

Westside Stories

"The Pride of the Westside"

A community newspaper by and for residents of the Leeward Coast of O'ahu, Hawai'i
Direct mailed to over 15,400 residences in the areas of Nānākuli, Mā'ili, Wai'anae, Mākaha and Mākua

MAY 2026
Volume 29, Number 5

VoR's Kāne 'Ōpio Youth Leadership Project Inspires Students

Submitted by Denice Keliikoa

More than fifty eight-grade young men from Nānākuli and Wai'anae Intermediate Schools gathered on April 15 at Lanikūhonua Cultural Institute, for the Kāne 'Ōpio Youth Leadership Project, a Valley of Rainbows initiative focused on strengthening leadership, character,

and future aspirations.

The day opened with a powerful cultural protocol led by Dr. Kyle "Kaliko" Chang, grounding students in 'ike (knowledge) and values, followed by emcee Leon Florendo who set the tone for a day of growth and engagement. In his keynote speech, Charles Hew Len shared his personal story of growth and encouraged students to reflect on personal responsibility and the importance of self-leadership in shaping their futures.

Students then experienced hands-on and high-energy sessions with community leaders and professionals. The Honolulu Police Department Specialized Services Division, led by Sergeant Pat Sung and SWAT K9 handlers Bruce Pang, Chad Tanaka, Joey Tomita, and Derek Yamamoto, demonstrated the discipline and partnership behind their "Heroes on Four Legs" program. This was followed by "Eyes in the Sky," where Sgt. Dana Souza and Sgt. Alan Ibrao showcased drone technology and the evolving fu-

ture of policing. During breakout career panels, students connected directly with leaders across fields, including Mike Lambert (law enforcement), Dr. Kaliko Chang (health), Leon Florendo (education), and professional mixed martial artist Yancy Medeiros, and gained insight into diverse career pathways rooted in purpose and perseverance.

The afternoon shifted toward personal development and applied skills. Landen Muāsau returned to lead "First

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Kāne 'Ōpio at Lanikūhonua



MOTHER'S DAY
SUNDAY, MAY 10TH



MEMORIAL DAY
MONDAY, MAY 25TH



SCHOOL GRADUATIONS
SEE CALENDAR ON PAGE 9

Presorted Standard U.S. POSTAGE PAID HONOLULU, HI PERMIT NO. 169

Papahana 'O Kaiona at the Hawai'i State Senate

Submitted by Senator Samantha DeCorte

In a powerful and heartfelt moment at the Hawai'i State Senate, Papahana 'O Kaiona took center stage to deliver the chamber's "Moment of Contemplation," bringing with them not just words, but the spirit of the Wai'anae Coast.

The presentation was led by Briana Joshua, a proud graduate of Papahana 'O Kaiona, and was joined by her mother, Bernice Joshua, and cousin, Miulang Amina. Standing before lawmakers, their presence represented more than a family, it represented resilience, second chances and the transformative impact of culturally grounded education on the Westside.

Also present were kumu and staff who make Papahana 'O Kaiona what it is today, educators and mentors who show up every day to guide, uplift, and believe in their students. Their work extends far beyond the classroom, building relationships that strengthen not only students, but entire families and



Briana Joshua (center) with staff and supporters of Papahana 'O Kaiona.

communities.

For the past four years, Papahana 'O Kaiona has operated out of a temporary space in Nānākuli, setting up and breaking down daily, navigating uncertainty while remaining steadfast in their mission. Despite these challenges, the program has continued to grow,

proving that impact is not defined by facilities, but by people. They are in the process of securing a permanent home on the Wai'anae Coast, a milestone made possible through strong partnerships and a shared commitment to the future of Westside youth. Kamehameha

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From the Publisher

By Steve Olbrich

Please visit our Facebook page for updated events that are happening throughout the month here on our Westside



May 1 is “May Day Is Lei Day in Hawai‘i.” Make sure you make a lei, wear a lei and share a lei! It’s so nice to see that so many schools and organizations have brought back their May Day programs.

This year’s legislative sessions will end on May 8 with several bills that affect our Westside are awaiting the Governor’s signature. Visit www.capitol.hawaii.gov for more information.

Once again Farrington Highway became inadequate for the Westside with the watermain break in Nānākuli recently. Mahalo to all the city, state and federal representatives who stepped up to get Kolekole Pass opened for the morning commute and Board of Water Supply for their hard work to get things open as quickly as possible. However, once again it showed the need for a true emergency access road off our Westside that’s open 24/7. Let’s hope we can all come together and work on this as soon as possible.

Mother’s Day is on May 10. To all

you mothers, grandmothers, aunts and older sisters who make a difference in a keiki’s life — mahalo for all you have done and continue to do. Mothers are incredibly special people, so make sure you send a card, flowers or visit with your mom and treat her to something special!

Believe it or not, graduation season is about to begin for our local high schools. Kamaile Academy PCS will hold their ceremony on May 21 beginning at 6 pm. Wai‘anae High’s graduation ceremony is on May 22 beginning at 6 pm and Nānākuli High & Intermediate School’s ceremony is on May 23 beginning at 5 pm. All ceremonies will be held at their school’s field. The last day of school for the Westside public school students is May 30.

Memorial Day is on May 25. The annual Shinnyo Lantern Floating Hawaii ceremony will be held the same day at Ala Moana Beach Park starting at 6:30 pm. If you wish to have your loved one remembered, and don’t want to fight

the crowds that day, you may submit your remembrances to lanternfloating-hawaii.com/remembrances by May 24, and it will be printed and floated on a Collective Remembrance Lantern. The ceremony will be televised on May 25 on KHON2 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm or online via their website or on their YouTube channel.

Oops! In last month’s issue, Adam Davis from National Association of Secondary School Principals submitted a story about NHIS’ Principal Christine Udarbe being named as one of the finalists for National Principal of the Year in which he incorrectly gave the wrong dates of her tenure at NHIS and her degree. She has been at NHIS since 2024, and her degree is a PhD (not EdD).

