



## Lots Going On in the Kukui Center Neighborhood

Our neighborhood is getting a lot of great attention lately. A new and very exciting project is the planning effort, spearheaded by American Savings Bank, to reimagine A'ala Park and expand its usage. They have contracted the UH Community Design Center to work with the Trust for Public Land. They have conducted individual and group interviews and will be holding 15 meetings with a wide variety of stakeholders to present various concepts for recreation and culture within the park. The participants include park users, neighborhood residents, business and nonprofits, the unhoused, public housing, and Chinatown. They are expected to complete this phase of the conceptual plan by June 2023.

Their plans include a lot of green space, areas for picnics, sports and games, exercise, community gardens and possibly special events. This creates an exciting opportunity not just for the area businesses and nonprofits such as the Kukui Center, but also the more than 18,000 people who live within a 10 minute walking distance. "Natural spaces and public parks play a vital role in the health of whole neighborhoods. We are so excited to work with community members living and working around A'ala Park as we develop a shared vision for the future of the park" said Sultan White, Parks for People Program Manager at the Trust for Public Land.



American Savings Bank  
Overlooks A'ala Park

There has been a long standing interest in the potential of our neighborhood. Several years ago, we were invited to participate in a visioning project conducted by the SHADE Institute, Hawaii's first public interest design organization. Over the course of multiple meetings attended by more than 50 stakeholders, we shared our ideas and dreams for how the River Walk could be transformed, providing an experience similar to that of San Antonio's River Walk. Despite a great deal of enthusiasm, energy and interest, that effort did not progress because of a lack of funding. Thus we were very happy to see that the River Walk is being included in the current A'ala Park redesign project. And even better, Mayor Rick Blangiardi has just announced that the City and County of Honolulu will be looking at upgrading and creating an exciting new experience there.

When we first created the Kukui Center, some questioned whether we should be situated on the outskirts of Chinatown. Time has proven that this is a thriving neighborhood with great potential.



healthy mothers  
healthy babies  
COALITION OF HAWAII

## HMHB Expands Services to Hawai'i Island

Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii has opened an office and launched a second mobile van in Kona, HI. This expansion will support pregnant, postpartum, and birthing people and their families who experience limited access to maternal and infant care. Based on the state's most recent data, nearly all indicators for perinatal and infant health on Hawai'i Island are worse than statewide and national rates. HMHB aims to improve maternal and child health outcomes for residents across Hawai'i Island through this new venture.

HMHB currently serves members on Hawaii Island via telehealth, and through partners who serve as distribution sites for cribs and other social needs. Our telehealth platform provides value by initiating virtual support that is flexible and convenient. We are now able to replicate the hands-on success of the Oahu-based Mana Mama mobile van to provide in-person appointments within the Hawaii Island perinatal care shortage area. This expansion will address a broad variety of needs through a health equity lens that will begin to reduce the disparities we see today across Hawaii Island. By increasing education and reducing barriers to accessing care, our mobile van is in direct alignment with family-centered and integrative approaches to health care.



## Every Child Needs a Home

Sadly, an estimated 1 in 30 young children in Hawai'i experience homelessness every year. Community partners and supporters like you are transforming the lives of those children and families — giving them a pathway to stable housing and lasting independence.

We recently worked with a family of three — a mom, dad, and 1-year-old daughter — through our emergency shelter program. Thanks to generous community support, this program provides free interim housing for families experiencing homelessness, while they work closely with case managers to locate and re-enter permanent housing. This family had to overcome several challenges to finding housing, but we're happy to share that they successfully moved into a new apartment in mid-February — just as they're expecting their second child.

Our shelter program provides some of the only private, or "non-congregate," shelter space for families with children on O'ahu. Each family has a separate room in this program. It's also successful because of the community's involvement - volunteers provide warm meals and essential household supplies. And all our programs,

including the shelter program, provide holistic wraparound support, from individualized financial coaching to connections to other essential services. We're also excited to resume in-person volunteer opportunities later this year. We will soon be looking for volunteers to run evening activities with the families in our programs. For volunteers interested in providing meals, we'll also offer the opportunity to eat with the families (as we did pre-pandemic), instead of just dropping off the meals.

