

Senator Michelle Kidani

Twenty-eighth Hawaii State Legislature

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



Chair, Committee on Education

Vice Chair, Committee on
Commerce, Consumer Protection,
and Health

Committee Member
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Aloha Friends and Neighbors,

Now that the Legislature has adjourned and final votes on bills have been tallied, we can be clearer about the major bills we passed. As has been reported by the media, the Legislature made a major commitment of \$100 million for the Department of Education to undertake an aggressive program to provide air conditioning for as many as 1,000 classrooms. The Governor signed the bill on the day after we adjourned, and the DOE has already made progress in issuing contracts. We can now say with certainty that relief is on the way. A related bill would require the DOE to take advantage of energy savings options - including other methods of heat-abatement - to become a "net-zero" energy user in 20 years.

I am pleased to note that the budget includes the sum of \$10 million for the Pre-school Open Doors program, and that additional support positions for the Executive Office on Early Learning were approved as well. We must make good on the Legislature's promise to establish pre-K programs for as many of our keiki as we can, as so many other states have done as an investment in the future.

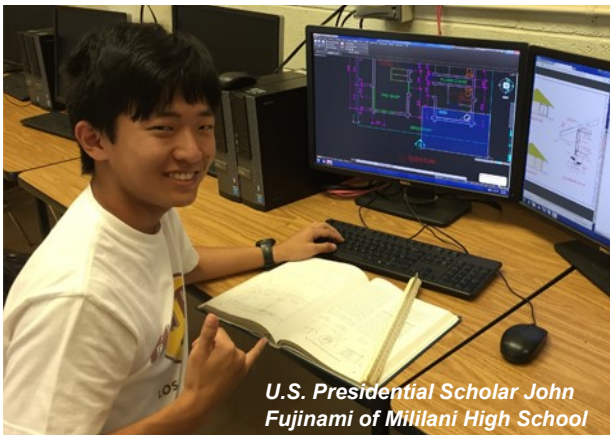
The Legislature also agreed with me that it's time to do a formal study to determine whether or not it is feasible to invest in an inter-island ferry system.

One measure that we all worked very hard to refine would have, I believe, resolved issues with teacher travel when accompanying students on educational trips by amending the ethics law. The final bill was a version of HB 1713 that originated in the House, and my Senate colleagues and I were ready to pass this important bill out of the conference committee. But the House conferees did not want to send the bill forward for final votes. Some expressed hope that new members of the Ethics Commission would re-examine the Commission's earlier position on this matter to the benefit of our students. I must say I was disappointed that we must now rely on 'opinion' rather than statute.

Elsewhere in the newsletter, you will find information about other bills that we sent to the Governor. He has until June 27 to let the Legislature know if he is considering any of these bills for vetoes. If he takes no action on bills by July 12 they automatically become law without his signature.

As the school year comes to a close, let me pass along my congratulations to all graduates from college and high school to middle and elementary schools. May all your new endeavors be memorable and successful!

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,



U.S. Presidential Scholar John
Fujinami of Mililani High School

Mililani grad named U.S. Presidential Scholar

Less than a week after he accepted his diploma as a Class of 2016 Valedictorian at Mililani High School's commencement ceremony, **Joseph Fujinami** was named to the 52nd class of **U.S. Presidential Scholars**. Joseph was one of 160 students selected from 4,700 candidates nationwide, and part of the program's first group of 20 Career and Technical Education (CTE) students. Outside the classroom, he has performed as a violinist with the Hawaii Youth Symphony for the past ten years and served as the orchestra's Concertmaster for the 2015-2016 season.

Seven Hawaii public school students were semifinalists for the honor, including - from our area schools - Joseph's classmate **Reyn Aubrey** and **Waipahu High School's Sydney Millerd**.

2016 Legislative Update



The Senate Committee on Education, for which I serve as Chair, reviewed dozens of bills that seek to improve our schools and address issues of concern among students, teachers and administrators. *The overall education budget for the year beginning July 1 totals \$2 billion – 15 percent of state expenditures and the second largest commitment of state funds behind \$3.3 billion for the Department of Human Services.*

Here are a few of the individual **education bills** that we passed and forwarded to the Governor for his consideration:

- ◆ **SB 3126** – as noted on page one, provides \$100 million for school classroom air conditioning.
- ◆ **SB 2607** – establishes limits on the ways in which DOE and its contractors may use student data collected as part of online services.
- ◆ **HB 2267** – amends current laws regarding funding for textbooks to include digital instructional materials such as e-books and other documents that are supplementing or replacing physical textbooks.
- ◆ **HB 1814** – provides funding for training on student restraint or seclusion, the result of several highly-publicized incidents at schools including Kipapa Elementary.

