o Lono, one of several heiau in Waimea. - Photo: Waimea Valley Hi‘ipaka LLC

that his trusted kahuna nui was a traitor.

According to this version of the mo‘olelo, when Kahahana removed Ka‘opulupulu from his council, Ka‘opulupulu returned to Waimea Valley and tattooed his knees (kuli) black, symbolizing that his chief, Kahahana, had turned a deaf (kuli) ear to his counsel and that any decisions the chief made moving forward were not made with his guidance.

After learning about this symbolic act of defiance, Kahahana ordered Ka‘opulupulu killed. Ka‘opulupulu and his son, Kahulupue, also a kahuna, fled Waimea but were later captured in Wai‘anae by Kahahana’s warriors where Kahulupue was killed.

Ka‘opulupulu was taken to Pu‘uloa into the presence of the king where he, too, was killed. It is said that, with his dying breath, Ka‘opulupulu prophesied that the king’s own death was near and that his body, too, would be de-based. After he died, Ka‘opulupulu’s body was taken to Waikīkī and hung from a coconut tree. This was in 1782.

The next year, Kahekili invaded O‘ahu landing at Waikīkī and slaughtering and pillaging his way to Waialua. His son, Kalanikūpule, became ali‘i nui of O‘ahu and the defeated Kahahana hid in the mountains with his wife and companions for nearly two years until he was captured and killed by Kahekili’s warriors in 1785.

As had been done to Ka‘opulupulu, the bodies of Kahahana and a companion, Alapa‘i, were taken to Waikīkī

and hung from coconut trees by Kahekili and his priests.

Following Kahekili’s victory, a fearsome regiment of his warriors – known as “Pāhupu” warriors because their bodies were tattooed half black – remained in Waimea for a time. The Pāhupu warriors are likely responsible for the murder of three crewmen from the British Royal Navy ship, the *HMS Daedalus*. The ship anchored in Waimea Bay in May 1792, and the men ventured into the valley to replenish their freshwater reserves. They were never seen alive again.

In 1795, Kalanikūpule was defeated by Kamehameha at the Battle of Nu‘uanu. With the O‘ahu chiefs gone, Kamehameha awarded the ahupua‘a of Waimea to his own kahuna nui, Hewahewa.

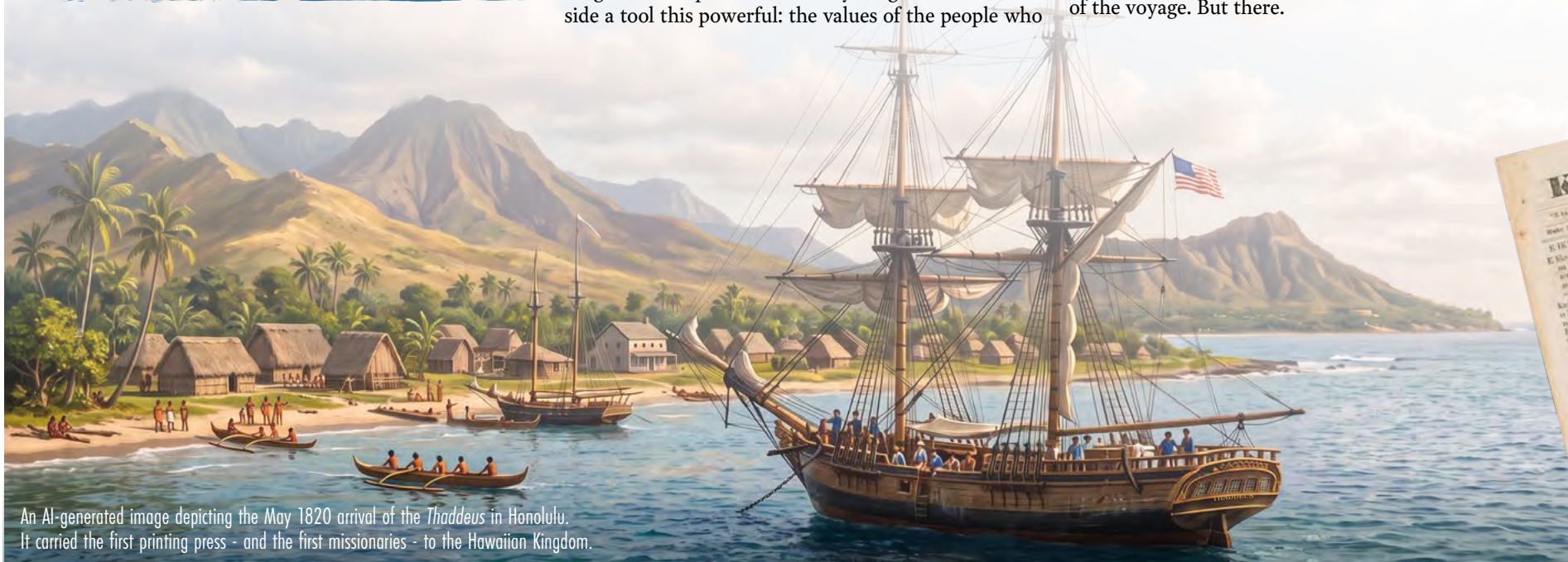
After Kamehameha died in 1819, Hewahewa helped to abolish the kapu system and later converted to Christianity. He served Kamehameha II and, briefly, Kamehameha III. In 1826, Hewahewa retired to Waimea to live out his remaining years. He died there in 1837 and, despite his adoption of Christianity, he asked to be buried in the old way. His iwi rest in Waimea Valley. ■

Mahalo to Waimea Valley Hi‘ipaka Research Director Dr. Alana Kanahele and Cultural Programs Manager Ka‘ulamealani Diamond for sharing most of the information used in this recounting of the mo‘olelo.

He Aupuni Palapala kō Kākou

By Olin Kealoha Lagon

In 1820, a foreign ship delivered a printing press and an agenda to Hawai‘i. Within a generation, our kūpuna had mastered the technology, left the agenda behind, and built one of the most literate nations on Earth. Today, the ship of artificial intelligence (AI) is in our harbor and it, too, carries someone else’s agenda. How do we navigate the changes it will bring - good and bad - and come out the other side still Hawaiian?



An AI-generated image depicting the May 1820 arrival of the *Thaddeus* in Honolulu. It carried the first printing press - and the first missionaries - to the Hawaiian Kingdom.

In 1820 a ship arrived carrying a printing press and the missionary whose grandson would help overthrow our kingdom. Both cargoes have landed again.

On Oct. 23, 1819, a small brig called the *Thaddeus* sailed out of Boston Harbor carrying two cargoes that would remake Hawai‘i.

The first stood on deck. Asa Thurston, newly ordained, newly married, sent to bring the gospel here. Seventy-three years after that ship landed his grandson, Lorrin, would help lead the overthrow of our kingdom.

The second sat below in a crate. A used Ramage printing press, the kind you work one lever at a time. It came with an assignment. Yet less than two years after it landed, the first hand to pull its lever belonged to a chief.

This past June I was in Boston for AI (artificial intelligence) classes at MIT (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), a birthplace of the field. One afternoon I stumbled into Park Street Church, where a plaque by the front door proudly marks their 1819 mission to the Sandwich Islands, the same mission that sent the *Thaddeus*. I knew nothing of this history. But after spending a couple of hours there, it hit me. We are living through a similar arrival. The ships of artificial intelligence have already dropped anchor, and they are carrying both cargoes again. The press and the passenger.

This time, the press is the most disruptive technology any of us will ever touch. And this time the passenger is not a person. It is everything that rides in beside a tool this powerful: the values of the people who

packed it and the plans we were never part of.

Let me be super clear about what this story is not. I am not pointing a finger at any faith. Christianity didn’t overthrow our kingdom. Men chasing land and power did.

Many of our kūpuna chose faith with clear eyes and made it profoundly Hawaiian. The *Baibala Hemolele*. The hīmeni that fill our churches every Sunday.

Our queen, devoted to the end, composed *Ke Aloha o Ka Haku* from her imprisonment and asked God to forgive the sins of men. At the bottom of that manuscript, she named the missionary party who overthrew her government. She drew a line I am drawing here. Ke Ali‘i Pauahi, raised in a mission classroom, inspired by faith to bequeath one of the largest educational gifts in history. I honor all of it.

In fact, the reason that ship sailed at all was because of a Hawaiian. His name was ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia. A boy from Ka‘ū who lost his parents in war, swam out to a trading ship, and landed in Connecticut.

He learned English. Then Latin. Then Hebrew. Then he sat down and started building the first attempt to write our language down.

He wanted to carry it home but died of typhus. It was the book about his life that convinced those New England volunteers to go. Elisha Loomis, the printer, signed up after reading it.

And he was not the only Kanaka on that manifest. Four Hawaiian men also sailed. John Honoli‘i, Thomas Hopu, William Kanui, and Humehume.

On a ship that changed everything, some of our people were on deck. Not enough of them. Not in charge of the voyage. But there.

Mission boards were shipping presses all over the earth in those years, each one carrying the same assignment. Print so that others may convert.

What our kūpuna did with that press has almost no parallel anywhere in history.

Within two years of the *Thaddeus* dropping anchor, ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i had a working written alphabet. On Jan. 7, 1822, the first sheet of ‘ōlelo Hawaiian ever printed came off that Ramage press. The hand that pulled the lever to strike that very first sheet in Hawaiian belonged to Chief Ke‘eaumoku.

Our ali‘i leaned into literacy for all with urgency. Chiefs became students. Students became teachers. Kauikeaouli declared, “He aupuni palapala ko‘u.” Mine is a kingdom of literacy. In 1840 he made it law and funded schools for every keiki in the islands. The U.S. did not catch up to universal education nationwide until 78 years later.

Schools and newspapers flourished. Just a dozen years after that first sheet of paper, adult Hawaiian literacy had exploded from near zero to 91%. On the continent, the U.S. sat around 78%.

Our kūpuna recorded mo‘oku‘auhau and mo‘olelo. Kani-kau for the dead. The old prayers and practices. Fishing reports, love stories, political beefs, letters from kalo farmers giving government officials heat. Governance, commerce, history, weather, science. Puakea Nogelmeier says those papers held everything the internet is today.

Foreign tech landed here in 1820 with somebody else’s agenda. Inside a single generation, our kūpuna had learned it faster than any nation on earth and used it to build a national memory. They leaned all the way into a foreign technology and came out the other side still Hawaiian.

Then, in 1893, the other cargo finished unloading. Asa’s grandson and the Committee of Safety illegally overthrew the kingdom. The board that sent his grandfather had put the assignment in writing before the *Thaddeus* ever left the dock: your work is to be wholly a labor of love. That was the instruction. The grandson made no such pledge.

Our kingdom fell. The library our kūpuna built did not. It is still sitting there. Nogelmeier counted it. They filled



Asa Thurston
- Images: Wikimedia Commons



Henry ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia

125,000 newspaper pages between 1834 and 1948, and less than 1% has been translated and published.

Almost everything written about who we were traces back to just four authors at the center of that 1%. Malo. Kepelino. Kamakau. ‘Ī. We have read only a tiny shelf. My mother was born Evelyn Mary Kalani Kamakau. Even I have read only a sliver of my own mo‘oku‘auhau.

That is the manifest I want us to hold together. Two cargoes. Our own people on deck. A library we have barely opened. Because the second ship is already unloading at our piers.

Let me tell you two stories about what is coming. The first one keeps me up at night.

AI is not going to take your job. Something worse is coming. The companies that fully adopt it are going to compete with yours, with pressure unlike anything we have felt.

We are entering an age where a very small team can build a company doing hundreds of millions in revenue. Take Medvi. One man in Los Angeles started it with about \$20,000 and a stack of AI tools. He used them to write the code, make the ads, and run customer service. Then he hired his only employee, his younger brother.

Their first full year they did \$401 million selling weight loss drugs online. *The New York Times* went through their

books. This year they are on track for \$1.8 billion. Search the name and you will find an FDA warning letter and lawsuits over how that marketing was done.

Could your company compete with that? Could it compete with the Medvi of your industry, running agents that cost pennies per task? Companies like this are already knocking on your customers’ doors - and they are cheaper than you.

This second story is one reason I still have hope. I am almost embarrassed to write this because it makes me sound like a kook, but I have spent my life as a technologist calling the future, and I am calling this one too.

