

Honolulu Community Action Program, Inc.

"Providing Opportunities and Inspiration Since 1965"



Ku`i Na Lono

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SPRING 2010

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COOKIE'S STORY: Everyday miracles



Cookie lives in Waimanalo with her husband David, their daughter-in-law, and 10 grandchildren. They participated in HCAP's Weatherization Assistance Program funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (WAP-ARRA).

I worked for the airlines for 22 years, then when I got sick I had to retire early. But God knew where this grandma needed to be — right here, taking care of the mo`opuna.

Sometimes it can get a little crazy, like last year our water heater started to act up. We had no hot water and our tank was leaking. We fixed it, then there was another leak. It was a disaster over here. Trying to boil water for 10 kids to take baths? It was hard, but was good learning for the kids. I told them, "No worry, it's not the end of the world."

Our plumber told us about HCAP, so we went to put in an application. In January, Bob from HCAP calls me up and tells me, "We're going to bring in your heater and a whole new system." Bob didn't just put in a new solar, he also told us HCAP could help with electricity payments once a year, and he gave us a new showerhead and light bulbs. I said, "Thank you! I didn't expect all of that." I got blessed double.

It was awesome. The electric bill came down so fast! Our bill was over a thousand when everybody first moved in, now I got this new heater and it went down to \$450. The water bill is down to \$350. The way I see it, it's all miracles.

We been teaching the children too, how to conserve. Like when you go to the ice box, make sure it's closed good. And you don't go and just play in the shower, it's not like going in the swimming pool or the beach.



Another tip Bob told us, 'cause he seen my cell phone and all these things plugged in, he says, "You know, that's no good." He said we can keep down the cost, just unplug it when it's pau. That's something you never think about. So now I watch, and I pull out everything. I tell the kids, "You leave your Gameboys and don't pull it out, it draws electricity, hello! When you're done, you need to unplug it." I think that's why the electricity came down too. Everybody came more aware.

Bob gave us a lot of tips and we're applying it, we're teaching the children. Someday they're going to leave us, and they need to apply it to their families. I tell them, "Don't take this for granted. Take heed of this, learn from this, and better it, then share with others."

HCAP is accepting applications for the WAP-ARRA program on an on-going basis. Qualifying applicants will receive free energy-saving devices, as well as helpful information and tips about conserving energy. For more information, call Cerell Rivera, Program Specialist, at 447-5431.

From Our Director



Robert N.E. Piper, Esq.

“Loss, Recovery & Growth”

Spring was bittersweet for us this year, as we faced the loss of an agency cornerstone, Ruby Hargrave. Our executive director from 1976 to 2004, Ruby passed away peacefully at age 84. She is fondly remembered by our current and former staff as a fierce advocate for those in need, and a warm and compassionate friend to many.

With Ruby’s example and legacy as our guide, we continue to help the people to whom she dedicated her life. This Spring, we helped 276 O’ahu families file their taxes through our free EITC tax help program. These families will receive over \$425,000 in tax refunds, including \$202,705 from the Earned Income Tax Credit.

We’ve enhanced our services by partnering with other agencies doing great work through The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We also began planning our new after-school STEM program for elementary and middle-school kids. Through exploration of robotics, computer programs and science experiments, we’ll help local kids learn about their world and how they can make it a better place.

With your support, we look forward to the next season of growth at HCAP.

Mahalo piha,
Robert N.E. Piper, Esq.

HCAP helped families claim nearly half a million dollars in tax refunds

Tax season can be a difficult time for working families. Many feel overwhelmed about filing their taxes, but cannot afford professional assistance. HCAP helped out this year as a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) provider.

From January 30 to April 15, we offered free tax preparations to low- to moderate-income earners. “It was such a meaningful program for our staff and clients, because they saw the impact right away,” said Ace Tufu, Community Services Manager for Kalihi-Palama. “People get really excited when they see that refund number.”

HCAP set a goal of helping 100 families. Through the efforts of our extraordinary staff and volunteers, we far exceeded our goal, serving a total of 276 households! These families will



Tax preparer Rosa Young helps a client at HCAP’s main office

receive over \$425,000 in Federal tax refunds.

Every HCAP district staff member was trained and certified as a tax preparer. All five district centers served as tax sites, as well as our main office in downtown Honolulu. The program was targeted to help people file for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and HCAP helped 126 clients file for the EITC, for a total of \$202,705.

Windward District’s manager, Debra Warman, said, “Every one of our staff grew their own skills by getting trained and certified. Next year, they look forward to getting even more training and being able to help people with more advanced needs.”

