



## THOSE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*By Judy Lind, Executive Director*

Every program needs leaders. Some are out front leading the effort and others are behind the scenes, invisible but crucially important.

A vital role for any nonprofit organization is that of president of the board. Often they serve for a longer and more consistent period than an executive director and provide the continuity for the program and staff. No nonprofit executive can survive without an active, involved, committed and supportive board and particularly its president.

The Kukui Children's Foundation (KCF) owes much of its success to Jack Dwyer, its president since 2006. A natural leader and longtime advocate for children and families, he served as a founder and board president of the Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Oahu (also helping found the 4 neighbor island Justice Centers through partnerships with local Rotary Clubs). Jack also served on the Girl Scout Council and on the boards of MADD and Friends of Foster Youth, among others. He and his family have personally supported families in need and brought a

young man they met in Africa to be educated at HPU and then the Kennedy School at Harvard University.

An attorney by profession and a proud West Point graduate, Jack brings a community perspective built on the highest principles of Service Above Self, a foundational principle of the Rotary Club of Honolulu of which he was president. As the KCF board president, he is extremely generous with this time, talent and connections. He has never said "No" and makes himself available to help in every way needed, large and small.

His commitment to the Kukui Center is emulated by the other community leaders who serve with him on the Board of Directors; the majority have served with Jack since the Kukui Center was just a dream in our collective consciousness. They say if you want something done, ask a busy person. And we did and look what we have achieved!

Please join us in celebrating and thanking the many community volunteers who serve as directors on Kukui Center boards. It is a wonderful partnership.



*Jack Dwyer, President  
Kukui Children's Foundation*

## IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE, OH... IT'S OUR CLINICAL DIRECTOR, KARI WHEELING!

**Kari Wheeling** is an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse - Family Nurse Practitioner. Kari has always been an integral part of the HMHB team, serving 10 years as HMHB's Project Coordinator and 6 years as a Board Member, all of which have fueled her drive and determination to directly impact women, children, and their families in Hawai'i.

In her new role, we have been working tirelessly the last two years developing what the perfect clinical services arm would look like for HMHB. The fruit of her labor has resulted in increasing access to comprehensive perinatal/reproductive health services and more for the families we serve. Since the launch of our Mana Mama Mobile Clinic, Kari and the staff have been out in the field, providing the utmost high-quality



services that feels like concierge medicine, along with delivering our amazing provisions and social services.

You need diapers/wipes/food/cribs/help with WIC/SNAP? We got you. You need rental assistance? We got you. You need access to perinatal services? We got you. You need birth control? We got you. You're scared about your pregnancy and the stressors of the pandemic getting to you? We got you. Your auntie or uncle is homebound and needs a COVID-19 test or vaccine? We got you. You need someone to cry and be happy for you to celebrate your huge accomplishments? Kari's got you there too.

Thank you Kari- You're our hero.

We love you so much.



healthy mothers  
healthy babies  
COALITION OF HAWAII

## UNDERSTANDING PAST TRUTHS

In 2020, Family Promise nationwide affiliates formed the Racial Justice Council to ensure we collectively address racial equity issues at all levels within the work we do as individual agencies. **Marissa Commey** stepped up and is committed to being a leading member in policy, practices, and procedural changes to aid in the principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA). The council was created to address the systemic and structural racism that disproportionately causes Black, Brown, and Indigenous people to be affected by homelessness and poverty.

This past June, Marissa returned to her home state of Oklahoma to honor the centennial anniversary of the historic 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.



This event was an 18-hour attack on the thriving segregated neighborhood of Greenwood. According to the commission's 2001 report, 100 to 300 people were killed, and more than 8,000 people became homeless. Later there was an attempt to restore the district, but efforts were disrupted after planners decided to build a highway through the area. This event is one of many examples of systemic and structural racism.

Rooted in understanding significant truths of the past, Marissa brings a perspective of compassion and empathy to her work as the Manager of Community Engagement. She incorporates the DEIA concepts daily and provides training to our staff to advance our genuinely diverse and anti racist agency.

## TO HELP SOMEONE IS TO EMPOWER THEM



"What I do is very rewarding and meaningful", says

Melissa Wong,  
Senior Staff  
Attorney in the  
Public Benefits  
department at  
Legal Aid Society of

Hawaii.

Straight out of Law School, Hawaii-born Melissa joined Legal Aid not knowing she would love working for a non-profit organization. It has been five years; her passion to help has not wavered.