Also, in last month’s issue we featured Matthew “Messiah” Cargo being named a finalist for the 2026 BGCH Youth of the Year. We are pleased to

share that he was named the 2026 Boys & Girls Club Hawaii State Youth of the Year – the organization’s highest honor and will represent the state at the regional competition in May in Arizona. Good Luck Messiah!

As we were going to press, we learned of the passing of James “Jimbo” Taylor who was well known as the Video Production Training Manager at ‘Olelo Community Media at both Wai‘anae and Nanakuli High and later serving on the ‘Olelo Board of Directors. Our deepest condolences to his ‘ohana.

Once again, mahalo to all of you who stepped up to help all of our Westside community members in need with food and water, household goods, clothing, personal hygiene products, building materials and more through the past weeks of all the devastating storms. Westsiders are always there to help each other! #PaaPono96792

Kāne ‘Ōpio

Continued from front page

Impressions,” where students practiced communication, confidence, and even how to tie a tie with guidance from community “uncles.” Rotating breakout sessions deepened learning in self-care and wellness with Dr. Chang, technology and innovation with Elton Garcia Uta and Chrissy Kauhine, and cultural sustainability with Wayson Josue of ‘Elepaio Social Services. The day con-

cluded with reflection, student sharing, and a collective closing of Hawai‘i Aloha which reinforced unity and pride.

Heartfelt mahalo goes to the generous sponsors—Atherton Family Foundation, Hawaiian Electric, First Hawaiian Bank, Hui Huliau, James Campbell Development, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, NFL Foundation, Goodwill Hawaii, Wahine Toa Designs, and Westside Stories—whose support made this impactful day possible for West O‘ahu’s future leaders.

Papahana ‘O Kaiona

Continued from front page

Schools, the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and the Department of Education were all recognized for their partnership and commitment to securing a permanent home for Papahana ‘O Kaiona and supporting the success of its students.

This moment in the Senate was more than ceremonial; it was a statement. A

statement that programs like Papahana ‘O Kaiona matter. A statement that Westside students deserve opportunities rooted in culture, identity, and purpose. A statement that when community, education, and leadership come together, real change is possible.

As applause filled the chamber, it was clear: Papahana ‘O Kaiona is not just a program, it is a movement grounded in ‘ike, resilience, and hope for the next generation.

We apologize, but due to space limitations we needed to pull Niele this month. It will return to its regular space next month in our June issue.

Contributors to this Month’s Issue:

Racquel Aikala, Samantha DeCorte, Kelsey Domingo, Sally Ford, Wendy Gumm, Katie Ka‘ahanui, Denice Keliikoa and Kelly Stinefelt

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who contributed to their community newspaper and we invite everyone to do the same.

Next issue: June 2026 • Story & Advertising Deadline: May 10, 2026



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PROUD MEMBER OF THE WAIANAE COAST ROTARY CLUB



Rego & Nakoa
Attorneys at Law
A Law Corporation



Happy Mother's Day
Sunday, May 5, 2026
My mother was my role model before I even knew what that word was. — *Lincoln*


Memorial Day
Monday, May 25, 2026
WE REMEMBER AND SALUTE THOSE WHO PAID THE ULTIMATE PRICE FOR OUR FREEDOM

- Workers' Compensation • Automobile & Personal Injury
- Family Law • Estate Planning • Business • Real Estate Law

Wai‘anae Office
85-833 Farrington Hwy.
Wai‘anae, Hawai‘i 96792
808-696-7061

Honolulu Office (Diamond Head Tower)
500 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 400
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96813
808-545-7061

Email: lawyers@regonakoalaw.com | Web: regonakoalaw.com
APPOINTMENTS BY TELEPHONE, ZOOM OR IN PERSON



F.O.W.L.

Friends Of Wai‘anae Library

May Day is Lei Day
Viva Cinco De Mayo
Happy Mother's Day
Honor our fallen Heroes on Memorial Day

In May we are featuring
Hawaiiana and
Nostalgia
(Do You remember?)

Don't forget to donate
your clean
unwanted books.

Inaugural Valley CommUNITY Fest demonstrates community connection and pride in Nānākuli



Community connections were made and everyone had lots of fun.

Submitted by Katie Ka'ahanui

The inaugural Valley CommUNITY Fest held in March brought together residents, families, youth and service providers across the Westside for an evening centered on connection and community pride. Designed as a welcoming and inclusive space for all, the event created meaningful opportunities

Continued on page 8

HŪI Wai'anae!

Lets BUILD PILINA!! TO LEARN MORE AND REGISTER!

Strengthen community through mo'olelo, mea 'ai, and hana no'eau!



Questions email: nhpol@hawaii.edu

Spring CLEANING Help for Seniors

Need a hand getting rid of junk? We're offering **FREE** trash pickup for our Wai'anae kupuna!



We're here to help you clear out unwanted trash and haul it away!

- ✓ FREE pickup
- ✓ Two truckload limit
- ✓ No hazardous material or tires

Don't wait — limited spots available! Call 808-696-0774 or email: info@foster-realty.com to schedule your pickup!

Let's work together to keep our community beautiful!

Congratulations Class of '26 Graduates!



TWO CONVENIENT LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU IN WAI'ANAE & WAHIAWĀ!



Wai'anae
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Wahiawā
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Wahiawā, HI 96786
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Wai'anae Public Library

Hawai'i State Public Library System
May 2026

The library will be closed Saturday, May 23 through Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day.


Book Club
Wednesday, May 27 | 6:00pm – 7:30pm



Join us for the May 2026 meeting of the Wai'anae Public Library in-person book club. This month's book is **The Four Winds** by Kristin Hannah. In 1934 Texas, in the middle of the Dust Bowl, Elsa Martinelli must make a difficult choice: stay in the land she loves and ride out the storms with little food or water or depart for California and figure out how to make a living there.