There are keiki alive in Hawai‘i today who will live to see their 150th birthday. We are pointing all of this technology at the things that make us sick, and it has already started.

Take diabetes. It has hit my ‘ohana hard, and probably yours too. One of its cruelest tricks is diabetic retinopathy. It scars the eyes until the lights go out. My sister lost her sight to it. I watched it happen and could do nothing. Catching it early used to require a specialist, an appointment, a referral, a long wait.

The FDA has already approved an AI that can make that call on its own. No doctor in the room. Just a photo of your eye, and an answer in minutes.

Then take cancer. Native Hawaiian women have the highest breast cancer death rates in these islands, and too often it is found late.

Look at what happened in Sweden. Researchers there ran the first randomized trial of AI reading mammograms, more than 105,000 women, with results published in *The Lancet* this year. The AI caught 29% more cancers with no increase in false alarms. Most of the extra ones were small and early, the kind that can still be beaten.

Same mammogram. Just a different set of eyes that never get tired, never have an off day, and keeps learning.

Now take the heart, the number one killer of our people, and often silent. Doctors at Mayo Clinic taught an AI to spot a weak pump from a single Apple Watch reading.

SEE HE AUPUNI PALAPALA KŌ KĀKOU ON PAGE 20



An AI-generated image of the original Ramage printing press that was set-up in Honolulu. It arrived with the first missionaries in 1820 and in 1822 produced its first printed work - a 16-page Hawaiian language primer that introduced the Hawaiian alphabet, the pī‘āpā. In 1834, when the literacy rate in Hawai‘i already exceeded 90%, the first Hawaiian language newspaper, *Ka Lama Hawaii*, was published by the students of Lahainaluna. By the end of King Kamehameha III’s reign in 1854, Hawai‘i was arguably the most literate nation in the world.



Our kūpuna seized on the technology that the printed press presented 200 years ago and learned it better and faster than anyone on Earth. As a result, there are 125,000 pages of 'ike kūpuna preserved in 19th and early 20th century Hawaiian newspapers for new generations of learners. Today, we have to decide how we will use - or not use - AI. And if we choose to use it, how do we ensure that it works for us in ways that are healthy and pono? - *AI-generated image*

HE AUPUNI PALAPALA KŌ KĀKOU

Continued from page 19

So where does it end? A study published this summer in the journal, *Aging*, asked exactly that. Suppose we cured every disease and reversed every part of aging that science can ever reach. Random errors in our DNA would still cap human life somewhere between 146 and 194 years. That is one ceiling. And if we ever learn to fix those errors, the same math points to nearly 1,800 years.

Hawai'i has the longest life expectancy in America at 81.9 years. Kānaka live 77.4, which is about what the average American lives. We get none of our hometown advantage. Ten years behind the longest living group in our own islands. Almost everything between where we are and whatever our ceiling turns out to be is exactly the ground AI is already changing fast. And remember, this is the dumbest AI will ever be. In medicine it has barely started.

You are going to meet a thousand more stories like these every year. A wild mix of horror and hope. Both cargoes, unloading at once.

So now what?

If I had a magic wand, I would stop the whole world from building this until we were certain it was safe. I do not have one.

So, each of us has to draw a line. Actually, there are two.

The first one you do not get to draw. The world draws it for you. You already deal with hundreds of AI systems every day, and they work for whoever built them. The phone in your pocket. The grid, the credit card swipe, the dating app, the algorithm that decides if you get the loan. And, unlike the last machine, this one does not wait for a hand. A printing press sat still until a person pulled the lever. This thing moves on its own. That line creeps closer every day whether you like it or not.

The second is yours alone. How much of this are you going to let in on purpose?

I am not telling you to do what our kūpuna did, because we cannot. They had a kingdom. They had ali'i who

could turn a nation in a decade.

What is still available to us is the posture. They did not stand on the beach arguing about whether the ship should have come. They took the machine, learned it faster than anyone on earth, and pointed it at what they loved. They came out the other side still Hawaiian.

I believe that pathway is open again, and I will tell you where I think it starts. Remember those 125,000 pages of our own 'ike, still sitting in a language most of us cannot read. Nobody on this earth is better positioned to bring that waiwai back than we are.

But nobody starts there. So, let's start with literacy. Again. And start small.

Kilo your day, at work or at home. What do you spend hours doing that you wish went faster? Write it all down. Grant reports for your hālau? Testimony due Thursday you have not started? Hunting down and filling out scholarship applications for your keiki? Finding time to study 'ōlelo Hawai'i? Get a paid version of one of the main models, around \$20 for one month. Feed it your list. Tell it to interview you, to understand you deeply, and only then to work the list with you until you land on one thing worth fixing. Not a party trick. Something that gives you back hours or takes a weight off your shoulders.

Then let it teach you. Ask it a million questions. Do not worry if you are not technical. When you get stuck, and you will, do not reach for the phone to call your niece. Ask the machine. Make it explain until you understand. Nobody can hand you this one. You have to build it yourself, and you can do almost anything with a patient coach that goes step by step. Keep going until it has changed one real thing in your daily life.

From there you will understand in your na'au one manini part of what this thing is. And manini is the honest word. You will have seen the shoreline at night. What sits past it is an ocean nobody has crossed yet. But standing on that shore is enough to put the hoe uli, the steering paddle, back in your hands, where you can point this tech in any direction you choose, including away.

And if one small lever feels like it could never matter, there is one more piece of 'ike kūpuna I want you to hold. In 1897, four years after the overthrow, our kūpuna



One of the most positive developments in the application of AI is in the medical field. In Sweden, by using AI, 29% more cancers were detected in mammogram screenings, while doctors at the Mayo Clinic taught AI to spot a weak heart using an Apple Watch. The potential to treat, cure and prevent chronic or deadly diseases may be just over the horizon - and with it, the potential to double the average human lifespan. - *AI-generated image*

answered with the very machine the *Thaddeus* delivered.

They gathered signatures district by district, by horse-back and canoe and on foot. When they finished, the Kū'e petitions carried the names of more than half of our entire people. Not half the adults. Half of everybody.

And you cannot sign your name if nobody ever taught you to write it. That is the press, still working, 75 years after the first impression.

Those pages went to Washington, D.C., and helped make sure the annexation treaty never got the votes it needed. Annexation came the next year anyway, without a treaty, by a resolution we never consented to. But it did not come with our silence.

So go back to that room one last time. Jan. 7, 1822. A grass hale in Honolulu. The press stands ready, the type is set, and Elisha Loomis, the printer who crossed an ocean because of 'Ōpūkaha'ia's book, invites a chief to step up to the machine.

Ke'eumoku had been leaning in from the start. He housed the missionaries when they landed. He learned the new letters, and his English skills made him their interpreter. That afternoon the composing stick was placed in his hands and he set a line of type himself, shown how to place the letters, shown where to put his hand, shown when to pull.

He was not a printer. No Hawaiian was. Did he know what he was kicking off? The schools, the newspapers, the 91%, the petitions, a lāhui writing itself into memory? Nobody could have predicted all of that. But our ali'i knew mana when they touched it. Maybe he felt the whole thing in the lever.

A ship is in the harbor again. Maybe you feel uneasy. Maybe this machine feels like it belongs to somebody else. It does. So did the last one.

Ke'eumoku did not wait until he understood it all. He put his hand on the lever and pulled. ■

Olin Kealoha Lagon is a Kanaka 'Ōiwi technologist and kalo farmer from the Waimānalo homestead. Over three decades he has co-founded companies and organizations like Purple Mai'a, all with the same aim: putting technology to work for the lāhui.

Catholics Prepare to Celebrate 200 Years in Hawai‘i

By Donalyn Dela Cruz

Nearly 200 years ago, a Catholic mission group of three priests and three lay brothers arrived in Honolulu to establish a faith that would endure persecution, grow across the islands, and leave a lasting mark on Hawai‘i through education, healthcare and service.

The missionaries, members of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, departed Bordeaux, France, in 1826 on a nine-month journey to Hawai‘i. When they arrived in Honolulu in July 1827, they faced opposition from Protestant missionaries who had arrived seven years earlier and who had gained considerable influence with Kuhina Nui Queen Ka‘ahumanu.

However, the Catholic missionaries were welcomed by O‘ahu governor Boki who, with the approval of King Kamehameha III, granted them a plot of land in Honolulu. This allowed the group to establish its mission before a period of religious persecution and political opposi-



Reverend Lane Akiona (second from left) was celebrated on August 2 as he marked 50 years of service in ministry. Also pictured is Reverend Monsignor Terry Watanabe (center) who delivered the homily. - Courtesy Photo

Catholics were persecuted and were either imprisoned, starved or forced into hard labor.

Kalani Akana, Ph.D., wrote about the persecution that occurred in Maui: “There were many Catholics living in Wailuku at the time. They were ordered by the government to build a Protestant church, but they refused. Instead, they consented to fix the roads. When the gov-

ernment ordered them to send their children to the Protestant schools, however, they refused again. As a result, they were captured and bound and taken to Lahaina.”

In December 1837, King Kamehameha III enacted a law prohibiting the practice of Catholicism. Hundreds of Native Hawaiian Catholics were persecuted and were either imprisoned, starved or forced into hard labor.

Queen Ka‘ahumanu, who abolished the kapu system and had converted to Protestant Christianity, ordered Catholic missionaries to leave.

ernment ordered them to send their children to the Protestant schools, however, they refused again. As a result, they were captured and bound and taken to Lahaina.”

In Honolulu, the land granted by Boki remained the center of the Catholic mission, and Catholics returned there following the end of their expulsion in 1839. The Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace was later constructed on the site of the mission’s small chapel.

As local Catholics prepare to commemorate 200 years since the establishment of the Catholic mission in Hawai‘i, those difficult years also represent a formative period that helped strengthen and shape the faith in the islands.

The Reverend Monsignor Terry Watanabe, who was born and raised in Wailuku, began his priestly ministry at his hometown’s St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church. He said, “If you trust in the Lord, which is what we’re called to do in our daily living and our daily lives, God will be with us both in the good times and the bad, and the joys and the sorrows of life.”

At St. Anthony of Padua Church in 1873, four young priests volunteered to serve those forced into isolation at Kalaupapa because of Hansen’s disease. Father Damien was among them, serving the exiled community for 16

SEE CATHOLICS IN HAWAI‘I ON PAGE 22

Kuleana grows leaders

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Pauhi Foundation

Waikīkī Beachboys Seek to Restore Historic Koa Canoe

By Kyler Hood

For more than four decades, *Kamoho Ali'i*, beloved traditional koa wa'a of the Waikīkī Beachboys Canoe Club (Beachboys) has served as a physical connection to the club's roots.

"Koa canoes are so important to our history [of the Beachboys], and to the history of the Hawaiians," said Rae Kamaka, wife of the late legendary waterman William "Moku" Kamaka who was one of the club's founders and the club's head coach for years.

Origins

The canoe club was founded in 1973 by a group of Waikīkī beachboys to promote surfing and outrigger canoe paddling. Today, the Beachboys are a highly regarded canoe club known for embodying the Hawaiian waterman tradition, preserving outrigger canoe history, and for perpetuating aloha.

Kamaka shared that, back when the club was founded, traditional koa canoes were far more prevalent. Today, fewer than 60 are actively raced, and all are highly prized.

Kamoho Ali'i was born in 1980 in Hilo, the creation of canoe-builders Ray Bumatay and Alex Apo. From the beginning, *Kamoho Ali'i* was a source of pride for the Beachboys. Still a relatively new canoe club at the time, adding *Kamoho Ali'i* to their fleet of canoes was the achievement of a goal that club members viewed as being a significant step towards becoming a respected canoe club.

Another goal was to win either the Moloka'i Hoe or Nā Wāhine o ke Kai – both long-distance canoe races (approximately 41 miles) that cross the Ka'iwi Channel from Moloka'i to O'ahu.



A mixed crew of paddlers from the Waikīkī Beachboys take *Kamoho Ali'i* for a ride in the early 1980s. The koa canoe has been in dry dock for more than two decades, but fundraising efforts to restore the canoe are currently underway. - Courtesy Photo

That goal was finally realized in 2011 when the club's female crew took first place in Nā Wāhine o ke Kai. It proved to be a spectacular season for the Beachboys.

