



## HFPA Conference Provides Valuable Support to Foster Parents

**T**he 9<sup>th</sup> Annual HFPA Foster Care conference, held at the Sheraton Waikiki on Thursday, October 7, 2004 was attended by nearly 500 foster parents, social workers and other service providers. Comments from conference attendees include:

- \* *"All the speakers were interesting and provocative, especially Pat O'Brien. I can now see a different way of working with teens and hope the system can, too."*
- \* *"I appreciated the time to network with others and to get reacquainted with past contacts and foster parents."*
- \* *"Michaela's presentation was very moving, but I was able to hold all my tears until the end."*
- \* *"I gleaned information not only from the speakers, but from other foster parents at the conference."*
- \* *"I learned that a child needs a permanent home for life, not just a place to stay and learn ILP skills to go out on his/her own."*



Michaela Alexander held the audience spellbound as she told her personal story and the importance of foster parents who made an unconditional, lifelong commitment to her through adoption at age 17.

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Foster Care Training	Hawaii Foster Youth	National Resource Center for Foster Care	Milici Valenti Ng Pack

(Conference Supporters Acknowledged—Continued from page 1)

**W**e thank everyone who supported, attended, volunteered or otherwise made the conference a success, including the following:

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Conference attendees enjoy lunch and a time to meet others and share stories of their fostering experiences.

***The mission of HFPA is to educate, support and nurture caregivers, empowering them to provide quality care to children in Hawaii affected by foster care.***

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Sarah T. Casken, *Editor*

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Michael Troy, HFGA Board President and MC at the conference, emphasizes a point as he outlines the agenda for the day's events.



Conference chair Judith Wilhoite pauses for a moment with Lt. Governor Duke Aiona and keynote speaker Pat O'Brien.

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## Hawaii Children's Justice Centers Provide Services for Children

*Judy Lind, Statewide Director*



Many of the children in foster care because of having been sexually abused come to one of the Children's Justice Centers to be interviewed. These centers, part of the state Judiciary, are located in Honolulu, Hilo, Kona, Lihue and Wailuku.

When a report of child sexual abuse is made, the child is brought to the center. Specially trained detectives and social workers conduct the interviews. We also have consultants who interview the very young children and those with special needs. A videotape is made of the interview so that the information can be provided to anyone with a "need to know" and to assure that the process is transparent and neutral. It also prevents the child from having to tell his or her story over and over again.

Interviewing children is difficult, particularly about abuse, and especially when they may have been told to keep it a secret. Children tell because they want the abuse to stop but they often love the abuser and don't want him or her to get in trouble. Often they have been receiving special attention or gifts to keep the silence and don't want to lose that. So, some children may initially

hint at abuse but then be reluctant to give details. Others may need to have more than one interview in order to feel comfortable enough to tell what happened. The centers are very child friendly and we find that kids like coming here and do not mind returning if it is necessary.

There's a mistaken belief that children should only be interviewed one time. That is not really true; what is true is that they should be interviewed by the same person if a second interview is necessary. For young children, the first visit may be a short visit, providing an opportunity for the child to get familiar with the surroundings. A second visit may be necessary to conduct the actual interview and that is OK. For other children, they may not feel comfortable disclosing (telling their story). For those children, when there is a strong belief that something may have occurred, it is preferable to put the child into specialized counseling until they feel safe enough to disclose. Children are different with different needs and the system has the flexibility to accommodate that.

Recantation (changing the story and saying that the previously-disclosed abuse didn't really happen) can often occur even when the abuse is substantiated. Children feel responsible for what happens after the abuse is disclosed and can be blamed by family members for getting the perpetrator "in trouble." It is important to stress to the child that he or she is not responsible for what the adult did and that a child cannot stop an adult from doing something. Research shows that understanding who is to "blame" predicts the child's eventual healing and adjustment. Those children who know they were the victim and not at fault do better than those children who continue to be blamed and feel responsible.

Foster parents' provide



# EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

**Gear Up Hawaii  
Get a Goal. Get a Life.  
Get College!**



**G**EAR UP Hawai'i's mission is to encourage more of Hawai'i's youth, particularly those in low-income communities, to have high expectations, stay in school, study hard and take the courses that will enable them to have the choice to go to college.

GEAR UP's approach is unique and complements existing programs. GEAR UP Hawai'i uses a two-pronged approach:

- **School-based Services:** Including professional development for math and language arts teachers, standards-based tutoring for students and activities that increase parent & family involvement.
- **Individual Student Support:** Students at all 32 GEAR UP middle schools are eligible to participate in the GEAR UP Scholars program if they meet the necessary academic and behavioral requirements.

