

Senator Michelle Kidani

(D) Senate District 17— Serving Mililani Mauka, Mililani Town, Waipio Acres and Waipio Gentry



Aloha, friends and neighbors:

Next month, the first graduates of a new program at Waipahu High School will be recognized for completing a college level course in psychology over the past summer. Through a partnership with Chancellor Gene Awakuni and UH West Oahu, WHS offered dual high school and college credit for Psychology 100, with thirty WHS students in class from 9 to noon, and in optional study sessions in the afternoons. All thirty students passed

the course, averaging a passing grade of 'B.' Through special funding, classes were available at no cost to the students; they were so enthusiastic that they asked for more!

Now, in partnership with Leeward CC, Waipahu this semester has more than 40 students enrolled in History 151 and Speech 151 college level classes. Principal Keith Hayashi says, "We're looking to expand these opportunities for all who are interested. We want students to BELIEVE that as they apply themselves," he says, "they can take can succeed in college-level programs while still in high school."

WHS is working with former LCC Chancellor Mark Silliman as a "transition coordinator" to help guide students along the path to college. Additional opportunities are expected to be available to Waipahu students in the 2013-2014 school year through the Jump Start program now available at Farrington, Kaimuki, Roosevelt and McKinley High Schools.

Congratulations to our all-star students, and to administrators and teachers for their fine work in mentoring our future leaders. We are grateful for their leadership as Waipahu High School prepares to celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2013 as one of Hawaii's legacy secondary schools.

Me ke Aloha,

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month



An estimated 1,120 people in Hawaii will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, among the 6,600 state residents whose cancers will be detected in 2012.

Years of research have demonstrated that regular screenings, a healthful diet and even a mild regular exercise program are effective tools in preventing and treating breast cancer.



Have a happy & SAFE Halloween!

If you're heading out for tricks or treats next week, make sure your keiki are safe and sound.



Make the rounds in your own neighborhoods with folks you know, or find a group event at schools or community centers.



Congratulations Waipahu High Juniors and Seniors for your pledge not to text while driving

Juniors and seniors from Waipahu High School were at the State Capitol last month to make public their pledge not to text while driving. The story was featured on the Channel 2 News, including interviews with WHS Senior Tiffany Ganti and

Junior Edgar Pobre. The activity was part of a program sponsored by AT&T nationwide. The slogan for the campaign is *When it comes to texting and driving, it can wait.*

A survey released earlier this year says that 75 percent of teens say texting while driving is very dangerous – but 43 percent admit that they do it anyway.

Parents were surveyed also, and while parents tell their teens that texting or talking on the phone while driving is not safe, 77 percent of teens say their parents are texting illegally "all the time." That's an important reminder: *talking and texting while driving is against the law.* The Channel 2 News story points out that in a 3 to 4 hour period in one Oahu neighborhood one day, HPD issued nearly 140 traffic citations, and about half of those were for unlawful use of electronic devices. ~~~ *Watch the complete TV news story, with Tiffany and Edgar's interviews, on the Web at the link below:*

<http://www.khon2.com/news/local/story/Governor-supports-no-texting-while-driving/mh48nBWlxU2d4Rr4mclTfw.csp>



Coming events in our Community . . .

- ◆ Friday, October 26 - Kanoelani Elementary – PTSA Pumpkin Carving Night
- ◆ Friday/Saturday, October 26-27 - Waipahu High School presents a Haunted House event, 6-10 pm, sponsored by the Arts & Communications Pathway students



- ◆ Saturday, October 27 - Leeward Community College—**UH eWaste Disposal Day**, 9 am to 3 pm. Bring old computers and accessories, handheld devices, office equipment, and audio and video equipment. **DON'T** bring household appliances, contaminated equipment, damaged CRT screens, microwaves, etc. More information at <http://hawaii.edu/ewaste>



Last month, I sat in with my Senate colleagues for two days of intense hearings regarding UH practices and policies that laid out a great deal of unsettling testimony about management and accountability at the University. The Committee's report is expected in a few weeks.

~~ Fish and Veggies ~ visiting an aquaponics farm ~~

I recently toured *'Ili'ili Aquaponics Farm* at the invitation of Ag Specialist Jim Hollyer of UH. The visit followed a discussion I had with Mililani resident Vic Kimura of Sheraton Hotels who brought to my attention several issues related to food safety and sustainability, and ways in which the Legislature can help support Oahu's farmers. Sheraton is wholly committed to buying from local farmers to the extent possible for its many hotel restaurants.

The basic concept in aquaponics farming: water from fish tanks is piped to plants that take nutrients from fish waste; the water is cleansed and returned to the fish tanks. The fish – usually tilapia – are the fertilizer source and can be sold to markets when they mature. Aquaponic crops grow faster and use less land, water and labor. *In the photo at right my grandson Keaolana Cook and I feed the fish; Jim Hollyer of UH in the pink cap, and 'Ili'ili owner Dan Ching to the far right.* Dan's growing lettuce, basil, watercress and bok choy using three 5,000 gallon tilapia tanks. There are other such farms in Kunia, Haleiwa and elsewhere in the state. Support for Hawaii's farmer / entrepreneurs is important to food sustainability and a diversified economy.



Birthday celebrations provide an ideal opportunity to count life's blessings, and my favorite blessings helped me blow out the candles on my cake as we marked the 25th anniversary of my 39th birthday last month. From left, kids that make my world go 'round: grandsons **Akoni** and **Kahiau** and granddaughter **Kamalani**. At right, Kamalani makes sure that youngest granddaughter **Ayame** gets her share of the attention (and a cupcake).



It's your right . . . and your responsibility General Election Day is Tuesday, November 6

Absentee ballots have been mailed, but you may still request a mail-in ballot until October 30. In person early walk-in voting begins on Tuesday, October 23 and continues until Saturday, November 3. Vote between 8 am & 4 pm at Honolulu Hale, Kapolei Hale or Pali Golf Course. Vote at your neighborhood polling place on election day from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Questions? <http://hawaii.gov/elections> or call 543-8683

Hawaii's Keiki can vote, too!

Since 1996, Hawaii school-aged students have participated in *Kids Voting Hawaii*, a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that partners with public, private, charter and home schools statewide. In the 2010 election, more than 108,000 Hawaii students voted online as a part of this program to teach civic responsibility and prepare our young people for a lifetime of voting.

Voting is done online at a secure Web site that requires a password, distributed by school coordinators. **Parents: check with your children to see if they've requested or received a password at school.** Kids Voting started this week and will continue through election day November 6. **For more information: <http://www.kidsvotinghi.org>**

