



Across DHS: Island to Island



Fall 2013

Of Interest:

- * A New DHS Era
- * Congratulations !
- * 2013 Incentive and Sustained Superior Performance Awards

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Director's Message

It's no surprise that once again, Department of Human Services staff statewide have successfully met their challenges and deadlines. Most recently, the MQD built a new eligibility system (KOLEA) that supports an on-line application process, and published 65 chapters of new or amended Administrative Rules.

Always on the move, the DHS staff continues to innovate, lead and excel in their work. The 2013 DHS Employee Excellence Awardees were:

Manager of the Year—Pankaj Bhanot for his work in transforming the BESSD business process to better serve our SNAP and financial assistance clients. Pankaj later went on to receive the Governor's Award for State Manager of Year;

Team of the Year—The Med-QUEST Policy and Program Development Office (PPDO) for their work in assuring Hawai'i's rules, policies, State plan and waiver were aligned with mandates of the Affordable Care Act. The PPDO also combed through hundreds of pages of Administrative Rules and re-organized them into an accessible and easy to understand format;

Employee of the Year— Gordon Takesono (DVR) for his people skills and daily compassion that continually motivate and empower his students; and

Sustained Superior Performance Awards— Randy Chau (MQD), Timothy Kitagawa (SSD), Kerry Kiyabu (OYS), Deborah Saromines (BESSD), Gordon Takesono (DVR) and Mannix Tesoro (HPHA).

Photos from the Aug. 22, 2013 Incentives and Service Awards ceremony are posted on the DHS website at <http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/communications>. Congratulations to all DHS award recipients, and thank you for your commitment and service.

A special thanks to Ryan Shimamura and the Office of Information Technology (OIT) staff for installing new desktop computers in Med-QUEST offices statewide — and in time for the October 1, 2013 rollout of KOLEA.

Congratulations to the Social Services Division, Child Welfare Branch staff, who were nationally recognized for increasing adoptions of Hawai'i children in foster care.

Thanks to staff at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) for leading the transition to a new automated case management system that will improve the DVR's ability to assist its clients. The anticipated Go Live Date is July 1, 2014.

Thanks to everyone for their continued dedication to the DHS and its vulnerable clientele.

A New Chapter in Hawai'i Medicaid

The Oct. 1, 2013 launch of the new Medicaid eligibility system, KOLEA, has catapulted the Department of Human Services (DHS) Med-QUEST Division (MQD) into an entirely new chapter of Medicaid coverage. Individuals now can apply on-line for Medicaid and State-funded medical assistance through www.mybenefits.hawaii.gov, and receive eligibility determination the next day. KOLEA upgrades scheduled for later this year will allow for same-day determinations.

Development of a new eligibility system typically takes two to three years to complete. "I'm proud of the DHS Med-QUEST staff who accomplished this monumental task in only eight months," said Governor Neil Abercrombie. "The staff worked tirelessly to build, test and launch the new online eligibility system, and was ready for business on Oct. 1." Hawai'i was one of very few states to accomplish this objective.

Since launching on October 1, the MQD has added an additional 6,100 beneficiaries to the Hawaii Medicaid program.

State compliance with the ACA mandates also required the MQD to revise its Hawai'i Administrative Rules. On Oct. 1, 2013, 65 chapters of Hawai'i's new, repealed or amended Administrative Rules took effect; another 28 State Plan Amendments have been approved, or are in the process of being approved. These documents provide the necessary authority to implement the MQD eligibility changes, and a new on-line eligibility system that supports Hawai'i's state-based marketplace.

The MQD also renewed its Section 1115 demonstration waiver. "The waiver promotes integration of Med-QUEST programs and benefits, and develops a more patient-centered care delivery system," explained Dr. Kenny Fink, MQD Administrator. "The State also consolidated and streamlined the various Med-QUEST programs under the single category of QUEST Integration, and eliminated eligibility enrollment caps."

Many thanks to the MQD for its hard work throughout this transition process.