There is no longer a virtual/online book club.

Writing Group
Monday, May 11 | 1:00pm – 2:30pm



Join us for a new self-guided writing circle that is a small safe place to practice your writing skills, learn from others, and share your own work, thoughts, and dreams.

Free Comic Book Day
Saturday, May 2 @ 10:00



On Saturday, May 2, visit us and pick out a free comic book of your choice. They are available while supplies last. Some comic titles include: World of Archie, Stitch, Eragon Universe (Transformers, G.I. Joe), Garfield, Avatar: The Last Airbender, Armageddon X-Men / Avengers, and Spidey & His Amazing

Family Storytime
Saturdays @ 10:00
May 2, 9, 16, 30

Toddler Time
Tuesdays @ 9:30
May 5, 12

Get 1-On-1 Tech Help with a **Digital Navigator**. Book your appointment for Monday morning or Saturday afternoon. Call the library for more information.

Wai'anae Public Library is located at 85-625 Farrington Hwy. 96792 808-697-7868
Email: owncirc@librarieshawaii.org

Legislatively Speaking



Representative
Darius Kila
House District 44
Mā'ili, Nānākuli,
Honokai Hale



Representative Kila with Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement CEO Joe Kūhiō Lewis and board member Makalika Naholowa'a, where Rep. Kila honored the organization with a legislative certificate recognizing its 25th anniversary on the floor of the House Chamber.

Session Adjournment and Working for Our Coast

On May 8, the Hawai'i State Legislature will adjourn the 2026 legislative session. As this column goes to print, I remain hopeful we will have strong deliverables to share with our community, including measures aimed at improving public safety, lowering costs for working families, strengthening road safety laws, and continuing investments that benefit our coast and Hawai'i as a whole. It has been a demanding session, but every bill, hearing, and late-night discussion has been grounded in one purpose: delivering for our communities.

I look forward to providing a fuller update in the weeks ahead on legislation moving to the Governor's desk and what it could mean directly for our families.

At the same time, I need to be very clear about an issue demanding immediate community attention: the proposed expansion of the Waimānalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill.

The City and County of Honolulu is pursuing the acquisition of additional

Continued on page 8



Representative
CHRISTOPHER Muraoka
House District 45
Wai'anae, Mākaha
Mākua

As we approach the close of the 2026 Legislative Session, I want to extend my heartfelt mahalo to the Wai'anae Coast community for your continued support, mana'o, and engagement. The Legislative session will end on May 8th, marking the end of a meaningful and productive two-year session. It has been a true honor to serve our Wai'anae community during this time.



Representative Muraoka and Tamah-Lani Noh, Program Director; U.S. Vets

Over the past two years, my work at the Capitol has remained grounded in the needs of Wai'anae—supporting local families, expanding access to jobs and workforce opportunities, improving infrastructure, and advocating for resources that strengthen our coast. While challenges remain, I am proud of the progress we have made together to uplift our community and create more opportunities for our residents to thrive close to home.

I also want to highlight an important upcoming event right here on the Wai'anae Coast. On May 5th, the 96792 Exposure Fair and Hiring Blitz will be held at the Ark of Safety Community Center, bringing together local businesses that are actively hiring. This is a valuable opportunity for our residents to connect directly with employers, explore career pathways, and take that next step toward stable employment. I strongly encourage anyone seeking a job or looking for a fresh start to attend and take advantage of this event.

As always, I remain committed to staying connected with our Wai'anae community. Your voices guide this work, and I welcome your input. Please feel free to reach out to my office at 808-586-8460, visit www.repmuraoka.com, or connect with me on social media @repmuraoka. Mahalo for the privilege of serving Wai'anae!

Announcing the
ROTARY 2027
"96792 PRIDE" CALENDAR
AMATEUR PHOTO CONTEST!

WAIANAEOAST
Rotary CLUB
PEOPLE OF ACTION

DEADLINE for receiving photos is June 30, 2026.
Winning photos will be featured in the 2027 "96792 Pride" Calendar
For more information, please visit: www.waianaecoastrotary.org

PLEASE NOTE:
If you had a problem submitting your photos, please resubmit them before the June 30th deadline.

Waianae Coast Rotary Club Presents
"96792 Pride"
of the Waianae Coast Rotary Club's Amateur Photo Contest

Rotary **FOR GOOD** "Thankback Mother and Call" — Above Kai'ua — John Endam 2026

- 1) Photos must be taken from anywhere between Kahe Point to Ka'ena Point - Any place in the 96792 zip code area.
- 2) No more than 3 entries per person.
- 3) Entrants must be amateurs — *no professionals please!*
- 4) Original photos only.
- 5) E-mail us your digital photos in high resolution (*landscape format please*).
- 6) Include in your e-mail: a) your name; b) your address; c) phone number; d) e-mail address; e) title of photo; f) location where photo was taken.

Email photos to: 96792pride@waianaecoastrotary.org

NĀNĀKULI PUBLIC LIBRARY
MAY 2026 PROGRAMS

FRI 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 KEIKI STORYTIME EVERY FRIDAY 11:30AM	MON 18 'OHANA GAME NIGHT 5PM-7PM
MON 4 HUI LEI 5:30PM-7PM	THUR 21 THE TINY TREE HTY 2:30PM
THUR 7 LEI OF LITERACY 5:30PM-7PM	SAT 23 - MON 25 LIBRARY CLOSED: MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND
SAT 9 MESSY PLAYTIME 10AM-11AM	TUE 26 PERLER PARTY 2:30PM-3:30PM
TUE 12 LEGO TIME 2:30PM-3:30PM	

For more info visit librarieshawaii.org/events

To get more information about TheHandi-Van eligibility process, call 808-538-0033.