Lastly, we are hoping to expand our emergency shelter program this year, and we appreciate any referrals for potential land or properties that we could lease or acquire — or that the owner may be interested in donating. If you have any questions or suggestions, please email [ryan@familypromisehawaii.org](mailto:ryan@familypromisehawaii.org). For the latest updates about volunteer opportunities and our programs, you can subscribe to our email newsletter at [familypromisehawaii.org/email-newsletter](http://familypromisehawaii.org/email-newsletter) or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.





## Sam\* Leads the Way for Keiki at Mayor Wright Homes!

Classmates told Sam he had no chance of winning the Student Government election. Sam, an 11-year-old resident of Mayor Wright Homes (MWH), attends Hawai'i Literacy's Family Literacy Library (FLL) Program, an after-school youth program located at two public housing sites in downtown Honolulu. Discouraged, Sam told FLL staff, "Miss, nobody from MWH wins, what's the point in even trying?" Staff believed in Sam, so with their support and encouragement Sam started to plan his campaign. From making posters at the library to writing his speech and practicing it daily in front of staff, Sam was determined to win. His mom was so happy that FLL supported and treated him like family. When the big day came, Sam arrived at the library, unable to contain his excitement he announced "I won!" Everyone at FLL congratulated him with high-fives and chee-hoos. His peers came with big smiles, "Miss! Sam won!" Sam thanked everyone for their help and promised to be the best president he could be! That day, not only did Sam win the seat as Student Government President, but so did every keiki at Mayor Wright Homes!

\*Student's name has been changed for privacy.



## Time Will Tell

We are living in the days of the aftermath of a pandemic that literally turned our world upside down. The families we serve are renewing their self-worth, caring for their mental health, putting food on the tables, maintaining careers while being attentive to how their children are faring in school. After all, they spent a year schooling them online in their homes, feeling like failures, but reassured their children were protected from the tentacles of COVID. The majority of families did well with some being resilient, stronger, creative and inspired to do more.

At LDAH, over 50% of our staff are parents of children with disabilities. Through the pandemic they were among the 20,000 parents of children with disabilities schooling their children at home and maintaining their careers at LDAH. They continued to guide families by creating an online parent support group to ease the stress of families schooling their children at home. As the pandemic subsided, and children returned to school, our staff felt the pressure of safely returning their own children to school, mentoring families to do the same, and concerned about being exposed to COVID. The pandemic has changed them. They are resilient and love their jobs, but it has taken a toll on their mental well-being. Today, they are rebuilding their communication, trust and connections with each other using a communications consultant. Brave, durable, and tough is how to describe these growing pains. The results will impact us for a lifetime. #weareLDAH



## Empowering Our Children

Kids Hurt Too Hawaii expands mentoring opportunities to meet the needs of children and families through collaborations with other non-profits and businesses. Along with providing therapeutic peer support groups, mentoring activities work to alleviate suffering from emotional, social, and academic problems common in children and families impacted by parent loss and/or trauma from domestic violence, abuse, or neglect. We currently have 143 children and 72 families participating in our programs. In 2022, we provided 192 group meetings and 135 mentoring activities.

For the last 2 years, one of the KHTH mentoring activities that has been provided in collaboration with the Honolulu Judo Club. Funded by an Okumura Family Fund grant, we have partnered with Judo instructor, Stephen Alphabet, who is the founder of Juku's ABC After School Program, an innovative approach which combines tutoring and Judo. Sixteen of our children took baseline assessments to determine their academic levels. They receive weekly tutoring, prior to Judo lessons, that addresses their individualized needs. The program is intended to empower children with academic success and improve self-esteem. This is a wonderful opportunity for our children.

All KHT children will be invited to participate in Juku's ABC After School Program. According to Lauren Nahme, vice president of Strategy and Transformation at Kamehameha Schools, "When the hearts and minds of our keiki are well-supported, healthy, and whole, it places them in the best position to thrive in school, their community, and their home."



These stories of success are all from former foster youth in our Interdependent Living, Higher Education, or Imua Kākou (ʻIHI) program. May they encourage you as they do us.

Ke'ale is an aspiring model. She recently obtained two modeling gigs. One agency, who works with Bretman Rock, asked Ke'ale to be one of their priority models.

