

First Lady Dawn Amano-Ige



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Mahalo from the First Lady

It has been a remarkable eight years serving as the First Lady of the State of Hawai'i. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to work and meet with so many dedicated and talented individuals who rise above challenges to strengthen our community. Thank you to everyone who supported these impactful projects and programs.

I came into this role as an educator and used the opportunity to develop innovative ways to make education meaningful to students. As First Lady, I participated in many school visits and educational events in Hawai'i and abroad.

It was a privilege to serve as honorary chair for charitable events such as Goodwill Goes Glam, and the Alzheimer's Association Walk. Serving as chair of the National Governors Association's Spouses' Leadership Committee allowed me to bring light to issues such as childhood hunger and mental health.

There is so much progress to reflect and report on over the past eight years. I am grateful for this opportunity to share the impact we have made with all of you.



JUMPSTART AND MORE

Jumpstart the Day with Breakfast



“If a student is hungry, learning will be a challenge. Research shows that breakfast helps.”

In 2018, “Jumpstart Breakfast” encouraged students to start their day with a healthy school breakfast. The pilot program launched at 10 Hawai‘i schools jumpstarted by funding from the national No Kid Hungry campaign.

I partnered with the Hawai‘i State Department of Education’s School Food Services Branch, Hawai‘i Appleseed, Hawai‘i Child Nutrition Programs, Safeway Foundation, and other community partners to encourage more students to start their day with a healthy school breakfast. The program included a breakfast recipe contest at Kapi‘olani Community College, where eight student culinary teams vied for top prizes in breakfast categories.

Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota also joined the effort by supporting an outdoor eating area for Central Middle school students. Today, schools participate in alternative breakfast models, including breakfast in the classroom, grab and go, and breakfast after the bell. For more information go to ainapono.org/jumpstart/

Thank you to committee members Jennifer Dang, Dexter Kishida, Daniela Spoto, Sharlene Wong, Keith Amemiya, Summer Kriegshauser, and members of the Department of Education Food Services Division who worked hard on this initiative.

Grab and Go Campaign

To support the Department of Education’s free meal program during the pandemic, we established a Grab and Go information campaign to provide information to families about free meals at schools. Information was shared through social media, TV, and print media. Over 1.3 million school meals were distributed to children 18 years old or younger at public schools on O‘ahu, Kaua‘i, Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i and Hawai‘i Island.

The program provided free breakfasts and lunches to all children, regardless of their enrollment at public, private or home schools, or eligibility for free and reduced-price meals. Thank you to No Kid Hungry for supporting this communications effort, and to Blackletter for creating the campaign.

