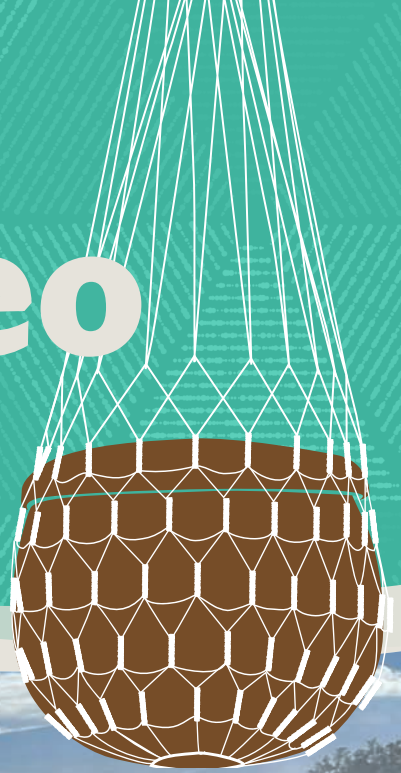


# ‘Umeke Kā‘eo

*A well-filled calabash, a well-filled mind.*

HAWAI‘I LAND TRUST NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 13, NUMBER 1 | SPRING 2023



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HAWAI‘I LAND TRUST



# HAWAI'I LAND TRUST

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'Umeke Kā'eo is the newsletter of Hawai'i Land Trust, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization committed to land conservation in Hawai'i.

As a Hawai'i organization, we encourage our entire community to learn more about the Hawaiian language. Should you come across a Hawaiian word or term you don't understand in our newsletter, please visit [wehewehe.org](http://wehewehe.org) or email [info@hilt.org](mailto:info@hilt.org) for more information.

**Hawai'i Land Trust**  
126 Queen St., Ste 306  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 744-AINA (2462)  
[www.hilt.org](http://www.hilt.org)



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Cover Photo: Maui Huliau Foundation coordinated a professional development session at Waihe'e Refuge with King Kekaulike faculty and administrators. The teachers became the students for a day and enjoyed learning through aloha 'āina to experience connectivity to Hawai'i.

## FROM THE CEO

# Aloha e ka 'ohana HILT,

I am 'Olu Campbell, the new President and Chief Executive Officer of Hawai'i Land Trust. I am from Kaimukī, O'ahu, where I also currently live with my 'ohana. I come to HILT from the Kamehameha Schools where I had the privilege to serve Native Hawaiians and Hawai'i's community in the Strategy & Transformation, Community & Government Relations team. I have made a personal commitment to work to improve the health and wellbeing of Hawai'i and our people and I am thrilled for the opportunity to continue that work in this new role.

I joined HILT's team in February, as prior CEO, Laura Kaakua, took the amazing opportunity to help lead the State's Department of Land and Natural Resources. As such, the first quarter of 2023 has been highlighted by our transition, which I am happy to report has gone smoothly. I feel privileged to enter this role with a diverse, sophisticated board, high-performing, experienced team, and broad network of community partners and supporters. Through our collective efforts, HILT is poised to continue growing our ecological and social impact.

In the next few years, we anticipate closing an unprecedented list of fee and conservation easement acquisitions. We are also growing our 'āina and education teams to ensure we provide exemplary ecological and cultural stewardship and 'āina-based learning at our community preserves and beyond. I recognize that our incredible network of donors and supporters makes this possible. For that, I thank each and every one of you for trusting our organization and believing in its vision - I ola ka 'āina, i ola kākou nei; Hawai'i's lands thrive and nourish its people.

*With gratitude and aloha,*

'Olu Campbell  
*President & Chief Executive Officer*



# Honoring Our Loved Ones

Over the last several months Hawai'i Land Trust suddenly lost people who have been an important part of our 'ohana and story. We are deeply saddened by their loss yet are eternally grateful to them, as they will continue to influence and guide us as we remember the lessons and stories they shared.

## Patricia "Patti" Ann Kalaniokahaunani Solomon



On November 1, 2022, heaven gained another angel as Patti Ann made her transition to the heavens in the peace of her home surrounded by her 'ohana, the Kohala community, and her voyaging 'ohana from around the Pacific and the world.

HILT was doing something right by having one of Kohala's treasured kūpuna on staff, humbly serving as Mahukona's 'Āina Steward and Educator. Prior to HILT, Patti Ann worked for Kohala Surety and as security for Kohala Middle School. She was a treasure to the community as a member of Kohala Hawaiian Civic Club; Nā Kālai Wa'a; Kawaihae Canoe Club; Ke Kuahiwi A Me Ke Moana Hunting Club; Protect Pololū; Friends of Keokea; Friends of Mahukona; and Kupuna Board Member of Mālama Pono.

In true Hawaiian fashion, Aunty Marie and Uncle Sonny Solomon, Patti Ann's parents who were caretakers of Mahukona holding generational connections and stories of that place and its cultural sites, handed off this kuleana to their daughter. Patti Ann has provided Kohala, HILT, and Nā Kālai Wa'a a solid foundation and leaves us all with the strength and wisdom of her 'ohana who we are humbled to continue to work with on this special Protection effort, to protect and steward Mahukona for generations to come – Ka Makani 'Āpa'apa'a.

## Patrick Charles Fisher



Pat Fisher of Kula passed away on February 14, 2023. Pat and his brothers Mike and, Director of 'Āina Stewardship, Scott Fisher grew up in Kula, Maui. Pat, who had been a wildlife biologist mentored his younger brother, Scott, in restoring habitat at Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge, benefiting the Hawaiian waterbird population there.

From a very young age, Pat loved the outdoors, and his real passions were fishing and hunting. Pat graduated from Colorado State University with a bachelor's degree in wildlife biology and started Hawai'i Safaris, a hunting and fishing outfitting business on Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Hawai'i Island, as well as several states on the continent, in 1992. His passion for hunting and fishing was matched by his love for Hawai'i's native ecosystems which led him to serve on the board of the Hawai'i Island Land Trust when he lived in Waimea on Hawai'i Island. Pat's humor and ability to make everyone feel at ease were among his greatest traits.