TheHandi-Van
City and County of Honolulu

MAY IS WILDFIRE AWARENESS MONTH

Protecting lives, homes and communities

We continuously take these actions to support our Wildfire Safety Strategy to help reduce the risk of wildfires:

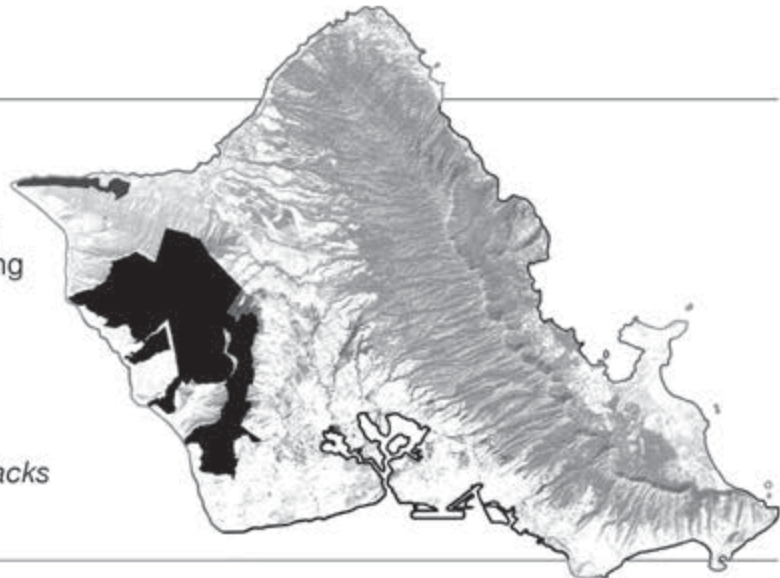
- Replacing and upgrading utility poles and overhead lines
- Utilizing the latest technology to shut power lines off quickly
- Installing high-definition cameras with artificial intelligence and weather stations
- Clearing vegetation around power lines
- Deploying spotters, drones and helicopters to monitor high-risk areas

Sign up for PSPS notifications

A key component of Wildfire Safety is our Public Safety Power Shutoff or PSPS program. PSPS identifies areas of high wildfire risk and can help prevent wildfires by proactively shutting off power.

If you live or work in areas with the following zip codes, contact us to receive PSPS notifications.

96792 Waianae / Mākaha / Nānākuli	96707 Kapolei
96791 Waialua	96857 Schofield Barracks
96786 Wahiawa	96759 Kunia



Special Medical Needs

If you depend on life support or medical equipment at home or if you have increased heating or cooling needs due to a medical condition, please contact us as soon as possible to ensure you receive PSPS notifications.

Go to: hawaiianelectric.com/medicalneedsalerts

Or call: 808-548-7311 on O'ahu

Homeowners and Renters

If you're a Homeowner, please update your contact information at: hawaiianelectric.com/myaccount
If you're a Renter, sign up for PSPS notifications here: hawaiianelectric.com/pspsalerts

Mobile App

With our mobile app, you can get important notifications, including PSPS alerts, plus status updates on outages. You can even access your online account. The Hawaiian Electric mobile app is free on Apple® App Store® and Google Play™ store.



Through our ongoing collaborations with first responders, community groups, government agencies and customers, Hawaiian Electric is committed to creating a fire-safe environment for our families and communities.



NEWSLETTER

Ka Leo o ke ALOHA, a me ka Leo o ke OLA. The Voice of ALOHA, and the voice of HEALTH.

SERVING WEST OAHU SINCE 1972 | WAIANAE · NANAKULI · KAPOLEI · EWA · WAIPAHU

MAY 2026 | RICHARD BETTINI, PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | DR. DONALD SIMPSON, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER | GINGER FUATA, CHAIRPERSON

2026 ANNUAL BOARD ELECTIONS & APPOINTMENTS

At Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center's April Board of Directors' annual meeting, board member election results and appointed positions were named. Newly elected and appointment positions will serve a three year term starting May 2026.

To learn more about our board members, visit wcchc.com/boardofdirectors.



MERRIE AIPOALANI



DESIRE' DE SOTO



GINGER FUATA



DAN GOMES



BILLIE HAUGE



CLIFFORD ISARA



KAWIKA KANE



DENICE KELIIKOA



DEROYN LAVATAI



KEOLA LLOYD



AIRLEEN LUCERO



TODD NITTA

NEWLY ELECTED



ANTHONY "MAKANA" PARIS



FLO PELL



RENEE REGO



WAYNE SUEHIRO



CANDY SUIISO

Congratulations
CLASS OF 2026

YOUR HEALTH CENTER PROUDLY CELEBRATES YOU AND ALL YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED!

IN OBSERVANCE OF
MEMORIAL DAY
MONDAY, MAY 25, 2026

ALL CLINICS & DEPARTMENTS WILL BE CLOSED

OUR EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT REMAINS OPEN
24 HOURS | 365 DAYS A YEAR



MAY 2026 | RICHARD BETTINI, PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | DR. DONALD SIMPSON, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER | GINGER FUATA, CHAIRPERSON

WCCHC KICKS OFF 10 YEAR CELEBRATION OF SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTERS



On Friday, April 17, Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center gathered at Wai'anae Intermediate School to kick off the celebration of a milestone of ten years of School Based Health Centers bringing healthcare directly to the students and families of the Wai'anae Coast.

Staff, students, school leaders, elected officials, and community supporters came together for a mid-morning event of student performances, heartfelt speeches, clinic tours, and light refreshments. Among those who joined in the celebration were Representative Chris Muraoka and his staff, WCCHC board members, and

Wai'anae Intermediate School Principal John Wataoka, whose school was home to the very first SBHC when the program launched in 2016. In those early days, the clinic was a small wagon that, when not in use, shared office space on campus. Over time, the school based health center grew into a full clinic on campus.