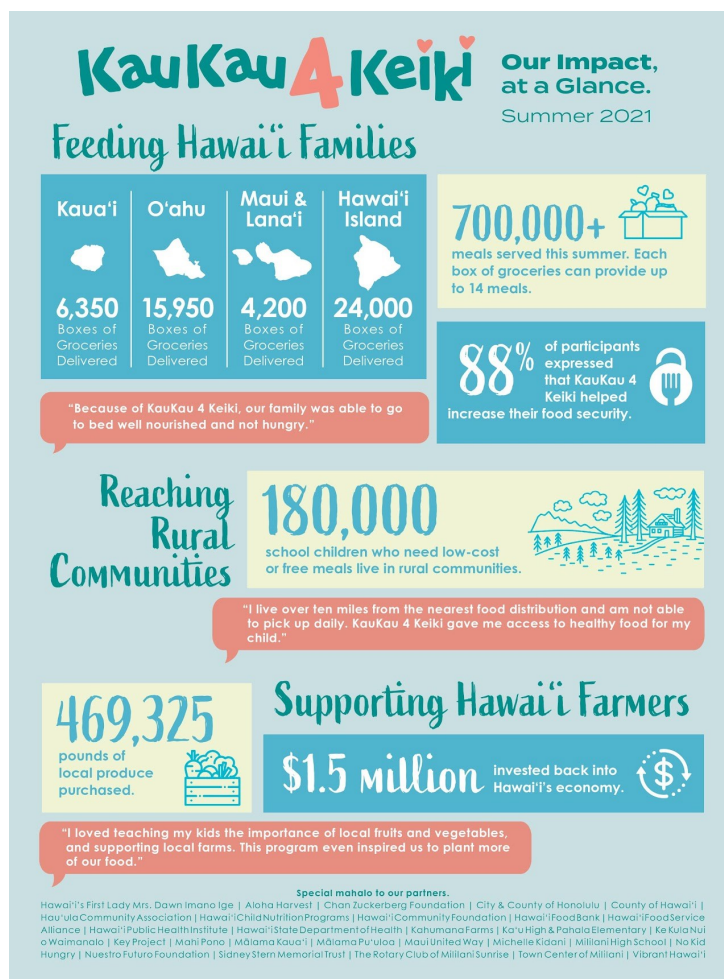


KAUKAU 4 KEIKI

Meal Kits for Keiki

The Kaukau 4 Keiki partnership was established to provide weekly breakfast and lunch meal kits for children 18 and under in rural communities. The coalition includes food access coordinators on O'ahu, Kaua'i, Maui and Hawai'i Island, Hawai'i Child Nutrition Program, Kahumana Food Hub Organic Farms (O'ahu), Mālama Kaua'i (Kaua'i), No Kid Hungry, USDA Summer Food Services Program, Vibrant Hawaii (Hawai'i island), and Hawai'i Foodservice Alliance. Thank you to Dexter Kishida who coordinated the effort, Sharlene Wong, No Kid Hungry and the food access coordinator on each island.

Website: <https://www.kaukau4keiki.org/>





'OHANA READERS

OVER 12,000 BOOKS DISTRIBUTED TO CHILDREN

Research shows that children are ready to learn in their earliest years. In 2019, the 'Ohana Readers literacy program was launched on Moloka'i.

Each month 'Ohana Readers delivers free books to children, from birth to age 5, at home by mail through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in partnership with the state Department of Human Services, Hawai'i State Public Library System, Friends of the Library, Representative Lynne DeCoite, Learning to Grow, and Read to Me International. Thank you, Kui Aldolpho for coordinating the effort in Moloka'i. And thank you to the KIUC Charitable Foundation and the Friends of Princeville Library.

'Ohana Readers encourages family read-aloud time. The program has since expanded to Lānai, parts of Kaua'i, Hāna on Maui, and Nā'ālehu and Pāhala on the Big Island.

<https://friendsofthelibraryofhawaii.org/ohanareaders/>



Research shows that children are ready to learn in their earliest years.

'OHANA READERS
EARLY CHILD LITERACY PROGRAM
FALL 2022

ABOUT
HOW IT BEGAN
Launched by First Lady Dawn Amama-Ūlu in 2018, the 'Ohana Readers is an early child literacy program that focuses on reading with family. The program provides high-quality, age-appropriate Imagination Library books each month to children who are five years old and younger.

SPECIAL MAHALO TO: PARTNERS
First Lady Dawn Amama-Ūlu | Office of the Governor | Dolly Parton's Imagination Library | Maui County | Hawaii State Public Library System | Friends of the Library of Hawaii | Windward Community College Learning to Grow | Read to Me International | State Representative Lynn DeCoite

FUNDERS
Department of Human Services | KIUC Charitable Foundation | Kapaemāhewa Schools | Friends of the North Shore Library at Princeville | and

COMMUNITY
SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF
2ND EXPANSION: HANALEI, WAHIHA, PRINCEVILLE, ANAHOA, KĀLAHEA
MOLOKA'I
KEKAHA & WAIMEA (KAUAI)
1ST EXPANSION
LĀNA'I
COMMUNITY COMMITMENT
COMMITMENT PLUS 1000 2ND EXPANSION KĀ'U (HAWAII)

IMPACT
BY THE NUMBERS
10,400
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library
2,000
Scholastic Summer Reading Ambassador (donated to schools across the state: Kāhala, Lāna'i, Fern, Nālehu, Maunaloa, Māhālanā) |
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION
12.4K
BOOKS

Scholastic Summer Ambassador Program

To help address the summer reading slide, I, along with first spouses across the country served as Scholastic Reading Ambassadors from 2015 – 2018. As part of this program, 2,000 books were donated to the following schools.

