

Across the DHS: Island to Island

Dedicated to Improving People's Lives



Spring 2015

The First 100 Days

The first 100 days of any new administration are crucial in setting the overall tone of office, demonstrating a governing style, and building a brand and reputation. The public, the media, and scholars have been using the 100-day mark to gauge presidential success and activism since 1933, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced the concept.

While the Department of Human Services (DHS) is no presidential office, it has accomplished amazing things in the first 100 days of the Ige administration. Leadership, staff officers and division administrators (SO/DA) have re-established department priorities, prepared and provided legislative testimony, given multiple radio, newspaper and magazine interviews, strengthened community partnerships, and met with the Star-Advertiser Editorial Board to set the DHS record straight. And of course, on March 20, 2015, the Hawaii State Senate confirmed Rachael Wong, DrPH, as the new DHS director.

The complementary styles of Director Wong and Deputy Director, Pankaj Bhanot, and their "anything is possible" attitudes recently caught the attention of Governor David Ige. The Governor and his Chief of Staff, Mike McCartney, attended the March 5, 2015 DHS SO/DA meeting in the Liliuokalani Building to hear from department leaders, to learn about DHS issues, and to answer questions.

Prior to hearing from the DHS leadership, Governor Ige thanked everyone in the room for their public service. "Government employees are the State's most important asset," he said. "My job is to give you the tools to do your job and to give you the best opportunity to do what you do."

Since the beginning of the year, the DHS and its attached agencies and commissions have been actively doing their jobs. The **Med-QUEST Division (MQD)** successfully implemented QUEST Integration on January 1, 2015. QUEST Integration combines the QUEST and QUEST Expanded Access (QExA) programs into one program and offers enrollment options in five health plans. QUEST Integration beneficiaries can remain with their health plans and doctors when they turn 65 years old or if they become disabled. The introduction of QUEST Integration also gives aged, blind, and disabled clients more health plan options, and reduces the administrative burden on providers.

Leslie Tawata took over as Acting MQD Administrator on Feb. 28, 2015. **Patti Bazin** serves as Assistant MQD Administrator. Thanks to both of you for your leadership.

The online Medicaid eligibility determination application, KOLEA, continues to improve functionality and to make determinations on an average of 7,400 applications received per month, and 19,500 annual redeterminations per month. Recent upgrades to KOLEA have expanded user options to include electronic uploading of documents, online status checks of applications, and the option to view MQD notices online. As of March 2015, Medicaid enrollment was more than 317,000.

The MQD's underlying goal is to ensure access to quality health care. One example of that commitment to beneficiaries is implementation of the Premium Assistance Program (PAP) for 7,500 adult COFA individuals who were transferred to the Hawaii Health Connector (HHC) in March 2015. To prevent any interruption in

(Continued on page 4)

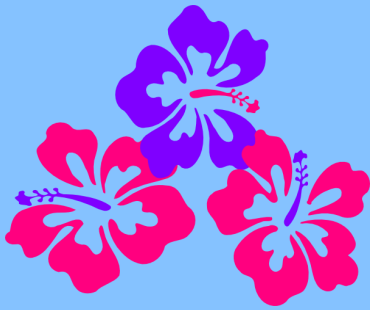


Table of Contents

The First 100 Days	1
Director's Note	2
Office of Youth Services Recognition and Awards	3
2015 Legislative Session	5
Do You Hear the Voices?	6
Hawaii Says NO MORE Campaign	6
Incentive and Superior Performance Award Nominations	8
New FMO Website	8
Never Too Late to Say, Thank you	8

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David Y. Ige, Governor
 Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director
 Pankaj Bhanot, Deputy Director

Note from DIR Wong

It is an honor to be part of the DHS family. Clearly, the people who work at the DHS, the Office of Youth Services, the Hawaii Public Housing Authority, and the Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women—as well as those who volunteer with the Commission on Fatherhood—do so because of a shared commitment to serve our community and to improve our neighbors' health and well-being. As someone who comes from the mission-driven non-profit sector, I truly feel that I'm now part of the biggest non-profit in the state!

As a statewide workforce of more than 2,300, the DHS will continue serving Hawaii individuals and families with quality programs and culturally-appropriate services. We will emphasize open communication, transparency, and fiscal responsibility, and let collaboration guide us as we move forward to strengthen our shared communities.