Today, WCCHC's School Based Health Centers serve students at six schools across the Wai'anae Coast: Wai'anae High School, Wai'anae Intermediate School, Wai'anae Elementary School, Kamaile Academy Public Charter School, Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, and Nanaikapono Elementary School. Over the past decade, the program has reached 5,322 patients across more than 23,193 visits. It is now providing medical care, behavioral health services, and outreach and prevention efforts tailored to the needs of students. By bringing care directly to campus, the program reduces time away from class and ensures that students do not have to miss a full day of school for a routine appointment.

For many families on the Wai'anae Coast, access to healthcare has not always been easy. The School

Based Health Centers were designed to change that by meeting students where they are, in a setting they already know, with providers who understand the community. That commitment has made a real difference. Chronic absenteeism remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Hawai'i schools, and SBHCs play a meaningful role in keeping students healthy, present, and ready to learn. The clinics also serve as a safe, confidential space for students navigating behavioral health challenges, offering counseling and crisis support alongside medical care.

WCCHC will continue honoring this milestone with a second celebration this fall at Wai'anae High School, bringing the community together once more to recognize the work and the people who have made this program what it is today.

A heartfelt mahalo to our school and community partners for ten years of trust and collaboration. And a special mahalo to the School Based Health Center team: the providers and support staff who show up every day for our keiki. Your dedication has grown this program to what it has become.

Train to be a Medical Assistant with nimaa today!

Apply for the 2026 Fall Cohort!

APPLICATION DEADLINE: **May 27, 2026**

Attend a virtual information session

INFO SESSIONS: **May 6 & 21, 2026**

Apply at nimaa.edu

For more information, visit wcchc.com/nimaa

Talk Story Tuesdays

GUEST SPEAKERS: **GLENN ARAKAWA & NANI MANU**

FEATURED TOPIC: **No-Cost Home Assistive Devices**
This service assists seniors age 70+ by providing devices to improve mobility & home safety, at no charge. Offerings include bathroom grab bars, ADA toilets, night lights, canes, walkers, wheelchairs, & housekeeping.

TOPICS:

- MED-QUEST, SNAP, SLIDING FEE SCALE
- WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE

Plan Advisors

MAY 12 | 9am-11am
WCCHC DINING PAVILION

May 19 | 9am-11am
WAIPAHU FAMILY HEALTH CENTER
FILIPINO COMMUNITY CENTER

FREE TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE from Makaha to Honolulu Hale

Register Today! Call Patient Assistance Services at (808) 697-3405 or email: PAS@WCCHC.COM

SCHOOL & SPORTS PHYSICALS

Offered at the Nearest School Based Health Center

WAI'ANAЕ HIGH SCHOOL 808-697-3520

WAI'ANAЕ INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL 808-697-3523

WAI'ANAЕ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 808-697-3523

KAMAILE ACADEMY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL 808-697-3523

NĀNĀKULI HIGH & INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL 808-697-3222

NĀNĀIKAPONO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 808-697-3222

NOW SCHEDULING FOR SUMMER APPOINTMENTS

wcchc.com/sbhc @n.o.o.w.health

FREE! KEIKI CAR SEAT CHECK-UP & INSTALLATION

PLEASE BRING WITH YOU:

- ✓ YOUR CAR
- ✓ YOUR CHILD
- ✓ YOUR CHILD'S CAR SEAT

THE LAW: A child passenger restraint or booster seat is required for children 4-9 years old, unless the child is over 4 feet 9 inches tall.

DON'T RISK IT! Get your child's car seat checked by our professionals!

SATURDAY MAY 16, 2026
WAIANAЕ MALL | 10 AM - 2 PM
Last car will be taken at 1:15 PM

QUESTIONS? CALL (808) 697-3548

WALK-IN CLINICS

NEW HOURS STARTING MAY 30TH

EXPANDING TO BETTER SERVE YOU!

WAIANAЕ WAIOLA CLINIC
Waianae Mall | (808) 697-3133

KAPOLEI WEST OAHU COMMUNITY HEALTH
Kapolei Medical Park | (808) 697-3800

MONDAY - FRIDAY: 7:30 AM - 6:00 PM
SATURDAY: 7:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Spring Craft Fair

Find treasures, ono food, or a Mother's Day gift at our annual craft fair!

Friday, May 8, 2026 | 7:00 AM - 1:30 PM
WCCHC Main Campus - Dining Pavilion

Free Admission

CommUNITY Fest

Continued from page 3

for community members to engage directly with local resources, visit food and product vendors, explore career law and public safety pathways and build closer relationships with those working every day to support the community.

Beyond individual interactions, the event also fostered meaningful connections between residents and providers. Participants were introduced to programs and services they had not previously been aware of, increasing the likelihood of future engagement and resource utilization. The event also demonstrated strong family engagement, with equal participation from students and parents, reinforcing the im-

portance of inclusive, family-focused, community-centered spaces.

The strong turnout and overwhelmingly positive feedback reflect a growing appetite for opportunities that prioritize connection, access and community voice. Mahalo to INPEACE for sponsoring the event, the thirty plus com-



Some of the many volunteers who helped make the event a success.

munity vendors, the Wai'anae-Nānaku-li DOE complex, the City & County of Honolulu, Hawaiian Electric, Honolulu

Police Department, Honolulu Fire Department and Department of Law Enforcement.

Tysen Kapule Justo Represents Westside at State Spelling Bee Finals

Submitted by Wendy Gumm

On Saturday, March 28, fourth-grade student Tysen Kapule Justo, not only represented Nānāikapono Elementary School in the State Spelling Bee, but the entire Westside of O'ahu.

The first and youngest student from this side of the island to have reached this accomplishment, started his journey in January coming in as runner-up at the school level Spelling Bee Contest, then on to the District where he placed 2nd. From there it was on to the State Spelling Bee. Due to the hard efforts of his parents, Joanie Dumlao and Tysen Justo and family, Tysen was able to make it to the State Finals where he placed 12th in the state and definitely showed that the Westside has "hidden gems." Thank you for your valiant effort and hard work Tysen!



