

Speaker Information

Antonia Alvarez has a Master's in Social Work Community Organizing from the University of Michigan and a BA from Oberlin College in Theatre and Studio Art. Antonia is the Director of the Youth Suicide and Bullying Prevention Project at Mental Health America of Hawai'i as well as the Training and Education Coordinator on the Hawai'i chapter of the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN). In her spare time, she loves to play music.

Crystal Brown is a former foster youth who graduated from Chaminade University of Honolulu with her B.A. in Psychology with a Minor in English. She will enter the School of Social Work Graduate Program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in the fall and recently received the 2013 Mental Health of America Hawai'i's Outstanding Youth Mental Health Consumer Advocate award. Crystal continues to strive towards her goals and dreams with the hopes of continuing to serve youth and lead them down a path where they too can reach great accomplishments.

Paula Fuga is a musician on a mission! She is a former foster youth who shares her powerful story of overcoming obstacles of homelessness, abuse and neglect in hopes of inspiring and igniting passion in the generations to come. For the youth of Hawai'i, Paula is a beacon of hope sharing the healing powers of forgiveness and love and a shining example of possibility for youth who are learning to believe in themselves.

Hawai'i Foster Youth Coalition (HFYC) is a "Youth Led" Organization comprised of former and current foster youth from the ages of 14 to 24 currently living in the state of Hawai'i. The HFYC's board includes current and former foster youth as well as tireless advocates for the rights and well beings of foster youth in Hawai'i.

HI H.O.P.E.S. (Hawai'i Helping Our People Envision Success) This Youth Leadership Board is made up of current and former foster youth between the ages of 14-25. They provide the "youth voice" for the Hawai'i Youth Opportunities Initiative ("HYOI"), a Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, to identify the needs of and advocate on behalf of transition-aged foster youth.

Lehua Kaopio aged out of foster care in 2011. She graduated from High School as a Kamehameha Scholar, received the Urban Corps Outstanding Achievement Award in 2011 and was chosen as a FosterClub 2012 Outstanding Young Leader. She is currently attending Kapiolani Community College with a goal of working in the medical field. She dreams of one day developing a multicultural healing center by combining alternative medical practices and techniques from her own culture with Western medicine.

Malia Malufau is a former foster youth and mother to a beautiful 10 year old girl. Malia graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa with a Bachelor's in Political Science and a certificate in Ethnic Studies. She has just started a new chapter in her life as a full time mother.

Patricia McManaman, Director of Hawai'i Department of Human Services, has practiced law in Hawai'i for over 30 years. She has served as a per diem judge in the District Court and Family Court of the First Circuit. The director is a huge advocate for foster children and youth in Hawai'i. She was instrumental in the passing of SB 1340 Act 252, the new law that extends foster care to age 21 in Hawai'i.

Judge Paul Murakami a judge of the O'ahu First Circuit Family Court of Hawai'i with a strong interest in foster youth's outcomes. Prior to his appointment, Murakami had a private practice specializing in family law and criminal defense.

Victoria Rowell is an American actress and dancer and a former foster youth. She is best known for her portrayal of Drucilla Winters on the CBS daytime drama 'The Young and the Restless, and medical examiner/pathologist Dr. Amanda Bentley on the CBS drama Diagnosis: Murder. Victoria has created an organization, Rowell Foster Care, to help foster youth reach their goals as well as published a memoir of her life, 'The Women Who Raised Me, which focuses on her time in foster care.

Jennifer Marie K. Torres is resource caregiver (foster parent), adoptive parent and a former foster youth with a passion to give back, "pay it forward" and make positive changes in our foster system. She is the program coordinator for Ho'ololi mua no ke ola Senior Program (HSP) with Family Programs Hawai'i in Hilo and a facilitator for PRIDE/HANAI trainings with Catholic Charities Hawai'i.

Kintaro Yonekura is a former foster youth who received his Bachelor in Social Work and is currently working on his Masters in Social Work degree at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Kintaro sits on the Board of Directors for the Life Foundation, gives motivational speeches and training to foster youth and works with intermediate and high school youth doing presentations about HIV and AIDS.

Gerald Yutob is former foster youth who is currently enrolled at Leeward Community College with plans to double major in Culinary Arts as well as Social Work. He is Gernani Yutob's younger brother and an active Board Member of the Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition. He hopes to start his own foundation to help kids off the streets, foster youth and orphans. He was inspired by the Bruce Wayne Enterprise from the movie, 'The Dark Knight Rises.

Gernani Yutob, Jr. is a former foster youth and the president of the HI H.O.P.E.S. Youth Leadership Board on O'ahu. He recently graduated from the University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu in Spring 2013 with a B.A. in Public Administration, concentration Justice Administration, with Academic Distinction. He now works with the Youth Circle program for EPIC 'Ohana, Inc., to help foster youth plan for bright futures.