Pat served on the board of the Hawai'i Island Land Trust for three years until he moved back home to Maui in 2009. Pat continued to support the Land Trust by generously donating guided deer hunts on Maui and Moloka'i for the annual Buy Back the Beach Lū'au auction. Pat leaves behind his wife Tobi, three children, Emalia, Chaz, and Zach, and two grandchildren, Kanoa and James.

## Betty Hay Freeland



Sorrowfully, in March 2023, Betty Hay Freeland passed away on Maui, Hawai'i. Betty Hay was mother to Denby Freeland, HILT's Director of 'Āina Education. Betty Hay was born in Kohala on the island of Hawai'i and moved to O'ahu at twelve years old to pursue a better education when she enrolled herself at Kamehameha Schools in Honolulu. She boarded at Kamehameha Schools and later graduated from Punahou. After college, Betty Hay returned to the Islands and she and her husband Keoki Freeland raised their three children in the sugar plantation town of Waipahu, O'ahu. They moved to Lāhainā, Maui in 1985 when Keoki transferred to Pioneer Mill. Family memories were often captured by Betty Hay who always brought her easel and her camera to the many family vacations, hikes, and while exploring the islands with family and friends.

Betty Hay loved painting outdoors on location and was a prolific artist of Hawaiian landscapes for over six decades. Her original oil paintings hang in countless collections throughout Hawai'i and the world. Her stunning interpretations of our unique Hawaiian islands will continue to be everlasting.

Betty Hay was first led to HILT's Nu'u Refuge when she wanted to feature an area that the public was not aware of for a particular art show in 2016. She described her time at Nu'u noting, "I love big, expansive landscapes." Betty Hay also created several paintings of Waihe'e Refuge over the years. Betty Hay was a true artist whose talent, grace, and elegance will be dearly missed.

KUAHAUA

# Perpetuating Traditions of our Kūpuna

O ke kahua mamua, mahope ke kūkulu.

The site first, then the building.  
Learn all you can, then practice.

*‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings, No. 2459*

At Hawai‘i Land Trust’s community preserves on Hawai‘i Island, Kaua‘i, Maui, and O‘ahu, indigenous knowledge is passed on to the next generation and cultural practice is perpetuated. Hawaiians access shorelines their ancestors fished to feed their families, hula hālau and others gather foliage for lei, chanting requests for permission to their gods or goddesses, hundreds of school children are inspired by the genius and ways of the people who settled in these islands over 1,000 years ago. The teaching and practice of cultural traditions at our community preserves is one means to create, or reestablish, connection to ‘āina. It is through this connection that we as a people discover purpose, reach for wellbeing, and contemplate our significance.

In studies exploring the benefits of ‘āina-based, or place-based, education, the passing of indigenous knowledge from elder to child was a key component leading to favorable outcomes. Increasing data is proving what our great grandparents already knew – take care of the land and it will take care of you. Here are some of the ways our ‘āina stewards are perpetuating cultural practice and growing the next generation of kahu ‘āina.

On this page the Maunawila ‘Ōpio work work with kūkulu hale practitioners to build a traditional hale in Hau‘ula, O‘ahu.



## Kūkulu Hale at Maunawila Heiau Complex, Hau'ula O'ahu

In building hale, we build community. Last summer our Maunawila 'Ōpio, a group of 15 high school juniors and seniors and college freshmen embarked on an ambitious project, to build a traditional hale, or structure, in just five weeks. The group was led by hale builder, Tiana Henderson, who learned under Francis Palani Sinenci, the only certified Kuhikuhi Pu'uone, or master hale builder, in the Islands today. Tiana, through her company Indi-Genius Minds, held community and school workshops in the months leading up to the construction of the hale to allow the entire community an opportunity to explore the various skills required for traditional hale building. The community learned how to identify and gather building materials from loulou, hau, and ironwood, how to prepare the wood that would eventually become scaffolding, posts, and beams, how to prepare and dry the loulou fronds that become the thatching, how to strip bark to create material for cordage, how to make cordage, how to use that cordage to secure beams to posts, and much, much more. The work is hard, but when done together as a community, the burden is lightened and we can have fun with each other. The many hands that participated in building the hale have contributed to building a stronger, more resilient community. We look forward to building a second, larger hale in 2023 where Hau'ula kūpuna will have a space to teach skills, share stories, and reconnect with each other. We are grateful to the City & County of Honolulu and Hawai'i Tourism Authority for supporting our 'āina-based education activities at Maunawila Heiau Complex

## Learning to Kilo at Kūkūau Community Forest, Hilo, Hawai'i, and Kāhili Beach Preserve, Kīlauea, Kaua'i

Our newest community preserve, Kūkūau Community Forest in Hilo, Hawai'i Island isn't available to the public yet. We still need to build an access road before we can begin welcoming members of the community to participate in 'āina-based programming there. In the

meantime, we observe. Ulumauahi Keali'ikanaka'oleohaililani is HILT's Kūkūau 'Āina Steward and Educator. His work for the last 6 months has included drafting a Forest Stewardship Plan. To do that well, one must practice kilo 'āina. Kilo means to observe or be observant, and 'āina means land. When our ancestors were introduced to, or conquered, new land the first thing they would do is kilo 'āina and kilo lani. The land that we care for is very old, yet so new to us, and that we need to introduce ourselves to the natives of the forest. For Ulu, the natives of the forest are non-invasive insects, plants, and animals. Noting that even we, as humans, can be considered invasive to our native forest ecosystems. Kilo 'āina allows us to understand and work with the annual cycles of Kūkūau. For example the winter season during Kā'elo, Kaulua, and Nana (January, February, and March) brought storm systems with heavy rains and some heavy snowfall up mauka. Ulu was able to observe how the forest responded to the cooler temperatures, clouds, winds, and rain. These storm systems recharge our aquifers and tributaries which directly affects our livelihood and our environment. Kūkūau forest functions to attract clouds, sequester carbon, absorb and filter water. Thus the ecosystem services that Kūkūau (and all native forests) provide, benefit our environment as well as our people.

