

Senator Michelle Kidani

(D) Senate District 18– Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia



Aloha friends and neighbors,

The 2013 legislative term is now two thirds done, with just 20 session days remaining for us to complete our official business. The most important part of that is finalizing the state's fiscal plan for the two year period beginning July first. Initial work on the Governor's budget is done by the House, after which the Senate Ways and Means Committee makes further amendments. We are taking a less conservative approach than the House in restoring programs and services that have suffered from budget cuts over the last several years. The Senate is also likely to propose funding for the major early learning initiative so Hawaii can join 39 other states in a commitment to academic success for our children and grandchildren.

As Vice Chair of Ways and Means, I am prioritizing the Senate's construction budget. One major focus we are considering is critical infrastructure that would vastly upgrade the state's information technology capabilities to benefit island businesses, virtually all Hawaii residents who increasingly rely on broadband access, and state agencies that can then more effectively provide public services and access to information. Our current transpacific cable is almost at capacity. New cable technology no longer requires Hawaii to be a stepping stone to other continents, and it is imperative that we show interest in wanting to be a player in laying new and enhanced cable infrastructure.

Also, I am pleased that two important bills I introduced are moving forward. **SB 571** would support Oahu's rail transit project by reducing the ten percent overhead cost that the State charges the City and County of Honolulu to collect the half percent excise tax designated to cover the cost of rail. The ten percent charge seems excessive; any money the City saves on a reduced rate can be applied directly to rail costs. **SB 573** is my bill that would give teachers a tax break for certain expenses they incur when spending their own money for classroom resources. It's the least we can do to help support our dedicated teachers. You can follow these and other bills on the Web: <http://capitol.hawaii.gov>.

Me ke Aloha,



Town Hall Meeting on Transportation

The public is invited to a town hall meeting next month where the State and City Transportation Departments will discuss transportation issues. This is an opportunity to ask questions about transportation matters from plans for fixing our roadways to widening Kipapa Bridge to rail transit. Please come!

*Wednesday, April 10, 7:30 pm
Mililani High School
Cafeteria*

Read Aloud America introduces *The Cat in the Hat* to Kaleiopuu youngsters

I was invited again this year to read to students at **Kaleiopuu Elementary in Village Park**, this time in the kindergarten classroom of teacher **Gina Jimenez**. The students really got into our time together.

You can see in the photo at right they even made their own *Cat in the Hat* hats for this special occasion!

There was good news for Kaleiopuu that day! I announced that funds are now committed so that Kaleiopuu will be able to participate in the **Read Aloud America** program for the fall semester of 2013.

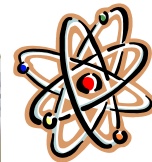


Our Students in the spotlight ~ Celebrating the arts, sciences and the humanities

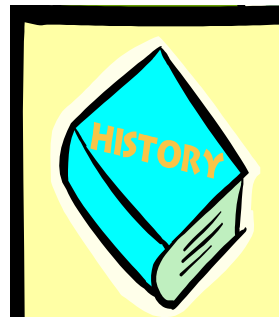


<<<<<< Their **Waipahu High School** art teacher, **Gloria Jakahi**, calls them the "Fantastic Five." Back row, from left, **Beethoven Sausal, Tai Phan, Walter Mamuad**, and front, **Sable Prieto and Sharee Lei Mamuad**. They all sent art pieces to the **50th Annual Hawaii Regional Scholastic Art** competition, on display in March at the Hawaii State Art Museum. **Mililani High School** students **Lawrence Castro, Renzo Gonzalez and Violet Fox** also had art works on display, as did **Mililani Middle School** students **Hannah Ishikawa, Emerald Esperas and Spencer Ilagan**.

Paintings, drawings, many prints and several photographs have been on display at the State Capitol as winners of the **2013 Second Congressional District Kaha Ki'i Art Competition**. This year, photographs by three students in **Francine Sandell's** classes at **Mililani High School** were selected as finalists. Congratulations to **Lawrence Castro, Devin Ono and Christina Monahan**. Christina's photograph - entitled *Relaxed* - is pictured at right. It depicts a fisherman at a favorite spot, appearing to be at the end of a beautiful Hawaii rainbow. Come see the art until **Saturday, March 30**, when an overall winner will be chosen to be in an exhibition at the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.



Viola Mocz (above left) explains her physics project - judged second best overall - and **Marc Siler & Danielle Terukina** (above right) display their third place trophy. All three **Mililani High School** students qualified to participate in the **Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Arizona in May**.



The **Leeward District History Day Fair** was held on March 9 at Waipahu Intermediate. **Jessica Joy Fernandez, Angelica Badua, Jethro Macaraeg and Ina Deloso** from **Waipahu High School**, and **Daniel John Quiamas, Wilma Calimag, Michelle Baon and Rovy Anne Pajarillo** from **Waipahu Intermediate** advanced to the State History Day competition in April.

Jubilation in Victory ~ and on to the Nationals in Ohio!
Mililani High School will represent Hawaii in the National Science Olympiad in May at Wright State University. MHS team members (above) celebrated their win this month - in **alphabetical** order: **Rachel Brewer, Vivian Fang, Kevin Frifeldt, Renzo Gonzalez, Terianne Hamada, Shaun Kim, April-Joy McCann, Stephen Mau, Viola Mocz, Brandon Quon, Adrianna Saymo, Evan Wilson and Kyle Yamada**.

