



WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Please join us for lunch

MONDAY, January 26, 2009

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Miyama Main Hall, Harris United Methodist Church
Nuuanu Ave. and South Vineyard Blvd.
Ample parking - driveway off Nuuanu Ave.

AGENDA:

- 11:30** Luncheon: Various Subway Sandwiches, Salad, Drinks, Dessert by Eloise, \$5.00 Donation
- 11:45** Welcome: Introductions and Remarks, Larry Geller, President
- 12:00** Program: Coral Andrews, Vice President, Healthcare Association of Hawaii, **“WAITLISTED PATIENT ISSUES, A SYMPTOM OF OUR BROKEN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.”**
Andrew’s areas of responsibility are Long Term Care, Home Care, Hospice, and Advocacy.
- 12:30** Preparing for the 2009 Legislature: Be Part of the Solution!
- 12:50** Annual Meeting, Election of Officers
- 1: 00** Adjourn and Announcements

Lunch Host: John Cannell

Board meeting: 10:00 a.m. preceding lunch.

Time to pay your 2008 Kokua Council Dues. Look at your address label to see the last payment date. Individual dues continue to be \$5.00, Lifetime \$100, Organization \$25. Send payments to Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard, Honolulu HI 96813. Donations welcome. Check our website at www.kokuacouncil.org

BOARD RETREAT DECISIONS

- After hearing Alex Santiago, CEO of PHOCUSED, and a lengthy discussion, board voted to join PHOCUSED.
- Based on member votes and unfinished legislation, 2009 legislative priorities are finalized. See enclosure.
- Sam Cox appointed head of nominating committee.
- Suggestions for luncheon programs.
- Appointed committee to plan strategy, Jim Shon, chair

PRESIDENT'S LETTER—*Larry Geller*

Many people are relieved to see 2008 go. It was not pleasant watching the economy take a dive, wiping out jobs, savings, and retirement hopes for many (most?) Americans. The New Year promises more challenges, except for the CEOs of bailed-out banks. Hey, we didn't get any bailout. Not even the crumbs of a bailout.

The country has a new president, and amazingly he is African-American. There is hope for 2009. But everyone seems to be after Obama for a special bailout even as the economy remains in peril. There's wisdom in the phrase "The squeaky wheel gets the grease." If we don't squeak up, others will get the grease, so now is not the time to sit back and rely on hope alone. Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid will likely become issues as Congress looks for ways to pay for the bank bailout.

Gandhi said, "What you do is of little significance. But it is very important that you do it." This may be the year that we each must do something.

Kokua Council has put together its 2009 Legislative Priorities, based on your requests during our October 2008 community meeting. Your copy is enclosed with this newsletter. We hope you will help us achieve these goals as Hawaii's legislative session begins this month. It could be a tough session.

We invite you to visit our website at kokuacouncil.org where there is up-to-date information on meetings of various groups, and where you can listen to the audio of our past monthly meetings.

It's also time to ask annual members to renew or to upgrade to Life Membership. Annual membership is still only \$5. We can do this because we are all volunteers. Please renew today.

HAWAII FAMILY CAREGIVER COALITION MEETING AND LEGISLATIVE ICE CREAM SOCIAL – TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2009

Please join us on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 for our meeting and legislative ice cream social. The meeting will be held from 12:00pm-1:45 p.m. and ice cream social, open to all legislators and staff, will be held at 2:00pm. *Wes Lum, Chair*

KAPIOLANI COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER NEWS

The KCC Kupuna Education Center is proud to announce that its website www.kupunaeducation.com is now able to be viewed on the web. The website will promote the Center's practical solutions to senior care challenges through paraprofessional education, family caregiver training and the promotion of activities for active retirees. Training sessions by the Center will be updated on a regular basis.

The Hawaii Community Foundation has provided funding for the Center to conduct a training needs assessment to plan for the development of new training and development of residential care and foster home operators.