The free EITC tax help program was sponsored by Hawaii Alliance on Community Based Economic Development (HACBED) in collaboration with the Internal Revenue Service. This program is one of the many ways that HCAP approaches the war on poverty. Helping people access the tax credits they have earned and worked for is exactly the kind of work that community action agencies like HCAP were designed to do.



HCAP’s tax help program was a success because of our enthusiastic and experienced tax preparers, like Christine Vuong

RIZALINA'S STORY: The work of her hands

Rizalina's eyes light up as she talks about the garden. She moves among the plants with familiarity, pointing to one that just started flowering, then another that she says has medicinal properties. "You boil the leaves and drink it," she explains. "Helps the stomach."

Rizalina has transformed the garden at HCAP's Leahi District Center with her careful planting and care. The small red and white building on Palolo Avenue is now surrounded by neatly

placed rows of plants, trees and flowers. Rizalina shares some of their names: dwarf palmera, basil, arretes ("earrings"), money plant, fortune plant (ti).

Rizalina is employed as Leahi's maintenance worker and landscaper through HCAP's Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP).

She even comes in on weekends to check on the plants. "It's not just a job for her," says Rizalina's employment counselor, Barbara Koike. "She just really loves what she does."

In the SCSEP program, HCAP's staff matches seniors with work sites that provide them with training and job opportunities. The work sites must be either a non-profit or a government agency,



and the senior's pay is completely subsidized by HCAP through its SCSEP funding. In Rizalina's case, she is actually assigned to HCAP as her work site; however, the majority of the 135 seniors currently enrolled in SCSEP are assigned to one of over 60 other agencies throughout Oahu.

SCSEP is a win-win situation; the work site benefits from free staffing and committed workers, and the seniors receive the many benefits of working: learning new skills, a feeling of self confidence, physical activity, social networks, as well as the financial benefits. Many SCSEP workers are immigrants, including Rizalina who is from Dumagiti in the Philippines. They are able to pay into the Social Security system and accumulate credits so they will be eligible to collect Social Security benefits when they retire.



Frank Yim, SCSEP Program Coordinator, explains the program's larger effect. "There's more people now in the workforce beginning to see the value of seniors. Before, they would be kind of pushed on the side. What people are beginning to see, more and more, is that these seniors have a lot of dedication and heart and soul behind what they do."

Leading HCAP in 2010: Board of Directors



HCAP welcomed five new members to our Board of Directors for 2009 - 2010. We asked one of these dedicated volunteers to share why he serves, what HCAP means to him, and what he hopes to accomplish.

William Shiroma joins the HCAP Board as the representative from Bank of Hawaii. Bill was born and raised in Kalihi and is a graduate of the Kamehameha Schools and the University of Hawaii - West Oahu. He feels that we should all be involved in what goes on around us, and he serves on the Board as a way to give back to the community where he lives and works. Bill sees HCAP as a champion for those less fortunate who rely on HCAP's services to make their lives and community a better place. As a Board member, he would like to become more familiar with the various ways that HCAP is involved in the community and find ways to extend the services we provide. For Bill, HCAP is a vital part of the community and being able to serve HCAP is an honor and privilege.

Malama Pono hosts Town Hall: A conversation about underage drinking

175 adults, teenagers and kids gathered in Kahaluu on March 21 to learn about underage drinking. This Town Hall meeting was one of hundreds held nationwide as part of National Alcohol Awareness Month. It was hosted by HCAP's Malama Pono Youth Mentoring Program and supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA).

Firefighter Mark Yeager gave an unforgettable speech, using his own props and gear to paint a picture of the events of responding to a call about a drunk driving accident. Tracy Ah Mook Sang, whose daughter Makamae died last year from alcohol poisoning, gave her personal testimony. Amber Aduja, National American Miss Jr. Pre-Teen Queen 2010, shared her passion for this issue and her message to teenagers to think about their actions. The National Guard and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) offered educational videos and informational displays.

After the Town Hall meeting and a Q&A session, people left with a greater awareness of the problem of underage drinking and encouraged by the community's commitment to working together to address the issue.



Mark Yeager describes his experiences responding to drunk driving accidents

Bringing special needs children into Head Start family

HCAP Head Start's unique partnership with the Hawaii Department of Education (DOE) was featured at a staff training this February. Through the Inclusion Project, both Head Start and DOE Special Needs children are enrolled together in preschool classes and are supported by DOE and HCAP teaching staff.



