

Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII FEDERATION OF BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

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Federation Welcomes Exchange Students

Amy Nishimoto

The Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations Student Exchange Program welcomed two students from Japan, Mio Iwata, 23, and Kana Yoshida, 18, on July 31, 2012, at the Honolulu International Airport in true Hawaiian fashion. Coordinated by Oahu United, the aloha spirit was evident as members from Honolulu and Oahu Uniteds greeted the two women with leis, hugs, and the warmth that you get only in Hawaii.

The welcoming members along with Mio and Kana attended the traditional service at the Betsuin with the Bishop presiding, followed by a light lunch at the Betsuin Minister's Dining Room hosted by the Oahu United women. In the evening they attended a welcome dinner hosted by Bishop and Mrs. Eric Matsumoto at their residence. Accommodations for the first two nights of their stay was at the Honpa Hongwanji Guest Room. So began nine days of exciting, memorable, and enlightening experiences, planned and coordinated by the many hands, minds, and hearts of Buddhist

women on Oahu, Hawaii Island, and Maui, that reflected the purpose of the Student Exchange Program: to nurture future leaders of Jodo Shinshu women's activities through exposure to Buddhist culture in Hawaii, Hawaiian culture, and Hawaii's youth movement, and as a mission of good will.

Highlights of their West Oahu tour hosted by Oahu United members were



a Swap Meet where they thoroughly enjoyed shopping for Hawaiian attire, visiting a pineapple field and facilities, walking on the sandy beaches of Sunset Beach and Waimea Bay, and enjoying the fellowship of a dinner social at Waipahu Hongwanji with Oahu BWA members.

A morning flight to the Big Island, found the students visiting Hilo Betsuin and Hilo's beautiful landmarks and delicious island-flavor shave ice. The Hawaii

United ladies made it possible for Mio and Kana to participate in an ukulele lesson, and an evening of good food and sharing of talents. Continuing on their visit, BWA members planned opportunities for Mio and Kana to learn about the uniqueness in the islands' geology at the the Volcano National Park where the ladies made connections of the

steam vents to the onsen in Japan. They were kindly welcomed to stay at the homes of three temple families.

The students' fifth day found them on the island of Maui where Maui United members took the students to visit

the Kahului, Wailuku, and Makawao temples, relax on the beaches of the North Shore, and attend a Hawaii-tradition bon dance at the Kahului Jodo Mission. Also among the many memorable events on Maui was a 4:00 a.m.-trek to Mount Haleakala to see the exquisite sunrise, and they again were welcomed to stay at the home of a temple member.

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HAWAII ISLAND

Carol Tsunezumi and K.T. Cannon-Eger



Hawaii Island United BWA in AIDS Walk

In April, the first ever Big Island AIDS Walk was held from Liliuokalani Gardens along the Bay front to downtown Hilo and back. Puna Hongwanji BWA organized participation from several BWA units. Our members helped with the registration table, folding T-shirts, handing out tickets and hats, directing walkers on the route, and on the last lap cheering walkers as they approached the finish line. Our monetary donations and active participation helped the organization surpass their fund raising goal of \$24,000. In addition, we upheld the intent of the resolution passed at World Convention in Tokyo in 1990 to promote AIDS Education.



HONOLULU UNITED

Nembutsu From Heart To Heart



Wendie Yumori

“Nembutsu From Heart to Heart” was the theme of the Honolulu United BWA Education Workshop held on June 9, 2012 and hosted by the Hawaii Betsuin BWA. The theme was taken from the words of Rev. Dr. David Matsumoto who said: “The Nembutsu is not a theory – it’s real and alive. The Nembutsu has a human character. The Nembutsu passes from heart to heart.” With this in mind, and knowing that BWA ladies are a wonderful Dharma

resource, the workshop was planned as a day of sharing and reflecting sprinkled with elements of fun!

First expressions of the workshop theme were demonstrated during a narrated slideshow/video, which honored three special ladies, Rev. Ruth Tabrah, Mrs. Mitsuyo Saito, and Mrs. Lily Horio, for their expressions of heartfelt Nembutsu in writing and music. BWA ladies who continuously offer their hands and hearts in service to the temple were also recognized and thanked for the inspiration they provide every day to Live the Dharma.

The morning and afternoon small group sharings focused upon these questions: Who inspires or encourages you to live the Dharma?... and How do we pass on what we have

received? When participants were invited to share their stories with the whole group, their stories were so real and deeply touching. And some stories were humorous! Dharma gifts all.

What seemed clear during and following this workshop was the priceless value in having BWA ladies share the Dharma. In the evaluations, participants overwhelmingly approved of the format and content of the workshop and the most frequent remark was that it was “meaningful.”

The narrated slideshow/video “Nembutsu From Heart to Heart” as well as photo collages and a musical slideshow created by Ruth Tokumi of the education workshop may be viewed on the BWA Federation website under Honolulu United BWA.



