

Ke Ala Hou

A New Path Forward

Ke Ke'ena O Ke Kia'aina | Office of the Governor • April 2024

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Governor Josh Green, M.D.

We have made great progress toward the recovery of Maui in March. The One 'Ohana Fund is now accepting applications from survivors who lost loved ones and those who were seriously injured and hospitalized as a result of the Maui wildfires. As Governor, my hope for this fund is that it will provide a more direct path toward healing and recovery for the families affected.

In terms of the recovery timeline, we are currently moving from the short-term recovery stage to the mid-term recovery stage. As we transition away from temporary non-congregate shelters (NCS) and move into longer-term builds, we expect families to move into secure and safe housing options over the next two months. We have already negotiated up to \$220M in savings for the state with our federal partners, and had a 60% decrease in impacted families in NCS.

In addition, we are implementing new measures by working with the U.S. Fire Administration to deploy 16 wind sensors and 80 new beta wildfire sensors with 24-hour alerting capabilities that can detect wildfires before they start across Hawai'i. We also celebrated the opening of the new temporary King Kamehameha III school that was lost in the fires.

The road to recovery is long, but I am grateful for the perseverance and support from our local, national, and international communities. I want to continue to express my gratitude to the federal, state, and county partners for their invaluable contributions toward the rehabilitation of Maui. Their dedication and efforts have been instrumental in prioritizing Maui's recovery, and we are truly thankful for their unwavering support.

Mahalo,

A Court Victory For Endangered Forest Birds

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), as represented by the Department of the Attorney General, prevailed in a lawsuit challenging a project utilizing the Incompatible Insect Technique—which uses a naturally-occurring bacteria to help suppress mosquito populations—for combatting avian malaria on east Maui and giving native birds a chance for survival.



Above: Models of extinct native birds watch over proceedings as the "jurors" in this litigation about the future survival of endangered birds.
Photo courtesy: Dan Dennison (DLNR)

The disease has already led to the extinction of many native birds and is responsible for nearly wiping out several remaining species of Hawaiian honeycreepers on the verge of extinction in the wild.

Deputy Attorneys General Miranda Steed and Danica Swenson represented DLNR at an evidentiary hearing before First Circuit Court Judge John Tonaki.

Ke Ala Hou intends to elevate, recognize, and celebrate the hard work done by our state departments. Our goal is to share top achievements from our state employees, emphasize aloha and kindness in action, and demonstrate caring leadership at the state level. It is our hope that by sharing these stories, we build trust and understanding in what we do everyday in service to you.

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A Court Victory For Endangered Forest Birds Continued from page 1

Before the first evidentiary hearing, Steed and Swenson placed wooden models of extinct native birds before the jury box. “We did this intentionally,” said Steed. “The extinct native birds were sitting as the jurors in this case.”

Following the hearing, Judge Tonaki granted summary judgment in favor of DLNR and other defendants.

“We are thrilled with the judgment and for the native birds that will have a better chance at survival,” said Swenson. “Our defense was structured to be evidence-based and grounded in the comprehensive scientific analysis of the final environmental assessment.”

“Projects addressing climate-change impacts, such as this one, are still subject to litigation. But eradicating mosquitos to prevent avian malaria is safe. It also cannot wait,” said Steed. “An adverse court decision would have been a death sentence for the remaining honeycreepers, and we are grateful for Judge Tonaki’s ruling.”



Above: Deputy Attorneys General Miranda Steed and Danica Swenson hold a demonstrative photo of an 'apanepane with a mosquito stinging its eye, that was used at an evidentiary hearing. Photo courtesy: Department of the Attorney General

Meet Two of HIDOE’s Youngest Teachers!



Blaise Babineck

With the help of the Hawai‘i State Department of Education (HIDOE) Early College Program, two teachers returned to their alma maters, becoming the youngest full-time teachers in HIDOE history.

Blaise Babineck is an eighth-grade science teacher at King Intermediate School. Through

Maryknoll’s Early College Program partnership with Hawai‘i Pacific University (HPU) and advanced placement credits, Babineck graduated high school at age 16 in June 2022 and started college at junior- and senior-level courses. He then graduated from HPU at 18 years old as the undergraduate class valedictorian with a bachelor’s degree in chemistry in May 2023.