For more information on planning for college, visit their website at: [www.gearup.hawaii.edu](http://www.gearup.hawaii.edu)

For information on enrolling your middle school student in the Scholars Program, e-mail to: [gearup@cba.hawaii.edu](mailto:gearup@cba.hawaii.edu)

**Other contact information:**

Telephone: (808) 956-3879

Toll-Free (Neighbor Islands): 1-866-808-4327

Fax: (808) 956-9685

## **Search Engine for Scholarships**

College Connections Hawaii ([www.collegeconnections.org](http://www.collegeconnections.org)) has recently launched a search engine for local scholarships. This free search can help students find funding to pay for college costs. The database includes hundreds of different scholarship opportunities that are relevant to Hawaii students. All you need to do is go to the site and click on Scholarship Search. You will be asked to create a user name and a password. You can then begin your search.



## Scholarship Opportunities for Youth in or formerly in Foster Care



### Hawaii Community Foundation

The **Hawaii Community Foundation** is accepting scholarship applications for the 2005-2006 academic year. Applicants must be residents of Hawaii attending an accredited two- or four-year college or university here or on the mainland. All applications must be *postmarked by March 1, 2005*. There are many scholarships available.

The **Victoria S. and Bradley L. Geist Foundation** provides financial assistance to students currently or formerly in the foster care system. Verification of foster care status is required. There is no minimum GPA requirement and no deadline, so you can apply at any time. However, you are strongly encouraged to *apply by March 1*, as processing time takes 2 to 3 months. Scholarships increase in amount in year, based on satisfactory progress.

**Ho'omaka Hou Scholarships** are for students who have turned their lives around after facing difficulties or major crisis in the past. Students must demonstrate financial need and enroll in a degree-seeking or certification program in Hawaii. Applications are accepted year-round but applicants are strongly encouraged to *apply no later than March 1* to meet fall semester payment deadlines.

**Vocational Education Scholarships** are available to Hawaii residents enrolled in vocational programs at Honolulu Community College or Kapiolani Community College.

For the scholarships listed above, please call (808) 566-5570 or toll-free (888) 731-3863 for an application, or visit HCF's website at [www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org](http://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org).



### National Foster Parent Association

The **National Foster Parent Association (NFPA)** offers scholarships for foster youth who wish to further their education beyond high school, including college or university studies, vocational and job training, and correspondence courses, including GED. Visit their website at [www.nfpainc.org](http://www.nfpainc.org) or request for an application from: NFPA Scholarship Committee, 7512 Stanich Ave., #6, Gig Harbor, WA 98335. Scholarship applications must be *postmarked by March 31st*.



Check out the HCPA website at [www.hawaiifosterparent.org](http://www.hawaiifosterparent.org) for upcoming events, free tickets and informational articles. New postings are added on a regular basis.

## Scholarships Offered by the Orphan Foundation ([www.orphan.org](http://www.orphan.org))

*"I would like to thank you so much for establishing this scholarship. It has helped me to accomplish goals that I didn't imagine I could attain. I have a mentor, whose name is Renee. She encourages me a lot and I know that I will always have a friend in her. I send you my biggest "Mahalo" (thank you) to the Orphan Foundation for making it possible for me to accomplish my goals. I am so grateful to you all, and thank you for believing in me."*

*~ Yuki Lei,  
Honolulu Community  
College, HI*

### OFA-sponsored Scholarships

There are several scholarship programs for students who are currently in foster care or were in foster care at the time of their high school graduation and/or 18th birthday and who are entering their sophomore, junior or senior year as a full-time student at a four-year college or university. For more information, please contact [scholarships@orphan.org](mailto:scholarships@orphan.org).

### Male Students of Color in Post-secondary Education



([http://www.orphan.org/casey\\_family\\_scholarships.html](http://www.orphan.org/casey_family_scholarships.html))

This nonrenewable scholarship of up to \$5,000 is available to minority male students from now until the scholarship fund is expended. Applicants must verify their status as having aged out of the foster care system and be graduating in good standing from an accredited vocational or technical training program, college or university in 2005. Visit the website, call at 1-571-203-0270 or email

[scholarships@orphan.org](mailto:scholarships@orphan.org).

### Casey Family Scholars/Orphan Foundation (open to non-Casey youth, too)

This program provides scholarships of up to \$10,000 a year to young people who spent at least

# HFPA Executive Director Receives National Award

**S**enator Daniel Inouye recently honored Sarah Casken, the HFPA executive director, with an *Angels in Adoption* national award.

Angels in Adoption is a national, bipartisan awards program sponsored by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption. This event raises congressional awareness about the thousands of foster children in this country, and the millions of children around the world in need of permanent, safe and loving homes.

Each year, members of Congress select an individual from their state to receive this national recognition for their work in the field of adoptions

and permanency for children. Senator Inouye recognized Sarah for making a difference in the lives of children and the organizations that support them. A national awards ceremony was held in



Sarah Casken thanks conference audience for its acknowledgment of her national Angels in Adoption award.

## Around the World in an Evening



**T**he "Around the World in an Evening" wine tasting fundraiser for the Hawaii Foster Parent Association was enjoyed by a crowd of over 95 people at the Indigo Restaurant on November 10<sup>th</sup>. A wide variety of wines was featured by M & S Brokerage and wonderful, gourmet food was provided by Indigo's Chef Glenn Chu.