- Nānāikapono Elementary
- Fern Elementary
- Nā'ālehu Elementary
- Maunaloa Elementary
- Lihikai Elementary
- Lā'ie Elementary
- Wailuku Elementary
- Kekaha Elementary

VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

Storytime With the First Lady

One of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic was that many people in Hawai'i and around the world felt disconnected, especially children. Many keiki in Hawai'i lost the normalcy of going to school and experiencing face-to-face connections with teachers and friends. I decided to reach out through social media to share read-alouds and activities that families could do together at home.

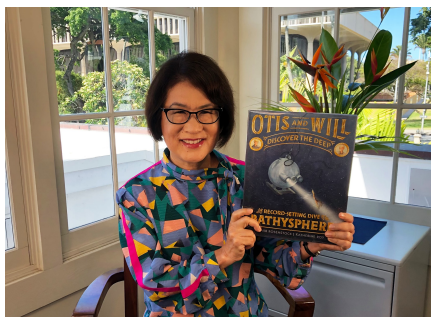
As a parent and former educator, I have always valued books and the role they play in instilling the love of learning in a child's life. Storytime brings quality books and activities into a family's home and encourages invaluable family time.

Storytime with First Lady included the following children's books:

- *If You Give a Pig a Pancake*, by Laura Numeroff
- *The Brilliant Deep: Rebuilding the World's Coral Reefs*, by Kate Messner
- *Kijimuna and Shisa*, by Mariko Uehara
- *What Do You Do With An Idea?* by Kobi Yamada
- *Snow Angel, Sand Angel*, by Lois-Ann Yamanaka
- *Wordsworth the Poet*, by Frances Kakugawa

I am grateful to 'Ōlelo Community Media who helped me bring the "Conversations with the First Lady" series to families all over our island state. Inspired by "Storytime," in this series, I did a read aloud and interviewed inspiring people in the community. Here are some of the episodes that aired on the 'Ōlelo channel:

- Episode 1
Featured Book: *Say Something*, by Peter H. Reynolds
Conversation with Hawai'i State Supreme Court Justice Sabrina McKenna
- Episode 2
Featured Book: *She Persisted: 13 American Women Who Changed the World*, by Chelsea Clinton
Conversation with Major General Suzanne Vares-Lum
- Episode 3
Featured Book: *Rain School*, by James Rumford
Conversation with author James Rumford
- Episode 4
Featured Book: *Creepy Carrots*, by Aaron Reynolds
Conversation with Dr. Ted Radovich of the UH College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR)
- Episode 5
Featured Book: *How to Make an Apple Pie*, by Marjorie Priceman
Conversation with Dr. Elizabeth "Libby" Char, Director of the Hawai'i Department of Health
- Episode 6
Featured Book: *The Night Before Christmas*, illustrated by Jan Brett
This episode featured a tour of Washington Place and a concert featuring Jake Shimabukuro and David Ige.



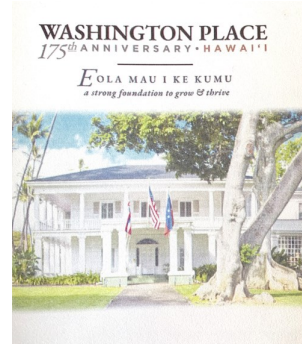
I encourage you to read with your child or loved one. You can borrow these books at your local library.



WASHINGTON PLACE

Renovations, New Exhibit, and a Commemoration

Springtime at Washington Place and 'Aha Mele concerts in conjunction with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority were free music concerts held from 2015 to 2017 to begin making Washington Place accessible to the public. I made it a priority to welcome all to experience this historical treasure of Hawai'i.



The second floor of Washington Place required much renovation due to health and safety needs. As a result of the renovation, Queen Lili'uokalani's story was brought back to the home through a new exhibit and the Queen's Library on the second floor. The new library is equipped with computers that have access to the digitized Queen Lili'uokalani files from the Hawai'i State Archives. The gallery features a replica dress that the Queen wore in the Washington Place gardens. The new exhibit became part of the home's 175th anniversary celebration.