Melissa is also staunch advocate for education, constantly encouraging her clients to be pro-active. "I try to empower them that they could make a



difference especially if they experienced injustice. They have a powerful voice. Melissa and the Legal Aid's public benefits department, provides help to Hawaii residents with accessing claims or benefits especially during the pandemic when many families are facing unemployment, loss of income, and state and federal agency offices remain closed to the public.

Other benefits that Legal Aid assists with are TANF/TAONF (cash assistance), SNAP, and Med-QUEST (for state), and SSDI and SSI for disabled adults and SSI for disabled children (for federal).

If you are facing economic hardship due and experiencing barriers to obtaining needed benefits, you may qualify for assistance. Please call 808-536-4302 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Mondays to Fridays. You may also visit [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org) for more information.

WELCOME JULIANNE BAKER MATTERN,  
OUR NEW ADULT LITERACY MANAGER

**Hawaii  
Literacy**

Julianne Baker Mattern was born and raised on Oahu where she attended Mililani High School. She has a background in teaching Special Education and was a teacher with the Hawaii Department of Education for several years. Prior to joining Hawaii Literacy, Julianne was the Branch Director for the Armed Services YMCA on Wheeler providing services for our military members and their families.

At Hawaii Literacy, Julianne is responsible for leading our Adult Literacy program where volunteers provide free 1-to-1 literacy tutoring to help English-speaking adults and parents unable to read and write so they can build literacy skills and help their own children also become readers.



The program operates on O'ahu, Kaua'i, and the Kona side of Hawai'i Island. As a young child, Julianne saw her mother struggle with being unable to read and write in both her native language and with English. She was inspired by her mother's strength to seek out help to not only read and write in her second language but also to improve her life. All of this compelled her to join Hawaii Literacy and help other community members like her mother.

Julianne holds a Bachelor's of Science in Business with a concentration in Communications and a Master's of Arts in Elementary Education. On the weekends you can find her spending time with her family or date nights with her husband.

## PAVING A PATH FOR CAREER MOM'S



**Leadership  
in Disabilities  
& Achievement of  
Hawai'i**

Lineè Reeves started working for Leadership in Disabilities & Achievement of Hawai'i in September 2020. She is a single mother of five children, two of

whom are children with disabilities. Born prematurely with a unique gene mutation called Waardenberg Syndrome, Lineè lost her hearing in her left ear at the age of four. School was a struggle for her and being bullied was isolating and lonely. Through her earlier life experiences and raising her children with disabilities, Lineè is inspired to help people of



any age with a disability and their family be empowered by spreading awareness through person-centered planning, self-advocacy, and a strong support circle toward inclusivity across all settings.

Lineè enjoys new adventures and is passionate about helping and supporting children and youth with disabilities. LDAH has broadened her scope and perception of special education and she is humbled by the work we do by serving families. Lineè is dedicated to her self-care, her children and time outdoors hiking, going to the beach, and experiencing new things. She believes that it is okay to be uncomfortable, but never give up! Through her experience and compassion to serve her community, Lineè hopes to encourage parents and family members that they are their child's best advocate.



**HALE KIPA**

GOING THE EXTRA MILE FOR YOUTH? *Cam Do!*

While based at our Old Fort Weaver Road office, Hale Kipa's newest case manager, **Cameron Coleman** can be regularly seen at the Kukui Center meeting with his town clients. Cam joined the Independent Living Program/Imua Kākou team in October 2020, after returning to the islands with his family. Cam was previously stationed here with the US Army, where he met his wife who is local to O'ahu and also in active service.

**What led you to work with young people?** *My first job was as a Youth Development Specialist at the Boys and Girls Club. I found great satisfaction in helping young people learn, grow, and develop to their greatest potential.*

**What are the challenges/best parts about working with young people?** *The biggest challenge with working with young people is getting them to trust that you*



*have their best interest at heart, and the best part about working with young people is watching them flourish.*

**How does your childhood experiences influence your work with young people?** *The Boys and Girls Club greatly impacted my childhood. I learned many valuable skills and life lessons that I pass on to young people.*

**Any advice for folks newly working with young people?** *Be patient!*  
**Favorite local foods?** *Chicken Long Rice, Kalua pig, Mochiko Chicken w/ curry from L&L*

When not working, Cam enjoys outdoor activities with his family. Cam was also recently accepted into Chaminade's school counselor program and will be starting classes this fall. Congratulations, Cam! We are lucky to have you!

