



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FROM THE OFFICE OF REPRESENTATIVE JO JORDAN

HOUSE DISTRICT 44 · WAIANAE, MAKAHA, MAKUA, MAILI · WINTER 2015

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Aloha Neighbors,

As reflected in the column to the right, I recently held a Town Hall Meeting on Education where I shared information about funding provided for Waianae coast schools. I'm also excited about the funding released for Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for our community and statewide.



In the meantime, my colleagues and I on the House Finance Committee have been conducting site visits throughout the state, which started with a visit to Hookele Elementary School in Kapolei on July 20. The Committee then visited Maui Memorial Hospital, Paia School, and other locations on the island of Maui from September 9-11. After returning from Maui, several members toured Turtle Bay and Kahuku on September 16 followed by Hawaii State Hospital and Paepae O Heeia on September 18. On October 9, I organized a tour for the House Finance Committee in Waianae which is highlighted in this newsletter. The Committee then went to Molokai on October 15, Hawaii Island from October 19-21, and Kauai on October 28. The Committee will be completing its site visits to the Department of Taxation on November 19, Lanai on December 3, and the Board of Water Supply on December 10.

It is my honor to continue to serve you. Feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance.

Mahalo,

Jo Jordan,
District 44 Representative



Town Hall Meeting on Education

On October 27, I had the pleasure of hosting a Town Hall Meeting on Education with special guests Ann Mahi, DOE Complex Area Superintendent of Nanakuli & Waianae; Doris Ching, UH West Oahu Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; and Kalei Kailihiwa, Director of Community Programs at Kamehameha Schools. I am grateful for the many community members who attended, including the principals of Waianae High, Leihoku, Makaha, and Waianae Elementary Schools, and Kamaile Academy. I also want to thank Olelo, who filmed the evening in order to broadcast the meeting on Olelo at a later time. ◀

Funding Released for Capital Improvement Projects

Governor Ige's Administration announced the release of funding for several Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and included on that list were \$67 million in lump sum CIP for construction for school repairs and maintenance Statewide, \$2 million (design only) for Phase 2 of the H-1 Freeway Management System, \$600,000 to fund design and construction for miscellaneous improvements to the Waianae Agricultural Park on Oahu, and \$7 million for construction for a new Administration and Allied Health Facility at UH West Oahu. ◀

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE WAIANAE SITE VISIT



Members of the House Finance Committee, led by Oahu District Manager of the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation **Meghan Statts** (second from the left), toured the Waianae Boat Harbor on October 9.

Members of the House Finance Committee attended a site visit I organized in Waianae on October 9. The visit began at Waianae Boat Harbor where members received information from Meghan Statts, Oahu District Manager of the Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation of DLNR. Meghan informed members of the revenues generated at the boat harbor as well as the expenses. She noted the loss of needed revenue because numerous slips are out of service and unusable. In an effort to address this need, I've worked to secure CIP funding for the boat harbor and Meghan reported on the status of those projects. Still, Meghan stated that there has been an increase in water usage costs as well as refuse disposal costs. Additionally, she brought to the members' attention the increased reports of theft and vandalism. I will continue to work closely with DLNR staff to address the needs at the Waianae Boat Harbor and keep House Finance members informed of these needs.

Site visit participants then walked over along the coast to Waianae High School. We were met by Waianae High School Principal Disa Hauge who expressed appreciation for the weighted student formula, which provides staff, curricula, supplies, equipment, and flexibility. While she noted challenges in schools in areas of high poverty such as high transiency, lack of resources, and other issues, she also shared that the Waianae community has a tremendous number of

strengths such as extended families, pride, and the high value of education. Disa stated that if she could ask for only one thing that would make the biggest difference in the world would be to pay teachers more because when adjusted for cost of living, Hawaii starts teachers at the lowest rate in the nation. She reported that there is a teacher shortage and 25% of staff are from out of State and probably temporary. In the long term, to stabilize staff, Disa shared that they started a Teacher Academy and hope to graduate 30 students each year who are well prepared for college and determined to return to the Coast. Disa acknowledged P-20 and the UH system as the impetus for the early college classes offered at the high school, which has been a life-changing experience for about 200 students so far. She also recognized Title 1 and State level funding for the strong team of coaches who are able to be in every room at least weekly. Student success and increased staff morale is helping with teacher retention.



