

The Office of the Mayor,
Department of Housing and Human Concerns,
and the Maui County Office on Aging/
Aging and Disability Resource Center

presents the
*54th Annual Maui County
Outstanding Older Americans
Recognition Event*



Friday, May 5, 2023
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Tante's Island Cuisine — Kahului



OLDER AMERICANS MONTH HISTORY

Established in 1963 by President John F. Kennedy and the members of the National Council of Senior Citizens, "Senior Citizens Month" was created to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country in May of every year. Since then, every President has issued a formal proclamation to pay tribute to older persons in our communities. Now known as "Older Americans Month," it is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs, and other similar activities every May. The Administration on Community Living has given this year's theme as

"Aging Unbound."



"Hawai'i Aloha"

E Hawai'i e ku'u one hānau e
O Hawaii, O sands of my birth

Ku'u home kulaīwi nei
My beloved native home

'Oli nō au i nā pono lani ou
I rejoice in the blessings of heaven

E Hawai'i, aloha ē
O beloved Hawaii, aloha

HUI (Chorus):
E hau'oli nā 'ōpio o Hawai'i nei
Happy the youth of beloved Hawaii

'Oli ē! 'Oli ē!
Rejoice! Rejoice!

Mai nā ahehe makani e pā mai nei
Gentle breezes blow

Mau ke aloha, no Hawai'i
Love always for Hawaii

**54th Annual
Maui County Outstanding
Older Americans Recognition
Event**

2023
Program

Welcome – Emcee Rowena Dagdag-Andaya

Lori Tshako, Director, Housing and Human Concerns

Alice Lee, Chairperson, Maui County Council

The Honorable Richard Bissen Jr., Maui County Mayor

Older Americans Month Proclamation- “*Aging Unbound*”

Recognition of Dignitaries

Special Guests

Past Outstanding Older Americans

Elected officials/representatives

Council on Aging

Outstanding Older American Judges

Introducing the 2023 Outstanding Older American Nominees

~Intermission~

Blessing/Prayer *Fr. John A.H. Tomoso, member, Council on Aging*

Lunch *by Tante’s Island Cuisine*

Announcement of the 2023 Outstanding Older American Male & Female

Mahalo

Closing - “*Hawai‘i Aloha*”

2023 Outstanding Older American Nominees



Patricia (Pat) Toyama, 73 yrs. old, Kahului

Nominated by Christina Medley.

Pat Toyama was a former Law Technician at the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney for the County of Maui. As a Law Technician, she disposed of numerous old cases and entered into a new in-house computer system Tricon, that allowed for easy access of personal information within the Office. Pat began volunteering at Maui Arts & Cultural Center when it opened in 1994. For 29 years, she served as a Docent Volunteer, Office Administrative Volunteer, Theater Usher, Amphitheater Usher and Script Captain. She also serves on the MACC Volunteer Committee and provides input to the MACC’s Education Department. Her role as volunteer at the MACC helps a vast audience of the Maui Community and island visitors. She has a constant presence and welcomes guests with Aloha. Pat plays a very important part in leading volunteers and training incoming volunteers which is key to the learning environment of the large multi used facility. As a volunteer she goes above and beyond, addressing every detail that many others would overlook. She is passionate about volunteering and has faithfully continues to serve the MACC’s vision of providing Maui’s community to a world class performing arts center. Her loyalty is unmatched.



Evalina (Nani) Watanabe, 71 yrs. old, Kahului

Nominated by Zilpah Kaimiola.