Workshop Chair, Wendie Yumori, with honoree, Mitsuyo Saito, and Past Chair, Lois Ohta.

KAUAI UNITED

Jani Okura

Once again the United of Kauai Hongwanji BWA is preparing for its annual Fall Conference, planned for October 7th and hosted this year by the Kapaa Hongwanji BWA. It's always a fun event that helps our Units reconnect. KUHBWA's 2012 Dana Project will be a \$500.00 donation to the Kauai YWCA Women's Shelter for the purchase a much needed stove. We believe in their mission and are always happy to do what we can to help.

This past summer KUHBWA was proud to award \$1,000 scholarships to two deserving young women. Each year the KUHBWA awards scholarships to outstanding young adults from our Temples. Our three Units donate to this scholarship fund, as well as a generous yearly donation from West Kauai member **Edith Yoshioka**. The 2012 Recipients were **Alison Yamamoto** and **Brandi Yamamoto**. These cousins have been active in their Temple (Kapaa Hongwanji) and have both been past presidents of Kauai United Jr. YBA. Brandi was recently elected as 2012-2013 President of the Hawaii Federation Jr. YBAs. Both musical, Alison plays the Sanshin and Brandi is a gifted singer. We are proud to honor these talented students and wish them success as they both enter college this fall at the University of Hawaii, Manoa.



Alison Yamamoto (L) and Brandi Yamamoto (R)

MAUI UNITED

Marilyn Morikawa

Maui United BWA Spring General Assembly was held on April 28 at Maui Tropical Plantation, with President Sharon Nohara presiding. Prior to attending the luncheon meeting, visitations were made to Kula Hospital, Hale Makua Wailuku, Hale Makua Kahului, and Lanai Community Center. Hawaii Federation President Janet Honda addressed the BWA members and shared her vision for BWA as a viable organization in the community where we all work together to make the transition into a new generation of BWA.

This year's Dana Award was given to Women Helping Women, whose mission is to end domestic violence through advocacy, education and prevention and to offer safety, support and empowerment to women and children victims. In a year, over 200 women and children are provided shelter, nearly 9,000 referral calls are made, and over 1,000 calls are made to the crisis hotline.

Our Maui Sangha also welcomed Rev. Sol Kalu to Makawao Hongwanji and bid farewell to Rev. Jeffrey Soga and family of Kahului Hongwanji. He will serve as chief minister at Hilo Betsuin.



Rev. Sol Kalu



OAHU UNITED

June Asato

The Oahu United Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association held its 39th Annual Seminar on April 21, 2012 at the Wahiawa Hongwanji Mission. The 106 participants were welcomed by Mrs. Roseline Yano, President of the host unit and Advisor Rev. Jay Okamoto.

For the Japanese session, Rev. Shigenori Makino's informative slide presentation was entitled "Nembutsu is the Path for

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Boundless Freedom." Life does not necessarily happen the way you want. As we walk the path of Buddha Dharma and receive Buddha's light, we become more accepting of what has happened, developing a more positive attitude and growing in our appreciation of the Nembutsu.

Rev. Earl Ikeda's historical presentation

of Bodisattva Dharmakara and his endless search in countless Buddha Lands in seeking the Truth as described in the Sanbutsuge and the declaration of the 48 vows to save humanity was also very relevant and thought provoking. Although some things are difficult to understand, we must entrust ourselves to Amida with an open mind and heart and recite the Nembutsu in gratitude.

Rev. Irene Nakamoto ended the day's seminar by sharing her reflections on her current role as a care-giver. She interjected warm and humorous anecdotes experienced daily and brought us closer to the reality of what Buddhism really is...Everyday Life. "Live the Nembutsu fully with vitality and creativity."

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Finally returning to Oahu, Honolulu United members met the two ladies at the airport and assisted them to check into the Ala Moana Hotel where they stayed for the last two nights of their visit to Hawaii. Among the many places they visited were the Buddhist Study Center and Honolulu district temples including Kailua, Moiliili, and Jikoen and its Lumbini Garden Preschool. They also took part in an interview with KZOO at Shirokiya and enjoyed a luau in true Hawaiian fashion.

At the Honolulu International Airport as the two students prepared to leave, with tears in their eyes, Mio told of how she didn't want to leave, and Kana repeatedly expressed, "I will be back." With many hugs and well wishes, the two ladies departed on Japan Airlines on August 8th. Judi Fujiyama from Hawaii Island United expressed it well when she said, "Everyone worked hard and collaboratively; the generous spirit of our [Hawaii] Sangha [was] clearly evident by their actions." This has been a priceless experience for Mio and Kana and for many BWA ladies too as they expressed how they enjoyed hosting the young ladies. What an amazing experience for all!

Jiri Rita. . .
"The ideal Buddhist life is one
in which 'benefiting the self'
and benefiting others occur
simultaneously."

Shared by
Bishop Eric Matsumoto