At Kāhili Beach Preserve in Kīlauea, Kaua'i, we have a well-established 'āina education program that teaches students as well as families and visitors the art and practice of kilo. Kilo helps bring an understanding that a continual and interactive reciprocal relationship to 'āina and wahi is needed for healthy communities. At Kāhili one of the most obvious and prominent features to kilo are the sea birds that swoop, soar, and swirl in the skies above Kāhili Beach, Mokolea point, and the pu'uone and muliwai zone of Kāhili. We kilo the birds through the seasons, learning the times they arrive and times they leave. Some of the lessons learned from observing the birds include knowing when fish

On this page: I'iwi soar above Kāhili Beach Preserve, Kaua'i. Below: Each day, when our 'āina stewards arrive to their community preserves, they killo, or observe and document, conditions, weather patterns, animals present, and more.



are abundant in the bay, when to keep dogs away from nesting areas, and when one can enjoy the magical experience of a swarm of 'iwa just overhead. Mōlī (laysan albatross) arrive around the start of Makahiki, or about late fall, and leave around the beginning of kauwela, or late spring. Mōlī are particularly vulnerable as they are ground-nesting birds and very dedicated parents, known to remain with an unhatched egg even if harassed by a human or other animal. The koa'e kea (white-tailed tropicbird) display their courtship flight behaviors and calls in springtime and have chicks in their burrows in the summer months. The 'ā (red-footed booby) are very active, fishing in the summer months and appear when fish are in the bay. The 'iwa are most active around Kāhili in the summer months as they gather around the pu'uone to perch on the trees, to drink from the muliwai, and juveniles learn flight maneuvers from the adult birds. There are many juveniles in the summertime, so we know they must have nested and hatched their young during the winter months, when what you see are mostly the adults flying to forage for food. **Learning to kilo connects people intimately with place, which in turn increases the understanding of our collective kuleana to mālama our wahi pana.**

Teachers from King Kekaulike High School receive training in making kaula from ahu'awa collected at Waihe'e Refuge. Photo credit: Maui Huliau Foundation

## Weaving fiber and stone at Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge and Nu'u Refuge, Maui

At Waihe'e and Nu'u Refuges on Maui, we've had the privilege of sharing our sites with multiple school groups this year. Our activities vary between what the teachers are focusing on in their classroom, the ages of the participants, and our always evolving stewardship work onsite. Our programs integrate our cultural history and Hawaiian methods whenever possible. Thanks to the years of volunteer restoration, we are beginning to have certain resources abundant enough for teaching. Occasionally we are able to include the Hawaiian art of kaula, or cordage, in our time. Kaula can be made from different types of plants like hau, ahu'awa, hala, olonā, and more. As students learn the basics of a new skill they become familiar with our Hawaiian plants and their quiet conversations while working leads to acknowledgement of how resourceful our Hawaiian ancestors were. Through this small lesson, students leave with a deeper understanding that the restoration of our native ecosystems are not only valuable to the preservation of our islands, it is vital to the perpetuation of our Hawaiian culture. The small stretch of cordage made into a bracelet, water bottle holder, or other small memento is a lasting reminder of this lesson for participants on their return home.





The fishpond in the Kapoho wetland at Waihe'e Refuge is approximately 800 years old. We are working with community to restore the pond to provide food for our community.



Kia'i Collier, HILT's Maui 'Āina Steward, works together with Kūākea Yasak, a regular volunteer at Waihe'e, to reconstruct the kuapā.

Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge is home to a 27-acre wetland called Kapoho. A little more than 800 years ago, chief Pi'ilani had a loko i'a kalo, or an inland fishpond that grows both taro and fish, built in the wetland. Hundreds of years of history buried the fishpond and its walls. In 2022, Kia'i Collier, our Maui 'Āina Steward, engaged Fred Peleke Flores to learn the skills necessary to restore the kuapā (fishpond wall) and eventually steward a productive loko i'a kalo to benefit the community. Peleke is a recognized resource for the art of uhai humu pohaku, or dry stack wall-building, having dedicated more than 15 years of his life to the tradition. Peleke challenged Kia'i to find members of the Waihe'e-Waiehu community to learn alongside him, developing a group of alaka'i, or leaders, who will eventually be skilled enough to teach the art of uhai humu pohaku to others. Today, if you visit Waihe'e Refuge, you will see the progress – approximately 170 feet of restored wall. This effort will take many years to complete, but in the process we are continuing to develop practitioners who will learn this art and pass it on to the next generation.

# HILT Happenings

## ▶▶▶ Protect

*Hawai'i Land Trust was created by communities around Hawai'i out of a passionate love of natural spaces. Today, HILT prioritizes protecting wahi pana, or cultural landscapes, coastlines, and lands that produce food for Hawai'i's people.*

The loko i'a at Kaumai, Keaukaha, Hawai'i Island serve as an outdoor classroom and farm for the students of Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo Public Charter School.

### **Hawai'i Island**

Over the last several months, HILT has worked with Hui Ho'oleimaluō, local nonprofit landowner and steward, to advance a joint application to secure County of Hawai'i Public Access Open Space and Natural Resources Commission (PONC) funding. The application received a #2 ranking and we are now on to obtaining County Council approval to move forward with the acquisition of a conservation easement over a very rare, cultural and ecological treasure: the fishpond systems at Kaumai, in Keaukaha, Hilo. Hui Ho'oleimaluō provides opportunities for STEAM skill building, place-based learning, and community engagement through the maintenance and management of loko i'a ecosystems. HILT is humbled to support and uplift communities of place to protect, steward, and connect in ways that allow for the transmission of cultural



stewardship practices from one generation to the next. It is this model of land ownership and stewardship that ensures the permanent protection of Hawai'i's lands and natural resources. HILT looks forward to supporting Hui Ho'oleimaluō and project partners in mindful conservation easement drafting and closing the PONC's first-ever acquisition in the Hilo district. The protection and stewardship of Kaunani provides great synergies and connections with HILT's Kūkūau Community Forest, building the resiliency of Hilo's forests and continued ability to capture water and continue water cycles flowing ma kai (towards the ocean).

## Kaua'i & Moloka'i

As inquiries continue to flow our way, HILT's Protect team is exploring unique opportunities better support stewardship of significant coastlines, wahi kupuna, and agricultural lands on Kaua'i and Moloka'i. We look forward to sharing updates in the next newsletter.

Cucumber growing on one of the many farm plots on the proposed 907-acre Waikapū easement in central Maui.