MQD staff from across the state met in September for a ACA/MQD training

Back L>R: Alan Takahashi, Calvin Unoki (Hilo), Sunny Yee, Noreen Tolentino, Kimberly Lutao, Jeffrey Young, Kevin Higa, Tracy Allison, Jessica Kim, Lualla Hunt, Terrance Takiu (Hilo); **Front L>R:** Iris Venzon (Kauai) Michelle Johnson, Gail Omura (Maui) Geri Oliveras (Maui), Florence Ashihara (Kauai)

2013 DHS Performance Awards



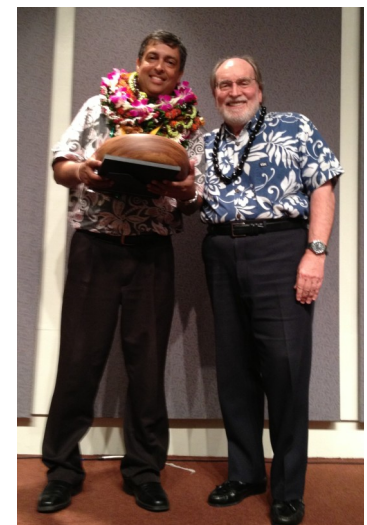
TEAM OF THE YEAR -

MQD PPDO - Evelyn E. Yamamoto, Edie L. Mayeshiro, Renee J. Konen, Liane K. Harimoto, Aileen J. Befitel, Noreen (Kookie) Moon-Ng



EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR—

Gordon Takesono (DVR)



MANAGER OF THE YEAR—

Pankaj Bhanot (BESSD)



BONUS!

The Benefits, Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD) has been awarded a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) bonus of \$724,139 for the most improved Program Access Index for fiscal year FY 2012. Over the past year, timeliness rates across the state have hovered between 95% and 97%, and BESSD continues to exceed federal requirements. On September 3, 2013 the District Court of Hawai'i issued a Stipulation and Order of Settlement and Dismissal. BESSD is no longer under a federal injunction to improve timeliness rates. Congratulations, BESSD!

Photo: Pankaj Bhanot receives Governor's 2013 Manager of the Year Award. Presented by Lt. Governor, Shan Tsustui. Photo by the Governor's Office

New Approach to Juvenile Justice

Through the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI), a new inter-government bipartisan working group was formed and convened. This working group is comprised of policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders. Members are tasked with analyzing the state's juvenile justice system and developing data-driven policy recommendations for the 2014 Legislature. Members will study Hawai'i's data, review evidence about what works in juvenile justice, and develop policy options to improve outcomes and reduce costs.

"It costs a tremendous amount of money to put juvenile offenders into state custody," said Gov. Abercrombie. "We need to take a hard look at our data, find better outcomes, and identify more cost effective ways to handle our juvenile offenders."

The DHS Deputy Director, Barbara Yamashita, serves as one of three co-chairs of the JRI working group. "This is a project that brings together the three branches of government and the private sector in a collaborative approach to redesign the juvenile justice system and improve outcomes," she said. "David Hipp and the competent personnel at OYS should be commended for their work and support of this initiative."

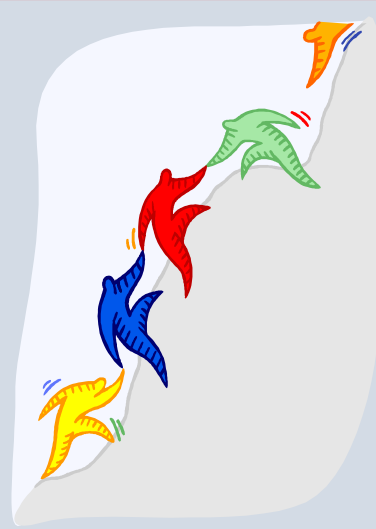
The working group receives intensive technical assistance from the Pew Charitable Trusts Public Safety Performance Project. "We are very excited about the State's partnership with Pew Charitable Trusts," said David Hipp, Administrator of the DHS Office of Youth Services (OYS). "The research clearly indicates that incarceration as a solution to juvenile delinquency is a failed approach. Pew's ability to identify both the strengths and weaknesses of a state system will be vital as Hawai'i looks towards improving its juvenile justice system."

Pew and its partners have provided similar assistance to more than two dozen states, including Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Oregon, Texas and Vermont.



Rep. Mele Carroll, Sen. Donna Mercado-Kim and Chief Justice Mark Rectenwald answer media questions at the JRI briefing

GOT VACATION LEAVE? YOUR KOKUA IS NEEDED



The DHS **LEAVE SHARING PROGRAM** assists employees who need time off from work to recover from a serious personal illness or injury, or to care for a family member with a serious personal illness or injury who is incapable of self-care. The **Leave Sharing Program** balance of donated vacation leave credits is now empty. That means direct share donations may be the only option to assist our co-workers in need. Please consider sharing your leave time to help fellow employees. Interested donors are asked to complete the DHS Leave Sharing Donation form, along with a Form G-1 and send them to PERS/ERS via their chains of command.

Please visit [Q:/PERS/ERS/L Share](#) for more information about how to participate in this worthy program. You may also call the Personnel Office, Employee Relations Staff at 586-4982 if you have questions.