The 175th Anniversary Celebration held in March 2022 included over 2,300 4th graders simultaneously dancing to the chant E' Liliu 'E. Other activities include a revitalized garden, KHON TV special, commemorative publication, and a concert with the Royal Hawaiian Band. The anniversary event recently was recognized with a Programming Award from the Historic Hawai'i Foundation.

Free tours continue every Thursday and for those unable to attend, virtual tours are now available on the Washington Place website at washingtonplace.hawaii.gov/



INNOVATION IN EDUCATION

Paving the Path for Innovation in Education

Learning is no longer bound by the walls of a classroom. With the Governor's Emergency Education Relief grant program, Hawai'i is paving the path for innovation in education. The fund provided grants to the University of Hawai'i and 31 schools and nonprofits to address the impact of COVID-19 on education.

The grants provided for many new programs as well as emphasized the value of collaboration between all schools, non-profits, and colleges. Programs included the use of robotics in agriculture, genome science involving the COVID virus, virtual art programs, creating satellite cubes, project-based learning lessons, a GED program for incarcerated women, transition from high school to college during the pandemic, and the establishment of family resource centers, just to name a few. See all the projects at www.hawaiigeersummit2022.com/grantees



Empowering Youth at the IUCN World Conservation Congress

In 2016, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Hawai'i was the first of its kind to actively engage younger generations. I wanted Hawai'i students, together with teachers, to be inspired to become change agents in their local communities to help preserve the beauty of our environment.

The IUCN Congress National Host Committee K-12 Working Group developed a 16-member working group made up of community members dedicated to empowering youth and includes organizations like Kupu, Hawai'i State Department of Education, Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation, and Harold K. Castle Foundation.

The Congress's inaugural Students' Day, Sept. 6, 2016 featured the Hawai'i Youth Challenge 2020 – an interactive, interschool, design-thinking activity where students designed environmentally conscious systems for Hawai'i schools and communities. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Hawai'i middle schools and high schools to learn from international conservation professionals and leaders about the challenges facing Hawai'i and the world.

We enlisted the help of Ian Kitajima, senior executive of Oceanit and expert in design thinking, to facilitate the Hawai'i Youth Challenge 2020 along with a committee of teachers to bring together over 900 students from various schools throughout the state. Students learned how to use the design-thinking process – a human-centered problem-solving method – as a tool to address conservation issues and develop solutions to work towards a more sustainable future.

During the Hawai'i Youth Challenge 2020, students attended a series of discussions and presentations at the IUCN Congress Thematic Pavilions -- an engaging space where students and international experts from the conservation community could collaborate and learn from each other.



INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

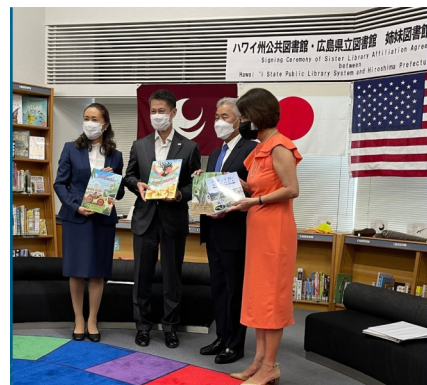
Hawai'i's First International Sister Library Agreement Signed in Hiroshima and Okinawa

I took the importance of literacy beyond our shores to Japan where Governor Ige signed Sister Library Agreements between the Hawai'i State Public Library System and the Hiroshima and Okinawa Prefectural Libraries. This agreement was the first in Hawai'i's history. One of the agreements is an annual exchange of books written by local authors on culture, family, and history.

One Wednesday, Aug. 31, 2022, at the Hiroshima Prefectural Library (HPL), the first Sister Library Affiliation Agreement in Hawaii's history was signed by Governor Ige, Hiroshima Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki, Hawai'i State Librarian Stacey Aldrich and HPL Director General Yoshimasa Toyota.