"2011 was really the culmination of carrying out what Moku and the Beachboys had set out to do when the club was founded," said Dana "Gorecki" Yaross, a club member who paddled with the Beachboys for 18 years and served as its president from 2002 – 2017.

However, amidst the club's success that year, the Beachboys also experienced tremendous loss. Club co-founder Moku Kamaka passed away in August 2011.

In Need of Repair

Around 2003, after paddling her for more than 20 years, the Beachboy's prized koa canoe, *Kamoho Ali'i*, was placed in storage. She needed repairs that the club could not afford.

Time passed and in 2019, the club began restoration

work on its fleet of canoes. By 2026 all the club's fiberglass canoes were restored. *Kamoho Ali'i* is next.

After almost 23 years, the Beachboys are excited to begin restoring *Kamoho Ali'i*. It will be a long process, but the wa'a is foundational to the club and its values. To this end, fundraising efforts are underway to restore *Kamoho Ali'i* which club leadership estimates could cost \$90,000. A hefty price, but they believe it is well worth it.

Eric Lenz is the current president of Waikīkī Beachboys. He has been with the club for about 16 years and is its Novice B paddling coach. Reflecting on the club's canoe restoration efforts, Lenz emphasized that boats are meant to be on the water.

At the annual Waikīkī Beachboys Invitational Regatta on July 11, 2026, Kahu Dennis Salas offered the opening pule. Seventeen clubs competed this year at the event which, of course, was held at Waikīkī Beach. The regatta enjoyed clear weather and the Beachboys took home five gold medals that day.

At the conclusion of the regatta, beneath sunny skies and against the aquamarine backdrop of the ocean, the Beachboys celebrated on Waikīkī Beach with the other canoe clubs and paddlers who competed that day, win or lose.

"We want paddling to be competitive. That's why we're here. We're here to win races. We're here to paddle, but we're mostly here to have fun," said Lenz. ■



To donate to the restoration of *Kamoho Ali'i*, scan QR code or go to: wbbcanoeclub.square.site/product/donation-for-kamoho-ali-i-our-1980-koa-canoe-/84

CATHOLICS IN HAWAII

Continued from page 21

years until his death in 1889.

Also answering the call to serve at Kalaupapa was Mother Marianne Cope, a sister of St. Francis.

"She's the one that started Maui Memorial Medical Center here on Maui," added Watanabe. "Because right next to St. Anthony was our first hospital, which was called Malulani Hale. I was born there."

Mother Marianne managed Malulani Hospital, known today as Maui Memorial Hospital, and St. Anthony School.

"Mother Marianne was incredible because she promised her nuns that no one would ever get sick or contract leprosy by working in Kalaupapa. And ... not one of the sisters who ever worked there ever got leprosy," Watanabe said.

Kalaupapa was home to an interfaith community where multiple religious groups cared for patients. However, Father Damien and Mother Marianne left an enduring legacy for their fearless advocacy and transformative service which, today, is internationally recognized.

"Not every state can say that they have two saints," said Watanabe. "We are so fortunate that these saints basically are models and witnesses to us of what it truly means to really live the faith and to proclaim the faith and to put the word of God into action for others. It's not just something that was written about in history, but it's something that lives today."

As the Catholic Church became more established in Hawai'i, immigration also contributed to its growth. The expanding sugar industry brought waves of immigrants to the Hawaiian Kingdom, including Portuguese laborers, many of whom were Catholic.

A *Catholic Herald* article notes, "Hawai'i received its first major influx of Catholic immigrants with the arrival

of the first Portuguese farm laborers from the Azores in 1878. Among them were the ancestors of Bishop Larry Silva, the fifth bishop of Honolulu."

Today, Catholicism is the largest single organized religious body in the state with 66 Catholic parishes across Hawai'i. The Catholic Church has also made lasting contributions to education and healthcare. Twenty-six Catholic educational institutions continue to operate spanning early learning to higher education. St. Francis Healthcare System of Hawai'i provides medical services focused on kūpuna care.

The U.S. Province of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary – the same religious order that established the Catholic mission in Hawai'i nearly 200 years ago – is led by today by Father Lane Akiona, a Native Hawaiian priest from Moloka'i. Akiona not only serves in Hawai'i and on the continent, but in Tonga as well. Here at home, Akiona shepherds St. Augustine by the Sea in Waikīkī. ■

Pursuing 7 Billion to Stop the Cultural Genocide

By Kalaniakea Wilson, Ph.D.

The U.S. Marine invasion in 1893 initiated a state of war that subdued the Native Hawaiian government. For over a century, Hawaiians survived through policies of genocide. Here, I highlight cultural genocide.

On July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawaii – the grandparent to the State of Hawaii – replaced the Native Hawaiian government resulting in an example of social and political genocide.

The compounded negative effects of physical, economic, social, and political, genocides are immeasurable. I'll introduce cultural genocide policies that extinguished Hawaiian language and destroyed Hawaiian identity.

In 1896, the Republic of Hawaii passed Kanawai 57 prioritizing English schools to replace Hawaiian schools effectively banning Hawaiian language in public schools. My grandmother was spanked by the teacher in front of the students as an example to Hawaiian youth that if you speak Hawaiian, you will be tortured.

Hawaiian families across the archipelago experienced corporal punishment through physical torture, suspension, detention, and more to extinguish Hawaiian language.

In 1978, the constitutional convention established Hawaiian language as an official language of the State of Hawaii. After nearly 50 years, no Hawaiian language TV station, radio station or programming exists. Hawaiian language is not a course requirement for graduation in public schools while four years of English is required.

In 1906, the Department of Education required the "Programme for Patriotic Exercises in the Public Schools" curriculum to replace Hawaiian Kingdom consciousness for American consciousness. Hawaiian Kingdom national holiday celebrations ceased to exist. Since 2016 the legislature disapproved bills to reestablish La Hoihoi Ea and La Kuokoa as paid state holidays perpetuating centuries old cultural genocide policies.

Thank you, Governor Waihee for passing La Hae Hawaii or Hawaiian flag day on July 31, 1990, which opened the doorway to reestablish La Hoihoi Ea history presentations at Luakini Puukohola National Park.

Every year since 2014 I have provided presentations and a flag ceremony at noon flying only the Hawaiian flag. In 2026, I was directed by Paul Scolari NPS Superintendent, Kawai Domingo Park Ranger, and Pomai Brown ROOK I Moku o Kohala, to do my presentation outside on the grass, after the park closed. Hawaiians in positions of power assist to perpetuate policies of cultural genocide today suppressing Hawaiians seeking to remedy a century of genocide injustices.

The State of Hawaii continues to underfund Hawaiian education programs seeking to reverse cultural genocide policies in the Department of Education. In 2026, Hawaiian language immersion programs are not adequately supported and continue to be underfunded and unavailable as an option for Hawaiian youth at many public

schools. The legislature is perpetuating the intention to destroy by not reversing these century-old genocidal policies.

When the legislature chooses to divert funds away from funding initiatives to reverse genocide policies, the legislature then becomes a sponsor that supports continued genocide policies that result in Hawaiian deaths.

Unknowingly, Hawaiians have been in a struggle for their survival and existence. Here is a kahea to unite and fight for our right to exist in our own homeland. ■

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

A Modernized Jones Act Could Help Reduce Hawai'i's Cost of Living

By Dr. Inam U. Rahman, M.D.

For more than a century, the Jones Act – formally the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 – has governed shipping between U.S. ports. It requires that domestic cargo move on vessels that are U.S.-built, U.S.-owned, U.S.-flagged, and U.S.-crewed.

While intended to strengthen national security and support American maritime jobs, some provisions now create unintended economic burdens for non-contiguous states and territories such as Hawai'i, Alaska, and Puerto Rico.

Hawai'i is especially vulnerable because nearly everything we use – from food and medicine to fuel and building materials – must arrive by ship or air. Hawai'i imports most of its food, making transportation costs especially important to local families. As an island state already facing one of the highest costs of living in the nation, Hawai'i depends on an efficient and affordable transportation system.

As a physician, I have seen patients struggle to afford healthy foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables essential for preventing and managing chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and obesity. Higher shipping costs contribute to higher food prices, making healthy choices more difficult for working families, seniors, and residents living on fixed incomes.

Native Hawaiians are often disproportionately affected because they face higher rates of poverty, food insecurity, housing challenges, and chronic health conditions. When the cost of essential goods rises, the burden falls hardest on vulnerable communities.

Supporters of the Jones Act correctly note that a strong domestic maritime industry is important for national security, military readiness, and maintaining a skilled American workforce. Those concerns are legitimate. But protecting national interests and reducing costs for island communities are not mutually exclusive goals.

One of the costliest parts of the law is the requirement that vessels used in domestic shipping be built in the United States. American-built ships often cost far more than comparable foreign-built vessels, and those costs are ultimately passed on to consumers through higher

shipping expenses.

Modernizing the Jones Act does not mean abandoning American maritime strength. It means updating an outdated provision while preserving the law's core goals. A balanced reform plan could preserve U.S.-flag, U.S.-ownership, and U.S.-crew requirements, while modernizing the build requirement so foreign-built vessels can qualify if they are U.S.-owned, U.S.-flagged, and U.S.-crewed.

It could also create a transparent waiver system for Hawai'i, Alaska, and Puerto Rico during emergencies, natural disasters, or major supply disruptions, while continuing to protect military and emergency shipments.

For Hawai'i, transportation policy is not abstract. It directly affects the price of groceries, housing, fuel, medicine, and other necessities. Even modest reductions in shipping costs could help ease financial pressure on local families.

Congress should begin a serious bipartisan review of the Jones Act's build requirement. Thoughtful modernization can preserve national security, support American workers, strengthen our maritime industry, and help reduce the cost-of-living burden on Hawai'i's families. ■

Dr. Inam U. Rahman, M.D. is a physician, educator, small business owner, and community advocate in Hawai'i.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

An Open Letter to the Nine Members of the Hawaiian Homes Commission

On behalf of the Waiohuli Makai Homelands Advocacy Group, I thank a Honolulu philanthropist for an August 2 contribution of \$3,000. The donor, a prominent isle developer, designated the sum toward a scholarship for a University of Hawai'i senior or master's-degree candidate in architecture, community planning or engineering to create a Waiohuli Makai site plan.

Waiohuli Makai is the project name of a proposed 1,200-lot Hawaiian Homes development on 4,780 acres in Upcountry Maui. Ten years ago, Maui Hawaiian homestead leaders had proposed this vision for a Waiohuli Makai housing/farming community on some 5,000 fallow acres. The state Land Use Commission has designated as "agriculture" this homelands acreage on the slopes of Haleakalā crater.

Meanwhile, the UH Foundation has welcomed the scholarship offer and indicated an intention to organize a program to manifest a Waiohuli Makai site plan. With the latter plan in hand, the donor developer said the next steps will be to assign phases to the project and to pursue funding.

I know 10-term Congressman - Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole, father of the 1920 federal Hawaiian Homes Commission Act - would have deemed this initiative as Native Hawaiian self-determination, self-governance ... and sovereignty.

Kekoa Enomoto

Founder, Waiohuli Makai Homelands Advocacy Group and 40-year Hawaiian Homes beneficiary.

The One Who Walks Beside You

By Lilinoe Kauahikaua

There is something a peer can offer that no degree or credential can teach. *I'm still here. I didn't forget where I came from. I made my way through, and I'm not letting you do it alone.*

That knowing is at the heart of peer support. Because they lived it. It comes from living through substance use, incarceration, loss, recovery, healing, and rebuilding a life – and choosing to turn around and walk beside somebody else who is also struggling.

A peer supporting someone through crisis may find themselves face-to-face with reliving their own experiences. Like a mirror, shared one recent trainee, seeing someone repeat a cycle she recognized from her own life.

So, we look not only how we train peers, but also how we hold them.

In Hawai'i, we've always known this. We go to the 'āina. We oli. We know which auntie to call. We understand that healing does not happen apart from culture, community, and place.

The 58-hour Ka'ao-Based Peer Recovery Specialist training was built from that knowing, grounded in the stories and practices of our people, and how we understand our relationships to one another and the world around us.

