

Senator Michelle Kidani

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



Aloha friends and neighbors,

This newsletter includes a lot of information about our schools—focusing on students, teachers and administrator excellence. We've just completed our annual Education Week activities at the Capitol that highlight some of the outstanding work at our public schools from the elementary, middle and high school level and on University of Hawaii campuses. It's truly inspiring to celebrate student successes and to meet the young people who take advantage of all the opportunities our schools have to offer.

Legislative Update

After many hours of informational briefings and hearings on specific pieces of legislation, detailed work on the State budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1 has begun. The Senate Committee on Ways and Means, for which I serve as Vice Chair, met for a good part of last weekend to carefully craft a budget bill that will now be compared to the Governor's proposed spending plan and the budget already passed by the House.

In spite of the administration's statements that we have a budget "surplus," our Council on Revenues says that the robust economy of 2013 is cooling off, and the State has far less flexibility in budgeting than we had hoped for. The Ways and Means Committee, therefore, has taken a much more studied approach to formulating a budget, proceeding with caution in light of receding revenues. It's the prudent thing to do, and we believe the House will agree to this more measured approach.

Our capital improvement budget, which I oversee, has spurred job growth - especially in the construction industry - over the past couple of years. Now, we are proposing a more focused approach, designed to meet critical health and safety requirements, with a heavy investment in modernizing the state's information-technology capability to better serve our public purposes.

An important budget deadline occurs next week when the Senate's plan will be laid out in more detail. Follow our progress at the Legislature's Web site: <http://capitol.hawaii.gov>.

Me Ke Aloha,



Next Wednesday! Town Hall Meeting

The public is invited to a town hall meeting hosted by Senator Michelle Kidani ~

Wednesday evening
April 2, 7:00 pm

Kanoelani Elementary
School Cafeteria

Honolulu Mayor
Kirk Caldwell
will be present for
a briefing on the new
Emergency Medical Services
facility to be built in Waipio

The State of Hawaii Medal of Honor

For the ninth year in a row, the Senate and House met in joint session this week to present the State Medal of Honor to family members of four military personnel with Hawaii ties who died in a war zone during the past year.

The Medal of Honor was created by the Legislature in 2005 and was first presented the following year to recognize service and sacrifice by members of the armed forces, Reserves and the National Guard who were residents of Hawaii, attended an educational institution here or were stationed in the islands.

This year's posthumous awards . . . for service and sacrifice

- Hawaii Army National Guard Sgt. **Drew M. Scobie** of Kailua, Oahu - killed in January in the crash of a plane on a night mission in Afghanistan;
- Air Force Capt. **Reid K. Nishizuka** of Kailua, Oahu - killed in a plane crash in Afghanistan in April 2013
- Army Chief Warrant Officer 2 **Edward Balli** of Kapolei, Oahu - killed in an insurgent attack in Afghanistan in January;
- Army Sgt. **Tofiga J. Tautolo** of Waianae, Oahu—killed in May when his vehicle was attacked with an explosive device in Afghanistan



“The freedom we treasure is not free, and the families of all service personnel honored this year know this to be true.

“Let us not forget those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom.”

~ Senator Kidani



“People learn a lot at pre-school,” said **Roxanna**. “All kids should go. I want the bills to turn into laws,” she concluded.

At the Capitol

Important education bills continue to work their way through the Senate. Among them is **HB 2276**, that establishes a **State Early Childhood Education System** that most other states already have in place. We heard testimony in the Committee on Education from a variety of people who support the program, including youngsters **Ruby** and **Roxanna** - pictured at left with Committee Chair Senator Jill Tokuda and myself.



A very large audience gathered at the Capitol earlier this month to recognize Hawaii Army National Guard **Brigadier General Keith Y. Tamashiro** at ceremonies marking his promotion.

When General Tamashiro (pictured above with his wife, *Iwalani*) is not on Guard duty, he works for the State Department of Human Services. He’s also a member of the Mililani Mauka Neighborhood Board.

Did you know . . . ? Some interesting facts about folks who live in Senate District 18

(Mililani Town, Portion of Waipio Gentry, Village Park, Waialeale, Royal Kunia)

Resident population: 58,308 . . . **male:** 50.5 percent, **female:** 49.5 percent . . . **Median age:** 38.1 years (6.3 % younger than 5 years of age, 78.1 % 18 years and older, 11.3 % 65 years and older) . . . **Average household size:** 3.05 . . . **Number of families:** 14,970 . . . **Median household income:** \$92,936 . . . **Persons below the poverty level:** 3.8 percent; **Families below the poverty level:** 2.6 percent . . . **Education level:** High school degree or higher: 94.2 percent; Bachelor’s degree or higher: 31.4 percent . . . **Foreign born population:** 17.4 percent . . . **Population speaking language other than English:** 22.1 percent . . . **Median value of owner-occupied housing:** \$516,200 . . . **Median rent:** \$1,875 . . . **Ethnicity:** Asian (including Filipino): 72 percent; Caucasian: 33.7 percent; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 21.5 percent.