And a non-education bill – **SB 2618** – provides funding to study the feasibility of a state inter- and intra-island ferry system, a follow-up to high public interest in this transportation alternative.

I should also acknowledge the initiatives led by my colleague, **Senator Donovan Dela Cruz**. He spearheaded efforts to include \$2.5 million in the budget for immediate assistance to Wahiawa General Hospital. We heard from literally hundreds of area residents who recognize the critical importance of this acute care hospital to the people of Central Oahu. Senator Dela Cruz also secured \$31.5 million to purchase more than 900 acres of prime agricultural lands north of Mililani and Wahiawa. Acquiring these lands not only moves us closer to food sustainability, but also creates new job opportunities for farmers.

The Legislature also approved funds to help address the growing challenge of affordable housing and Hawaii's homeless population. The budget includes \$91 million to subsidize development of affordable rental homes, and \$12 million in unrestricted funds that the Governor may use for such things as the Housing First initiative, repairs to public housing units that are currently vacant, homeless outreach services, rent subsidies and a possible new shelter facility in Kakaako. The Governor is directed to present a plan for the use of these funds in the next few months.

In addition, I'm pleased to report that funds have been allocated in the budget for a number of construction projects that will impact area residents. These include our schools and a community organization that is a source of pride and an important reminder of our plantation heritage:

- ◆ **\$500,000** for a new portable classroom at Waipio's **Kanoelani Elementary**
- ◆ **\$5.5 million** for campus improvements at **Waipahu High School**, including planning and design for a new building
- ◆ **\$35 million** for a new Creative Media facility at **UH West Oahu**
- ◆ **\$11.5 million** for plans and design for a 15 classroom building to allow **Mililani Middle School** to transition from the current multi-track schedule to the conventional school year calendar
- ◆ **\$2 million** for parking lot and handicap access improvements at **Mililani High School**
- ◆ **\$760,000** for an erosion control project at **Mililani Uka Elementary**
- ◆ **\$200,000** for renovation of plantation structures at **Waipahu's Hawaii Plantation Village**



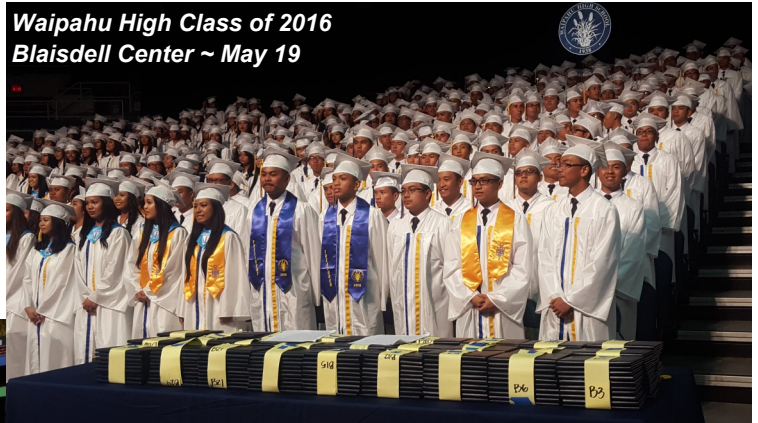
An adjournment-day portrait ~ May 5, 2016.

We  our 2016 graduates!

Diplomas waiting, seniors in white stretching up the Blaisdell Arena bleacher seats as far as the eye can see. As one of Hawaii's legacy campuses, Waipahu has distinguished itself in so many ways this year. The future is even brighter.



Waipahu High Class of 2016
Blaisdell Center ~ May 19



Mililani High Class of 2016
Aloha Stadium ~ May 15

Lifetouch photo



ROTC honor guard, a sea of golden robes, a massive audience of family, friends and well-wishers.

Someone observed, "Aloha Stadium is the only place big enough for all of the folks who have supported our grads over all these years."



UH West Oahu photos

Interim Chancellor Dr. Doris Ching, keynote speaker Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald, UH President David Lassner and university regents greet the Spring Class of 2016 as UH West Oahu celebrates 40 years as a unique campus in the university system.



