

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

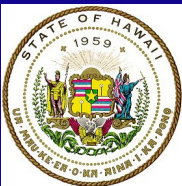
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Waipahu High School dedicated its new football field and running track earlier this month. The new field is the focal point of the **Masa Yonamine Athletic Complex**, named to honor longtime football and baseball coach who led Waipahu teams to three Rural Oahu Interscholastic Association football championships and eight league baseball titles from 1954-1970. *For more on this year's Marauder football successes, see page 4.*

Aloha, friends and neighbors,

This is the first opportunity to report to the Board in the two months since the July meeting. In this newsletter, you will find notes about our special legislative session to formulate a plan to support the city's rail project, as well as several items of interest to our Waipahu communities.

During the past several months since our regular session, I have spent a good deal of time on what I believe is a true success story - and a remarkably quick response to a real need. Working with the Department of Education, the UH Manoa College of Education and other campuses in the UH system, we have created a hands-on approach to mitigate the perennial challenge of making sure all of our public school classrooms are staffed with qualified license professional teachers. It's coupled with a higher profile program to raise awareness of the vital part teachers play in our society, urging candidates to **"Be a Hero. Be a Teacher."** You'll find information about both of these efforts inside on page 3.

The teacher shortage here is no different from that in many other states. I accepted invitations to attend mainland meetings of the Education Commission of the States (ECS) and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) this summer. These meetings outside of Hawaii provide valuable perspectives on this and other issues that many states have in common. I already serve as Vice Chair of the Education Committee for the NCSL. In July, I was elected Co-chair of the Education Committee for the NCSL Asian Caucus.

This summer I also accepted an appointment to the Senate's Committee on Ways and Means - the committee that reviews all state-agency budget requests and the Governor's spending plan before formulating the Senate's approach to responsible expenditure of public tax dollars. The session that begins in January will be known as a "supplemental budget session," as we take a second look at the two-year budget we approved in May. State departments and the Governor are expected to submit revised spending plans after seeing how their plans have been playing out over the last several months. We expect a busy session, and, of course, always welcome your input on neighborhood concerns.

Me Ke Aloha Pumehana,



A new point of pride on the Waipahu High School Campus



Notes from the Capitol



My colleague, Senator **Donovan Dela Cruz**, now chairs the Senate Ways and Means Committee (at left). I was also appointed to the committee as we presided over hearings on proposed legislation to finance and monitor Honolulu's rail transit project.

Below, Hawaii's U.S. Congresswoman **Colleen Hanabusa** was among those who testified at a full-house hearing during last month's Special Legislative Session.

The bill we approved, and now signed into law by the Governor, is a compromise package that extends the half-percent Oahu general excise tax surcharge and increases the hotel room tax on all islands by one percent. It also requires strict reporting responsibilities on the city as the state assumes more control over the project.

The new law acknowledges that the rail project is of such magnitude that statewide support is merited.



The Department of Education has an excellent program that assists military families and their 14,000 youngsters who attend our public schools. The **Joint Venture Education Forum** of military and civilian members recognized two individuals who have done extraordinary work to make the program a success this year. At left, DOE Superintendent **Christine Kishimoto** congratulates **Enrica Luz Guerrero**, an Education Assistant at Radford High School, as **Outstanding Civilian Contributor** to this work. At right, Chief Petty Officer **Jon Franquez** was recognized as the **Outstanding Military Contributor** for his volunteer work as a sciences mentor and sports coach.

Forty-five public schools in Hawaii are officially designated military-impacted campuses. Military dependent youngsters make up about 8 percent of DOE's total student count. *Mahalo—and keep up the good work!*



I joined several of my Senate and House colleagues to re-create a scene from a century ago to mark the 100th anniversary of the Red Cross in Hawaii. The Palace was chosen because not only did **Queen Liliuokalani** open the throne room to Red Cross volunteers, she also presented them with a Red Cross flag that was raised over the Palace.