## Maui

'Ōpelu Point was protected for perpetuity in October of 2022! In a collaborative public/private effort, including several County departments, two nonprofits, the Kīpahulu community, and a private landowner worked together to return 'Ōpelu Point, traditionally used to monitor Kīpahulu's fishery, into the hands of the local Kīpahulu community. 'Ōpelu Point is now forever protected by a perpetual conservation easement co-held by Hawai'i Land Trust and the County of Maui. On the westside of Maui, what started as a hope to create and hold space for culture, education, and community in the narrow yet deep valley of Honokohau, is beginning to look like more of a reality after securing County of Maui Open Space funds to purchase, protect, and steward a portion of the Honokohau Bay coastline. More news to come as we explore other sources of funding to protect this wahi pana.

HILT has also continued to advance what will be one of the largest agricultural conservation easement in Hawai'i, protecting and promoting the cultivation of food in the fertile lands of Waikapū.



## O'ahu

HILT continues to work closely with the City & County of Honolulu's Clean Water & Natural Lands Program and landowner and steward, Pacific American Foundation, on due diligence for the purchase of a conservation easement to permanently protect Waikalua Fishponds. We are grateful to the many donors who have contributed to make this project happen and look forward to celebrating with you when it's completed.

Just one ahupua'a over from Waikalua, HILT, in partnership with The Trust for Public Land (TPL), is supporting two local, community based nonprofits, Ho'okua'āina and Kauluakalana, for the purchase and

permanent protection of over 160 acres of fertile agricultural lands in Maunawili. The project was presented before the Board of Land and Natural Resources in advancing applications for State Legacy Land Conservation Program funds. These lands are part of a larger effort to protect 1,000 acres in Maunawili Valley with Hui Maunawili-Kawainui, the State DLNR, and TPL. We are excited to move these special cultural and agricultural projects forward in Ko'olaupoko!

**Learn more about many of our active protection efforts at:** <https://www.hilt.org/active-aina-protection-projects>.

HILT is working with The Trust for Public Land and community partners to protect over 1,000 acres in Maunawili Valley, Kailua, O'ahu. The view in this photograph overlooks Maunawili Valley reaching to the foothills of Olomana.





# Steward

*Stewardship is a very important part of our work at Hawai'i Land Trust. While most often this involves removing invasive species and replacing them with indigenous or endemic plants, our work also involves gaining a better understanding of the threats our special places face and implementing strategies to overcome them.*

HILT's Kūkūau Community Forest in Hilo, Hawai'i.

## Hawai'i

Currently at **Kūkūau Community Forest in Hilo**, we have been focusing our energy on two main objectives: 1) networking and 2) securing funds. Networking with neighboring land owners, state officials, private landowners, 'āina-based, community-led organizations is necessary to create a cohesive and seamless understanding of each other's responsibility as landowners in caring for our native forests. Similarly, securing funds for infrastructure (i.e. access road, kauhale, composting toilet, and storage facility) is crucial to undertake the responsibility of stewarding our native forest. While working with neighboring landowners HILT has been able to secure locally sourced koa seeds to aid in our reforestation efforts at Kūkūau. HILT is also working with the State and Forest Solutions, Inc. on securing a koa seed source that



Above: Keone Emiliano, Ulumauahi Keali'ikanaka'oleohailani, Cameron Healy of the Healy Foundation, and Shae Kamakaala visit a potential project in Niuli'i. Below: 'Iliahi alo'e (*Santalum ellipticum*), a variety of native sandalwood grows at Mahukona.

may be resistant to wilt. The wilt resistant koa ensures a healthy stand for our native ecosystems and our future generations. We are in the very early stages of developing our stewardship plans for Kūkūau Community Forest. Our dedicated staff are enthusiastic about what's to come.

At Mahukona, we are fortunate to have **Keone Emiliano** join the HILT team. Keone was born and raised in Kohala, and has a wealth of knowledge about Mahukona. As Keone familiarizes himself with the management kuleana of working at such a special place, he will be developing a management plan which will help us chart the course for our work at Mahukona for generations to come. Of course, some of the first activities will include working closely with Nā Kālai Wa'a and others from the community to help shape this future. We are very fortunate to have Keone serving in this role.



## Kaua'i

The last several months have seen many opportunities for community stewardship at Kāhili Beach Preserve. We've welcomed school groups from neighboring schools who participate in mālama 'āina activities while learning about native plants and animals, as well as the muliwai and sand dune ecosystems. Community members from all over Kaua'i and some visiting from other places in the world have also contributed to stewardship at Kāhili, clearing invasive species, planting natives, and clearing the beach of litter and ocean debris. One wonderful volunteer has also installed a dog waste bag dispenser and helps us keep it stocked with bags. While we would prefer dogs weren't brought to Kāhili Beach at all (for the peace of mind of our native sea birds), if you must bring your dog, please keep your dog leashed and be sure to take your dog's waste out with you. We would like to send a special mahalo to the families and staff of Hōkūala who participated in a wonderful 'Ohana Day in November. The group took out several Brazilian pepper shrubs, removed tons of other weeds, and planted pōhinahina on the dunes. They were also treated to storytelling by Uncle Gary Smith, one of the original founders of Kaua'i Public Land Trust, responsible for protecting Kāhili Beach in 2003! As the weather warms, we will be keeping an eye out for increased illegal activity at Kāhili Beach Preserve. This includes camping, raves, and "full moon parties."

These activities have often left trash, burning embers, and other inappropriate or unwanted waste at the Preserve and are disturbing to our native birds and sea life. We work closely with the Kaua'i Police Department and the State Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to curb those activities so that the entire community can safely enjoy Kāhili Beach with confidence.