During the past three months, the DHS staff has been busy drafting legislation, working with community members, meeting federal requirements, and leading efforts to provide programs and services to our *keiki* through *kupuna*. This issue of *Across the DHS: Island to Island* highlights some of the great work our divisions and attached agencies and commissions are doing, some of which has been recognized on the state and national levels.

It is wonderful to have this opportunity to work with the great DHS team. Thank you for all that you do to support our community.

Pankaj Bhanot



Rachael

Note from the DDIR Bhanot

I am excited to be back in the Director's Office. It is a great opportunity for me to work with all of you to further the mission of the Department of Human Services – to provide timely, efficient and effective programs, services and benefits for the purpose of achieving the outcome of empowering Hawaii's most vulnerable people; and to expand their capacity for self-sufficiency, self-determination, independence, healthy choices, quality of life, and personal dignity. I fully support Director Wong's emphasis on open communication, transparency and fiscal responsibility.

In addition to working with Rachael to position the department to best serve our statewide community, I am working closely with leadership from all DHS divisions, staff offices and attached agencies to re-establish department priorities and to strengthen community partnerships. I also work closely with the Legislature, Governor, and the Department of Budget and Finance to ensure that DHS needs are properly conveyed, understood and funded.

I would like to thank Governor Ige and Director Wong for this wonderful opportunity to work with all of you at the Department of Human Services. Thank you for your commitment to the DHS and the families, children and individuals we serve.

Office of Youth Services—State & National Awards

The Executive Director of the Office of Youth Services (OYS), **David Hipp**, has been recognized by **Mental Health America of Hawaii** as the **2015 Outstanding Government Leader** for initiating and leading many important juvenile justice reforms. Those reforms include ensuring that youth in the juvenile justice system charged with low-level offenses, and who are not a threat to society are kept out of the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) and redirected to mental health and other services they may need. This reform “prevents the re-traumatization of youths who oftentimes find themselves in this system due to past trauma,” David explains. David also expanded the availability of mental health services for youth on probation, and their families.



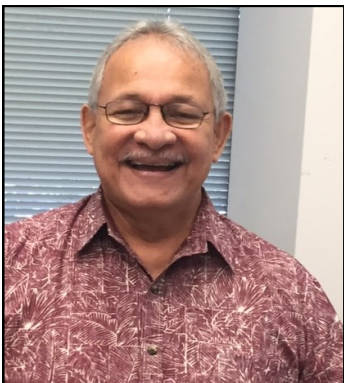
Mental Health America of Hawaii awards are given for Outstanding Community Leader, Outstanding Government Leader, Outstanding Adult Consumer Advocate, Outstanding Youth Consumer Advocate, Outstanding Business Leader, and Outstanding Family Advocate.

“Adjudicated youth often suffer from serious mental health problems, and David’s efforts ensure they get the treatment they deserve, instead of, or during, incarceration,” says Marya Grambs, Executive Director of Mental Health America of Hawai’i.

David Hipp and the other community leaders will be recognized at the 10th Annual Mental Health Mahalo Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, May 12, 2015, at the Ala Moana Hotel from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. The event is open to the public. Reservations are required. For more information call 521-1846 or visit www.mentalhealth-hi.org/events.

OYS Juvenile Justice Program Coordinator, **Edward Chargualaf**, has been recognized by the **Coalition for Juvenile Justice** as the nation’s **2015 Outstanding Juvenile Justice Specialist**. For the past 30 years, Ed has helped kids move through the juvenile justice system in Hawaii and on his home island of Guam. He also has worked with the US Department of Defense to secure much needed federal funding for juvenile justice. While working with Hawaii’s at-risk youth, Ed lead the fight against disproportionate minority contact (DMC) and planned and implemented programs and services “that reflect and integrate culture-based, trauma informed approaches grounded in practicality and usefulness,” David Hipp wrote in his support of the state’s Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee nomination letter for Ed. The OYS executive director said he supported Ed’s nomination because the Chamorro native “has consistently shown how to live a life of integrity and passion that makes us all better people, which correlates and results in a better juvenile justice system that ultimately benefits our youth and state.” Ed also has advocated for improving re-entry for youth returning home after incarceration at the HYCF, and convened partners to plan a more coordinated system of care, mentorship, and skill-building for youth and their families during the transition.

