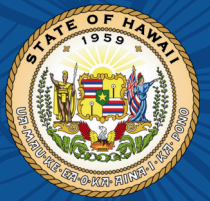


COMMUNITY REPORT

SENATE DISTRICT 18 | NOVEMBER 2024

Serving Mililani Town, Waipi'o Gentry, Crestview, Waikele, portion of Waipahu, Village Park, Royal Kunia



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Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

As we gather this month to celebrate gratitude and community, I extend my warmest wishes to you and your 'ohana for a safe and joyous Thanksgiving. This season is a time for reflection, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to continue serving you as your District 18 Senator. We have navigated challenges and embraced initiatives that uplift our community, and it is an honor to represent such a dynamic and caring district.

This month's newsletter highlights a range of community events that I had the pleasure of attending and supporting. For our pickleball enthusiasts, my colleagues and I celebrated the blessing of 45 new indoor pickleball courts at the Hawai'i Convention Center. These courts provide a space for friendly competition and physical activity, an excellent facility for our residents and visitors as the sport grows in popularity across the state.

Additionally, I recently toured Fukuoka's Kaiyu Maru training vessel with First Lady of Hawai'i Jaime Green and Hawai'i State Department of Education Superintendent Hayashi. The exchange between Fukuoka student fishery trainees and Campbell High School students offers hands-on experience in sustainable fishing and ocean conservation, introducing our keiki to careers in marine science. It was wonderful to see these students' dedication to preserving our natural resources and the impact of their global connections.

As advancing computer science education continues to be a priority for our schools, I joined Hawai'i Public Radio's (HPR) Bytemarks Café to discuss how access to computer science is expanding for every public school student, from as early as kindergarten. The collaboration between state departments and industry experts aims to equip our students with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in today's technology-driven workforce. I invite you to listen to the show, available on HPR, to learn more about the journey that brought us here.

Recently, the Hawai'i State Legislature gathered to honor the legacy of Representative Mark Nakashima, a friend and colleague who dedicated his life to public service. Representative Nakashima's contributions to education, healthcare, and consumer protection have made a lasting impact on our community, and his presence will be deeply missed.

Our community continues to be resilient, connected, and compassionate. It is an honor to represent you, and I remain dedicated to working on behalf of all our families. I share my warmest wishes for a joyful Thanksgiving season filled with gratitude and aloha.



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Hawai'i Convention Center Indoor Pickleball Courts Blessing

I joined my colleagues, the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), and members of the community at the blessing of Hawai'i Convention Center's (HCC) new indoor pickleball courts. With the installation of 45 premium courts, this facility aims to be a premier destination for pickleball in Hawai'i, providing residents and visitors with an indoor space to enjoy one of the fastest-growing sports in the nation.

These new courts were unveiled in time for the center's inaugural pickleball event, the Aloha Pickleball Games & Festival. Organized by Pop Up Pickleball, the festival welcomed over 600 players of all ages and skill levels for a weekend of friendly competition and family activities.

The HCC has been instrumental in supporting recreational and tourism goals through its expanding sports courts program, which includes facilities for volleyball, basketball, badminton, and now, pickleball. As pickleball continues to grow in popularity, these new courts are a fantastic resource for residents to stay active, connect with others, and enjoy quality recreational time in a convenient, indoor space. Mahalo to the HCC team and everyone involved for bringing this vision to life. Here's to many games filled with friendly competition and aloha spirit!



Above, breaking in the new pickleball courts with a friendly match!



Above, left (L-R): Kahu Kordell Kekoa, Rep. Quinlan, Sen. DeCoite, Rep. Tam, Pickleball Management Group leaders Charlie Hauser and Scott Winters, HCC General Manager Teri Orton, HTA Board Chair Mufi Hanneman, HTA Interim President & CEO Daniel Nahoopii, Sen. Moriwaki, myself, Sen. Kim, and HTA Board Member Roy Pfund. Above, right: My colleagues and I before a fun game of pickleball.



Regional Kitchens: Transforming Agriculture Through Strategic Investments

I attended the Hawai'i Agricultural Foundation's Eat Think Drink: Regional Kitchens, where community and industry leaders explored how regional kitchens can strengthen Hawai'i's food systems through local sourcing and strategic investments. With Senator Donovan Dela Cruz as keynote speaker, discussions emphasized the role of regional kitchens in supporting food sustainability and agricultural growth. Panelist DOE Superintendent Keith Hayashi emphasized how these initiatives can drive local sourcing and sustainable practices.

A highlight of the evening was the menu collaboration between Hawai'i chefs and students from their high school alma maters, featuring locally grown ingredients. I was delighted to see students from Mililani, Farrington, Kalani, and Moanalua high schools showcase their culinary talents and bring creative, local dishes to life. Their work reflects the commitment of our educational and culinary communities to fostering the next generation's connection to Hawai'i's agriculture.



Above, left: myself with Mililani High School culinary teachers Joyce Kong (left) and Shannon Marxen (right), whom I coached in the Mililani-Waipio Bobby Sox league. Above, middle: Chef Robin Abad from Ali'i Fish Market and I. Above, right: myself, Superintendent Hayashi, Chef Abad, faculty, and the talented culinary students of Farrington High School.

Tour of the Kaiyu Maru Training Vessel

I spent an exciting afternoon with First Lady of Hawai'i Jaime Green and Superintendent Hayashi on a tour of the Kaiyu Maru training vessel, where we welcomed student fishery trainees from Fukuoka, Japan. The Kaiyu Maru Program, in partnership with Campbell High School, provides a unique opportunity for students from Hawai'i and Japan to engage in an enriching cultural and educational exchange. These students from Fukuoka have spent two months at sea, learning hands-on about sustainable fishing practices, ocean conservation, and the technical skills needed in the fishery workforce. It was remarkable to witness their dedication and passion for their craft.

