

Senator Michelle Kidani

Twenty-ninth Hawaii State Legislature

(D) Senate District 18 – Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park, Royal Kunia



Senate Vice President

Chair: Committee on Education

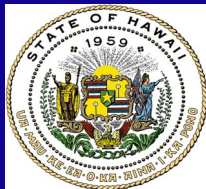
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Aloha, friends and neighbors,

Our legislative session is scheduled to adjourn on Thursday, May 3. Decisions on budget allocations were completed about a week earlier than in previous sessions so that we could allocate \$125 million in immediate emergency relief funding for residents of Kauai and East Oahu who suffered property damage and losses due to catastrophic flooding.

Here are some items in the construction budget that we finalized this week for the year beginning July 1 that will be of interest to area residents:

- **Mililani High School** - \$5 million for planning, design, construction and equipment for a girls athletics locker room
- **Waipahu High School** - \$20.5 million for a new classroom building
- **Kaleiopu`u Elementary** - \$650,000 for renovation and expansion of the school cafeteria
- **Kanoelani Elementary** - \$300,000 to increase the capacity of the cafeteria
- **Mililani `Ike Elementary** - \$325,000 for a new bell and PA system
- **UH West Oahu** - \$5 million for renovation and construction at the campus center and the UHWO library

For more notes from the Capitol, please turn to page two.

All Hawaii joins with the Akaka `Ohana in mourning the loss of "Uncle Danny" – U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka, who died earlier this month. I was privileged to know the Senator for many years. In the photo below left, I was fortunate to be able to introduce my sister Leilani to the Senator during a visit to the Capitol. Below, right, the Senator with his beloved wife, Millie, on another occasion at the Capitol.

The public may pay their respects to the Senator when his casket lies in state in the rotunda of the State Capitol from 10:00 a.m. Friday, May 18, until 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 19. The Capitol will remain open and accessible to the public for 24 hours. On Saturday, memorial services will be held at Kawaiahao Church. A private burial service is planned for the following week at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl on Monday, May 21.

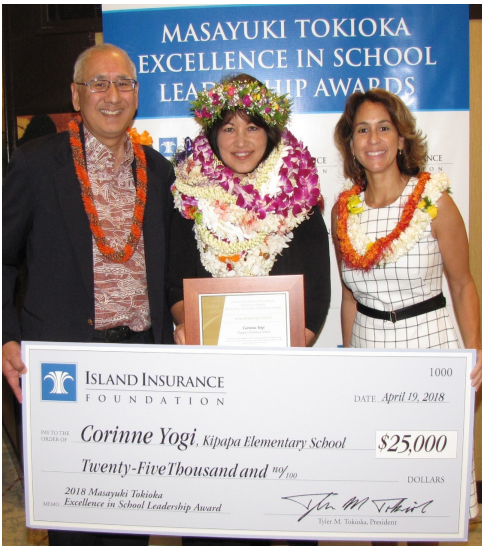
Aloha, Uncle Danny, and mahalo for the many ways you served and represented Hawaii during your long life.

A fond Aloha, Senator Daniel Kahekina Akaka



**In
Memoriam**





Kipapa Elementary Principal Corinne Yogi has received the Masayuki Tokioka Excellence in School Leadership Award from the Island Insurance Foundation. The award recognizes Principal Yogi’s 24 years at this wonderful Mililani campus as both a teacher and administrator. Corrine has been especially successful in developing and establishing new science, technology, engineering and math (S.T.E.M.) studies program at the school, along with afterschool enrichment opportunities that have greatly improved student achievement and encouraged better study habits.

This prestigious award was established by Island Insurance as a tribute to company founder, Masayuki Tokioka. It includes a \$25,000 cash grant that Corinne says – without hesitation – will go to improving Kipapa’s library.

We learned also that Corinne was named Central District Principal of the Year by the Hawaii Elementary & Middle School Administrators Association. This and other honors are a real testament to the excellence of our Mililani public schools, thanks to committed teachers and leadership.

Congratulations, Corinne! Mahalo for your hard work and commitment to our keiki’s futures!

Above, Tyler Tokioka, son of Island Insurance founder Masayuki Tokioka, Kipapa Principal Corinne Yogi, and Hawaii DOE Superintendent Dr. Christina Kishimoto.

My Committee on Education heard testimony from nominees to the Hawaii State Board of Education. They include (photo at right) **Dwight Takeno** and **Catherine Payne**.

Dwight has been a senior administrator at the University of Hawaii and served as Interim Executive Director and chief negotiator for the Hawaii State Teachers Association. He assumes the seat now held by Board member Hubert Minn.

Catherine will serve as Board Chair, as current Chair Lance Mizumoto completes his term. She has devoted her adult life to education, serving as a teacher and in administrative positions as Vice Principal at Waianae High School and Principal at Farrington High School. She is currently the temporary DOE Complex Area Superintendent for the Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex.

Current Board member **Maggie Cox** has been confirmed for reappointment to her position on the Board, representing Kauai County. These appointments and the re-appointment are effective July 1, 2018.



Notes from the Capital

About that Constitutional Amendment . . .

I am pleased that both the Senate and the House overwhelmingly voted in favor of offering Hawaii voters the opportunity to vote on a means to create a source of significant new funding for our public schools. This would allow the state to create a property tax mechanism with proceeds dedicated to fully-funding our public schools. With the passage of Senate Bill 2922, a question will appear on the ballot in November asking whether the State may create a tax surcharge on residential investment properties with proceeds going to our schools.

All other states nationwide fund their schools through property taxes. If Hawaii voters approve the question on the ballot, lawmakers will return to the Capitol in January to work on details of the tax plan.