HCAP Head Start staff at a joint training with DOE teachers

Challenges always occur with varying educational philosophies; however, the benefits far exceed the challenges. The Head Start children provide peer modeling opportunities for the special needs children. This can include providing a speaking environment when there are language-challenged or speech impaired children or demonstrating problem solving strategies. The special needs children teach Head Start kids about persistence, the importance of honoring each other's gifts and talents, and the many ways of communication and learning. All the children learn acceptance for those that may be different from them. HCAP has inclusion classes in Sunset, Kainalu, Kapalama, Puohala, KMCBH, Honowai, Kaneohe, Heeia, Keolu, Maili, Ben Parker, Waipahu, Waipahu, Kahaluu, Waikele, Maunawili and Kailua.

Our aloha goes out to all our DOE partners and to Phyllis Ida, the DOE Windward District 619 Preschool Coordinator. Phyllis envisioned this years ago and made it a successful state-wide project. We will miss Phyllis greatly when she retires this summer and are grateful that she has imparted a philosophy and successful project that will allow her legacy to continue.

Your Helping Hand

We need your kokua!

Your support directly benefits Oahu's children, families and seniors who are struggling through economic and personal hardships.

HCAP's programs can use the following items:

Youth Services (call 591-1766)

For our Graduation ceremony on June 24

- ✎ Greenery and flowers
- ✎ Sheet cake
- ✎ Appetizers

For our classrooms and offices

- ✎ Inspirational/Motivational framed wall hangings
- ✎ Black picture frames
- ✎ Wall fans

Kumuhonua Transitional Shelter (call 682-5494)

- ✎ Twin size mattress covers (vinyl/plastic)
- ✎ Microwave ovens
- ✎ Outdoor benches, furniture and/or picnic tables
- ✎ Sewing machines
- ✎ Toiletries
- ✎ Pots & pans
- ✎ Cooking utensils, plates, bowls, eating utensils
- ✎ Household cleaning supplies
- ✎ Men's & women's clothing for job interviews (especially need larger sizes)



Employee Anniversaries!

We honor and thank our staff who reached significant milestones of service this Spring

20 YEARS
Betty Akau

15 YEARS
Sammi Rafael

10 YEARS
Beverly Domingo,
Georgine Panui,
Carmen Fola
Neal McFeeley

5 YEARS
Gina Labra,
Leiann Vicari,
Angela Kaaloa

Monetary Donations

We welcome your donations to HCAP or to a specific program.

✎ Donations may be sent to:

Honolulu Community Action Program, Inc.
33 S. King St. Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96813

District Centers (call 521-4531)

- ✎ Clothing
- ✎ Hygiene supplies

Volunteer Time (call 521-4531)

- ✎ Please call our main office if you would like to volunteer or help out in any way.



Second-graders from Kaimuki Christian School organized a food drive for HCAP's Leahi district



HCAP is proud to be a partner agency of Aloha United Way

Our designation number is **70250**

www.auw.org



MAIN OFFICE:

33 S. King Street, Suite 300, Honolulu, HI 96813
Tel: (808) 521-4531 Fax: (808) 521-4538
Email: hcap@hcapweb.org

DISTRICT CENTERS:

For help with jobs, finances, family support, or questions about our programs, call the District Center nearest you.

LEEWARD

Tel: 696-4261 Fax: 696-0169
85-555 Farrington Hwy. Waianae, HI 96792

CENTRAL

Tel: 488-6834 Fax: 488-7862
99-102 Kalaloa St. Aiea, HI 96701

KALIHI-PALAMA

Tel: 847-0804 Fax: 841-7971
1555 Haka Dr. #2408 Honolulu, HI 96817

LEAHI

Tel: 732-7755 Fax: 735-6034
1915 Palolo Ave. Honolulu, HI 96816

WINDWARD

Tel: 239-5754 Fax: 239-3912
47-232 Waihee Rd. Kaneohe, HI 96744

HCAP HEAD START:

For affordable preschool care and support & skills for parents, call us at:

HEAD START KAPALAMA (KMR)

Tel: 847-2400
Fax: 847-2302

HEAD START KUNIA

Tel: 621-5099
Fax: 621-3842



PROGRAMS:

YOUTH SERVICES

Tel: 591-1766 Fax: 591-1768

SENIOR EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (SCSEP)

Tel: 521-4531 Fax: 521-4538

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE (WAP-ARRA)

Tel: 521-4531 Fax: 521-4538

KUMUHONUA TRANSITIONAL SHELTER

Tel: 682-5494 Fax: 682-5495

MALAMA PONO

(Mentoring Children of Prisoners)

Tel: 239-5754 Fax: 239-3912

Please visit our website!

www.hcapweb.org



Honolulu Community Action Program

33 S. King Street, Suite 300

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Promise of Community Action



Community action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.