~ ~ From the Hawaii State Data Center based on information from the Census Bureau



Kipapa Elementary School in Mililani officially dedicated a large stained glass mosaic this month. It’s titled **Kipapa and the Path of Light**, and was created by artist Calley O’Neill through the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts *Art in Public Places* program.

With invited guests standing in front of the mural, you can get an idea of the size of this work of art. The taro represents good health and strength; the *kukui* tree symbolizes wisdom and enlightenment.

At right, brother and sister dancers who served as models for those in the mural - **Daniel-William Hiapo** and **Marie Ku’uipomakamae Elisaga** - along with artist Calley O’Neill.



The Native Hawaiian Education Association is holding its annual convention at UH West Oahu this week. The Association plans to honor Waipahu High School’s longtime Hawaiian Language teacher **Rebecca Kahealani Sanborn**. Kumu Kahealani has been at WHS for 20 years, teaching and mentoring hundreds of students in the culture, history, language and proper care for the *‘aina*. **Mahalo!**



The Waipahu community gathered earlier this month for **Kaulana o Waipahu** to recognize longtime residents. In the center of the photo below, **Judy Soares, teacher at Honowai Elementary, Outstanding Educator**. With her, left to right, Senator Kidani, Judy’s husband Dexter, Sen. Clarence Nishihara and Representative Henry Aquino.





Tips from the **MMS Fishing Club** ~ and student **Hunter Gentry** (below) shows off his project.

All together 29 clubs are active in the MMS after school program.



Mililani Middle School's energetic Principal **Elynn Chung** has been named 2015 Middle School Principal of the Year by the Hawaii Association of Secondary School Administrators.



The open courtyard at the State Capitol became "**Blazer Central**" last week as the **Mililani Middle School** staged displays and demonstrations to show off their Resources for Enrichment, Athletics, Culture and Health (R.E.A.C.H.) after school program.

The High Interest Program (HIP) involves more than 600 MMS students grades 6-8 in clubs and sports that suit their interests and talents.

Earlier this year, I joined Lt. Governor Shan Tsutsui, several DOE administrators and area elected officials to present a \$45,000 check to MMS to support the R.E.A.C.H. program that has improved overall school attendance and student achievement.



Waipahu High School Principal **Keith Hayashi** was recognized in the Senate for having received the Tokioka Award for Excellence in School Leadership last year.

Now, he's been named 2015 High School Principal of the Year by his fellow school administrators.

We

 our schools!
 Education
 Week
 @
 the Capitol



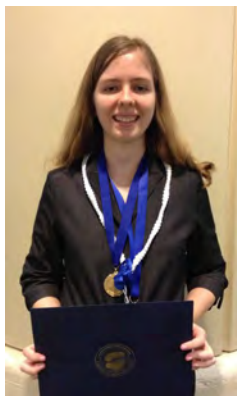
Mililani High School's Advanced Placement Government and Politics Class was honored in the Senate as winners of this year's *We the People* competition. The event is held each year for students who have become experts in the history and interpretation of the U.S. Constitution. All 16 members of the class, with teacher/coach **Amy Perruso** (above with the white lei) will travel to the national competition in Washington, DC, in late April. **Good Luck and congratulations!**



This year's Education Week featured a **College Day**, focusing on programs at the UH Community Colleges.

At left, Senator David Ige prepares to have his blood pressure checked at the table set up by the **Leeward CC** Office of Continuing Education and Workforce Development. At right, I tried out the simulator used in the motorcycle safety and operator training program—another LCC class offering.





Waipahu and Mililani Science All-Stars



Top honors in the Leeward District Science Fair went to **Waipahu High School's** (*top row, left*) **Maria Jurado**, first place overall winner, pictured with her proud parents; (*top right*) **Charlyn Manuyag**, second place; and (*second row right*) the third place team of **Jasmin Valera** and **Irene Kuikahi**. They will all represent their school at the INTEL International Science Fair to be held in Los Angeles in May.

Second row left, with their trophies, Central District Science Fair winners **Brandon Kinnard** and **Tess Cramer** will represent **Mililani High School** at the INTEL Fair in LA. *Second row center*, MHS senior **Viola Moczek** will travel to the National Junior Science Symposium in Washington, DC, in May as winner of the Pacific Symposium for Science and Sustainability. **Good luck and keep up the good work!**



The **Mililani High School Boys Varsity Soccer Team** said aloha to "Coach Jeff" Yamamoto, retiring after 20 years leading the Trojans. *At right*, celebrating with daughter Haley and wife Dee.



Photo: Brien Ing, ScoringLive

Community Photo Gallery



Daniel Mark Johns is Troop 144's most recent Eagle Scout. For his Community Service project, Daniel planned, organized and supervised a program to collect and purchase, pack and ship large quantities of classroom supplies for youngsters in schools on Molokai. **Congratulations, Daniel!**



The sparkling blue pool at **West/Oahu/Mililani YMCA** reopened this month. *Above*, YMCA Branch Manager **Keola Taniguchi** accepted the State Senate's congratulations.

Schools in the Mililani complex participated in a wonderful choral music concert in early March.

At right, **Mililani Middle School** took center stage for their songs.

