

State of Hawaii

Department of  
Human Services



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# Across DHS: Island to Island



Note from

Director Patricia McManaman and Deputy Director Barbara Yamashita

Dear Colleagues,

As our appointment to the Department of Human Services draws to a close, we want to express our sincere gratitude to all of you for your continued commitment to the DHS and to those we serve. It has been a pleasure and an honor to be a part of this incredible organization. We are humbled by the enormity of the work and the numbers of individual lives that are impacted by your collective work.

We enjoyed meeting you and learning about your special skills and the passion each of you bring to the DHS. Together, we shared moments of success.

Most exciting for us was being able to work alongside you to rebuild this department—program by program. Daily, we were able to celebrate accomplishments small and large . . . some HUGE! . . . like increasing the DHS workforce. Over the past four years, your work and perseverance helped rebuild the permanent workforce to more than 2,140 positions and increase the annual budget to over \$2.6 billion dollars. As a result, the department has been able to improve services and increase the number of people served.

We were fortunate to share in the development and continued evolution of KOLEA – building necessary IT capacity to meet seemingly unrealistic timelines — and succeeding!!! The department began enrolling individuals on October 1, 2013—meeting mandated timelines of the Affordability Care Act.

We were able to support and witness changes to our business processes, and to celebrate those successes with you. Your hard work was recognized locally and nationally, and you received awards and accolades for your exceptional work.

We observed positive and progressive change as you built new IT support so Vocational Rehabilitation clients could be better served. Together, we celebrated your success of “going live” with relatively few glitches in the new system, and that joyous feeling of relief and success!

We joined you in celebrating the implementation of Imua Kākou — the voluntary extension of foster care to young adults up to age 21. That multi-year collaborative effort led to successes beyond initial expectations, and to national recognition.

We shared in the success of passing juvenile justice reform legislation. We were part of a monumental moment when, after almost 16 years of unsuccessful tries, the State legislature passed an Emergency Contraceptive (EC) measure that ensures access to EC for victims of sexual assault. We also were able to share the joy of watching improvements at our various public housing properties, particularly Mayor Wright and the Towers at Kuhio.

You do great things. And you will continue to do great things because that is who you are individually and as a department.

These are just a few highlights of the many joyful times at the DHS that we are grateful to have been a part of. Your dedication to this department, and its mission to serve our most vulnerable residents, has been inspirational. We are honored to have been a part of this incredible department. We are proud to have served with you and wish you all continued success. Best Wishes and Happy Holidays.

Sincerely and Humbly,

Pat and Barbara

## 2014 Department of Human Services Incentive and Service Awards



**Kenny Fink (MQD) DHS Manager of the Year.** Under Kenny's leadership, the MQD has improved health care outcomes for Hawaii's low-income beneficiaries, and kept Hawaii MQD costs below national healthcare inflation. Phase One of the KOLEA system, electronic eligibility determinations, also was successfully launched under his leadership.



**Eloise Uehara (Staff Offices) Sustained Superior Performance Award.** Eloise processed nearly 65,000 pre-audit and payroll actions valued in excess of \$220 million dollars. Her work ensures that State government funds are properly distributed in a timely manner, and avoid penalties and the imposition of interest.



**Sharon Hashimoto (BESSD) Sustained Superior Performance Award.** As a result of Sharon's on-site visits and recommendations, Eligibility Workers better understand SNAP rules and regulations, provide public assistance benefits more timely and accurately, and take steps to combat fraud and abuse.



**Anne Miyamoto (SSD) Sustained Superior Performance Award.** Anne recruits, trains, and places seniors who serve as role models, mentors and tutors for children with special needs in school settings across Kauai.



**Betty Lee Mara (HPHA) Sustained Superior Performance Award.** A Housing Plumber I who inspects, repairs and/or replaces defective plumbing pipes, fixtures, and valves . . . with style. Betty also has saved HPHA thousands of dollars in fines.



**Kimberly Wu (DVR) Sustained Superior Performance Award.** Kimberly was recognized for her exceptional attitude and work ethic, ability to see beyond employment barriers, and her ability to create employment opportunities for her clients.

