

Ka Wai Ola

NEWS FOR THE LĀHUI

kawaiola.news



KA MO'OLELO O KAULULĀ'AU AND OTHER GHOST STORIES FROM LĀNA'I

PAGES 18-20



The huge mo'o akua, Mo'oaleo, who terrorized the people of Lāna'i was one of the most formidable opponents that the legendary 15th century antihero, Kaululā'au, would encounter and defeat. - Original artwork by Alike Spahn Naihe



Royal Hawaiian Band

October 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O‘ahu

Free concerts on the ‘Iolani Palace
Grounds. rhb-music.com

17th Annual Paddle for Life Voyage to Lāna‘i 🌿

October 3, 6:00 a.m. | Maui to Lāna‘i
October 4, 6:00 a.m. | Lāna‘i to Maui

Two-day event paddling from Hana-
ka‘ō‘ō Beach in Lahaina to Hulopo‘e
Beach on Lāna‘i and back to raise funds
for cancer survivors and caregivers.
paddleforlifemaui.org

Kānaka Actor’s Pū Pa‘akai 🌿

October 3, 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
October 4, 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Honolulu, O‘ahu & Virtual

Two days of in-person sessions and vir-
tual access designed to reclaim Kānaka
mo‘olelo and representation in film and
television. inamona.org

Moloka‘i Hoe 🌿

October 11, 7:45 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Moloka‘i & O‘ahu

The annual long distance outrigger ca-
noe race across the Ka‘iwi Channel. Be-
gins at Hale o Lono Harbor on Moloka‘i
and ends at Duke Kahanamoku Beach in
Waikiki. ohcra.com

Kama‘āina Sunday

October 11, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Honolulu, O‘ahu

Free audio tours of ‘Iolani Palace, food,
entertainment, and local vendors. iola-
nipalace.org

Princess Ka‘iulani’s Birthday

October 16, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Waimea, O‘ahu

Kama‘āina enjoy FREE admission with a
valid state ID. waimeavalley.net

Royal Order of Kamehameha & Nā Wāhine o Kapuaiwa 2026 Kuapapa 🌿

October 16 & 17, 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Kapolei, O‘ahu

Two days of community meetings and
discussions, cultural workshops, and a
mākeke held at UH West O‘ahu.

Kēhau - 30 Years of Hawaiian Education 🌿

October 16, 2:00 - 9:00 p.m. | Kalihi, O‘ahu
An education award and recognition
event/ceremony. The milestone event
celebrates 30 years of Hawaiian cul-
ture-based early education. koka.org



Princess Victoria Ka‘iulani October 16, 1875

Victoria Kawēkiu Ka‘iulani
Lunalilo Kalaninuiāhilapalapa
Cleghorn was born to Princess
Mariam Likelike, younger sister
of King Kalākaua and Queen
Lili‘uokalani. Her father was Ar-
chibald Scott Cleghorn, a Scottish
financier from Edinburgh. At age
13, Ka‘iulani traveled to England
for school and lived abroad
until 1897. She was the heir to
the throne, and the loss of the
Hawaiian Kingdom grieved her
immensely. She died in 1899 at
the age of 23.

October 11, 9:30 a.m.
Kawaiaha‘o Church
Ali‘i Sunday Worship Service

2026 HFU 16th Annual State Con- vention: Mahi‘ai Makahiki 🌿

October 16, 17 & 18, various times
Waimānalo, O‘ahu

Farm tours, opening celebration with
food, music, games, market, and work-
shops. Official union business meeting
on October 18. hawaiiifarmers.org/hfuf

49th Annual ‘Ō‘ō Awards Gala 🌿

October 16, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.
Waikiki, O‘ahu

This year, the Native Hawaiian Chamber
of Commerce recognizes Sammie Ku‘ui-
po Kumukahi, Richard Fernandez, Kimo
Kahoano and Brickwood Galuteria.
nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org

Mālama Hulē‘ia Community Workday

October 17, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Libu‘e, Kaua‘i

Every 3rd Saturday volunteer to do con-
servation work at ‘Alekoko Fishpond.
malamahuleia.org

Pu‘uhonua Mākeke

October 17, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Waimānalo, O‘ahu

Products, services, and businesses across
Hawai‘i. Pu‘uhonua o Waimānalo Pavil-
ion. FB/IG @puuhonuamakeke

Maui Steel Guitar Festival

October 17, 3:00 - 6:45 p.m. | Wailea, Maui

Performances by steel guitar masters
from Maui and O‘ahu at the Shops at
Wailea. mauisteelguitarfestival.com

29th Annual Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival - Kona Style

October 18, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Kailua-Kona, Hawai‘i Island

Some of Hawai‘i’s finest musicians at
the Outrigger Kona Resort. Kama‘āina
tickets \$20 at the door. facebook.com/
Slackkeyfestivals

Make Music Jamms

October 21, Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Honolulu, O‘ahu

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

Ma‘a: Establishing Our Pilina to Kanaloa

October 22, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Kaiwi‘ula, O‘ahu

Learn how pilina to Kanaloa and ‘āina
is cultivated through commitment, ‘ike,
and action. Free with registration. bish-
opmuseum.org

MeleCraft Music Mentorship Program 🌿

October 23, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.

October 24, 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Hōlualoa, Hawai‘i Island

A two-day educational program at Kona
Coffee and Tea Farm for aspiring young
artists ages 14-22. hakuhawaii.com/
melecraft

Make a Difference Day

October 24, 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Waimea, O‘ahu

Community volunteer day at Waimea
Valley. Help us protect our botanical
gardens and cultural sites. Space is limit-
ed. RSVP at waimeavalley.net/events/

Waipā Community Workday

October 24, 9:00 a.m. - Noon

Waipā, Kaua‘i

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

Hawai‘i Island Festival of Birds 🌿

October 24, 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Hilo, Hawai‘i Island

A festival celebrating Hawai‘i’s native
birds. Conservation booths, artists, ac-
tivities and more. birdfesthawaii.org

‘A‘a i ka Hula Competition

October 24, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Moanalua, O‘ahu

A gathering celebrating Hawaiian cul-
ture within Hawai‘i public, private and
charter schools.

Hot Kūpuna Nights

October 27, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Honolulu, O‘ahu

Bring your ‘ukulele to the second floor
of Nā Lama Kukui and join in the kan-
ikapila. Food available for purchase. IG
@nalamakukui

Moonwalk

October 25, 8:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Waimea, O‘ahu

Enjoy Waimea Valley under the moon-
light. waimeavalley.net

WATRRS Group Halloween Night 🌿

October 31, 11:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Wai‘anae, O‘ahu

Community-centered, alcohol and
drug-free family event to provide a safe,
fun and positive Halloween experience.
Games, movies, and storytelling at Pō-
ka‘i Bay Beach Park. watrrsgroup.org

EXHIBITS

‘Ai Mama Exhibition

August 25 - December 11, Mon - Sat, 12:30 -
4:30 p.m. | Kāne‘ohe, O‘ahu

Explore the transmission of ‘ike through
the lifework of ‘Ōlohe ‘Umi Kai and
Sulu‘ape Keone Nunes at WCC’s Gallery
‘Iolani. gallery.windward.hawaii.edu.

Kanaloa ka La‘a o Kohemālamalama

September 24 - December 31

Ka‘iwiula, O‘ahu

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



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



Summer L.H. Sylva
Interim Chief Administrator

K.Sean Kekina
Chief Operating Officer

Bill Brennan
Communications Director



EDITOR
Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Kaleena Patcho

STAFF WRITERS
Philamer Felicitas
Kelli Meskin Soileau

STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS
Nelson Gaspar
Jason Lees

CONTRIBUTORS
Kalani Akana, Ph.D.
Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton
Bobby Camara
Cedric Duarte
Kara Dumaguin
Cynthia Engle
Kawai Hong
Maile Kane
Lōpaka Kapanui
Tanya Kapanui
KipuKai Kualīī
Richard Kaipo Lum, Ph.D.
Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH, RDN
Kelsey Kukaua Medeiros
Ashley Obrey, Esq.
Pasifika in Tech
Davis Price
Kamaile Puluole-Mitchell
Kalani Lukela Raphael, MD, MS
Mālia Sanders
Hannah Kihalani Springer
Kalaniakea Wilson, Ph.D.

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Kānaka Rising: The Next Season of OHA

Transitions carry many emotions. Some are welcome; others long overdue. We should strive for transitions that are supportive, transparent, grounded in integrity, thoughtfully planned, and worthy of celebration. I am proud that OHA’s approaching leadership transition has the makings of just that.

It is fitting that the selection of OHA’s permanent Administrator coincides with potential turnover on our Board. Every incumbent seeks another term while preparing for a new season – whether re-elected or called to serve another way.

The public conversation about what OHA has accomplished – and what more it should accomplish – is intensifying. Expectations are rising. That is a good thing. It means our beneficiaries remain engaged, or are re-engaging, because they still believe in OHA’s promise.

As the executive search closes, I, too, put my name forward for the permanent Administrator and CEO position, offering my hopes and unfinished aspirations for OHA’s next chapter. Whatever the outcome, I am heartened that other leaders are similarly called to OHA’s enduring mission and service to our lāhui.

Soon, the carved form of Kihawahine – the powerful mo’o akua associated with Mokuhinia and Moku’ula – will begin her journey home after more than 130 years in Germany. Cultural practitioners, advocates and kia’i will ensure her safe passage to Maui and, eventually, Lahaina.

Another delegation will travel to Oregon, joining hundreds of Kānaka at the 2026 Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs Convention to continue our tradition of vigorous policymaking and spirited discourse about the forces shaping Hawai’i and Hawaiians – living both separated and connected by the sea.

One journey brings an ancestor home. The other sends our people forward to advocate for choices that will shape Hawai’i. Both remind

us that what we carry from the past matters, as does what we are bold enough to build next.

Kaka’ako Ma Kai is a bellwether for those tensions. Some invoke customary access and environmental protection to oppose Native Hawaiian aspirations for these lands – as though descendants of la-wai’a, po’e he’enalu, and generations of aloha ‘āina must choose between access, stewardship, and advancement.

We reject that false choice. Kānaka defended these shorelines, practices, and places even after displacement.

An unobstructed ocean view may be beautiful. But I can imagine one more beautiful still: Kānaka rising – literally and figuratively – greening our spaces and filling the shoreline with the sights, sounds and spirit of ko kākou Hawai’i: ‘ōlelo, mele, oli, hula, voyaging, keiki, kūpuna and ‘ohana.

Native Hawaiians have every right to dream boldly, build responsibly, create prosperity and shape our own future on our lands. That is the promise of Kānaka-led and informed development – not only at Kaka’ako Ma Kai, but wherever we choose to stand, build, innovate and make our presence known, rooted and enduring.

A cultural center. A seat of Native Hawaiian governance. A piko of the Pacific. A welina mai to Oceania. A source of shared prosperity.

That is the legacy we can place in the hands of the next generation of dreamers, doers, leaders, and never-say-never warriors. That is the next season of OHA.

Aloha ‘āina mau a mau,
Summer Lee Haunani Sylva
Ka Pouhana Kūikawā | Interim Chief Administrator



MEA O LOKO

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Independent Impact and Clean-Up Assessment Must Come First

By Davis Price

Since the Hawai'i Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) rejected the U.S. Army's environmental impact statements in the summer of 2025, the military's expiring land leases have come under significant scrutiny.

Following the BLNR's decision, Gov. Josh Green and then-Army Secretary Dan Driscoll pursued a proposed "friendly condemnation" that would have transferred the leased lands at Pōhakuloa to the Army. In exchange, Hawai'i would receive a community-benefits package apparently developed by the governor without a transparent public process.

Native Hawaiian leaders and organizations immediately opposed the proposal, and many others quietly joined that resistance. The plan was eventually shelved. Members of Hawai'i's congressional delegation are now opposing condemnation and urging the Army to comply with state law by preparing and submitting a revised environmental impact statement.

While that political struggle unfolded, a collaboration of academic research centers, public-policy organizations, and grassroots groups was examining one of Hawai'i's most persistent narratives: that our economy depends on the U.S. military and could not survive without it.

For generations, this claim has been treated as unquestionable. The military remains nearly untouchable in the minds of many – and especially among those closest to

political and economic power.

Published in May 2026, *The True Costs of the U.S. Military in Hawai'i* is a groundbreaking examination of the military's economic, environmental, and social impacts. It challenges the exaggerations and incomplete claims that have helped shield the military from accountability for the harms it has caused.

The report scrutinizes information promoted by the Department of War and repeatedly presented to Hawai'i's people: that military spending is overwhelmingly beneficial to our economy. Never before has research directly challenging this narrative – and the system that gives the military extraordinary power over Hawai'i's lands, resources, and people – been assembled in this way.

Confronting this power structure is essential because the narrative of dependency restricts our ability to imagine and plan for a different future – one in which Native Hawaiians and local communities guide our economy and thrive.

We are continually warned that Hawai'i cannot survive without the military. This report challenges that assumption and creates space for serious conversations about economic alternatives.

As the lease issue develops, Native Hawaiians must continue demanding accountability for the environmental and societal harms caused by U.S. military activities. A central demand must be the full investigation and cleanup of contaminated lands, with the military bearing the costs.

These are not merely state-owned parcels available for disposal. These are the crown and government lands of

the Hawaiian Kingdom over which Native Hawaiians maintain unresolved claims.

The United States has formally acknowledged that Native Hawaiians never directly relinquished their claims to sovereignty or their national lands. Native Hawaiian institutions, both public and private, must assert those sovereign rights and explore strategic legislative and litigation pathways toward the return of these lands that include Native Hawaiian and community-based stewardship, decision-making, and governance of these lands.

Any negotiations to extend the leases are premature until independent assessments determine the full extent of contamination, the work necessary to restore the lands, and the cost and timeline of that work.

Hawai'i must not accept promises of future cleanup in exchange for continued military occupation. The military must provide a binding, fully funded cleanup and restoration plan developed with meaningful participation by the Native Hawaiian community and practitioners.

Every available avenue – including administrative action, political advocacy, and litigation – must be considered to prevent further harm and protect these ancestral lands. Decisions concerning these lands cannot continue to prioritize military access over environmental restoration, public health, Native Hawaiian rights, and the unresolved question of sovereignty. ■

Davis Price is a Native Hawaiian attorney and advocate who currently serves as the senior domestic policy strategist at NDN Collective, an Indigenous-led organization founded to support self-determination and foster justice and equity.

Walk to the Box Events

October 20, 9:00 a.m. | Wailuku Maui

Velma McWayne Santos Community Center then sign waving on Ka'ahumanu Avenue at 10:00 a.m.

October 21, 10:00 a.m. | Lihue, Kaua'i

Sign waving on Rice Street near the Kaua'i Museum then Walk to the Box at 10:45 a.m.

November 2, 9:30 a.m. | Honolulu, O'ahu

Sign waving on King Street across from 'Iolani Palace then Walk to the Box at 10:15 a.m.

November 3, 9:30 a.m. | Hilo, Hawai'i Island

Sign waving on Kamehameha Ave. near the Kamehameha Statue the Walk to the Box at 10:15 a.m.



For more info, go to:
vote.kanaeokana.net



VOTE IT'S OUR KULEANA

IMPORTANT DATES

OCT
16

General election
ballots will arrive
in mailboxes

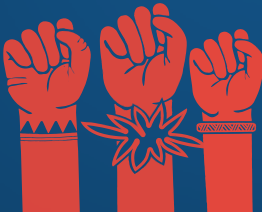
OCT
20

Voter service
centers open
statewide

NOV
3

General
Election Day

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



For more election
information, visit:
oha.org/vote



Helping 'Ohana Hold on to Ancestral Lands

By Kamaile Puluole-Mitchell, OHA Public Policy Advocate

For many families across Hawai'i Island, 'āina is more than property. It is where kūpuna lived, farmed, raised keiki, cared for 'ohana, and carried forward kuleana across generations. These lands hold mo'olelo, and deep connections to place.

But as land values increase, some 'ohana are facing a painful reality: the lands their families have cared for over generations are becoming increasingly difficult to keep. Rising costs of living and insurance rates place pressure on families. For some, property taxes that increase as neighboring land values rise can push lands out of 'ohana hands.

In response to these pressures, many counties are looking at ways to change property tax assessments to protect owner-occupied generational use.

Hawai'i County Bill 163 addressed these concerns by creating a new 'Āina Kūpuna Dedication to lower property taxes on ancestral lands. The measure recently passed its final reading before the Hawai'i County Council and has since been enacted as Ordinance 26-58.

The new law allows qualifying 'ohana to pay minimum property tax on generational family lands during a 10-year dedication period. In Hawai'i County, the minimum tax is currently \$200 per year.

To keep the program targeted, it limits eligibility to properties of 20 acres or less that have remained in the family since or before Jan. 1, 1926, with at least one qualifying owner residing in Hawai'i County. The property must also meet a specific tax-burden threshold based on the amount of property tax assessed over the prior 10 years.

One important feature of the program is that it accounts for agricultural lands. Some ancestral lands are already assessed under agricultural use, which can lower property tax bills.

Ordinance 26-58 allows the county to consider what the 'ohana's tax burden would have been without the agricultural use assessment when determining whether a property meets the required tax-burden threshold. This ensures that families are not penalized for keeping land in agricultural use.

The ordinance also recognizes that agriculture can be part of how families maintain ancestral lands. Agricultural activities are not treated as prohibited commercial use under the new program. At the same time, the program includes safeguards to keep the benefit focused on land retention rather than speculation.

Dedicated lands cannot be transferred to someone outside the descendant line during the dedication period. It also limits commercial use and residential rentals for terms shorter than six months.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs submitted testimony in support of Bill 163 because ancestral land retention is deeply connected to the wellbeing of Native Hawaiian 'ohana. The loss of 'āina is not only an economic loss, but a loss of relationship between people and place.

Families seeking dedication status for the tax year beginning July 1, 2027, must apply by Dec. 31, 2026. After the first year, applications will be due by September 1 of the year prior to the tax year in which the dedication would apply.

The 'Āina Kūpuna Dedication program is part of a broader movement across the pae 'āina to protect 'ohana ancestral lands.

Hawai'i County's approach follows a path already taken by Maui County, which created its own 'Āina Kūpuna program in 2021 to help families retain ancestral lands through minimum-tax treatment during a 10-year dedication period. Maui's program generally requires a family connection to the land for at least 80 years before application.

Hawai'i County has built on that approach while tailoring the program to Hawai'i Island through requirements such as a 20-acre limit, a local residency requirement, and a tax-burden threshold.

Together, these county efforts show how local governments can help 'ohana remain rooted in the places that carry their genealogy. ■

Kuleana grows leaders

Preschool applications close
October 31, 2026



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



Ke Kula 'o Kamehameha

OHA and the City Discuss Future of Kaka'ako Ma Kai

By Bill Brennan

In early September, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) and the City and County of Honolulu began exploratory discussions regarding the potential future use of the City-owned Look Lab site in Kaka'ako Ma Kai, including whether the property could help advance complementary public purposes involving ocean safety, Native Hawaiian culture and broader community benefit.

The Look Lab site is the former J.K.K. Look Laboratory, an approximately 18,000-square-foot ocean engineering and marine research facility previously leased and operated by the University of Hawai'i for marine research, testing and hyperbaric studies. The now-vacant facility and surrounding property are located adjacent to the Kaka'ako Waterfront Park and near OHA's Kaka'ako Ma Kai lands.

The current discussions are examining opportunities to address the City's ocean safety operational needs while complementing OHA's vision for a Native Hawaiian Cultural Center at Kaka'ako Ma Kai. Both organizations recognize the potential public value of coordinating their respective plans for neighboring public lands and are working collaboratively to determine whether a shared vision for the area is feasible.

"This is an opportunity to think creatively about how public lands and public resources can work together to serve our community," said OHA Board of Trustees Chair Kaiali'i Kahele.

"OHA has a bold vision for Kaka'ako Ma Kai as a place where Native Hawaiian culture, history and identity are celebrated and shared with Hawai'i and the world. At the same time, ocean safety provides an

essential public service to our island community. We appreciate Mayor Blangiardi and the City coming to the table with us to determine whether we can create something here that advances both missions and provides lasting benefit for generations to come."

The discussions remain conceptual and are intended to better understand each organization's operational and long-term needs and identify potential community benefits.

"We see a real opportunity here to bring together two important public purposes in a way that respects this special place and creates lasting value for our community," said Honolulu Mayor Rick Blangiardi.

"Ocean safety is fundamental to who we are as an island community, and so is preserving and perpetuating Native Hawaiian culture. These conversations are still very early, but we are excited to work with OHA, consider what is possible, and see if we can develop a shared vision that will serve the people of O'ahu for generations to come."

No decisions have been made regarding the future use of the Look Lab property. Any potential proposal would require additional discussions and due diligence, and would be subject to all applicable review and approval processes by the appropriate City and OHA governing bodies before moving forward.