## Maui

**Waihe'e:** Stewardship at Waihe'e has mainly focused on the restoration of the Kapoho fishpond. This fishpond is a type known as a loko i'a kalo where, traditionally, fish were raised with taro. We have formed a new hui called Ka Poholima Kā'eo (the group of dedicated hands), and this group is now part of the statewide loko i'a network. The Po'o (head) of Ka Poholima Kā'eo is Kia'i Collier, and the Alaka'i (leaders) are 'Ulili Quenga, Kealoha Ishikawa, William Anana, and Jobi Miguel. So far 170 feet of kuapā (wall) has been restored, and the plan for this summer is to begin the training for the next group of alaka'i to help with the restoration. All of the alaka'i have gone through basic training for uhaul humu pohaku (traditional Hawaiian dry stack wall building) with Kumu Peleke Flores. For those who might be interested, workdays are on the third Saturday of the month from 8-11 at the loko i'a kalo. **Please contact Kia'i Collier at [Kiai@hilt.org](mailto:Kiai@hilt.org) if you are interested.**

Volunteers from the Montessori School of Maui assist with the planting of a forested bio-shield which will protect the Pūpuka wetland at Nu'u Refuge from inundation and sedimentation by big wave events.



**Nu'u:** As the rains returned to Kaupō in early October, marking the beginning of the ho'oilo, or wet season, HILT staff and volunteers began the annual cycle of planting endemic, indigenous, and Polynesian introduced trees at Nu'u. In the ho'oilo of 2023, we are expanding the suite of plants to include hala, alahe'e, a'ali'i, hao, keahi, 'iliahi'alo, milo, kamani, and kou. With the help of Montessori middle school students, we planted our 320th trees and shrubs in early March!

We anticipate planting about a dozen more trees with our volunteers before the beginning of the kau wela (summer). As evidence for a very large tsunami having hit Nu'u, probably sometime in the 15th or 16th century, grows, we are planting these trees and shrubs in a very precise design pattern to serve as a "forested bio-shield." Our ultimate goal is to protect the Nu'u refuge (especially the Pūpuka pond) from future high energy marine inundation events (storms and tsunamis).

## O'ahu

Stewardship at Maunawila these past few months has mainly included our students at Hau'ula Elementary school from Kindergarten to 6th grade. The students' weekly visits have been a huge help in maintaining and clearing important sites in preparation for our upcoming projects and hale building starting over the summer. Students have been clearing areas, as well as learning new skills using cordage. These skills will be put into



Hau'ula Elementary students at Maunawila Heiau Complex in Hau'ula, O'ahu form a hali hali line to carry stones for the creation of an ahu.

practice as students construct important boundary markers around the Maunawila property, such as buffer lines, gates, and traditional lele, or designated places for ho'okupu (offerings) brought to the Heiau or property. We appreciate the connection we have with the students of Hau'ula Elementary. We look forward to building that relationship stronger as we recognize that the youth of Hau'ula are our future stewards.

Below left: A student participating in the Maunawila Menehune program, an after-school program held weekly for 4th, 5th, and 6th graders, learns to secure beams in a hale using cordage. Below right: Volunteers assist with removing debris from a felled kiawe tree at Pūpuka Pond in Nu'u Refuge.





# ▶▶▶ Connect

*Connection is at the core of all of our work at Hawai'i Land Trust. Our connection work includes our 'āina-based educational programs, Talk Story on the Land hiking series, volunteer days, and many more activities that connect people to the 'āina.*

Above: Students from the Carden Academy of Maui visit Nu'u Refuge. Below: Orange 'ōhi'a Lehua blossoms found at Kūkūau Community Forest.

## Hawai'i Island

Kūkūau Community Forest is still in the very early stages of developing into a community preserve where students, families, and community groups can gather to learn about native forest ecosystems and build reciprocal relationships with 'āina. We have been hard at work developing a Forest Stewardship Plan in partnership with the Hawaii State DLNR Division of Forestry and Wildlife. An immediate concern is securing local sources for seed propagation.





We don't yet have the infrastructure at Kūkūau to propagate native species but what we have been able to do is connect with on-island greenhouse facilities that can propagate the koa and 'ōhia seeds on our behalf. Ulumauahi Keali'ikanaka'oleohaililani, our Kūkūau 'Āina Steward and Educator, developed relationships with FSI Greenhouse (in Kona Hema), 'Aikāne Nursery (in Kohala) and Auntie Aileen Yeh (in Hilo) as they are all potential greenhouse facilities willing to propagate native seeds for us. One of our koa seed sources owns land near Kūkūau and has offered to collect and donate the koa seeds that they have collected for our propagation and out planting at Kūkūau.

Above: Students and their teacher assist with clearing invasive *widelia* from the river bank at Kāhili Beach Preserve.

## Kaua'i

Kāhili Beach Preserve on the north shore of Kaua'i provides ongoing opportunities for people to connect with the site and each other. Thanks to our volunteer days, we get a wide range of people working together – young children to kūpuna, local to visitors. It's interesting to witness people start their morning as strangers and leave inspired by one another's life stories and rejuvenated from their contributions to the area. We hope those with their surfboards and fishing poles recognize that we all benefit from the efforts of our community volunteers and school children. We encourage all to establish a reciprocal relationship with places that provide them with rest, healing, recreation, and inspiration. Join us on our monthly volunteer days on the 1st Sunday of each month! **Sign up online at [www.hilt.org/volunteer](http://www.hilt.org/volunteer).**





Above: Director of 'Āina Education, Denby Freeland, teaches a group of Carden Academy of Maui students about the ki'i pōhaku at Nu'u Refuge. Below: Pā'ia Elementary students learning adaptations of ocean species to their habitats.