The Senate’s intent is clear:

- ◇ The homes that you own and live in will **not** be taxed; the focus will be on residential investment properties.
- ◇ The Senate will **not** allow a tax to be collected on residential investment properties valued at *less* than \$1 million; the threshold could be even higher.
- ◇ Further, the Senate does **not** intend to tax any commercial properties – just *residential* properties.

Over the next several months, you will hear a lot more about this issue. Step one in the process is to vote yes on the Constitutional amendment question that will be on the ballot.

Some miscellaneous notes:

The final disposition of several bills is not yet known as committee work continues. Among the bills still pending are:

- Measures that would fund computer science instruction and laptop computers to enhance STEM studies;
- A bill that would require a review of unused state property or underutilized DOE facilities that could be made available to public charter schools;
- A bill that would help to cover fees for ACT and SAT tests for eligible high school students;
- A bill that would assure that charter school teachers are eligible for incentive bonuses for teachers at hard-to-staff campuses or who earn National Board certification.

I am pleased that the budget we will approve this session includes \$400,000 to provide scholarships to continue UH College of Education programs to assist DOE substitute and emergency hire teachers and educational assistants to earn their teacher licenses.

All households in Senate District 18 – Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Royal Kunia, Village Park and Waikele – will receive a special newsletter in the regular mail with complete coverage of the Legislature’s 2018 accomplishments. Look for it in your mail box next month!



It was a pleasure to join in celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Hawaii Challenger Center where hundreds of students have honed science skills and developed interest and talents in astronomy, flight training, math, communications, engineering and a host of other science disciplines through programs at the Center in Kapolei. Quite a number of teachers from **Mililani Middle School** were among those who attended the ceremony, and who were recognized for 20 or more years of affiliation with the Center. From left above, **Carrie Hata, Yvonne Kauihou, Senator Jill Tokuda, Michael Nishiki, Lynn Yoshioka**, and to my left, **Glory Ann Kama, Governor Ige, Amy Kim, Challenger Center Director Liane Kim, Paul Sasaki, Laurie Sogawa, and Diane Awana**.

A special guest at the Center anniversary event was **June Scobee Rodgers**, (at right with my colleague Senator Tokuda), founding director of the Challenger Center and widow of Challenger Shuttle Commander Dick Scobee. She took the initiative after the Challenger tragedy in 1986 to keep the mission's legacy alive through the nationwide network of Challenger Learning Centers.



Congratulations 2018 Graduates!

We join in celebrating with spring semester graduates at **UH West Oahu** on Saturday, May 5, with the **Mililani High School Class of 2018** on Sunday, May 20, at Aloha Stadium, and with **Waipahu High School** seniors on Thursday, May 24, at Blaisdell Center. New opportunities lie ahead, and we are confident that your teachers, mentors, coaches and families have given you the ability to meet any challenges you encounter.

You will discover that your lives are always a work-in-progress. Enjoy the journey & make great memories!



A program of music and entertainment – and more than a dozen state and private, non-profit service providers – filled the Capitol rotunda for the 2018 **Kupuna Power** event. At left above, singers **Danny Kaleikini** (at the podium) and **Marlene Sai** were among those who offered tributes to the late former U.S. Senator **Daniel Akaka**, whose portrait was displayed on stage. Mahalo to my colleague, **Senator Brickwood Galuteria** (on stage in the yellow shirt) for organizing this wonderful event that brings hundreds of seniors to the Capitol each year.



Aimee Morifuji with an ink/pen drawing she titled *A Medley of Cactus and Leaves* - a 2018 Scholastic Arts Gold Key winner. *Congratulations!*

Mahalo to Maryanne Long – member of the Association of Hawaii Artists and MidWeek columnist – for calling our attention to Mililani High School junior **Aimee Morifuji’s** artistic talents.

At right, artwork on the wall in my Capitol office – titled ***Dragon Trellis***, painted on silk by artist **Cudra Clover** – was on display for visitors during this month’s annual ***Art at the Capitol*** open house.



HAWAII FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM



The DOE’s Farm to School fresh and fabulous school lunch program unveiled a new logo this month. I was at Mililani High School for the ceremony and a chance to chat with Student Body President Alyssa Ann Yamada-Barretto (at left). A few days later, MHS seniors Jessica Delos Reyes, Destiny Perreira, Jorge Aponte Alvarez (above right) visited lawmakers’ offices at the State Capitol to make sure we know how popular the new menus are.



Making a mark

We are so proud of Waipahu High School alum **Shevan DeFreitas**, a junior at Eastern Oregon University and a rising star on the softball team. Shevan plays first base and was Cascade Conference Player of the Week twice this year. The Mountaineers are X and X with four regular season games remaining. Shevan is a granddaughter of the Waipahu Neighborhood Board’s **Maureen Andrade**, who is also Representative Henry Aquino’s office manager at the State Capitol.

Congratulations Shevan – and Maureen!

OIA Sports Report

The Mililani Varsity Baseball Team won the OIA Championship and advances to the State Tournament beginning May 8. **Congratulations to the Trojans and Head Coach Mark Hirayama and his staff!**



The Trojan Boys Varsity Volleyball Team made it to the OIA tournament semifinals, then finished in 3rd place. The **Waipahu Marauders** dropped a tournament quarterfinal game and finished 6th overall. Both teams move on to the state tournament beginning May 3.

Both the Mililani boys and girls varsity tennis teams won their respective OIA team championships, as well as the boys and girls doubles titles. They begin play in the state tennis tournament on May 3.



The Mililani Varsity Softball Team is scheduled to play in the opening round of the OIA Tournament on Wednesday, April 25.

Good luck to the Lady Trojans and Head Coach Rose Antonio!