

# 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

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Aloha friends and neighbors,

Thanksgiving marks the end of the fall high school sports season in which we saw two Mililani High School teams and their student athletes excel. The girls varsity volleyball team, led by **Head Coach Val Crabbe**, went through the OIA West Division undefeated with ten wins and no losses. They entered the State Championship Tournament and eventually finished with a record of thirteen wins and three losses. Setter **Hope Carter** was named OIA West Division Player of the Year and three others were named to OIA All-Star first and second teams.

The 2014 State Champion Mililani Football team, under **Head Coach Rod York**, won the OIA Blue Division with a perfect 7 and 0 record, then finished as runners-up in the OIA tournament. A first-round win in the State Championship Tournament sent them to the semifinals, where they fell to a strong St. Louis team of the ILH. Our season ended with 10 wins and just 3 losses. Mililani's **Vavae Malepeai** was named OIA Offensive Player of the Year, deservedly so since he broke the state high school rushing record set some 17 years ago and he established the new current record for most rushing touchdowns. Nine other MHS varsity players were on the OIA first and second team all-star rosters.

While individual players excelled in their sports, clearly the total team efforts were responsible for this season's successes. It is also true that the excitement of athletic competition and these kinds of accomplishments help to unify our communities more than many other "issues." We are so very, very proud of the efforts put forth by both of these teams as well as MHS student athletes in other sports over the last several months.

*Excellence, Tradition, Pride . . . thank you Trojan Nation for an awesome fall season!*



*This week we pause for Thanksgiving. My fondest hope is that you all have much for which to be thankful, and that you are able to enjoy the day and the season in the company of family and friends. I wish everyone a warm and peaceful remainder of 2015 as we celebrate the holidays.*

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

## Governor's Awards Ceremony recognizes public library employees



Photo from George Kodama

Congratulations to our Mililani neighbors – **Miriam Sato and Jaclyn Ching** – who were honored by the Hawaii State Library System last month. Miriam (at left with **State Librarian Stacey Aldrich** and **Governor David Ige**) was named 2015 Employee of the Year. She heads the Business, Science and Technology section of the Hawaii State Library and is a 35-year veteran with the department.

Jaclyn (at right) is a Library Assistant at the new Aiea Public Library facility that celebrated its grand re-opening just last year. She received an award for Sustained Superior Service.

*Thank you for your work on behalf of library patrons*



Photo from Baron Baroza

## Notes from the Capitol

### Senate Education Committee Informational Hearing

In a wide-ranging hearing before my Senate Committee on Education and our House of Representative counterparts, we questioned several Department of Education administrators about several issues that have concerned lawmakers, teachers, parents and children in our schools over the last few years. We discussed the State Ethics Commission ruling earlier this year about teacher travel that has already put several planned student trips on hold. We received a progress report on efforts to provide air conditioning for our classrooms, student testing and test scores, and priorities for using federal Race to the Top (RTTT) funding that should be used to improve instruction.

Shockingly, a 2014 evaluation of RTTT expenditure of \$74 million in federal funding showed that the DOE spent 35 percent on consultants, 41 percent on personnel, and only 24 percent on actual programs and other needs for our schools. **I requested a full accounting of RTTT funding, personnel as well as contracts related to RTTT and will make this a priority in the legislative session that convenes in January.**



Judiciary photo

At left, Hawaii Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Recktenwald recognized Associate Justice Sabrina McKenna as the recipient of the 2015 Daniel K. Inouye Trailblazer Award. I joined them this week to present a congratulatory certificate from the State Senate. Justice McKenna was one of five attorneys selected by the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association to receive the award that recognizes the outstanding achievements, commitment and leadership of lawyers who have paved the way for the advancement of other Asian Pacific American attorneys.

At right, the Hawaii Afterschool Alliance organized a State Capitol rally for more than 400 youngsters who participate in various enrichment programs after classroom hours through the year. I joined several of my colleagues from the Legislature, **First Lady Dawn Amano-Ige** and numerous parents and leaders for a wonderful program that showcased the initiative, creativity, enthusiasm and bright talents of Oahu's students – all of whom benefit from such programs from A+ to the YMCA. The Hawaii rally was one of hundreds of National Afterschool Alliance events across the US to raise awareness of these important programs.



## *Honoring our Veterans ~ Aboard the USS Missouri Memorial*



With me from left, Michael Carr, USS Missouri Memorial Association CEO & President, with Senators Clarence Nishihara and Mike Gabbard.

It was an honor to represent the Senate at a late afternoon ceremony at Pearl Harbor aboard the *USS Missouri Memorial* where this year's Veterans Day program focused on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of US combat in Vietnam.

My colleagues and I presented a Senate certificate to the Memorial Association, noting the important role Hawaii played during the war years.

November 11 has been set aside each year for more than a century to honor the military service of men and women in uniform – for which we are so grateful.



There are many, many ways to celebrate the holiday season. I can especially recommend a very special event on the first weekend of December. **Governor David Ige and First Lady Dawn Amano-Ige**, along with the Washington Place Foundation, will host *Christmas at Washington Place* on Sunday, December 6, beginning at 4:00 p.m. The home will be decorated for the holidays, and live Hawaiian musical entertainment is on the program. Seating is limited and reservations are required. Call 586-0249 by December 1 for a seat!