## Maui

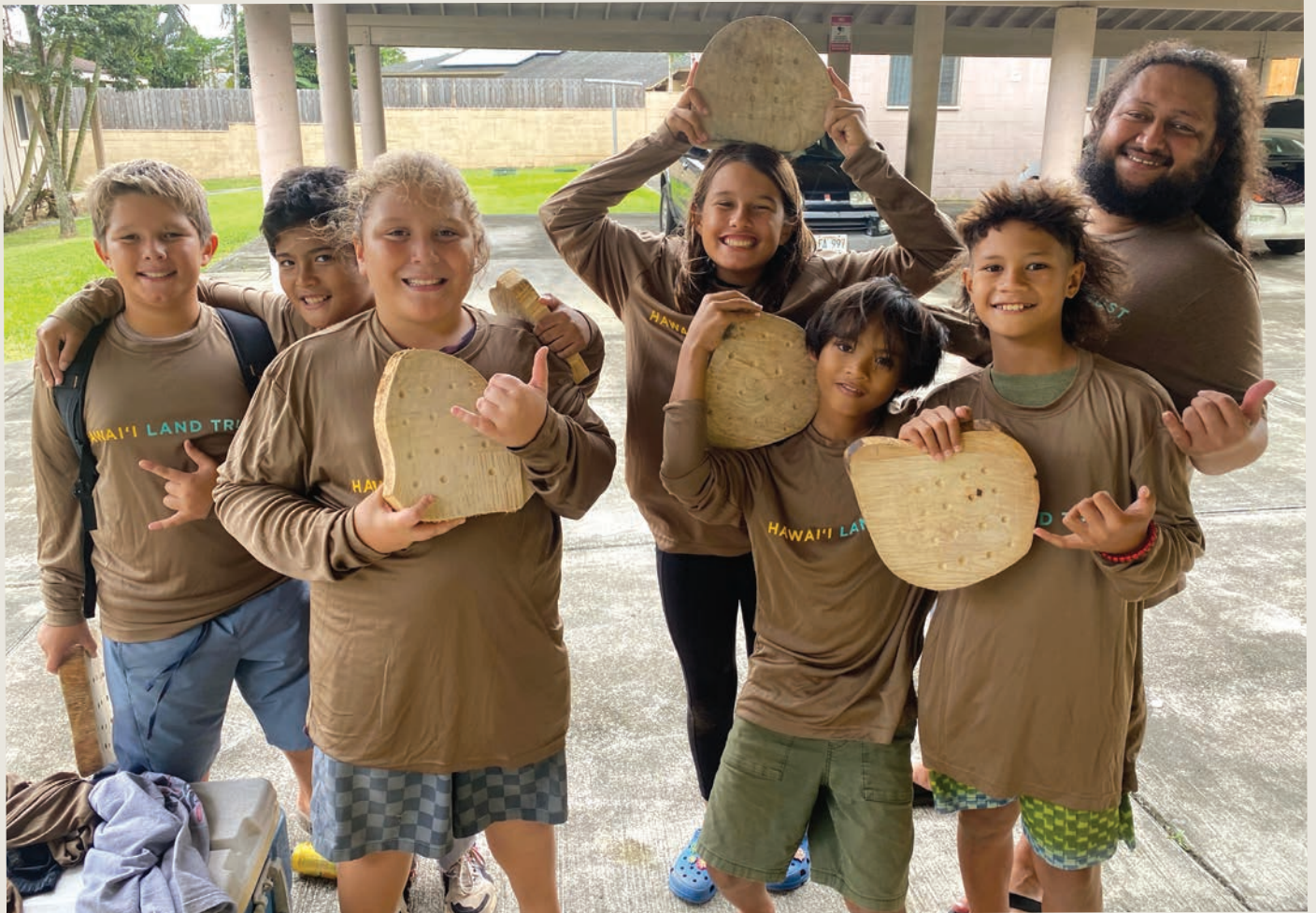
2023 began with a whirlwind of students visiting our Maui sites. We are deeply grateful to all the determined teachers that have persevered through our varying weather conditions to get their students outdoors. We've had the extremes of wind and rain between surprisingly hot days filled with relentless smiles and enthusiasm from kids enjoying their time at Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge and Nu'u Refuge. Out of caution, we had to unfortunately cancel a couple of classes due to extreme weather conditions, but we are determined to reschedule those classes and fit them into our busy calendar. This is the first year the Waihe'e field trip calendar is full and has a wait list! This is a true testament to the power and value of 'āina-based learning. Mahalo to all the Maui schools that bring us your students. It is an honor to work with each of you.



## O‘ahu

Maunawila Heiau Complex renewed its partnership with Hau‘ula Elementary School, where teachers use Maunawila as a satellite classroom. Most recently students have been using kilo, or observation, to get to know themselves better as they build pilina, or relationships, to ‘āina and to each other. Older students are also learning the basics of uhuu humu pohaku with the intention to build a lele, a raised stone platform, where gifts and ho‘okupu can be placed when we have visitors to Maunawila. Students are also learning skills to make and use cordage. These skills will come in handy as we prepare to build our second hale at Maunawila. Students from BYUH, Kahuku High School, a UH Alumni group, and Kinaole, a business owned by a member of the McGregor ‘Ohana, have helped tremendously by clearing the area where the hale will be constructed of invasive species and hau.

Right: Maunawila Menehune learn to use cordage to secure beams for a traditional hale. Below: Maunawila Menehune display the kōnane boards they made using wood collected from trees at Maunawila Heiau complex with Maunawila ‘Āina Steward & Educator, Ewaliko Leota.



# HAWAI‘I LAND TRUST

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## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



# 2022 Highlights & Accomplishments

In 2022, HILT grew its staff by five, protected 230.5 acres on Maui and O'ahu, advanced 10 land conservation projects toward permanent protection in the next two years, and connected thousands of students, residents, and visitors with the land through 'āina-based education, cultural practice, stewardship, and recreational activities. We are thrilled by the building momentum that will ensure the protection and community stewardship of

even more of Hawai'i's coastlines, Hawaiian cultural landscapes, and lands that grow food for Hawai'i's people.

HILT measures its success in advancing its mission through a variety of Protect, Connect, and Steward metrics. We not only track increases in land protection and stewardship, but also student and community engagement and perpetuation of cultural practice.

**50**   
Conservation  
EASEMENTS

**21,903** Acres  
PROTECTED  


**30,000**   
VISITORS  
at HILT Preserves

**6,590**   
COMMUNITY  
Service Hours

**7** Hawai'i Land Trust  
COMMUNITY PRESERVES 

## PROTECT

(Conservation Purchases and Easements):

- Total places protected following HILT's Strategic Land Protection Priorities: **4**
- Total acreage protected in 2022: **230.5**
- Protected **24** acres of prime agricultural lands with Kahumana Organic Farms in Wai'anae, O'ahu
- Partnered with the Hāna community group Ke Ao Hāli'i to protect **32.7** acres of coastal ranchland of great cultural significance at Moka'e, Hāna Coast, Maui
- Coordinated with Hawaiian Memorial Park and Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club on the protection of **156.5** acres of land in Kāne'ohe, O'ahu that will include a cultural preservation area to be stewarded by the Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club providing cultural and educational access
- Returned 'Ōpelo Point to the Kīpahulu community with a conservation easement protecting **9.5** acres in Kīpahulu, Maui
- Advanced the protection of **Waikalua Fishponds Complex** in Kāne'ohe, O'ahu for completion in summer 2023
- Advanced the protection of **Mahukona Cultural and Navigational Complex**, on the Kohala Coast of Hawai'i Island for completion in fall 2023
- Significantly advanced **10** protection projects to close in 2023 through 2025
- Increased capacity to own and steward land in **8** communities

# Protect Highlight: Kahumana Organic Farms

In February of 2022, HILT celebrated the protection and expansion of prime Wai'anae farmland through an agricultural conservation easement, ensuring 24 acres of land will be permanently farmed to grow healthy food for local consumption. This project directly aligned with HILT's conservation priority to protect working farms and ranches that produce healthy food for our communities.