Principal **Disa Hauge** spoke with members of the House Finance Committee about the numerous projects undertaken by Searider Productions.

As a catalyst for change in Waianae High School, the members then spent time at Searider Productions (SP) with Executive Director Candy Suiso, staff, students, and college interns. For the last twenty plus years, SP as an elective program has been offering students of the Waianae coast the opportunity to explore, create and engage in all forms of media. Since introducing video production in 1993, SP has

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE WAIANAЕ SITE VISIT



Students of Waianae High School created a collage of self-portraits on display in the computer lab at Searider Productions.

expanded to include journalism, digital media, animation, graphic design, web design, interactive media, audio production and photography. SP's core is taught using 21st century skills on an iPad. At the digital media television level, students are exposed to every piece of equipment/program needed to succeed in the Video/Journalism industry. Searider Video/Searider News is the award winning and nationally recognized classes of SP. Students learn real world industry skill sets. Alternatively, students can tackle key graphic design concepts in Searider Digital core. Each student focuses on the attainment of digital media proficiency in a graphics heavy environment. Students then build upon the skills they developed at the Core level to actively participate in Graphic Design projects that carry real world implications. Beyond extending the digital art focus to encompass packaging, shirt design, and business branding, students also take part in a 3D component that encompasses model building and animation. The culmination of the Searider Digital pathway is where students use their accumulated knowledge to approach projects in new and creative ways, including acclaimed ventures into QR Codes and authoring magazines for use on tablet technology.

The site visit continued in Makaha with Barry Usagawa, Amy Tsuneyoshi, and Dean Seki of the Board of Water Supply (BWS) and Cynthia Rezentes of Mohala I Ka Wai who shared about the Makaha Watershed Restoration Fence

Project. Last year, the Legislature appropriated \$500,000 for plans, design, construction and equipment for an environmental assessment and to construct a fence line in Makaha Valley to protect the watershed. The fence will connect to an existing fence in Makaha Valley. It will be constructed along two sub-ridges and cross four gulches to enclose about 50 acres. This fence will protect some of the most diverse native mesic forests in Makaha from devastating pig damage. By protecting the forests, the source of our drinking water is protected. Students from the Waianae Coast have adopted a portion of Makaha's forest where they learn to identify native plants and animals, and control invasive species with guidance from staff of Kaala Farm Inc., Oahu Army Natural Resources Program, Waianae Mountains Watershed Partnership, and BWS. These efforts help to malama the forest by removing the invasive alien species and allow the native seedlings to thrive. Natural resource management and watershed protection efforts are on-going by various partners with BWS.

The visit concluded in Waianae Valley with Yumi Miyata of the Waianae Mountains Watershed Partnership (WMWP), which is a voluntary partnership between major landowners and stakeholders in the Waianae Mountains. The partnership was formed on April 22, 2010 with 7 original partners signing a Memorandum of Understanding. The 7 original partners are DLNR, BWS, Gill Ewa Lands LLC, Navy Region Hawaii, US Army Committee, Oahu Plant Extinction Prevention Program, and Malama Learning Center. WMWP is supported as a project under the University of Hawaii on behalf of the College of Natural Sciences for the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit. Together, the partners are responsible for 46,518 acres of mauka conservation land in the Waianae Mountains. An example of a WMWP project is the Waianae Kai Forest Reserve Vegetative Firebreak project completed within the three year original project timeframe with 3,000+ volunteers, students, teachers, and community members and resulted in 2500+ plants propagated and outplanted. This project continues now under DLNR. <

Representative Jo Jordan

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