*Awards (continued on page 3)*





**Aileen Hiramatsu (MQD) Sustained Superior Performance Award & DHS Employee of the Year.** Under Aileen's extraordinary leadership, the creation, development and implementation of KOLEA can be called a success.



**Special Team (HPHA) DHS Team of the Year.** The 25 person team organized into five highly efficient mobile units to complete major renovations to 77 vacant units. The team saved the HPHA countless dollars by doing repairs in-house and eliminating the use of outside contractors.

### **Statewide Disaster Response: Winds, Rains nor Lava Flow Can Stop the DHS**

During Tropical Storm Iselle, designated personnel worked in 12-hour shifts August 7 through August 9 at the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA, formerly known as Civil Defense) Diamond Head facility to answer DHS-related questions and to guide clients who required special assistance. Through the end of August, the DHS was present at the state's Joint Information Center and Disaster Assistance Relief Centers (DARCs). [Special thanks to Alison Lee, Susan Foard, Patti Bazin, Lim Young, Susan Yamamoto, Lance Abe, Troy Aina, Genevieve Akana, Janice Asano, Donna Ayala, Ened Batalona, Lee Ann Carvalho, Sharon Cummings, Kaycie Demotta, Kimberly Demotta, Kanan Dettloff, Clarence Foster, Cindy Fukuda, Janet Fukushima, Phyllis Funada, Nadine Grace, Jadelyn Higa-Onodera, Diane Huff, Lois Iwashita, Lynn Kawachika, Nicole Keo, Erin Kita, David Kohara, Marlyns Kohara, David Kuniyoshi, Allison Lee, Arlene Loughmiller, Karen Matsumoto, Robert Narimatsu, David Nunez, Josephino Orilla, Eladine Olevao, Korry Pacheco, Ann Pilor, Peggy Pitoy-Schmedes, Kelly Robinson, Kayla Rosenfeld, Sherry Sayaboc, Scott Seto, Terrienne Sewake, Len Shimabukuro, Sidney Shimabukuro, Maurice Takeshima, Olivia Taum, Amy Torres, Michelle Uchima, Iris Venzon, Corinne Yabuta, and all Division Administrative and Staff Officers.](#)

On Hawaii Island, where the majority of Iselle damage occurred, the BESSD staff operated four assistance offices in Pahoia and Mountain View. While still maintaining their regular caseloads so other households would continue receiving benefits without interruption, staff helped SNAP beneficiaries whose food items spoiled during the storm apply for monetary reimbursement. Reimbursement was limited to the actual dollar value of food destroyed and did not exceed the household's current monthly allotment. In total, more than 3,500 households were reimbursed almost \$1,050,000 in SNAP benefits between August 12 and August 30. BESSD staff also was ready to deploy during Tropical Storm Anna in mid-October.

Meantime, the lava flow continues to challenge East Hawaii residents. To monitor the safety of our beneficiaries, the BESSD Hawaii Island staff regularly attends community meetings regarding flow advancement, and network with the residents and businesses on a daily basis.

### **Updated Disaster Plan**

The department management team, led by DDIR Barbara Yamashita, which included Malia Taum-Deenik, Mike Imai, Lisa Nakao, Katherine Jumalon, and Susan Yamamoto, worked for over a year to update and revise three department emergency response plans: the Department Emergency Operations Plan (DEOC); the Departmental Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP); and the State Repatriation Plan. The process was guided by Mr. Ed Teixeira who volunteered his time, expertise and experience to help the department update its plans. Mr. Teixeira's guidance and involvement were invaluable. The DHS is grateful for his true gift of aloha. Kudos also go out to the emergency management team. Great job!

## Congratulations, BESSD!

### Federal Oversight Ends



The DHS Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD) is no longer under the Federal Court's jurisdiction in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) timeliness class action lawsuit. The Court entered a preliminary injunction order in January 2012 that required the DHS to meet the 95% timeliness rate for SNAP benefit issuance by December 2012, and to maintain the same rate through June 2013. Following the design, and implementation of the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) program, the average monthly timeliness rate for SNAP issuances reached 95% in November 2012. As mandated, the BESSD maintained that rate through June 2013. As a result of these measurable positive outcomes, the DHS successfully settled the lawsuit. In September 2014, the U.S. District Court issued a Stipulation and Order of Settlement and Dismissal. Good work, everyone!

