

Ke Ala Hou

A New Path Forward

Ke Ke'ena O Ke Kia'aina | Office of the Governor • October 2024

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Governor Josh Green, M.D.

Reflecting on the events of September, we have witnessed significant developments across our state. My administration remains dedicated to addressing our key priorities, including housing, homelessness and health care.

In this month's newsletter, you will learn about Department of Defense initiatives to support our community, the successful conclusion of the Maui Economic Recovery Commission led by the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. In addition, the University of Hawai'i also conducted an important Maui Wildfire Exposure Study and launched a

survivor registry. We also highlighted the exceptional recipients of the Governor's Awards, and our ongoing efforts to strengthen Hawai'i's relationship with Japan and boost tourism.

Thank you, everyone, for your tireless work to make Hawai'i better for everyone, whether they live here or are just visiting. I'm honored to work alongside such talented individuals who show a deep commitment to our 'ohana, keiki and 'aina.

I wish everyone a fantastic and delightfully spooky October!

Mahalo,



Governor Green Strengthens Hawai'i-Japan Relations

Governor Josh Green, M.D., has concluded a productive trip to Japan, where he participated in several key events aimed at enhancing cultural, economic and diplomatic relations between Hawai'i and Japan. During his visit, Governor Green took part in significant engagements that showcased Hawai'i's unique heritage and commitment to international collaboration. The four main highlights of the Governor's visit included opening the Tokyo International Gift Show, celebrating Hawai'i manufacturers with U.S. Ambassador Rahm Emanuel, opening Nā Po'okela, an official overseas event of the Merrie Monarch Festival staged in Yokohama and visiting Hawai'i's sister states in Japan.

Governor Green's visit to Japan underscored the deep-rooted relationship between Hawai'i and Japan, characterized by shared values, cultural exchanges and economic partnerships. As Hawai'i continues to strengthen these bonds, the Governor is committed to fostering an environment of mutual growth of tourism, economics, understanding and collaboration for future generations.



Ke Ala Hou intends to elevate, recognize, and celebrate the hard work done by our state departments. Our goal is to share top achievements from our state employees, emphasize aloha and kindness in action and demonstrate caring leadership at the state level. It is our hope that by sharing these stories, we build trust and understanding in what we do everyday in service to you.



Scan the QR code to view our digital newsletter.



Liko Nā Pilina Seedling Planting with Hawai'i Army National Guard

Thirty-four volunteers helped to increase the population of 20 indigenous and familiar, non-invasive plant and tree species at the Keaukaha Military Reservation (KMR) in Hilo, during an event with the Hawai'i Army National Guard Environmental Office and the Liko Nā Pilina Hybrid Ecosystems Project of the University of Hawai'i (UH).

The volunteers included members of Hawai'i Army National Guard, students and faculty from the University of Hawai'i Hilo and Hawai'i Community College, and many community members dedicated to habitat restoration in Keaukaha.

These incredible volunteers planted 242 seedlings in just one hour. The seedlings transplanted included native species like 'ōhi'a, kōpiko and alahe'e, as well as non-invasive introduced plants including kou, kukui and 'ōhi'a 'ai (see table above for full list).

Species	# Planted
'Ohe	20
Kou	16
'Ōhi'a 'ai	24
Neneleau	1
Kukui	20
Avocado	30
Milo	29
Kamani	20
Maile	1
Kōpiko	19
Alahe'e	32
Mango	6
Māmaki	1
'Ōhi'a	5
Monkeypod	1
Hau	5
Hibiscus	1
Kolea	2
Lā'i	2
Cacao	7
Total	242



Photo courtesy: DOD.

This was a continuation of transplanting efforts along Escape Road that began at the Earth Day transplanting event in April 2024. The purpose of these efforts is to establish a native-dominant forest that is more resilient against the many invasive plants and pests found at KMR.