After college, he began teaching at King Intermediate School because he wanted to support kids with whom he shares a similar background. In his first seven months as a teacher at King Intermediate, Babineck was the driving force to bring the science fair back. He wanted his students to have the same opportunities that he did in middle school.

“I really loved sharing my passion for science with other people and guiding them through things and showing them how interesting and fun chemistry can be,” he said. “I had a lot of fun doing that.”



Skye Yasuda

On the Leeward side, Skye Yasuda became a sixth-grade English and social studies teacher at Waipahu Elementary School at 20 years old.

Yasuda also took advantage of the Early College Program at Waipahu High School and graduated as valedictorian in 2021. She also earned two

associates degrees – one in teaching and another in liberal arts, as well as a certificate of competence in culturally responsive teaching from Leeward Community College (LCC), simultaneously. She was the first high school student in the state to graduate with an Associate of Science in Teaching from LCC.

Yasuda then attended the University of Hawai‘i–West O‘ahu on a Presidential Scholarship and later graduated with her bachelor’s degree in elementary education. She expressed that her young age puts her at an advantage as a teacher.

“I went to school during COVID so I know how hard it was, being able to understand all those different circumstances,” said Yasuda.

Although it is challenging for Yasuda to see her friends who are in college while her weekends are spent grading papers, Yasuda said, “Right now, I can do what I love and I can put into action everything that I learned.”

Want to read more about these high-achieving teachers? Visit, <https://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/MediaRoom/PressReleases/Pages/blaise-babineck-skye-yasuda-hidoe-youngest-teachers.aspx#>



Awareness, Education and Action is the Focus of Tsunami Awareness Month

As people in Hawai'i awoke and got ready for work and school on April 1, 1946, an unwelcome visitor barreled its way toward the islands, triggered by a massive overnight earthquake off Alaska's Aleutian Islands.

Hilo would take the brunt of the "April Fools' Tsunami," with 158 deaths and damage in the millions. The tsunami also destroyed the Scotch Cap lighthouse on Unimak Island, Alaska, near the epicenter, killing its five occupants.

Hawai'i learned some deadly lessons about tsunamis and tsunami awareness that day. Because of this, the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA), and its federal, state, and county partners observe every April as Tsunami Awareness Month, sharing those lessons to save lives in the future.

This year's focus is on Awareness, Education, and Action — knowing what a tsunami is, how to recognize the signs of an impending tsunami, and what to do before, during and after a tsunami occurs.

Tsunamis can strike at any time; there is no "tsunami season." They are often generated by earthquakes but can be triggered by underwater volcanic eruptions and landslides, or other powerful events as well. And a tsunami isn't only one wave — it's a series of waves.

A roaring sound from the sea, strong earth shaking, or a suddenly exposed sea floor are all signs a tsunami may be

HHFDC Selects Master Planners for Kapolei Affordable Housing Project

The Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation's (HHFDC) Board of Directors awarded developers 'Ikenakea Development LLC and The Michaels Organization, both a 75-year lease in early March to master plan and develop Haku Kapolei. The project will include up to 900 affordable rental and for-sale homes at one of the largest, remaining undeveloped properties in the Villages of Kapolei. The 19.4-acre property is located at Farrington Highway and Fort Barrette Road, next to the future Hawai'i State Veterans Hospital and across from the Kapolei Walmart.

Haku Kapolei is scheduled to be built in three phases:

- Phase 1: 344 rentals in two multifamily buildings. Units are to be priced for those households earning 30%, 50% and 60% AMI or below.
- Phase 2: 376 units in two, multi-family housing buildings, along with 95,000 square feet of commercial space anchored by a grocery store. Rental units will be priced for those households earning 30%, 50% and 60% AMI or below. The partnership also proposed adding 130 more units through a "higher density alternative." Two, 170-foot mid-rise towers may be allowed if entitlements and financing can be obtained.
- Phase 3: 50 for-sale units in nine, three-level fee simple town-home buildings that would be priced for those families earning between 80% and 140% AMI.



Above: Examples of two signs that O'ahu residents might see around areas which may be impacted by tsunamis. Our neighbor island county partners might have different signage. Photo courtesy: HI-EMA

arriving, even if warning sirens aren't sounding. Don't wait — get to higher ground immediately!