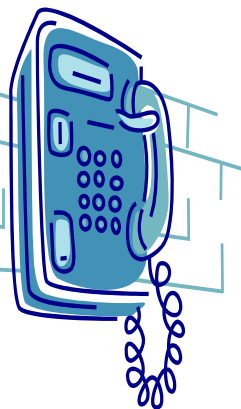
### Investigations Office (INVO) Database Implementation

BESSD's administrative responsibilities include investigating and reporting fraud complaints to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS). To better track its complaints and investigation results, BESSD partnered with the State of Hawaii Office of Information Management & Technology (OIMT) to design, develop and implement an Investigation Management System (IMS). Launched April 8, 2014, the goals were to: 1) address data integration; 2) reduce duplicated effort and data; 3) improve process consistency and documentation; 4) archive policy; 5) validate data; and 6) facilitate the annual reporting to USDA/FNS.

### BESSD Awards

The BESSD recently received a federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) **bonus of \$915,580** for the most improved Program Access Index (PAI) for fiscal year 2013. This is the second consecutive year, and third time overall, that Hawaii has been recognized for its program improvements. An estimated 99,348 Hawaii households (195,448 individuals) receive SNAP assistance each month. On average, BESSD issues \$44 million in benefits each month to Hawaii SNAP recipients.

The BESSD also received a 2014 Global Case Management Award for **Excellence in Social Services** for its recently-deployed enterprise content management (ECM) solution that supports 22 office locations across the islands. "The ECM has empowered our staff to capture more securely and accurately our beneficiaries' case information and to access that information from any location" said Pankaj Bhanot, BESSD Administrator. "Staff can now monitor the process more efficiently allowing the agency to deliver support much sooner."



### New Public Assistance Information Line

BESSD has implemented a new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system (Public Assistance Line) that uses cloud technology and web services to provide benefit information to BESSD clients and the public. The new IVR system replaced the 1999 legacy system that relied on telephone lines. The outdated technology created a bottleneck of incoming calls that resulted in a 65% caller hang-up rate. The redesigned IVR system, launched in September, receives an average of 795 calls daily with no caller hang-ups. The new Public Assistance Line Information number is **1-855-643-1643**.

## Imua Kākou. . . Child Welfare Services Branch

### Effective July 1, 2014 . . . .

Imua Kākou is a voluntary program that allows young adults who turn 18 years old in foster care, or youth who were adopted or placed in a guardianship after age 16, to participate in the foster care program until age 21. **Imua Kākou** provides extended foster board payments, case management support, housing opportunities, independent living skills, assistance in securing jobs or job training, and support to continue education.

“We are thrilled to be launching *Imua Kākou*,” said DHS Director Pat McManaman. “The ground work for the program was truly a collaborative effort between the DHS, foster youth, community organizations, the Judiciary, and the Legislature. There has been a need for these services for a long time, and we believe *Imua Kākou* will provide opportunities for vulnerable young adults and transform lives in the process.”



*DHS Director Patricia McManaman (L) and Epic 'Ohana Youth Advocate Noy Worachit (R) speak to MSNBC Host Ronan Farrow*

To participate in **Imua Kākou** the young adult must be:

- completing high school or a program equivalent;
- enrolled in post-secondary or vocational education;
- participating in a program to promote employment;
- employed for at least 80 hours per month; or
- incapable of doing any of the above due to a medical condition.

Recent studies show that foster youth who exit care without any support are at a high risk of homelessness, unemployment, substance abuse and incarceration. Imua Kākou provides these young adults with an opportunity to succeed through education and supportive employment. As of October, 156 youth had applied for the program. Visit the [Epic 'Ohana website](#) to view an Imua Kākou public service announcement produced by foster youth.

Imua Kākou also received national attention. In August 2014, MSNBC Host Ronan Farrow spoke with Director Patricia McManaman, and youth advocate Noy Worachit, about this game-changer for the foster care system. [Click here](#) to see and hear the interview.

