

SENATE DISTRICT 18 COMMUNITY REPORT

DECEMBER 2021 – *Serving Mililani Town, Waipio Gentry, Waikele, Village Park & Royal Kunia*



Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

Mele Kalikimaka! It has been a whirlwind winter season for us here in Hawai'i, from stormy weather to Omicron and many challenges in between. I know this has not been an easy year, but when I stop to think about where we were a year ago and how differently we celebrated the holidays socially-distanced from our loved ones, I can't help but be grateful. We have risen above innumerable challenges and met the moment with aloha and grace. We have proven our resilience--to ourselves and one another. We have demonstrated the power of the collective when we unite for a shared cause and put the welfare of community as our primary goal.

While last year my monthly newsletter was devoid of cheerful photos enjoying fellowship in the community and supporting wonderful events, this year I was heartened to see my schedule fill with opportunities to offer my support and congratulations in person with community members rather than exclusively online. We may continue doing so with masks and safety precautions in place, but it fills my heart to see you all in person again and to celebrate your joys and successes.

As we head into the new year, I am hopeful for the future we have been rebuilding together over the past 2 years, with so many lessons learned along the way. In the wake of the Omicron variant's presence here in the State, I encourage you to get your booster shots and to vaccinate your keiki as the highest defense against this dangerous new variant and any others that are likely to evolve in the future. I am not alone in looking forward to celebrating Christmas with my loved ones and welcoming 2022 with open arms. I am sending my aloha to you and your 'ohana...wishing you an awesome holiday!

mele kalikimaka a me hau'oli makahiki hou!

*with much aloha,
Senator Kidani*



SENATE VICE PRESIDENT

Chair:
Committee on Education

Vice Chair:
Committee on
Higher Education

Member:
Committee on
Ways and Means

Member:
Special Committee on
COVID-19

Hawaii State Capitol
Room 228
(808) 586-7100

senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov

Head to [My Official
Capitol Web Page](#)
for a complete archive
of my monthly
newsletters

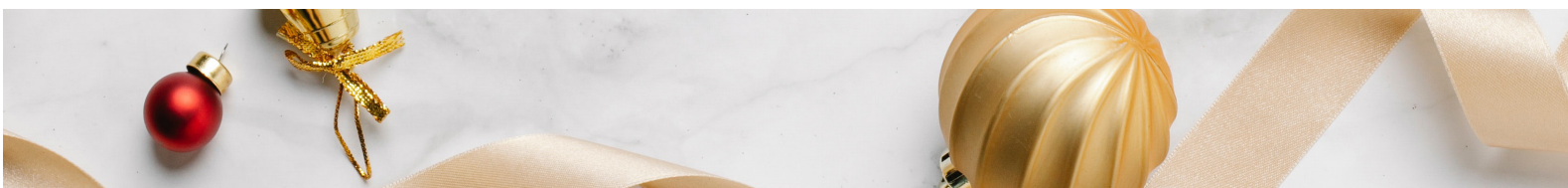
PAPAHANA 'O KAIONA SITE VISIT

I had the pleasure of visiting the students and staff of Papahana 'O Kaiona Alternative Learning Center at Ka'ala Farms in Wai'anae Valley with Senator Dela Cruz, Senator Shimabukuro and OHA Chair Hulu Lindsey. This incredible program helps to decrease at-risk youth incarceration and increase graduation rates through innovative methods of teaching. Classes are taught both in the classroom as well as at various sites, including the kalo farm pictured below. It was wonderful to have the students share what they have learned in such a beautiful setting as well as to get in to the kalo fields ourselves! The Senate and DOE are currently exploring ways in which to implement similar programs in all public school complex areas across the State.



MILILANI HIGH SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT

Representative Ryan Yamane and I had the honor of co-emceeding Mililani High School's 46th Annual Winter Concert on Sunday, December 5th. It's amazing to enjoy live performances again and I was overjoyed to see our hardworking MHS students share their musical talents with the Mililani community. Mahalo nui and congratulations on a beautiful, festive holiday performance!





ADULT FRIENDS FOR YOUTH AWARD

I was extremely honored to be the recipient of Adult Friends for Youth’s (AFY) 2021 Service to Hawai‘i’s Youth Award. This prestigious honor by AFY is one of the highlights of my 13 years in the Senate. I was further honored to receive a House certificate from my colleagues at the Legislature on this very special night surrounded by my beloved family and friends!



NANAKULI SITE VISIT

I had a beautiful site visit to Nanakuli High School to review an area on campus for possible teacher housing and community services. We met with House Finance Chair Sylvia Luke, Interim Superintendent Keith Hayashi, School Facilities Authority Board Chair Alan Oshima, CAS Disa Hague and Nanakuli High & Intermediate School Principal Darin Piliialoha to discuss how we could take advantage of this site to provide needed resources to the school and community. The Nanakuli Intermediate students also led us on a tour of the school garden they started during the pandemic, proudly showing us the garden and chicken coop they built to help manage pests. The students shared thoughtful insights they’ve learned from this experience, especially how much they appreciate applying what they learn outside the classroom back into the classroom as it benefits to their overall academic success.



USS DANIEL K. INOUE RECEPTION

On December 8th, I had the honor of attending the ceremony honoring the Navy's newest warship, the Arleigh Burke-class missile destroyer USS Daniel Inouye, which was officially commissioned at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. It was incredibly moving to hear speakers reflect on our late Senator's life and commemorating his legacy as an inspiring statesman, war hero and Medal of Honor recipient in such a magnificent way. It was a tribute truly befitting his honored life! (Pictured below: The USS Daniel K Inouye warship; (L-R: Cliff Bean, myself, retired General Darryll Wong, Jocelyn Victorino, Mayor Mike Victorino, Daniel K Inouye Jr. "Kenny" and wife Jessica Inouye, and former Mayor Kirk Caldwell.)



Congratulations to Mililani High School alumni, former Regents Scholarship winner and recent UHWO early graduate Emma Lake on receiving a Creative Media degree with a concentration in Video Game Design & Development!



Congratulations to my oldest daughter, Malia Cook, who graduated with a Bachelors Degree and double majors in Applied Science and Business Administration! I am so incredibly proud of you and all your hard work!



YWCA FERNHURST SITE VISIT

I joined members of the Women's Legislative Caucus on December 3rd for a visit to YWCA Fernhurst, the only community-based work furlough program for female inmates. As a co-convener, I was proud to stand with our caucus last session as we fought diligently to keep the program operating and we were proud to see it continue serving the community and providing well-needed opportunities as female inmates work diligently to transform their lives. Securing a dedicated funding source, providing access to all YWCA and partner programming and education, passing Clean Slate legislation to reduce recidivism and ensuring the State fulfills its mandate to issue identification to inmates prior to release are amongst Fernhurst's top priorities.