OHA owns nine parcels totaling approximately 30 acres in Kaka'ako Ma Kai that were transferred to OHA by the State of Hawai'i in 2012 as part of a settlement addressing past-due Public Land Trust revenues.

OHA has been working toward a long-term vision for these lands that would create a vibrant destination grounded in Native Hawaiian culture while providing meaningful educational, cultural and community benefits. ■

OHA BOT Approves Hurricane Lowell Emergency Relief

By Bill Brennan

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees convened an emergency meeting on September 9 and authorized up to \$362,800 in immediate disaster assistance for Native Hawaiian beneficiaries and communities impacted by Hurricane Lowell, with particular attention to severe and continuing impacts on Kaua'i, Ni'ihau and West O'ahu.

The emergency action included up to \$250,000 in direct disaster aid grants to verified Native Hawaiian households, up to \$75,000 to support community resource hubs (with awards of up to \$10,000 per hub), and the distribution of \$37,800 in Times/Big Save Supermarket gift cards to help meet immediate needs in communities impacted by the storm.

The Board's action also gave OHA's administration the flexibility to rapidly deploy assistance as damage assessments continue and additional needs emerge, while maintaining eligibility, fiscal and accountability requirements.

"Hurricane Lowell has caused tremendous damage and disruption, and many of our beneficiaries are dealing with the loss of property, interrupted utilities, damaged roads and the uncertainty that comes with a disaster of this magnitude," said OHA Board Chair Kaiali'i Kahele.

"The Board's action today allows OHA to move resources directly into affected communities without unnecessary delay. Our priority is to reach our beneficiaries and families experiencing the greatest need and help them begin the difficult work of recovery."

The Board also authorized the OHA Administrator to establish streamlined application, verification, documentation, award and disbursement procedures to help get assistance to beneficiaries as quickly as possible.

Recognizing that families displaced or otherwise affected by a major disaster may have difficulty accessing ordinary documentation, the authorization provides OHA with flexibility to appropriately streamline documentation requirements while maintaining fiscal, eligibility and accountability controls.

"We have learned through our previous disaster responses that conditions can change rapidly and that assistance needs to be flexi-

ble enough to respond to what communities are actually experiencing on the ground," said OHA Interim Chief Administrator/CEO Summer Sylva.

"This authorization gives our team the ability to move quickly, while ensuring that OHA resources are directed responsibly to verified Native Hawaiian beneficiaries and organizations serving our communities. We will continue working closely with government agencies and community partners to identify where the needs are greatest."

Hurricane Lowell brought destructive winds, heavy rainfall, flooding and high surf across portions of the state on September 7, damaging homes, roads, utilities and other critical infrastructure. Kaua'i and Ni'ihau experienced particularly serious impacts.

Beneficiaries and communities experiencing the most immediate and substantial impacts were prioritized. OHA assistance may complement county, state, federal, insurance, charitable and other disaster assistance, while safeguards will be implemented to prevent duplicative OHA assistance for the same identified need to the extent reasonably ascertainable.

OHA Trustee for Kaua'i and Ni'ihau Dan Ahuna and his team on Kaua'i have gone out into the affected communities to listen, assess impacts and connect with community-led response efforts. OHA staff is also working with community organizations and other response partners to determine the appropriate locations and level of support needed for community resource hubs. The hubs can provide critical points of contact for families seeking assistance and help connect isolated or heavily impacted communities with available resources.

Approximately 17,000 Native Hawaiians live in Kaua'i County, representing roughly 23% of the county's population, according to 2021 Census data and OHA staff analysis. The significant concentration of Native Hawaiians on Kaua'i, combined with the severity of Hurricane Lowell's impacts, was among the factors prompting the Board to convene an emergency meeting.

In the weeks following the storm, OHA continues to assess impacts on Native Hawaiian businesses, farmers, homesteaders and other beneficiaries impacted by Hurricane Lowell to determine how OHA's available resources can best support recovery efforts. ■

"Held in Trust"

New documentary asks what comes next for military-leased lands

By Cedric Duarte

In 1964, thousands of acres of Hawai'i's public trust lands were leased to the U.S. military for 65 years for just \$1 per lease. Those leases begin expiring in 2028, including major Army leases at Pōhakuloa Training Area on Hawai'i Island, and at Mākua, Kahuku, and Kawaiiloa-Poamoho on O'ahu in 2029.

More than six decades later, the people of Hawai'i face consequential decisions about what happens next on these public trust lands.

A new documentary from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), *Held in Trust: The Future of Hawai'i's Public Lands Beyond Military Leases*, examines the history of these lands, their significance to Native Hawaiians, the impacts of decades of military use, and the choices ahead as the leases expire.

Held in Trust begins with 'āina. For Native Hawaiians, the film explains, the relationship between Kānaka and 'āina is genealogical. Through cultural practitioners and community leaders, the documentary explores Pōhakuloa as a living cultural landscape and a place tied to generations of Hawaiians.

From there, it traces the lands' political history – from their designation as the crown and government lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom, through the overthrow and annexation, to their inclusion as part of Hawai'i's Public Land Trust at statehood.

The documentary returns, again and again, to the following question: What responsibilities do we carry



Representatives from OHA's Military-Leased Land Technical Advisory Group visited Kaho'olawe on August 10 to better understand the long-term impacts of the military's use of our 'āina. They are pictured here, on Kaho'olawe, with members of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana. - Photo: Dawn Kaniaupio

today that a previous generation lacked, or didn't represent, when it signed these leases more than 60 years ago?

In February 2025, the OHA Board of Trustees established a Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) to investigate the ongoing military-leased land negotiations and report on how OHA might participate. Over the following months, the group reviewed environmental documents, visited the sites, met with state and federal officials, engaged the congressional delegation and military leadership, and conducted community outreach.

In December 2025, the board established a new PIG to develop OHA's official position on leases expiring be-

tween 2029 and 2031, along with a 14-member Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that includes Native Hawaiian practitioners, community advocates who question continued military use of the lands, as well as individuals with military experience and an understanding of the Army's case for why Pōhakuloa matters to national security.

One of the documentary's most powerful segment records the Technical Advisory Group's visit to Kaho'olawe, where members found both warning and hope.

Decades after military bombing ended, unexploded ordnance remains, restricting where restoration work can occur. Yet the documentary also shows Native Hawaiians returning to the island, restoring native vegetation, practicing culture and rebuilding relationships with 'āina.

The visit provided a tangible example of how decisions about military land use can extend far beyond the term of a lease.

OHA's work has continued beyond the documentary. The agency has engaged state and federal officials while opposing any permanent alienation of the lands through fee-simple sale, land exchange, or condemnation. The documentary frames the lease expirations as a question of trust obligation, asking viewers what this present generation owes to those who will inherit these lands next.

"Held in Trust: The Future of Hawai'i's Public Lands Beyond Military Leases" premieres October 8 at 6:30 p.m. on television stations statewide and at OHA.org/aloha-aina.

HELD IN TRUST

The Future of Hawai'i's Public Lands Beyond Military Leases

BROADCASTING

OCTOBER 8 AT 6:30 PM

KGMB / KHNL / KFVE / KITV / KIKU / KHII

STREAMING LIVE AT

WWW.OHA.ORG/ALOHA-AINA

A Visionary Hawaiian Leader

Thomas "Kamaki" Awa Kanabele III

Jan. 14, 1945 – July 27, 2026

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

"Many people have no use for these young Hawaiian radicals but I count my blessings for them. They're telling everyone that they are Hawaiians, they love who they are, [they] are intelligent, talented, and will speak up, be heard, and finally be counted."

– Kamaki Kanabele, July 8, 1983

Thomas "Kamaki" Awa Kanabele III was many things: a cultural practitioner, a traditional healer and priest, a kumu hula, a teacher, a businessowner, an administrator, community leader, and a politician. He is remembered by the community, and especially by those who knew and loved him, as a beloved kupuna and visionary who dedicated his life to advocating for and serving our lāhui.

Kanabele was born to a large 'ohana and mostly raised in Nānākuli, O'ahu, on a Hawaiian homestead. His mother was Agnes Kalaniho'okaha Cope (Auntie Aggie Cope) who would, in time, become a revered kupuna and community leader on the Wai'anae Coast. His father, Thomas Kahaku Awa Kanabele, passed away unexpectedly when Kanabele was just 5 years old.

After his father passed, Kanabele was sent to live for a time with his grandparents on Ni'ihau. He was trained by his mother and grandmother in both hula and the healing arts including lā'au lapa'au, ho'oponopono, lomilomi and more. He recalled, as a child, practicing his healing lessons on the family dogs saying "they were very good patients because we loved them."

Kanabele graduated from Wai'anae High School and went on to BYU Hawai'i (then known as Church College) and earned a bachelor's degree in art and education. From there he went to BYU Provo where he completed a master's degree in education. After graduating, he taught art history for five years at Olympus High School in Utah. As a teacher, he successfully helped to reduce racial conflicts between Ute and Hispanic teenagers, drawing upon his training as a traditional healer.

While living in Utah, Kanabele also started an import-export business, owned a couple of Hawaiian dance studios, and performed at a Hawaiian restaurant.

Around 1974, he accepted a job in Washington, D.C., as the administrator of education for the National Endowment for the Arts, coordinating and administering



Thomas "Kamaki" Awa Kanabele III - Photo: Kai Markell

federal funding in support of arts education programs. It was an interesting time to be in Washington – although Richard Nixon was still president, it was at the height of the Watergate scandal and soon after Kanabele moved to Washington, Nixon resigned.

Many Washington administrators only last through one presidential term, but Kanabele held his position for 10 years serving under four administrations: Nixon, Ford, Carter and Reagan. In a 1986 *Focus Hawai'i* television interview, Kanabele recalled at the time that, "in the entire federal agency, I was not only the highest-ranking Native Hawaiian, but the highest-ranking Native American."

It was an exciting job that afforded Kanabele the opportunity to meet famous artists and performers like Helen Hayes and Clint Eastwood. He also met world leaders, including the Shah of Iran, the Dalai Lama, and Mother Teresa.

However, the defunding of the Civil Rights Commission, federal reconsideration of affirmative action, and the appointment of four conservative justices to the Supreme Court during the Reagan administration gave him pause. He noted in the interview that the impact of these developments on him as a Polynesian – and the potential impact on the Hawaiian people – left him "a bit shaken as to what our role is in all of this."

Kanabele left Washington and returned home to Hawai'i in 1985 after being selected as the new administrator for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) in a special meeting of the OHA Board of Trustees to replace outgoing administrator T.C. Yim.

At a news conference following his appointment in November 1985, Kanabele said that his most important kuleana would be to ensure that Hawaiians were free to chart their own destiny exclaiming, "Give us an opportunity to decide our fate, not other people."

Kanabele began his duties at OHA in January 1986 and served in this capacity for three years through February 1989. During his tenure as OHA administrator, Kanabele helped to set the direction for the 6-year-old organization and advance OHA's work in education, health, economic opportunity, cultural preservation, and the pursuit of resources and revenues owed to Native Hawaiians.

"Kamaki Kanabele belonged to a generation of courageous Hawaiian leaders who helped establish OHA and define its responsibility to our beneficiaries," said OHA Board Chair Kai-alii Kahele. "He understood that OHA could not merely speak about the needs of our people; it had to listen to our communities, protect their interests, and act with courage on their behalf."

Around the same time, Kanabele became actively involved in the Hawaiian homestead movement. "When homestead leaders from across Hawai'i came together in 1987 to form what became the Sovereign Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations (SCHHA), Kamaki became the first leader elected by homesteaders to serve as its chairman," Maile Lu'uwai, current vice chair of SCHHA, was quoted as saying in an August 26 *Star-Advertiser* article.

Kanabele stepped down as OHA administrator in 1989 and the following year he ran for a seat on OHA's Board of Trustees. He was elected as an at-large trustee and



This iconic photo of Kamaki Kanahale and his mother, Aunt Aggie Cope, by photographer Shuzo Uemoto was featured in *Nānā i nā Loea Hula Volume 1*, which was published in 1984. - Photo: Nā Kumu Hula Archive

A VISIONARY HAWAIIAN LEADER

Continued from page 8

served in this capacity for four years, from 1990-1994.

As an OHA trustee, Kanahale chaired the Committee on Education and Culture, bringing community concerns regarding traditional fishing practices and coastal development and access before the board. He also helped establish OHA's Hawaiian Language Award that is presented at the Merrie Monarch Festival each year.

After leaving public office, Kanahale continued to provide leadership to the Hawaiian Homestead Association and dedicated himself to his Wai'anae Coast community serving as a traditional healer and kahu. He eventually became chair of the Kūpuna Council of practitioners of Hawaiian healing traditions in West O'ahu.

In 2009, Kanahale and his mother, Aunt Aggie Cope, established the Dr. Agnes Kalaniho'okaha Cope Center for Traditional Native Hawaiian Healing where skilled practitioners not only treat patients, but pass their 'ike on to others. The Healing Center is overseen by the Kūpuna Council to ensure that cultural knowledge is practiced - and passed down - correctly.

Located on the grounds of the Wai'anae Coast

Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC), the placement of the Healing Center is significant; Cope herself helped to found WCCHC in the early 1970s after realizing that many Hawaiians on the Wai'anae Coast could not afford to visit a hospital when they became sick.

Upon the opening of the new Healing Center in 2009, Kanahale said: "This is the only place in all Hawai'i that will be a formal training center for the traditional healing arts. We're trying to make this the premier reservoir of traditional healing practices by preserving, and healing, and actually implementing these practices."

Reflecting on Kanahale's profound contributions to our lāhui throughout his lifetime, Rep. Darius Kila who represents Kanahale's beloved Nānākuli wrote in a Facebook post, "Uncle Kamaki dedicated his life to preserving Native Hawaiian culture, healing traditions, and advocating for our people. His legacy will continue to live on through the countless lives he touched and the generations he inspired."

In an interview with *Native Voices*, Kanahale said that "death and dying is part of the structure in which all know of - and we prepare ourselves from childhood all the way up to the passing to understand that it is an important part of life."

E moe mālie, e Kamaki Kanahale. Ua hala 'oe, akā, e mau ana kāu mau hana aloha no ka lāhui. ■



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East Maui Water Court-Ordered Contested Case Moves Forward

By Ashley Obrey

For generations, East Maui communities have fought to restore water to their streams and protect the traditional and customary practices they sustain. Nā Moku Aupuni o Ko'olau Hui (Nā Moku) has carried that fight for nearly three decades, opposing more than a century of diversion for commercial use that drained many streams dry.

This summer brought significant legal developments, including the Board of Land and Natural Resources' (BLNR) rejection of a 30-year water licensing proposal and Environmental Court orders requiring the contested case hearing Nā Moku and the Sierra Club of Hawai'i (Sierra Club) have sought for years.

Together, these developments blocked the proposed generation-long commitment of East Maui water and finally gave the community an evidentiary forum to make its case for protecting traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights and enforcing the state's public trust duties – both rooted in the Hawai'i Constitution.

In August, BLNR considered and rejected a proposal for a 30-year disposition of East Maui water to Mahi Pono and East Maui Irrigation that would have authorized up to 94.45 million gallons per day (mgd), including 87.95 mgd through a commercial license and another 6.5 mgd for the County.

Nā Moku, the Sierra Club, and other community members opposed the long-term licenses which would have committed East Maui's public trust water to private commercial use for a generation – despite unanswered questions about Mahi Pono's water needs, waste, and impacts on Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices.

Some framed the issue as a choice between healthy streams and water for agriculture. But the 94.45 mgd was extraordinary, even compared with prior amounts authorized by BLNR.

For 2026, BLNR authorized less than half that amount – 41.72 mgd – and the Environmental Court recently reversed that authorization for breach of the public trust. The court instead capped the 2026 diversions at 31.5 mgd pending the contested case hearing requested by Nā Moku and the Sierra Club.

Rejecting the private licenses did not mean choosing between healthy streams and water for agriculture. Nā Moku supported setting aside East Maui water to the County of Maui for public management through the Department of Water Supply and 'Aha Wai o Maui Hikina, the East Maui Water Authority, a direction Maui voters had already endorsed.

BLNR's rejection means East Maui's water will not be committed through the proposed 30-year commercial



(L-R) Jerome Kekiwi Jr., NHLC Senior Staff Attorney Ashley Obrey, and Norman Bush Martin in East Maui. Kekiwi and Martin are members of Nā Moku Aupuni o Ko'olau Hui. - Courtesy Photo

license for now. Mahi Pono and EMI also requested a contested case hearing challenging that decision, which BLNR denied. Meanwhile, how much water may lawfully be diverted in future years remains unresolved.

The next step is the contested case hearing ordered by the Environmental Court on the revocable permit for calendar years 2026 and 2027. The hearing will allow Nā Moku and the Sierra Club to present evidence, cross-examine witnesses, test competing claims, and obtain a BLNR decision based on a developed factual record.

For Nā Moku, that hearing has been a long time coming.

Three times – on the 2016, 2025, and 2026 revocable permits – BLNR denied Nā Moku a contested case hearing. Each of those times, the Environmental Court later concluded that BLNR violated the law and that Nā Moku was entitled to a hearing based on its members' constitutionally protected traditional and customary Native Hawaiian rights.

In July, the court again confirmed that right and emphasized BLNR's independent duty to protect traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices when deciding how much water may be diverted. In July, the court again confirmed Nā Moku's right to a contested case hearing.

The hearing is scheduled for later this fall and will finally examine questions that Nā Moku and the Sierra Club have raised for years: How much water is available, and reasonably and beneficially needed for off-stream uses? How much is lost or wasted? And what do the diversions mean for kalo farmers, fishers, gatherers, and other practitioners whose traditional and customary practices depend on flowing streams?

Those questions are not abstract. Water not diverted remains in the streams, supporting 'ōpae, 'o'ōpu, hihīwai, kalo cultivation, and other traditional and customary practices.

Nā Moku's members have described the importance of free-flowing water to maintaining those practices and passing traditional knowledge to future generations.

That generational perspective matters. As early as 1881, East Maui residents petitioned the government to stop commercial diversions. Generations later, their descendants are still fighting over the same water.

Nā Moku should not have to hand that fight to another generation. ■

Ashley Obrey is a senior staff attorney at the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation.

Co-Management Isn't New; The Law Just Caught Up

By Hannah Kihalani Springer and
Kara Dumaguin

For generations, communities across Hawai'i have cared for the places they know best. They have watched changes in the land and water, understood when to gather resources and when they needed rest, and passed 'ike from one generation to the next.

That kind of stewardship existed long before there was a legal structure for co-management. The practice is not new. What is changing is the law around it.

This year, Hawai'i took an important step toward formally recognizing that work. In July, Act 203 was signed into law, giving the Department of Land and Natural Resources clearer authority to enter into formal co-management agreements with qualified community groups. The law also allows for the disposition of public lands through those agreements, creating another way for communities and the state to work together.

But the significance of Act 203 goes beyond the agreements themselves. It creates an opportunity to reconsider the relationship between community, government, and place.

For a long time, community engagement has largely been understood through participation in government processes: attending public meetings, submitting testimony, responding to proposed rules, raising concerns, and advocating for places and issues that matter.

Those forms of participation remain important. Co-management, however, invites a broader conversation.

Instead of asking only, "How can community participate in the state's process?" another question becomes possible: What does it look like when community is not simply asked for input, but has real weight in how decisions about place are shaped?

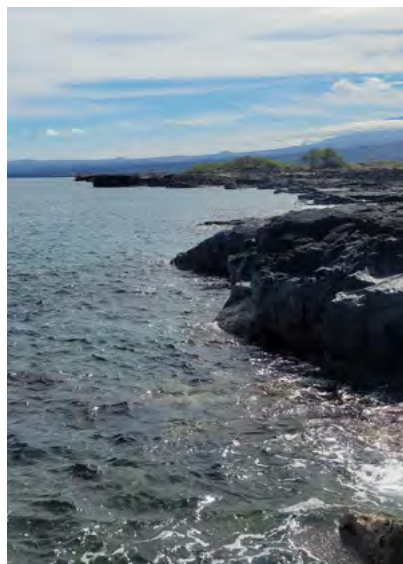
That can mean staying engaged over time, sharing 'ike, working through differences, and remaining connected to what happens after a decision is made.

That greater role carries kuleana. But greater weight for community does not mean a smaller role for the state. Government agencies hold legal authority and regulatory obligations that communities do not. They also bring public resources, technical expertise, enforcement mechanisms, and systems that support the work.

Community brings relationships, lived experience, and 'ike rooted in place. Sustained connection can reveal



l'a along the Ka'upulehu coastline, where 'ike, kilo, and mālama continue to inform fisheries management. - Photos: Nicky Tachibana



The coastline of Ka'upulehu, where Hui Kahuwai's work is rooted in pilina to 'āina and kai and a shared kuleana to mālama place.