The Okinawa Prefectural Library (OPL), the second Sister Library Affiliation Agreement in Hawaii's history was signed by Governor David Ige and Okinawa Governor Denny Tamaki on Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022.

The two books exchanged were two books -- *Leilani Blessed and Grateful*, by 'Iolani School teachers Greg Bowman and Alan Suemori, illustrated by Jamie Tablason, and *Snow Angel, Sand Angel*, by author, poet and educator Lois-Ann Yamanaka, illustrated by Ashley Lukashevsky. The books include educational facts about Hawai'i, Hawaiian activities for children, a glossary of Hawaiian words and information about Hawai'i's 10 climate zones.



International Student Exchange – Connecting Hawai'i to the World

My reach as an educator expanded internationally by establishing educational ties through our sister-state programs. These relationships paved the pathway for stronger sister-school relationships. In 2017, I led an education mission in Japan where a delegation visited many schools and colleges. Today more students are planning visits with each other, creating a stronger global understanding and appreciation of other cultures.



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

**Chair of the National Governors
Association's Spouses'
Leadership Committee**



When COVID-19 pandemic hit, the National Governors Association's Spouses' Leadership Committee went to work. I served as chair of a six-person, bipartisan group that took on the task of addressing issues raised during the fight against COVID-19 that were connected to children and families.

The NGA's Spouses Leadership Committee wants to bring light to many areas of concern where we as First Spouses saw an opportunity to have a positive impact and gain policy support. These issues can include hunger, education, child welfare and mental health services, literacy and more.

Because of the pandemic, the group met virtually often while expanding its focus.

Part of my goal as chair was to develop more engagement and discuss a wider range of issues. The Spouses' Leadership Group empowered the members through the sharing ideas to see what was going on in other states. We developed a system of support that can benefit all of us because we could collaboratively come up with strategies and solutions to benefit all local, state and federal levels.



WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women Leaders Inspire All of Us

There are so many women in our community who serve as role models here in our state as well as across the country. Sabrina McKenna, Hawai'i State Supreme Court Justice; Kristi Yamaguchi, Olympic Gold Medalist; Suzanne Vares-Lum, president of the East-West Center; and Nicole Yamase, first Pacific Islander to voyage to the Mariana Trench are just some of the remarkable women I interviewed on Facebook and 'Ōlelo during the COVID-19 pandemic during that time of isolation. Each interview was connected to stories such as *She Persisted* by Chelsea Clinton.

For the past several years, I was proud to co-host the annual Women's International Day breakfast with the Australian Consul General. We've heard from women leaders in education, the military, conservation and sustainability, and from those leading the state through the pandemic.

Second Story



A SPECIAL MAHALO

This journey began with family so I would be remiss not to mention a few family milestones over the past eight years:

- Lauren graduated from law school and has been practicing as an attorney in California and Washington, D.C.
- Amy graduated with a nursing degree and works with patients in a dialysis clinic in Washington state. She married Anthony Paschke in December 2017 at Washington Place.
- Matthew graduated with a computer science degree and now works as a computer engineer for one of the largest tech companies in Washington state.
- Lucy, our cat, still rules in the house.



As we approach the holiday season, I have much gratitude for all your help with these many projects. My life took an unexpected path as First Lady, but I learned that no matter what your title is for the moment, each of us can make a difference. I would also like to thank the team at the Governor's Office and Washington Place who have supported many efforts, including:

- Keith Yamamoto, Chief Operating Officer
- Carole Hayashino, Protocol and Community Affairs Director
- Ashley Dorman, Protocol and Community Affairs Executive Assistant
- Jodie Ching, Protocol and Community Affairs Specialist
- Douglas Carroll, Protocol and Community Affairs Specialist
- Cameron Heen, Washington Place Director
- Travis Hancock, Washington Place Curator
- Anthony "Tony" Benabese, Dept. of Accounting and General Services, Comptroller Special Assistant

I'm often asked what I will do next. I hope to continue to serve in the community in the area of universal preschool education.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my husband, David, who stood by my side, and I stood next to his for 40 years, and to my three children – Lauren, Amy (and her husband Anthony Paschke), and Matthew for their patience.

Aloha,
Dawn

