



DEPT. COMM. NO. 212

IOLANI PALACE

December 24, 2024

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker and Members of the
House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of the State of Hawai'i Museum of Monarchy History 2024 Annual Report as required by Hawai'i Revised Statutes §6E-35.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at (808) 522-0822 ext. 125

Sincerely,

Paula Akana
President and CEO
The Friends of 'Iolani Palace



IOLANI PALACE

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

STATE OF HAWAII MUSEUM OF MONARCHY HISTORY



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July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

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MISSION STATEMENT

E mālama, ho'ihō'i hou, wehewehe, ka'ana a ho'ohiwahiwa i ke 'ano laha ole o ka mo'omeheu, ka mō'aukala a me ka mana o ka Hale Ali'i o 'Iolani a me kona pa no ka pono o ke kānaka 'ōiwi a me ka po'e o Hawai'i nei a me ko ke ao nei.

To preserve, restore, interpret, share, and celebrate the unique cultural, historical, and spiritual qualities of 'Iolani Palace and its grounds for the benefit of native Hawaiians, the people of Hawai'i, and the world.



MESSAGE FROM THE FRIENDS OF 'IOLANI PALACE PRESIDENT AND CEO PAULA AKANA

Aloha kākou,

State of Hawai'i Museum of Monarchy History presents its annual report for the fiscal year from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. It is with deep kuleana (responsibility) that we share this account of our efforts to mālama (care for) and preserve 'Iolani Palace, a sacred wahi pana (storied place) that holds immense meaning for kama'āina and visitors.

Highlights of this year include exhibitions that bring the rich stories of our ali'i to life, educational initiatives that inspire knowledge and understanding, and the strengthening of relationships through key partnerships.

We extend our heartfelt mahalo to the Hawai'i State Legislature for their support, the State Foundation for Culture and the Arts for their continued partnership, and the Department of Land and Natural Resources for their work in helping us maintain this historic treasure. Your kōkua is vital to ensuring 'Iolani Palace remains a source of pride and inspiration.

We invite you to explore this report, which celebrates the dedication and expertise of our team and partners. It is both a reflection of our achievements and a reminder of the ongoing responsibility we hold to preserve 'Iolani Palace as a source of pride and inspiration for all.

Me ke aloha,

Paula Akana, President and CEO
The Friends of 'Iolani Palace





In fiscal year 2024, the State of Hawai'i Museum of Monarchy History moved key restoration projects forward to protect the Palace's structure and history, while educational programs and partnerships continued to engage the community. These efforts demonstrate our ongoing dedication to preserving this treasured landmark for future generations.

Roof Repair and Restoration Project

In fiscal year 2024, 'Iolani Palace made substantial progress with the critical \$1.2 million roof repair and restoration project, which was supported by a \$500,000 Save America's Treasures grant and matching funds from the Hawai'i State Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Efforts include replacing approximately 9,000 square feet of slate roofing, treating cast iron elements, neutralizing rust damage, and repairing the historic glass cupola and skylights. This work safeguards the Palace's structural integrity and the thousands of cultural objects housed within, ensuring they remain protected for future generations.

The project, estimated to be completed during the first quarter of 2025, underscores our commitment to perpetuating the legacy of 'Iolani Palace, which served as the royal residence for Hawai'i's last reigning monarchs. With guidance from MASON, the state's leading historic consulting firm, and MRC Roofing LLC, the work preserves the Palace's historical appearance while addressing modern preservation needs.

Structural Integrity Projects

Significant progress has been made in ensuring the long-term durability of 'Iolani Palace's architectural framework. In collaboration with the Department of Land and Natural Resources, we completed a thorough building envelope assessment, providing insights to guide future preservation and maintenance efforts. This evaluation has laid the groundwork for key initiatives, including a fire suppression system and HVAC improvements, both vital to safeguarding the invaluable cultural resources housed within the Palace.





Glass Pane Replacement

The State’s operational budget allocation covers essential expenses, allowing us to focus our resources on critical preservation projects like the replacement of the nine iconic etched glass panes in the first-floor doors. The effort has faced several challenges, including sourcing specialized glass to match the original and working with the only remaining artist in California who still uses the same 19th-century etching process. Despite these obstacles, the original panes are being carefully preserved and protected to prevent future damage. Additionally, we are refinishing the original window casings and doors, which have deteriorated due to age and exposure, ensuring they are restored to their historic grandeur.

Grants In Aid Support

Additional Grants-in-Aid funding supported vital repair and restoration efforts for parts of ‘Iolani Palace’s exterior and its surrounding grounds.