Also effective July 1, 2014, was the first **increase to foster board payments** in 20 years. The monthly per child payment to Hawaii resources caregivers was increased from a base rate of \$529 to \$575 for 0-5 year olds, \$650 for 6-11 year olds, and \$676 for children aged 12 and above.

The increase in basic board payment also applies to families eligible for adoption assistance, permanency assistance, youth receiving higher education board allowance payments, and to young adults who choose to enroll in Imua Kākou.

Effective October 2014 . . . specially trained CWS staff began using **Unidentified Perpetrator with Serious Harm Protocols** in cases where perpetrators are unidentified and the child has been seriously harmed. These are often the most challenging cases for CWS and the Courts. Under these protocols, the CWS will continually monitor families to assure safety and progress as they move through counseling and other intervention programs.

### 2014 National Reunification Month Event

The seven member Kim-Seu Family was recognized this year for its long journey to reunification. Parents Vivian and Randy hope their experience inspires other families and shows that reunifications are possible. *SSD (continued on page 6)*





## The Maui Inter-Disciplinary Team

By Scott Seto, Administrator

Maui Adult Protective and Community Services Section

The Maui Inter-disciplinary Team (IDT) meets monthly to discuss issues that impact seniors receiving services from several state and county agencies. The mission of the IDT is to encourage collaboration between human service agencies that serve kupuna in Maui County and to strengthen agency partnerships for better outcomes.

On July 10, 2014, the IDT celebrated its 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Events included a presentation by Dr. Lorin Pang, District Health Officer, Maui County District Health officer, who spoke about fall prevention and the emerging use of technology to assist in preventing falls.



More than 40 representatives from state and county agencies as well as community partners attended the event including: the Department of Health, Public Health Nursing; Department of Human Services, Maui Adult Protective Services; The Maui County Office on Aging; Maui Memorial Medical Center; Kaunoha Senior Services; Hale Mahaolu; Bayada Home Health Care; Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i; Neighbors Helping Neighbors; and Maui County Day Care Centers.

Thanks to Maui County District Office Public Health Nurses Christopher Thomas RN and Supervisor Jayme Tamaki, RN for organizing the event. Thanks to Hale Mahaolu Ekolu for providing the venue and hospitality. Congratulations to everyone for their hard work and program success!

## Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Job Recruitment Fair for People with Disabilities

Partnering for the first time with the Starwood Hotels and Resorts Waikiki, the DVR sponsored a recruitment fair to promote access and ability for individuals with disabilities. More than 75 pre-screened applicants interviewed with 12 separate employers, including Bank of Hawaii, Diagnostic Laboratories, Hawaii Pacific Health, Oahu Work Links, Hawaiian Telcom, Kili, LLC, Starwood Hotels, and Unitek. The employers conducted a total of 129 job interviews from 9 am to 3 pm. Jasmine Wong, Starwood Employment Manager said, "this event helps us see the person behind the application. It feels great to be part of the effort that helps people with disabilities find meaningful employment."

Representatives from the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), U. S. Veterans Initiative, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the City and County of Honolulu, Department of Community Services, and the State of Hawaii were also onsite to answer any legal questions, and to educate applicants about their rights.

Employers praised the quality of the job applicants and noted that they were well prepared for jobs they selected. It is the hope of all partners to conduct this recruitment fair on an annual basis.



*Lanikila Pacific, provider of Meals on Wheels, interviewed Ryan Manzano*



*Bank of Hawaii interviewed Lucerne N. Acosta for a Bank Teller position*

## Med-QUEST Division Updates

### QUEST Integration

The Med-QUEST Division (MQD) has launched a more patient centric Medicaid program to better serve clients. QUEST Integration effectively combines and replaces the QUEST and QUEST Expanded Access (QExA) programs. The health plans participating in QUEST Integration are Aloha-Care, Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA), Kaiser Foundation Health Plan (Oahu & Maui only), 'Ohana Health Plan and UnitedHealthCare Community Plan.

“The benefits of QUEST Integration include more health plan choices for aged, blind or disabled individuals, and a greater ability for a beneficiary to remain with the same health plan upon turning 65 or developing a disability,” explained Dr. Kenny Fink, MQD Administrator. “Additionally, eligible beneficiaries will gain expanded access to home and community based services to prevent decline to institutional level of care.” QUEST Integration also reduces administrative burden by creating a single managed care program.