OBAMA PROMISES BID TO OVERHAUL SPENDING ON RETIREE PROGRAMS

Recently, President-elect Barack Obama said that overhauling spending on retiree programs would be "a central part" of his administration's efforts to contain the federal budget. "The Alliance

for Retired Americans will reiterate our policy positions and stress the need for the quality of life of seniors not to suffer," said George J. Kourpias, President of the Alliance. "We appreciate that President-elect Obama has consistently opposed privatizing Social Security and is for raising the caps on income subject to the Social Security tax, which will help the finances of Social Security. He also wants to reduce Medicare waste and fraud and introduce more efficiencies, and plans not to tax the first \$50,000 of seniors' income. We are confident that he will continue to stand up for retirees."

APPOINTMENT OF OLD FRIEND

Jeanette Takamura, Ph.D., former director of the Hawaii Executive Office on Aging, is overseeing the Obama-Biden transition for the Administration on Aging, the Assistant Secretaryship she held during the Clinton Administration. During her position here, she initiated Project Hope, the first attempt at a long term care financing program in 1993. She has also been the first woman dean of the School of Social Work at Columbia University.

JLCAIP/KUPUNA CAUCUS TOP VOTES FOR 2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Members present at the December 5th meeting of the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place and the Kupuna Caucus cast votes for their legislative priorities for the 2009 session. The top 4 are:

- Maintain Kupuna Care Program base funding
- Restoration of Senior Center funding if DOH cuts funding
- Posting of annual inspections of care homes foster homes on-line.
- Cash & Counseling Project

Chairs Sen. Chun Oakland and Ihara are drafting House and Senate bills

LCAO Makes Recommendations on Obama Executive Order for Seniors

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations is a consortium of prominent national aging advocacy organizations that represents millions of older Americans. Among LCAO's recommendations is that the Obama Administration create a White House Office on Older Adults (or the position of Domestic Policy Council Advisor on Older Adults) to develop, lead and coordinate the Administration's policy agenda on crosscutting issues that assist and empower older Americans. LCAO also recommends giving the Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to use Medicare's bulk purchasing power to negotiate prescription drug prices, and halting the so-called "premium support" demonstration project in 2010 that would require traditional fee-for-service Medicare to compete, based on cost, with heavily subsidized private plans in certain areas. The coalition also wishes to allow early retirees to buy into Medicare, along with several other steps.

5-STAR RATING SYSTEM FOR NURSING HOMES

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) created the Five-Star Quality Rating System to help consumers, their families, and caregivers compare nursing homes more easily and to help identify areas about which you may want to ask questions. Please visit the Survey and Certification website at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CertificationandCompliance>

[/13_FSQRS.asp#TopOfPage](#) for general as well as technical information relative to the 5-Star Rating System for Nursing Homes.

Kokua Council wants to have a similar state system to help consumers compare care and foster homes. See 2009 Legislative priorities.

WHAT IS THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON AGING IN PLACE?

The purpose of the Joint Legislative Committee on Aging in Place is to develop a comprehensive public policy program to support family caregivers who provide unpaid, informal assistance to persons sixty and older with physical or cognitive disabilities. The Committee will consider providing support in categories including but not limited to: coordinated services and policies, training and education, respite services, financial incentives and balancing work and caregiving. It usually meets jointly with Kupuna Caucus, the first Friday of each month, 2 p.m. in room 229, State Capitol. Co-Chairs are Senator Les Ihara, Jr. and Representative Marilyn Lee. Come and show by your presence your support for their issues.

MEDICARE CAUTIONS ABOUT FRAUDULENT PHONE CALLS

A caller says he needs to know the name and address of the Medicare member in order to mail a new card. Another caller tells the Medicare member to make a one-time lump-sum payment and premium deductions from the member's Social Security benefits check will cease forever so please provide a bank account number. Medicare does not sell products or services nor is issuing a new card.

Do not volunteer personal information to anyone claiming to call from Medicare. If this happens, report the call to SMP Hawaii, a fraud prevention program at Executive Office on Aging at 586-7281. If you think you have given your bank account number to a scam artist call your bank immediately.



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

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WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP OTHERS

Who Are We?

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. There is a \$5 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., Ample parking and a light lunch are provided for \$5. **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. "

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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 MEMBERS	LIFE MEMBER	ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS	DONATIONS
___\$5.00	___\$100.00	___\$25.00	_____

Name _____ Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Mail to: Treasurer, Kokua Council, Harris United Methodist Church, 20 S. Vineyard Blvd.,
 Honolulu, HI 96813