After their hard work, volunteers were treated to more hands-on experiences while learning about some traditional uses of the plants found at KMR. They dyed fabrics using colorful dyes, such as a brownish-yellow made from milo fruits, and a pale, pastel yellow color made from 'ōlena (turmeric) rhizomes. Additionally, there was a tasting of medicinal teas made from 'ulu, false kamani and noni. The event at KMR was a wonderful demonstration of community involvement in the care of the land and education of native Hawaiian cultural practices. The volunteers' enthusiasm made it a great day of caring for the 'āina (land) and learning about forest restoration in Keaukaha.

More Funding for Maui Wildfire Exposure Study and Launch of New Survivor Registry

In an effort to address the long-term health and social impacts of the devastating Maui wildfires, Governor Josh Green, M.D., has signed off on an additional \$2.3 million in funding the Maui Wildfire Exposure Study (MauiWES).

This will allow the study to increase its participant base to 2,000 individuals with a focus on children and first responders, and to build the infrastructure for a comprehensive survivor registry targeting up to 10,000 survivors.

Led by University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Professors Ruben Juarez and Alikā Maunakea, the study offers comprehensive health screenings and enrolls affected individuals into the most extensive social and bio-monitoring study in Hawai'i following a disaster.

"As we move past the one-year anniversary of the worst disaster in the state of Hawai'i, our commitment to the people of Maui remains steadfast," Governor Green said. "The MauiWES has demonstrated the need to address some health challenges of people affected by the disaster.



JABSOM Professor Alikā Maunakea assists a participant at a Maui Wildfire Exposure Study recruitment event in February 2024. Photo courtesy: UH.

The creation of this survivor registry is a crucial step in ensuring that we leave no one behind, including our keiki (children) and those who risked their lives as first responders. By supporting this academic-community partnership, we are laying the groundwork for a healthier future for all impacted by these tragic events."

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The Maui Wildfire Exposure Study team, led by UH Professors Ruben Juarez and Alika Maunakea, at a recruitment event in June 2024. Photo courtesy: UH.

Continued from page 2.

“We want to thank Governor Josh Green and the state of Hawai‘i for their unwavering support and commitment to our community,” Maunakea said.



MauiWES has published one of the most comprehensive reports to date on the social and health impacts of the August 2023 wildfires, and the MauiWES interactive dashboard continues to be a vital resource, offering real-time data and insights for the community and stakeholders.

For more information, visit <https://www.mauiwes.info/>.

Governor's Awards Recognize Outstanding State Employees and Teams

Governor Josh Green, M.D., recognized winners of the Governor’s Awards on September 24. The awards were designed to honor state Executive Branch employees, managers and work teams who exemplify the highest caliber of public service and dedication in serving the people of Hawai‘i. The statewide program is administered by the Department of Human Resources Development.

“Public employees have made important contributions to our continuing efforts to improve the efficiency and quality of government services,” said Governor Green. “We are honored to work with such dedicated individuals and appreciate all they do each and every day.”

Governor Green presented the awards for:

- 2024 State Manager of the Year: Joanna Seto, Administrator, Department of Health
- 2024 State Employee of the Year: Heidi Taogoshi, Registered Nurse, Department of Health
- 2024 State Team of the Year: UH Maui College Culinary Arts Team, University of Hawai‘i

The three winners were selected from 56 exceptional groups and individual nominees. A volunteer selection committee of four prominent members of the community carefully reviewed the 56 nomination packets and rated them according to defined categories. The committee presented their recommendations for the three awards to Governor Green.

At this year’s ceremony, Governor Green also recognized the recipients of the 2020 Governor’s Awards for Employee, Manager, and Team of the Year for their outstanding achievements due to the cancellation of the May 2020 ceremony during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2020 selection committee, selected the award recipients from 53 exceptional groups and individual nominees. They are:

- 2020 State Manager of the Year: Bonnie Kahakui, State Procurement Assistant Administrator, Department of Accounting and General Services
- 2020 State Employee of the Year: Janis Matsunaga, Entomologist, Department of Agriculture
- 2020 State Team of the Year: Corrections Programs Services – Education Branch, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

“These individuals have selflessly given of themselves to enrich the lives of those they serve,” said Governor Green. “Their accomplishments perpetuate the aloha spirit and make our state a special place to live and work.”