Developed in partnership by Papa Ola Lōkahi, Lonoa Honua, and Lewin Strategies, and Funded by the Department of Health-Alcohol & Drug Abuse Division and the University of Hawai'i Substance Use Professional Develop-



ment Board, the training weaves cultural teachings and national peer-support standards through Ka'ao.

Built by peers, for peers.

The five stages of the Ka'ao framework were taught to us by Dr. Taupōuri Tangarō and Kekuhi Keali'ikanaka'ole. Ka'ao gives

language to a journey peers already know: Hua, the seed, our why; Ha'alele, what we leave behind; Huaka'i, the journey; Ho'ina, the return; and Hā'ina, the embodiment.

Twenty-two peers completed the pilot this summer. Sixteen had never received formal peer training.

In the lo'i, feet in the mud, memories surface. We carried away a teaching from Auntie Kekuhi: somewhere back in time, this 'āina has already experienced what you are experiencing now.

We aren't the first to experience what we've experienced. And we won't be the last.

The ground beneath us has survived. So have our people.

And recovery is not only about surviving.

One peer pointed out how recovery can teach you to watch constantly for the negative. But healing had taught her to notice something else.

Maybe it was the sunrise ... the birds in the morning ... a plumeria opening.

Maybe that was the peace we were looking for the whole time. ■

Lilinoe Kauahikaua, MSW, is the education and training manager at Papa Ola Lōkahi.



The Ka'ao-Based Peer Recovery Specialist Training requires 58 hours and is grounded in the stories and practices of our people and how we understand our relationships to one another and the world around us. Pictured is this summer's 2026 Ka'ao Peer Recovery Specialist Training Cohort. - Courtesy Photo

E NHLC...

I've been offered a job doing scientific research and development for a company. What should I know before I sign?

By Makalika Naholowaa,
NHLC Executive Director



Science and research offer real opportunity for our people. Careers in biotechnology, agriculture, environmental science, and data can pay well, build skills, and put Kānaka at the table where important decisions get made impacting our 'āina and the lāhui.

Native Hawaiian inclusion in this work can be good for everyone. But when that work is done as an employee of a company, especially one that is not governed by Kānaka Maoli values, there are things Kānaka should understand before saying yes.

You become the company's agent. Under the law, an employee is an agent of the employer and owes it a duty of loyalty and confidentiality. In plain terms: information you develop while doing your job can be treated as the company's confidential property, so long as the company takes steps to keep it secret. That duty likely follows you even after the job ends.

The company may own what you create. Many employers ask staff to sign agreements stating that all information, content, and innovation created in the course of the job belongs to the company. The law already leans this way: work an employee produces within the scope of employment is generally owned by the employer, not the worker, unless the employer says otherwise. A signed assignment agreement only strengthens that claim and can relate to even publicly disclosed content that the company claims as proprietary, for example as copyrighted or trademarked material or patented inventions.

How this impacts Kānaka. A company may hire a Kānaka precisely to engage community, kūpuna, knowledge holders, and cultural practitioners to learn our 'ike and turn it into science the company can own and profit from. That can create a hard conflict between your legal duty to the employer and your kuleana to the lāhui. And community members who share knowledge may not realize that it is employment, contract, and intellectual-

property law, not our own customs of stewardship and reciprocity, that may govern what happens to what they share.

Our 'ike is recognized but not automatically protected. International norms increasingly affirm that Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain, control, and develop their traditional knowledge and cultural expressions.

Global frameworks call for free, prior, and informed consent and fair benefit-sharing before others use genetic resources and the knowledge tied to them.

Importantly, Hawai'i's Constitution reaffirms and protects the traditional and customary rights of Native Hawaiians, and our courts have held the state must actively protect them. But the law is undeveloped for many situations, and many of these duties bind governments, not private employment contracts. Individuals and community groups usually carry the burden themselves when interacting with private parties including corporations.

Consult an attorney first. If you are considering a research or development role, especially with a company that is not governed by Kānaka Maoli values, talk with a lawyer before you accept, so you understand what may be involved as it relates traditional knowledge and cultural resources. The same goes for any hui or practitioner asked to collaborate – have an attorney review the terms and consider negotiating protections that reflect Kānaka expectations around knowledge stewardship and the use of our native resources. ■

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

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

The 3rd Annual Ho'okipa Hawai'i Festival

By Mālia Sanders

Ho'okipa Hawai'i Festival, presented by the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association, returns to the Royal Hawaiian Center on Sept. 12 – 13, 2026, for a FREE two-day, family-friendly community event celebrating Native Hawaiian culture, community and the many ways Hawaiian knowledge continues to shape Hawai'i.

Ho'okipa Hawai'i Festival brings together cultural practitioners, Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs, and community organizations to create opportunities for both kama'aina and visitors to engage with Hawaiian culture in meaningful and respectful ways.

Ho'okipa, is a Hawaiian cultural value that is at the heart of this festival, and a defining feature of the programming is the curated marketplace featuring 50+ Native Hawaiian vendors.

Each participating business has been personally vetted to ensure its products and services align with NaHHA's mission and represent Hawai'i in a pono way. The marketplace provides a platform for Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs to share their products, stories and innovations while strengthening pathways into local, visitor-industry and retail markets.

Featured among the vendors are participants from Pākōlea by NaHHA, a small business cohort program created specifically for early-stage Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs developing consumer packaged goods, food products, fashion and apparel.

Pākōlea addresses longstanding barriers faced by businesses seeking access to visitor-industry and retail opportunities, while supporting products that express the foundational values of Hawai'i and are sustainable, socially responsible, culturally grounded and locally produced.

On Saturday, September 12, NaHHA will host a special invitation-only experience called the Pākōlea Buyers Showcase from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. This aspect of the program is designed specifically for dis-



covering emerging Native Hawaiian brands and exploring potential wholesale and retail opportunities. Buyers and procurement professionals interested in attending are encouraged to contact info@nahha.com to request an invitation.

The festival will also highlight several Native Hawaiian youth entrepreneurs participating in Keiki Rise, a youth-focused small business incubator program. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet young entrepreneurs and



Celebrating the Ho'okipa Hawai'i Festival last year at the Royal Hawaiian Center in Waikiki. Pictured (l-r) are Kimo Kahoana, Mālia Sanders, Monte McComber and Hi'ilani Shibata. - Photo: Kat Wade Photography

learn more about the next generation of Native Hawaiian business leaders.

Beyond the marketplace, Ho'okipa Hawai'i Festival offers opportunities to experience Hawaiian culture through cultural practitioners and community engagement with on-stage cultural practices and performances including hula, mele and oli. Together, these experiences invite audiences to deepen their understanding and appreciation of Native Hawaiian culture and the living knowledge systems of Hawai'i.

Ho'okipa Hawai'i Festival is more than an event, it is an opportunity to support Native Hawaiian enterprise, celebrate Hawaiian culture and experience the spirit of ho'okipa through meaningful connection and community.

The public is welcomed to join us, September 12 (2:00 – 7:00 p.m.) and September 13 (12:00 – 5:00 p.m.) on the 4th Floor Ka Lewa Lanai at the Royal Hawaiian Center! ■

For more information visit: nahha.com/event or email info@nahha.com

Honoring Kamaki Kanahele by Continuing SCHHA's Work

By KipuKai Kualii'i

The Sovereign Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations (SCHHA) and our entire lāhui pauses to remember, mahalo and honor Kamaki Kanahele who we lost last month. Uncle Kamaki was more than a leader. He was a visionary, a kumu, a healer and a fierce advocate for our people and our Hawaiian Homes Lands.

As one of the founders of the SCHHA in 1987, Uncle Kamaki helped establish the movement that brought homestead associations together from across our pae 'āina to stand stronger as one voice.

I was fortunate to know Uncle Kamaki and to follow in the footsteps of leaders like him, Uncle Tony (Sang) and Robin Danner who all understood the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) is a federal trust responsibility and a promise to our lāhui.

Uncle Kamaki understood, too, that our strength comes from our 'āina, our 'ohana and our ability to stand together.

SCHHA continues the work and honors Uncle Kamaki not just by remembering him, but by carrying forward the work he helped begin. We continue to protect the 203,000 acres of Hawaiian Home Lands, advocate for our homesteader and waitlisted beneficiaries, strengthen our homestead associations and make sure future generations in-



herit more than promises: that they inherit their lands and all the possible opportunities that comes with it.

That is why I invite our homesteader and waitlisted beneficiaries, 'ohana and allies to join us for the SCHHA Conference in Honolulu, September 15-17, 2026.

Our conference is an opportunity to come together, share mana'o, learn from one another and discuss the challenges and opportunities facing Hawaiian Home Lands. It's our chance to continue building the unity and self-determination Uncle Kamaki dedicated his life to!

Our challenges today are great. There are legal attacks, housing challenges, long waitlists, infrastructure needs and continuing questions about how we protect the intent of the HHCA. We cannot meet these challenges divided.

Uncle Kamaki helped plant the seed for our unity. It is now our kuleana to mālama that seed, nurture it and make sure it continues to grow. As we gather in Honolulu, let us remember Uncle Kamaki and the other homestead leaders who came before us. Let us honor their lives through our actions!

I hope we see you at our SCHHA Conference, September 15-17 in Honolulu at the Ala Moana Hotel. E ho'omau kākou. Let us continue the work! No ka 'āina. No ka lāhui. No nā hanauna e hiki mai ana. For our land! For our people! For generations yet to come! ■

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Alzheimer's Isn't Just About Age

By Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH, RDN

Once thought of as a disease of old age, Alzheimer's is increasingly showing up earlier; early-onset Alzheimer's, diagnosed between 40-64, has more than doubled worldwide since 1990.

Yet it's still not considered a normal part of aging – age alone isn't enough to cause it. Lifestyle plays a role too. Among Native Hawaiians, researchers estimate nearly 30% of Alzheimer's cases are linked to factors within our control. This includes high LDL cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity.

Choosing a healthy diet, exercising regularly, sleeping well, managing stress, and cutting back on smoking and alcohol are all powerful, evidence-backed ways to lower one's Alzheimer's risk.

The Mediterranean Diet has shown strong support for reducing this risk, not because of the specific foods it prescribes, but because of certain nutrients those foods share. Researchers point to three: polyphenols, omega-3 fatty acids, and B-vitamins (folate, B6, B12).

Polyphenols are found in māmaki, lū'au leaf, purple sweet potato, bok choy, choy sum, and kalamunggay. Omega-3s and B12 come from 'ahi, 'ōpelu, akule, sardines, and salmon. Folate and B6 show up in papaya, mango, liliko'i, avocado, bananas, and citrus fruits. Together, these nutrients calm brain inflammation and protect brain cells from damage.

Curcumin in 'ōlena (turmeric) goes a step further, helping prevent the brain plaques that precede Alzheimer's. This particular benefit, however, is mainly seen with concentrated curcumin supplements rather than everyday turmeric use. Still, 'ōlena in its regular form offers meaningful antioxidant value on its own.

Sleep does more than rest the mind. During deep sleep, brain cells shrink slight-



ly, widening the spaces between them so cerebrospinal fluid can flush out toxic buildup behind Alzheimer's plaques. Prioritizing 7-9 hours of consistent, quality sleep gives the brain the time it needs to complete this nightly wash cycle.

Exercise reshapes the brain, not just the body. A study found that walking 40 minutes, three times a week, actually grew the hippocampus (the brain's memory center) by about 2%. You don't need to run marathons; a brisk, heart-rate-raising walk a few times a week is enough to trigger this effect.

Chronic stress has been linked to a more than doubled risk of Alzheimer's, largely through elevated cortisol shrinking the hippocampus over time. Interestingly, time in nature offers a fast, measurable antidote: just 20-30 minutes in a green space can significantly lower cortisol levels.

Smoking cessation pays off on a real timeline. Dementia risk declines steadily after quitting and levels off around the seven-year mark, eventually matching that of people who never smoked.

It's never too late to start that clock; every year of being smoke-free moves you closer to that reset.

Alcohol reduction connects back to the same B-vitamins covered earlier: chronic alcohol use interferes with the body's ability to absorb thiamine (vitamin B1), and deficiency can damage the hippocampus and frontal lobes directly. Recent research also shows no drinking level is truly "safe" for the brain. Even light, regular drinking nudges risk upward.