It's an appropriate reminder that the Red Cross plays an important part in helping island residents recover from emergencies statewide and in our neighborhoods. Red Cross volunteers from Hawaii have also assisted people in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and elsewhere in their recovery from hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. Find out how you can help with relief efforts by calling (808) 734-2101.

Facing up to the Teacher Shortage

This news release from the University of Hawaii describes a program for which I included \$400,000 in each year of the two-year budget we passed in May. Mahalo to the UH College of Education and Department of Education (DOE) for quick work to implement this important way to address Hawaii's teacher shortages.

Becoming an education hero, is now more attainable, thanks to generous support from the State Legislature and the Hawaii DOE. The UH Manoa College of Education will award up to \$600,000 in scholarship stipends to recruit new teacher candidates who already serve in educational capacities in our public schools.

The scholarship stipends are available to DOE employees who are emergency hires, substitute teachers, or education assistants for enrollment in the college's statewide post-baccalaureate certificate in secondary education in spring 2018. The initiative, called **Grow Our Own**, is designed to address teacher shortage areas in Hawaiian language, world languages, English, mathematics and science.

"This partnership between the College of Education and the DOE is the first of its kind, targeting educators who have an undergraduate degree, but no teaching license, and who demonstrate content knowledge in a DOE federal shortage area," said Dean Donald B. Young. "This is the first time state scholarships have been available to support teacher preparation. We appreciate the leadership of **Senator Michelle Kidani** in helping to make this opportunity a reality."

"After reviewing several years of teacher shortage and retention issues, I partnered with the College of Education and DOE to find a way to recruit substitute teachers with bachelor's degrees to become licensed teachers," said Senator Kidani. **"This cohort pilot program is really a start. If it is successful, we should also recruit others with bachelor's degrees such as DOE emergency hires and others whose degrees may be underutilized. If they already live and work in our community and want to become teachers, we should focus on growing our own to provide the best possible educators for our keiki."**

Students of the **Grow Our Own** initiative will begin in January 2018 and graduate in May 2019 with an opportunity to gain teacher licensure from the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board upon completion. The program includes online courses as well as field experience and teaching residency in a DOE or public charter school. Graduates are required to commit to three years of full-time teaching (grades 6–12) in their designated shortage area. ***The application deadline is October 1, 2017.***

For more information, go to the **Grow Our Own** website: <https://coe.hawaii.edu/node/4507> or contact the College of Education's Office of Student Academic Services at osas@hawaii.edu.

The Grow Our Own program is paired with a new multi-media public awareness campaign aimed to encourage young men and women to become teachers. A prime mover in developing the program is Dr. Niki Libarios, Director of the College of Education Office of Student Academic Services. Sadly, Dr. Libarios passed away unexpectedly in August at the age of 47. Here's more about Dr. Libarios and the Be a Hero. Be a Teacher. campaign.

The key components of the campaign are two professional videos for use online, on social media and as part of a future public service announcement campaign. Posters have also begun going up at UH campuses and public and private schools across the state.

The videos and posters are meant to drive future teachers to the **Be a Teacher. Be a Hero.** website that showcases the pathways and programs available at UH to gain teaching credentials. Visit: <http://www.beaherobeateacher.com/> Four campuses offer teacher programs: UH Manoa, UH Hilo, UH West Oahu and Leeward Community College.

"Our hope is that students entering college or who are on their way to earning a degree will look at teaching as a profession that provides rewards on many levels," said Donald Straney, UH Vice President for Academic Planning and Policy. "This campaign speaks to the very important role that teachers play for students and our society, and aims to inspire those who may not have considered a career in teaching, to take another look."

One of the heroes of the **Be a hero. Be a teacher.** campaign was **Ernest "Niki" Libarios Jr.**, (photo at right) the UH Manoa College of Education (COE) director of the Office of Student Academic Services.