Teachers Bryson Matsushima and Wendy Gumm with Tysen Kapule Justo (Center)

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Rep. Kila

Continued from page 4

land to support landfill expansion. I strongly oppose this effort. Our community was given a promise that no future landfill burden would continue to be placed on the Wai'anae Coast.

Our coast has long carried more than its fair share of impacts, and our community deserves solutions rooted in environmental justice, public health, and genuine accountability. Expanding the landfill is not the answer.

Now is the time for our community to raise its voice. Stay informed. Participate in meetings. Submit testimony.

Share your concerns. Community advocacy has always been the strongest when we move together. Please visit www.honolulu.gov/dpp/pim-mhl/ to submit your comments.

I also want to mahalo the many residents who continue to stay engaged, whether on legislative issues, public safety concerns or neighborhood matters. Your voices shape this work.

As session concludes, the work does not end, it continues year-round in service to you and our community. As always, please continue to reach out to our office and we will do our very best to help. You can contact us at (808) 586-9480 or repkila@capitol.hawaii.gov



'O ke kahua ma mua, ma hope ke kūkulu

Kumu create the strong kahua upon which haumāna grow and discover their purpose. Rooted in 'ike kūpuna and guided by kuleana, they shape the 'ōiwi leaders who will carry our lāhui forward.

Mahalo piha e nā kumu!



Ke Kula 'o Kamehameha



“What's Up” on the Westside

** Please visit our Facebook page for updated events that are happening throughout the month here on our Westside**

MAY 2026 Calendar of Events

May 1
May Day - Lei Day
9 am to 1 pm — “Preschool Here I Come” event at INPEACE Nānāikeola

May 2
6 pm — Makaha Canoe Club's Open Market Festival at Makaha Valley Country Club
7 pm — Nānākuli Performing Arts presents “NPAC Rewind” at Nānākuli High's Multi-purpose building

May 5
11 am to 1 pm — Westside Hiring Blitz at Ark of Safety Center (Wai'anae Mall)

May 7
4 to 8 pm — 3rd Annual Lei of Literacy program at Nānākuli Public Library

May 8
7 am to 1:30 pm — Spring Craft Fair at WCCHC's Dining Pavilion

May 9
3 to 8 pm — 10th Annual Ko Olina Children's Festival at Ko Olina (Kekai Place Lawn)

May 10
Mother's Day

May 16
10 am to 2 pm — Keiki Car Seat Check-Up and Installation at Wai'anae Mall

May 21
6 pm — Kamaile Academy PCS Graduation Ceremony at Kamaile's school field

May 22
6 pm — Wai'anae High School Graduation Ceremony at Raymond Torii Field

May 23
5 pm — Nānākuli High School Graduation Ceremony at NHIS' Hawks Stadium

May 25
Memorial Day

May 28
Last day of public school



CLUBS, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

AARP Chapter 4936 of Wai'anae
9:30 am on the first Friday of each month at the Wai'anae Community Center (Satellite City Hall).
Call Patrick Maher at 808-545-6003.

Aerobics (Low Impact)
4 to 5 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Wai'anae District Park. For more information, contact Flo Pell at 808-696-2776.

Aikido
Daily classes, morning, afternoon and evening for children, teens and adults.
Call 808.202.6171 or 808.462-1118.

B&G Club Hawai'i
— Wai'anae Clubhouse
Afterschool programs for youth & teens Grades 2nd thru 12th. Register at: membership.bgch.com or call 808-696-2754.

La Kōkua Ka'ala Farm
9 am to 12 noon on the 2nd Saturday of each month to mālama 'āina, lo'i and weeding. All are welcomed! Call 808.696.4954 or check our website www.kaalafarm.org

Lualualei Hawaiian Civic Club
3rd Thursday of every month at 6 pm and held both in-person and virtually via zoom at KS Learning Center in Mā'ili. For more information, Email: lualualeihcc808@gmail.com or visit our Instagram: [@lualualeihcc808](https://www.instagram.com/lualualeihcc808) or Facebook: Lualualei Hawaiian Civic Club

Mākaha Bridge Club
10 am on Wednesdays and Saturdays at Lilikoi Lounge (Mākaha Valley Country Club). Call Kay Smith at 808-695-7844 for more information.

Mākaha Red Hatters
2nd Monday of each month at various restaurants along the Westside. If you would like to join this club, call “Queen” Gerry Ottinger at 808-399-2594.

Maj Jongg (American style)
Tuesdays at 11 am Call Coco at 808-330-4765 for more information. *Beginners welcomed!*

Nānākuli-Mā'ili Neighborhood Board #36
7 pm on the third Tuesday of the month at Nānākuli Public Library's meeting room. Call Neighborhood Commission Office at 808-768-3710 for more information or visit honolulu.gov/nco

St John the Baptist Church Thrift Shop
Wednesdays. from 9am-1pm
Thursday 1pm-5pm Stop by for great bargains! To volunteer, please email revjazzybostock@gmail.com

Veterans of Foreign Wars
VFW Post 849 (Leeward Coast) monthly membership meetings at 6:30 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at “Beach House by 604” (Piliilau Army Rest Camp). Our mission is to serve our veterans, the military, and our community. For more information, contact Steve Mayoral at 310-365-7048.

Wai'anae Coast Neighborhood Board #24
6:30 pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month at Wai'anae Public Library. For more information, contact Neighborhood Commission Office at 808-768-3710 or visit honolulu.gov/nco

Waianae Coast Rotary Club
12 noon on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at “Beach House by 604” (PARC) Piliilau Army Rec. Center (Rest Camp). For more information, contact: waianae coastrotary.org or Craig Alvarado at craigalvarado@bhshawaii.com

Wai'anae Farmer's Market
Mākeke 'Iki 9am to 12 Noon every Tuesday at WCCHC Main Campus.
Mākeke Wai'anae 8 am to 12 noon every Saturday at Wai'anae Mall. For more information call 808-697-3709.

