



**Community Association**  
*"Doing what it takes to keep Ka'u healthy."*

QUARTERLY  
 NEWSLETTER  
 OF KRHCAI  
 July 2022

# "Nānā I Ke Kumu O Ka'u"

*(Look to the Source of Ka'u)*

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## President's Message

Aloha Kakahiaka, I hope everyone is taking care of their health and keeping safe during this Pandemic. Welcome to KRHCAI's launching of "Nana I Ke Kumu O Ka'u" Newsletter. The translation is intended connect the mana'o of past, present and future generations. An example of this is translation is the present composition of KRHCAI board of directors have shared lived experiences of the past, and are looking to engaging future generations. The board's commitment is to fulfill our mission "To Do What It Takes To Keep Ka'u Healthy", through our Health and Wellness Program that focus on health, education, research opportunities and economic sustainability (H.E.R.O.E.S.)

The Pandemic impacted our community in late 2021, and KRHCAI had to change our operations to that of working remotely and focusing on keeping our community safe and free from Covid 19. With the help of public/private healthcare providers

and partnerships, we were able to secure funding to help with Covid 19 Mitigation. Auntie Jessie Marques Executive Director shares below more information on how KRHCAI benefited from collaborating with various partnerships and received grant funding to continue our mission.

It is with much appreciation and Mahalo! to KRHCAI Board of directors, advisors, members, volunteers and partnerships that made it possible for our community to have access to healthcare resources, supplies, manpower and technical assistance.

In future editions I will share more information on how KRHCAI will continue to serve our community and "Do Whatever It Takes To Keep Ka'u Healthy".

Thank you, and remember to take care and be safe.



## Auntie Jessie Marques, Executive Director's 2021-2022 update:



Aloha and Mahalo for your continued support and kokua. When the Pandemic emerged (2020) throughout the country, Ka'u's family and community were no exception to the social, economic, and mental health impact. KRHCAI took the lead in advocating for our rural, underserved, vulnerable marginalized population by collaborating with other local, state and national organizations, agencies, public/private health care providers, government agencies, University of Hawaii / JABSOM, the Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders 3R Network, and the National Association of Community Health Workers.

As a direct result of our collaborative partnerships in 2021 KRHCAI received grant funding from **1:** Papa Ola Lokahi (\$250K) to expand and sustain a public health workforce to prevent, prepare for and respond to Covid 19 in the rural underserved, vulnerable marginalized community of Ka'u; **2:** Community First Hawaii / Kuleana Health Literacy Project (\$105K); **3:** Hawaii Public Health Institute: Community Engagement for Health Equity in Covid 19 Prevention and Mitigation Project (\$150K); and Ulu Network (\$6,000): to develop "Ohana Strong" a NHPI Covid 19 Mitigation Outreach video to lead a consortium of local health organizations focused on improving health outcomes through increasing health literacy.

Funding provided KRHCAI with administrative and program assistance and 3 Community Health Workers to facilitate Covid 19 Pop-up Vaccine Clinics, testing, pre-registration, information/education, outreach, training and workforce development. Incentives such as gas cards, food gift certificates, water, masks, hand sanitizers, honorariums were donated by public/private businesses and organizations.

"Without board support and collaborative partnerships, KRHCAI would not have been able to fulfill our mission "To Do What It Takes To Keep Ka'u Healthy".

In closing, I hope you enjoyed this first edition of "Nānā I Ke Kumu O Ka'u" Newsletter, and would like to hear your comments, thoughts and ideas on how KRHCAI can continue to advocate for our community.

For more information on KRHCAI call the Kau Resource & Distance Learning Center at (808) 928-0101 or send an email to KRHCAI@yahoo.com.

Mahalo, for your kokua and Malama Pono

*Auntie Jessie*



## Talk Story with Stacyn and Otis Salmo

**Stacyn:** *Otis, can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your commitment to KRHCAI's Mission: "To Do What It Takes to Keep Ka'u Healthy".*

**Otis:** From a young age, it was instilled in me that the "Whole is greater than the sum of its parts". The concept of community resonated with me as I grew up in my rural hometown. For me, my village played a huge role in who I've become today. Thus, teaching me the value of service and what it means to always give back without expecting anything in return.

Being born in Hawaii and raised in Pahala, I had a unique childhood.

As far as I can remember, each milestone I've hit, I have been blessed with knowing that my community played a significant role in all of my achievements. Throughout my time in the military service, accomplishments with higher education, and various careers in mental health and public schools on the mainland-- I have always felt that something was missing during those years. I came to realize that it was time for me to give back to my own community, the community that helped raise me to become who I am today.

It is amazing how a community can influence one's perception on human behavior, how one fits into this world, and the contributions one can make to improve their surroundings. Because of my connection with Ka'u and the place it has in my heart, I feel it is my duty to give what was given to me. With my background in social emotional learning, diversity, restorative practices, therapeutic interventions, and education I recognize how all of these factors impact the general health of an individual. In our community alone, there are many barriers that impact healthy living--whether it is cultural biases towards social/emotional services, substance abuse and dependency, or the limited resources in rural communities I feel I want to make a difference in any way I can for the community I care about so deeply.

**Stacyn:** *Please share some of your ideas on how you plan to implement your commitment.*

**Otis:** On a personal level, my immense desire to be a servant to my community, I want to be able to wake up every morning knowing that I am doing my best for Ka'u. That my intentions are humble, the work I do is for the greater good for the community-at-large, my deeds are not reaped for credit but instead for uplifting my neighbors, and that the legacy I leave behind is one congruent with servitude and helping others reach their highest potential healthily. I want to bring healthy change to our community which is oftentimes isolated from resources or overlooked by bigger cities. This drives my commitment to doing whatever it takes to keep Ka'u healthy. If my background, experience, and education can benefit the Ka'u community, I want to be part of the driving force that fights for this community with an agency that does it righteously.

A wise President of the United States once said, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek". I believe it is my time for me to step up and contribute to my community as change will not come if we sit and wait. We must do whatever it takes.

***Otis Salmo, MA, LMHC has been a member of the Board of Directors of  
Ka'u Rural Health Community Association since September of 2021***

# SPECIAL THANKS TO KRHCAI VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS

## *“DOING WHAT IT TAKES TO KEEP KA’U HEALTHY”*



NANA I KE KUMU O KA'U



*Look to the source of Ka'u*



Community Association

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KRHCAI

PO Box 878

Pahala, HI 96777

(808) 928-0101

[www.KRHCAI.com](http://www.KRHCAI.com)