Jay T. Kitamura, chair of the State Juvenile Justice State Advisory Committee, nominated Ed for the Outstanding Juvenile Justice Specialist award. “True to his roots and his training in partnering with communities to assess their own needs and strengths, Ed values bringing together local knowledge as well as data resulting from rigorous research to better understand the complex problems of juvenile justice system involvement for youth, families, and communities in Hawaii. Ed personifies a commitment to work at the messy interface of government and community, recognizing the importance of building trust, identifying where system improvements can be made, and creating innovative solutions together.”



Ed says his proudest moment in his 10 years with OYS was developing and implementing a process for distributing funds to culturally-based grass-roots programs in smaller Hawaii communities. “These programs provide youth a sense of identity,” he says. “The kids need the grounding.”

Ed Chargualaf will receive his Tony Gobar Award on June 11, 2015 during the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Annual Conference at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. Congratulations to OYS!

(100 Days Continued from page 1)

their health care coverage, the PAP pays the clients' individual share of the insurance premium. COFA individuals and Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) whose income is less than 100% FPL, are enrolled in a Silver Level health plan, and who receive the maximum advanced premium tax credit (APTC) and cost-share reduction (CSR) are eligible for the PAP. The PAP does not pay the premium for stand-alone dental or vision plans. Prior to the PAP, individuals in the LPR demographic were ineligible for state or federal health care coverage due to their immigration status.

The **Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD)** continues to support more than 193,000 individuals across the state who receive SNAP (food assistance) benefits. Program administrators report they have maintained the federally-mandated timeliness processing rate of 96% or better, and received a performance bonus for their continued compliance.

BESSD also has made progress serving Hawaii's homeless populations. The Homeless Programs Office (HPO) aligned with nationally-recognized best practices of Housing First (HF) to house and provide robust services to the chronically homeless with the highest acuity (needs) without pre-requisite compliance with treatment services. In this program, each client applies for all public benefits for which they are eligible and is provided case management services.

HF also is a primary focus of the Governor's Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH), which is administratively attached to DHS. The HICH chair is appointed by the Governor and works closely with the HPO to implement a HF approach that retools the way Hawaii addresses homelessness. The HF initiative promotes a coordinated entry system consistent with the requirements of the federal HEARTH Act, assesses individuals and families using a common assessment tool, and uses the resulting data to understand the needs of the homeless on Oahu. To date, the HPO and HICH have conducted over 2,300 assessments. More than 100 chronically homeless individuals are in various stages of preparation for housing and services.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) clients now earn wages that surpass the federal goal of \$11.35 per hour. In Hawaii, VR clients earn on average \$11.89 per hour. Prior to receiving VR services, the average annual earning per individual was \$4,490.20. After receiving VR services, the average annual earning per rehabilitated individual increased 314% to \$18,603.52!

The **Social Services Division (SSD)** continues to support programs and services that protect and ensure the safety and well-being of vulnerable children and adults. Additionally, the Adult Protective and Community Services Branch (APCSB) is preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Foster Grandparent Program and the 41st anniversary of the Senior Companion Program. A national representative is flying in from Washington, D.C. in May 2015 to participate in festivities and to promote volunteerism.

(Continued on page 7)



From L>R front row: Paul Sasaki (AQCRO), Aphirak Bamrungruan (LEP), Lisa Nakao (DIR), Malia Taum-Deenik (DIR), Kayla Rosenfeld (DIR), Governor David Y. Ige (GOV), Rachael Wong (DIR), Susan Foard (DVR), Ryan Shimamura (OIT), Leslie Tawata (MQD), Scott Nakasone (BESSD), Catherine Betts (HSCSW). Missing, Mike McCartney (GOV) who snapped the photo.

From L>R back row: Barbara Arashiro (HPHA), Irene Nakano (AAO), Ken Kitamura (FMO), Albert Perez (DVR), Pankaj Bhanot (DDIR), Yvonne Tanaka (PERS), Julie Morita (BESSD), Mona Maehara (SSD), Susan Fernandez (BPMM), Elliot Kano (SSD).