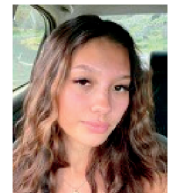
Kacie is pursuing her bachelor's at HPU leading to a career in criminal justice. She is currently a Youth Partner for Epic Ohana, providing support and mentorship for young adults experiencing homelessness.

Brandon is a bachelor's candidate at Creighton University, pursuing a future as a Hawai'i business attorney.

Christian graduates from LCC this spring with an AA in accounting and will pursue a career as a financial consultant.

Keyt recently obtained her first job in sales. She is determined to make a career out of it and becoming a real estate agent or entrepreneur.

Delylah graduates this spring from the University of Tampa with a BS in Biology, and minors in chemistry and dance/theater. Delylah has been conducting stem cell research and hopes to publish her work soon. Delylah recently obtained her CNA license and wants to become a surgeon.



Kacie



Delylah





## Hawaii Immigrant Justice Center: Supporting Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence

When Yoshi and daughter Hana, 4, arrived in Hawaii, they were full of dreams. Yoshi was to marry an Oahu resident and they were ready to build a family.

But during the marriage, Yoshi's husband became abusive and withdrew Yoshi and Hana's immigration petition. He claimed marriage fraud. This denied them the right to apply for immigrant status and endangered their stay in the United States. Without green cards, both mother and daughter would be forced to leave the country and might possibly be placed in a detention center before deportation. The uncertainty of their life and legal status was scary and devastating.

Hawai'i Immigrant Justice Center (HIJC) at Legal Aid helped them achieve immigrant status through the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). In 2022, they finally received green cards allowing them to become legal residents. HIJC also helped Yoshi win a divorce case against her abusive husband, as well as full custody of all her children (she had two other children with her ex-husband).

"I could not do the procedures by myself, but HIJC supported me," said Yoshi. "Moreover, since someone helped me, I also received emotional support and I could have my peace of mind."

HIJC helps survivors of domestic violence and other serious crimes with immigration assistance. To request assistance you can go to [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org) or call 808-536-4302. Interpretation is available at no cost.

## WISH LIST

The agencies at the Kukui Center need the following goods and services for the vulnerable children and families that they serve. If you can help in anyway, please contact Marlene at [mamong@kukuicenter.org](mailto:mamong@kukuicenter.org)

### HAWAII IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER

- Volunteers to assist the elderly & disabled families move into housing

### HAWAII LITERACY

- Locally Published Books for Keiki (new or gently used)
- School Supplies & Back Packs
- See thru Plastic Bins

### HALE KIPA

- New tablets & laptops
- Working Condition Microwaves
- New Pillow Cases, Sheets, Furniture

### HEALTHY MOTHERS HEALTHY BABIES

- New GRACO Pack 'n Play Travel Cribs
- Folding Chairs

### KIDS HURT TOO HAWAII

- See thru Plastic Bins
- Air Purifier
- Volunteer to digitize/scan documents

### LEADERSHIP IN DISABILITIES & ACHIEVEMENT IN HAWAII

- Gift Cards & School Supplies
- Volunteer Graphic Artist
- Volunteer AV Tech to help with virtual conferences

The agencies at the Kukui Center need the following:

\*GIFT CARDS FOR KEIKI MEALS

\*TRANSLATORS in Korean, Chuukese, and Marshallese

\* Commercial Shredder

*Mahalo*





Kids Hurt Too Hawaii

*Congratulations*

**HIRO ITO**

Hawai'i Hyundai Hometown Heroes Winner  
of a 2022 Santa Cruz!

As the Co-Founder and Program Director of Kids Hurt Too Hawai'i, Hiro Ito conducts peer support groups, mentoring and workforce training for grieving and traumatized children. He has dedicated his life to service and providing the help to those who need it the most. Congratulations Hiro for being Hyundai 2022 Hometown Hero! There were so many great nominees. It's so awesome to see so many great people doing such amazing work in our community.

