



# MidWeek

This column by Senator Michelle Kidani  
was published in  
the MidWeek **CENTRAL VOICE**  
section on Wednesday, May 4, 2016.

## **Congratulations to the Class of 2016!**

In less than two weeks, we will be congratulating Mililani High School graduates of the Class of 2016. Commencement ceremonies are scheduled for Sunday, May 15, at Aloha Stadium. As in past years, there will be more than 500 diplomas awarded for completing required courses – and much more! Dozens of seniors have achieved statewide and national distinction in academic competitions of one kind or another. And graduating student athletes have proved the Trojans are a force to be reckoned with in a broad spectrum of team and individual sports.



It is no wonder that *US News & World Report* – in its 2016 rankings of the nation’s best high schools – selected Mililani as number one in the state. Such student successes are a reflection of the combined efforts of many people – the students themselves, of course, but also the teachers and counsellors, campus leadership and staff, and the families who play a vital role in supporting their youngsters. Our Mililani campus stands as a source of great pride in our community, and we are so grateful to those who understand that educating these young men and women is everyone’s *kuleana*.

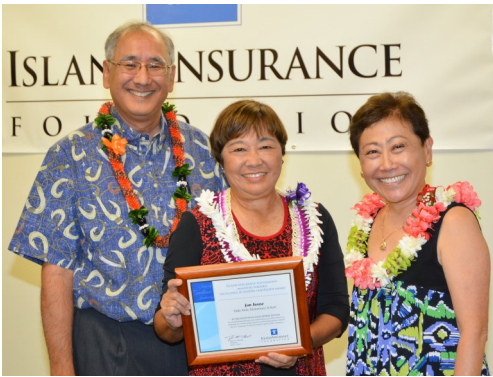
As chair of the Senate Committee on Education, I should also acknowledge one Mililani senior in particular. Brennan Lee has spent many, many hours as the Student Representative on the State Board of Education, and he will now turn over his seat to a new student member in the 2016-2017 school year. Brennan is a soccer player, a musician who plays at the honors level, and a serious scholar who aspires to become a surgeon. Extraordinary ambitions, but his high-energy years at Mililani have prepared him well for what lies ahead.

***Mahalo, for your service, Brennan, and best wishes for much success in college!***



***Continued next page . . .***

Congratulations to Hale Kula Elementary Principal – and Mililani neighbor – Jan Iwase. Jan was one of a dozen public school principals nominated for the 2016 Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award. The honor is named for the founder of Island Insurance, whose Foundation continues to support issues of importance to Mr. Tokioka during his lifetime.



***Principal Jan Iwase, with Tyler Tokioka of Island Insurance Foundation, and State Superintendant of Education, Kathryn Matayoshi.***

Jan has been Principal at Hale Kula – located on base at Schofield – for 14 years. She faces the challenge of a highly-transient population of about 800 students that is almost entirely made up of youngsters whose parents are in the military. Despite that, Hale Kula’s students have excelled, and the school has received support from both the Department of Defense and the State of Hawaii for major campus upgrades and expansion of facilities. Well done, Jan! Mahalo for your leadership and tireless work on behalf of our military family neighbors.

Hale Kula was also in the news last month as the State Board of Education approved a name change for the campus. As MidWeek reported on last week’s front page, the school will now be known as the Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School in honor of the late U.S. Senator from Hawaii who served Hawaii for so many years in Washington, D.C.



Campus construction and the new state-of-the-art facilities are all expected to be ready for full use in a few months. Principal Iwase says she expects there will be an official ceremony to recognize the name-change as the 2016-2017 school year gets underway.

***New classroom building at Daniel K. Inouye Elementary***

***The school’s namesake, the late U.S. Senator from Hawaii, Daniel K. Inouye***