DHS administrators gathered in the Director's Office prior to the Feb. 20, 2015 Legislative briefing. L>R: Pankaj Bhanot (DDIR), David Hipp (OYS), Rachael Wong (DIR), Susan Foard (DVR), Albert Perez (DVR), Kimberly Wu (DVR), Lili A. Young (DAG).

The 2015 Legislative Session

Anticipating a tight state fiscal environment, Governor David Ige limited the size and scope of the 2015 administrative budget and bill package to 104 bills for all executive agencies, attached agencies, and commissions. The Governor's underlying message is: there is already enough public policy to implement, and the executive branch needs to execute its mandates in an efficient and effective way.

The DHS bill package includes three Med-QUEST proposals, one BESSD proposal, and three HPHA proposals. At this point in the legislation session, DHS has submitted testimony on 34 House bills (12 of which have fiscal implications) and 40 Senate bills (17 of which have fiscal implications). Because of state budget restraints, DHS testimony has consistently asked the legislators to reference the department's priorities as identified in the executive budget bill.

On March 11, 2015 House Finance Committee Chair, Sylvia Luke, announced substantial reductions to the executive budget, HB 500. Thanks to the leadership of **Susan Fernandez**, chief of the DHS Budget Management Office (BMO), the DHS is working to have those items restored through the budget process.

At first crossover on March 12 (bills must pass three readings on the floor of each chamber to "cross over" to the other chamber for consideration), the legislative team continued to monitor and submit testimony on 29 bills and to monitor several other measures that may impact DHS programs. Additionally, March 13 was the deadline for legislators to submit substantive resolutions. Resolutions are measures that may request action by a government agency, such as participating in a task force, preparing a report to the legislature on a particular issue, and/or requesting the Auditor to conduct an audit. DHS will likely submit testimony on a number of resolutions.

The legislative session ends on May 7. It is possible for a bill to be signed into law prior to closing day or "adjournment *sine die*." If a bill moves through the receiving chamber without amendment and passes the readings on the floor of the receiving chamber, the bill can be transmitted to the Governor's office for signature and become law. DHS has requested expedited consideration of SB 1106, Relating to Medicaid Managed Care Program, and SB 1107, Making an Emergency Appropriation For General Assistance.

Many thanks to the DHS Office of Information Technology (OIT) for creating an internet and cloud based legislative tracking mechanism for the DHS. The cloud based system allows document sharing and has improved the drafting and review of proposed testimony between divisions and the Director's office.

For more information about the status of a bill or a DHS legislative position, contact **Malia Taum-Deenik** or **Lisa Nakao** in the Director's office.

~ Article by Malia Taum-Deenik



HICH Chairman Colin Kippen, Rep. Mark Hashem, and DHS DDIR Pankaj Bhanot discuss housing and homeless issues. [Click here](#) to access the legislative package.

NO Hurting



Do You Hear the Voices?

Jalena Haas, a 10 year-old foster child from Kauai has won first place in the 12th Annual Hawai'i International Training Summit on Preventing, Assessing & Treating Trauma Across the Lifespan, Children's School Art Contest. Jalena currently lives with her resource family (foster parents).

Florencia Corregedore, Jalena's resource mom, says, "When Jalena arrived in our home last May she was very quiet and introverted. In less than a year she has developed into a strong, outspoken young lady who does artwork everywhere she can."

The primary mission of Children's School Art Contest is to help instill Aloha in developing interpersonal relationships and to avoid violence and/or to provide support to others who have been affected by violence and abuse, explains Steven Choy, Co-Chair of the Hawai'i Trauma Training Summit. "The Art Committee believed that Jalena best conveyed these thoughts in the elementary division. They were impressed with her understanding that although one may have experienced trauma in their lives, there are people that have given aloha

to those that have been hurt and this has given them hope and a better life. The committee hopes that Jalena will know that there are many people to help her build bridges to a better future."

The Children's Art Contest was sponsored by the Department of Education. Jalena's artwork was one of 800 statewide entries from more than 30 schools. "We are so proud of her," says Florencia. She and her husband Shane have been caregivers to eight children over the past five years, including Jalena and her two sisters. "We're grateful to Kauai social workers **Karla Huerta-Balocan and Marcia Ota**. We would not have stayed on as resource caregivers without their support."