Nani has been dedicated to her community her entire adult life. She has been serving the deaf and hard of hearing community on Maui for 20-25 hours a month for over 40 years. Her love for this community came out of growing up with a best friend who was born deaf and who taught Nani how to communicate using American Sign Language. Nani has also been volunteering with the Maui Wheelers for 18 years. The Maui Wheelers is a group organized of people with disabilities whose mission is to ensure that all persons live independently with a good quality of life despite disability. Nani also serves as the chairperson for the Maui County Commission on Persons with Disabilities. She has great knowledge of the various resources available in the community and is always willing to share her knowledge with others, directly help folks if needed, or give needed advice on how to get help. Nani is very caring and will lend a helping hand to anyone in need. She and her husband of 50 years also serve as a host family for students from Japan and loves sharing her culture and learning about other cultures. Nani also volunteers for the State Rehabilitation Council, the Cultural Resource Commission, and does volunteer outreach events for the Alzheimer’s Association. In addition, Nani is very active in sharing her Hawaiian culture and history by volunteering for the Festivals of Aloha Maui Nui Style since 2008 and helping out with the annual Festival of Aloha festivities on Lanai since 1997. Nani is a talented singer and ukulele player and enjoys sharing her music in the community. She loves Ohana gatherings, the beach, travel and making new friends.

2023 Outstanding Older American Nominees



Sara Sanders, 83 yrs. old, Wailuku

Nominated by Judy Guajardo.

Sister Sarah Sanders spends every day contributing to the betterment of someone else and to serve others. After graduating high school in California, Sr. Sara entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. She lived and ministered as a religious sister from 1959, then relocated to Maui in 1980 to teach at St. Anthony High School. Sr. Sara served as a member of the Leadership Council of Maui Catholic Charities for three years and as the assistant music director and choir member with Music Ministry at St. Anthony Church for four years. She also devoted her time as an announcer, the meet director, and as a clerk of Maui Interscholastic League Track and Field for 23 years. Not only was she a resource member with Mission Integration Team for one year but also volunteered with Na Hoaloha for six years. At Na Hoaloha, she unselfishly volunteered countless hours to ensure that kupuna on her call list received regular calls, letters, and cards. At age 70, she prepared seasonal music selections for about 25 choir directors in Hawaii and on the Mainland, accumulating approximately 4550 volunteer hours over the last 13 years. Sr. Sara retired after 35 years of teaching only to be called back to the classroom for another four years until a replacement could be found. She retired a second time at 79 years of age. Sr. Sara Sanders is a role model for how to age independently, be productive, and use your talents to enhance others and the community.



Rose Freitas, 90yrs. old, Makawao

Nominated by Adele Rugg.

Rose is a 'living legend' in the paniolo world of Upcountry Maui and the rest of the world. In fact, she was recognized as one of Maui's 100 most influential people in the past 100 years. Rose rode horseback at the Makawao Parade for 48 years. For 13 consecutive years, she won "Best Costume in the Makawao Parade" in which she actually designed and sewed all of her attire. Rose has over 70 belt buckles from winning barrel racing, team penning, goat tying, ribbon roping, and steer undecorating events. In 1974, Rose was honored as the first all-around cowgirl in Hawaii. In 2006, Rose was honored as the first and only cowgirl from Hawaii to be inducted into the National Cowgirl Museum Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas. Rose co-founded the Maui All Girls and Junior Boys and Girls Rodeo Association in 1974. Known as "Queen of the Crater", Rose been honored for her years of service to our beautiful Haleakala National Park volunteering service in the crater. Rose was the oldest cowgirl and world championship qualifier from the State of Hawaii, competing in barrel racing till the age of 74. The poem "Paniolo Poem" was written by Rose, and is recorded in the Library of Congress. She also wrote a book titled, "One Woman's Journey from the Plantation to the National Cowgirl Museum Hall of Fame". Rose is proof (at the age of 90) that she is "aging unbound".

2023 Outstanding Older American Nominees



Ulu Keahi, 77 yrs. old, Lahaina

Nominated by Nancy Altenburg.

Born and raised in Mala, Lahaina, this nominee is a retired school bus driver who now spends most of her time caring for the animals and serves as a good steward of the environment. Ulu has a great sense of humor, is kind, has a big generous heart and embodies the Hawaiian spirit of Aloha. The countless hours that she shares with the Save Maui Cats Organization is evidence of her generosity. She provides guidance and is always willing to share her knowledge and experiences. Ulu cares for the established feral cat colony at Mala Ramp by providing them with water and food. Not only does she help to maintain a healthy cat colony, but Ulu also helps to maintain the beauty and cleanliness of Mala. She picks up trash, cleans the grounds, waters the plants and feeds the feral chickens. She loves all animals, loves people, loves the land and the ocean. Ulu enjoys spending time with her `ohana and spends a great deal of time at Mala caring for all the animals that reside there. Her care, generosity, and positive attitude serves as an inspiration for the younger generations. She is a good example for her `ohana and the community in her practice of the concept of Aloha `Āina - serving as a good steward of the land and natural resources while having values deeply rooted in Hawaiian culture and tradition.