At right, a newly-minted UHWO alumnae – diploma in hand – red tassel blowing in the wind on a bright, sunny Saturday morning, almost sprinting back to her seat. Smiling, and looking *forward*.



Spring 2016 Graduates
UH West Oahu Courtyard ~ May 7

Footnotes:

Generation next!



Allow me personal congratulations if you will. At left, that's **Keolana Cook**, an outstanding young man finding his way through the years, with a good heart and a great head on his shoulders. Proud member of the Mililani Class of 2016. At right, three cheers for **Jayreed Kidani** who won the *Ha'aheo Award* at the Mililani Uka Elementary recognition day ceremony last week. Thank you, **Ms. Yashiro**, for your guiding hand. I am so proud of these grandsons and all they mean to our Mililani `ohana.

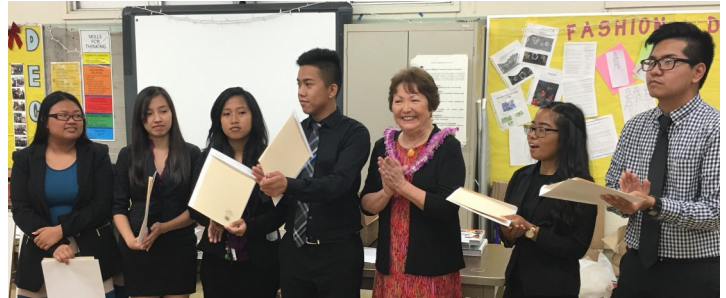
'Safety First' priority earns Mililani Uka Elementary safety award



The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) has cited **Mililani Uka Elementary School** for its outstanding safety record. The school was recognized for its efforts to make workplace safety a priority and establishing “Safety First” and “Always Be Careful” mottos that are shared by all students and staff. **Principal Heather Wilhelm** said, “Our school safety committee works to foster safe behaviors through our entire school community of 700 students, teachers and staff. Each of us plays a role in making safety our top priority on our campus.”

Great work, everyone!

I was invited to **Waipahu High School** several days ago to present congratulatory certificates from the Hawaii State Senate to six outstanding students in the Business Learning Center program. Each has been awarded a scholarship for further study. From left, congratulations to **Christine Guira, Marjorie Raquiz, Revelyn Taylan, LJ Tamayo, Abigail Aquino** and **Agassi Reyes**. They earned their awards based on academics, leadership, community service and an essay - more success stories from the WHS career pathways and small learning communities programs.



Making the rounds at year-end school programs this month took me to the **Kaleiopu' u Elementary School May Day** program in Village Park (at left), and to the Mililani High gym for the **Mililani Waena Elementary Songfest**. *Sounding great, Waena Class of 2018!*



Honolulu Community College Assistant Professor of Construction Management, **Norman Takeya**, arrived at his end-of-the-school-year get-together and discovered that he was the guest of honor! Norman – a longtime Mililani neighbor – was named **Outstanding Educator by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)** for his work at HCC. His students nominated Norman for the honor, and I joined them in extending the Senate’s congratulations for his more than ten years of great work to support one of Hawaii’s most important industries. Norman’s proud wife Denise joined us for the surprise celebration. *Congratulations!*



Need Legal Help?

VOLUNTEER LEGAL SERVICES HAWAII

Attorneys will be available at a Pop-Up legal clinic at the Filipino

Community Center on Saturday, June 4 ~ 9 am-noon.

FREE to all low and moderate income individuals!

If you have a legal problem and need some help, call **528-7046** to make an appointment.



Both the **Mililani and Waipahu High School Varsity Baseball** teams made it to the quarterfinals in the State Championship Tournament earlier this month. Congratulations to the Marauders for their 6th place finish; the Trojans were set to play the Campbell Sabers for 3rd place, but torrential rains forced cancellation of the game. *Great work, everyone – see you next season!*

The **Lady Trojan Varsity Softball** team played into the semifinals of the State Championship Tournament before a tough loss to Campbell. The season ended with a victory over Pearl City for 3rd place. *Mahalo to Coach Rose Antonio and her dedicated players for another great year!*



The **Mililani Boys Varsity Volleyball** team advanced to the semifinals of the State Tournament before the season ended with consolation round losses to Punahou and Kamehameha-Hawaii. The **Waipahu Boys Varsity** team wrapped up the year with State Tournament wins against Waiakea and Kalaheo, also in the consolation round.

Thanks for making the 2016 sports season very special for fans at both schools!