Thanks to financial support from the Friends of the Children's Justice Center, Jalena and Florencia were able to attend the April 2, 2015 Luncheon and Awards Ceremony on Oahu. "They made it possible for us to attend without worrying about how we would pay for the trip." With tears in her eyes and emotion in her voice, Florencia said, "Jalena wouldn't let me read her speech because she wanted it to be a surprise. She said it's her public way of thanking me and the family."

Jalena's artwork will be displayed at the Hawaii Convention Center during the conference and at various malls in April 2015 during Child Abuse Prevention Month. Members of the Art Committee say they also may create a 2016 calendar.

The 12th Annual Hawai'i International Training Summit on Preventing, Assessing & Treating Trauma Across the Lifespan conference is sponsored by the Institute on Violence, Abuse & Trauma Institute on Violence, Abuse & Trauma at Alliant International University, Argosy University, the National Partnership To End Interpersonal Violence Across the Lifespan, Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute, and Working Together to End Violence & Abuse.

The conference ran from March 31 — April 2, 2015 at the Hawaii Convention Center. Click [here](#) for more information.

HAWAII SAYS
NO MORE | TOGETHER WE CAN END
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT



DHS Deputy Director,
Pankaj Bhanot

THE FACTS

- 1 in 7 women in Hawai'i are sexually assaulted
- Over 500 domestic violence survivors seek support from programs every day in Hawai'i
- 1 in 3 teens experience sexual or physical abuse or threats from a boyfriend or girlfriend in one year
- 1 in 2 women and 1 in 5 men have experienced some form of sexual victimization in their lives

Using the signature blue [symbol](#) to increase visibility and foster greater dialogue, Hawai'i Says NO MORE seeks to end the stigma, shame and silence of domestic violence and sexual assault. <http://hawaiisaysnomore.org>

(100 Days Continued from page 3)

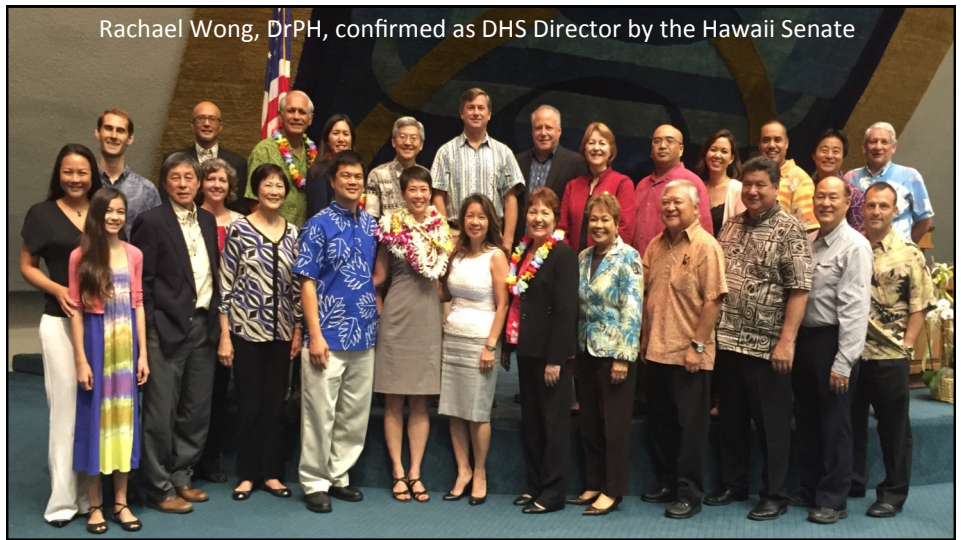
Under the direction and leadership of the **Office of Youth Services (OYS)** law enforcement professionals statewide received training related to juvenile justice. "Effective Police Interaction with Youth" was designed to help patrol officers better understand youth behavior and to apply practical strategies for reducing the negative outcomes and/or police actions with youth, especially Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Youth. "Surviving the Night with the Juvenile Offender" was designed to protect the physical, emotional and mental health of the juvenile offender during those first critical 24 hours in custody. Both trainings have been critically acclaimed and widely accepted by members of the law enforcement communities.