The MQD took multiple steps to inform the public about QUEST Integration, including holding public hearings, conducting community outreach and soliciting public comments. The MQD staff made numerous and substantive changes in response to public input. As a result, QUEST Integration is an innovative program shaped by the community for the community.



### KOLEA Update

The Med-QUEST Division (MQD) and its contractor, KPMG, are in the final stages of the next major release in January 2015. User Acceptance Testing will be completed by mid-November and training will be conducted in December and January. The new release will provide enhancements to both the worker and client portals. As an example, for the client portal, users will be able to complete and submit an application, report household changes, upload documents to support eligibility determinations, and review notices. With the implementation of the enterprise content management system, offices will be able to scan documents such as applications and supporting documentation, and upload files such as branch reports. KOLEA will perform more automated determinations for non-MAGI eligibility groups and generate more specific notices. Additional interfaces between DHS and the Department of Public Safety and Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility and federal interfaces to PARIS and DEERS also will be implemented. The new interfaces provide additional verifications to support eligibility determinations. Following the next release, MQD will be working on implementing a customer relations management system that will support the Call Center functions.

Since the inception of KOLEA in October 2013, the MQD eligibility offices took over processing of all medical assistance applications and cases. The offices have been processing an average of 5,500 to 7,500 applications per month with the highest number received in March 2014 of nearly 11,600 applications in March 2014. Approximately one-third of the applications are submitted on-line and the Department continues to look for ways to encourage more on-line participation.

## New Hires, Transfers and Retirements

**Hired** June 2014 as Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) Administrator. Mark Patterson has been employed by the State of Hawaii since June 1, 1993. He began his State service as an Adult Corrections Officer III and over the years has worked his way up to an ACO VI. Prior to transferring to HYCF Mark was employed as the Warden at the Women's Community Correctional Center.



*Mark Patterson*



*Lisa Nakao*

**Transferred** October 2014 as the DHS Administrative Assistant in the Director's Office. Prior to this position, Lisa Nakao worked as a Planner in the DHS Budget, Planning and Management Office (BPMO) and Social Services Division (SSD). In total, she has 19 years of experience working as a Planner which also included working at the Department of Health and the Department of Transportation.

**Transferred** in September 2014 to the DHS Administrative Offices to oversee the task of moving BESSD and SSD to the KOLEA platform. Sharing the same IT platform will allow program administrators to share client information and to serve beneficiaries beyond a single DHS division. Prior to this move, Aileen Hiramatsu planned and managed implementation of the new Med-QUEST Division integrated eligibility system.



*Aileen Hiramatsu*



*Susan Yamamoto*

**Retired** August 2014. Susan Yamamoto became a civil servant and DHS employee in 1989 when she began work as a Management Analyst. She transferred to the Department of Budget and Finance in 1990 and returned to DHS in 1995. Susan assisted then-Director Susan Chandler and Deputy Director Kate Stanley with legislative activities. In 2001, Susan moved to the Director's Office as an Administrative Assistant, as well as the Legislative and Civil Defense Coordinator. "It was a lot of fun and I learned a lot. But, the best thing of all was the good people I have had the pleasure to work with all these years and the relationships and friends I have made."

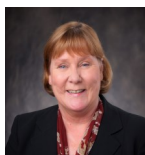
**Retired** September 2014. Joe Deponio's first State of Hawaii job was as a Tax Returns Examiner at the Department of Taxation. In September 1990, Joe transferred to the DHS Budget Office as a Program Budget Analyst. In 2013, he was temporarily assigned to supervise the Budget Staff. Between March and September 2014, Joe served as the Budget Staff Supervisor. He retired from the DHS with 24 years of State service.



*Joe Deponio*

### Transitioning Out November 2014 . . .

Director  
Patricia McManaman



Deputy Director  
Barbara Yamashita





Neil Abercrombie, Governor  
Patricia McManaman, Director  
Barbara Yamashita, Deputy Director

### **Across DHS: From Island to Island**

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