Raffle tickets were sold throughout the evening and the winning raffle numbers were drawn as the evening came to a close. Our donors included **Hawaiian Airlines, Westin Seattle, Sheraton Keauhou, Westin Maui, Sheraton Hotels in Waikiki and Tea at 1024**. Many thanks to our generous donors for supporting HFPA's commitment to providing education and support to foster parents in Hawaii.



Chieh Fu Lu, Joe and Elena Chan, David and Ellie Lundquist, and Steve Lim sampled the delicious food and wines served at HFPA's fundraiser at Indigo Restaurant.



# SERVICES AND FUNDING AVAILABLE TO YOUTH

Lee Dean, Program Development  
Department of Human Services

**Independent Living Services Providers (ILSP)** are available on all islands to assist youth in foster care prepare for life after foster care and to continue to provide support for youth formerly in foster care. ILSP provide valuable support for youth in higher education and can help the youth develop the needed independent living transition plans and be the payee for the higher education benefit.

## **Providers:**

**Kauai** - Child and Family Services (240-2831)

**Oahu** - Hale Kipa (589-1829x202)

**Maui** - Maui Youth and Family Services (579-8414)

**East & West Hawaii** - Salvation Army Family Intervention Services (935-4411).



## **What services are available to youth after foster care?**

Youth may be eligible for the following services if the youth was in foster care with the Department of Human Services (DHS) when he or she turned eighteen and completed high school or was in foster care with DHS when another agency or person was granted permanent custody or legal guardianship.

**Higher Education Board Allowance:** Benefit - \$529 per month until age 22, if eligibility criteria are met. **Criteria** - apply within 1 year after completing high school; attend an accredited institution of higher learning (academic or vocational); sign an application/agreement and provide documentation of enrollment, attendance and grades; attend school and make progress to completing the program. After the end of each session the youth must provide grade reports and sign an agreement for the next session. Youth must also apply for scholarships and grants including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Bradley & Victoria Geist Scholarship.

**Education and Training Voucher (ETV):** Benefit - Federal guidelines allow up to \$5,000 per year toward the cost of attendance at an accredited institution of higher learning. This can include tuition, room & board, books, clothing, transportation and other expenses directly related to the cost of attendance. If youth is receiving ETV on 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, may continue to be eligible until age 23. **Criteria:** Meet eligibility criteria for DHS higher education board allowance program, with one exception: youth who would have been eligible but did not apply for the higher education board allowance within one year of completing high school may apply for ETV. Complete an application that includes documentation of the "cost of attendance," enrollment, financial awards, grants and loans, and a personalized independent living transition plan that includes a budget and plan for successful completion of the planned education.

**Medical coverage:** After leaving foster care, the youth is eligible to receive individual medical coverage. When foster care benefits are terminated, the youth's name, address and employment information will be provided to MedQuest (MQD) which will send the youth an application for continued medical. This must be completed and returned to MQD or coverage will terminate.

# Mahalo to Our Partners

Thank you for partnering with us to make a difference!

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### Builder (\$100 to \$249)

- Ruth Baldino
- Emmanuel Episcopal Church
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- Victor Kimura

- Lari Koga
- Lorna Kunishige
- David Lundquist
- Jean McIntosh
- William A. Santos

### Provider (\$250 - \$499)

- Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition

### Healer (\$500 - \$1,499)

- Foodland's Give Aloha Campaign
- The Mark and Debi Roling Foundation  
*in honor of Sarah T. Casken*
- Sam's Club Foundation

### Advocate (\$1,500 - \$4,999)

- AdoptUSKids
- Visitor Industry Charity Walk

### Visionary (\$5,000)

- Schuler Family Foundation

### Kokua in Kind

- Barbara Luksch



## Birth Announcement:

"HFPA joins our graphic artist, Betty Dumas and her husband, Marc, daughter Tyler Joy and dog Tucker, in celebrating the birth of their daughter, Cameron Michelle."



Hawaii Foster Parent Association  
PMB 261, 111 Hekili St., Suite A, Kailua, HI 96734

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Yes, please send me the next four quarterly newsletters, mailed directly from the HFPA office.

❖ This gift will be acknowledged in the HFPA Bulletin unless requested otherwise.



## Winter Break Program Offered

The Central Union Church's "Kids Night Out," normally held on the last Friday of the month, will not be held in December, due to the holidays. However, there will be Adventure Bible Camp starting on the 20th and running till the 31st with half days on both Fridays. It's an all day program running from 7:30 to 5:00 at a cost of \$25 per day. The morning is rotated between group worship, singing, crafts and games, with the afternoon of quiet time, free play, special presentations and ending the day with Veggie Tales. This program is open to children ages 3 1/2 through the sixth grade. Registration is already underway and space is limited. Call Ron Williams at





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This would be a good place to insert a short paragraph about your organization. It might include the purpose of the organization, its mission, founding date, and a brief history. You could also include a brief list of the types of products, services, or programs your organization offers, the geographic area covered (for example, western U.S. or European markets), and a profile of the types of customers or members served.

Return Service Requested

It would also be useful to include a contact name for readers who want more information about the organization.



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