The OYS also has been leading the effort to affect the necessary juvenile justice reform changes outlined in Act 201, which focus on increasing public safety and holding juvenile offenders accountable for their actions, while reducing costs to Hawaii taxpayers. A bipartisan working group made 24 recommendations that aim to: reduce recidivism and rehabilitate more youth; leverage and reallocate resources across the juvenile justice system to maximize the effectiveness of Hawaii's correctional dollars and placement options; and ensure that Hawaii's policies and practices are grounded in data and evidence. In February 2015, the Chief of Staff from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) within the U.S. Department of Justice visited Hawaii. COS Shanetta Cutler visited all four Hawaii counties and met with OYS staff, judges, prosecutors, court administrators, probation officers and other stakeholders. Prior to leaving the islands, she said she was impressed with Hawaii's recent reform efforts and that the OJJDP and the Office of the Attorney General believe that Hawaii will set the national standard for juvenile justice reform (*see Awards, page 3*). The OJJDP will be seeking additional funds for technical assistance to support Hawaii efforts.

The **Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA)** helped launch a Housing and Homeless Legislative Package that includes issuance of general obligation bonds for the development, design and construction of public housing facilities; appropriation of funds for deposit into the rental housing trust fund and dwelling unit revolving fund to finance affordable rental housing development and infrastructure development; and appropriation of funds for the construction of micro apartment housing units. As the state's largest residential landowner, the HPHA also continues to manage 6,200 low-income public housing units throughout Hawaii.

The **Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women (HSCSW)** successfully advocated for the passage of a resolution before the Honolulu City Council that would start a domestic violence task force with the police and the prosecutor's office. The resolution also will assist in shoring up gaps in services for victims of domestic violence. Oahu is the only county in the state without a DV task force. The HSCSW also sponsored a March 2015 panel on campus sexual violence, and is a core team member of Hawaii Says No More Campaign (*see No More, page 6*).

The Commission on Fatherhood (COF) is drafting the State's first demographic study on Fatherhood. A partnership with the University of Hawaii, the study is expected to be completed by June 30, 2015. The Commission held a 24/7 Dad workshop, entered into a contract with UH for a media project/essay contest/logo contest, and partnered with the Hawaii Children's Trust Fund Coalition to provide fatherhood workshops.



Good Work, Everyone!



Outside the Star-Advertiser building at Restaurant Row after the Editorial Board meeting. L>R: Kayle Perez (CWS), Rachael Wong (DIR), Leslie Tawata (MQD), Aileen Hiramatsu (PMO), Pankaj Bhanot (DDIR). Topics of discussion included Child Welfare Services, the Med-QUEST Division, the KOLEA portal, and Director Wong’s vision for the DHS.



FMO Website

The DHS Fiscal Management Office (FMO) has launched a [website](#) designed to assist DHS employees involved in FMO-related processes and procedures. FMO Administrator, **Ken Kitamura**, says the site is still under development, but there is enough posted material to be useful. “The site includes FAQs that address areas of recurring inquiries and problems, samples of past contracts/solicitations as a reference, instructional videos and checklists. Most of the content is located under the forms/template and reference sections.”

The office plans to phase out all physical distribution of FMO circulars and placement of resource files on the Q: Drive, Ken says. Those resources will be replaced by e-mail notifications containing links to the FMO website. For more information contact Ken Kitamura kkitamura@dhs.hawaii.gov or 586-4856.

2015 Superior Performance & Incentive Awards

Nominate DHS co-workers, supervisors, or staff for

- ◆ Sustained Superior Performance Award
- ◆ TEAM of the Year Award
- ◆ Manager of the Year Award

Nomination Deadline
April 30, 2015

Nomination forms are available on the Q:PERS/ERS/Awards Questions? Call 586-4982

It’s Never Too Late to Say, Thank You



Mahalo! to Franz Weber of Kailua-Kona who facilitated the Christmas 2014 donation of 14 bikes and helmets from FLO Wheels (mainland) and Lavaman Triathlons (Hawaii). In addition to the bikes, he facilitated several thousand dollars in presents and gift card donations that West Hawaii CWS staff were able to deliver to children and their families. For the past few years, every child in the West Hawaii CWS system (toddlers to teens) has received a present, says Weber. “There’s so many people in the community who want to give, they just want to find the right place.”