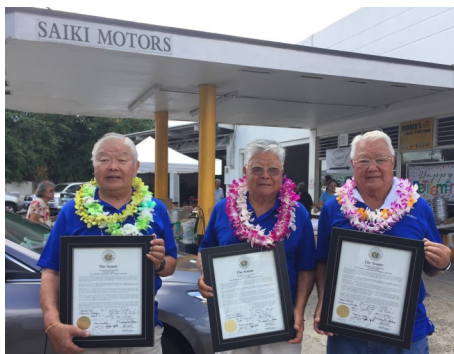
Libarios led a faculty discipline group on education, represented by educators at the four UH campuses, to develop the campaign, produced by local advertising firm Kai Media. "Niki took the lead in designing and creating the campaign on behalf of the UH System," said COE Dean Donald Young. "The videos are a tribute to his knowledge, expertise and leadership."

"Niki was passionate about uplifting the teaching profession," said Denise Nakaoka, who worked with Niki in the Office of Student Academic Services. "He comes from a family of educators both at the high school and post-secondary level, he was himself a former elementary school teacher, and had devoted 18 years of his career at the College of Education, so this campaign was very personal to him."

Dr. Niki Libarios



Notes from our Communities



Mahalo to the Saiki Brothers – Walter, Harold (Yasu) and Albert (Yoshi) , accepting congratulatory certificates from Senator Kidani.

Aloha and mahalo – after 74 years

A longtime landmark in the heart of Waipahu town met the needs of three generations or more of motorists in need of car repairs. At the end of August, Saiki Motors closed the doors for good as brothers Albert, Harold and Walter decided that it was time to retire. Their father, William “Bill” Saiki, and the behind-the-scenes backbone of the family, Mama Kikuyo, took a leap of faith in the midst of World War II, followed their dream and opened their shop in 1943 – an astounding 74 years ago.

Bill instilled a firm work ethic in his sons, who worked at Saiki Motors even before they could drive. The three brothers worked tirelessly over the years, with honesty and integrity, always putting first the needs of loyal customers from all over Oahu. As time passed, health challenges came along, the next generation decided to pursue other careers, and so it is time for well-deserved retirements.

The Saiki family and their business that served our community so well for so long are a perfect example of the values that make our neighborhoods stronger.

We’re so glad to have known them as friends and neighbors, and wish them all the best in the years ahead. **Mahalo!**

Kudos to the Waipahu High School Culinary Academy! I attended a public affairs forum over the summer and was so pleased that Marauder chefs-in-training were dedicating part of their summer to food service for community events such as this one. These young men and women have been extremely creative in their career training program.

A favorite: teriyaki poke served on a won ton spoon! Mahalo to Culinary Academy **Elaine Matsuo** for working with our students even when school was not in session. **Great work, everyone!**



Adult Friends for Youth Graduation



Fifteen students, including some of our neighbors from Waipahu, completed their course work in a program sponsored by **Adult Friends for Youth (AFY)** that offers basic-skills education for second-chance young men and women. I was so happy to meet them and offer some thoughts as commencement speaker last week. With this 8-month study program now completed, they’re going on to study at Honolulu Community College. **Congratulations to the grads, and mahalo to AFY, President & CEO Debbie Spencer, and to their many sponsors!**

There was a lot to cheer about at last weekend’s **WHS Homecoming** football game versus the Pearl City Chargers. A full-house crowd of about 5,000 fans celebrated a 37-6 victory to move to six wins and no losses in the current season – with a chance to grab the number 1 seed in the four-team Division II playoffs with a win this coming weekend against the Kaimuki Bulldogs.

Funding for the new football field and the state-of-the-art track were first included in the state’s budgets when I oversaw the Senate’s construction plan as Vice Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means. **We are so proud of the hard work that everyone contributed to create this outstanding campus landmark for Waipahu student-athletes for many years to come!**



Photo courtesy Scoringlive