The body and brain are connected. Care for one, and you are caring for both. ■

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

He Mele no Pihemanu

Na Pelika Andrade

'O ka pōnaha iho a ke ao
'Au maila nā moku
ho'olewalewa
Aia ma ke ka'e kapa o nā
moku o Kanaloa
Nā papa kaha kua kea o Lono,
Kālewa 'ia nā manu e Kamoā'e
Ka'a loa nā 'ale o Kaiaulu
Ho'olaukanaka i ka leo o nā manu
Ka manu ka'upu hālō 'ale o ka moana
Me he 'opihi pa'a lā
Pa'a iā loko
Pa'a iā waho
Pa'a i ka huli honua nei
Huli i ka lani a ola
Huli i ka honua a ola
Huli i ke kai hohonu a ola
A ola nō!
Puka mai he ko'a
He pūko'a kani 'āina
Kani ka pihe o nā manu
Ka manu lau o Pihemanu
Ua 'ike 'ā

*Out spreads now the dawn
The islets reach out to the sea
We are at the boundary's edge of the
islands of Kanaloa
The low white marked islands of Lono
The birds float along in the Kamoā'e
tradewinds
The deep ocean swells of this fruitful sea
pass us by
Voices of the birds give the place a feel-
ing of being inhabited
The ka'upu bird that observes the ocean
We are like steadfast 'opihi
Steadfast within
Steadfast without
Steadfast in the exploration of our
foundation
The heavens are searched, and there is
life
The Earth is searched, and there is life
The depth of the ocean is searched, and
there is life*



*There is life indeed!
A coral is born
A coral that births an island
The cries of the birds are heard
The multitude of birds of
Pihemanu
It is revealed*

This mele was compiled and composed by Pelika Andrade

with the 2008 Kū'ula: Traditional Marine Resource Management Cohort of UH Hilo. Over the semester that culminated in a two-week visit to Pihemanu, Kū'ula students explored how Native Hawaiian culture could be integrated into Western scientific research and management.

As has been done for millennia, we honor people, places, and events with mele. Before our huaka'i, it was important to gift Pihemanu with a mele that would honor the place, document our visit, and help us remember the relationship we now share with our entire pae 'āina. Like most Hawaiian mele, it weaves together the old and the new, acknowledging past references to the place and the kūpuna who continue to hold certain teachings.

This mele is one of many that have emerged over the past 20 years as more of our Hawai'i visit and add our stories to this very special place. It reminds us to remain steadfast within, without, and in our inquiries; that though we may be small, we can do big things. Ua 'ike 'ā ... it is revealed. ■

Pelika Andrade was born and raised on the island of Kaua'i. She is an extension agent for the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program, founder and executive director of Nā Maka Onaona, a Hawai'i-based nonprofit, and the current co-chair of the Papahānaumokuākea Native Hawaiian Cultural Working Group.

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He Aha ke Ko'iko'i o ka National Heritage Fellowship?

Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

Enā makamaka o ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Ua ku'i ka lono mai ka piko la o Wakinekona, ua koho 'ia 'elua kānaka Hawai'i e kū ma ka wēkiu o ka hanohano ma waena o nā po'e hana no'eau ma 'Amelika Hui Pū 'Ia.

Ua hā'awi 'ia ka National Heritage Fellowship i kēia makahiki 2026 iā Lloyd lāua 'o Haunani Sing no kā lāua hana e ho'omau i ka hana ulana 'ie. 'O ia ho'i ka ulana 'ana i ka hīna'i poepoe 'oe, ka hīna'i hīnalea 'oe, ka hīna'i 'o'opu 'oe, ke ki'i kupuna 'oe, ka mahiole 'oe, a mau nō a'e. 'O ka National Heritage Fellowship, ka makana ho'ohanohano ki'eki'e loa ma 'Amelika no ka po'e hana no'eau ku'una.

Ua hā'awi 'ia ka National Heritage Fellowship mua ma ka makahiki 1982. Akā 'a'ole i hā'awi 'ia ka makana i kekahi kanaka no Hawai'i ā hiki i ka makahiki 1990 – ua hā'awi 'ia iā Gladys Kukana Grace, kekahi wahine ulana lauhala kaulana no Kona. He kumu 'o ia kekahi a nui kāna mau haumāna, haumāna mo'opuna, a haumāna mo'opuna kuakahi paha.

Ma hope ona 'o Grace, ma ka mahele hana no'eau, 'o Meali'i Kalama ma ka makahiki 1995. 'O Kalama ka mea i kaulana i ke kapa kuiki. A laila, 'a'ole i ho'ohanohano 'ia kekahi kanaka hana no'eau ā hiki i ka makahiki 2022 me ke koho 'ana iā Frank "Palani" Senici, he kanaka kāpili hale. Ma hope ona 'o Roen Kahalewai Hufford no kāna hana kapa. 'O Hufford 'o ia ke kaikamahine a Marie McDonald, he momi waiwai kaulana ma ka hana kapa.

'O ka hapanui o nā kānaka hanohano, he mau kanaka kaulana ma ka pūolo (music) Hawai'i. Ma ka 'ao'ao puolo ku'una, 'o ia 'o Kau'i Zuttermeister (1996) no kāna hana ma ka hula. Pēlā pu ka ho'ohanohano 'ana iā Pualani Kanahele lāua 'o Nalani Kanaka'ole (2023) me George Nā'ope (2006). No Hawai'i Moku nō lākou. Ma ka makahiki 2005, ua ho'ohanohano 'ia 'o Ka'upena Wong no kāna hana ma ke oli 'ana.

No nā mea hanohano o ka mahele



puolo Hawai'i o kēia wā 'o:

- Cyril Pahinui (2017) – He kanaka kaulana i ke kīhō'alu me kona mele 'ana.
- Ledward Ka'apana (2011) – He loea ma ka 'ukulele, ke kīkā me ka leo ki'eki'e.
- Genoa Keawe (2000) – Kaulana ma kona leo ki'eki'e me ke kō lō'ihī loa o kona leo.
- Eddie Kamae (2007) – He mea ho'okani pila, he haku mele, a he kanaka ho'opalapala 'ike.
- Clyde "Kindy" Sproat (1988) – He kanaka ha'i mo'olelo a he pu'ukani.
- Raymond Kane (1993) – No'eau kona mau lima ma ke kīhō'alu.
- Richard Ho'opi'i & Solomon Ho'opi'i (1996) – Kaulana no ka leo ki'eki'e.

E kono ana 'o Lloyd me Haunani i Wakinekona no kekahi 'aha ho'ohanohano. E hā'awi 'ia ana i \$25,000 iā lāua no ka ho'omau 'ana i kā lāua hana, 'o ia nō, ka ho'opahola 'ana i ka 'ike ulana 'ie ma ka pae 'āina. E kū ana kēia hanohano nui no lāua i nā kau a kau a mau loa.

'O ka hapanui o nā kānaka no Hawai'i i ho'ohanohano 'ia, he kānaka Hawai'i. Akā 'a'ole no nā Hawai'i wale nō ka National Heritage Fellowship. Ua koho 'ia 'o Gertrude Tsutsumi (2016) no ka hulahula ku'una Kepani o ke kula Onoe-ryu a me Lynn Nakasone (2012) no ka hulahula ku'una no Okinawa. 'O kekahi kanaka Uchinānchu (Okinawan) 'ē a'e i koho 'ia 'o Seisho Nakasone no kona maiau ma ka puolo Liukiu (Ryūkyū).

Inā helu 'oe i nā makahiki, aia kekahi mau makahiki i koho 'ole 'ia kekahi kanaka. No laila, inā 'ike 'oe i kekahi kanaka e ho'omau ana i kekahi hana no'eau ku'una a i 'ole ka puolo kahiko a i 'ole ka puolo Hawai'i o kēia wā e nomineka ma [arts.gov/honors/heritage](https://www.arts.gov/honors/heritage).

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.com](https://www.kawaiola.com).

The All-Hawai'i Army Companies History

By Patrick Filbert

The heart of our Las Vegas Hawaiian community is heavier as we mourn the loss of Uncle Patrick Ka'ano'i, beloved pillar and gentle cultural ambassador who carried the warmth of the islands wherever he went.

In researching a memorial resolution for the 2026 Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs Convention, I found Uncle Patrick wore many hats with effortless grace – he was a cultural specialist, a devoted Hae Hawai'i (Hawaiian flag) historian, an author, a video documentarian, a Native Hawaiian rights advocate, and a soulful singer-composer. He was also a proud Army veteran and a cherished member of our Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club.

It feels entirely fitting that, while uncovering the depths of this modern-day koa (warrior), his spirit guided me to a hidden treasure in our collective past – the All-Hawai'i Army Companies.

As reported in the *Honolulu Advertiser*, a total of 3,370 men and women from the Territory, and later State, of Hawai'i volunteered for service under this unique concept between 1955 and 1969. Enlisting and training together, 15 distinct companies were formed.

Developed by Captain David Cho, the program launched in July 1955 with 179 high school graduates. Sworn in at Palm Circle, Fort Shafter, by LTC William Martasin, they were addressed by Pacific Army Commander LTG Bruce C. Clark and Secretary of Hawai'i Farrant Turner.



Traveling by ship to California, they completed basic training at Fort Ord distinguishing themselves as the most outstanding company ever produced there. Upon arrival, they were warmly welcomed by LTC Bernard Nahonooipilani Farden – granduncle of Hailama Farden, OHA's senior director of Hawaiian Cultural Affairs.

The project's success caused the Army to approve annual cohorts. Ceremonies took place at 'Iolani Palace and the Kapi'olani Park bandstand drawing hundreds of 'ohana. In 1957, 20 women formed the first All-Hawaiian Women's Army Corps Platoon, training at Fort McClellan, Alabama. While early cohorts traveled by ship, the 12th Company pivoted to military aircraft in 1966.

During the Vietnam era, most members deployed to Southeast Asia, but some served in Europe. Uncle Patrick joined the 11th All-Hawai'i Company in 1965, serving as an Army Signaller in West Germany from 1966 to 1968. Ever the cultural ambassador, he organized kanikapila events and sang across Germany, proudly sharing aloha.

The company program concluded in 1969, but its legacy endured. In 1973 and 1976, platoons formed for training at Fort Ord and Fort Polk, Louisiana, with members serving in the famous 100th Battalion, 442nd Regiment and 411th Engineer Battalion (Construction). Mahalo, Uncle Patrick. Your legacy remains forever woven in our hearts. ■



A 1965 photo of the Army's 11th All-Hawai'i Company. A total of 3,370 men and women from Hawai'i volunteered for military service under this program between 1955 and 1969, including Uncle Patrick Ka'ano'i, beloved member of the Las Vegas Hawaiian Civic Club who recently passed away. - Courtesy Photo

Cease-And-Desist Demand Sent to Berning

In early August, the 'ohana of the late Haunani-Kay Trask sent a Cease-and-Desist Demand to Nathan M. Berning, a candidate for Hawai'i's U.S. Congressional District 1 (urban and central O'ahu).

Berning, a nonpartisan challenging incumbent Rep. Ed Case, has been running a campaign ad that features Trask's image, making it appear that she is endorsing his candidacy.

Trask, a renowned Native Hawaiian academic, educator, poet, and outspoken advocate for Hawaiian sovereignty passed away in 2021.

According to *Hawai'i Public Radio*, Berning has claimed that the image was that of an actress whose resemblance to Trask was "coincidental" and said that the concerns that were being raised "would be sent to his campaign manager in Tennessee."

In an email to *Ka Wai Ola*, her sister Mililani Trask, a retired attorney and former Office of Hawaiian Affairs trustee wrote, "Any material that suggests, implies or trades on the appearance of [Haunani-Kay's] association with this campaign is misleading to Hawai'i voters and deeply offensive to our family and to the lāhui."