Keelan Okazaki and Gabrielle Gregorio from **Mililani High School** have received summer study and travel awards from the **Pacific and Asian Affairs Council (PAAC)**. Keelan will travel to Vietnam and Gabrielle will spend two weeks in China, both with fellow students from other Hawaii public schools.



In Memoriam

On Wednesday, March 27, the Senate and House convened in joint session to present the Hawaii Medal of Honor to recognize the sacrifices of 19 military service members who were residents of Hawaii, or personnel who were stationed at bases here, who died in Iraq or Afghanistan. The medal has been presented each year since 2006.

I hosted the family of the late U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 Don C. Viray of Waikele. CWO 2 Viray served in the 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Infantry Division at Wheeler Army Airfield.

The Viray family was represented at the State Capitol ceremony by parents Leodindo and Luz Viray and sister Sherry Anne Viray.

The freedom we treasure is not free. The families of all of the service personnel honored this year know this to be true. Let us not forget those who paid the price for our freedom.



<<<< The State Capitol is truly a gathering place for thousands of Hawaii residents during the legislative session. The photo at left provides an unusual perspective on the **estimated 4,000 public school teachers** who rallied at the Capitol earlier this month to urge support for our schools and more urgent and more serious contract talks between the state and HSTA.

Over the past weekend, the Governor and the union announced that they had reached a tentative agreement on a new four-year contract for the 13,500 teachers that provides for pay increases, restoration of previous medical coverage premium contribution percentages and HSTA input on teacher evaluations.

The agreement will be presented to teachers for approval in mid-April.

During **Education Week at the Capitol**, a group of students from **Waipahu High School** presented their positive experiences with Smaller Learning Communities at WHS. The school has distinguished itself with an aggressive college and career prep program that makes education interdisciplinary, interest-based and career oriented and makes sure that instructional and guidance programs are tailored to a student's individual needs and capabilities. **The success of the WHS smaller learning communities is due to committed administrators, teachers and counselors.**



With me and WHS students are Waipahu Representative Ty Cullin (back row, left) and WHS Principal Keith Hayashi.

Community Partner Generosity Acknowledged



I was pleased to join invited guests at the **Salvation Army Partners in Community Service Awards Luncheon** last week, and to acknowledge two individuals who have been generous donors to many Hawaii charitable organizations. With me in the photo from left, well known Hawaii dentist, **Dr. Lawrence Tse**, Dr. Tse's social secretary, **Leilani Keough**, Hawaii's Ambassador of Aloha, singer and entertainer **Danny Kaleikini**, and our **Senate President Donna Mercado Kim**.

Danny remembers learning to read music and play the trumpet as a youngster at a Salvation Army summer camp, and supports many organizations through his **Danny Kaleikini Foundation**. **Dr. Tse** has shared his resources with numerous community organizations for many years and was once named "**Philanthropist of the Year**."



Mililani Complex Schools Stage Health and Wellness Fair, Celebrate 'Character Counts' Program

All seven schools in the Mililani Complex were well-represented at a big event at the Town Center of Mililani last month. New Mililani High School Principal **Fred Murphy** (at left) was a speaker, and I was happy to set up my own table (photo at right) to distribute more **Keiki ID** safety kits. **The ID kits are still available. Contact my office at 586-7100 if you would like to have one mailed to you.**



All Mililani schools participate in the **Character Counts** program that focuses on the "six pillars" - **trustworthiness, respect, fairness, responsibility, good citizenship** and **caring**. Since our children and grandchildren spend so many hours on campus, our schools are places where they practice valuable life lessons they can *only* learn when they interact with classmates their own age. That's where programs like **Character Counts** become so important. At the Mililani schools:

- teachers discuss the "six pillars" in the classroom, or
- counselors conduct guidance lessons with students, or
- assemblies recognize students who are good citizens, or
- even our high school coaches incorporate the six pillars into the way they coach or interact with their players.

The behaviors and values that **Character Counts** teaches can help to build a solid foundation for our youngsters that they will carry into their lives beyond the classroom.



Mililani Middle School staff at February's Fair

Three cheers for our Mililani schools that have committed to the Character Counts curriculum!

You are invited...



STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
ART IN PUBLIC PLACES COLLECTION
AT THE LEGISLATIVE OFFICES

The Hawaii State Legislature will welcome the public for the **5th Annual Art at the Capitol** event in conjunction with the Hawaii State Art Museum's **First Friday** festivities on **April 5, 2013 from 4:30 to 7 p.m.** This is a free event, offering a unique opportunity for the public to view more than 460 works of art by Hawaii artists placed in the offices of legislators, executive offices and the Public Access Room. Part of the evening's program will include a tribute to acclaimed sculptor **Satoru Abe** whose art works are very well represented in the State's art inventory.

More information at 586-6460.

Recognizing a true public servant

Former **State Representative Marilyn Lee** has continued to serve the Mililani community as a member of the Mililani/Waipio Neighborhood Board. She also serves as Mayor Caldwell's representative to the Mililani Mauka Board. Since her 16 year tenure in the State House ended last year, Marilyn has received numerous awards to recognize her service.

Among them:

- Awards of appreciation for service from Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa, the State House and Senate and Mililani Town Association.
- Community Leadership Award from Planned Parenthood Hawaii and Award of Appreciation from Mothers Against Drunk Driving.
- Proclamation from the Governor declaring February 19, 2013 as Marilyn B. Lee Day.
- On Friday, April 5, Marilyn will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award from Hawaii Women Lawyers.
- **This week, the Governor nominated Marilyn to the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women. Her appointment will go to the Senate for approval. Congratulations!**

