

## Kupuna Outreach at Pohulani Elderly

For the holidays, Jill Matro, whose mother Eden lives at Pohulani Elderly, gathered her friends from church to host a potluck party for Pohulani residents. With food and fellowship, it was a festive day sharing a meal together as ‘ohana.



A delicious hot meal, Christmas music, a hula halau performance and gifts from The Testimony church.



Jessica, Edith, and Janet (left to right) intently create lei ~ Hawaiian expression of love.

Serving the kupuna was such a rewarding experience that The Testimony church returned for more “Kupuna Outreach” visits to Pohulani. In January Kara Doles and friends brought a variety of colorful flowers to teach residents how to make lei while sharing the aloha spirit. Lei making returns to Pohulani later this summer.

Mahalo to The Testimony for sharing with the residents of Pohulani Elderly.

## Happy Mother’s Day

A Hawaiian lei was the perfect expression of a daughter and mother’s love, as Pohulani resident Eden (right), adorned her daughter Jill with a colorful, fresh orchid, rose and tuberose lei. Eden created the lei in the Lei Making class at Pohulani hosted by members of Jill’s church.



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## Partner Profile: Goodwill Hawaii

*Strengthening Hawaii's Communities Through the Power of Work*

During the recent tax season, Goodwill Hawaii brought their tax clinics to the Oahu rental properties served by Komohale Services. Residents received free and accurate tax preparation assistance, right where they live, offered by the IRS-sponsored VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program in conjunction with Goodwill. Residents were instructed to bring all their necessary tax documents and forms to their appointment.

Goodwill provided tax preparation services to 58 residents at the six Oahu properties. "While all properties utilized this service, residents at Pohulani Elderly and Kekuilani Courts filled all of their appointment slots," said Emily Lau, Goodwill Hawaii's Vice President of Mission Services. "Most returns were completed and electronically filed within an hour, and we're happy to say that most received refunds quickly that really makes a difference," she added.

Deborah of Pohulani was just one of the happy residents. Scrambling to get her taxes done before Tax Day, she is especially grateful to Gidget Chase, Goodwill financial

education specialist. She said, "Gidget is amazing! She not only did my taxes, she has a good heart."

Goodwill has been IRS-certified to offer tax clinics for qualifying tax filers since 2006, ensuring that returns are prepared accurately and families and individuals receive the tax credits for which they may be eligible, including the earned income tax credit for families that work or food credits for seniors.

A Komohale Services partner since 2022, Goodwill also offers financial literacy classes and workforce development services at the Oahu properties, Emily explains. Group-based training and one-on-one counseling are available to those who are looking for a job or want to advance in their career. This includes help with job search assistance, personal career guidance and planning, resume writing and interview practice, training opportunities, and referrals to other community resources for services such as child care assistance.

Lilinoe is a shining example of Komohale Services' collaboration



**Goodwill Hawaii FIT Program:  
Lilinoe**

with Goodwill. She always dreamed of working in the entertainment industry. By participating in Goodwill's FIT (Financially Informed and Thriving) program including attending classes and one-on-one counseling with Gidget, Lilinoe got a job with Malu Productions that enabled her to fulfill her monthly obligations and exceed her goal of saving \$1,000 after the first year. With monthly budget reviews, she is now saving toward a "what if" emergency fund. During the company's recent award ceremony, Lilinoe received multiple awards, including Best Positive Attitude, Most Aloha to Guests, Most Prepared for Shows among others.

Goodwill's mission is "to help people with employment barriers reach their full potential and become self-sufficient," by providing job placement, career development, education, training, employment and support services.

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**The Goodwill Hawaii team at Komohale Services' Resource Fair.**

## Congratulations to Komohale Services winners!

Congratulations to the winners of our monthly drawing of Foodland gift certificates:



**Jon Ulukita**  
Halekauwila Place



**Kyle Gabriel**  
Kekuilani Courts

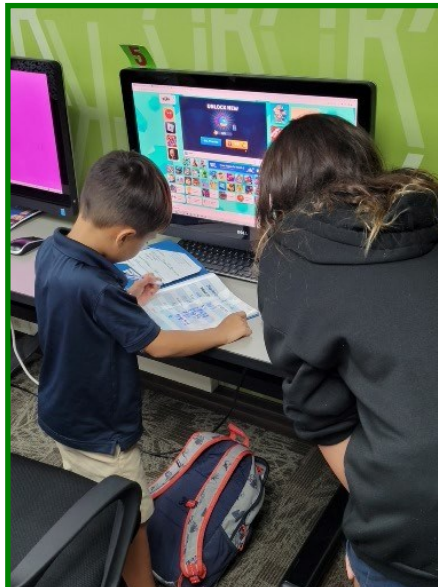


**Dante Smith**  
Kamakee Vista

Become a future winner! Go to <https://komohale.org/residents/> enter the password (ourvillage), then sign up.

## Halekauwila Place Has After-School Play

Children and youth living at Halekauwila Place now have a safe place to go to after school. Supervised by Komohale Services, the space called “Kreation Korner” is located on the building’s first floor across from the elevator.