Wai'anae Hawaiian Civic Club
5:30 to 7:30 pm on the 2nd Monday of each month at the KS Learning Center in Mā'ili. Contact waianaehawaiiancivicclub.org for more information..

Women of Wai'anae
For more information visit womenofwaianae.org or call Karen Young at 808-388-8828. *Focus is on fundraisers for non-traditional college scholarships.*

Happy Mother's Day
Sunday, May 10th
MOTHER KNOWS BEST...
OUR “FASTLANES” GET YOU CHECKED OUT WIKI WIKI - USE THEM AND MAKE MOTHER PROUD!
We will be hosting a BLOOD DRIVE FRIDAY, MAY 29TH
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11am - 5pm
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REMEMBER & HONOR THEM MEMORIAL DAY
Monday, May 25th
FELIZ CINCO DE MAYO
Be sure to check for special sales, deals, and announcements!
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CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

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Antonia Ho'opi'iaina Zizzi
Bachelors of Science in Accounting from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix

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MAY 1ST May Day is LEI DAY in Hawai'i

Westside Stories
"THE PRIDE OF THE WESTSIDE"
A monthly newspaper serving the communities of Nānākuli, Mā'ili, Wai'anae and Mākaha

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Remember Mom on Mother's Day Sunday May 10th and those who gave their final measure on Memorial Day Monday, May 25th...

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Aloha, Verna Mae Leimomi Landford-Bright

Submitted by Raquel Aikala

On April 10, 2026, Verna Mae Leimomi Landford-Bright entered into eternal rest. "Aunty" Verna (as everyone would call her) was a pillar of the Moloka'i and Wai'anae community. Her many roles as a servant to her community and 'āina, dear friend, sister, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother here on earth, will forever be cherished. While she has left our side, the impact of her kindness, unwavering dedication, perseverance, and aloha, will remain with us all. We find comfort knowing that she is at peace and has reunited with her late husband Wilbur "Hailama" Bright, her mother Evangeline Kaleikoa Kiaha and her father Richard Bernard Landford Sr. and the thousands of kūpuna who came

before her.

Born on March 3, 1951, in Honolulu, Verna was raised in Mā'ili (on Kimo Street), when they played movies on screens, under the stars, sitting on benches for residents that were family to one another. She attended public schools in the community and was a proud graduate of Wai'anae High's Class of 1969. While she is most remembered as a Song Leader through grades 9 to 12, her active role in the Neighborhood Youth Camp, Elections and Social committees (just to name a few), was no-nonsense. Some of her peers recall her being a CPO (Campus Police Officer) and a proud member of the Hawaiian Club and was Miss Football in the Homecoming Court. She enjoyed reminiscing about the "good old days" of Wai'anae, full of laughter when greeted by long-lost friends, but re-

mained closely in touch with classmates and those of "hanabata" time and was always looking forward to their travels and get-togethers for all occasions.

Married in 1970, Aunty Verna moved to Moloka'i, starting a family of her own. She worked for Alu Like, Lokahi Pacific, Maui Community College, and Moloka'i Family Planning at the Hospital. Aside of her work and 'ohana, she established her place in Moloka'i Makahiki Committee, started the Moloka'i Bed Race during the Aloha Week Festivals, became the Mō'i Wahine of the celebration, and even helped plan and organize the first and only Gay Pageant Carnival and Fair on Moloka'i. She was featured on CNN and World News for her endeavors.

In 1988, Verna returned to O'ahu and made her home in the family 'āina of Puea (Wai'anae Valley). She began working with Wai'anae Mental Health Services and then with City & County's O'ahu Work Links as a Job Resource Case Manager while serving concurrently with VASH (Visitor Aloha Society of Hawai'i), until she retired in 2022. In the middle of all this, Verna could not limit herself to just two islands and she and Hailama moved to Makawao, Maui for five years and became a full-time makua at The Maui Farm Inc., where she cared for children who were "wards" of the state and helped to foster teens in being rooted with Hawaiian Cultural Practices and 'Aina Based-Education within the home.

Her leadership and advocacy for education were very evident as she was one of the founding members of the Wai'anae High School Alumni & Community Foundation; one of the founding members of Valley of the Rainbows; a non-profit group that not only provided aid to the youth of the west side communities but also sponsored an annual event such as Sunset on the Beach for many years. Her vision was to be proactively engaged in and with the "future" of Wai'anae; evident with the various workshops, scholarship, and activities/field trips to help encourage the youth to "not just dream, but to fulfill them!"

After her retirement, she volunteered to work at Wai'anae High School part-time for a few more years and continued as a board member of the Wai'anae Moku Kūpuna Council. She remained a Temple member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and has forever influenced countless other entities. Well-known for that million dollar smile, that poofy hair with some kind of arrangement in it, that little plum car with her personalized license plate, those bright eyes that light up when meeting someone new, that radiant personality looking for her next project to execute, and that undying energy that would swoop into the Wai'anae Coast like a powerful but necessary wave.

She is leaving behind a massive legacy of such a beautiful posterity, which include her daughters — Benadeen(-Joe) Paraiso of Moloka'i, Evan (Jorge) Weiss of Colorado, Racquel(Ryan)

Continued on page 12



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Wai'anae community gathers for 7th Annual Prince Kūhiō Festival

PVT is proud to have been a sponsor of the Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole Festival on Saturday, March 26 at Kalaniana'ole Beach Park (formerly Nānākuli Beach Park). It was a great afternoon and evening filled with ono food, entertainment, and fireworks.



Celebrating a Prince — Members of HPD's District 8 Community Team, elected officials, vendors, and hula halau made Prince Kūhiō Day Festival memorable.



