



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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Testimony in SUPPORT of G.M. 0731
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Hawai'i Advisory Commission on
Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances, Gubernatorial Nominee,
KU'ULEIALOHAONĀLANI SALZER-VITALE, for a term to expire 06-30-2022

SENATOR ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Hearing Date: May 13, 2020

Room Number: 229

1 **Fiscal Implications:** None

2 **Department Testimony:** The subject matter of this measure intersects with the scope of the
3 Department's Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) whose statutory mandate is to assure a
4 comprehensive statewide behavioral health care system by leveraging and coordinating public,
5 private and community resources. Through the BHA, the Department is committed to carrying
6 out this mandate by reducing silos, ensuring behavioral health care is readily accessible, and
7 person-centered. The BHA's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) provides the following
8 testimony on behalf of the Department.

9 The Department of Health strongly supports the nomination and confirmation of Ms.
10 Ku'uleialohaonālani Salzer-Vitale to the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and
11 Controlled Substances (HACDACS) for a term to expire 6/30/2022.

12 HACDACS appointees represent a cross-section of the community, including, but not
13 limited to pharmacological, medical, community and business affairs, youth action, educational,
14 legal defense, enforcement and corrections segments of the community, pursuant to HRS §329-2.

15 Ms. Salzer-Vitale is the Alcohol and Other Drug Education Program (ADEP)
16 Coordinator for the Office of Student Affairs at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. ADEP's
17 goals are to reduce the incidence and consequences of alcohol/other drug misuse and abuse

1 among University of Hawaii Mānoa students by helping to prevent illegal and/or harmful use,
2 conducting social marketing campaigns to correct student perceptions of their peers and by
3 providing intervention for those who are at high risk. Her expertise is consinterated in the
4 assistance of young adults from a multitude of different backgrounds, to include both native
5 Hawaiians and service members with dependencey issues.

6 Ms. Salzer-Vitale has a Master of Public Administration (2018) and a Master of Social
7 Work.(2016). She has been a certified Prime for Life Trainer since 2018 and a certified Safe Talk
8 Trainer for Suicide Prevention since 2016.

9 We respectfully request your expeditious and favorable consideration for the nomination
10 of Ms. Salzer-Vitale, to serve on HACDACS.

11 Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of a committed volunteer
12 whose appointment adds to the cross-section of community interests represented on HACDACS.

13 **Offered Amendments:** None.



UNIVERSITY
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MĀNOA

University Health Services Mānoa
Health Promotion

April, 29, 2020

Dear Colleague,

It gives me great pleasure to provide this letter of support regarding Ms. Ku'ulei Salzer-Vitale's nomination to serve on the Hawai'i Advisory Commission for Drug and Controlled Substance.

Ku'ulei is a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and serves as the Alcohol and Other Drug Education Coordinator. One of Ku'ulei's primary responsibilities is to oversee the Brief Alcohol Screening & Intervention for College Students program (BASICS). This program is part of University Health Services-Health Promotion and provides students with short-term counseling and referral services related to their alcohol and/or drug use. The primary goal of the program is to educate students about risky behaviors and the possible consequences of alcohol and/or drug abuse. Ku'ulei always creates an effective and judgment-free counseling setting for students examining their alcohol and/or other drug use behavior.

In addition to her high level counseling skills, Ku'ulei also take on a leadership role in the planning and implementation of a variety of health promotion events at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Ku'ulei is involved in the planning and implementation of health fairs, poster campaigns, and research projects designed to encourage healthy choices related to alcohol and/or other drug use among the college student population.

This year, Ku'ulei has also taken on a leadership role in expanding the Malama Project, a collegiate recovery program that empowers students to be resilient, achieve academic success, and maintain overall well-being. Ku'ulei has demonstrated a strong commitment to providing culturally grounded programming and support for UH students impacted by substance use.

Ku'ulei demonstrates effective counseling skills, professional leadership, and a myriad of skills that have made her an exemplary faculty member. Ku'ulei is extremely mature and responsible and has demonstrated a strong commitment to health and wellness issues within the campus community. As a result, I believe that she would be a valuable addition to the Hawai'i Advisory Commission for Drug and Controlled Substance. If there are any questions pertaining to Ms. Ku'ulei Salzer-Vitale, please feel free to contact me at 808-956-4493.

Sincerely,

Kristen Scholly, PhD

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An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

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12 April 2020

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to recommend Ku'ulei Salzer to serve as a member on the State of Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances (HACDACS). I have known Ku'ulei for the last two years and have had the pleasure of having her work with me at the Substance Abuse Counseling Center (SACC) at Kaneohe Marine Corps Base for half that time.