'Opihi monitoring along the Ka'upulehu shoreline through a collaboration between Hui Kahuwai and the Four Seasons Resort Hualālai Natural Resources Department, strengthening 'ike and mālama of coastal resources.

patterns through observing change, caring for resources, and carrying knowledge across generations. Some patterns only become visible through years, sometimes generations, of paying attention.

Place-based 'ike does not replace the science, technical expertise, or regulatory knowledge government brings. It contributes to a fuller understanding of what is happening in a place and what that place may need.

Neither replaces the other. The state brings its kuleana. Community brings its own. Co-management creates space for those different contributions and ways of knowing to shape the work. It also raises a question for the state: What does it mean for government to truly show up in this relationship?

The question is not only whether community has a seat

at the table, but what is valued once everyone gets there. If place-based 'ike is invited into the conversation, is it treated as another piece of public input or as knowledge that can help shape how a problem is understood and what happens next?

Co-management will look different across communities and places. Differences will arise in how a problem is understood, what a place needs, or who has authority to make a particular decision.

This is where pilina matters. Trust cannot be legislated, and relationships cannot be written into existence simply by putting names on a document. What matters is having relationships strong enough to navigate differences without abandoning the work.

Act 203 does not invent community stewardship. What it can do is create another structure for community and the state to meet differently.

For community, that may mean engagement that is more sustained rather than simply being consulted or providing testimony. Having a voice matters, but so does having that voice carry weight in what follows.

For the state, questions remain about how early community is brought into the conversation, how place-based 'ike is treated once shared, and what resources and support are brought to the relationship.

Legislation alone cannot answer these questions. Practice, relationships, and time will.

At Ka'upulehu, Hui Kahuwai is already navigating many of these questions through its fisheries management and implementation work with the state. That experience offers an opportunity to look beyond what co-management can mean on paper to what it asks of community and government in practice. ■

Hannah Kihalani Springer is a kama'āina of Ka'upulehu who has held a variety of volunteer, elected, and appointed positions in Hawai'i nei. A child of active Hawaiian Civic Club members and a steadfast advocate of civic engagement, she and her family garden and raise livestock and native dryland forest plants at their 'āina aloha, Kukui'ohiwai, at Ka'upulehu ma uka.

Kara Dumaguin is program director for Hui Kahuwai and has been part of the hui's work at Ka'upulehu for many years. Her work is grounded in pilina, kuleana, and a commitment to mālama the relationships between people and place.

'Ulu Celebration Cultivates a More Resilient Food Future



Visitors gather beside an 'ulu tree in Tonga. - Photo: Courtesy of Breadfruit People

By Philamer Felicitas

The 2026 Breadfruit Celebration, proudly supported by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, was a week-long international gathering centered on 'ulu and its importance to culture, community, agriculture and food security. Through cultural gatherings, educational sessions, culinary experiences and farm excursions, participants explored the history of 'ulu while sharing knowledge and approaches from breadfruit-growing communities around the world.

Held September 19-25 in Kailua-Kona and South Kona, the celebration brought together cultural practitioners, farmers, researchers, educators, chefs, entrepreneurs and community members from Hawai'i, the Pacific, the Caribbean and other tropical regions.

Kona provided a meaningful setting for the gathering. The region was once home to a vast kalu'ulu, or breadfruit agroforestry system, that stretched across nearly 10 contiguous square miles. This carefully managed landscape had the capacity to produce approximately 35 million pounds of 'ulu annually, enough to meet the carbohydrate needs of an estimated 175,000 people.

The scale of the kalu'ulu reflects the knowledge and ingenuity of Native Hawaiian farmers who cultivated abundant food systems grounded in careful observation, adaptation and stewardship of 'āina.

Today, 'ulu continues to offer pathways toward greater food security, healthier communities and economic opportunity.

The long-lived tree can produce food for decades and thrive within diversified agroforestry systems that support healthy soil, conserve water, create habitat and strengthen resilience.

A week of learning and celebration

The celebration began September 19 with the 'Ulu Festival at the Amy B.H. Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden in South Kona.

The community festival featured cooking demonstra-

tions, production workshops, traditional crafts and activities for keiki. The ethnobotanical garden previously hosted breadfruit festivals in 2011 and 2012 that drew thousands of attendees and helped build momentum for Hawai'i's modern 'ulu industry.

On September 20 and 21, 'Aha 'Ulu provided a dedicated space for cultural practitioners to share knowledge, perspectives and concerns from an Indigenous point of view. By centering practitioners, the gathering recognized that the future of 'ulu cannot be separated from the people, practices and places that have sustained breadfruit across Oceania and other tropical regions.

The Global Breadfruit Summit was held September 22-24 at the Outrigger Kona Resort and Spa. This international conference explored breadfruit history and diversity, propagation, education, product development, agroforestry, nutrition, food security and climate resilience.

Participants shared research, cultural knowledge and community-led approaches to cultivating, conserving and using breadfruit in different environments around the world.

The summit also recognized elders whose foundational work helped advance the modern breadfruit movement. Keynote speakers included farmer and cultural practitioner Kaina Makua, James Beard Award-winning chef Robynne Mai'i, and entrepreneur and professional bodyboarder Dave Hubbard.

An Edible Showcase on September 23 brought farmers, chefs and food producers together to highlight traditional and innovative uses of 'ulu. The celebration concluded September 25 with excursions exploring traditional agriculture, Hawai'i's modern 'ulu industry, and tropical fruit production.

Growing abundance for future generations

'Ulu is more than a versatile staple crop. Across Oceania and other tropical regions, breadfruit carries generations of knowledge connected to cultivation, harvesting, preparation, preservation and community stewardship.

Expanding its cultivation and use can help island and tropical communities strengthen local food production while creating opportunities in farming, processing, education, culinary arts and value-added products. In Hawai'i, it can help reduce dependence on imported food while ensuring that traditional crops and the 'ike surrounding them remain present in the lives of future generations.

By gathering in the landscape that once sustained Kona's renowned kalu'ulu, participants honored what Native Hawaiian agriculture achieved in the past while exchanging knowledge that can help communities throughout the world cultivate abundance and resilience once again. ■

To learn more about the Breadfruit Celebration and the continuing work surrounding 'ulu visit: 2026celebration.breadfruitpeople.com.



Participants gather around a young 'ulu tree during a field visit hosted by Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative. - Photo: Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative



Farmer Tom shows 'ulu growing on a tree. - Photo: Hawai'i 'Ulu Cooperative



A woman sorts freshly harvested breadfruit into boxes. - Photo: Courtesy of Breadfruit People

The Wahine Behind "Chicago's Sacred Space of Aloha"

By Megan Ulu-Lani Boyanton

Generations of Kumu Hula Carole Lanialoha Lee's 'ohana have made their home in Chicago, Illinois, as have many other Kānaka Maoli families. By her count, it was in 1886 that the initial wave of Hawaiians migrated to the American Midwest.

Lee, 62, is the wahine behind the Aloha Center Chicago in Evanston, Illinois, which shares space with the Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum.

Established in 2015, the center – known as "Chicago's Sacred Space of Aloha" – serves as a cultural and community cornerstone. It offers arts and crafts, music, performing arts, dance, genealogy research and more.

Now, Lee is searching for a "forever home" for the center in Chicago.

As she says, "My agenda is aloha. My life's work is aloha. My name is aloha."

Lee's 'ohana is predominantly rooted in O'ahu and Kaua'i, with some ties to Hawai'i Island. Both her makuakāne, Calvin B. Lee Jr., and her makuahine, Joelladean Hinano Keliikoa-Lee, had Kānaka 'Ōiwi ancestry.

But the Chicago story really starts with her tūtū, Caroline Namahoe Ha'o. "She was my everything," Lee said.

Caroline learned 'ōlelo Hawai'i as her first language. Before her passing in 2003, "it was joyful for her when she got to come across some of the younger generation," Lee said. "She was actually able to communicate in the way she felt most comfortable."

Caroline performed in Hawai'i as a dancer. She also sang lead and duets. After meeting and marrying musician Francis Samuel Ka'a'a Jr., the couple relocated to Chicago to perform.

Her daughter, Joelladean, was punished for speaking English at home and Hawaiian at school. She joined the U.S. Air Force, serving at Chanhute Air Force Base in Rantoul, Illinois, which is now decommissioned. She received computer training and, at the end of her military career, Joelladean moved on to work for the U.S. Steel



Kumu Hula Carole Lanialoha Lee - Photo: 3arts.org

Corporation in Chicagoland. She had three keiki: Lee and her two brothers.

Lee recalls that her uncle and Navy man, Edward Nakapaahu Keliikoa, played a role in the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 alongside her mother: They carried the bags of recovered body parts that were taken to the infirmary for possible surgeries.

Some of Lee's earliest memories are tied to performances. With the Hawai'i Visitors Bureau, Hawaiian Airlines and Aloha Airlines (which ended operations in 2008) maintaining a presence in Chicago, Lee's 'ohana was contracted to perform at tourism events.

"That's the path for us," Lee said, "because our family was in it."

From the age of 3, her family often traveled every weekend for work. "It was no easy task. It was brutal," Lee commented.

She danced hula and performed 'oli, with four kumu hula, including her grandmother. It served as the foundation of Lee's burgeoning music career.

In her youth, she learned how to drum and play the

French horn. She was part of Drum Corps International for several years. Later, Lee played 'ukulele and sang lead vocals. By high school, she wrote cadences for the marching band at Buffalo Grove High School in Buffalo Grove, Illinois. Some of those pieces are still played today.

However, "the entire time I was being raised in Buffalo Grove, I never felt a part of it," Lee said. "I never felt welcomed. They weren't really prepared to receive the ethnic diversity."

After graduating in 1982, she attended VanderCook College of Music in Chicago to study music formally. At the same time, she booked shows of her own throughout the city.

Later, Lee transferred to the University of Southern Colorado, now known as the Colorado State University Pueblo. She performed as a timpanist for the Pueblo Symphony Orchestra while continuing her music education. Traveling the Rocky Mountain West, Lee recalls listening to skilled banjo players at the Flying W Ranch.

There, "life was so different," she said. But Lee felt the pull back to her community and her hometown.

"All I knew, was I was gonna go back to Chicago, just kind of ho'oponopono on everything," she said, "and really look closely at what I could do to help."

Lee realized she could use her educational training to develop a curriculum that aligns with Hawaiian culture. For decades, she taught both hula and 'ukulele at the Old Town School of Folk Music.

"I'm teaching our culture," she said.

Lee has two children: daughter Kaho'okele Napuahnano Sumberg and son Kū Kamaehao Sumberg. Years later, she would give birth to the Aloha Center, too.

It started in the basement of the Avondale Vintage Market but changed locations several times before landing at its current spot, the Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum, which centers Indigenous history.

"We're really digging it," Lee said. "I'm really enjoying this path of finally being able to work with other natives." ■

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The O'ahu Cemetery Project Preserved on Papakilo

By Cynthia Engle, Executive Director of the Hawaiian Historical Society

"I felt it was important to identify and document these sites before they are lost forever." - Nanette Napoleon

In 1986, Nanette Napoleon surveyed gravesites across 46 O'ahu cemeteries, documenting the information recorded on tombstones and grave markers. These cemeteries were selected because they had no publicly accessible burial records at the time.

Napoleon's dedicated research was ultimately published by the Hawaiian Historical Society – a nonprofit library and archive established in 1892.



Researcher and writer
Nanette Napoleon.
- Photo: Philip Deters

In her publication, Napoleon explores how cemeteries are "outdoor museums" holding historical and cultural value. Cemeteries, in a sense, are like libraries and archives, and the headstones are like rare books that hold the stories of the individuals buried there.

These stories help others build their knowledge and strengthen their connection to the 'āina and their ancestors. Repositories like the Hawaiian Historical Society preserve the past to support our lāhui in building historical narratives in the present. Our mission is to preserve, perpetuate, and encourage the study of the history of Hawai'i; e mālama, ho'omau, a paipai i ke a'o 'ana i ka mo'olelo o Hawai'i nei.

Preservation of this intrinsic value is crucial. However, accessibility to the information is just as important. Regarding the information included in Napoleon's cemetery survey, access was limited to the repositories that held physical copies. Unless an individual visited archives like the Hawaiian Historical Society, or the actual cemetery, the threat of these sites being "lost forever" lingered.

In 2023, the Hawaiian Historical Society partnered with the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) Papakilo Database to digitize and transcribe into a searchable format



Hawaiian Historical Society intern Daytona Aweau holding Nanette Napoleon's O'ahu Cemetery Publication - Photo: Cynthia Engle

Napoleon's publication, expanding access to this information globally.

The Papakilo Database is a comprehensive digital repository that centralizes over a million historical records, land documents, and Hawaiian-language newspapers from multiple archives. It serves as a vital cultural resource that empowers researchers and the public to access, preserve, and explore Native Hawaiian genealogy and history from anywhere in the world.

OHA's Papakilo Database empowers community archives to increase capacity through the digitization of historical material ensuring preservation while increasing accessibility to these collections.

The digitization of the O'ahu Cemetery Project was a three-year endeavor that took a dozen Hawaiian Historical Society staff, volunteers, and interns to complete. The work included scanning each page as well as transcribing

each individual name. Papakilo then had to ensure the quality of each digital product and develop an infrastructure that is easily navigated by the general public.

To say the least, the work was tedious yet rewarding. For one intern, Daytona Aweau, this project unearthed genealogical ties. "Discovering family members from Kāne'ohe made me realize the importance of this project. The work I'm doing has the potential to help others find their family history too."

For me, personally, the O'ahu Cemetery Project data revealed details about my own family's burials that I did not know before the project. I was astonished to discover my family had a burial plot at O'ahu Cemetery. This revelation meant that my family had a suitable place to bury my grandparents' urns. To the relief of my family here and on the continent, I could bring my Puna back home and lay her to rest. This moment was unreal for me.

Now that this information is widely available, there will, hopefully, be more of these surreal moments for others. It might even inspire a future Nanette Napoleon to continue her research.

Although the O'ahu Cemetery Project collection comprises nearly 9,000 records of individual gravesites along with accompanying information inscribed on the grave markers, the data has grown since 1986. The beauty of research is that it is never done. There is always more to learn. The role of libraries and archives is to preserve what is documented, hopefully, in perpetuity.

October is Archives Month, a time to raise awareness about how primary sources tell our shared stories and support transparency. It is fitting, then, that we can celebrate Nanette Napoleon's work and to make it widely available. Through shared work such as this, we collectively ensure that our past is neither lost nor forgotten. ■

The O'ahu Cemetery Project is now available on the Papakilo Database. Visit papakilodatabase.com for access. This project is one part of a larger digitization partnership between the Hawaiian Historical Society and OHA's Papakilo Database. Stay connected by visiting hawaiianhistory.org to schedule a reference appointment, become a member, or donate to help continue our mission of preserving Hawai'i's history.

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Hawaiians Gotta Get Political!

By Kelli Meskin Soileau

Kamaha'o Halemanu has been interested in civic engagement since high school. During his senior year at Kamehameha Schools Kea'au he spearheaded Hawai'i Island's participation in "Our Kaiāulu Votes," a youth voting initiative during the 2024 election cycle.

This election cycle, Halemanu is a second-year student at Amherst College in Massachusetts but he still wanted to do something that would boost voter turnout in Hawai'i for the 2026 election.

So he and his Kamehameha classmate, Cajohn Hano Mar, who is currently enrolled at Oregon State University, decided to collaborate on an educational website promoting civic engagement as being something very Hawaiian.

"We decided to create an ArcGIS StoryMap that talks about the history of Kānaka Maoli voting, as well as its connection to Ke Aupuni o Hawai'i, the Hawaiian Kingdom," Halemanu said.

The website, Kuleana 'Ōiwi, is an abridged timeline of more than 100 years of political power in Hawai'i starting with Kamehameha's unification of Hawai'i Island in 1781 up to the U.S. annexation of Hawai'i in 1898.

The non-partisan, interactive website is designed to remind the lāhui that the Hawaiian people have a long tradition of civic engagement, collective responsibility, and self-governance and to encourage participation in the political process today – specifically voting in the 2026 elections.

Kaulana Nā Pua, the iconic patriotic song about Hawaiian resistance against the 1893 overthrow of the monarchy, is featured on the website's landing page and other songs about Hawaiian national pride are featured all throughout the site.

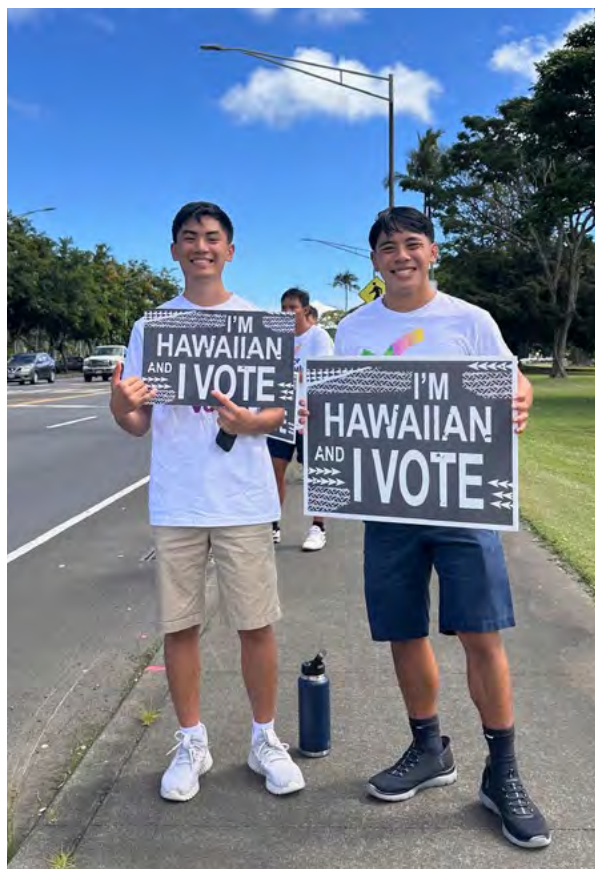
"It's a reminder that no matter where we stand politically, Hawai'i's history is always rooted in the Kingdom of Hawai'i," Halemanu explained.

The project is supported by a grant from the Center for Native American Youth (CNAY). Mar and Halemanu traveled to O'ahu for research and to visit historical sites like Bishop Museum, Mauna 'Ala and 'Iolani Palace.

The site has been shared by CNAY, Kanaeokana, 'Awili Hawai'i (a youth-powered nonprofit in Hilo), and on other sites and social media platforms.

Kuleana 'Ōiwi began as an informational resource for the community – a way for Halemanu and Mar to kāko'o the community despite being away at college. But after noting the low voter turnout in last August's Primary Election, Halemanu renewed his involvement in Our Kaiāulu Votes (OKV) as the initiative's "civics attaché."

In this capacity, Halemanu serves as a role model and resource for the 17 youth on OKV's 'Ōpio Steering Committee who are working on strategies to improve voter turnout for the upcoming General Election in November.



Cajohn Hano Mar and Kamehameha Halemanu sign wave during the 2024 election season. - Courtesy Photo

Hawai'i's Primary Election voter turn out hit an all time low this year. The total number of registered voters across the state is 850,000 but only about one-third of them voted.

"That means a third of the people who live in Hawai'i are controlling who will be in these places of power," he said. "A third of the people are controlling the protection of our wai and our 'āina."

Many of the legislative and county races were determined before the Primary Election. There were 24 incumbent candidates (5 Senate, 13 House and 6 county seats) with no competition at all. Voters didn't even have a choice for those seats.

Additionally, the Primary Election confirmed 10 candidates as winning their seats because the challengers were all in the same political party. So, the races for the candidates who won in the Primary are done. Voters will not have a chance to vote on those seats in the General Election.

Many people don't pay a lot of attention to Primary Elections because the General is where final decisions are made. But Primary results determine who even makes it to the General.

The harsh reality of not voting is that ongoing issues plaguing our community such as water rights, afford-

able housing, the lack of economic diversification, sustainability and outmigration of young Native Hawaiians and other kama'āina (brain drain) continue unchanged despite years of "discussions."

'Aina protection, housing policies, water rights, livable wages, development, and natural resource management are all political issues. Caring and paying attention to the decisions being made for and about our community – and who benefits (or is harmed) by them – is critical because the laws that politicians make affect us all, whether or not you vote.

Halemanu argued that without taking action today, the percentage of Hawaiians living in Hawai'i will continue to decline.

"We, the people of Hawai'i, have a civic duty to think about how can we best protect our land, resources and our people," he said passionately. "And voting is one of the best things that we can do to elect people who care about Hawai'i into positions of power."

Back in high school, Halemanu had one teacher he thought would be opposed to voting but found out otherwise when he was coordinating youth voting rallies.

"He was very kū'ē and his pedagogy was based in international law and politics," he said. "He brought me up in front of the whole class and said 'Come on, let's do it. We gotta vote! You guys gotta get political!'"