2013 Superior Performance Awardees



*Randall
Chau
(MQD)*



*Timothy
Kitagawa
(SSD)*



*Kerry
Kiyabu
(OYS)*



*Deborah
Saromines
(BESSD)*



*Gordon
Takesono
(DVR)*



*Mannix
Tesoro
(HPHA)*

Integration and Expansion of Behavioral Health Services

To reduce fragmentation of services, the DHS and DOH have consolidated their behavioral health case management services within the MQD Community Care Services (CCS) program. The MQD contractor for the CCS program is 'Ohana Health Plan. Transitioning QExA members with serious mental illness from the Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) to CCS, and expanding eligibility and benefits began September 1, 2013. Since then, the MQD has transitioned approximately 3,200 individuals from AMHD. The MQD and AMHD continue to work together to monitor the transition and its results. To learn more about this initiative, please view the PowerPoint presentation posted on the DHS website at <http://humanservices.gov/mqd>.

Calling All Artists

The Department of Human Services (DHS) wants to update its logo to better reflect Department goals and staff sentiment.



Statewide, DHS staff are characterized as **supportive, caring, nurturing, and helpful**. The Department's goals are to **strengthen clients' safety net** by offering an array of services that will lead to **safety, protection, self-sufficiency and sustainability**.

Logo designs are limited to two colors, and must be produced with a minimum print resolution of 300 dpi.

You can submit your designs via: 1) email to krosenfeld@dhs.hawaii.gov; 2) State Messenger; or 3) USPS mail to Kayla Rosenfeld, DHS Public Information Officer, 1390 Miller Street, Room 210, Honolulu, HI 96813. Deadline is February 15, 2014.

No Task is too Big When Done Together

The DHS CWS Branch and its partner organizations sponsored a Kalihi Parents "Aha" Workshop to inform, empower and strengthen families to prevent child abuse and entry of children into the foster care system. This Workshop was one of four 'aha sessions planned for the island of Oahu this year.

The Kalihi Parent's Workshop ('aha) opened with a video excerpt from *The Aloha Spirit at Work: Life in these Islands*. Following the video, two parents involved with the child welfare system shared their experience. With the goal of helping other families understand the CWS system Jamie and Clyde described their personal challenges and successes. They also highlighted the various CWS programs available to families.

'Aha participants also learned about the Title IV-E programs, federal funding, and the role the Child Support Enforcement Agency plays when a child or children are placed in foster care.

Representatives from the Court Appointed Special Advocate for Children (CASA), the Family Court and the Ho'olokahi Program also participated in the discussion, and shared their roles and services within the context of the child welfare system. A Court Appointed Attorney described how parents can qualify for an attorney free of charge and provided tips on how to communicate with legal counsel.

The statewide 'Aha is a collaboration between the DHS/CWS and its partners Casey Family Programs, EPIC, Inc., PACT Neighborhood Place of Kalihi and Parents, Inc.



SB 1340 CD1 is a bill that establishes the **young adult voluntary foster care program**. Passed by the 2013 legislature and signed by Governor Neil Abercrombie this summer, the bill extends the voluntary care and supervision of eligible foster youth until age 21. Currently, foster youth are emancipated from State supervision at 18 years old; some need more time to transition to independence. The DHS worked closely with the HI HOPES Youth Leadership Program to draft the bill. The organization is comprised of young leaders previously part of the State's foster care system. After the signing ceremony, HI HOPES leaders celebrated their future. *Photo in the capitol rotunda by Judith Wilhoite*



2013 Hawai'i Food Bank Campaign

Many thanks to the DHS employees who generously contributed cash and canned goods to this worthy cause. As a department, the DHS collected 2,191 pounds of food and raised \$4,766 for Hawai'i's hungry individuals and families. Thanks to OYS for spearheading the DHS/Hawaii Food Bank Campaign.

Aloha United Way Results

DHS staff raised more than \$16,600 in cash and payroll deductions for the AUW campaign, and more than \$2,400 from special events. "We had a terrific group whose focus was to build awareness of AUW services," said committee chair, Suzy Mahelona. "Committee members established their fundraising goals and enthusiastically coordinated activities to meet their quota. Thanks to the committee and the entire DHS staff for your outstanding kokua."

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Produced by the
Department of Human Services
Public Information Office

1390 Miller Street, #210
Honolulu, HI 96813

Phone: 808-586-4892
Fax: 808-586-4890
E-mail: dhs@dhs.hawaii.gov
<http://humanservices.hawaii.gov>