

# “Nau Wale No...Just for You”

Volume 8

August 2016



## Services for the Blind

State of Hawaii/Department of Human Services/  
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

1901 Bachelot Street Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Telephone: (808) 586-5269 Fax: (808) 586-5288

Website: <http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/vr/hoopono/about/>  
Mission Statement: Empowerment, Freedom and Independence  
for people who are blind and visually impaired.

### Administrator's Message: Lea Dias

Happy Summer 2016! Welcome to another edition of Ho`opono's newsletter, Nau Wale No. In this issue, you will get updates on our wonderful new staff, community events, and upcoming opportunities for learning. You will read about our Ho`opono `ohana's adventures at national consumer conventions and on the high ropes at Camp Erdman.

Each and every day, our staff, consumers and community partners are working together to build a better future for the blind of Hawaii. We are expanding our outreach to employers and the DOE. Last state fiscal year, our VR Counselors and Employment Specialist placed more than 40 people in competitive employment. Over the last couple of months, 11 blind youth got some solid work experience in the community. Our Older Blind program and Low Vision Clinic have resumed

services on the neighbor islands. Our Business Enterprise Program continues to grow and flourish, although we lost a giant supporter with the passing of our dear friend Filo Tu. Our New Visions staff are full of energy and ready to welcome new students to raise their levels of confidence and to learn blindness skills to prepare for work and life.

We value our partnerships and look forward to your visits with us, or even giving us a call to let us know what you're up to. Have a fun, safe Summer and we hope to see you all at the White Cane Walk, Friday October 21st at the State Capitol!

Aloha,  
Lea Dias

**Administration: (808) 586-5268**

Administrator: Lea Dias

Secretary: Geri Mitomi

Community Services Coordinator: Gavan Abe

**Counseling Section (Vocational Rehabilitation/  
Older Blind/Low Vision Clinic): (808) 586-5257**

Supervisor: Fiona McNeill

Secretary: Lorna Gallano

Social Services Assisant: Wilford Samia

Office Assistant: Francine Tezak

Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist: Cindi Takiguchi

Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist: John Zamarra

Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist: Shayla Wakumoto

Rehabilitation Teacher (OIB/LVC): Carol Mau

Rehabilitation Teacher (OIB): Carol Fujimoto

Rehabilitation Teacher (OIB Big Island): Theone Suzuki

**Adjustment Section (New Visions Program):  
(808) 586-5273**

Supervisor: Dean Georgiev

Secretary: Janet Masuko-Kagimoto

Orientation & Mobility: Shellford Cantan

Orientation & Mobility: Justin Salisbury

Personal & Home Management: Kyle Laconsay

Braille: Deborah Gabe

Technology: VACANT

Woodshop: Gordon Takesono

Residential Counselor: Shannon Cantan

**Employment Section (Business Enterprise Program/  
Job Placement): (808) 586-5285**

Business Manager/Supervisor: Kathleen Fujimoto

Secretary: Mary Jane "MJ" Andres

Account Clerk: Janis Maraya

Employment Services Specialist: Maylene Galicinao

Vending Facilities Specialist: Susan Chong

Vending Facilities Specialist: Tad Matsuno

Vending Facilities Specialist: Chris Tamanaha

**Staff Updates**

Since our last newsletter over a year ago, we've had new staff join our branch as well as staff moving to different sections. In our Counseling Section, we have Shayla Wakumoto as our Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist and Francine Tezak as an Office Assistant. In the Adjustment Section, Kyle Laconsay, who was a Vending Facility

Specialist is now the new Personal & Home Management Instructor and Justin Salisbury is the second Orientation & Mobility Instructor. In the Employment Section, there are two new Vending Facility Specialist, Tad Matsuno and Chris Tamanaha. We are so glad to have them join our Ho`opono Ohana!

### **Ho`opono Job Openings**

Currently, we have job openings in various sections throughout the branch. Vacant positions are first open to Department of Human Services civil service employees and if not filled, then externally to the public. Click on the link below to view the openings. If you have any questions, please direct them to the DHS Personnel Office. <http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/employment-opportunities/>

### **“I didn’t know my iPhone could do that”**

An accessible technology workshop focusing on iPhone and iPad for individuals who are blind, visually impaired or have other print reading disabilities. This includes senior citizens, students, blind employees, professionals serving people with disabilities, parents, teachers and children.