After a tsunami, wait for an all-clear from authorities before going home. Avoid debris, downed power lines and other hazards.

"Get tsunami ready now," said HI-EMA Administrator James Barros. "Know your evacuation routes and make a plan."

How can you prepare? Pack a Go Bag of essential items such as food, water, clothes, medication and important documents, in case you need to evacuate. Make a plan, which should include phone numbers and a meeting place if you get separated, and practice your plan with friends and family.

Visit [ready.hawaii.gov](https://www.ready.hawaii.gov) for more information. Go to the "Get Ready" menu and select "Types of Disasters" to learn more. No get scared — get prepared!

Governor Josh Green, M.D., applauded the partnership stating, "Affordable housing is among the top priorities for this administration and Haku Kapolei will help us fulfill my promise to provide more affordable housing for kama'āina families."

The property, often referred to as "the Kapolei Northwest Corner," is the last major undeveloped piece of the Villages of Kapolei master-planned community that was envisioned by former Governor John Waihe'e and the state Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HFDC), HHFDC's predecessor agency, in the late 1980s.

To date, approximately 4,000 units have been built in the Villages of Kapolei, roughly two-thirds of which fall under the definition of affordable housing. The developers' timeline calls for Phase 1 of Haku Kapolei to be ready for tenants in April 2029, and full buildout in April 2033.



UH Addressing Student Housing Needs With Successful P3s

Residences for Graduate Students

The University of Hawai'i is just about a year away from completing its second successful Public-Private-Partnership (P3) to build modern student housing facilities on the UH Mānoa campus with zero taxpayer dollars. Construction on the \$170 million Residences for Graduate Students facility began in October 2023 and is scheduled to be completed in fall 2025.

The facility consists of two buildings (18 stories and 12 stories) with 316 units containing 550 beds for graduate students, junior faculty and undergraduate students. It will include a childcare facility, retail spaces, study rooms and a café. The facility is being built on the mauka (mountain) side of Dole Street between the East-West Center and Mānoa stream.

"In Hawai'i we hear a lot about P3s," said UH Vice President for Budget and Finance/CFO Kalbert Young at an October 10 groundbreaking ceremony. "I think we can take a sense of pride in recognizing that we are talking about groundbreaking on the second public-private partnership at the University of Hawai'i in less than three years."



RISE Success



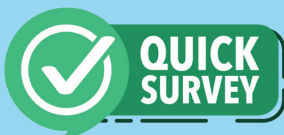
The first P3, the \$70 million Walter Dods, Jr. Residences for Innovative Student Entrepreneurs (RISE) Center opened in August 2023 at UH Mānoa. The six-story, student entrepreneurship and innovation center is home to 374 students and is operated by the Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship at the UH Mānoa Shidler College of Business. It features makerspaces where students have exclusive access to 3D printers, laser cutters, tools, sewing machines, project workspaces, and more to bring their ideas to life.

The facility is located on the site of the former Atherton YMCA on the corner of University Avenue and Metcalf Street. It was named after former First Hawaiian Bank Chairman Walter A. Dods Jr., who donated \$5 million to the program.

RISE is fully funded with private, non-taxpayer money. For the Residences for Graduate Students, UH provided out-of-tuition monies, \$8 million for pre-development and pre-construction work, and will provide \$2 million a year for rent abatement to keep rents affordable for the duration of the 45-year property lease.

Improve Our Quality of Life in Hawai'i by Taking This Survey Today!

Researchers at the University of Hawai'i (UH), in partnership with the Office of Wellness and Resilience, are interested in your thoughts about strengths and opportunities to better our well-being – in our homes, communities and workplaces. Feedback from the state workforce, as well as community members statewide, will be used to create reports to inform and improve local programs and policies. Share your thoughts today! This survey takes roughly 15 minutes. Click here to complete the survey. For more information, visit: www.health-study.com, or email Trina Orimoto at UH: trinao@hawaii.edu. The survey within the QR code takes about 15 minutes.



We would love to hear your feedback on our newsletter!
Scan the QR code to fill out our survey.



Ke Ala Hou is a monthly publication of the Office of Governor Josh Green, M.D.

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