A significant portion of the funding was dedicated to replacing the 24 historic sconces adorning the palace’s exterior. This project has revived the palace’s exterior lighting, restoring its original splendor and timeless charm.

The funding also enabled the launch of the complete repair and renovation work on the two pergolas on the palace grounds. This thoughtful restoration effort preserves these iconic structures, which embody the grace and elegance of ‘Iolani Palace’s surroundings.





Operational Enhancements

The \$1.8 million in operational funding appropriated by the State Legislature allowed us to expand our dedicated team. This growth enabled the recruitment of additional staff members, empowering us to enhance visitor experiences, broaden educational outreach, and maintain the meticulous care of 'Iolani Palace. Additionally, the monies supported essential operational needs, including electricity costs and the maintenance of the campus HVAC systems, ensuring a comfortable and well-preserved environment for all who visit.

Kama'āina Sundays

This popular monthly event continued throughout the year with support from a grant provided by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. The program offered free tours for the first 500 local residents and featured live entertainment, hula performances, family-friendly activities, and more. Each month's activities highlighted cultural themes such as 'olelo Hawai'i, hula, lauhala weaving, Makahiki, and Lā Kū'oko'a, Hawaiian Independence Day. In March 2024, a new workshop series was introduced to provide guests a hands-on experience with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and artisans. The events drew between 400 and 900 kama'āina and visitors each month.

School Tours

Each year, we welcome students from Hawai'i's public and private schools, as well as institutions from across the nation, including local and out-of-state colleges. In fiscal year 2024, we hosted over 5,000 students from elementary through college. We also began offering free tours with transportation to Title I schools across O'ahu courtesy of a grant from the City & County of Honolulu. With over 170 of Hawai'i's 258 public schools classified as Title I, this grant will increase student access, allowing them to immerse themselves in the history of 'Iolani Palace and Hawai'i's monarchy.

The State of Hawai'i Museum of Monarchy History is committed to continuing these free school tours even after the city grant comes to an end, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to experience and connect with this important piece of Hawaii's history.





The Bartels Gallery Exhibits

The Bartels Gallery, located in the 'Iolani Palace basement, serves as a dedicated space for rotating exhibits that highlight the stories of those who lived in, worked at, and visited this historic landmark. For these exhibits, the Curatorial Department dedicates extensive effort to researching, acquiring cultural resources, and thoughtfully interpreting the stories to be shared. In 2024, two exhibits were debuted. 'Āinamoana: The Lands of the Sea, offered guests the opportunity to explore Hawaiian diplomacy across Oceania during the reign of King Kalākaua. The most recent exhibit, He Inoa No Kalākaua: Celebrating 150 Years of King Kalākaua, honors the life and legacy of King Kalākaua and his unwavering commitment to our lāhui (nation) and the independence of Hawai'i.

Elevator Replacement

We have also begun the costly but much-needed replacement of the nearly 50-year-old elevator. This critical project will ensure safer, more reliable access for visitors while preserving the integrity of the historic structure.





Future Plans

As stewards of 'Iolani Palace, we are dedicated to preserving its cultural legacy. Our efforts this year focused on essential repairs, careful refurbishments, ongoing preservation, and strategic evaluations to ensure its longevity for future generations.

Basement Galleries Project

Our work continues on the Basement Galleries to further tell the story of Iolani Palace, the Hawaiian Kingdom, our ali'i and their people, and Hawai'i's place in world history. The Curatorial Department is actively developing new exhibits for these galleries to share deeper insights and narratives with our visitors.

Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Objects

The Friends of 'Iolani Palace are preparing to undertake important conservation and preservation work on the Palace's treasured collection of cultural objects. Planned efforts include the careful treatment of the royal silverware and other important artifacts to ensure their long-term preservation. These pieces will be stabilized and protected to prevent deterioration, safeguarding their historical and cultural value for generations to come. Future work also includes the conservation of portraits painted by Hungarian-born artist Paul Petrovitz. This meticulous process will focus on restoring their vibrancy while protecting them from environmental damage. These planned projects reflect our commitment to caring for and honoring the legacy of Hawai'i's monarchy through thoughtful stewardship of these irreplaceable artifacts.

The preservation of Native Hawaiian heritage is at the core of the State of Hawai'i Museum of Monarchy History. We are committed to safeguarding the legacy entrusted to us, nurturing a space where history thrives and echoes through time, and continues to inspire and educate generations to come.