While working at the SACC, I was able to observe her creative skills and innovative approaches to deliver the message of substance use prevention and the decreasing of community risks. Ku'ulei has the ability to adapt to evolving situations, stays current on community and national trends, and has no issues finding ways to get the information delivered. She is ethically sound, and takes pride in her approach as a professional. She is fair in her perception and decision making, and provides a safe platform to both share and receive feedback from her peers. Ku'ulei is able to work well with a team, allowing for the sharing of ideas and perspectives in order to conclude with an educated assessment of the situation. She works with passion and integrity for her community, her culture, her environment, and the population she's working with. She also recognizes the correlation between substance use, mental/behavioral health, and our youth. Ku'ulei has returned to the University of Hawaii, and is again making efforts to have a positive impact on students through her genuine aloha, compassion, and awareness (in this field).

With her capability, commitment, and tenacity, Ku'ulei will be a great asset as a HACDACS member. I have no doubt that you will be pleased with this decision, and that her professional and personal experiences, skills, and knowledge will be a welcoming addition to your team.

Sincerely,

Jody Y. L. M. S. Johnson, MFT, CCS, CSAC

1. Why do you want to be a member of the Board?

I desire to become a member because I want to work with other Board members to find innovative ways to prevent substance use of young adults and support young adults who are currently dependent on substances.

2. What do you perceive are the roles and responsibilities of a member of the Board?

There could be many different roles and responsibilities board members are accountable for. As a new member, I perceived my responsibility would be to fill in any void the board is currently experiencing. I would volunteer my expertise and obliged to the responsibility the board best sees fit for me. I would also support the Board's ongoing initiatives and assist with innovative ways to contribute. I also perceive another role to initiate training for our community to help increase our communities' knowledge of substance use and effective resources.

3. In what ways do you feel you can help protect the consumer?

I can help protect the consumer by sharing research findings that can help increase their knowledge of the substances, prevention, and treatment resources. Ethical, peer-reviewed, local, and relevant research is necessary to give the consumer adequate understanding of substances and their effects.

4. Given your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a Board member, why do you believe that you are qualified for the position? Please include a brief statement of your skills, expertise, and knowledge that would aid you as a member of the Board.

Yes, as a faculty member at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) I feel that my contributions will benefit the Board. I will do this by sharing ongoing research projects and partnering with other Board members to share findings with consumers and our communities. I believe that I am qualified for the position because of my education, past experience, and a desire to serve our community.

I am skilled and competent in Motivational Interviewing for individuals and groups. I currently conduct Motivational Interviewing training for social work students at the UHM. I am an expert in the prevention and intervention of substance use in college students and young adults. I am currently a faculty advisor for the Student Health Advisory Council. I am knowledgeable in up to date research on substance use, prevention and treatment resources in Hawaii. I know the current trends of substance use of college students. I am also knowledgeable in the standards of national collegiate recovery programs.

5. What do you hope to accomplish

There are four objectives I hope to accomplish while on the Board:

- First, I would like to assist with the Board's current projects and endeavors.
- Second, I would like to work with the Board to expand colligate recovery programs to other higher education institutions and high schools in needed areas.
- Third, I would like to conduct community-focused research with other Board members and share our findings with consumers.
- Fourth, conduct recovery ally training for educators in highschoools and higher education institutions so educators may understand the needs of students in recovery and provide resources to their students.

6. Name three qualities that best describe you and how these qualities will benefit the Board.

Below are three qualities that best describe me. I believe that these qualities will benefit the Board because it shows that I will be a dedicated and hard-working Board member.

- Patient: I understand that great ideas do not come to fruition in a short time, it takes planning, research, and sacrifices to produce a quality product that can create a positive change in our community.
- Professional: I maintain good boundaries, ethics, and communication with my colleagues. I am prompt and present at meetings. I value my colleague's time and expertise.
- Empathetic: I am understand the needs of others. I am non-judgemental and I believe that people everyone has the right to contribute no matter their background.

7. Name previous experience you've had that will be beneficial as a Board member.

I have many experiences that have benefited me in becoming the professional I am today. Below are previous experiences that will be beneficial as a Board member.

- I served as the Graduate Chair of the Student Health Advisory Committee (at UHM) that advocated for health-relevant laws such as age to 21, and smoke-free campus. I currently serve as a faculty advisor of the Student Health Advisory Committee.
- In 2016 I Co-created a colligate recovery program at UHM, The Mālama Project. through a grant from Transforming Youth Recovery and the Safe Project.
(<https://recovery85.wixsite.com/malamaproject>)
- Chaired community health fairs on a college campus: Condom Fair (sexual health promotion), Alcohol Awareness Fair, Great American Smokeout (tobacco prevention), and Safe Spring Break.
- I conducted over 100 hours of alcohol and other substance use prevention and education training for Marines at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i, Kāne'ohe.
- I chaired and authored the Alcohol and Other Substance Use Biennium Review for the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

- I am currently creating a recovery ally training for faculty, instructors, and staff so they may understand the needs of students in recovery and resources to refer students to.

8. Can you foresee any possible conflict of interest that could arise during your service on the Board? How would you overcome conflicts of interest?

At the moment I do not foresee any conflict of interest. However, if a conflict of interest arises while I am serving I will notify the chair of the Board as soon as possible and try to eliminate the conflict myself. If I am not successful I would consult with the chair of the Board and voluntarily remove myself from the Board if necessary.