Halemanu shared that his perspectives on current issues, his political advocacy in college, his support for Kamehameha Schools regarding the recent lawsuit, and his work to coordinate community civic engagement all connects back to what he learned from this particular teacher.

"That foundation that he gave me in Hawaiian Kingdom law and history, really informs my decisions."

Knowing this history has also helped him to understand his kuleana to his community as a Hawaiian.

"Hawai'i had one of the highest literacy rates in the world," he said. "Hawaiians debated through the newspapers, and when Kalākaua won the election against Queen Emma in 1874, there was a riot! That's how much they were into the politics of it," Halemanu said.

The website is not just for Hawai'i but for audiences worldwide. He wants people globally to understand Hawai'i's history of sovereign governance, international diplomacy, and law – and to see the real struggles of Native Hawaiians today instead of just the tourist-friendly images of Hawai'i and Hawaiians that most people see.

Voting and being maka'ala (alert) to the decisions being made about our community – and holding those in power accountable by speaking out about what is right – is one way to effect change.

Halemanu added, "Going back to what Haunani Kay Trask said at 'Iolani Palace [in 1993] – besides saying 'we are not American,' she also said 'Hawaiians need to learn to be political.'"

Visit Kuleana 'Ōiwi at: bit.ly/kuleanaoiwi

Visualizing Futures: Part 1

The Ground is Shifting

By Richard Kaipo Lum, Ph.D.

The world is changing in profound ways. Scientists are creating synthetic DNA. Engineers are launching us back to the moon. And we have created AI programs that write and code far faster and better than the average person.

All this and more is reshaping human civilization in ways that are breaking important assumptions we have held about the world for generations.

This is a moment in human history when more people than ever before have the tools and inspiration to change the world; to pursue their own visions for how things could be different in the future.

Even a quick doom scroll through your social media feed will confirm that lots of people out there, for both good and bad reasons, are actively pursuing change and reshaping the trajectory of human history.

... Vision is Lacking ...

Amidst all this turbulent change sits Hawai'i, a place – for better or worse – that has traditionally been more focused on its past than its future.

And at a time when it is more critical than ever for communities to think critically about the expanding range of possibilities the future represents, Hawai'i's people share no truly compelling vision for that future. Not even a common language to talk about what those possibilities might look like.

And the unfortunate truth is that, today, with so many others busily pursuing change in the world, if we are not pursuing our own vision, then we will end up living in someone else's future. Again.

Real vision in this sense is not simply an artful description of values or hopes (though those are central), it is a description of the future you want; one that acknowledges the changing world around you and is informed by the true range of what is possible tomorrow.

And that requires frank conversations about the present and a broad understanding about how the future could unfold.

In short, vision requires foresight.

Rewriting History to Rethink ... the Future ...

Thinking about the future comes naturally to us. We do it every day, all day long.

Thinking critically about the future, however, is hard. It is especially hard in times of great volatility and growing uncertainty. Times like today. There is simply so much change going on, in so many places around the world, it can be overwhelming.

One way to ease into thinking critically about the future is to start by thinking critically about the past. This is easier because, while the future does not yet exist,

everyone knows at least a little history.

However, in thinking critically, we should do more than read history – we should rewrite it. Historians call the exercise a “counterfactual,” futurists, like me, call them “alternate histories.”

So, before we talk about a vision for Hawai'i, let us consider what things might look like today had the future unfolded a little differently.



In 1881, King Kalākaua embarked on a 281-day world tour, in part to import a foreign labor force. He visited some 17 nations, traveling throughout Asia, India, Egypt, Europe and the U.S. This photo was taken in Japan. Pictured seated (l-r): Prince Komatsu Akihito, King Kalākaua, and Count Sano Tsunetami. Standing (l-r): Charles Judd, Tokuno Ryosuke, and William Armstrong. - Photo: Wikipedia

... A History Without the Overthrow ...

Without the overthrow, modern Hawai'i would be a parliamentary constitutional monarchy, with a prime minister and an elected parliament.

It would have a decades-long history as a diplomatic and cultural hub in the middle of the Pacific, it would have deeper and lasting economic and political ties to countries like the United Kingdom and Japan, and it would boast a modestly sized and modestly diversified economy with some notable achievements related to things like education, agritech, and astronomy. And it would, of course, feature a very different socio-economic landscape.

Why these things and not others? Because Hawai'i would be a longtime security-based treaty ally with the United States, whose security concerns and economic importance to the kingdom would have played an ongoing role in Hawai'i's affairs after the failed coup of 1893.

With America a rising power in the late 19th century, and with Hawai'i's economy built around American markets, Hawai'i would have not have able to simply walk away or turn to a competing world power for a credible security guarantee in the middle of the Pacific.

Pragmatism would have balanced idealism.

The monarchy – and increasingly, the parliament and government – would have prioritized diversifying the economy and its export markets as much as possible, along with building strong relationships with other countries. And America's involvement in overseas conflicts, from the Spanish-American War to WWI to

WWII, would have only increased Hawai'i's geostrategic value, meaning the U.S. would never want to leave - but also providing the slowly growing leverage to negotiate for more in return for an American military presence.

As an intentional diplomatic and economic hub between East, West, and the Pacific, Hawai'i would cultivate its relationships and cultural competencies as an enduring soft power.

A convener and hub, both sovereign and covered by America's security umbrella, it would be able to criticize American policy even as it was forced to abandon strict neutrality repeatedly across the 20th Century.

And with its diverse population and independent political stance, Hawai'i would find itself perpetually caught between conflicting world powers: Japan and the U.S.; Russia and the U.S.; and most recently, China and the U.S.

And ... Hawai'i's business class would not only look different, it would have over a century of kingdom-based trade and relationships across the Pacific and the world. Its educational system would be structured differently, with quite contrasting outcomes and connected to respected international programs.

Its political parties would, of course, be different and its politics unique – though its debates over land use, economic policy, taxes, power, and foreign policy would at least be recognizable to us. And perhaps most importantly, many of the most divisive and painful societal issues that have defined local society for so long would simply be absent.

But unfortunately, social media and smart phones would create the same divisive, isolated, and polarizing issues that it did for everyone else.

Thinking Critically, and Expansively, ... About Tomorrow ...

So, what does an alternate history like this tell us? What lessons and reminders should we keep as we think about our own futures?

1. It reminds us that a lot of very specific things had to happen over the past 133 years for Hawai'i to turn out exactly as we know it today; all along the way there were myriad different paths that events could have followed and many possible futures for Hawai'i. We just happened to live through one of them.
2. Small changes at pivotal moments in history can dramatically change the course of the future. We knew that already, and it bears repeating, especially because with today's tools and connectivity, that virtually everyone has a real possibility to create strategic effects in the world. Including you and I.
3. Since the modern age, global events and world transitions have always strongly reshaped Hawai'i's path. Failing to consider how the world beyond Hawai'i may

Native Species Rediscovered on Lānaʻi

By Kelsey Kukaua Medeiros

Pūlama Lānaʻi, which manages conservation initiatives, among other kuleana on the island, reported several rare native species sightings during Native Hawaiian Plant Month last April.

“It continues to remind us that it’s caring for the land as it cares for us, which is one of our company values” said Rachel Sprague, director of conservation at Pūlama Lānaʻi.

“Even though Lānaʻi is small with just a tiny fraction of its native habitat remaining, these native species are a reminder of the biocultural history of Hawaiʻi that is really what makes Hawaiʻi special. And so, finding and protecting Lānaʻi’s native species is sort of a way to honor its history and future.”

Sprague, who holds a Ph.D. in wildlife biology, and husband Jonathan Sprague, have led Pūlama Lānaʻi’s conservation programs since 2016.

Last October, the conservation team joined forces with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department of Land and Natural Resources’ Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Maui Nui Plant Extinction Prevention Program (Maui Nui PEPP), and the community, to uncover a Blackburn’s Sphinx Moth, a federally endangered native insect once believed to be extinct in Hawaiʻi, along with native plants not seen on island since the 1930s.

She noted that a Lānaʻi resident discovered the species as a caterpillar on a sidewalk in town.

“[John and I] and the biologists we work with [tend to] know what we’re looking for and know what a lot of these species look like, so to still be surprised in a really good way is ... gratifying. We’ve been looking for it for 10 years,” Sprague said.

“The Blackburn’s Sphinx’s spots look like a number of other species that have been introduced to Hawaiʻi from either the Mainland or South America. ... *Manduca quinquemaculata*, (or the five-spotted hawkmoth) is the relative that looks the most [like] The Blackburn’s Sphinx.”

The State Entomologist and a University of Hawaiʻi professor confirmed the conservationists’ hypotheses, marking the second documented record of that species of moth on Lānaʻi since 2009.

According to Sprague, what was unique about this finding was the coordination between the community, Pūlama Lānaʻi’s conservation team and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They supported its development into an adult moth released it on the island into a “more suitable habitat.”

Regarding the recent native plant rediscoveries – *Embelia pacifica*, *Peperomia tetraphylla*, *Schiedea menziesii* and *Cyperus phleiodes* – that have not been seen on the island since the 1930s, she adds: “The difference with that



Pūlama Lānaʻi conservationists responded to an inquiry from a resident who found a rare native species called the Blackburn’s Sphinx moth on a sidewalk in Lānaʻi City. - Photo: Pūlama Lānaʻi.

trip was that they [Maui Nui PEPP] surveyed Maunalei Valley and some of the surrounding canyons and that was the first time I can recall the plant experts doing so with a drone. I think that contributed to why there were multiple species that were found ... because no one had looked there.”

She noted that the rare plant program operates under permits from the state. Once a rare species is found, the team coordinates with the state on long-term monitoring to track its fruit or seeds and set up plans to propagate and protect it from animals, plants or other threats.

Sprague is currently overseeing a project to build a predator exclusion fence for Hawaiian petrels, or ‘ua’u, seabirds endemic to Hawaiʻi, as well as creating a conservation area for the Orangeblack Hawaiian Damselfly.

“For me, it’s always exciting when we think about how much conservation work has been done here and across the state,” she said.

Maui Nui PEPP Coordinator Zach Pezzillo described finding multiple rare native species at one time as “an anomaly.” The unit is focused on protecting Hawaiian plant species with fewer than 50 individuals remaining in the wild across Maui, Molokaʻi, Lānaʻi and Kahoʻolawe.

For the last five years, Pezzillo has served as a “plant detective,” he said with a laugh. “Our job is to look for rare species. I spend a lot of time looking at maps and place names, adding to collections of western botanists working in the Islands since the 1800s.”

In addition to his team, he credits a drone for getting them access to the harder to reach spots on the cliff face beside a waterfall. “It’s a game changer. Drones have opened up so many doors for us.”

Maui-born Pezzillo recalled his first field visit to Lānaʻi.

“I had a very faint image of what the place was like, and it was so cool to come here and connect all of those glimpses. Despite the challenges the island is facing with the sheer abundance of weeds in the forest and the sheep and the deer, [it’s great] to see that these tiny pockets of forest are being protected.”

He said what stood out to him most while on Lānaʻi most recently was a vibrant green fern, or ‘iwa’iwa. “It responds to the rain, grows in dry habitats overtaken by species, [and] is bright green. They are so resilient.”

Looking to make a difference in your own backyard?

Pezzillo says to consider volunteering with organizations that are already doing the work. “That community is incredible. You’ll meet like-minded people who want to be outdoors.”

That, and to find your local native plant nursery – each island has one – and plant in a pot or directly in your or a family member’s yard.

“Just getting out and continuing to make that connection with the species that make Hawaiʻi what it is. Starting somewhere is the best people can do.” ■

Kelsey Kukaua Medeiros covers community news as senior editor of “Aloha State Daily.” A Native Hawaiian with roots in Maui, she moved to Oʻahu from Los Angeles in 2019.

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Pūlama Lānaʻi is funded by Larry Ellison. It functions as the land, resource and asset management company for his landholdings on Lānaʻi.

VISUALIZING FUTURES: PART 1

Continued from page 16

change over the next decade or two – and how that will impact Hawaiʻi – creates a major blind spot in our thinking.

4. Economics is pivotal and history shows us that economics and politics are inseparable (most especially in Hawaiʻi). Serious discussions of Hawaiʻi’s future cannot ignore the practical realities of either.
5. A description of history is considered “rich” when it traces out how all these things – politics, economics, social issues, technological change, and environmental change – interact to create the twisting, turning, and unforeseen opportunities and challenges that people encountered in the past. These are the interesting and insightful stories to read. It is only logical that our discussions about the future should be just as rich.

So, as we try to think about Hawaiʻi’s future during this particularly turbulent, rule-resetting moment, we can perhaps boil these lessons down to a couple of key ideas to help us.

First, there are many possible futures for Hawaiʻi – not one. Next, try to create a “rich” picture of how the world is changing. Finally, in thinking critically about the future, understand that you are not trying to capture everything out there – that is simply not possible.

Rather, like our alternative history above, you are simply trying to weave together more threads in more interesting patterns to understand more of what is may be possible as the world changes around us. ■

Dr. Richard Kaipo Lum is an author, an academically trained futurist, and CEO of Vision Foresight Strategy LLC, a foresight and strategic analysis firm headquartered in Honolulu.



KA MO'OLELO O KAULULĀ'AU AND OTHER GHOST STORIES FROM LĀNA'I

BY LŌPAKA AND TANYA KAPANUI

There are many versions of the legend of Kaululā'au, the trickster and troublemaker whose father sent him to live on the ghost-inhabited island of Lāna'i. A personal favorite is "The Sacred Spear-Point," a short story by King David Kalākaua, which appears in his collection of mo'olelo, *The Legends and Myths of Hawaii*.

The king's beautiful, ornate language was intimidating, and at my young age, I needed a dictionary to understand words I had never seen before. But I was enthralled, and a second read-through let me fully enjoy the king's writings. The story of Kaululā'au captured my imagination.

Here was a boy who loved playing tricks on people, but a day came when Kaululā'au went too far.

I'm sure we all know a prankster from our youth, or perhaps we were the kolohe ones. This writer's parents and brothers might have pointed a finger at him given the question, but I'm sure my shenanigans were not nearly as traumatizing as those of the son of Kaka'alaneo.

In any case, Kaululā'au was the antihero my youthful, kolohe heart needed.

Other versions of the story that I discovered later also shaped my impression of Kaululā'au. Accounts retold by W. N. Pualewa, Emma Ka'ilipuolono Nakuina, Abraham Forlander, Martha Beckwith, and Mary Kawena Pukui offered new details, different language, and sometimes an alternate perspective.

Comparing the tales shared by these storytellers has given me a deeper appreciation for our Hawaiian mo'olelo. Every version changes things a bit, but the overall arc of the story is the same. What follows is my own respectful retelling, drawn from these sources and from the tradition that has kept the legend of Kaululā'au alive.

Born into royalty on Maui in the 15th century, Kaululā'au was smart, handsome, blessed with supernatural strength, but extremely kolohe. His endless pranks and shenanigans vexed the ali'i and maka'āinana alike. After committing an especially unforgivable offense he was banished to the island of Lāna'i - a land infested with evil spirits and man-eating ghosts. - Original artwork by Alikā Spahn Naihe



THE LEGEND OF KAULULĀ'AU

In the early 15th century, Hawai'i was not yet a unified kingdom, and each island had its own rulers. On Maui, the brothers Kaka'e and Kaka'alaneo ruled over the island together from Lele, the ancient name of Lahaina.

As the eldest son, Kaka'e was the legitimate heir, but it is said that an accident in his youth impaired his mental faculties, so Kaka'alaneo acted as a joint ruler and virtual king in his brother's stead.

Kaka'alaneo was the father of Kaululā'au. He is remembered as a well-respected ruler concerned with the prosperity of his people. Tradition credits him with planting the 'ulu groves that would become one of the defining features of the land as expressed in the name, "Ka Malu 'Ulu o Lele" (the shaded breadfruit grove of Lele).

'Ulu was highly regarded and considered extremely valuable. To plant one 'ulu tree was a meritorious act, and to plant a grove was an act worthy of the gods. Conversely, destroying one tree merited death, and destroying many was a declaration of war.

Kanikaniaula was a woman of exceptionally high ali'i status, descended from the line of Kamauaua of Moloka'i. Despite her status, she lived quietly with a husband of lesser rank, concealing her lineage.

After her death, her spirit encountered 'Ele'io, the kahu of Kaka'alaneo and legendary kukini (an elite foot runner and messenger) who restored her to life. Among her possessions was an ahu'ula, a magnificent feather cloak that was unlike anything 'Ele'io had ever seen. This was the first of its kind in Hawai'i.

When 'Ele'io presented Kanikaniaula and her ahu'ula to Kaka'alaneo, he was so impressed with her beauty and grace that he made her his queen. She became the mother of Kaululā'au in a story that is remarkable even before her famous son enters it.

Kaka'e had a son named Kahekili. Today, he is often referred to as Kahekili I, as this was three hundred years before the time of Kahekinui'ahumanu, also known as Kahekili II, who ruled over Maui and O'ahu during the time of Kamehameha.

Though the cousins Kahekili and Kaululā'au were about the same age, they could not have been more different. They grew up together, learned from the same teachers, and were taught the same mo'okū'auhau, but their personalities were quite opposite from each other.

As ali'i pi'o, the high-ranking chief and the rightful heir to his father's rule, Kahekili was well aware of his status. A kaula (prophet) foretold that a descendant bearing his name would be Maui's last independent king. This sobering thought left Kahekili to often worry about the future. He was known for his intelligence and kind-heartedness, and he earned the respect of his people.

Unlike his sacred cousin, Kaululā'au did not have the strict responsibilities of royal succession.

While Kahekili was wrapped in protocol and ceremony, Kaululā'au focused on enjoying himself with shenanigans, music, and 'awa. He was smart, handsome, and blessed with supernatural strength, but was also very kolohe. He was a recklessly wild trickster who would keep the village in an uproar for weeks at a time with feasting and hula.

Kaululā'au played pranks on members of the ali'i class, making him popular with the maka'āinana, the commoners. His list of hijinks included setting wa'a (canoes) adrift, opening the gates of loko i'a (fishponds), and painting pua'a (pigs) black to trick kahunas in their sacrificial ceremonies.

In those days, hearing the call of the 'alae 'ula, or Hawaiian moorhen, at night was considered a bad omen. This is the famous bird that held the secret of fire until Māui forced him to reveal it.

Because of its ties to the spirit world and the gods, the 'alae 'ula was viewed with great spiritual reverence and caution. Hearing its sudden cry at night was interpreted



In one version of the story, Pahulu, the god of nightmares, is killed by Kaululā'au. Another claims he escaped by entering a fish called weke pahulu. It is said that eating the brains of this fish produces terrifying nightmares. - Original artwork by Alike Spahn Naihe

as a warning of impending misfortune, sickness, or death in the household.

Kaululā'au created an instrument that could imitate the call of the 'alae 'ula, and played it outside people's homes, causing fear and distress. He also had a talent for making others believe that they were being prayed to death.

Kalākaua says that Kaululā'au committed an unforgivable offense of disrespecting Kaka'e, his father's sacred brother, causing his exile to Lāna'i. However, Pualewa explains it differently.

Kaululā'au enjoyed playing a game called ke'a pua, in which he would throw arrows or darts made from the

dried flower stalks or tassels of kō (sugar cane). When one landed in an 'ulu tree, he would shake the tree until the dart fell. But if the dart remained stuck, Kaululā'au would simply pull the tree up by its roots and toss it aside, leaving it to die.

At first, no one thought much about what he was doing, until they realized he kept doing it. Shoot the dart; the dart gets stuck; shake the 'ulu tree; it doesn't work; pull up the whole tree. In his careless, kolohe way Kaululā'au continued uprooting the trees until an entire 'ulu grove lay barren.

The people of Lele were incensed, but the kaula, Kūkamolimoliaola, warned against beating or killing Kaululā'au because the land would be blessed by his deeds. So, as punishment in lieu of death, Kaka'alaneo said it would be better to send his son to live on Lāna'i since he is kolohe, just like the spirits on that island. If the spirits kill Kaululā'au, then so be it. But if he destroys all the spirits, then his kolohe nature will have proven useful.

At that time, Lāna'i was infested with 'uhane 'ino and akua 'ai kanaka, evil spirits and man-eating ghosts, including the huge mo'o, Mo'oleo. They killed animals, destroyed crops, uprooted coconut trees, wrecked the walls of fishponds, and made life quite unbearable for the human inhabitants of the island.

Although kahunas tried to quiet these spirits, their efforts were in vain. If the kahunas rid one place of destructive spirits, those kolohe beings would just wreak havoc in another.

Knowing what lay ahead of him, the kaula and kahunas instructed Kaululā'au in many charms, spells, prayers, and incantations to help him resist the spirits and monsters. The kahuna nui, Waolani, gave the young ali'i an ivory spearpoint that had been dipped in the waters of Pō, the realm of darkness and mystery.