**Keiki receive help with homework at the Kreation Korner.**

Kreation Korner, open Wednesdays and Fridays from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. (*Fridays only for June, July, and August*), can accommodate up to 10 kids who sign up,

where they can do their homework and use one of the computers to develop their computer-related skills, play online games or solve puzzles. A desktop 3D printer is also onsite to help with developing STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Math) skills.

Samuel Apuna, whose two children go to Kreation Korner, says, “I appreciate that my children have a safe place to go, where they can be kids.”

The goals of Kreation Korner are to help children develop good study habits, become more familiar with technology use that will serve them in school and in the future, and be respectful of other people’s property. At the same time, parents can be reassured that their children are in a safe place. In conjunction with Kreation Korner, the Hawaii Literacy bookmobile also visits Halekauwila Place on Fridays so children can borrow books and develop a lifelong love of reading and learning.

## Partner Profile: Goodwill Hawaii *continued*

For families and individuals impacted by the Maui wildfires, Goodwill’s relief efforts included distributing emergency vouchers to redeem for household items and clothing at a Goodwill store and providing support with applying for unemployment benefits, FEMA disaster assistance, food stamps, and emergency

housing relief. Goodwill was also awarded a one-year contract by the State of Hawaii’s Office of Community Services to provide employment core services for displaced workers including Lahaina’s immigrant population.

For more information about Goodwill Hawaii, visit [goodwillhawaii.org](http://goodwillhawaii.org).

## Notes from the Executive Director



Tax season for many of the residents served by Komohale Services was a breeze this year, thanks to Goodwill

Hawaii, the subject of this issue's partner profile, and their VITA volunteers. When word spread around the properties that the tax clinics made tax filing stress-free and painless, more residents wanted to sign up for an appointment. Even though the deadline had passed, Goodwill graciously made arrangements to help as many residents as possible. That's what you call going beyond. Mahalo Goodwill for being such an awesome partner!

If you have read our previous issues of *Komohale News*, you may recall that we regularly featured a column that included household and money saving tips. All of the past tips such as water conservation, emergency preparedness, dining discounts, and more are now at your fingertips on our website at [komohale.org/Hints for Your Hale](http://komohale.org/Hints for Your Hale). We'll continue to share more tips on the website so that our newsletter will focus on updates about our Komohale programs, events at the various properties, and the partners and communities with whom we collaborate.

Aloha,

Pamela Witty-Oakland  
Executive Director



## Property Profile: Kauhale Kaka'ako 860 Halekauwila Street, Honolulu

Kauhale Kaka'ako, a 29-story high-rise comprising 116 one-bedroom and 151 two-bedroom units, is conveniently situated in the heart of one of Honolulu's thriving communities. Built by the State of Hawaii in 1993, Kauhale Kaka'ako was purchased by a private-public partnership in 2019. Cosmetic renovations to the public areas and units were completed in 2021, befitting the urban living aesthetic of Kakaako.

Units were refreshed with new flooring, lighting, ceiling fans, kitchen cabinets and range hoods, and bedroom windows, with some receiving new major appliances and medicine cabinets.

Common area hallways were repainted and floors were newly carpeted; the three elevators were modernized, security cameras were installed, and the lobby, mail room and management office were also upgraded, including large-screen TVs strategically placed for announcements. Now boasting enhanced security, Kauhale Kaka'ako uses a key fob system for the main entrances and elevators and entry to the community amenities on the sixth floor.

The newly renovated laundry room and recreation deck and a new fitness center, all open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., are among the community amenities where residents can mingle and interact with each other. The private recreation deck, which includes a basketball court, children's playground and open spaces surrounded by greenery, is ideal for large gatherings such as a community resource fair for residents and Christmas event that were organized by Komohale Services. With the addition of a fitness center, stocked with treadmills, weight machines, balls, and other workout equipment, residents don't have to leave the property to stay fit and healthy. Also on the sixth floor, the resource center is available upon request through the management office for meetings, classes and other private functions for up to 15 people.



Kauhale Kaka'ako Recreation Deck

The resident mix at Kauhale Kaka'ako, also a pet-friendly community, includes working families with children and older adults over the age of 62, many of whom are original occupants.

Site Manager Laura Kim, who has been in the position for nearly two years, oversees the property's day-to-day operations. She's responsible for assisting current residents with issues they may have, coordinating maintenance and repairs, and ensuring the property is safe and functioning for everyone. "Meeting new applicants and successfully helping them move into one of our units is the most fulfilling part of my job," she says. "I also enjoy interacting with our residents and all of their pets."

Laura also adds, "Here at Kauhale Kaka'ako, we have great teamwork, making work fun and enjoyable." She transferred to Kauhale Kaka'ako after serving as site manager for Marin Tower, also managed by Hawaii Affordable Properties.

Kauhale Kaka'ako is located near The-Bus line and all the shopping and entertainment Kakaako has to offer, making it a great place to live. For an application or more information, visit [www.kauhalekakaako.com](http://www.kauhalekakaako.com).