The Cease-and-Desist Demand reads, in part: "Your campaign's placement of Dr. Trask's identity in campaign communications creates ... the false and deeply objectionable impres-

Eight 'Ōiwi Among PBN's 2026 "40 Under 40" Awardees



Pacific Business News' annual "40 Under 40" awards celebrate some of Hawai'i's most accomplished rising leaders and visionaries — young men and women who are shaping the future of our islands through their innovation, leadership and impact. Pictured (Top l-r): Alex Awo, director of habitat restoration programs, Mālama Maunaloa; Kamaka Cardines, program director, Ulu A'e Learning Center; Chanel Josiah, COO, Hawai'i Community Lending; and Katie Ka'ahanui, director, Safe & Sound Westside, Department of the Honolulu Prosecuting Attorney. (Bottom l-r): Kalani Ka'ana'ana, CEO, Hawai'i Green Growth; K.Sean Kekina, COO, Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Ivory Kealani Lloyd, director of marketing and events, Common Ground Kaua'i; and Nahelani Parsons, founder and president, Pacific Government Relations. Ho'omaika'i iā 'oukou!

sion that she, her estate, or her 'ohana endorsed, supported, or is otherwise affiliated with your candidacy.

"Dr. Trask's life and work were devoted to Kānaka Maoli sovereignty, resistance to colonialism, and the intellectual and political liberation of the Hawaiian people ... The 'ohana affirmatively rejects any suggestion that Dr. Trask would have supported your candidacy, policies or

political program."

The Trask 'Ohana has demanded immediate cessation of the use of Haunani-Kay's image.

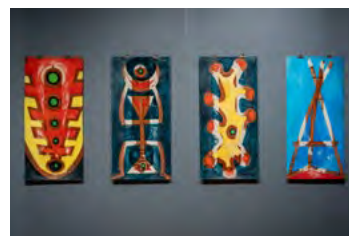
"This matter touches directly on the integrity of our elections, the responsibilities of our media, and the legacy of one of the most important Native Hawaiian leaders of our lifetime," said Mililani.

Based on his online presence, Berning appears to reside in Florida. The U.S. Constitution requires that all members of Congress be inhabitants of the state they represent at the time they are elected.

Multi-Venue Art Exhibit Celebrates 50 Years of Aloha 'Āina

I OLA KANALOA: 50 Years of Aloha 'Āina is a multi-venue exhibition of contemporary art presented in collaboration with the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO).

Established in 1976 to protect



Carl F.K. Pao is one of the artists whose work will be on display as part of I Ola Kanaloa's multi-venue exhibit. - Photo Courtesy of the artist and Duarte Studios

the sacred island of Kanaloa-Kaho'olawe, in 2026 PKO celebrates a half-century of unwavering aloha 'āina for the island, a legacy that continues to inspire demilitarization movements in Hawai'i and elsewhere.

The exhibit features the work of over 20 artists and unfolds across four venues in Honolulu: Honolulu Hale, Aupuni Space, Native Books at Arts & Letters Nu'uanu, and KĪPUKA – Community Makers Space. It opened August 15 and runs through October 12.

Presented as part of a yearlong celebration, the project's various strands address themes of military occupation, ecological restoration, political sovereignty, ea – self-determination, Hawaiian spirituality, and intergenerational healing. Admission is free and open to all.

The exhibition recognizes the interdependence between the natural environment, community, and our collective futures. It honors, celebrates, and gives thanks to the PKO, past, present, and future, as well as its early warriors, its many leaders and extended communities, for all that has been carried forward for over half a century.

Organized by Pu'uhonua Society, the exhibit was curated by artist Drew Kahu'āina Broderick with support from Pu'uhonua Society's Director of Curatorial Initiatives Josh Tengan and made possible by Teiger Foundation, with support from the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts. It was developed in consultation with PKO leaders Davianna Pōmaika'i McGregor and Craig Neff.

Pu'uhonua Society Executive

Director Emma Manu-Broderick said, "The Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana has shown us what it looks like to turn shared values into collective action. The need ... is no less urgent today than it was 50 years ago."

For more information go to: puuhonua-society.org/activations/Kahoolawe.

Daniels is New Mission Houses ED



Peter Daniels - Courtesy Photo

Peter Daniels was recently named executive director of Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives. As executive director, he will focus on strengthening community partnerships, expanding public engagement, fostering inclusive conversations about Hawai'i's history, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organization.

Daniels has more than 30 years of executive leadership experience in communications, community engagement, public affairs, and strategic partnerships. Most recently, he was director of campus communications for Kamehameha Schools Kapālama.

His previous experience in communications includes leadership roles with school districts and educational organizations throughout Hawai'i, California, and Washington State, where he was responsible for corporate communications, community engagement, strategic partnerships, and organizational initiatives serving diverse communities.

A graduate of Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, Daniels has a bachelor's degree in speech and

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False Endorsement



This is a screen grab of the image of Haunani-Kay Trask that was used without permission in a campaign ad for Nathan Berning.

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communication from Boston College and a master's in journalism from Indiana University.

Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives is one of Hawai'i's oldest educational and historical organizations and is a repository of one of the Hawai'i's most significant collections of archival materials, historic structures, and cultural artifacts, including thousands of books, letters, journals, and one of the largest collections of 19th century documents written in 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

Three 'Ōiwi Receive
Native Artists Award

Fashion designer Rocket Ahuna, multidisciplinary artist Malia Osorio, and painter/photographer Nainoa Rosehill are among the 15 Indigenous artists honored with 2026 LIFT – Early Career Support for Native Artists awards.

This award is presented annually by the Native Arts + Cultures Foundation (NACF) and provides selected artists with professional development, marketing support, culturally appropriate evaluation and a \$15,000 award to develop and realize new projects that address critical issues including cultural sovereignty, environmental and social justice, healing and well-being, and systemic change.

Raised in Kapa'a, Kaua'i, Ahuna's work draws from 'ike Hawai'i, hula, 'ōlelo and pilina to 'āina to explore how fashion can carry ancestral knowledge and

Punahou Unveils the Mary Kawena
Pukui Learning Commons

Punahou School has a new, state-of-the-art learning commons (learning center) that was named in honor of revered Hawaiian historian, scholar, educator, composer and author Mary Kawena Pukui. Completed in time for the new school year, the learning commons was inaugurated with a series of special events, including an opening celebration on August 7, a blessing on August 8, and a convocation with students on August 11, the first day of school. Pukui taught at Punahou School in the 1930s, creating the school's 'ike Hawai'i curriculum. The 53,300-square-foot interdisciplinary hub for students in grades 6-12 brings together the Cooke Library Collection, Punahou Archives and spaces for computer science, design, engineering, and hands-on learning. It is envisioned as a hub for creativity, innovation, collaboration and problem-solving. It also includes numerous sustainability features, from a full roof PV array and architectural designs to enhance natural light and ventilation, to water efficient landscaping and use of recycled materials in building. The decor in the learning commons will reflect Pukui's influence and include a dedicated space for 'ike Hawai'i and for artifacts documenting her scholarship including photos, audio, film and text. - Photo: Jason Lees

contemporary expressions of Hawaiian identity. A graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology, his collections have included themes of place, genealogy and storytelling.

Based in Wahiawā, O'ahu, Osorio's commitment to Indigenous social justice has taken her to the front lines of struggles around the world including Maunakea, Standing Rock and Palestine. Her art documents

and honors the communities participating in social justice movements worldwide and is inextricable from her activism.

Rosehill was raised, and still resides, in Puna, Hawai'i Island. His art is oriented towards sacred mysteries, archaeological ruins, geographies of crisis, and the limits - and potentials - of images. His work focuses on both the veneration of images and destruction of images. His art has been exhibited locally, nationally and internationally.

The NACF advances equity and cultural knowledge, focusing on the power of arts and collaboration to strengthen Native communities and promote positive change for Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives.

POL Asks Court to Move
Lawsuit to Hawai'i

On July 14, Papa Ola Lōkahi (POL) filed a motion asking the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to transfer *Do No Harm v. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services* to the U.S. District Court for the District of Hawai'i where Papa Ola Lōkahi operates and co-administers the Native Hawaiian Health Scholarship Program (NHHSP) at the center of the lawsuit.

The scholarship program directly benefits the citizens of Hawai'i, as program scholars commit to serving in Hawai'i, thereby increasing the number of primary care providers in the state.

"We are committed to defending this program for the students and the communities it serves. It is easier to defend the program in a court within our own community [rather] than in one nearly 5,000 miles away," said POL CEO Dr. Sheri Daniels.

The NHHSP was established by Congress under the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act to address longstanding and persistent health disparities. Since 1991, the program has helped more than 300 recipients pursue health profession education and service placements throughout Hawai'i.

Do No Harm, a conservative group based in Utah, filed the lawsuit in March 2026, challenging the scholarship program's Native Hawaiian eligibility criteria. POL moved to intervene in the case in May 2026, and the court granted the organization the right to intervene in June 2026.

Gallery 'Iolani Presents
'Ai Mama

An exhibit exploring the contemporary transmission of 'ike through the lifework and lived experiences of two master practitioners, 'Ōlohe G. 'Umi Kai and Sulu'ape Keone Nunes, is now open at Gallery 'Iolani at Wind-



Sulu'ape Keone Nunes - Courtesy Photo



'Ōlohe 'Umi Kai - Courtesy Photo

ward Community College in Kāne'ohe through December 11.

The exhibit, 'Ai Mama, considers how knowledge is carried, embodied, practiced, and shared across generations through photographs, storytelling, and selected works and cultural materials. It offers a glimpse into the complex cultural and genealogical contexts that have shaped their practices and the knowledge they carry forward.

'Ai Mama refers to the process of chewing food and sharing it with another; a metaphor for the transmission of knowledge. 'Ai Mama asks us to consider 'ike not as something static or contained, but as something living. Cultural knowledge is inseparable from the people and relationships through which it is transmitted; the stories surrounding the work are as important as the objects and images themselves.

'Ai Mama is co-curated by Kapulani Landgraf and Noelle M.K.Y. Kahanu and is the second exhibition in a four-part exhibition series at Gallery 'Iolani centered on Hawaiian mentorship and the transmission of 'ike. It includes a series of public programs, artist conversations, workshops, and community gatherings designed to encourage dialogue and deepen engagement.



LIFT Award recipients (l-r): Rocket Ahuna, Malia Osorio, and Nainoa Rosehill.

- Courtesy Photos

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Admission is free and the gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday from 12:30 – 4:30 p.m. The opening reception for 'Ai Mama is on Friday, September 11, from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. For more information visit gallery.windward.hawaii.edu/ai-mama.

Court Halts North Shore Development

O'ahu's Environmental Court ruled in July that the development of a new Ritz-Carlton resort at on O'ahu's North Shore (the area known as Turtle Bay) cannot proceed until additional studies are completed; the county must consider potential impacts to conservation lands and native species. The area is home to several endangered species protected by state and federal laws.

The court noted that the City and County of Honolulu relied on an old environmental report issued 13 years ago for the development. The outdated study lacks information on newly listed endangered species and changed ecological conditions. This ruling directs the county to require a supplemental environmental impact statement.

"The court's ruling makes clear that the county cannot rely on outdated environmental reviews to approve development. Hawai'i's environmental laws require decisions based on today's science, not yesterday's assumptions," said Center for Biological Diversity Hawai'i and Pacific Islands Director Maxx Phillips.

The lawsuit was filed in February by Earthjustice on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity, Conservation Council for Hawai'i, and community group Kūpa'a Kuilima.

"Our community is thrilled that the court has upheld our environmental protections," said Jessica dos Santos of Kūpa'a Kuilima. "Kuilima is not only one of the last stretches of pristine coast on O'ahu; it's also



The Office of Hawaiian Affairs gathered at Kāko'o 'Ōiwi in He'eia, O'ahu, on August 7 to support the organization's important conservation work, participating in both wetland and ma uka restoration activities. Established about 16 years ago, Kāko'o 'Ōiwi's work focuses on restoration and management of Ahupua'a He'eia and the interconnection between the areas water resources, irrigation systems, food production, and native plants and animals under the leadership of Executive Director Kānekoa Kūkea-Schultz. Kāko'o 'Ōiwi includes about 300 acres of wetland and 100 acres of hillside. With just 40 people on staff, more than 60 acres of wetland have already been cleared and more than 12 acres of lo'i are in active production. Committed to growing food for the Ko'olaupoko community, Kāko'o 'Ōiwi sells poi, kūlolo and other products at their small store which is open on Fridays from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. - Photo: Nelson Gaspar

a place of cultural significance beloved by residents."

Since the original document was approved, significant new information has emerged about native wildlife and ecosystems in the project area. Hundreds of acres abutting the areas slated for development have been designated as conservation lands.