Paula Keele 74 yrs. old, Pukalani

Nominated by Margaret Kono.

Paula has spent her entire life in service to the communities where she lives and has continued that passion for service into her elder years. Paula received her Masters in Human Services at the age of 63 in order to better support a loved one in the aging process and this was the spark that immersed Paula into the Maui community as a volunteer. It is clear to all who know Paula that she is dedicated to improving the lives of all people. From volunteering with keiki providing physical education for Kahului Union Church preschool and serving as the fitness merit badge counselor for Troop 1 Boy Scouts, to being a volunteer caregiver for a 95 year old with Na Hoaloha, no one is excluded from Paula's desire to make positive change in the lives of others. Paula is one of only ten T-Trainers (Trainer of Trainers) in the USA for EnhanceFitness, a program which keeps hundreds of kupuna healthy and fit across Maui county. Paula enjoys researching and developing programs that benefit kupuna, especially as it relates to cognitive health, balance, and falls prevention. Paula has been a certified volunteer instructor for Better Choices Better Health and volunteered on the Kaiser Maui Member Advisory Council whose work positively impacted health care for the 60,000 Kaiser members at the time. Paula is a volunteer public speaker for the Alzheimer's Association, Maui Economic Opportunity (MEO) and AARP when she is asked. She likes to read and is very active, enjoying paddle boarding, hiking, kayaking, and traveling in her spare time.

2023 Outstanding Older American Nominees



Betty Yamashiro 83yrs. old, Kahului

Nominated by Julie Higa.

At the age of 83, Betty still continues to actively support her peers and the organizations that she is affiliated with. She exhibits a lot of energy and enthusiasm and encourages many kupuna to remain active in the community. Betty has been a member of the Wailuku Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association for many years and the Moiliili Hongwanji Mission's Project DANA site leader for 23 years. As the Maui site leader, Betty coordinates caregiving support and education for Kupuna and their families and assists with events. Betty also serves as office manager for the Maui Okinawa Kenjin Kai Center in Wailuku and also serves as the organization's senior club coordinator where she organizes field trips for members, makes friendly calls, and conducts periodic in-person checks with club members who no longer participate in activities outside of their home. She will also provide transportation for those who wish to attend meetings and events. Betty has also been active with the following organizations: Maui Lions Club, Maui Puerto Rican Association, was a board member for the Lahaina Arts Society and served as President, Vice President, and coordinator for the Miyakohima-Maui Student Exchange program. Betty has been married to her husband for 64 years and helped him establish his restaurant after he retired from his occupation as a carpenter. Betty is an amazing wife, mother, grandmother, and a true gem in our community.



Judith Mikami, 79 yrs. old, Kaunakakai

Nominated by Deldrine Manera.

How can you measure or count the countless lives Judy has impacted? Born and raised on Molokai, Judy continues to advocate for the community regarding healthcare and long-term care issues. Judy is a pivotal player of the Moloka'i Kupuna Care Program, in which she has been a grant writer, founder, and current advisor since 2021. Judy was also a grant writer for Na Puuwai from 2007 – 2015 where she worked hard to secure monies for Molokai's sick and elderly. Judy continues to seek and maintain funding to help Molokai residents. Like Billy Akutagawa of Na Puuwai, Colette Machado, a former OHA Trustee and Dr. Emmett Aluli, Judy has been a key player in healthcare decisions and a great advocate for Native Hawaiians and the entire Molokai community. She represented the island of Molokai for five years as a council member of Maui County Council on Aging. In 2007, she and her husband founded Rhen Liberty Dialysis, the only dialysis center on Molokai. Thankfully, this has helped reduce off-island travel and treatment for residents. She and her family also continue to maintain pharmaceutical needs on Molokai. Even after retirement, Judy is still engaged with political events and advocating for people's needs. Aside from the healthcare community, Judy is a strong believer of faith in which she taught Sunday school at the Kaunakakai Baptist Church from 1973 -1990. This loving grandmother continues to remember her roots and embraces the community with aloha and malama.