## A GENEROUS DONATION FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATORS



The Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) Hawaii donated 100x packs of school supplies for the Keiki of Kids Hurt Too Hawaii. The school supplies were purchased by ALA Hawaii and came in great use as additional fillers for the 100 backpacks (with folders, hand sanitizer, and a mask included) that were recently donated by Locations Foundation. The school supply packs include: Pens, pencils, eraser, wide ruled folder paper, folder, composition book, highlighters, colored pencils, washable markers, crayons, pencil sharpener, glue stick, Elmer's glue, and a utility box.

Keiki and their families have been visiting the Kukui Center to collect school supplies for the Fall 2021 school semester. Two chair racks were also donated to Kids Hurt Too Hawaii by ALA Hawaii. The racks store foldable chairs that are mostly used for KHTH's Therapeutic Peer Support Groups and Volunteer Facilitator Trainings. The chair racks are a tremendous help for keeping the activity space clean and clear for youth and their families to enjoy. The school supplies and chair racks were delivered to the Kukui Center on Thursday, August 19, 2021.



Two Chair Racks (Customized) at Kids Hurt Too Hawaii Space  
TJ Tom II (Program Director) and Hiro Ito, MSW (Co-Founder and Program Director)

*Mahalo Nui Loa  
from*



**Healing Young Hearts**

@kidshurttoohawaii



*By Terry Chin*

### FOCUS ON: ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ADMINISTRATORS

The Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) Hawaii Chapter was established in 1974 to enhance and promote the quality of management in legal service organizations in Hawaii. The Chapter's over 34 members represent 25 local law firms.

Each year the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) Hawaii Chapter selects a non-profit organization to support in its community connection event.

This year, ALA decided to support the *Kids Hurt Too Hawaii* agency under the umbrella of Kukui Center which is a nonprofit which works with grieving children and their families. Cynthia White, its Executive Director, mentioned that they need a chair rack to safely stack chairs in their agency so that no children will get hurt while playing near the chairs. The agency could not find a suitable one on island or online and the shipping costs were prohibitive. Lymari Graciano, Administrator for AM Pacific Group LLP, who also has a background in filmmaking in which she has experience in designing and ordering specific custom-built apparatuses, knew exactly who to call and selected two builders to create/customize a chair rack/mover specific for *Kids Hurt Too Hawaii*. One of the builders is a retired grade school teacher and his input was invaluable. The chair rack was designed so that the children would not potentially hurt themselves; i.e. no sharp edges, no protruding screws/nails, nothing that could smash fingers, no ability to lock someone inside, no ability to climb on top of the rack. The original design was adjusted from building one giant chair rack into building two smaller chair racks for maneuverability and weight so the children could actually push and stack the chairs. As an extra feature, the chair racks were painted with chalkboard paint on the sides, so the kids can draw on it or the adults can write instructions on it.

For this year's Community Challenge, the local Hawaii Chapter raised over \$2720.00 from its generous-members and business partners! All excess money raised was used to purchase school supplies to fill 100 school backpacks.

***The 'Ohana at the Kukui Center Appreciates  
the Generosity of the ALA  
Mahalo Nui Loa!***



2021 Co-Chairs ALA Hawaii Community Outreach  
Lymari Graciano (AM Pacific Group LLP) and  
Terry Chin (Case Lombardi & Pettit)



Excess Funds Raised to Purchase School Supplies to fill 100  
backpacks Jenna Weissman (Producer & Project Manager-  
KHTH)), David Moore (Dept of the Attorney General), TJ Tom II  
(Program Director), Terry Chin (Case Lombardi & Pettit), Lymari  
Graciano (AM Pacific Group LLP)



Two Chair Racks/Movers Transported by  
Access Hawaii to Kids Hurt Too Hawaii

## *Mahalo Palena 'Ole*

Gratitude Beyond Measure to our 2021 Community Partners for your continued support of goods and services.