The spearpoint was imbued with powers greater than any akua he might encounter. If he drew a line with the point, nothing will be able to pass the mark. If he set it upon a spear and threw it, it would reach its target no matter how far away.

Proving this point, Kaululā'au mounted the ivory atop a long spear and attacked the akua on Lāna'i shortly after he arrived. He spent his days hunting down and defeating the spirits that terrorized the island's people, traveling across Lāna'i confronting one being after another.

Among the many akua Kaululā'au encountered, Mo'oleo proved to be one of his most formidable opponents. Beating this creature required more than simple strength, for the great mo'o avoided Kaululā'au and remained beyond the influence of the magical spearpoint.

Realizing the mo'o traveled underground, Kaululā'au used the tip of his spear to draw a circle on the ground, just above the space where the mo'o was burrowing. No matter how deep Mo'oleo dug, it could not pass the boundary of the circle above him; it could only go deeper. But deeper did not mean escape, for soon the mo'o encountered a lake of fire and was forced to return to the surface. After the

KAULULĀ'AU ON LĀNA'I

Continued from page 19

mo'o promised to leave Lāna'i forever, Kaululā'au erased the line in the dirt and allowed Mo'oa'leo to escape to the sea, never to return to the island.

Kaululā'au did not defeat every enemy through force. His quick thinking and kolohe nature became his greatest weapons on Lāna'i. In one instance, when the akua asked him where he would sleep, he gave them a false answer and said he would sleep in the thorny puakala patch. When they rushed in to capture him, they were caught on the sharp branches where Kaululā'au was able to kill them.

In one of his cleverer schemes, Kaululā'au gathered several akua at Lāna'ihale and waited until they had settled down to sleep. Moving quietly among them, he used kepau, a sticky substance made of 'ulu sap, to seal their eyes shut. With their sight taken from them, they could neither see his next move nor escape. Kaululā'au then set the hale ablaze, destroying the akua inside and freeing another part of Lāna'i from their terror.

At Kaunolū, he confronted another gathering of akua. Although he destroyed these monsters, he spared Kānemakua, the spirit who cared for the fish and was destined to become the akua of the fishermen.

Later, he encountered an akua named Kuahulua, described as having a large, protruding belly. Kaululā'au killed him before continuing toward Mānele.

Eventually, only Pahulu, the god of nightmares and ruler over the 'uhane 'ino and akua 'ai kanaka of Lāna'i, remained. Wise to his trickery, Pahulu was not an easy target for Kaululā'au.

However, on one moonlit night, Kaululā'au hid in a tree that hung over a spring. As he sat there, waiting for Pahulu to come for a drink, he held a large stone in his arms. Finally, when the akua bent over the water, Kaululā'au moved the leaves aside and made his reflection appear in the pool below. The image made Pahulu think Kaululā'au was in the spring, and he dove into the water to seize him. Kaululā'au dropped from the tree and struck him with the stone.

In one version of this story, Pahulu is killed instantly. But in another, after Kaululā'au hit Pahulu with the stone, his spirit leaped into the sea and entered a weke pahulu (*Upeneus taeniopterus*). It is said that eating the brains of this fish causes one to be possessed by Pahulu's spirit, producing terrifying nightmares.

It took more than a year to rid the island of the malicious spirits. Kaululā'au was so successful in making life easier for the people who lived there that they gave thanks with offerings of the best goods from both land and sea. When Kaka'alaneo heard about his son's triumph, he sent word to Kaululā'au, offering forgiveness and telling him to come home.

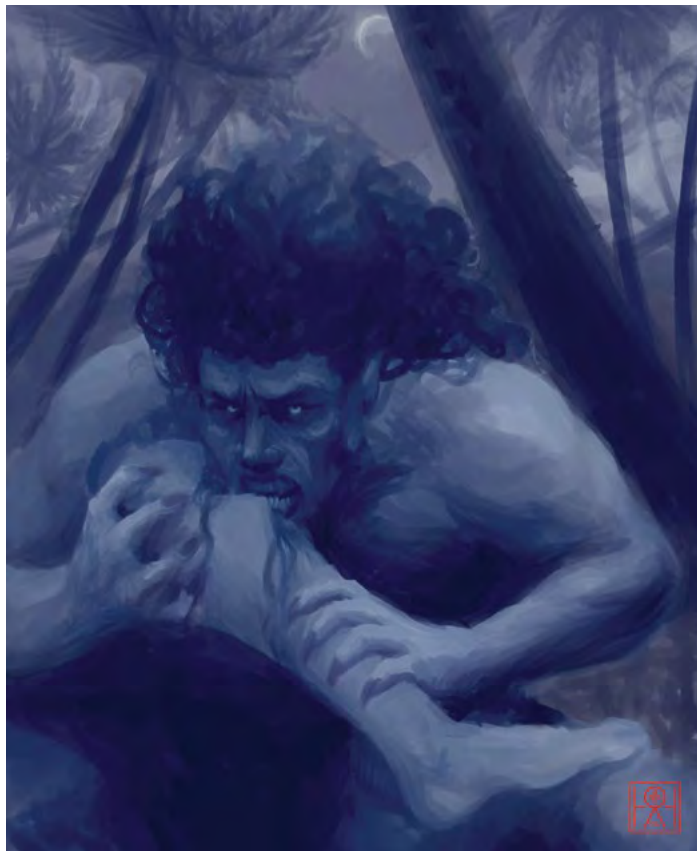
But Kaululā'au found life on Lāna'i to be enjoyable. He had comfort and companionship and could think of nothing on Maui that he could not get on Lāna'i. He thanked his father and announced that he would return

to Maui sometime in the future, after visiting the other islands.

THE LAND REMEMBERS

The legend of Kaululā'au doesn't end with the ghosts he defeated. In a way, the landscape of Lāna'i preserves the names of the places and beings associated with his exploits.

Lāna'ihale, or House of Lāna'i, is the island's highest peak where Kaululā'au outwitted a group of akua and then defeated them by setting the hale on fire while they were trapped inside.



According to mo'olelo, the island of Lāna'i was once infested with evil spirits, a giant mo'o, and man-eating ghosts. - Original artwork by Alikā Spahn Naihe

Kaunolū and Kuahulua still carry the names of places and supernatural beings encountered along his journey.

Even Pahulu, the formidable king of ghosts, lives on in the name Pahulu Well, which is recorded in traditional place-name records of Lāna'i.

This is how the story of a kolohe boy who was sent to a haunted island became inseparable from the island itself.

Lāna'i was no longer just the place where Kaululā'au was banished; it became "Lāna'i a Kaululā'au," the island forever associated with the young ali'i who rid the place of its ghosts.

A LAND OF NEW GHOSTS

Now, remember that the story of Kaululā'au took place in the 15th century, and while the youthful Kaululā'au worked hard to rid the island of the ancient akua 'ai

kanaka, there has been plenty of time for new ghosts to appear. Every place has its ghost stories, and Lāna'i is no exception.

In the center of the island lies Lāna'i City. Our friend James described the small town he grew up in as having little for teenagers to do. Before cell phones, they would hang out at night, looking for excitement, an activity that almost always seemed to evolve into ghost hunting. The kids never had to search for long, as someone always had a thrilling story.

Children on Lāna'i still share stories about a little girl whose spirit is stuck at the Social Hall. Hunters tell stories about being followed by a ghostly woman in white, seemingly in the middle of nowhere. We've even heard tales of the huaka'i pō, who still march along their ancient paths.

James explains that a night marcher's trail comes down from the mountain in the east toward the Social Hall. The Hawaiian Pineapple Company originally built the large bungalow-style home as the plantation manager's residence. The old house became a community center in the mid-1930s and was simply called the "Social Hall." Those who lived near the Social Hall often heard the pahu (drums) of the phantom army.

From the Social Hall, the trail makes its way toward the old Hotel Lāna'i, through Dole Park and the nearby neighborhood, and finally makes its way toward The Lodge and the cemetery beyond. It was at this cemetery that James' friend got mysterious scratches on her back while ghost hunting one night.

I met a man who grew up on Lāna'i through our Buddhist organization, and he eventually became my mentor. I affectionately call him "Dad," although we are not related.

He used to live a block away from Dole Park and said that the huaka'i pō used to march right through their neighbors' house across the street and through his god-brother's house nearby.

Dad also said that, while the pineapple fields weren't very spooky, there was one spot that gave him chicken skin. As he counted the quarter-ripe pineapples to estimate tonnage for picking, he recalled that standing in this particular spot was like standing in a cone of silence. The sounds of the wind, the birds, and everything just stopped until he moved on to the next spot.

Tales like these are what make Lāna'i such an interesting place for ghost stories. Generations of people have carried forward the mo'olelo of akua, ali'i, huaka'i pō, and ordinary people who encountered something they could not explain. Old paths are still there, the place names remain, and the stories continue.

Today, when someone hears a pahu drum in the darkness, sees a misty figure moving along a deserted road, or finds unexplained scratches on their body after wandering near a cemetery, they become part of that long tradition.

The great deeds of Kaululā'au live on and become intertwined with stories of younger ghosts who refuse to be forgotten. ■

From a Grassroots Gathering to a Pu'uhonua

Pasifika in tech builds on its second year at Hawai'i Tech Week

Submitted by Pasifika in Tech

Last year, when Pasifika in Tech held its first Pau Hana during Hawai'i Tech Week more than 100 Pasifika professionals showed up. This year, on September 3, the gathering returned to PEWA by Pono Potions on Bethel Street in downtown Honolulu for free, thanks to community sponsors.

What began as a one-off has become something sturdier: a sustained community with a reputation of its own in Hawai'i's tech ecosystem.

The organizers, Indigenous tech professionals Sage Ke'alahilani Quiamno, Evan Nai'aomana Castro, Lia Ikeda, and Leimomi Bong, are clear about what Pasifika in Tech is not: a networking event with a Hawaiian-shirt theme slapped on it. It's a hui, sustained by people who show up when it's hard.

Castro, a Native Hawaiian energy executive and *Pacific Business News* 40 Under 40 honoree, has spoken about growing up surrounded by "stereotypes that made Hawaiian identity feel limiting instead of powerful." That instinct shapes how the group built the Pau Hana; relationships over networking, culture carried into the room.

"Last year we didn't know if this was a one-time thing or the start of something," Ikeda said. "This year, watching people walk in already knowing each other, that's when it clicked."

Bong put it another way: "What people want, is to look around a room and see locals founding companies and sitting on panels building something that's ours."

That intention showed up in the space, from a Bay Area technologist ready to hire cybersecurity talent from the lāhui, to founders sharing AI-native products built for community.

"Seeing that many Pasifika technologists in one room was something I won't forget. This community is using AI to do important work like protecting our mo'olelo and keeping sacred knowledge in Hawaiian hands," shared Riley 'Ikelihiokalani Atkinson, a Kamehameha Schools alum now employed at software developer Scale AI.

"Working from the continent, this Pau Hana was energizing, and a reminder of how much innovation is happening right here in Hawai'i."



(L to R) Lia Ikeda, Evan Nai'aomana Castro, Sage Ke'alahilani Quiamno, and Leimomi Bong. - Courtesy Photos



Pau Hana group (l to r) Acacia Wong, Evan Nai'aomana Castro, Ethan-James Gaspar, Sage Ke'alahilani Quiamno, Ikaika Sheehan, Kekoa McClellan, Austin Cataluna, Miki Hardisty, Ashley McShane.

What organizers keep hearing, unprompted, is that the Pau Hana event is what Hawai'i Tech Week was always supposed to be. The organizers are modeling the shift they want the industry to make – away from treating Pasifika and Native Hawaiian talent as a diversity checkbox and toward recognizing them as experts already doing the work the tech industry claims to need.

Who gets access, who defines "innovation," and who benefits in Hawai'i isn't solved by better outreach. It's

solved by handing decision-making and ownership to the people closest to the problem. That's the quieter claim beneath the Pau Hana: not that community deserves a seat at the table, but that the table was already theirs to build.

Pasifika in Tech's Pau Hana was one thread in a week wrestling with the same question: what does a sustainable tech career in Hawai'i look like? Workforce development nonprofit Pi'ikū Co.'s State of Recruiting panel took it on directly. Tim Kamanā, a technical recruiter for Candid Health noted that the job market is flooded with AI-generated applications and commented, "AI can help you write a resume, but it can't fake curiosity in an interview."

Hawai'i Women in Tech's panel picked up the thread with Quiamno and Miki Hardisty, CEO of Ōlelo Intelligence, a company offering AI-enabled voice analytics for auto repair shops. This panel was the first time Quiamno introduced herself with her full Hawaiian name, because having another Hawaiian in the room gave her the courage to share it.

None of this happens without a kahua (foundation) built quietly, year after year. The Paubox Kahikina Scholarship, founded by Hoala Greevy, is now in its eighth year with 78 Native Hawaiian scholars and a 2026 cohort of 16 haumāna headed to schools from UH Mānoa to MIT, celebrated annually with a Pau Hana at the Pacific Club.

What started as a grassroots effort is becoming an anchor: a resource hub, a hiring pipeline, and a gathering place for a community too often treated as an afterthought. As Quiamno put it: "The cost of community is inconvenience, but it's worth the investment."

Pasifika in Tech plans to continue hosting the Pau Hana each year, with a growing desire to connect with Pasifika professionals beyond our one hānau (birth place), as ThriveHI and Hawaiians in Tech build community on the continent.

Castro, Ikeda, Bong, and Quiamno say they're just getting started. ■

Pasifika in Tech wishes to mahalo the following sponsors: Hawaiian Council, Purple Mai'a Foundation, PEWA by Pono Potions, 'Ulu & Kalo Bakery, PAU Vodka, Waiākea, Lyft, HTDC, ThriveHI, and the Hawai'i Tech Week team.

Transmitting Ancestral Knowledge Across Millennia

By Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

The term “ike kūpuna” (ancestral knowledge) is frequently cited and referenced when we talk and write about our history and cultural practices; but how is ike kūpuna actually transmitted from one generation to the next in contemporary Hawai‘i?

That is the question that “Ai Mama,” an exhibit at Gallery ‘Iolani on the campus of Windward Community College explores through its examination of the lifework and lived experiences of two master cultural practitioners: Ōlohe ‘Umi Kai and Sulu‘ape Keone Nunes.

Kai is a distinguished artisan known for his production of traditional implements, from weapons to ordinary, utilitarian objects. He is also a revered ōlohe lua, a master of traditional Hawaiian martial arts. Nunes is renowned for his revival and mastery of traditional kākau uhi (tattooing). Trained by Su‘a Sulu‘ape Paulo, a master of traditional Samoan tattooing, Nunes carries the Samoan title, Sulu‘ape. His formal title in Hawaiian is Kahuna Kā Uhi.

The exhibit title, “Ai Mama” refers to the process of chewing food and sharing it – as a parent or grandparent does with a very young child. In the context of the exhibition “this act becomes a metaphor for the transmission of knowledge: what is received is not simply retained but worked through, understood, embodied, and ultimately passed on to others. In this way, ‘Ai Mama asks us to consider ike not as something static or contained, but as something living,” wrote exhibit co-curators Noelle Kahanu and Kapulani Landgraf.

As part of the exhibit’s extensive programming, a panel discussion, “Ai Mama: The Ancestral Knowledge That is Carried,” featuring Kai and Nunes and moderated by Kahanu was presented on September 12. The discussion centered on what it means to carry ancestral knowledge – and how that ike is then transmitted from one generation to the next through practice, observation, mentorship and lived experience.

“When people think about receiving knowledge, everyone thinks about the head space – about being taught knowledge, about retaining what is taught to you in your mind,” Nunes reflected.

“For me, ‘ai mama [means] to be able to give my students the knowledge that was given to me in a way that they can internalize it, so it becomes part of them – not just in the head, but in the body, in the understanding, in the spirit of what they’re learning. And, after a course of time, it becomes mana.”

Nunes notes that it’s important to understand that this passing of ike is “a continuum that was started by our ancestors millennia ago.”

Recalling his immersion in ike kūpuna as part of his upbringing in the 1950s Kai said, “When I was growing up, I didn’t know I was being taught. It was just a lifestyle



Co-curator Kapulani Landgraf, Ōlohe ‘Umi Kai, Sulu‘ape Keone Nunes, and co-curator Noelle Kahanu following the panel discussion on traditional knowledge transmission at Gallery ‘Iolani on September 12. - Photos: Puanani Fernandez-Akamine



Warren Waikiki receives kākau uhi from Sulu‘ape Keone Nunes during an Artist-in-Residence demonstration on September 17 at Gallery ‘Iolani. Assisting Nunes is Noa Gardner, one of his lima hana (helpers).

– it didn’t feel like we were really forced except when we wanted to go surf or play. [It was like] when we dig the imu you better watch - because you’re going to be digging the next one.”

Kai compared that to how he teaches haumāna today, observing that not only is our modern lifestyle different, but so is the level of commitment of many learners. “They just want to make the leio-manō (shark-toothed war club) and forget about the niho ‘oki (shark-toothed carving knife). But the niho ‘oki sets the base for what you learn. You need to start at the bottom.”

Contrasting the western educational system with the way he is passing on ike to his haumāna Nunes said, “You go to school, you graduate. You go to college, you graduate. Then you take it from there, it’s almost like, ‘I have enough knowledge.’ [But] I have students that have been with me for over 20 years and they are still in the process of learning.”

Nunes added that when he was young and his friends were going to nightclubs, he deliberately sought out kūpuna so he could sit and learn from them. Some of these were people born when Lili‘u-okalani was still alive and carried specific knowledge and memories - the point being that while we can access the ike kūpuna that has been documented, young people today do not have access to the same kind of firsthand knowledge.

An additional challenge, Nunes said, is that some people still do not value Indigenous knowledge the way western knowledge is valued. “In my opinion we divide western education and Hawaiian education and say that western is better because you pay for the universities. You pay to be educated. We don’t [place] Indigenous knowledge on an equal level.”

In addition to the direct, hands-on instruction that Kai and Nunes received from their respective kumu and mentors, they have both spent a lot of time in museums.

“When I visit museums and all of the kūpuna that are there and the artifacts along with them, I’m looking for details. I’m looking for differences. The feeling I get is very somber, very respectful. I get a sense of the person that created the object. I get a sense of why they might have done something out of the ordinary,” Kai recounted.

Similarly, Nunes – who is also a carver – goes to museums to learn, to look at specific objects and understand, but never to simply replicate what he sees because we cannot know who the item was made by or for, or even be certain of an object’s function or purpose. “I tell my students don’t make a replica. Add to the culture. Add to the ‘umeke (calabash) of knowledge.”

Kai agreed, adding that his implements all include unique, personal modifications – although the item must still be functional and true to its purpose.

“When it comes to patterns and things [each object] was made for a specific person for a specific purpose. It has a history. You shouldn’t be duplicating that because it’s not yours. It’s like naming your child and somebody [else] using that name. Take the overall idea and create

SEE TRANSMITTING ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE ON PAGE 23

TRANSMITTING ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE

Continued from page 22



This leiomanō (shark-toothed war club) on display at Gallery ‘Iolani is the first such weapon made by ‘Ōlohe ‘Umi Kai.
- Photo: Puanani Fernandez-Akamine

your own. Now you’re advancing your own ‘ike, your own heritage.”
Regarding the designs he creates for kākau uhi – each of which is unique to the individual – Nunes notes that it’s important to know the foundational

designs of any traditional art form in order to be able to create your own designs. “It’s almost like a picture within a frame. There’s so much variation you can do and still stay within that frame.”
Nunes said it’s problematic when people start creating designs that go way outside that “frame” or appropriating designs that come from another Polynesian culture and calling it Hawaiian. “Sometimes we think of ‘appropriation’ only for our culture, not realizing that we might be appropriating other people’s culture without even thinking,” he said.
Both men emphasize that being grounded culturally – particularly in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i – helps to maintain our traditions and exercise creativity within the structures of our own culture. “If you want to do away with a culture, take away the language,” said Kai.
“Language is central to our culture,” added Nunes. “It’s very important. And so my students have honored me by learning as much Hawaiian as they can and incorporating Hawaiian within the practice.” ■
‘Ai Mama will be on view through December 11, 2026, at Gallery ‘Iolani at Windward Community College in Kāne‘ohe, O‘ahu. The exhibit and all related programming is free. Gallery hours are Tuesday - Saturday, from 12:30 - 4:30 p.m. For more information go to: [gallery.windward.hawaii.edu](#)

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The History of Deaf People is Misrepresented

By Maile Kane

I am a longtime reader of *Ka Wai Ola* and a Native Hawaiian. I am also Deaf, born in the 1950s and raised on Nīihau. I graduated from the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind. I want to correct the record on an article that misrepresented the history of Deaf people in Hawai'i.