Nānākuli Lady Hawks Softball Team Heading to State Tournament



Congratulations to the Nānākuli Lady Hawks varsity softball team, which is on its way to Maui to compete in the OIA DII championship tournament. The Lady Hawks went undefeated in the OIA DII West division during the regular season to earn their trip to the championship, which is scheduled to run Wednesday May 6 to Saturday May 9 at Maui High School. PVT is proud to support the team on its journey to the Valley Isle. Go Hawks!

For more information, contact leewardtrackclubhi@gmail.com.



Check it Out — Members of the Nānākuli Lady Hawks are headed for the OIA DII state championship. Two players at bottom hold a check presented by PVT to help cover the team's expenses.



Summer track season off and running at Nānākuli

Want to hone your track skills during the off-season? Or maybe you just like to run. Fast.

Leeward Track Club is now registering athletes who want to compete in its 2026 summer track season. Practices begin May 19 and the season starts May 23. Practices will be held at Nānākuli High School's stadium track.

Coaches are there to assist you in developing skills for sprinting, hurdling, distance running, jumping, throwing, and relay racing. LTC offers training and competition in both the USATF Junior Olympics and Masters divisions and is open to runners in all age groups.

For more information, contact leewardtrackclubhi@gmail.com.

On Your Mark — Register now for the LTC summer track season.



2026 SUMMER TRACK SEASON
NOW REGISTERING

PRACTICES BEGIN May 19, 2026	SEASON START DATE May 23, 2026
--	--

- Open to athletes ages 4 and up
- Athletes must be born in 2022 or earlier
- One form per athlete

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Verna Landford-Bright

Continued from page 10

Aikala of Maui, Renee(Marc) Albino of Alaska, Raldeen Albino of Alaska, Carolyn(Raymond) Ka'upu of Hilo, Ralayna(Detrick) Rawlins of Wai'anae, Royal Albino of Alaska; Sons — Ty-Gregory(Marisa) Wilcox-Landford of Aiea, Robert(Stacie) Barrera of Colorado, Ralph(Eraina) Albino of Alaska, Travis(Lace) Landford of Moloka'i; Countless hānai keiki; Thirty-eight mo'opuna and twenty-two great-grandchildren; Brothers — David(Margaret) Puli (predeceased), Richard B.(Shirley) Landford Jr. of Wai'anae, Robert(Snoo-ki) Puli of California, William(Donna)

Landford of Alaska, Darrell(Charlene) Landford (predeceased), Elvis(Esperanza) Landford of Wai'anae, Jordan(Veronica) Landford (predeceased), Rex-Shane(Annette) Landford of Wai'anae; Sisters — Gloria (Penny) Bailey of Nānākuli, Bernadette(Jerry) Mallonee (predeceased), Lane Dallas(Steve) Herrington of Tennessee and Rozlynn(Moses Jr.) Philips of Moloka'i.

Services will be held on May 16 at the Makakilo Stake Center LDS Chapel (92-900 Makakilo Dr.). Visitation will be from 9 am to 1 pm followed by services from 1 to 2 pm.

Aloha 'Oe and A Hui Hou, Verna Landford-Bright!

Sheldon Konno 2026 recipient of the Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award

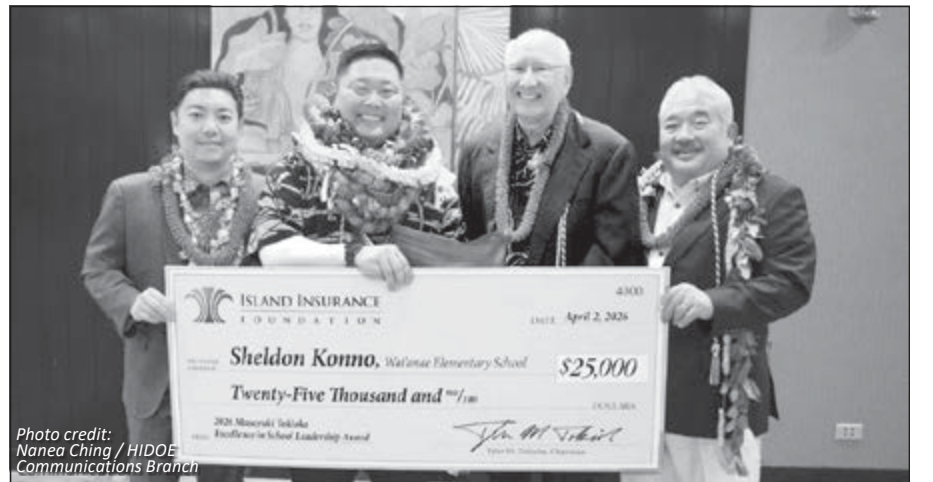


Photo credit: Nanea Ching / HIOE Communications Branch

Wai'anae Elementary School Principal Sheldon Konno (shown above center) has been named the 2026 recipient of the prestigious Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award, recognizing his commitment to strengthening school culture and expanding support for students and families in the Wai'anae community. The annual award honors outstanding Hawai'i public school principals who demonstrate visionary leadership, a commitment to student success and meaningful engagement with their school communities.

"It's very humbling to be recognized, and that the community at large sees the vision of what we're trying to do at our school, to not only support our kids but the Wai'anae community as a whole. It helps to ground us even more," said

Konno, who is in his fifth year as principal. "It's definitely a kākou effort. I wouldn't be able to stand here and talk about our vision and what we've done if it wasn't for the team at our school."

Sponsors Island Insurance Foundation and King's Hawaiian awarded Konno a \$25,000 prize — including a \$10,000 personal cash award and \$15,000 toward a school project of his choice. He plans to use the award funds to expand Wai'anae Elementary's community resource center, which provides critical support and services to students and families in a community impacted by socioeconomic challenges. The resource center operates within the school's Seahorse Community Hub, connecting families with essential resources and helping remove barriers to student learning.

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Sunday, May 10th
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