



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

PLEASE JOIN US FOR LUNCH

Monday, April 25, 2016 Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Nuuanu Ave. and S. Vineyard Blvd.—Ample parking—driveway off Nuuanu Ave

Agenda:

11:30 Luncheon (optional): Various Pizzas, Salad, and Dessert—\$5.00 Donation

11:55 Welcome, Introductions and Remarks

12:00 Program: Christy Nishita and Kathryn Braun: “Update from the Center on Aging: Current Activities and Future Path”

Christy Nishita, Ph.D. is Interim Director and Researcher at the University of Hawaii Center on Aging. She received her Ph.D. in Gerontology at the University of Southern California. She is a Board Member for the Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society. She is interested in the delivery and effectiveness of long-term care services, aging in place, health promotion, and disease prevention.

Dr. Kathryn Braun is Director and Professor of the Office of Public Health Studies. She is Co-Chair of the Barbara Cox Anthony Endowment and Director Emeritus of the University of Hawaii Center on Aging. Her research focuses on Asian and Pacific Island aging, with publications exploring ethnic differences in life expectancy and mortality as well as cultural variations in disease perceptions and health practices.

1:00 Adjourn

Kokua Council Windward: Thursday, April 14: “The Graying of Hawaii”
2009 Documentary Film will be shown, followed by updates by guests **Tony Lenzer and Bruce McCullough** COMMUNITY WELCOME

11:30 (Optional) — Buffet Lunch in Dining Room, \$11. Reservation and Information: Samuel Cox (808) 779-3606 or revsamuelcox@gmail.com.

12:30 Program: Documentary video: “The Graying of Hawaii”

1:30 Adjourn

Inside:

Notes on presentation by Moses Kalei Nahonoapi’ilani Haia III – Executive Director, Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, March 28, 2016
Homelessness is only a marker for the larger issue of poverty in Hawaii

(see p.2)
(see p.2)

Notes on presentation by Moses Kalei Nahonoapi'ilani Haia III – Executive Director, Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, March 28, 2016

Title: “A Lifetime Spent Waiting--Why Too Many Beneficiaries of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act Spend Their Lives Waiting in Vain for a Homestead”

(Note: a video of the presentation is available at our website, kokuacouncil.org. For those receiving this newsletter via email (apply on the web page), you can [click here to view](#).

Outline:

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921

“The treatment of Hawaiians in Hawaii is pitiful.”

Disturbing facts: 28,000 Hawaiians of 50% or more Hawaiian blood are on the waiting list for homes and leases.

1,600 have been waiting for more than 30 years.

On average, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands can accommodate about 300 families a year. This is restricted in part because they must take the annual \$28 million office administrative cost out of existing lease revenues.

If Hawaiian Homes could use that money to provide homes for those on the waiting list, they could double or triple the number each year.

A current court case asks that the annual administrative costs be allocated by the Legislature. Our Hawaii courts have ruled that this funding must be provided. The Legislature is resisting this.

(Notes provided by Kokua Council board member **Jim Shon**)

Homelessness is only a marker for the larger issue of poverty in Hawaii

Hawaii has the largest number of homeless residents per capita in the nation, a statistic so alarming that it should motivate our state and county leaders to the most urgent action. Instead, Governor David Ige's emergency task force, formed in July 2015, has few, if any, results to show, and the annual homeless count has increased once again this year.

It should be understood, however, that homelessness is only the tip of the iceberg—a marker, so to speak, for the larger issue of growing poverty in the state. A high rate of poverty, in addition, should

sound the alarm because it means that the state has inadequate resilience in the event of a natural or man made disaster. Even in the absence of a disaster, many Hawaii residents of all ages struggle to cope, often teetering on the edge of homelessness or contemplating leaving the islands.

How deeply is our population into poverty? The Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice commissioned a survey, [*Financial Struggles of Hawaii's Working Families*](#), which is available on their website, hiappleseed.org. From the Executive Summary:

A recent poll of 503 Hawaii residents was conducted by QMark Research beginning on February 17, 2016 and ending on February 29, 2016.