The article, "Hawaiian Sign Language" that appeared in the April 2022 issue of *Ka Wai Ola*, treated Hawaiian Sign Language (HSL), a project developed by Linda Lambrecht, James Woodward, and Barbara Earth, as a continuation of a historic, Indigenous deaf language.

But the premise is inaccurate, and I want to explain why.

There was no common HSL in use before American Sign Language (ASL) arrived in Hawai'i. Through the 1950s, Deaf children were forced into oral-only education. Sign language was forbidden, and children were disciplined for signing – not unlike the suppression Native Hawaiians faced around spoken language. I say that deliberately, because it's part of why it matters so much to get this story right.

Through early 1960s, Hawai'i's Deaf people communicated through homemade signs; not a shared language, but what each household invented on its own. ASL was introduced amidst real confusion; hearing educators cycled through ASL, Signing Exact English, Pidgin Sign, and other systems before ASL took hold.

At no point did we use anything called "Hawaiian Sign Language." It did not exist because we did not sign 'ōlelo Hawai'i. We signed in English-based systems, or in the makeshift gestures our families invented. It was personal, inventive, and specific to us. It was not a shared language, and it was not passed down as one.

HSL advocates point to Hiram Bingham's 1821 account of a Deaf Hawaiian man signing as evidence of continuity. But a sign language developed at UH Mānoa in the 2000s based on interviews with local Deaf people of mixed descent is not a continuation of what Bingham described two centuries earlier. HSL is not a revival of a dying Indigenous language.

Dorothy Sueoka Casterline, a member of the Deaf

community who co-authored *A Dictionary of American Sign Language on Linguistic Principles* with William Stokoe, never endorsed HSL as a historic language. Wanda Goeas-Andrew, another community member, told *The Guardian* in 2016 that what existed before ASL was "just sort of a mixture of everything," closer to an accent than a language.

When a well-meaning story treats a linguistically fabricated project as an Indigenous Deaf language, it doesn't just get the history wrong; it also, crowds out the real and ongoing story of Deaf Hawaiians building something authentic today.

I also want to be honest about a broader frustration: some Deaf people often feel disconnected from the wider lāhui. I hope that, in the future, our lāhui will recognize that there are Deaf Kānaka who desire greater connection and recognition with their brothers and sisters.

Finally, I want to share that Kekai Ka'auomoana Cummings, the first Deaf Hawaiian man to attend UH Mānoa and major in 'ōlelo Hawai'i, is developing a true 'ōlelo-based sign language. He learned from us, and we trust him to tell our stories. ■

Pursuing 7 Billion to Stop the Political Genocide

By Kalaniakea Wilson

Please read my previous three genocide articles to understand genocide and subcategories of genocide: economic genocide, cultural genocide, and political genocide.

For over a thousand years, tracing your genealogy to the Hawaiian ruling class was a requirement to become eligible to rule over the Hawaiian Islands.

The invasion the "Big Five" oligarchy represented by the Republic of Hawaii, comprised of all non-natives, ruled from July 4, 1894, before transferring governance of Hawaii over to President William McKinley on Aug. 12, 1898, via Newlands Resolution.

The 1900 Organic Act succeeded the Republic of Hawaii creating the Territory of Hawaii – parent to the State of Hawaii which continued policies of genocide. Replacing Hawaiian Kingdom laws and courts with American laws and courts resulted in social genocide.

Social genocide is the destruction and the replacement of the social system that preserves and maintains the values of the social aspects of society which are enshrined in a government's constitution, laws and courts.

The Organic Act also ushered in political genocide, destroying the Hawaiian Kingdom's political system and replacing it with an American political system controlled by two dominant political parties: Republicans and Democrats.

The 1921 Hawaiian Homes Commission Act was created by Kuhio for rehabilitation from genocide policies.

In 1946, the United States renamed the "Hawaiian Kingdom" on the United Nations list of non-self governing territories as "Hawaii," concealing the international relations history of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

In 1948, publication of the last printed Hawaiian language newspaper completed the cultural genocide.

In 1954, the democratic revolution led by Japanese war veterans, plantation labor, and the international long-shore workers union overthrew republican control for democratic political dominance up to the present.

The 1959 plebiscite for statehood removed Hawaii from the United Nations' list of non self-governing territories.

The 1978 Constitutional Convention created the Office of Hawaiian Affairs which was to receive ceded land revenues for the benefit of the Native Hawaiian people. This ConCon added another layer of control over the Hawaiian community by the federal and state governments.

Living through Kau Inoa, Kanaio lowalu, and participating in Nai Aupuni, I can honestly say I learned a ton from the Hawaiian political landscape. I was the only participant to apply using a Hawaiian Kingdom identification card. Myself, Clifford Kapono, and two other cousins created the Hawaiian Kingdom group downstairs of Nai Aupuni which later invalidated the Nai Aupuni vote.

From these experiences I learned that Hawaiians need to be at every table to influence every decision about our aina, wai, and future in today's world – and not only protest from outside the gate. The difference now, in 2026, is that we know our Kingdom of Hawaii mookuauhau.

On Nov. 1, 2026, we will launch a survey monkey through a QR code to commemorate La Kuokoa Hawaiian Independence day. In light of the continued course of conduct attacking the Kamehameha Schools and the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act we will gauge the lāhui's interest to convene across the archipelago to determine our future. ■

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Consider Eliminating Spearfishing

While I know that spearfishing is of historical significance on the Hawaiian Islands, I would like to point out that its tradition of cultural importance may have run its course.

In this era of pronounced environmental concern, the inhumane practice of spearfishing is further extinguishing our already extremely depleted reef and marine wildlife.

At a minimum since the 1980s, the number of fish and other sea life has been drastically reduced. Anyone that enjoyed the Hawaiian waters decades ago, can attest that there are significantly fewer fish and other sea creatures than there were just 30 or 40 years ago. It is my belief that this is not due to warming water or sunscreen, but to overfishing our resources causing fewer creatures to be able to reproduce.

To my surprise, non-residents and tourists alike can get a license to spearfish at a very low cost. At a minimum, this practice should be done away with to help preserve our already depleted resources.

If we wish to preserve our offshore habitat for future generations, Hawaiian officials need to, at a minimum, consider eliminating tourists and non-residents from further depleting our resources.

The most helpful course of action would be to consider eliminating the inhumane practice of spearfishing altogether. ■

Lori Hatley
Honolulu

Punalu'u Black Sand Beach: Buy it to Save it

I read your 2024 article about trying to save the area near Punalu'u Black Sand Beach from the massive development proposed by Eva Liu, et al.

It occurs to me that if funds could be obtained to buy the land and keep it wild or maybe create a park, the issue would be resolved. I've written to The Nature Conservancy (they have an office in Honolulu), HILT the Hawaiian Land Trust, as well as Earthjustice and the Environmental Defense Fund. I hope at least one of them can help.

Nature Conservancy is known for buying land to protect it. I am thankful that The Center for Biodiversity has stopped the development for now for environmental reasons. Supporting them is a good idea too.

It also occurred to me to reach out to the billionaires (philanthropic) who own land in Hawai'i to see if they'll fund a buyout of Liu.

I'm sure you are aware of the latest - Eva says they want to "clean up the area" and put in better parking and a farmers' market. Yet she's talking about restricting access and has already bulldozed the sign. It could be that they decided to change tactics and slip things in gradually - once the bulldozers are there, they may stay.

I hope the Ka'ū community with the Center for Biodiversity can oversee this "clean up" and subsequent activity. Meanwhile, we need a permanent solution. ■

Patty Buchanan
California

A Kuleana to Our Keiki

By Kawai Hong

This past August, I had the privilege of joining the Papahānaumokuākea Marine Debris Project on their second marine debris mission of 2026. Those who have had the honor of visiting our kūpuna islands know it's a life-changing experience.

Crossing into Pō may seem like simply crossing the vastness of the ocean, but the change is apparent. You feel the mana coming from our kūpuna, those who have been here before us and guided us to this special place.

Crossing Ke Ala Polohiwa a Kāne was something you can never prepare for. As I offered my ho'okupu to this space and sat to kilo, I noticed the clouds change, wind on my skin, and the sun beaming down, until that change was felt internally.

Privilege is a word I have often used to describe my experience in Pō. It is a privilege to experience Papahānaumokuākea, to be healthy and able to do the work that we do, but it is also a privilege to be a Kanaka 'Ōiwi in a place that reminds us of who we are, where we come from, and the kuleana we have to our keiki to come.

The work itself was physically demanding and deeply rewarding. Day after day, our teams swam through reefs, scoured shorelines, and searched for marine debris that had become entangled across these fragile ecosystems.

We removed thousands of pounds of nets, lines, and plastic debris, knowing that every piece we pulled was one less threat to the life that calls Papahānaumokuākea home. While the work can be exhausting, there is something fulfilling about knowing the mana we poured into these islands and atolls is directly helping protect such a sacred place.

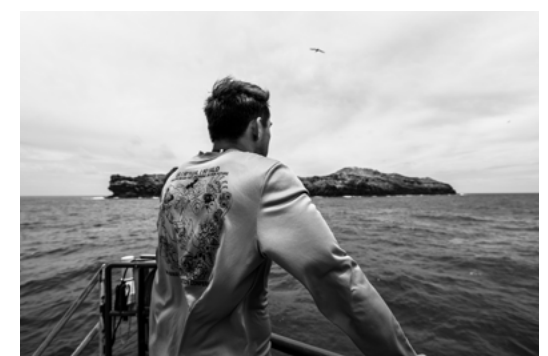
As a kanaka lawai'a, seeing the quantity of fishing nets and gear across the reefs was something that stayed with me.

I have spent much of my life in the ocean, learning the interconnectedness between lawai'a, i'a, and the pae 'āina. So to see nets draped across the ko'a where schools of fish should be thriving



was difficult to process. Fishing is a way of life that carries its own kuleana, and seeing the impacts of lost or abandoned gear was a powerful reminder that our actions in the ocean can reach far beyond the moment we are in.

Being a kanaka lawai'a is not only about knowing how to fish, but preserving and protecting the resources that we depend on. It is also our kuleana to ensure our keiki not only inherit a healthy ocean, but the practices and 'ike that have guided our pilina to Kanaloa. After all, the best lawai'a are also the best conservationists.



Kawai Hong looks towards Mokumanamana.

- Photo: Andrew Sullivan-Haskins

Days of swimming, hours of walking along the shores, and thousands of pounds of marine debris removed later, there are many ways I could express my time in Pō. Yet, from seeing schools of giant ulua to thousands of weke, each interaction with Papahānaumokuākea reminds me of what it means to live in Hawai'i: the shared kuleana to mālama our place, people, and culture.

Because here, to care for our 'āina is to care for one another. It is, and always will be, a kākou thing. ■

Kawai Hong was born and raised in Kaimukī and is a passionate kanaka lawai'a and conservationist. He is a true island boy at heart, fishing and diving while also working to promote the consumption of invasive reef fish as sustainable food. Currently, he works for Mālama Maunaloa as their Fisheries Management Area coordinator.



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Hinu Rise

By Mālia Sanders

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



textiles, home décor, art and other everyday products that bring a sense of Hawai'i into the places where people live and gather.

Hinu Rise began in 2020 when Kendra Medeiros returned to creating art while raising a young family. She was inspired to turn that creativity into a business that could share her love for Hawai'i,

her culture, and her community.

As a Native Hawaiian artist, Kendra began selling her pieces as original fabric artworks celebrating her home through designs inspired by Hawaiian ways of knowing, native plants, sea life, and the special places she cherished so much. Her art is personal, often reflecting her own experiences and growth, while helping others to feel a sense of belonging and connection to Hawai'i.

The name Hinu Rise reflects the values behind the business. Hinu means "to shine," and comes from a family name within her genealogy, Nahinu. Rise represents her belief in rising together through 'ohana, community, collaboration, and connection.

Whether discovering her original artwork, home goods, or other Hawai'i-inspired designs, connecting with Hinu Rise is an opportunity to support a Native Hawaiian artist and entrepreneur whose work is rooted in the values of Hawai'i expressing creativity and connection to place. ■

To learn more about Kendra and Hinu Rise, explore her website at hinurise.etsy.com and follow her on IG @hinurise. You may also reach out via email at aloha@hinurise.com.

For more information about the Pākōlea Cohort and other NaHHA programs please visit nahha.com or reach out to us at info@nahha.com.



Artist Kendra Medeiros, founder of Hinu Rise.
- Courtesy Photo

Surviving Hurricane Lowell

By KipuKai Kualii

Sitting in a very long and very slow-moving gas line through the Fujii Beach residential neighborhood in Kapā'a Town two days after Hurricane Lowell on September 8, I decided I'd use my column to share what I learned about surviving a hurricane.

I wasn't here for either of the past two major hurricanes that hit Kaua'i. During 'Iwa (Nov. 23, 1982), I was away at college in Stockton, California, and during 'Iniki (Sept. 11, 1992), I was living in, and working for, the city of West Hollywood, California.

Days before its arrival, we prayed and prayed that Lowell would track far away from our state and from Kaua'i. I've always believed, as many do, in the power of prayer. So, no matter your faith, please always pray that no harm comes to anyone in a hurricane's path.

For over 30 years now our prayers, indeed, have been answered. And even now, with Lowell, our prayers were once again answered as it was not a direct hit, and it was not a Category 4 or 5 storm. As a result, in Anahola, most of our homes received only minimal damage; many just losing a few roofing shingles or experiencing damage to trees, other vegetation, or fencing.

Prior to Lowell's arrival, we also focused on being prepared, having our hurricane kits ready, stocking up on water, and replacing the batteries in our flashlights and transistor radios.

What we didn't think about was the critical need for ice that we'd face with-



out having power for more than a couple days. Across our homestead, when I asked anyone what help they needed, the answer was always the same: ice. There just wasn't enough to go around!

So, with Council Chair Mel Rapozo's help, we were able to locate and secure a loaner

generator to power up the ice-maker in our Anahola certified kitchen. I waited in that gas line for three hours to get the gas we needed. And, before you know it, we had our ice-making and distribution plan in motion.

After a couple days, the power came back on in Anahola, but we kept making 500 lbs. of ice a day and shared it with our friends in Hanalei at the Waipā Foundation for them to distribute to their community which was still without power.

Without power, cable, internet and an operational radio station, we could not receive official emergency notifications. Many took to the highways to get critical supplies from Costco, or gas from any open gas station.

We never received the notifications telling folks to stay off the roads to allow officials to do their rescue work and power restoration work. Of course, as I think about it now, that's something we should already understand as necessary given the circumstances.

We've learned we need to better prepare ourselves by equipping our certified kitchen and pavilion to be an emergency hub from where we can, at a minimum, distribute critical supplies like ice and water and provide emergency communications! ■

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What Will You do About it?

By Kalani Lukela Raphael, MD, MS

I remember the day Dr. Kekuni Blaisdell took me into a hemodialysis clinic in Honolulu nearly 30 years ago. I was a first-year medical student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa John A. Burns School of Medicine.

He asked, "Kalani, what do you see?"

I saw dialysis machines with bright, intimidating displays, blood flowing through plastic tubes, and filters doing what kidneys could no longer do.



With community support, my colleagues and I are conducting the Utah Pacific Islander Diabetes Study to better understand the drivers of diabetes and kidney disease in our lāhui and in other Pacific peoples. We hope this work will lead to more targeted treatments and approaches to close these health gaps.

But there is so much more to do. Breast cancer, heart disease, maternal health, and other conditions need attention. We need more Pacific Islander providers on the front lines of care and in research to close health gaps.

To help build that future, my colleagues and I created Haumāna 'o Pasifika, a summer research internship for 'ōpio interested in careers in health and research with a commitment to lawelawe (serve) Pacific communities.

Since 2023, we have trained and mentored nearly 50 students from Hawai'i, Guam, Saipan, Tonga, American Samoa, and from across the continental United States. Many have gone on to pursue higher education in medicine,

nursing, and dentistry and will become our future healthcare providers.

There are others doing important hana (work) on the continent in service to our lāhui here and back home. It is still hard to leave Hawai'i when I return home. The pull to return permanently remains strong. But I have not yet returned. There are Kānaka Maoli on the continent who need support. I am one of them.

"This is what I'm doing about it, Kekuni." ■

Born and raised in Honolulu, Dr. Kalani Lukela Raphael is an adult nephrologist and professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Utah. His research focuses on chronic kidney disease and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander health. He also co-leads the Center for Pacific Islander Veterans Health and the Haumāna 'o Pasifika undergraduate research program.



Haumāna 'o Pasifika 'ōpio conduct research for the Utah Pacific Islander Diabetes Study. - Photo: Kalani Lukela Raphael

"Everyone on dialysis is Kānaka Maoli," I replied.

He raised his eyebrows slightly. "Yes," he said, "and what will you do about it?"

Those words have stayed with me ever since.

My path led me to the University of Utah for residency training. I had left Hawai'i intending to return home, but in Utah I encountered Native Hawaiians, Tongans, Samoans, and other Pacific Islanders with kidney disease, just as I had in Hawai'i.

I decided to become a nephrologist, a specialist in kidney health, because of these experiences.

It was as if Dr. Blaisdell saw my future.

I built a career as a doctor, scientist, and educator at the University of Utah. Academia has allowed me to bring national attention to kidney disease disparities affecting Pacific communities.

Nā Inoa 'o Akaka, Akana, Akina...

Na Kalani Akana, Ph.D.

Aloha e nā makamaka o kēia kolamu nei. Ua kama'ilio iho nei au me kekahi kanaka ma kekahi 'aha ho'ohanohano a ua nīnau 'o ia ia'u, e like me ka ma'a mau ma Hawai'i Nei, "No hea mai 'oe? No hea mai ka 'ohana?"

Ua pane au, "No Kaimukī ko'u 'ohana Akana akā no Hāna, Maui, me Anahola, Kaua'i, nā kūpuna loa." 'O kēia hoa hou, he pu'ukani 'o ia a kama'aina 'o ia i kekahi 'ohana Akana no Kaua'i. Mea aku au, "No Kalihīwai, paha?" 'Ae koke a ho'omau 'o ia e hoakāka i kona pilina me lākou.

A laila, ua huli 'o ia ia'u a nīnau e pili ana i ko'u 'ohana Akana no Anahola. Wehewehe au, na ke Akana mua i wehe i ka mila laiki mua o Kaua'i ma ka moku 'o Kawaihau ho'i. Aia a pau kona lima-hana mahikō, ua hele a nīnau i ko'u kupunawahine kuakolu, 'o Kamila Kekaula Makanui (he mau inoa 'ohana no Hāna), i 'aina no ke kanu laiki.

Ua 'ae ko'u kupuna e ho'olimalima i ke kuleana, 'o Konalele ka inoa, no ke kanu laiki. Ua ho'āo 'ia ho'i 'o Akana me ko'u kupunawahine kualua 'o Kamila Makanui a puka mai 'ehā keiki, 'o ko'u kupuna 'o Eli Kāheakūlani kekahi o lākou.

'O kekahi mea hoihoi iā mākou mamo, 'o ka inoa pono'i o ua kupuna Pākē 'o Akana, 'o ia 'o Li Mai. He Hakka* 'o ia no Pūkiene (Fujian). 'O Li Ma-i ka inoa ma kekahi palapala 'aelike ma ka Waihona Ho'oili 'Aina 'o Kalanimoku ma Honolulu. No laila, 'o Li ka inoa 'ohana Pākē pono'i. He inoa laha 'o Li ma waena o nā Hakka a 'o ia ka inoa kulāna laha 'elua ma Kina me Taiwana.

Hoihoi ka mo'olelo no Akana a e hō'ike 'ia ana ke kumu o ka pili 'ole o kēlā Akana me kēia Akana.

Ma hope o kekahi wā, ua kūkulu 'o Akana i hale mila laiki ma uka o nā lo'i laiki 'o Hanapa'a, a kokoke i ka 'uapo ma Anahola. Ua lawe mai nā kānaka mahi laiki i ka hale mila a kāhea lākou i ua Pākē lā, "E Mika, hiki ke mila i ka'u mau 'eke laiki?"

'O ka hua 'ōlelo Pākē no "Mika" 'o "San." Akā, 'a'ole hiki i ka hua 'ōlelo me ho'okahi kāpana (syllable) ke kū ho'okahi ma ka 'ōlelo Pākē, no laila ua ho'opili 'ia me ka "Ah." No laila, ua ho'ohawai'i 'ia ka "Ah San" ma ka puana 'ana a loa'a ka "Ah Sana." Pēlā ka pela 'ana o ka inoa o ka



'ohana ma Anahola, Kaua'i, i ka helu kanaka 1920: Ah Sana.

Ma kahi o ka makahiki 1940, ua ho'ololi 'ia ka pela 'ana e ke aupuni i ho'okahi hua 'ōlelo. 'O "Akana" ka pela 'ana a i kēia manawa. He mea hō'aka'aka paha kēia inoa "Akana," no ka mea 'o "Mika" ka mana'o o ia

inoa 'ohana.