To read more about the 2024 and 2020 awardees, visit <https://governor.hawaii.gov/newsroom/office-of-the-governor-news-release-gov-green-lauds-top-state-manager-employee-and-team-of-the-year/>.



Governor Green and the 2024 Awardees pose for a group photo.



Pathways to Maui Economic Recovery

The state of Hawai'i Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) and County of Maui convened the third and last state-facilitated meeting of the Maui Economic Recovery Commission (ERC) in September at the Maui Arts and Cultural Center. The meeting included cultural, economic development, agricultural, non-profit, creative, health care and education leaders from Maui; philanthropic, airlines, finance, business and other executives from statewide companies and organizations; and public sector representatives from the county, state and federal levels.

The Maui ERC identified economic recovery projects which include: a Lahaina business park, rebuilding Lahaina Harbor, regular community gatherings that promote healing for displaced families and business recovery, expansion of health care services alongside affordable housing with career training, a West Maui water management plan, a wai (water) dashboard, federal funding for recycled



Photo courtesy: Mark Middleton.

water use, a comprehensive workforce development plan, development of a food systems workforce, expedited permitting proposals and systems mapping for the island.

These projects are community-identified and -led collaborations that complement, amplify and are in alignment with many of the county's long-term recovery initiatives.

The Maui ERC first convened in January 2024, which Governor Josh Green, M.D., opened with Mayor Richard Bissen and the vision to: keep local people home, foster hope and rebuild the economy so local people can return home.

Since then, the Maui ERC convened as learning groups and focused on the following pathways to long-term economic recovery for Maui, which were identified through collaborative discussions: housing, workforce development, community interest, healing, wai and lele ahupua'a (catalyzing a modern day ahupua'a approach).

DBEDT Director James Kunane Tokioka, co-chair of the Maui ERC, said, "This commission has been dedicated to shaping a brighter economic future for Maui and creating pathways forward, and it's an honor to watch Maui lead the way."

Hawai'i Air National Guard Make "Messages of Hope" for Suicide Prevention Month



Photo courtesy: DOD.

For the second year in a row, members of the Hawai'i Air National Guard are using origami cranes to spread messages of hope for Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September.

This tradition started at the Pearl Harbor Navy Exchange last year when volunteers strung together a display of thousands of paper cranes. Patrons received inspirational messages inscribed on the pieces of origami.

Some displays comprise repurposed origami donations from last year's event, including thousands of

contributions that originated from members who were deployed.

"The successful implementation of last year's effort sparked the motivation to make the 'Messages of Hope' origami crane activity a tradition," said Dr. Yumi Panui, from the 154th Wing Director of the Psychological Health Team. "The effort was so well received by our Hawai'i Air National Guard Members and their family members, so it made sense to continue the effort again this year."

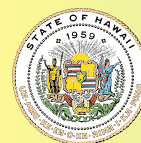
While the display of cranes serves as a colorful and eye-catching work of art, its purpose goes much deeper. Each crane is accompanied by a message of hope, written by volunteers and observers alike, to offer encouragement to those who may be struggling. These personal messages, woven into the display, symbolize the community's commitment to spreading hope and supporting one another in times of need.

These messages of hope extend beyond the HIANG's community, with additional participants and community partners such as the active-duty 15th Wing and the Cohen Clinic at Child and Family Service in Mililani.

The initiative emphasizes how even the smallest gesture—a folded crane with a handwritten note—can have a lasting impact. Each crane is a small symbol of kindness with a message of hope to remind us that we're all in this together.

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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