Location: Ho'opono Services for the Blind Auditorium  
1901 Bachelot Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Date: Friday, August 26, 2016

Time:

8:00am- Sign in

9:00am- Sessions Begin

12:00pm- Sessions End

- Intro to iPhone
- Everything and Anything to Input Information
- Downloading Books & Reading
- Travel & GPS Apps

Contact: Ann Lemke at [lemke@hawaii.edu](mailto:lemke@hawaii.edu) or  
(808)232-4040

The deadline has passed but you can still contact Ann to see if there are spaces available. And bring a device to record or to take notes with.

**Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is celebrating their 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Thursday August 25 from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

10:15am- Welcome & Blessing  
Clarence Liu

11:30am- Open House  
Learn about LBPH  
Exhibits, tours, have your name Brailled

Please RSVP by August 18 by calling 733-8444.

## **White Cane Walks**

October 6- Kauai White Cane Walk 10:00am  
Historical County Building  
For more information: Doug Moises  
(808)482-1115

October 14- Kona White Cane Walk, 10:00am  
Starting at Hale Halawai down Ali`i Drive.  
For more information: Sally Hammond  
(808)345-7065 or [hammondkona@yahoo.com](mailto:hammondkona@yahoo.com)

October 21- Oahu White Cane Walk, 10:00am  
Starting at the State Capitol Rotunda and  
ending at Iolani Palace.  
For more information: Gavan Abe

- Hilo will be having a walk but they do not have a specific date/time yet. I will let all of you know when I get more information. Unfortunately, Maui will not be having a walk this year.

## **Camp Ho`opono**

Every May, the New Visions Students pack their bags and head out to Mokuleia for a week to take part in activities at Camp Erdman. It is a change of scenery for the students but it is still part of training which means sleepshades and using their long cane.





Pictured Above: The students and staff pose for a group picture on the Odyssey Ropes Course 30 feet above the ground.

From May 23-27, the students participated in Group Challenge, Wilderness Survival, Odyssey High Ropes Course, Archery, Swimming and Hiking to Kaena Point. Additionally, students take turns for each meal to setup, serve and clean in the dining hall.

It was definitely a week of challenges and pushing the limits. Students really learn that they do not need vision to do many things that people might think they need it for. Climbing up a rope ladder over 30 feet and crossing wire ropes to four different platforms while maneuvering through obstacles may sound difficult but think about

doing this with no vision? Many might think this is impossible but every single student who started this, finished. What an accomplishment!



Pictured Above: Jonah and Shellford press their hands together while helping each other cross on separate logs from one platform to the other.

## **Summer Youth Employment Program**

The Rehabilitation Services Administration, who oversees our Vocational Rehabilitation program set out regulations to set aside 15% of their allotted budget on Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). This particular group consists of students with a disability from



age 14-22 who are currently enrolled in secondary education or college.

Ho`opono was fortunate to have 11 students participate in the SYEP in various jobs such as City & County Environmental Services, Hawaiian Island Creations and Assistive Technology Resource Center to name a few. One of the bunch got to work at Hawaii Magazine which turned out to be a great experience for her. Read below a short write up from Kiana Yasana on her 8 weeks at HAWAII Magazine. You can click on the link to read her article about the new Village Walk at Shirokiya:

<http://www.hawaiimagazine.com/content/6-delicious-eateries-inside-oahus-new-shirokiya-japan-village-walk>

### **Learning through Internship: Kiana Yasana**

Over the summer I was granted an opportunity of a lifetime. Currently, I am a junior enrolled at UH Manoa as an English Major and with the help of Ho`opono and the City & County of Honolulu, I was able to obtain an internship through a youth program with HAWAII Magazine. For me, this was a dream come true. I've wanted to work with/for a magazine for many years, and my overall goal is to become a contributing editor.

During my two-month internship, I learned about the magazine printing process. I met writers, editors, marketing directors, as well as employees from other magazines including Hawaii Business Magazine, Honolulu Magazine, Hawaii Home and Remodeling and a few

others. I was even able to publish a couple of online articles through HAWAII Magazine about another passion of mine, food. I was able to attend a press opening for Brug Bakery's new Ala Moana location, and write about the new Shirokiya Japan Walk, one of my favorite places on earth.