Pēlā pū ka pela 'ana me nā 'ohana e like me Ahana, Ahuna, Ahina, Akaka, Akama, Akana, Akima, Akina, Akiona, Akuna, Alama, Alana, Apana, Apuna, a pēlā aku.

Ma mua, ua pela 'ia paha me ka "Ah." 'O ka mea i 'ike 'ole 'ia, 'o ia nō ka mole o ka inoa Pākē. E like me ka'u la'ana, 'o Akana mai ka inoa kapakapa 'o Ah San "Mika" i lilo i ka Ah Sana, a laila ua lilo i ka Akana.

Mau nō ka pela 'ana kahiko o kekahi mau inoa 'ohana hapa Pākē ma Hawai'i e like me Ah Mook Sang, Ah Sam, Ah Sing, Ah You, me Ah Yat. Aia kekahi mau inoa 'ohana i loa'a 'ole ka "Ah" ma ka inoa akā ua ho'ohawai'i 'ia ka mana'o o ka inoa.

Ua hui pū au me kekahi kupunakāne no Ka'ū e noho ana ma Puna. Mea mai 'o ia, 'o ka inoa 'ohana, "Mokiao," he inoa Pākē i ho'ohawai'i 'ia! 'O "Mokyu" ka inoa Pākē. 'O Lili Mokiao ke kupuna a he 90 a 'oi paha ona makahiki i kēlā manawa. Ua pū'iwa mākou, ka po'e nīnauele.

Malia paha, aia kekahi mau 'ohana Hawai'i-Pākē me kekahi mo'olelo hoihoi no ka inoa 'ohana.

He inoa Hawai'i-Pākē kou? Inā pēlā, eia au ke koi nei iā 'oe e huli a 'imi a loa'a i ka mo'olelo i loko o ka inoa 'ohana. E ala e nā Ahana, Ahina, Ahuna, Akaka, Akama, Akana, Akima, Akina, Akiona, Akuna, Alama, Alana, Apana, Apuna, a nui aku ana paha. ■

**O ka mana'o o Hakka 'o ia ka "po'e malihini" no ka mea ua ne'epapa lākou mai nā 'aina 'ākau i nā 'aina lepo mōmona ma ka 'ao'ao hema o Kina. 'O ka mana'o o ka hua 'ōlelo Puntī 'o ia nō ka "po'e kama'aina, nā 'ōiwi," nā po'e i noho mua a lō'ihi loa ma ka 'aina. Ua hakakā nā Hakka me nā Puntī ma muli o kēia ho'okae kanaka ma Kina a ma Hawai'i kekahi.*

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

To read this in English go to kawaiola.news.

Rethinking ADHD as a Strength

By Jodi Leslie Matsuo, DrPH RDN

“Sorry. ADHD,” we joke, as a half-apology for losing a thought mid-sentence, starting multiple projects and not finishing them, or for a mind that won't sit still. It's become our go-to explanation for distraction.

For years, ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder) has been framed as a deficit: lack of focus, stillness, follow-through. It's also often treated as a fixed trait to manage or suppress, rather than a different kind of mind with its own advantages.

Research has shown that people with these ADHD traits have heightened awareness, and an optimized ability for scanning, reacting quickly and moving through unpredictable or unfamiliar situations.

They are better able to generate more original, less conventional ideas than their peers. They are also often capable of hyperfocus, long stretches of deep, sustained attention on something that genuinely holds interest. This kind of focus is said to be behind many entrepreneurs and artists who credit their ADHD for their success.

So, what separates someone who struggles with ADHD from someone who thrives with it? People with ADHD do better when their environment matches how their brain works; fast-paced or varied settings, rather than rigid routines and low-stimulation tasks. Encouragement and strong relationships also support better functioning, even when symptoms are severe.

While 70-80% of ADHD is due to genetics, lifestyle choices can affect how manageable it is. Getting regular exercise is one of the most effective habits for easing ADHD, improving focus and mood. Adequate sleep also matters, as poor sleep and inattention go hand in hand. Healthy diets can make symp-



toms milder, while unhealthy diets can make them more pronounced.

Many adults go undiagnosed for years, in part because they learn to mask their symptoms early, such as hiding restlessness or forcing themselves to appear organized, without realizing that's

what they're doing. This underdiagnosis problem doesn't affect every community equally. Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) have lower rates of diagnosed ADHD compared to whites. Researchers think this is due to less awareness of ADHD symptoms and that NHPI adults are less likely to seek mental health services in general.

One study found a gene linked to ADHD helped nomadic herders thrive but worked against their genetically similar relatives who had settled. This makes me wonder: what if that same restless, quick-shifting mind was what kept our early Polynesian voyaging ancestors alive?

While these studies did not look specifically among Polynesian voyaging populations, it's not hard to imagine how these traits might have shown up in those navigating in search of land or in the early Hawaiians who settled here.

What did it take to read a swell, notice a shift in cloud or star, change course in an instant, out on the open ocean with no compass and no guarantee that land was ahead? Once they arrived, could it have helped them learn the seasons of farming and fishing here, and understand the resources across the islands?

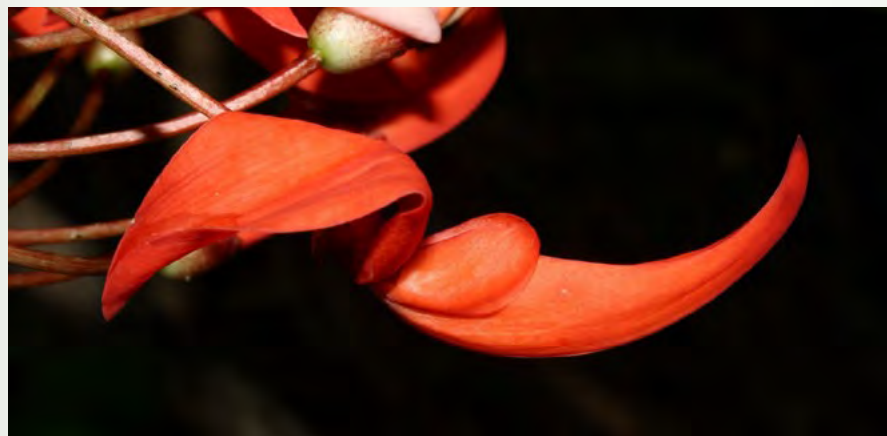
Maybe that's worth remembering the next time distraction feels like a flaw instead of an asset possibly rooted in ancestral instinct. ■

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

Let's Climb a Tree!!!

Nuku 'Iwi

By Bobby Camara



A single flower makes it easy to see the nuku resemblance. - Photo: Joel Lau on flickr

A German man named Chamisso who was, among other things, a naturalist and botanist, visited Hawai'i in 1816 and 1817 for 29 days. He collected and preserved many plant specimens, and one, nuku 'iwi (*Strongylodon ruber*) was described by another German man in 1836.

Folks often dismiss post-contact visitors to Hawai'i, but those malihini supplied much information about places, biology, and their views of Native Hawaiian culture, all of which help inform our understandings of ka wā kahiko.

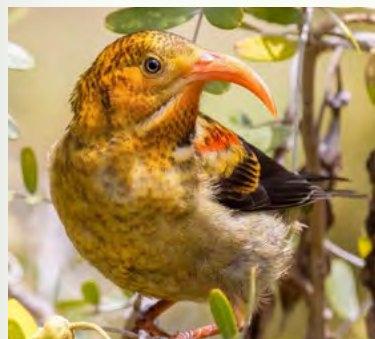
Nuku 'iwi, in the Pea Family, is an endemic tree-climbing vine in wettish forests, and its name refers to the bill of the 'iwi, to which its pua bear a strong resemblance. The plant is rare, but can still be found in appropriate forests on



Hua of nuku 'iwi about an inch long.
- Photo: seedsofhawaii.org

Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawai'i. Its seeds, about an inch long, recall those of what we used to call "sheep eye," and apparently were used in lei.

Many are familiar with the blue or orange jade vines, close cousins of this mea lā'au makamae. But please, let's call ours "nuku 'iwi" rather than "Hawaiian jade." Please? And go take a hike! ■



'Iwi pōlena, a juvenile, perched on māmane on Maui. As it matures, its feathers and bill will deepen in color — an orange bill and vermillion body. - Photo: Dubhan Clark

So you'll have a search pattern if you find yourself wondering in the nahele. - Photo: G. Metzler on hawaiiibiodiversity.org

Six New Pwo Navigators Inducted

Six Hawai'i Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) captains and navigators were recently inducted as Pwo Navigators. Among the six, five are Native Hawaiian and four are wāhine – the first women in Hawai'i to earn this sacred title and responsibility.

A sacred induction ceremony was held in Hawai'i for the first time on July 30, 2026. It was conducted by Satawalese Pwo Navigators Isidore Metewalur, Robert Erailug, and Thomas Raffipiy who represent the family lineage of the late Master Navigator Mau Piailug and the Weriyaeng School of Navigation.

The newly conferred Pwo Navigators are firefighter Russell Amimoto, educator Pōmai Bertelmann, educator Shantell de Silva, waterman Archie Kalepa, PVS Voyaging Director Lehua Kamalu, and UH professor Ka'iu-lani Murphy.

The Weriyaeng School of Navigation, located in the Caroline Islands, is the ancient Micronesian tradition and lineage of oceanic navigation in which Mau was trained and Pwo is among its highest honors. Those selected demonstrate decades of dedication to traditional navigation, voyaging, mentoring others, and serving their communities.

Mau was *Hōkūle'a's* first navigator in 1976, and he ensured that the ancient practice of wayfinding would survive by

training navigators outside of Micronesia, first in Hawai'i, then throughout Polynesia. At the time, traditional navigation had been dormant in Polynesia for 600 years.

Mau personally initiated the first five Native Hawaiian navigators in Satawal on March 18, 2007. In 2008, he graduated six more Pwo: four Aotearoa Māori and two Cook Islands Māori. In 2018, Mau's son, late Grand Master Navigator Sesario Sewralur, inducted Ōiwi Keahi Omai as a Pwo Navigator in Palau.

Uncertainty for Olelo Kanaka Niihau Kaiapuni School

Just weeks before the start of the new school year, Kula Aupuni Niihau a Kahelelani Aloha (KANAKA) New Century Charter School received a letter from the board of Kanaka Aupuni a Niihau (KAANA), which owns the land beneath the school, informing KANAKA that their 15-year lease would be terminated unless the school agreed to pay a monthly lease rent of \$20,000.

That represented an increase of 245% over the \$5,800 monthly rent the two organizations negotiated when the lease was first executed. Per the contract, the lease rent was open to negotiation every five years, however, KANAKA claims in a July lawsuit that the rent was increased without negotiation.

On July 23, a temporary re-

Wailehua a Miss America's Teen Semi-finalist!



In early September, Tianna Lei Wailehua represented Hawai'i at Miss America's Teen 2027 competition, advancing to the semi-final round with 10 others from a field of 52 talented young women. Wailehua performed an 'Ori Tahiti (Tahitian dance) for the talent portion, an art form that has long been an important part of her life and is central to her community service initiative HULA (Healing, Understanding, Legacy & Arts). The initiative focuses on healing through expression, understanding identity and community, preserving legacy, and using the arts to keep those connections alive. A 2026 graduate of Kamehameha Schools Kapalama, she is currently majoring in business at UH Mānoa while continuing her reign as Miss Hawai'i's Teen. Wailehua hopes to use her title to connect with keiki across Hawai'i, share HULA in the community and encourage others to take pride in who they are and where they come from. Ho'omaika'i iā Tianna Lei! - *Courtesy Photo*

straining order was issued by Fifth Circuit Judge Stephanie Char preventing the termination of KANAKA's lease until the legal dispute is resolved, which allowed KANAKA to open for school on August 3 as scheduled.

Outside of Niihau, KANAKA is the only Hawaiian immersion school that uses Olelo Kanaka Niihau as its medium of instruction. Fewer than 50 students are enrolled at KANAKA in grades K-12. Overall, an estimated 400-500 people speak the language, which is distinct from 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

KAANA is a nonprofit that promotes economic development for the people of Kauai and Niihau and supports KANAKA. Two KAANA board members, Katherine Tandal and Steven Sullivan, are named in the lawsuit. Sullivan is the widower

of former KANAKA principal Hedy Sullivan and briefly served as interim principal of KANAKA following her passing in 2025.

Opunui Selected to Obama Leaders Program

Dr. Landon Opunui was recently accepted to the 2026-2027 class of the Obama Foundation's Leaders Program, joining more than 150 "changemakers" selected from around the world. He is one of 35 individuals selected for the Leaders Asia-Pacific program.

The Obama Foundation Leaders program is designed to empower, and connect emerging leaders from Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the U.S. to implement positive global change. Participants receive training in values-based leader-



Dr. Landon Opunui - *Courtesy Photo*

ship development to strengthen their skills and scale their work across public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Launched in 2019, the Asia-Pacific program is creating a network of leaders to drive innovative change regionally and worldwide. This year's cohort represents 19 countries, and its members work across a broad range of fields including: Indigenous language and cultural revitalization; ocean and climate resilience; rural health access; and independent media.

Opunui is the executive director, the medical director, and a naturopathic physician at Nā Pu'uwai Native Hawaiian Health Care System which serves the islands of Moloka'i and Lāna'i.

A graduate of Kamehameha Schools Kapalama, Loyola Marymount University, and Bostyr University, Opunui is the first naturopathic physician in Hawai'i to be credentialed as a primary care physician with HMSA.

Bode Will Lead HPD Admin Operations

Honolulu Police Department (HPD) Maj. Parker Bode has been named as one of two deputy chiefs for HPD by new Police Chief David Lazar. Bode will lead HPD's Administrative Operations while Maj. Brandon Nakasato will lead its Field Operations.

Bode, a graduate of Kamehameha Schools Kapalama, is a second-generation HPD officer; his father retired as an HPD major after 33 years of service. At just 39 years old, Bode is one of



Hawai'i's six new Pwo Navigators with the Satawalese Pwo Navigators who performed their sacred Pwo induction ceremony on July 30 in Niu Valley on O'ahu. - *Photo: Kaimana Pinē, PVS*

NEWS BRIEFS

Continued from page 29



Maj. Parker Bode - Courtesy Photo

the youngest deputy chiefs in HPD history.

Bode has served at HPD for 16 years, much of which was in Human Resources focusing on personnel, workforce and organizational issues. He also served as captain of HPD's Criminal Investigation Division. Most recently he served as Lazar's interim chief of staff.

As part of his new kuleana as deputy chief for administrative operations, Bode will lead the department's effort to gather input that will help shape HPD's new strategic plan.

A former high school quarterback for Kamehameha Schools, Bode also serves in the community as a high school football coach and mentor.

Feds Push for Deep-Sea Mining in the Pacific

The Conservation Council for Hawai'i (CCH) and Fa'asao Amerika Samoa, represented by Earthjustice, filed a lawsuit in August challenging the Trump administration's attempt to launch deep-sea mining off the coast of American Samoa.

The lawsuit targets the National Marine Fisheries Service's conclusion that deep-sea mining "is not likely to adversely affect" any species protected by the Endangered Species Act.

The Marine Minerals Administration announced in July that it plans to hold a "lease sale" to mine the seabed of American Samoa's Outer Continental Shelf on Nov. 19, 2026. This is the first lawsuit to challenge deep-sea

OHA BOT Visits Moloka'i



On September 17 and 18, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees (BOT) held their annual Moloka'i Community and BOT meetings. Community presenters included: Leilani Chow of Ho'āhu Energy Cooperative Moloka'i; Melissa Lyman of Mokulele Airlines; Pi'ilani Agustino of Moloka'i Cares; Kanoelani Davis of Ho'āka Mana, Lehua Kauka of the Kalama'ula Homesteaders Association; and Sybil Lopez of Mokupuni Community Development Corporation. While on Moloka'i, OHA also had the opportunity to visit the ancient coconut grove, Kapuwiwa, and met with staff at Sust'ainable Moloka'i. In the top photo Doreen Gaspar, E.D., with the Moloka'i Occupational Center and Moloka'i historian Mikiala Pescaia (both in green dresses) pause for a photo with OHA staff at Kapuwiwa Coconut Grove. In the bottom photo, Tehani Kaalekahi of Sust'ainable Moloka'i (third from left) is pictured with OHA staff (l-r) Kingston Seguancia, Nathan Takeuchi, Trustee Luana Alapa, Royce Campbell, Pamela Knapp, Interim Administrator Summer Sylva, Trustee Dan Ahuna, and Crayn Akina. - Top Photo: Nelson Gaspar; Bottom Photo: Lehua Itokazu

mining – an industry that does not currently exist beyond a few small, exploratory projects – in U.S. controlled waters.

Deep-sea mining would extract metals from some of the most unexplored parts of the ocean using unproven technology. Scientists believe catastrophic biodiversity loss and habitat destruction will be unpreventable and irreversible.

As in Hawai'i, the people of American Samoa, rely on a healthy ocean ecosystem for

sustenance, protection, and long-standing cultural practices.

"Our oceans are not an underutilized tool for profit," said Jonee Kaina Peters, CCH executive director. "We cannot sacrifice our oceans to an inherently destructive infant industry."

"The Trump administration is barreling ahead with plans that will sacrifice one of the most important and pristine ecosystems on the planet in the pursuit of a reckless deep-sea mining experiment. This carelessness is driven

by dreams of corporate profits, rather than science," said Earthjustice Senior Attorney Chris Eaton.

Hawai'i, too, is threatened by deep-sea mining. The Clarion-Clipperton Zone, 500 miles south of Hawai'i Island, is a key target for deep-sea mining by corporations and pro-mining governments.

BLNR Transfers 300 Acres in Hilo to DHHL

The Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) has authorized the transfer of more than 300 acres of state-owned lands in the Waiākea area of Hilo on Hawai'i Island, from the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL).

The eight parcels identified for transfer consist of two commercial-zoned parcels appropriate for revenue-generating industrial/commercial development, as well as six parcels in the Hilo town core suited to connected residential and agricultural homestead development.

Next steps are for DHHL to conduct due diligence evaluations of the parcels to determine the extent to which they satisfy or otherwise meet the needs of the Hawaiian Home Lands Trust.

"[This] represents a significant milestone toward full satisfaction of the transfers required under Act 14, First Special

Session Acts, passed in 1995," said BLNR Chairperson Ryan Kanaka'ole. "The parcels approved for transfer will provide meaningful opportunities for both homesteading and revenue generation, supporting DHHL's mission to provide for the economic self-sufficiency of Native Hawaiians."

"The BLNR did Hawai'i proud," said Gov. Josh Green. "We awarded more than 2,500 leases in 2025 and are on track to award approximately 3,000 this year. This transfer builds on that progress and brings us closer to helping even more beneficiaries turn their awards into homes, working farms and thriving communities."

Act 14 was adopted to compensate DHHL for the state's use of DHHL trust lands between Aug. 21, 1959 through July 1, 1988. Since its enactment, DLNR and DHHL have collaborated to fully implement the intent of Act 14.

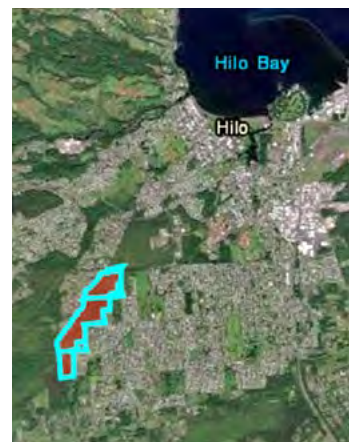
UH to Help Advance Seafood Supply

The University of Hawai'i is set to play a pivotal role in a new effort to expand sustainable aquaculture as part of the Cooperative Institute Fostering Aquaculture Research and Markets (CIFARM) a consortium created by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Funded by an initial \$13.5 million investment, this five-year cooperative institute seeks to unlock the potential of marine aquaculture in the U.S. The University of New Hampshire will serve as the host institution. UH will participate as one of five core consortium members.

UH's research team is being led by Associate Professor Chatham Callan from UH Hilo's Pacific Aquaculture and Coastal Resources Center. "Being selected is a testament to the decades of world-class aquaculture research happening right here in Hawai'i," said Callan.