Endangered Hawaiian yellow-faced bees, placed on the federal endangered species list in 2016, have been documented in the project area. It is also an important nesting area for Laysan albatross and a critical habitat for endangered Hawaiian monk seals. None of this was addressed in the 2013 environmental report.

Hui Kū Maoli Ola to Steward 400 Acres

Ono Small Pua'a, a new venture by Native Hawaiian-owned Hui Kū Maoli Ola, is stewarding nearly 400 acres of ma uka agricultural lands at Turtle Bay

Resort on O'ahu's North Shore under a 20-year lease agreement that began in June. The land is owned by Host Hotels & Resorts.

Ono Small Pua'a will revitalize Native Hawaiian agroforestry practices, support local kalo farmers, expand agricultural use, and reconnect the lands to their cultural, agricultural, and environmental purpose.

Founded over 25 years ago, Hui Kū Maoli Ola is recognized for its work in habitat resto-

ration, native plant propagation, agroforestry, and community stewardship. Project partners Kumano i ke Ala and GO FARM Hawai'i will bring their experience in cultural agriculture, farmer training, and workforce development to the Ono Small Pua'a initiative.

"We see the Turtle Bay ma uka lands as a place where restoration, agriculture, education, and community can thrive together," said Hui Kū Maoli Ola Co-founder Matt Kapalikū



Nearly 400 acres of ma uka lands at Turtle Bay Resort are now being stewarded by Ono Small Pua'a, a venture of Hui Kū Maoli Ola. - Courtesy Photo

Schirman. "Our vision is to help reconnect these lands to their cultural purpose through Native Hawaiian stewardship practices, native plants, and regenerative agriculture, while creating opportunities for local farmers, cultural education and long-term community engagement."

Their vision includes diversified agriculture, orchard development, educational programming, native Hawaiian plant restoration, farm stands, and expanded opportunities for community-based farming.

East Maui Water Diversion Permits Ruled Illegal

The Environmental Court has invalidated the Board of Land and Natural Resources' (BLNR) decision authorizing Mahi Pono to take 41.72 million gallons of water per day from East Maui streams in 2026.

In its July 17 ruling, the court found that BLNR breached its public trust duties. "This decision is a vindication not just of the people's water rights, but of how the law is supposed to work," said Wayne Chung Tanaka, Sierra Club of Hawai'i executive director.

"The Land Board ignored clear case law and direct orders by the Environmental Court, and its attorneys once again decided to waste everybody's time and our taxpayer dollars defending a patently defective decision.

"I hope that the court's ruling can finally break the Board's decades-long habit of ignoring water waste and corporate water hoarding, at the expense of East Maui's watersheds, estuaries, farmers, cultural practitioners – and our very constitution."

The Court's decision follows a series of rulings chastising BLNR for its actions impacting East Maui streams. As part of its decision, the court ordered BLNR to hold a contested case hearing over the East Maui stream diversion permit for 2026, which must

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also incorporate the issuance of the anticipated 2027 permit.

Community Intervenes in Proposed Hanalei Luxury Development

A community coalition successfully petitioned the Kaua'i Planning Commission to intervene in proceedings over a luxury coastal housing development by Miami-based Starwood Capital Group's 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay.

The proposed multi-million-dollar development proposal



Additional luxury development at 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay has been paused by the community. - Courtesy Photo

overlooking Hanalei Bay includes two-story six-plex housing units, a 4,500-square-foot event pavilion and expanded parking and infrastructure.

The groups, Mālama Kua'āina, Hanalei-Wainiha-Hā'ena Community Association, Hui Ho'omalua i Ka 'Āina, and Conservation Council for Hawai'i, say the proposed development fails to comply with environmental and cultural protection laws and would harm sensitive coastal resources, imperiled native seabirds, scenic view planes, and Native Hawaiian cultural practices.

Already, 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay is associated with excessive seabird kills – more than 25% of Kaua'i's documented seabird deaths occur at this resort. Additional development, lighting, and activity would exacerbate this.

The intervention allows the community to submit evidence, present expert testimony, and help inform the commission's decision on whether the project should proceed.

"Our coastlines are not sacrifice zones for luxury development," said Caren Diamond, Mālama Kua'āina executive director. "Hanalei Bay is a living cultural and ecological treasure, and the community has a responsibility to protect it for future generations." ■

CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: PROPOSED WAILUA SHORELINE PROTECTION PROJECT, PUNA DISTRICT, ISLAND OF KAUAI

At the request of WSP USA, on behalf of the State of Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT), ASM Affiliates (ASM) is preparing a Cultural Impact Assessment in support of the proposed Kūhiō Highway Emergency Shoreline Mitigation at Wailua Beach, Wailua Ahupua'a, Puna District, Island of Kaua'i. HDOT, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is planning to undertake installation of an un-grouted rock revetment and installation of rip rap shoreline protection to protect highway infrastructure from extreme storm events.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) entails a 0.36-mile-long stretch of Kūhiō Highway from approximately the middle of the road ma kai to the ocean with an area of approximately 63 acres and includes the following TMKs: (4) 3-9-006:012, 4-1-004:001, 4-1-004:020, 4-1-004:999, 4-1-005:004, 4-1-005:014, 4-1-005:017, and 4-1-005:999 and extending from the vicinity of Kuamo'o Road toward the vicinity of Papaloa Road. ASM is in search of kama'āina (persons with genealogical connections or are familiar from childhood with the 'āina) of Wailua. ASM is seeking information about the area's cultural resources and/or cultural uses of the APE and vicinity; and cultural practices that have occurred traditionally and/or continue within the APE and vicinity. ASM is also seeking input regarding strategies to prevent or mitigate potential impacts on culturally valued resources or traditional customary practices. If you have and are willing to share any information, please contact Chad Kaimanu

Jackson, cjackson@asmaffiliates.com, phone (805) 748-5898 *note area code, at ASM Affiliates 1601 Kapi'olani St., Suite 950, Honolulu, HI 96814. Mahalo Nui Loa.

KA PA'AKAI ANALYSIS: KALIHAIWAI, HALELE'A, KAUAI

Ka Pa'akai Analysis: Single-family residence at Kalihiwai, Halele'a, Kaua'i, Helen Wong Smith, PhD, Historical and Archival Consultant, at the request of McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon LLP, is conducting a Ka Pa'akai Analysis for a fee simple single-family residence on 1.002 acres at 3093 Kalihiwai Road, ahupua'a o Kalihiwai, moku o Halele'a, mokupuni o Kaua'i, TMK: (4) 5-3-003:040. The proposed project will be limited to 3,541 sq.ft., 16% of the property. Wong Smith seeks your knowledge, insight, and input on the following topics:

- Your knowledge of traditional cultural practices within the proposed project area and ahupua'a o Kalihiwai.
- 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 ahupua'a o Kalihiwai.
- 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 ahupua'a o Kalihiwai.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact Helen Wong Smith, PhD, at wongsmith808@gmail.com.

NMNH REPATRIATION OFFICE TO BEGIN CONSULTATION ON THE 'AHU'ULA OF KEKUAOKALANI

The National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), Smithsonian Institution, is subject to the repatriation provisions of the National Museum of the American Indian Act. As part of these requirements, the NMNH Repatriation Program invites consultation regarding the cultural affiliation of an 'ahu'ula belonging to Chief Kekuaokalani recently returned for safekeeping at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park.

The 'ahu'ula (feathered cloak) belonged to Keaoua Kekuaokalani and following his death on 21 December 1819 at battle at Kuamo'o, near Keauhou Bay on Hawai'i Island, the 'ahu'ula was taken by Kamehameha II (1797-1824). The 'ahu'ula then passed to Kamehameha III (1814-1854) who gifted the 'ahu'ula to U.S. Navy Commodore John Henry Aulick (c. 1791-1873) in 1841. Aulick deposited the 'ahu'ula at the Smithsonian in 1869.

The Repatriation Office would like to get a fuller understanding of the 'ahu'ula as a cultural entity and to learn about the responsibilities of those who have the authority to make decisions regarding its disposition. To do this, we are planning a series of meetings and conversations to be held in Hawai'i and remotely.

The first of a series of consultations will take place on Oct. 5, 2026, from 3:00-6:00 p.m. at Kamehameha Schools' Kaha-lu'u Ma Kai facility in Keauhou, Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i Island. Interested and related parties are invited to participate. Individual meetings with the Repatriation Office staff may also be arranged. For more information, please email NMNH-Repatriation@si.edu. ■

E kala mai...

In the August 2026 issue of *Ka Wai Ola*, in the cover story "Waimea Valley: A Cultural Treasure of the Highest Order," we indicated that Charlie Pietsch II acquired Waimea Valley in 1973. We have since learned that was not entirely accurate. Pietsch was part of a four-member hui of investors operating as Bishop Corporation (not to be confused with Bishop Estate) that purchased the valley to establish a botanical garden and entertainment venue. Waimea Falls Park was operated for 25 years by Associates Four, a partnership comprised of the same four shareholders of Bishop Corporation.



JOIN US *at* OUR NEXT COMMUNITY MEETING

Moloka'i



LUANA ALAPA
Trustee for Moloka'i & Lanai

COMMUNITY MEETING

Thursday, September 17, 2026
6:00 p.m.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Friday, September 18, 2026
9:30 a.m.

Both meetings will be held at:

Lanikeha Community Center

2200 Farrington Ave.
Ho'olehua, HI 96729



TUNE IN LIVE!

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



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

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Choosing OHA's Next Administrator: Kuleana, Kūlana and Leadership

The search for the next administrator and chief executive officer of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is about more than filling a position. It is about finding the right leader for a unique Hawai'i institution.

OHA is not a conventional corporation, nonprofit, or government agency. We are a constitutionally established institution governed by nine elected trustees. Trustees change. Board leadership rotates. Priorities evolve. Opportunities and challenges arise.

Our next administrator must understand that reality and thrive within it.

Two Hawaiian concepts describe what this position requires: kuleana and kūlana: understanding the responsibility entrusted to you and the place you occupy in carrying it out.

The Board has its own agency and kuleana. Trustees establish policy, set strategic direction, and provide governance and oversight. The administrator leads the organization charged with turning that direction into action.

Those roles should not compete. They should complement one another.

I believe leadership begins with aloha and a simple question: How can I help you succeed? Leadership is not about accumulating authority or protecting titles. It is about empowering others, accepting responsibility, and creating conditions for people and organizations to succeed.

We need a servant leader with the humility to understand that the title is a privilege, not an entitlement. Someone secure enough in their accomplishments to put mission ahead of ego and work effectively with trustees, board chairs, and different leadership styles while remaining grounded in OHA's purpose: improving the lives of Native Hawaiians.

But humility does not mean passivity.

OHA needs an administrator who brings ideas, innovation, and informed recommendations to the Board. Someone curious enough to understand the organization, willing to ask difficult questions, identify risks, challenge assumptions respectfully, and ensure OHA does not go off course.

Our CEO must understand that OHA



Kaiali'i Kahele

CHAIR
Trustee,
Hawai'i Island

is both an administrative institution and an advocate for the lāhui. Managing people, resources, lands, and programs is essential. But OHA also exists to advance Native Hawaiian interests. Our administrator must help transform the Board's priorities into meaningful policy and action.

Adaptability will be equally important. Leadership at OHA changes every two to four years. The environment surrounding our work can change even faster. What does not change is our mission. Our administrator must,

therefore, be loyal not to a particular chair, trustee, or moment in time, but to the institution, its beneficiaries, and its purpose.

One of the most important measures of leadership is what remains after we are gone.

Successful leaders build institutions stronger than any individual. Our next administrator should develop people, strengthen systems, build organizational capacity, and cultivate future leaders. OHA's success should never depend upon one chair, trustee, or CEO. Leadership is ultimately stewardship – leaving the institution stronger than you found it.

The Board has a responsibility in this partnership as well. We must articulate what success looks like. What should OHA accomplish in three to five years? How will we measure progress? What outcomes should beneficiaries expect?

The contract should represent more than a period of employment. It should reflect a shared commitment to accomplishing something meaningful for our lāhui.

Ultimately, we seek someone who does not simply want this job but consciously chooses this kuleana. Someone willing to lead and listen. To administer and advocate. To innovate, execute, empower, and be accountable. Someone who understands OHA's challenges but sees greater possibilities for what this institution can become.