As an intern, I was treated as another employee. I was included in meetings, made suggestions, did research for articles, and ultimately, I was just another member of the office. Nobody on the staff seemed to care about my disability; in fact, it seemed like they didn't even notice. I was given a decent work load and it felt amazing to be doing something in the field I want to go into.

## **2016 National Conventions**

This past June, the American Council of the Blind and National Federation of the Blind had their national conventions which many of our consumers attended. Below are reflections of Sajja Koirala who attended the ACB Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota and Khamtoun Porter who attended the NFB Convention in Orlando, Florida.



### **American Council of the Blind: Sajja Koirala**

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude to Ho`opono Services for the Blind for sponsoring me to attend the

convention of the American Council of the Blind 2016.

While attending the convention, I was able to participate in a tour to the Mall of America, do a fundraiser walk, tour to the Bakken Museum, a wonderful trip to Abdallah's candy store where I learned new things, met new people and had fun. I also went on a scavenger hunt, attended a writing workshop, participated in a self-defense class, attended a comedy show, went on two breakfasts (one focused on the importance of braille and other was about supporting and encouraging blind women), attended an informative seminar about different apps helpful for the blind and participated in a banquet hosted by ACB. Attending the ACB convention has been an empowering experience for me, and I sincerely thank you for allowing me to enjoy the convention with your generous support.

I learned something from each tour/activity I partook in, and I felt proud to meet blind and visually impaired people who were successful in their chosen careers. Navigating the Hyatt, The Mall of America and many other places we visited has enhanced my mobility skills, and learning self-defense techniques has increased my self-confidence. Going on tours with many blind and visually impaired individuals taught me to be more patient, and I was filled with gratitude to volunteers who worked hard to make our tours successful and meaningful for us. I learned about different books that have featured characters with a disability from the writing workshop, and I was able to make connections with others who shared a love for writing. I was motivated by the speakers at breakfasts, and I had a blast at the scavenger hunt! I learned to deal

with my disability with a sense of humor from the comedy show, and I gained valuable information about the latest and greatest apps for the blind by attending the app seminar.

I found the banquet to be a powerful ceremony, and I was deeply moved by some of the speakers. Terry Kelly, a Canadian blind singer/athlete/motivational speaker talked about dreaming big, and I was ready to move mountains after he finished his speech! I was humbled to realized that some of the restaurants in the neighborhood created braille menus to accommodate us during the convention, and my heart filled with gratitude to learn that before the law required hotel rooms be labeled in braille, ACB people wrote room numbers in braille and labeled every single room.

I learned so much in this convention that it is impossible to describe without making this letter too long, but I just want you to know that I really appreciate your support. I had an opportunity to see braille jewelry, different assistive technology, learn about the advocacy efforts of ACB to make life a little easier for blind people, and I can say that this convention has played an important role in my personal growth. I was able to discuss the pros and cons of using a cane or a guide dog with those who had the experience of dealing with both.

In conclusion, I just want to say that I am profoundly grateful to you for your support. This convention was a great learning experience for me, and I thank you for all

your help. Approximately 1000 blind and visually impaired individuals attended this convention, and it was exciting to be a part of an event so big.



## **National Federation of the Blind: Khamtoun Porter**

I had been a New Visions Student for 4 months before going to the NFB Convention in Orlando. Prior to that, I was very depressed. I didn't want to answer the phone or even speak to my neighbors. Everything that I observed was with my eyes. The colors of the sky and silhouette of a person. Now I can't see, I thought to myself how can I enjoy life?

Being a part of the New Visions program and having the opportunity to attend the convention was a real eye opener! I didn't know there were so many blind people. They had great jobs such as software engineers, artist, radio producers...jobs I never could have imagined that a blind person could do.

I thought to myself, if they could do it then I could too. From all the general sessions and meetings I attended, I felt a sense of freedom. It was so empowering to hear and see all these blind people who had been in my shoes. My blindness wasn't going to limit me from living my life.