"Through our partnerships



An aerial view of Hilo showing the location of the 300 acres recently transferred to DHHL. - Photo: Courtesy of BLNR

SEE NEWS BRIEFS ON PAGE 31

Community Planning for Kaka'ako Ma Kai



Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) staff and supporters turned out in force at a community planning meeting on September 19 to discuss the future of Kaka'ako Ma Kai. The planning meeting, part of a regular series of "updates," was led by the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA). At the meeting, the public had the opportunity to review and comment on four land use scenarios for Kaka'ako Ma Kai through interactive exercises. The four scenarios were based on priorities identified at an HCDA meeting last March: local housing opportunities; a Hawaiian Cultural Center; ocean access; and sustainability. OHA owns 30 acres at Kaka'ako Ma Kai that it received from the state in 2012 to settle its \$200 million debt in unpaid public land trust revenue. However, a residential ban at Kaka'ako Ma Kai has prevented OHA from maximizing its returns on this urban property. - Photo: Jason Lees

NEWS BRIEFS

Continued from page 30

with Native Hawaiian communities, we draw on a tradition of ocean stewardship and fishpond engineering that stretches back centuries. By focusing on cutting-edge tech, environmental forecasting, and real-world marine demonstration projects, we are actively building the blueprint for a more resilient, self-sufficient seafood industry."

Americans consume more than \$24 billion in imported seafood annually. By advancing domestic aquaculture, CIFARM aims to bolster food security, create jobs and uplift coastal economies in complement to wild-capture fisheries.

Hawai'i is uniquely positioned for this work. Hawai'i is already home to Blue Ocean Mariculture in Kona, providing a vital real-world connection to the consortium's demonstration and commercialization goals. ■

20 YEARS

@WAIMEAVALLEYOAHU

**MAKAHIKI FESTIVAL
& TE MOANA NUI GAMES**

Wednesday November 11

\$10 general admission, \$5 kama'āina
Hawai'i Foodbank Food Drive, hula,
local vendors, live music, and more!



JOIN US *at* OUR UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Lāna'i & Hawai'i Island

Lāna'i



LUANA ALAPA

Trustee for Molokai & Lāna'i



COMMUNITY MEETING & BOT MEETING

Thursday

October 15, 2026

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Meeting will be held at:

Maui County Council Services Office

814 Fraser Ave, Lāna'i City, HI 96763

Hawai'i Island



KAIALI'I KAHELE

Chairperson

Trustee for Hawai'i Island



COMMUNITY MEETING

Wednesday

October 28, 2026

6:00 p.m.

BOT MEETING

Thursday

October 29, 2026

9:30 a.m.

Both meetings will be held at:

**Ka Haka Ula o Ke'elikōlani College
of Hawaiian Knowledge**

200 W Kawili St, Hilo, HI 96720



TUNE IN LIVE AT [OHA.ORG/LIVE](https://oha.org/live)

Meetings will be available via livestream. To watch go to oha.org/live or go to OHA's Facebook and Youtube pages.

YouTube facebook

Our Voice, Our Kuleana: Vote in the OHA Elections

I grew up in a family where aloha 'āina, sivila – civics and politics – and service were part of everyday life.

I was born in 1974, during an extraordinary period when a reawakening of Hawaiian consciousness was taking hold across our pae 'āina. My father became a community organizer in Miloli'i, working alongside kūpuna and families to protect sacred coastlines, preserve cultural practices, and address issues of land, housing and Native Hawaiian rights.

Some of my earliest memories are of sitting through late-night community meetings in the Kaupiko front yard in Miloli'i, listening as our kūpuna discussed land rights, ocean rights, and the future of our people.

My father taught me Hawaiian history. He taught me about our ali'i, the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom and the importance of knowing where we came from. But just as importantly, he taught me that knowledge creates responsibility.

That lesson has stayed with me; each of us has an obligation to do our part to move the lāhui forward. One of the simplest and most consequential ways we fulfill that obligation is by voting.

On November 3, Hawai'i voters will elect five members of the nine-member Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Board of Trustees. OHA elections are nonpartisan, and every registered voter in Hawai'i – Native Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian alike – may vote in every OHA contest.

These elections matter.

OHA trustees make decisions involving Native Hawaiian trust resources, lands, programs and policies. They determine priorities affecting housing, education, economic self-sufficiency,



**Kaiali'i
Kahele**

CHAIR
Trustee,
Hawai'i Island

culture, natural resources and assets held for the betterment of Native Hawaiians. They are entrusted with stewardship of a trust exceeding \$1 billion – resources intended to serve this generation and generations of Native Hawaiians to come.

Yet democracy cannot function simply because institutions exist. It requires participation.

Government derives its legitimacy from the consent of the governed. Voting is the most fundamental way citizens give – or withhold – that consent.

When we participate, we strengthen our collective voice. When we disengage, we surrender that voice to others.

For Native Hawaiians, civic participation carries particular meaning. Our history reminds us what can happen when decisions affecting our people, our lands and our future are made without our meaningful participation.

We cannot change that history. But we can decide what we do with the responsibility handed to us today.

He ali'i ka 'āina; he kauwā ke kanaka. The land is chief; humanity is its servant.

That kuleana extends beyond caring for 'āina. It means caring for the generations who will inherit the consequences of the decisions we make today.

So, learn about the candidates. Watch the forums. Ask questions. Talk story with your 'ohana. Understand what OHA does and what is at stake.

Then vote.

Your ballot is more than a piece of paper. It is your voice, your responsibility and your opportunity to help shape the future.

Our lāhui needs a diverse, informed and vigorous civic movement. That begins with each of us.

On November 3, exercise your voice. Fulfill your kuleana. Vote. ■

The Difference Between a Good Cause and a Good Investment

A business proposal can sound attractive when it comes wrapped in a good cause. It may promise cultural benefits and opportunities for Native Hawaiians. But as an OHA trustee, I have to ask another important question: Is it also a good investment?

That distinction matters because trustees are not entrepreneurs placing bets with our own money. We are fiduciaries responsible for resources that belong to our beneficiaries, including generations yet to come. Good intentions matter, but they do not replace our duty to exercise care, loyalty, independence, and sound judgment.

Whenever OHA considers committing substantial trust resources to a business venture, trustees should ask basic questions. What return can we realistically expect, and what are the risks? Do we have the expertise and resources to oversee the investment? Have the assumptions been carefully tested? And do the expected benefits justify the financial risk and commitment of beneficiary resources?

We should also ask whether the proposed structure is the best way to accomplish the goal.

Different approaches carry different responsibilities and risks. Direct ownership, for example, may require greater financial and operational oversight than a grant or loan. The question is not whether one approach is always better than another, but whether trustees have carefully considered the alternatives before committing beneficiary resources.

Hawai'i has its own history to guide us.

In the 1964 case *Steiner v. Hawaiian Trust Company*, the Hawai'i Supreme Court criticized a trustee for leaving much of a family's inheritance concentrated in one risky stock for more than a decade. When the trustee finally sold some of that stock, it sold shares to its own president and a major shareholder without fully informing the beneficiaries. The lesson was clear: the trustee is supposed to be a neutral fiduciary looking out only for the beneficiaries, not steering trust assets toward people connected to itself.



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

Trustee,
At-Large

That lesson still applies. A worthy mission does not lessen the need for careful review. Putting too much into one business can expose beneficiaries to loss. And when the people recommending, evaluating, or participating in a venture have overlapping interests, greater scrutiny may be necessary.

Conflicts of interest are not always obvious. They may arise when a trustee or employee has a financial, personal, or professional relationship with someone who could benefit from a

transaction. Even when nobody intends to do anything improper, those relationships can affect judgment or create questions about whether the process is truly independent.

Hawai'i saw the importance of this principle during the Bishop Estate controversy of the 1990s. A court-appointed master examined investments in which trustees and employees had invested their own money alongside the trust and raised concerns about the lack of safeguards for the resulting potential conflicts. The episode reminds us why fiduciaries must keep personal interests separate from the interests of their beneficiaries.

None of this means trustees should avoid risk altogether. Every investment carries some uncertainty, and even a carefully considered investment may not succeed.

Prudence means doing the work before making the decision: understanding the risks and benefits, using realistic assumptions, obtaining independent advice when appropriate, disclosing conflicts, and putting safeguards in place.

A worthy cause deserves our enthusiasm. Trust resources deserve our judgment.

Sometimes good fiduciary judgment means saying yes. Sometimes it means asking more questions or requiring stronger protections. And sometimes it means deciding that another approach would better serve our beneficiaries.

That is not standing in the way of progress. It is doing the job of a trustee. ■

IMPORTANT DATES 2026 ELECTION DATES

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.



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:
NEW AERATION BASIN AT THE
WAILUKU-KAHULUI WASTEWATER
RECLAMATION FACILITY PROJECT,
WAILUKU, PŪ'ALI KOMOHANA MOKU,
MAUI (TMKS: [2] 3-8-001:188 [POR.])**

At the request of Munekiyo Hiraga, on behalf of the County of Maui, Department of Environmental Management (DEM), Cultural Surveys Hawai'i, Inc. (CSH) is conducting a cultural impact assessment (CIA) for the proposed New Aeration Basin at the Wailuku-Kahului Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WWRF) project.

The DEM proposes to construct a fourth aeration basin at the Wailuku-Kahului WWRF. The new basin will provide the needed redundancy for the facility's existing activated sludge treatment process, allowing one basin to be taken out of service for maintenance while maintaining reliable treatment. The project will not increase the facility's rated capacity of 7.9 million gallons per day but will improve operational reliability and reduce the risk of treatment disruptions. The project includes excavation, construction of a new concrete aeration basin, connections to existing influent and mixed liquor channels, installation of piping, mechanical equipment, process sensors, and instrumentation, and bypass pumping as needed during construction. CSH is seeking mana'o regarding:

- Traditional cultural practices and resources within the project area and surrounding Wailuku Ahupua'a
- Potential impacts to cultural sites, practices, and resources
- Referral to knowledgeable kūpuna, kama'āina, and cultural practitioners

To provide input, please contact CSH Cultural Researcher, Tehani Baculpo by email at tbaculpo@culturalsurveys.com no later than 30 November 2026.

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AND KA PA'AKAI ANALYSIS: HECO
KAHE-PALEHUA RECONDUCTORING
PROJECT, HONOULIULI AHUPUA'A,
'EWA MOKU, ISLAND OF O'AHU
[TMK: (1) 9-2-045:007 (por.), (1) 9-2-049:008 (por.), (1) 9-2-049:009 (por.), (1) 9-2-049:011 (por.), (1) 9-2-049:013 (por.), (1) 9-2-049:015 (por.), (1) 9-2-050:001 (por.), (1) 9-2-050:003 (por.), (1) 9-2-050:006 (por.), and (1) 9-2-050:008 (por.)]**

Pacific Legacy, Inc., on behalf of HDR, Inc., is conducting a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) and Ka Pa'akai Analysis for the proposed

Cultural Impact Assessment and Ka Pa'akai Analysis: HECO Kahe-Palehua Reconductoring Project, Honouliuli Ahupua'a, 'Ewa Moku, Island of O'ahu (TMKs listed above). The project is proposing to improve approximately 7 miles of an existing utility line, including reconductoring, replacing utility poles, and improving associated equipment.

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

- Cultural associations, mo'olelo, or legendary accounts associated with Honouliuli Ahupua'a.
- Past and present land use or traditional gathering practices within and near the project area.
- Cultural resources which may be impacted by the proposed project, including traditional resource gathering sites, traditional access trails, wahi pana, and/or burials.
- Any other cultural concerns related to traditional Hawaiian or other cultural practices within or near the proposed project area.
- Referrals to other knowledgeable individuals who may be willing to share their cultural knowledge of the proposed project area and wider Honouliuli Ahupua'a.

Those interested in participating are invited to contact Makanani Bell at 808-263-4800 or bell@pacificlegacy.com.

**HUMAN TEETH DISCOVERED
DURING ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SURVEY KAILUA, O'AHU**

NOTICE TO INTERESTED PARTIES IS HEREBY GIVEN that two human teeth were discovered by Pacific Consulting Services, Inc. while conducting an archaeological inventory survey for a proposed construction project at 164, 170, and 174, Hāmākua Drive and 380 Hahani Street in Kailua, O'ahu, Hawaii (TMK: [1] 4-2-028:046–049). The project proponent and land owner are proposing to relocate the remains to a new subsurface burial preserve to be constructed on the property. The project area is in the traditional Pāhe'ehe'e 'Ili, shown on a boundary map for Ka'elepulu 'Ili. Ka'elepulu 'Ili was awarded to Princess Victoria Kamāmalu under LCA 7713. The remaining land, given to Kalama Hakaleleponi Kapakuhaile, was part of LCA 4452. The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources State Historic Preservation Division requests persons having knowledge of the identity or history of these human remains to contact. Mr. Traven Apiki (traven.apiki@hawaii.gov) (601 Kamōkila

Boulevard Room 555, Kapolei, Hawai'i 96707) within 30 days of this notice to present information regarding appropriate treatment of the human remains and adequately demonstrate lineal or cultural descent from these remains or ancestors buried in the vicinity of this project.

**CULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND
KA PA'AKAI ANALYSIS: WAILUKU MIS-
SION SENIOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PROJECT, WAILUKU, PŪ'ALI KOMO-
HANA, MAUI (TMK: [2] 3-4-014:005)**

Cultural Surveys Hawai'i (CSH), on behalf of EAH Housing and Wailuku Union Church, is conducting a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) and Ka Pa'akai Analysis for the proposed Wailuku Mission Senior Affordable Housing Project, Wailuku, Pū'ali Komohana, Maui (TMK: [2] 3-4-014:005). EAH Housing, in partnership with Wailuku Union Church, is proposing to develop the Wailuku Mission Senior Affordable Housing Project, which would provide approximately 48 affordable senior rental units for residents 62 years of age and older earning 60% or less of the Area Median Income, approximately 42 onsite parking stalls, and landscaping on the Church-owned land. The Alexander House and the Baybrook House, contributing elements to Wailuku Historic District No. 3, will be rehabilitated and reused. CSH seeks your knowledge, insight, and input on the following topics:

- Traditional cultural practices within the proposed project area and Wailuku Ahupua'a
- The different natural resources associated with your specific cultural practice
- Referrals to other kūpuna, kama'āina, and traditional cultural practitioners knowledgeable about the proposed project area and Wailuku Ahupua'a
- Comments or thoughts on the potential impacts the proposed project may have on cultural sites, practices, and resources within the proposed project area and Wailuku Ahupua'a

For more information and if you are interested in participating in this study, please contact CSH Cultural Researcher, Chantellee Spencer by email at cspencer@culturalsurveys.com.

**KA PA'AKAI ANALYSIS: WAILEA
BEACH MARRIOTT RESORT PROJECT**

Cultural Surveys Hawai'i (CSH), at the request of Munekiyo Hiraga, on behalf of Sun-

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

LOVELL - The descendants of Joseph Lovell and Mele Holokahiki will hold a family reunion on Kaua'i, July 12-16, 2028. We are seeking descendants of their five children: Loika, John, William, Daniel, and Kini Lovell to assist with planning. Kōkua is greatly appreciated to bring our 'ohana together. The next meeting is Nov. 18, 6:30 p.m. on Zoom: hawaii.zoom.us/j/84116492841. Contact Kellie kelliepupu@gmail.com or Makalapua kaawa@hawaii.edu, or connect via TeamReach at Lovell a me Holokahiki 2028 Group Code: July2028 facebook.com/lovellameholokahiki ■

HO'OLAHA LEHULEHU
PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICES

Continued from page 13

stone Hawai'i 3-0, LLC, is conducting a Ka Pa'akai Analysis for the Wailea Beach Marriott Resort Project, Paeahu Ahupua'a, Makawao District, TMKs: (2) 2-1-008:061 and 2-1-008:076. The proposed project includes the development and construction of a new six-story building within the footprint of an existing asphalt-paved parking lot, improvements to the resort's existing parking structure, and the extension of 15 lānai (patios). The existing spa facility will undergo interior renovation and be converted into a meeting space, public restrooms, a restaurant area, five guestrooms, and an expanded fitness center. The project will also include the replacement of five existing 2-inch water meters with one new 6-inch water meter to fulfill a requirement imposed by the

County of Maui. CSH seeks your knowledge, insight, and input on the following topics:

- Traditional cultural practices within the proposed project area and Paeahu Ahupua'a
- The different natural resources associated with your specific cultural practice
- Referrals to other kūpuna, kama'āina, and traditional cultural practitioners knowledgeable about the proposed project area and Paeahu Ahupua'a
- Comments or thoughts on the potential impacts the proposed project may have on cultural sites, practices, and resources within the proposed project area and Paeahu Ahupua'a

For further project details, please contact CSH Cultural Researcher, Kellen Tanaka at ktanaka@culturalsurveys.com or Chantellee Spencer at cspencer@culturalsurveys.com. ■

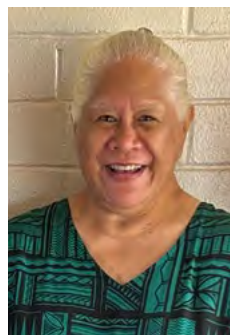
E Ō Mai,
e Kuleana Land Holders!

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

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



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.

MARBETH KANOELANI AKAU AQUINO
DEC. 2, 1954 – JULY 24, 2026

Marbeth Kanoelani Akau Aquino, 71, of Waimānalo, O'ahu, passed away on July 24, 2026, in Honolulu. A graduate of Kailua High School Class of 1972, she worked at the House of Music at Ala Moana, First Hawaiian Bank, the Department of Accounting and General Services, and retired from the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands after 30 years as an applications clerk. She was an avid researcher, helping many families qualify for their homestead. Genealogy was her passion, especially our 'ohana genealogy. Growing up, whether at home, visiting on the weekends, or at 'ohana gatherings, she was always surrounded by 'ohana.

A wonderful sister, wife, mother, grandmother, aunty, and friend. She is predeceased by her parents Robert Saint Sr. and Lucy Noelani Lonomaakanaka Milikaa Mia Akau; brother Paul Holualoa Akau; and husband, Rogelio "Roger" Villalon Aquino. She is survived by sons Holualoa, Koi (Ashley), and Kamakanaokealoha; grandchildren Azariah Maiava, Sarai Maiava, Uriah Maiava, Ilia Maiava-Aquino, Eliana Maiava-Aquino, Haven Hanawahine-Aquino, and Kamu Kalahiki; brothers Robert S. Akau Jr. and Alan-Doiron (Lorrena) K. Akau; sister Jonnett P. Akau-Aliifua; and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Two days of celebration of life will be held at Hawaiian Memorial Park Chapel. Thursday, October 8: Visitation at 3:30 p.m. and Service at 4:30 p.m. Friday, October 9: Visitation at 9:00 a.m., Service at 10:00 a.m. and Committal at 1:00 p.m. ■

DENISE K. L. K. FOSTER
JAN. 25, 1971 – AUG. 4, 2026

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs mourns the tragic loss of Denise Foster, a Native Hawaiian māhū and member of our lāhui who was murdered while incarcerated at Hālawā Correctional Facility on Aug. 4, 2026.

Denise was a non-violent offender housed with violent offenders. She deserved to live with dignity, be treated with aloha, and be safe while in state custody.

Denise's voice mattered. During her time in custody, she reached out to *Ka Wai Ola* newspaper, and OHA had the privilege of hearing from her and responding to her. We are heartbroken that she is no longer here to share her voice and mana'o.

Our deepest aloha and condolences are extended to Denise's 'ohana, loved ones, and to all those who knew and cared for her. We also hold close the many community members who are grieving her loss.

The loss of any member of our lāhui while in state custody is devastating. Every pa'ahao deserves dignity, humanity, and safety. OHA has long advocated for meaningful prison and criminal justice reform, and we will continue this work with urgency.

Denise deserved to be protected. She deserved to come home.

We honor Denise's life and her place within our lāhui. We will continue to advocate for a corrections system that respects the dignity of every Kanaka to ensure this kind of tragedy is never repeated. ■



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 HAWAI'I (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

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HOMES WITH ALOHA - Waimānalo Single level 3 bedrooms/1 bath \$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.

COMING SOON HOMES WITH ALOHA - Paukukalo/Maui. Single level 4 bedrooms/2 baths; Keaukaha/Hilo home Major repairs needed. Lot size 21,780 sq. ft. This is a leasehold property. Charmaine I. Quilit Poki (Realtor) (808) 295-4474. RB-15998 Keller Williams Honolulu RB-21303.

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IKAIKA ANDERSON



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KEONI SOUZA



JOHN WAIHE'E IV

O'ahu Island Trustee Forum

△ Kalei Akaka

△ Hina Wong

Tuesday, October 13, 2026
at 6:30 p.m

KGMB, K5, and streaming on demand at HawaiiNewsNow.com

Maui Island Trustee Forum

△ Ke'eumoku Kapu

△ Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey

Wednesday, October 14, 2026
at 6:30 p.m.

KGMB, K5, and streaming on demand at HawaiiNewsNow.com

At-Large Trustee Candidate Panel

△ Adrian Keali'i Akina

△ Ikaika Anderson

△ Kanekoa Crabbe

△ Brickwood Galuteria

△ Keoni Souza

△ John Waihe'e IV

Thursday, October 15, 2026
at 7:00 p.m

K5 and streaming on demand at HawaiiNewsNow.com



Broadcasted on:

