

Ke Ala Hou

A New Path Forward

Ke Ke'ena O Ke Kia'aina | Office of the Governor · October 2023

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Governor Josh Green, M.D.

As we enter the month of October poised to hit the two-month mark of the devastating Maui wildfire tragedy, I am filled with gratitude for the resilience and unity that define our community. While our last newsletter centered on the wildfire response and the resources dedicated to it, this

month, we shift our focus toward recovery and the enduring spirit that continues to light our way.

Lāhainā, with its rich history, has always been a place of great significance in many hearts. It's a place of many memories for anyone who has lived in or visited the town. The 150-year-old iconic banyan tree, lovingly planted on April 24, 1873, stands as a living tribute to history amid the ruins, and serves as a beacon of hope. The Maui County Arborist Committee and countless volunteers have diligently overseen its well-being, ensuring that this living landmark remains a symbol of endurance and strength. We thank them and all who are contributing to Maui's recovery.

While much of what is on our mind revolves around Maui, in this month's newsletter, you'll also find stories celebrating the great work of people, highlighting top achievements, and emphasizing kindness and caring—values that are at the core of our community and my Administration.

As we continue on this journey of recovery, let us draw inspiration from the Banyan Tree, standing tall as a symbol of hope. It speaks to the spirit that defines Lāhainā's historic legacy and represents our Hawai'i community. Together, we will overcome adversity and emerge stronger, just as our beloved Lāhainā will.

With warm regards,

Josh Green

Birthday Reflections on Queen Lili'uokalani from Washington Place

By Travis Hancock, curator of Washington Place



Heading into fall, the staff and volunteers at Washington Place are still reflecting on the poignant return of Queen Lili'uokalani's Royal Standard this past summer. The preciousness of such rare and important pieces of our shared history only grew in magnitude when so much was lost just a few weeks later on Maui. With that tragedy has come increased kuleana to preserve and share all we can. We look forward to

providing further updates on the forthcoming replica, which will enable us to tell the standard's story, while allowing the original standard to undergo much-needed conservation work at the Hawai'i State Archives. In the meantime, a full video of the procession and presentation is now available via 'Ōlelo Community Media at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxRuGVs-Nls>.

Building on our summer commemoration of the Queen's legacy, on September 2 we gladly opened Washington Place to celebrate her 185th birthday, in keeping with a tradition she started. Members of the public took tours with our volunteer docents, learned hula, strung crown flower lei, and made other island crafts. Students from the Hawai'i Youth Opera Chorus, led by Nola Nāhulu, taught guests some of the Queen's mele as well. By the day's end, the Queen's portrait in the Glassed Lanai was adorned with many lei, given as ho'okupu (tribute or offering).

Then, on September 16, the 161st anniversary of the Queen's marriage to John Owen Dominis and the day on which she first moved into Washington Place, we welcomed a special group of families to the home, many for the first time. These were grieving members of our island community, hosted by the Lili'uokalani Trust's H.O.P.E. (Helping Our People Emerge) program, who were given a special day devoted to healing ahead of the holiday season. They made more crown flower lei for the Queen, toured the home, and released monarch butterflies on the lawn as a symbol of metamorphosis and growth.

It is clear that we must hold dear to us the history that tells the stories of our past so the knowledge can be shared with future generations. Learn how to sign up for a tour and learn more about the rich history of Washington Place, the historic home of Queen Lili'uokalani, and the current home of Hawai'i's Governor here: <https://washingtonplace.hawaii.gov/tours-and-gardens/>.





From left to right: Jesse Neizman - chief engineer, Lāhainā Restoration Foundation; Ryan Grant - superintendent, Prometheus Construction; Jade Chihara - 'āina koa, lateral root of Lāhainā; Jake Kane - arborist, Kane's Legacy Trees; Gretchen Losano - founder, West Maui Green Cycle; Lorra Naholowa'a - soil specialist, Naholowa'a Earth Works LLC; Jaimie Cabalo - 'āina koa, Prometheus Construction; Hōkuaō Pellegrino- 7th generation farmer/educator; Kalapana Kollars - cultural programs director, Lāhainā Restoration Foundation. Photo credit: Anuhea Kollars - cultural practitioner, Lāhainā Restoration

Lāhainā's Historic Greenscape – The Royal 'Ulu Grove and Historic Banyan

In the heart of Lāhainā, around the time an iconic Indian banyan tree was planted by Sheriff William Owen Smith on April 24, 1873, Hawaiians were trying to save their beloved 'ulu (breadfruit) grove which flourished and fed its community for generations. 150 years later the effort to save them both is in full motion.



Photo courtesy: DLNR

The Maui County Arborist Committee has diligently overseen Lāhainā's historical and exceptional treescapes' well-being, ensuring its living landmarks remain symbols of our rich heritage. The Banyan's sprawling branches stretch over two-thirds of an acre, providing shade and a gathering place for generations of locals and visitors. The beloved 'ulu grove or Malu 'ulu 'o Lele means "the shaded breadfruit grove of Lele," just one of the historical Hawaiian names for Lāhainā. Moku'ula was an island in Lāhainā surrounded by a fishpond fed by natural springs. Moku'ula was the home of Hawai'i Ali'i, Kings, Chiefs, and Chiefesses. The few Kumu 'Ulu that survived until the fire were mostly offspring of the original grove which fed Hawai'i's Ali'i and generations of Kanaka.

The recent wildfire devastated much of Lāhainā's historic area, leaving uncertainty about the future. But amid the ruins, buried beneath the scorched earth and standing tall above the remnants of buildings are beacons of hope, live roots from our Kumu 'Ulu and the strong trunk, limbs, and branches of our 150-year-old banyan tree. Although scarred from the fire, it now symbolizes endurance and hope, and both are living legacies of a rich Hawaiian history.

Efforts to revive the survivor trees were underway once Lāhainā was deemed safe for entry. Hawai'i arborists worked to identify survivor trees and deploy a care plan for the trees within days of the fire. Water had to be trucked in. Soil fertility specialists came in with a custom compost extract to aid recovery and encourage new root growth. The trees are also being monitored with growth sensors, soil is being tested, and roots have been extracted for regrowth. Experts, including cultural practitioners and historians, came for the greening of Lāhainā, volunteering their time, equipment, and aloha. It is a blessing to have Lāhainā's own Restoration Foundation generational employees heed the kahea (call) and guide the charge with their knowledge of the forever changed but familiar landscape. Concerned calls came from around the world to offer kōkua and well wishes. The hypervigilance has subsided to let nature take its course after giving it the resources it needs to rise. New root growth has been



Photo courtesy: DLNR

confirmed and leaves are emerging.

While it's uncertain how long this recovery journey may take - whether weeks, months, or even years - the Lāhainā treescape history embodies resilience, unity, and the enduring spirit of Lāhainā's historic legacy.

Mahalo to Steve Nimz, lead arborist, his team Ilana Nimz and David Golden, Lorra Naholowa'a, who organized a team of volunteers, all experts and professionals who generously rushed in to kōkua, including Jesse Neizman (7th generation Lāhainā), Anuhea and Kalapana Kollars, Chris Imoti and team, Gretchen Losano, Jake Kane, Dr. Noa Lincoln, Hokuau Pellegrino, Jade Chihara, Duane Sparkman, and Kai McPhee. Also, mahalo to Goodfellow Bros. LLC for watering; Prometheus Construction for labor and sponsoring the crew; Theo Morrison, executive director of Lāhainā Restoration Foundation; and all who have played an important role in preserving Lāhainā's greenscape and will continue in this role in the future.



Representative Linda Ichiyama Wins National Advocacy Award



Photo: Hawai'i State Judiciary

Hawai'i State Representative Linda Ichiyama was awarded the Bud Cramer Advocacy Award from the National Children's Alliance in Washington, D.C. She was chosen for her exceptional promotion of the children's advocacy center model. The award is named after former Alabama District Attorney, Congressman Bud Cramer, who advocated for children to be safe from harm, minimize trauma, and have access to justice.

Rep. Ichiyama was nominated by Jasmine Mau-Mukai, the statewide director of the Hawai'i Children Justice Center (CJC). Mau-Mukai called Ichiyama a "respected leader and champion for children," and acknowledged her support of many bills focusing on improving the outcomes for children who are subject to maltreatment.

One of the most recent bills that Rep. Ichiyama played a critical role in passing was the 2022 bill to amend the Hawai'i Children's

Justice Program's statute to acknowledge the extensive mission of these centers, to include all forms of harm to children. As a result, the bill allows children who are alleged victims of sex trafficking, witnesses to violence, sexual abuse, serious physical abuse, and other forms of exploitation to have access to the same comprehensive services.

"Representative Ichiyama is cognizant of the importance of addressing vicarious and secondary trauma for the CJC's Multi-Disciplinary Teams," said Mau-Mukai. "She connected us to the recently established Office of Wellness and Resiliency under the Governor's Office. This may result in a comprehensive plan to promote resiliency for professionals, minimizing burnout and staff turnover."

During her acceptance speech, Ichiyama recognized the CJCs, law enforcement, prosecutors, Child Welfare Services, child service providers, and lawmakers for their collaboration. "It really takes a village to make significant and meaningful change," Rep. Ichiyama said. "I am proud to be part of our Hawai'i team as we work collectively to ensure our keiki are safe, accepted, and can thrive."

Charging Up for the Future With EV

The Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO), Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH), and Roberts Hawai'i, Inc. recently debuted and blessed five new zero-emission electric-battery buses, to provide clean transportation for keiki going to school and tourists on O'ahu. The innovative electric vehicle (EV) marvels mark a historic milestone as they become the first-of-their-kind tour/charter EV motorcoaches in the country, raising the bar for sustainable transportation. This is a vital step toward achieving the state's goal of being carbon-negative by 2045.

"We are absolutely committed to pursuing climate change strategies that are equitable, culturally responsive, and resilient," said Governor Josh Green, M.D. "Renewable energy and sustainable transportation are going to be a huge part of our future, so we need to build on the progress we have already made, with more events like today. I want to thank all the partners gathered here for their leadership and hard work toward our clean energy goals."

The buses were purchased with the assistance of the Diesel Replacement Rebate (DRR) program, funded by the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust. The DRR provides rebates of up to 45 percent of the total purchase amount to replace medium- and heavy-duty diesel vehicles and equipment with new battery electric or hydrogen equivalents. Also, the rebate covers up to 45 percent of an EV charger per electric vehicle.

The DRR program, administered by the HSEO in partnership with the DOH, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency, allocated approximately \$3.2 million in rebates to help offset the purchase of eight vehicles – seven buses and one forklift – to support renewable energy and decarbonization goals. The



five buses that debuted in July were purchased in 2022, and the remaining three will be purchased through the second year of the rebate program.

"While we are striving to adapt by providing zero-emission transportation options, this transformation involves new technology and it requires major upgrades to properties and, as such, the cost of electric buses, associated infrastructure, and workforce training is high. A shared public-private cost model is necessary, and we must work together to meet the state's 2045 zero-emission target and to protect Hawai'i's environment for future generations," said Roy Pfund, President and CEO of Robert's Hawai'i.

For more information on the Diesel Replacement Rebate program and its funding sources, please visit www.energy.hawaii.gov.



Office of Wellness and Resilience Supports Coordinated Maui Mental Health Response

By Erica Yamauchi, OWR Director of Communications & Engagement

In the early morning after the Maui fires, Office of Wellness and Resilience (OWR) Director Tia Hartsock sent an email to a dozen colleagues within our state mental health system and on the Trauma-Informed Care Task Force, asking them to join a Zoom call at noon to discuss a coordinated mental health response to the disaster. When she and her team signed on, they were heartened to see more than 250 people had joined the meeting.

Since then, OWR has held almost daily Maui Mental Health Coordinated Response meetings, totaling 400+ people, including mental health professionals on the ground on Maui, philanthropic, nonprofit and advocacy organizations, service providers, and government employees. The meetings have been instrumental in standing up services, breaking down barriers, and sharing resources and lessons learned.

In partnership with the Department of Health (DOH), Queen's Health System (QHS), and Kaiser Permanente (KP), "talk story and support" mental health services have been made available for all ages at the West Maui hotel shelters every day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This support ranges from simply listening to survivors and their stories, to resource navigation and referrals for more long-term support. More than 200 mental health professionals on Maui and across the state have volunteered to provide these services to ensure those affected have Hawai'i-informed mental health support when they need it.

Mental health "pop-ups" are also happening around natural gathering places in West Maui, and there is also crisis mobile outreach via DOH available for those in need of urgent help via Hawai'i CARES where you can call or text 988 to talk to local counselors. The DOH is in the process of hiring staff to expand the mental health response in a more sustainable way over the long term.



Left to Right: Tina Boteilho, Dr. Dara Rampersad, and Tia Hartsock taking a moment after providing mental health support to the West Maui community.

OWR is committed to serving survivors as it moves into the next stage of relief and recovery. The office is working with Hui Ho'omalua, a group of diverse cultural practitioners who have come together with a collective commitment to uplift Maui families and communities through Native Hawaiian healing practices. At hotel shelters, they have been providing gatherings several days a week which include music, cultural and family activities, and mental health support.

Key collaborations in the coordinated mental health response to the disaster include the DOH, Hawai'i Psychologists Association, National Association of Social Workers, Hawai'i Community Foundation, Kamehameha Schools, QHS, and KP.

OWR has put out a Public Service Announcement (PSA) with the help of Summit Media Group. The general message to the public is, that if you are not feeling like yourself right now, that's normal. Take some time to rest, connect with a loved one, and talk about how you're feeling, spend time in nature, or do something you have found relaxing in the past. If you need someone to talk to, or if you or someone you know is in crisis, please reach out to one of the resources listed on the right.



Wellness and Resilience Resources

Hawai'i CARES 988

- Local counselors ready to take your call or text.
- Call (808) 832-3100 or 1-800-753-6879, or call/text 988.

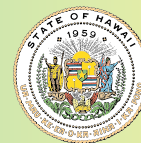
REACH

- Confidential, short-term professional counseling services for state employees. The services are free, up to a maximum of three sessions. For more information, visit: <https://dhrd.hawaii.gov/>.
- Maui Strong support for all helpers
- Online Zoom meeting room staffed by volunteers to support those in helping professions, such as health care, teaching, caregiving, etc. Offered 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Direct link: <https://zoom.us/j/88263804569> (Password: 12345)

Disaster Distress Helpline

- Free, 24/7 for crisis and emotional support at 1-800-985-5990 or text "TalkWithUs" to 66746. Multilingual support is available. To connect directly to an agent in American Sign Language, call 1-800-985-5990 from your videophone.

Ke Ala Hou is a monthly publication of the Office of Governor Josh Green, M.D.
We invite you to stay connected with us!



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