**Keiki Community Fair**  
 Saturday, April 29 • 11:30–3:30 pm  
 A'ala Park • 280 N. King St  
 Free registration: [familypromisehawaii.org/fair](https://familypromisehawaii.org/fair) **FREE!**

Bring the whole family to get **free** community resources, including:

- Fresh & canned food
- Kids' books
- Health screenings
- Social services
- Family fun activities
- Prize giveaways
- Music & entertainment
- Lunch & snacks

Organized by

Family Promise of Hawai'i

healthy mothers healthy babies coalition of hawaii



Save the date for an upcoming Family Resource Fair! The event will be on Saturday, April 29 at A'ala Park. Hosted by Family Promise of Hawai'i and Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawai'i, many of the Kukui Center organizations will be in attendance, along with other community organizations serving children and families.

**More details will be available at**  
**[familypromisehawaii.org/resourcefair2023](https://familypromisehawaii.org/resourcefair2023)**  
**If you have any questions, please email**  
**[info@familypromisehawaii.org](mailto:info@familypromisehawaii.org).**



## *Mahalo*

*to our 2023 Community Partners for their continued support of goods and services.*

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

Ace Security & Locksmith  
Advanced Fencing Solutions  
AESolutions LLC  
Afterschool Art  
ALTRES Global Business Services Inc.  
American Savings Bank  
Anthology Marketing Group  
Bodhi Massage Therapy  
College Directions Hawaii  
Denton US LLP  
Wendell Elento  
HACBED  
Hawaii Digi Doc  
Hawaii USA Federal Credit Union  
HONBLUE  
IPR Hawaii  
Dennis Kim  
King's Kustom Tinting  
Law Offices of Neal K. Aoki  
Leonui Communications  
Michael J. O'Malley  
Ohana Komputer  
Pacific Data Services  
Professional Image Hawaii  
RSI Roofing & Building Supply  
Take2 Production  
The Bead Gallery  
The CPA Collective  
YMCA of Honolulu

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

Aloha United Way  
Clarence T.C. Ching Foundation  
Evans Fund  
Friends of Hawaii Charities  
Ili'ili Fund  
Izumo Taishakyo Mission of Hawaii  
Watumull Fund  
Na Lei Aloha Foundation  
Women's League of Central Union Church  
Ekkebus Charitable Foundation

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

Aloha Diaper Bank  
Big City Diner  
CS Wo & Sons  
Assn. Legal Administrators  
GWIZ Promotions  
Honolulu Sign Company  
Kirk Hovious  
Islander Group  
Junior League Sustainers  
Jordan and Cara Odo Scholarship Foundation  
Servco Pacific  
Soderholm Bus and Mobility  
Soldat Construction  
Vim and Vigor

### ***Partnerships with Volunteers, Service Clubs***

### ***& Non-Profit Organizations***

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





Spring 2023

Harry and Jeanette Weinberg

**Kukui Center**

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

245 North Kukui Street - #103  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

## OUR FAMILY OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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

### FAMILY PROMISE OF HAWAII

Preventing and ending homelessness  
for families with children  
808-300-0560  
[familypromisehawaii.org](http://familypromisehawaii.org)

### HALE KIPA

Outreach, residential and  
therapeutic services for youth  
and young adults in crisis and  
those transitioning from the  
foster care system into adulthood  
808-589-1829  
[info@halekipa.org](mailto:info@halekipa.org)

### HAWAII LITERACY

Literacy & lifelong learning services  
808-537-6706  
[www.hawaiiliteracy.org](http://www.hawaiiliteracy.org)

### HAWAII IMMIGRANT JUSTICE CENTER AT LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF HAWAII

Civil legal services for low income families  
and immigrant victims of crime, including  
domestic violence, sexual assault and  
human trafficking  
808-536-4302 [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org)

### HEALTHY MOTHERS HEALTHY BABIES COALITION OF HAWAII

Advocacy & direct services for pregnant &  
birthing people so that babies can be born  
healthy & raised in a safe & nurturing  
environment  
808-737-5805 [info@hnhb-hawaii.org](mailto:info@hnhb-hawaii.org)

### KIDS HURT TOO HAWAII

Support for grieving & traumatized children  
808-545-5683  
[www.kidshurttoo.org](http://www.kidshurttoo.org)

### LEADERSHIP IN DISABILITIES & ACHIEVEMENT OF HAWAII

Training and screening center for parents of children with or at  
risk of disabilities and the professionals that serve them.  
808-536-9684 [www.ldahawaii.org](http://www.ldahawaii.org)