With *Aloha*, the Staff at the Kukui Center

### **Partnerships for Donations of Services**

Ace Security and Locksmiths  
Advanced Fencing Solutions  
AESolutionsLLC  
Afterschool Art  
Aloha Diaper Bank  
Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing  
ALTRES Global Business Services  
American Savings Bank  
Anthology Marketing Group  
Bodhi Massage Therapy  
Cushman & Wakefield ChaneyBrooks  
College Directions Hawaii  
Denton US LLP  
E Noa Corporation  
Wendell Elento  
Dennis Kim  
HACBED  
Hawaii Digi Doc  
Hawaii Self Storage  
HawaiiUSA Federal Credit Union  
HONBLUE  
IPR Hawaii  
King's Kustom Tinting  
KFVE Hawaii News Now  
Law Offices of Neal K.Aoki  
Learn to Love Yoga  
Leonui Communications  
Michael J. O'Malley  
'Ohana Komputer  
Pacific Data Services  
Professional Image Hawaii  
Take2 Productions  
The Bead Gallery  
The CPA Collective  
YMCA of Honolulu

### **Partnerships with Volunteers, Service Clubs, Non-Profit Organizations**

Arcadia Retirement Residence  
Bruce McEwan  
Habilitat, Inc.  
Hands in Helping Out  
Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Assn.  
Hawaii Youth Services Network  
Harris United Methodist Church  
Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority  
The Luke Center for Public Service at Punahou School  
Seymour Kazimirski  
Waikiki Community Center Seniors  
Winners Camp Foundation

### **Partnerships for Donations of Funds**

Aloha United Way  
Ekkebus Charitable Foundation  
Evans Fund  
Ili'ili Fund  
Jhamandas Watumull Fund  
Friends of Hawaii Charities  
Izumo Taishakyo Mission of Hawaii  
Na Lei Aloha Foundation  
Women's League of Central Union Church

### **Partnerships for Donations of Goods**

Assn. of Legal Administrators  
Aloha Diaper Bank  
Big City Diner  
CS Wo & Sons  
G Wiz! Promotions  
Honolulu Sign Company  
Kirk Hovious  
Islander Group  
Junior League Sustainers  
Pepsi Beverages Company  
RSI Roofing & Building Company  
Servco Pacific  
Soderholm Bus Sales and Leasing  
Soldat Construction  
Trade West  
Vim and Vigor



**KEIKI & ADULTS  
SERVED BY THE  
KUKUI CENTER**

2019: 11,000+

2020: 16,000+

Increase: 40%

If you know of any individuals, businesses, or organizations that can offer their support and interested in joining our Community Partners Program, please email [mamong@kukuicenter.org](mailto:mamong@kukuicenter.org). *Mahalo nui loa!*



**FALL 2021**

**Harry and Jeanette Weinberg  
Kukui Center**

*A gathering place for those who serve vulnerable children and families*

245 North Kukui Street - #103  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

## OUR FAMILY OF SOCIAL SERVICES

### **Board of Directors**

**John R. Dwyer, Jr.** - President

**Clyde Namu'o** - Vice President

**Pat Kay** - Secretary

**Lauren R. Sharkey** - Treasurer

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**Jim Reinhardt**

**Victoria Schneider**

**Sue Landon**

**Karen K. White**

*Board Members Emeritus*

**Judy Lind**

*Executive Director*

**Marlene Among**

*Community Partners  
Program*

**kukuchildrensfoun@hawaii.rr.com**  
**www.kukuicenter.org**

### **FAMILY PROMISE OF HAWAII**

Resources for homeless & low income  
families with children

(808) 548-7478

[www.familypromisehawaii.org](http://www.familypromisehawaii.org)

### **LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF HAWAII**

Legal services for immigrant victims of  
crime, including domestic violence,  
sexual assault and human trafficking

(808) 536-4302

[www.hijcenter.org](http://www.hijcenter.org)

### **KIDS HURT TOO HAWAII**

Support for grieving and traumatized children

(808) 545-5683

[www.kidshurttoo.org](http://www.kidshurttoo.org)

### **HAWAII LITERACY**

Literacy and lifelong  
learning services

(808) 537-6706

[www.hawaiiliteracy.org](http://www.hawaiiliteracy.org)

### **HEALTHY MOTHERS HEALTHY BABIES COALITION OF HAWAII**

Advocacy and direct services for pregnant  
and birthing people so that babies can be  
born healthy and raised in a safe and  
nurturing environment.

(808) 737-5805

[info@hmhb-hawaii.org](mailto:info@hmhb-hawaii.org)

### **LEADERSHIP IN DISABILITIES & ACHIEVEMENT OF HAWAII**

Training and screening center for  
parents of children with disabilities

(808) 536-9684

[www.ldahawaii.org](http://www.ldahawaii.org)

### **HALE KIPA, INC.**

Outreach services for child abuse victims in, or  
transitioning out of, foster care to become  
independent

(808) 853-4660

[info@halekipa.org](mailto:info@halekipa.org)

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