Additionally beneficial to Hawai'i, and the rest of the planet, Kahumana Farms uses regenerative agricultural practices that improve soil health, sequester carbon, and increase the health of the surrounding ecosystem.

The Kahumana Farms agricultural conservation easement is the first completed under HILT's major partnership with the USDA-NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) that began in November 2020. HILT and USDA-NRCS' partnership opens opportunities for HILT to bring home millions of dollars in federal matching funds for the protection of agricultural lands throughout Hawai'i. This partnership, the first of its kind in Hawai'i, provides opportunities for farmers, ranchers, and the possibility of expansion for fishpond stewards to preserve their lands in perpetuity for the production of local foods, with wide ranging impacts including food sustainability, community resilience, and ecological health.

HILT is working on four more exciting agricultural conservation easement projects which we hope to complete in the next two years. Our partners on these projects include Island Harvest, Hawai'i Institute of Pacific Agriculture, and Starseed Ranch in Kohala, Hawai'i and HILT's oldest agricultural conservation easement project, Ke'anae Lo'i Kalo in Ko'olau, Maui. If you are a farmer or rancher who is interested in protecting your land with a perpetual conservation easement, please contact Shae Kamaka'ala, HILT's Director of 'Āina Protection at [shae@hilt.org](mailto:shae@hilt.org).

## STEWARD

(Caring for HILT's Preserves, and Conservation Easement Annual Monitoring):

- Continued implementing the **Climate Change Resiliency Plan** for Waihe'e Coastal Dunes and Wetlands Refuge and began implementation for Kāhili Beach Preserve and Nu'u Refuge
- Planted **336** native and rare plants planted at HILT's preserves
- **1,655** volunteers gave 6,590 hours of stewardship to HILT preserves
- Hosted **125** volunteer days at Waihe'e Refuge, Nu'u Refuge, Veterans Peace Park, Kāhili Beach Preserve, and Maunawila Heiau Complex
- Restored **170** feet of Kapoho Loko I'a Kalo
- Hired **Kūkūau 'Āina Steward and Educator** to begin developing HILT's seventh community preserve: Kūkūau Community Forest, Hilo, Hawai'i
- Provided annual monitoring for **47** Conservation Easements per national standards
- Hosted **3** Community Kilo (observation) Programs at Waihe'e Coastal Dunes and Wetlands Refuge, Kāhili Beach Preserve, and Maunawila Heiau Complex
- Removed invasive plants from **2** acres at Waihe'e Refuge, Nu'u Refuge, Maunawila Heiau Complex, and Kāhili Beach Preserve
- Provided **12** hours of educational outreach to the Kāhili Ocean-user Community at Kāhili Beach Preserve

# Steward Highlight: Restoring Kapoho Loko I'a Kalo

In January of 2022, HILT took the first steps to begin what will be a many years long project to restore the ancient loko i'a kalo in the Kapoho wetlands at Waihe'e Coastal Dunes & Wetlands Refuge. As a landowner along the Waihe'e River, HILT was one of the beneficiaries of the historic Nā Wai 'Ehā Water Rights case - a vital step toward restoring vitality of the community. The vision for the restoration project is to ultimately have a functioning fishpond that can provide a source for both fish and kalo for the community. Kapoho Loko I'a Kalo is an inland fishpond, cultivating both kalo and fish in brackish water. As far as we are aware, this is the only fishpond of its kind in active restoration in the state. We are a culture that honors sustainability and we see fishponds a symbol of the connection between communities, the 'āina, and mo'omeheu. We believe this work, in concert with our other cultural and natural restoration projects, will restore a sense of place-based management and a relationship with the land for all our communities.

Interested in getting involved? Join one of our monthly volunteer days at Waihe'e. Connect with Kia'i Collier, Maui 'Āina Steward at [kiai@hilt.org](mailto:kiai@hilt.org) to learn more.

## CONNECT

(‘Āina Engagement and Education):

- Led **27 Talk Story on the Land Hikes** across the islands, sharing the importance of mālama ‘āina with over 300 participants
- Taught **3,385** students in ‘āina-based education on HILT preserves
- Provided **32** high school and college internships in natural and cultural resource management and land protection
- Welcomed **30,000** visitors to our preserves across Hawai‘i
- Build the first traditional hale in Hau‘ula in **over 100 years** at Maunawila Heiau Complex
- Hosted **1,865** campers at HILT preserves
- **16** ‘āina and kai-based cultural practices perpetuated on HILT’s preserves
- Provided **1** after school youth education programs at Maunawila Heiau Complex
- Partnered with UH Maui College to deliver the **Ahupua‘a Stewards Leadership Program**
- Strengthened **14** community partnerships expanding HILT’s reach with mālama ‘āina partners

# Connect Highlight: The First Traditional Hale Built in Hau‘ula in 100 Years

In the summer of 2022, our Maunawila team brought together a group of 18 high school and college students participating in HILT’s Maunawila ‘Ōpio program, a paid summer internship program. Over five weeks, the ‘Ōpio gathered and prepared the materials for and constructed a hale using traditional techniques and materials. Ironwood posts and hau branches came from on-site and community donations of loulu fronds, use of machinery, and much more made this effort a collaborative success. The ‘Ōpio learned the different stages of kūkulu hale while integrating Hawaiian values like mālama ‘āina. We are grateful to the teachers that shared their ‘ike and to all those that worked together.