For our students at Campbell High School, this exchange offers an invaluable perspective on global career opportunities in fisheries and marine science. By connecting with international peers and learning directly on a working vessel, our students gain practical knowledge and firsthand exposure to oceanic careers—right here in Hawai'i. Programs like these are critical in building the skills and perspectives that will equip our students to lead in areas vital to our islands and beyond.



Above, left: Group photo with distinguished guests including First Lady Jaime Green, leaders of the Hawai'i State Department of Education including Superintendent Hayashi, as well as faculty and students of Campbell High School with student fishery trainees aboard the Kaiyu Maru vessel. Above, middle: Exploring the Kaiyu Maru vessel. Above, right (L-R): Superintendent Hayashi, Japanese Consul Keiko Okawa, Fukuoka Suisan High School Principal Takehiko Koga, First Lady Green, and I. Photo Credits: Hawai'i State Department of Education

Hawai'i Public Radio's Bytemarks Cafe

Ian Kitajima, President of Pacific International Center for High Technology Research (PICHTR), and I appeared on Hawai'i Public Radio's Bytemarks Café, hosted by Burt Lum, to discuss our efforts in expanding computer science education across the state. We discussed the journey we've taken, alongside dedicated partners from the Department of Education and industry leaders, to make computer science accessible to students in every public school in Hawai'i. This effort started in 2017 and brings together today's statewide computer science curriculum. This collaborative endeavor was and is driven by public and private partnerships.

During the interview, I shared how Act 51 (SLH 2018) and Act 158 (SLH 2021) helped lay a foundation for integrating computer science into education for kindergarten through 12th grade. This legislation not only addresses today's workforce needs but also opens doors to new career pathways in tech, including cybersecurity, green energy, and robotics. It is rewarding to see the positive impact this initiative has on students' futures as a result of the State Legislature's priority to diversify Hawai'i's economy.

You can listen to the full interview online at Hawai'i Public Radio's website: <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/podcast/bytemarks-cafe>. Mahalo nui to Bytemarks Café host Burt Lum for providing a platform to highlight these advancements and the people working tirelessly to guide and empower the next generation of Hawai'i's tech innovators.



PLAY NOW

Bytemarks Café

Computer Science In K-12 Education

ABOUT

Today we'll find out how a subject like computer science can take root in K-12 education. We'll learn how technology and policy can help to shape future generations through advocacy and perseverance.

WHAT

Bytemarks Café is a half-hour radio magazine that showcases the innovation and creativity in Hawai'i's tech community. Hosted by Burt Lum, the program's purpose is to raise awareness of the tech economy and engage the listener in the discussion.

HOW TO LISTEN

*Online at Hawai'i Public Radio:
[hawaiipublicradio.org](https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org)*

SCAN ME



Upcoming Holiday Events at Mililani and Waipahu Public Libraries



Winter Wonderland in a Jar

This holiday season, I encourage you to enjoy festive family events at the Mililani and Waipahu public libraries! Visit during December for creative crafts and holiday fun for all ages.

- **Winter Wonderland in a Jar (Mililani) — December 10, 2024 @ 3pm-4pm:** Create a winter wonderland in a jar! Ages 8 and up (children under 12 with an adult) are invited to join this fun crafting session. Materials provided; space is limited. Sign up at Mililani Public Library or call 808-627-7470.
- **Family Holiday Fun (Waipahu) — December 14, 2024 @ 10am-12pm:** Bring the family for some holiday fun! Kids ages 3 to 18 can enjoy board games and holiday ornament painting (one per person, while supplies last). All materials provided. Programs may vary. For more details, call 808-675-0358.

Joint Venture Education Forum Certificate Presentation

As Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, it was my honor to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Joint Venture Education Forum (JVEF) with a Senate certificate in recognition of this impactful partnership between the Hawai'i State Department of Education and the United States Indo-Pacific Command.

Established in 1999, JVEF has served as a vital bridge, addressing the unique educational needs of military-dependent children and enhancing public school education for all students across Hawai'i. Over the years, JVEF has fostered open dialogue, community involvement, and initiatives that support the academic and social-emotional well-being of Hawai'i's students. **Congratulations JVEF on this milestone and best wishes for continued success in the years to come!**



Above, Superintendent Hayashi and Hawai'i State Board of Education Military Representative Air Force Colonel Angenene L. Robertson, with Hawai'i State Senate certificate.

In Memoriam: Representative Mark Nakashima



On behalf of the Hawai'i State Senate, I had the honor of delivering remarks in memory of my colleague and friend, Representative Mark Nakashima. Mark and I were both elected in 2008, and over the years, I witnessed his steadfast commitment to serving our state. His career began as a history and economics teacher at Honoka'a High School, where he shaped countless lives and deepened his dedication to education and public service, especially in rural communities. This early experience guided his belief in equal access to quality education and healthcare, values he carried with him throughout his legislative career.

As a representative of East Hawai'i Island, Mark championed issues such as consumer protection, sustainable energy, and healthcare access with a calm but resolute presence. In an arena often dominated by loud voices, his thoughtful approach was a reminder that effective leadership doesn't always require volume but conviction and purpose. Mark's contributions will continue to impact our communities for years to come, inspiring future leaders to take up his mantle. We extend our deepest condolences to his wife Yvette, his family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him. Mahalo nui loa, Mark. May you rest in Aloha.



Above, left: Addressing family, friends, and distinguished guests during Rep. Nakashima's memorial service. Above, right: Memorial service honoring Rep. Nakashima held in the Hawaii State Capitol rotunda.