2023 Outstanding Older American Nominees



Stephen Kealoha, 82 yrs. old, Pukalani

Nominated by Brian Kealoha.

For over 20 years, Stephen has given much of his time, talent, knowledge, and wisdom in providing guidance, creating programs, and supporting organizations whose missions are to improve the quality of the lives of people in Maui County and throughout the State of Hawaii. Stephen has served as a volunteer and board member of organizations that include the Malama Family Recovery Center, Aloha House, Maui United Way, St. Anthony Catholic Church and the Maui Leadership Council of Catholic Charities of Hawaii. In 2015, Stephen was awarded the Kahaloa Award from the Maui United Way for his outstanding leadership and was described as "a non-profit executive director's dream come true." As a volunteer with Malama Family Recovery Center, Stephen helped create a job training program for mothers and pregnant women who sought assistance in recovering from substance use disorders. This program involved financial education, interview and resume building skills, and job training. The participants in this program were able to find employment and create a stable living environment for themselves and their families.

Stephen is a true leader who demonstrates great care for the organizations that he represents, the board members he works with and the recipients of the programs that he supports. Stephen is not only a remarkable community volunteer, but also a dedicated husband, father, grandfather, and friend.

"Everybody can be great.
Because anybody can serve.
You don't have to have a college degree to serve.
You don't have to make your subject
and your verb agree to serve.
You don't have to know the second theory
of thermodynamics in physics to serve.
You only need a heart full of grace.
A soul generated by love."

~Dr Martin Luther King Jr

SPECIAL MAHALO TO:

Maui County Mayor Richard T. Bissen
Managing Director Kekuhaupio Akana
Deputy Managing Director Josiah Nishita
Department of Housing & Human Concerns Director Lori Tzuhako
Department of Housing & Human Concerns
Deputy Director Saumalu Mata'afa
Maui County Council Members: Chair Alice Lee,
Vice-Chair Keani Rawlins-Fernandez,
Pro Tempore Tasha Kama;
Members: Shane Sinenci, Tamara Paltin, Gabe Johnson,
Tom Cook, Nohelani U'u-Hodgins, Yuki Lei Sugimura

Governor Josh Green, Lt Gov Sylvia Luke
State Executive Office on Aging Director Caroline Cadirao,
Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs (PABEA),
Maui PABEA Representative Bill Kinaka,
all our Federal and State Legislators,
their representatives and office staff

Council on Aging (Maui county):
Chair Ed Romson, Vice-Chair John Tomoso,
Jim Diegel, Arleen Gerbig, Teana Kahooohanohano,
Valerie "Mapuana" Kalaniopio-Cook, Leonardo Sequeira,
Elaine Slavinsky, Shane Sinenci, Helen Tabura,
Laura Vo, Edwina Wilson-Snyder, Deldrine "Kauai" Manera

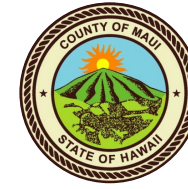
Aloha 'Aina Orchids ♦ Maui Floral
Tante's Island Cuisine Kahului ♦ Herman Andaya
Pearl Rose Donnelly ♦ MCOA staff