The findings of the poll revealed the personal financial struggles that many working families currently face in the Islands.

Some of the highlights include:

- Half (48%) currently describes their own personal financial situation as being one that survives “paycheck-to-paycheck.”
- One in four (25%) Hawaii residents have, in the last five years, worried about how they would pay that month’s rent or mortgage.
- Twenty-one percent have worried about how they would come up with enough money to pay their monthly utility bill.
- One in five (20%) Hawaii residents have faced a medical crisis which caused financial worry and hardship and questions as to how they would pay these bills.
- Seventeen percent of the families polled indicate they have worried about being able to provide basics such as food on the table for loved ones.

The survey results also show that Hawaii residents are highly concerned about the state’s high cost of housing and low wages and that they support targeted tax credits to help them make ends meet.

Of course, extensive and pervasive poverty here or anywhere is likely the result of numerous and complex factors. It is impossible to deny the complexity of the problem or of needed solutions. It’s also clear that doing nothing will perpetuate what should be viewed as a rolling crisis that affects the quality of life of so many Hawaii residents. Yet we lack social and political programs aimed at effectively reducing poverty. Nor is the problem new. It’s been with us for some time.

In the event of a natural or man-made disaster or extreme weather phenomenon, make no mistake, those living in poverty already will suffer most because they have the least financial resilience. All living under the poverty line are at the greatest risk. Climate change will exacerbate the suffering as competition for safe housing increases and as tourism, the primary driver of our economy, is impacted.

Components of the problem include the housing shortage, lack of jobs paying a living wage, and issues of unfair taxation. No doubt there are others that need our attention as advocates.



Kokua Council for Senior Citizens of Hawaii Education Fund, Inc.
 20 South Vineyard Blvd.
 Honolulu, HI 96813
<http://www.kokuacouncil.org>

Return Service requested

Non Profit Org.
 US Postage
 PAID
 Kailua, HI
 Permit No. 623

WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

April 25 meeting: “Update from the Center on Aging: Current Activities and Future Path”

Kokua Council Windward: Thursday, April 14: Documentary video “The Graying of Hawaii”

Who Are We?

Kokua Council is one of Hawaii’s oldest advocacy groups. There is a **\$10.00 annual membership** to defray printing and postage costs. At each meeting, topical issues are presented for discussion and possible action. We embrace diversity and extend a special invitation to any senior or intergenerational-minded individual interested in advocating for these important issues in Hawaii. All are welcome. **WHEN:** 4th Monday of every month, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. **WHERE:** Harris United Methodist Church @ Nuuanu and Vineyard Blvd. There is ample parking. A light lunch is provided for a \$5 donation. **REACH US** c/o Harris United Methodist Church, 20 South Vineyard, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Mission: “Kokua Council advocates and seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves. “

Board Members

President Marc Delorme
 Vice President Laura Manis, 597-8838, manis1350@gmail.com
 Secretary Helen Wagner, 247-7962, helenjeff@hawaii.rr.com
 Treasurer /Advocacy Barbara Service, 732-3688

Treasurer, Education Fund, T.J. Davies, tjdavies@juno.com
 Charles Carole, Samuel Cox, Marilyn Seeley
 Jim Shon, Larry Geller
Website: www.kokuacouncil.org Newsletter editor: Larry Geller



JOIN KOKUA COUNCIL!

Yes! I want to join Kokua Council. Here are my annual dues and my contact information. I understand that my phone number will be added to the Kokua Phone Tree and I will receive the monthly newsletter and occasional e-mails. Our fiscal year starts in January. Please make checks payable to **Kokua Council**.

Individual Member __ **\$10.00** Life Member __ **\$100.00** Organizational Member __ **\$25.00**

Donations: 501(c)(4) Advocacy _____ Education Fund: 501(c)(3) _____ (Tax Deductible)

Date _____

Name _____ Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Mail to: Treasurer, Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu, HI 9681