Is that leader you?

If these values resonate with you, if your talents and lived experience have prepared you for this kuleana, and if you are ready to help build a stronger OHA that will endure long after all of us are gone, we welcome you to apply through Kumabe HR. ■

The Power of Voter Participation

Hawaii has long struggled with low voter turnout. Does that mean most people are satisfied with their government and the decisions made by elected officials?

The truth is that we do not know. Most registered voters chose neither to support nor oppose any candidate because they did not participate at all.

Of Hawaii's 846,543 registered voters, only 33.1% – a total of 280,442 – returned ballots in the 2026 primary election.

I am not judging those who did not vote or suggesting they are apathetic. I am simply pointing out that they did not participate.

People give many reasons for not voting.

Some say voting is useless. They believe their vote will not make a difference because entrenched political powers ensure that incumbents or candidates from a particular party generally win.

Others say there are too few meaningful choices. In the 2026 election, five state senators and 14 state representatives faced no opposition from any party and were assured of election before the first vote was cast.

Still others say they do not know enough about the candidates. With limited news coverage of many local races – and few debates or opportunities to hear directly from candidates – voters may feel unprepared to make an informed decision. Rather than choosing someone they know little about, they leave the contest blank or do not return their ballot.

Non-participation is especially evident in elections for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA). In the 2026 primary, the 280,442 people who returned ballots could select as many as three candidates for OHA trustee-at-large. Of the 841,326 possible selections, 346,351 – or 41.2% – were left blank.

Again, my purpose is simply to acknowledge the reality of non-participation. Because ballots are secret and election results are not reported by ethnicity, we cannot determine precisely how many Native Hawaiian or non-Ha-



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

Trustee,
At-Large

waiian voters participated in the OHA contest.

Some non-Hawaiians say they intentionally leave that portion of the ballot blank. Some Native Hawaiians abstain because they do not recognize the legitimacy of American statehood in Hawaii. Others may feel disconnected from OHA or lack sufficient information about its candidates, responsibilities, and impact on beneficiaries.

Whatever their reasons, the result is the same: relatively few people determine who will over-

see an institution entrusted with improving the conditions of Native Hawaiians.

So, does it matter that such a small part of Hawaii's population votes? I have two thoughts on this.

First, low voter participation has serious consequences for representative government. When only a fraction of our citizens vote, a small – and not necessarily representative – group determines who will make our laws and govern our communities. As a result, the broader will of the people may not be fully reflected, weakening the very foundation of democracy.

Second, on a practical level, low voter participation keeps the political status quo, perpetuating the high cost and low quality of living in Hawaii. Just look at the conditions we face: a severe shortage of affordable housing, too few well-paying jobs, excessive regulation and taxation of local businesses, and limited access to medical care on the Neighbor Islands.

No wonder so many residents leave Hawaii in search of greater opportunity. And that's especially true of the majority of Native Hawaiians who now live on the mainland.

So, yes, it does matter whether we vote. For the upcoming general election, and all future elections, I encourage everyone to consider the power of your vote. Voting not only helps to preserve democracy, it helps to ensure that our conditions do not remain the same, and that we all have every opportunity to thrive. E hana kākou / let's work together! ■

A Call for Informed and Responsible Voting Beyond name recognition; vote thoughtfully for OHA trustees

Throughout Hawaii's history, Native Hawaiians have demonstrated a deep commitment to our communities, our 'āina, and future generations. Civic participation has long been one way our people made their voices heard and protected the lāhui.

Today, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) carries significant responsibilities through its nine elected trustees. Their decisions affect housing, education, health, cultural resources, economic opportunity, and the stewardship of Hawaiian trust assets. Voting in OHA elections is therefore one of the most meaningful ways to help shape our future.

But that vote should be based on more than name recognition.

A familiar name, campaign sign, or slogan does not reveal how a candidate will manage trust resources. Every voter should study each candidate's qualifications, leadership experience, character, priorities, and positions on Hawaiian issues. For incumbents, voters should also review their voting records, conduct, and stewardship. Beneficiaries deserve leaders who act professionally and place the lāhui first.

Major decisions involving OHA's lands and finances make this responsibility especially important. Kaka'ako Makai could strengthen the trust for present and future beneficiaries. After OHA retained a multimillion-dollar advisory team, beneficiaries deserve a clear accounting of progress, pending decisions, and why this important asset has not moved forward more quickly.

The possible purchase of a television station, reportedly approaching \$28 million, raises another fundamental question: Is this the best and highest use of trust funds while Hawaiian families struggle to secure stable housing? Due diligence may provide information, but trustees must still decide whether such a purchase should take priority over urgent beneficiary needs.

Housing remains one of the most serious challenges facing our lāhui. DHHL continues awarding lots to families on its



**Luana
Alapa**

Trustee,
Moloka'i and
Lāna'i

waiting list, yet some awardees may struggle with a down payment or financing. Meanwhile, high costs are pushing Native Hawaiian families away from Hawaii. Millions could provide lasting benefits through down-payment assistance, homebuilding support, home repairs, or other housing programs.

A television station may offer communication and storytelling opportunities, but those benefits must be weighed against the immediate need for safe homes.

Is acquiring a station more important than putting roofs over the heads of our people? Will future generations be able to remain in Hawaii, raise their families here, and build their future in Hawaii Nei? Trustees must answer these questions openly and responsibly.

Housing is one of my highest priorities as a trustee. I spearheaded OHA's Mālama Honua home-repair initiative for beneficiaries whose homes urgently need repairs. Eligible beneficiaries can apply for up to \$10,000. This direct investment can improve living conditions, protect family homes, and make a meaningful difference.

Voters should examine other major expenditures as well. Should OHA fund projects that may be county, state, or federal responsibilities, or direct those trust funds toward programs that more directly benefit Native Hawaiians? Are proposed activities financially practical, sustainable, and likely to produce measurable results? These questions go to the heart of accountability and stewardship.

The decisions made today can affect generations. With the general election approaching, voters should learn about every candidate: their education, professional experience, character, previous positions, and record of service.

Our kūpuna understood the importance of standing together when the lāhui's future was at stake. We honor that legacy by staying informed and electing leaders who will protect the trust and serve with integrity.

Review candidates. Examine the record. Ask the difficult questions.

Vote wisely – it is your kuleana. ■



Community Briefing & Listening Session on **MILITARY LEASED LANDS**

For more information, go to:

oha.org/aloha-aina

TUNE IN LIVE!

To watch, go to oha.org/live or go to OHA's YouTube and Facebook pages.



Community informational briefing to raise awareness about Public Land Trust lands currently leased by the U.S. military that will expire between 2028 - 2031.

Kahului, Maui

**Saturday
September 26, 2026
10:00 a.m. - noon**

**UH Maui
Pilina Event Center**

310 W. Ka'ahumanu Ave.
Kahului, HI 96732

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



**BEVERLY HEALANI SUN LAN
APANA MURAOKA
(AUG. 21, 1949 – JULY 12, 2026)**

Beverly Healani Sun Lan Apana Muraoka, 76, of Wailua Homesteads, Kaua'i, passed away peacefully on July 12, 2026, in Honolulu, surrounded by her family. Affectionately known as "Aunty Bev," she was a beloved mother, kumu hula, musician, and cultural practitioner whose life embodied aloha, faith, and service.

Born into the esteemed Apana 'Ohana of Kaua'i, Beverly carried forward a rich legacy rooted in Hawaiian music and hula. As a member of the celebrated Apana Sisters, she shared the beauty of Hawai'i's culture worldwide. Together with her husband, Ernest, she founded Healani's Hula Hālau & Music Academy, teaching generations of haumāna the values of kuleana, respect, and aloha.

A lifelong member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Beverly dedicated herself to serving others through faith, education, and community leadership. Recognized as a Kaua'i Museum Living Treasure, she was respected for her wisdom, generosity, and unwavering commitment to the lāhui.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Ernest K. Muraoka; her parents, Ernest Quon Po Apana and Christina Akio Aki Apao Apana; and her siblings Carolyn Lou Leimomi Hung Moi Apana, Dorna Elva Leimamo Hung Chun Apana Ginden Mahelona, Shirlette Pualani Yau Lee Apana Miike, Lynette Kuulei Yau Kut Apana Niau, and Lovey Leina'ala Yau Choy Apana.

She is survived by her children, Kerriane A.L.S.L. (Ty H. Gesteuyala) Muraoka, Ben H. (Renee) Cockett, and Dennis K. Soong; and her brother, Russell Ernest (Lori) Apana. Services were held on Aug. 28, 2026, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Kapa'a. ■

HO'OHUI 'OHANA FAMILY REUNIONS

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

SEARCH

KINIKAHIKOAINOA-PAHANE - 'Auhea 'oukou e nā mamo a Kanialama? Calling on the direct descendants of Kinikahikoainoa and Pooui 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'auhau... and of course, le'ale'a! For more information, email: pukanaokanialama26@gmail.com E ola ka hā loa o ka 'ohana!

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 (Katalani 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. ■

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 convene stakeholders and descendants of iwi discovered during development projects to determine whether these burials must be preserved in place or relocated. They also make recommendations to DLNR regarding the 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

OHA is currently accepting applications until **October 1, 2026**

To learn more and to submit your name
for consideration, go to:
oha.org/burialcouncils





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.

AINA REALTOR - Your Homestead journey starts with a conversation. Active listings across all islands, with guidance from financing and DHHL requirements to the day you get the keys. Have questions? Let's talk story. Jordan Aina (Realtor) | (808) 276-0880

AINA REALTOR - Thinking about selling your Hawaiian Homestead? I help Native Hawaiian families navigate the DHHL process and understand their options. If you're considering selling, let's talk story. Jordan Aina (Realtor - R-85780) | (808) 276-0880

AINA REALTOR - Have questions about your Hawaiian Homestead? Whether you're thinking about buying, selling, or just exploring your options, I'm here to help. No pressure—just talk story. Jordan Aina (Realtor - R-85780) | (808) 276-0880

HAULING WITH ALOHA - Pili aloha Trucking LLC offers reliable container hauling and freight transport on O'ahu. Pier-to-pier, local delivery, construction support. (808) 630-0554 | Mahalo

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

NEW MELE "MAUI KAI" BY TERENCE COLLINS out now on Spotify. Inspired by the 'āina, 50% of streaming royalties are donated to a local Hawaiian Land Trust to kōkua Maui's recovery. Contact Information: Terence Collins, (805) 801-3334, 1273 Sumac Court, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

NOW ENROLLING - Kaulike Academy is a Native Hawaiian homeschool co-op mentoring youth 13-17. Starting September. Visit kaulikeacademy.com

LET'S MAKE HOMEOWNERSHIP HAPPEN! Thinking about buying or selling real estate? Let's talk story! Call/Text Shavon Aluli, REALTOR® RS-87524 (808) 630-0554. Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303.

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LOOKING TO SWAP A HAWAIIAN HOMESTEAD LEASE, MAUI TO KAUA'I - I have a lease in Waiehu, Maui that I would like to swap for a lease in Hanapepe, Kaua'i. Email: kaunalewa@gmail.com

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

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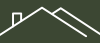
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PRESENTS A SPECIAL *free* ADVERTISING SECTION

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‘ŌI WI**

Supporting Native Hawaiian-owned Businesses

FREE ad space!

(actual size)

SIZE OF AD

width: 3.12 inches

Height: 3.03 inches

FILE FORMAT

4-color (CMYK) PDF or
high-resolution JPEG/TIFF (300 dpi)

DELIVERY

Ad materials can be submitted via
email to freeads@oha.org



The November 2026 edition of *Ka Wai Ola*
will feature a **FREE** advertising section for
Native Hawaiian-owned businesses.*

*Businesses will need to verify Native Hawaiian ancestry through the
Hawaiian Registry Program (HRP). To inquire, visit www.oha.org/registry

DEADLINES

Space Reservations must be placed

by Wednesday, October 8, 2025 by 4:00 p.m.

Final camera ready ads must be submitted

by Wednesday, October 15, 2025 by 4:00 p.m.

Spaces are available on
a first come, first served basis

Sign up today!



To learn more and apply go to:

www.oha.org/freeads

For questions about this promotion please email freeads@oha.org.