Now I am laughing again. I can joke around with others and feel like my old self. I never thought that after losing my vision that I could feel this way. I'm no longer afraid of getting lost anymore. I am free!

I have one funny story from the convention. Prior to going, I had signed up for the talent show which I had planned on singing. So I walked into the room and everyone ignored me. I sat down and thought, wow these people aren't very friendly. Then after a few minutes, I realized that the reason why no one spoke to me is because they were all blind. I just assumed that there were sighted people helping the blind.

### **Braille Reading Program**

Our New Visions Students, graduates and volunteers are continuing our Braille Reading Program at two nearby preschools. Once a month, we go to Good Shepherd Preschool, Pali Preschool and Hawaii Baptist Academy Kindergarten to read children's books that have Braille labels on the pages.

There will be new children in each of the classes who are introduced to blindness and see that even without vision, blind individuals are still able to travel around and read. In the past, I observed the children and got the impression that they don't see the readers as blind but just another adult reading to them.



Pictured Above: New Visions graduate, Scott, reads a Braille book to the children at a nearby preschool.

## **Aloha `Oe Filo!**

I'm sure many of you heard that Filo Tu, a friend of the blind in Hawaii passed away on July 27 after a battle with lung cancer. He will be missed as a strong advocate for the blind, voice for the Randolph-Sheppard Program and most of all his friendship. We will miss you Filo and know you are now resting peacefully!

## **Employment Corner: Maylene Galicinao**

Job Club is by appointment and Hoala takes place every Friday from 9-10:30am in the Job Club Room, located in the basement of Ho`opono. To participate in Job Club or

Ho`ala, a referral is needed from your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

I am able to assist all job seekers in completing a job application, creating or editing a resume, and providing a career assessment using Career Kokua and/or Onet. I can assist with your job search through job referrals, by conducting mock interviews, interview preparation (attire, time management, etc.) and interview assistance/support.

I also provide follow-up support to the job seeker and the employer. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (808)586-5261 or [mgalicinao@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:mgalicinao@dhs.hawaii.gov)

### **Braille Club**

Every Monday from 3-4pm at Ho`opono, our Braille Instructor Debbie Gabe hosts Braille Club which is open to blind and sighted individuals. It doesn't matter if you know nothing about Braille or have been reading it for years. For more information you can contact Debbie at (808)586-5259 or [dgabe@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:dgabe@dhs.hawaii.gov)

### **Older Blind Support Group**

Oahu: Last Friday of the month  
9:00-10:30am  
Ho`opono Conference Room  
Contact: Carol Fujimoto (808)586-5279

Big Island: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month

11:00am-noon  
Hilo State Office Building  
Contact: Theone Suzuki (808)974-6444

## **Social Media**

If you haven't heard, we have a Facebook page and a YouTube channel. There are pictures and posts to keep all of you updated with things going on here. So check us out on Facebook and "like" us! Also we've recently started YouTube videos on cane travel tips and have a Yelp page too. Just click on the icon below to take you straight to our pages.



Facebook: Ho`opono Services for the Blind



YouTube: gavanabe



Yelp: Ho`opono Services for the Blind

## **Ho`opono Resource Directory**

If you or someone you know needs a paper or electronic copy of the Ho`opono Resource Directory, please contact me. It contains local and national resources for blind and visually impaired people.

## **Upcoming Events/Important Dates**

August 19- Admissions Day Holiday

August 25- LBPH 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary 10:00am-2:00pm  
August 26- "I didn't know my iPhone could do that"  
9:00am-noon @ Ho`opono Auditorium  
September 12- Humanware Presentation 10:00am  
September 23-25 Ho`opono @ Good Life Senior Fair,  
Blaisdell Exhibition Hall 8:30am-4:30pm  
October 6- Kauai White Cane Walk  
October 14- Kona White Cane Walk 10:00am @ Hale  
Halawai down Ali`i Drive  
October 21- Oahu White Cane Walk 10:00am @ State  
Capitol Rotunda

I hope you all enjoyed the information. Sorry I haven't done this in a while! Please share it with others who might be interested. Also, I send out information through email so if you would like to be added to my listserve, please let me know.

If you have any comments or information to be posted in the next newsletter, please feel free to contact me.

Mahalo!

*Gavan*

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