

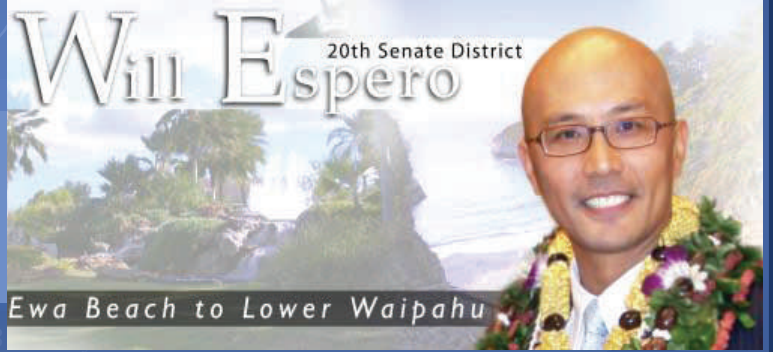
Legislative Connection

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March 2011



Ewa Beach to Lower Waipahu



Leeward Teacher of the Year

Alisa Bender

Education is more important to our country than ever before. Teachers prepare youth for a future we cannot yet imagine. Hillary Clinton's famous "it takes a village" to raise our children is just as true today.

Teachers are central to that social structure. As Alisa Bender, Leeward District Teacher of the Year, put it our collective task is to lift our youth on our shoulders so they can see what we may never see, go where we may never go, and do what we may never do.

Each year the Legislature recognizes the efforts of outstanding schools and teachers to encourage others in the noble work of educating. Among the awards presented are the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math & Science Teaching; Librarian of the Year; Excellence in Service; Milken Educator; Milken Educator Teacher of Promise; MetLife/NASSP High School Principal of the Year; MetLife/NASSP Middle School Principal of the Year; NAESP Distinguished Principal of the Year; Blue Ribbon School; state Teacher of the Year; and district Teacher of the Year.



AROUND THE CAPITOL

Besides considering bills for new laws, the State Capitol is also the site of events to educate legislators and the public or commend members of our community. Here are four — Education Week, Sheriffs, Lt. Gen. Benjamin Mixon, and the Medal of Honor.

EDUCATION WEEK



James Campbell AVID presenters

It is also a time to share information. AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) students from Campbell High and Washington Middle School discussed the college readiness program. UH students shadowed senators.

The UH brought its solar decathlon team and updated lawmakers on the new UHWO campus and UH-Manoa's conversion to renewable energy. It featured some of its programs: tropical conservation and biology; veterinary assisting; plant and biotechnology; biofuel; culinary; summer bridge; carpentry; digital media; engineering; and nursing.

The Kupuna Program's 30th anniversary and the Council on Development Disabilities' 12th Annual Day at the Capitol took place. Others featured: robotics from six schools — Hawaii Education Matters — *Hiki No*, the first state-wide student-run TV network — Early Learning Council — public charter schools and P-20 Partnerships for Education.



Honolulu Community College student Ryan Adverderada spent the day learning about the Legislature.

State Sheriffs

Hawaii's sheriffs trace their office all the way back to royalty, a heritage that may be unique among the 50 states. King Kamehameha III in 1846 created the office to protect and serve the people of Hawaii. Its mission endures to this day, 165 years later. Each day sheriffs put their lives on the line to carry out its commitment to public safety. The Senate recently honored the Sheriffs Division for its dedication and service.



With never a dull moment for those in uniform, the purview of the sheriffs covers a wide range all across the state. Sheriffs serve as body guards for the Governor and Lieutenant Governor and also to national and international dignitaries on request. They provide security for the State Capitol District, Maui Memorial Hospital, Hawaii State Hospital, Waimano Training School and Hospital, and Fort Ruger. They assist the Harbors Division with law enforcement on waterways and in harbors. It is the lead agency for federal Homeland Security issues. With its canine unit, it is responsible for detecting narcotics in Judiciary buildings and prisons. Sheriffs serve warrants and other legal documents, as well as handling accused persons from arrest through entrance into corrections centers.

Medal of Honor

September 11, 2001, a tragic date in American history. A decade later our response continues to have repercussions. Thousands of troops have been deployed to dangerous, volatile regions around the globe, particularly in the Middle East. In 2005 the Legislature created the state Medal of Honor to express its deep appreciation and gratitude to the loved ones of those fallen members of military. The Legislature conducts a Medal of Honor ceremony each year to recognize those men and women in uniform who have sacrificed their lives in service to our country. This year's ceremony will be held on March 29.



Lt. General Benjamin Mixon, Commanding General of the Army, Pacific region since February 2008, will retire on May 1. He began his Army career in 1975. Lt. Gen. Mixon was Director of Staff of the Combined Joint Task Force in Operation Enduring Freedom then Director of Operations for the Southern Command. Lt. Gen. Mixon commanded the Task Force Lightning and Multi-National Division North in Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Senate Human Services Committee recently approved Jason Espero as a member of the Board of Directors for the Hawaii Public Housing Authority. Jason has worked with the homeless as a Shelter Coordinator at the Waikiki Health Center for the last two years. He hopes to improve the living conditions of all those who live in public housing.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

With approximately six weeks left in this Legislative session, the main question is how to balance the budget. The tragedy in Japan is expected to negatively affect tourism, and events in the Middle East may also negatively affect us. Expect a combination of spending cuts and revenue generation bills as the State faces the latest challenge.