Maui County's Legacy of Outstanding Older Americans 1968 to 2022

Ernest Rezens	∞	2023	∞	JoAnn Rockwell
Robert Carroll	∞	2021	∞	Mary Trotto
+Pandemic year	∞	2020	∞	No event held+
Kimokeo Kapahulehua	∞	2019	∞	Dorothy Tolliver (tie) Louise Corpuz
William Kinaka	∞	2018	∞	Clara Felix
Cornelis Feenstra	∞	2017	∞	Yaemi Yogi
John Tryggestad	∞	2016	∞	Kathleen Phillips
Donald Jensen	∞	2015	∞	Katsuko Enoki
Fred Ruge	∞	2014	∞	Kanee Wright
Richard Endsley	∞	2013	∞	Diane Logsdon
Mathew Napier	∞	2012	∞	Michele Paularena
Jim Crowe	∞	2011	∞	Adele Rugg
Marvin Paularena	∞	2010	∞	Marie Osaki
Larry D. Carter	∞	2009	∞	June Ka'aihue
Gordon Cockett	∞	2008	∞	Gwendolyn Ewalani Shim
Eugene K. Lehua	∞	2007	∞	Anita T. Yamafuji
Richard Toba	∞	2006	∞	Pat Inouye Endsley
Edward Nishihara, Sr.	∞	2005	∞	Dorothy Nakata
Clarence Matsumoto	∞	2004	∞	Matsuko Takahashi
George Fujiwara	∞	2003	∞	May Fujiwara
Rafael Acoba	∞	2002	∞	Elsie Ota
Earl Kukahiko	∞	2001	∞	Florence Hasegawa
Henry Kupahu, Sr.	∞	2000	∞	Betty DeLima
Frank Montizor	∞	1999	∞	Alexandria Helm
Takashi Yamashita	∞	1998	∞	Kimie Lane
Roderick Vogel	∞	1997	∞	Mabel Ito



Edward Kato	∞	1996	∞	Michie Kosaka
George Ito	∞	1995	∞	Mildred Vogel
Manuel Rodrigues	∞	1994	∞	Patsy Kinoshita
Robert Wead	∞	1993	∞	Natsuyo Hayase
John E.K. Akana	∞	1992	∞	Thelma McElfresh
Lawrence Minami	∞	1991	∞	Amy Albright
John H.S. Kwon	∞	1990	∞	Alice Bourque
John Eddy Nelson	∞	1989	∞	Haruko Nakata
Clarence Agena	∞	1988	∞	Jean MacDowell
Marvin Tonai	∞	1987	∞	Charlotte Yoshioka
Masao Sato	∞	1986	∞	Ewa E. Miller
Richard Abing, Sr.	∞	1985	∞	Helen T. Ikeoka
Edward K. Nakamoto	∞	1984	∞	Edith S. Izumi
Carl A. Carlson	∞	1983	∞	Gloria Bediamol
Robert Asato	∞	1982	∞	Myrtle Crockett
Tony Tomoso	∞	1981	∞	Betty Allan Karcher
Jitsuo Matsubara	∞	1980	∞	Anna Kukahiko
Matsuo Yagi	∞	1979	∞	Shizue Suyama
Karl C. Leebrick	∞	1978	∞	Sugi Shibao
Giichi Okahiro	∞	1977	∞	Masayo Kawabe
Minoru Hayashida	∞	1976	∞	Ariyo Sodetani
Hideo Takiguchi	∞	1975	∞	Minerva Kalama
Toramatsu Yoshida	∞	1974	∞	Marion Peters
Toyoki Kimura	∞	1973	∞	Josephine Epton
James Ohashi	∞	1972	∞	Emily Harvey
Mokura Yamaguchi	∞	1971	∞	Regina Domingo
James Mahi	∞	1970	∞	Winifred Molina
Frank Watanabe	∞	1969	∞	Stella Belknap
Wendell F. Crockett	∞	1968	∞	——



**MISSION OF THE MAUI COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING
& THE AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER-**

**★To promote and protect the well being
of older adults in Maui County.★**



**Maui County Office on Aging/
Aging and Disability Resource Center**

**J. Walter Cameron Center
95 Mahalani Street, Room 20
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793
(808) 270-7774**

**e-mail: mcoa.adrc@mauicounty.gov
web: www.mauicountyadrc.org**

2023 Outstanding Older Americans of Maui County

Congratulations to our Award Recipients and Nominees.

Thank you all for attending this year's event.