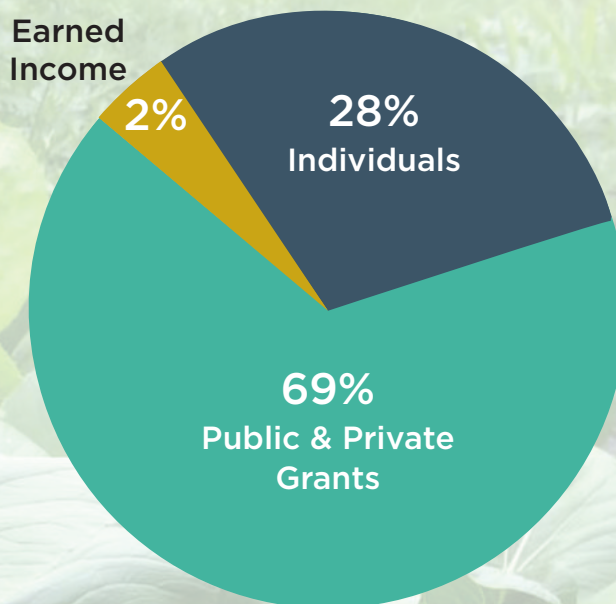
Through building hale at Maunawila, we are building community. Each of the ‘Ōpio are supported by their families to learn and grow while in the program. In turn, the families learn from the ‘Ōpio. Programs like these, held at many HILT community preserves across the state, provide opportunities for individuals and families to connect to ‘āina and come together as a community recognizing our commonalities and strengths.

# Financial Summary

## Combined statement of activities for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2022

In 2022, our income exceeded expenses, and we raised \$2,561,168 for operations and stewardship, enabling HILT to protect and steward over 22,903 acres of land across the state. HILT's efficiency is further demonstrated by the fact that 77 cents for every dollar raised is used directly to advance our conservation mission. The financial results depicted here are from HILT's audited December 31, 2022, consolidated financial statements.

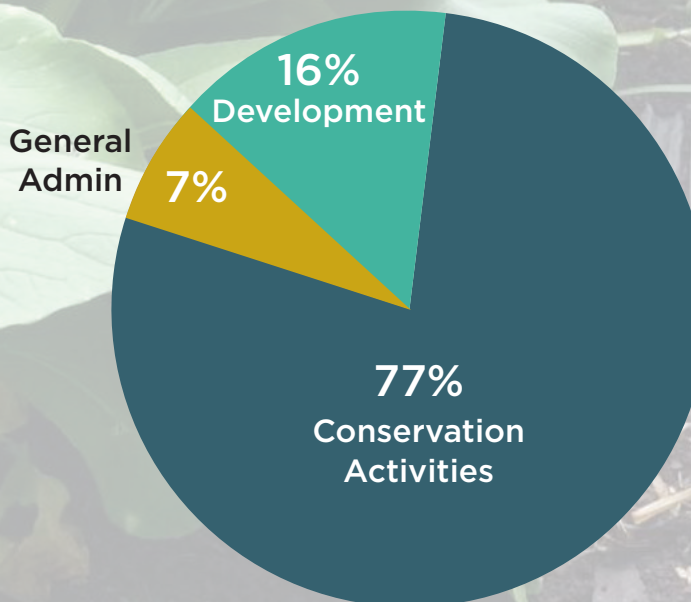
### Revenue by Source Total Revenue \$2,561,168



### Total Programmatic Efficiency

Total Expenses: \$1,180,146

Summary Program Expenses: \$913,595





# 2022 Featured Supporters

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## NŌPILI MONTHLY GIVING CLUB

The nōpili is a freshwater goby known to climb waterfalls by clinging to the wet stones. The unwavering determination of the nōpili has become synonymous for showing steadfast love through small, persistent acts. We equate that with the dedication of donors who make recurring gifts to HILT. These Nōpili empower HILT to take a more proactive role in protecting critical lands across the state.

Adrienne Antonsen*	James K. & Eleanor M. Crowe	Cassandra Kepler*	Helen Raine*
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Ruth Craig	Laura & Josh Kaakua	James O’Rourke	<i>*New in 2022</i>
James K. & Amy Crowe	Danielle Kaneshiro	Ruby Pap	

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## PLANNED GIVING

The ‘Āina Ho’oilina Society is a committed group of loyal supporters who have included HILT in their estate planning. Ho’oilina can mean legacy, therefore the people who make plans to ensure HILT’s work carries on after their passing are leaving a legacy that will benefit the ‘āina, and Hawai’i’s people, for generations to come.

Anonymous (4)*	Sonya H. Davis & Joseph R. DeFazio	Stephen Kieffer	Gerriane & Clyde Sakamoto
Janet Bal	Eve de Molin*	Maribeth & John Klobuchar	Bryce & Shannon Skaff
Dr. Richard H. Bennett	Madelein Frankel	Marguerite Lambert	Patricia A. & Jefferson G. Stillwell
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Jackie Brainard	Hilary Harts	Joan C. Pratt	Susan H. Thompson
Neola Caveny	Donna Howard	Robert & Carolyn Richardson	<i>* New in 2022</i>
Mary Charles & Tom C. Kiely	Frances O. Jackson		

# 2022 ‘Ohana

Mahalo for your support of Hawai‘i Land Trust. On behalf of our Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers, we wish to thank those who contributed to HILT between January 1 and December 31, 2022.

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 Leslie & Spencer Adams  
 Nyla Adams  
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126 Queen Street, Suite 306  
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## MĀLAMA 'ĀINA KĀKOU

**October 7, 2023**  
**5:00–9:00 p.m.**

HILT's popular benefit event held on the gorgeous grounds at Lanikuhonua is back after a three-year hiatus!

### *Honoring Suzanne Case as our 2023 Kahu o Ka 'Āina*

Join us for an event that you're sure to enjoy. Guests will be treated to live entertainment and 'ono cuisine provided by Monkeypod by Merriman's. Table sponsorships and tickets can be purchased online at [hilt.org/events](http://hilt.org/events) or by calling (808) 791-0731. For more information contact Angela Britten at [angie@hilt.org](mailto:angie@hilt.org).

