

# Senator Michelle Kidani

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Aloha, friends and neighbors:

The legislature has passed the half-way mark in the 60-day session; the Senate has passed its bills to the House and vice versa. Many bills considered at the beginning of the session have not survived as we narrow our focus and clarify our priorities.

The State Council on Revenues earlier this month had a bit of good news when it said its calculations show we may have more tax revenues this year than anticipated earlier. But it's not exactly a windfall, and the challenge will be to spend wisely to meet our obligations that have gone UN-funded for the past few years.

The Senate remains focused on generating jobs as quickly as possible through funding the huge backlog of repair and maintenance projects at our schools, libraries and other heavily-used public facilities. Our **Senate Bill 2012** - The Invest in Hawaii Act of 2012 - is now before the House Finance Committee, and we are urging serious and swift consideration of our approach so that we can get our workforce back to full employment

Meanwhile, my bill that would give our teachers a tax break for out-of-pocket purchases of classroom materials - **SB 2484** - was adopted in the House Education Committee and passed to the Finance Committee. Likewise, my bill that would give a tax break to employers who maintain insurance coverage for workers called to National Guard service - **SB 2489** - is also moving through its hearings process. I believe these kinds of "grass roots" bills can make a real difference for our families, our neighbors - and the business community - as we all try to make ends meet.

I welcome your thoughts on these and other matters, and encourage you to pay us a visit at the Capitol next time you're in town.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

## Celebrating An Important Anniversary

Earlier this month, the Senate marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Title IX – the Patsy T. Mink Equality in Education Act – enacted into law in 1972 to assure gender equity in all educational institutions that receive federal support. We honored five outstanding Hawaii women who have benefited from and advocated for equality of opportunity and social justice. (*For more on the ceremony and our honorees, please turn to page three.*)



From left, UH Assistant Athletic Director **Marilyn Moniz-Kahoohanohano**; Associate Supreme Court Justice **Sabrina McKenna**; Senator **Kidani**; Jill Nunokawa, UH Civil Rights Specialist; **Jennifer Rose**, UH Gender Equity Specialist; **Catherine Betts**, Executive Director, State Commission on the Status of Women.

# They Are the Champions!



Photo courtesy Jon B Photography

It was a thrill to be invited to the victory banquet for the Mililani High School Trojans Varsity Boys Soccer Team. Everyone was in great spirits as the boys celebrated their undefeated season that led to the State Division One Championship. This marks their 5th State Championship since 2001. Our thanks to families, friends and coaches whose great support contributed to their success!

## Three Cheers For the Trojan Cheerleaders!

Both the Varsity and JV Mililani High School cheer squads won top honors in their divisions at the 2011 American Grand National Cheer and Dance Competition in Las Vegas late last year. The 23 girls and one boy who are on the Varsity Team, and the two boys and 16 girls who make up the Junior Varsity Team, were disciplined, enthusiastic to the max – just as cheerleaders should be – and so very proud to represent the Trojan tradition and the State of Hawaii.

The Varsity Cheerleaders won their competition in spite of unexpected obstacles that challenged their stamina and threatened to undo the many months of training leading to their participation in the nationals. On the first day of the tournament, one Team member fell ill; on the second day, a knee injury in warm-ups forced a last-minute scramble to re-position competitors for their final performance.

Coaches **Renisha Kierstedt** and **Brian Rafael** say they're looking forward to the years ahead as the National Champion JV team members move up to Varsity level competition. They work hard, they're a "tight-knit" group that has many more years to cheer . . . and, we expect, many more successes to cheer *about!*



Varsity



Junior Varsity

## Celebrating Title IX: Patsy Mink's Legacy

This year is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Title IX – the historic law that has impacted millions of lives since its enactment in 1972. In just 37 words, the law says:

*No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.*

Title IX succeeded in opening the doors to educational institutions for women who previously had few opportunities to study law, medicine, the sciences or other disciplines, sometimes even at the undergraduate level. The new law was also interpreted to include participation in intercollegiate athletics. And so if you have a sister, or niece, or daughter or granddaughter who is involved in organized sports at whatever level, you can thank Title IX. If you are a fan of the Wahine volleyball, softball or basketball teams – or any of the nine other women's sports teams at the University of Hawaii – you can thank Title IX.

Our commemoration of this anniversary in the Senate Chamber was part of Education Week activities at the Capitol. March is also Women's History Month, and we cannot, of course, talk about Title IX without remembering that it was authored by one of Hawaii's truly historic women leaders – the late Hawaii Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink. She represented our state's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District for nearly a quarter century in Washington, DC, and just a few weeks after her sudden passing a decade ago, Title IX was renamed in her honor – The Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act.

I should note also that in subsequent years, the 270 acre sports complex bordered by Mililani, Waipio Gentry and Waikele – in my Senatorial District – was renamed the Patsy T. Mink Central O`ahu Regional Park as a tribute to the sports legacy of Title IX.



*I authored certificates and coordinated the Title IX anniversary commemoration. All nine women members of the Senate posed with our five women honorees (identified on the front page) around a portrait of the late Congresswoman Mink, and members of her family joined us: Mrs. Mink's brother, Eugene Takemoto, to the right of the portrait; his daughter, Jo Ann Kagawa, the second person over to his left; and, at the far right in this picture, Eugene's wife, Frances Takemoto.*

## Capitol Visitors



**Katrina Jimenez and Chaz Mihara** from Waipio Gentry visited for Education Week and Government Day. These Pearl City High School students are part of a premiere youth leadership program in Hawaii for high school juniors and seniors, the Center for Tomorrow's

Leaders (CTL). Each year, CTL accepts about two dozen students from among hundreds of applicants. The focus is on emerging young leaders who can influence their generation and society for the highest good. As part of their state-of-the-art leadership training, Center participants have the opportunity to interact with leaders at the highest levels of government, business and the professions. You can find more information on the Web at [www.centerfortomorrowleaders.org](http://www.centerfortomorrowleaders.org)



Congratulations to the **Mililani High School Robotics Team** for their achievements in competitive events through November and December. The Team was at the Capitol during Education Week, and I was pleased to introduce them in the Senate Gallery during our regular session. After having won events in various categories, four MHS teams will go to a world championship competition in California.

## Congratulations, Al Nishigaya - 2012 Kunia Orchid Show 2nd place display



The **58th Kunia Orchid Society Show** was staged at Leilehua High School's Kobayashi Gymnasium. I was pleased to donate a trophy that was awarded to **Al Nishigaya** for his elaborate Mini Japanese Teahouse Retreat—2nd place winner in the display category.



Photographs and an oil painting created by **Mililani High School students** are on display on the Chamber level of the State Capitol. This is a photo by senior **Amanda Olinger**, entitled *Misery*, inspired by scenes from the film *Moulin Rouge*. The display is for Youth Art Month and the 2nd Congressional District 2012 Kaha Ki'i Art Competition.



I was happy to be able to greet three dozen of the MHS art students when they visited their display and then toured the Hawaii State Art Museum across the street from the Capitol. From left above, junior **Renzo Gonzalez** and ninth grader **Alex Belcher**, along with sophomore **Shenaiya Lerma-Tehero** and senior **Laura Dux**.