



Maui Strong!

We Continue to Stand With Lahaina!

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Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

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

Honorary President: Yoshiko Umitani President: Linda Nagai Minister Advisor: Rev. Blayne Higa
1727 Pali Highway Honolulu, HI 96813 USA Contact us at (808) 522-9200 or www.hawaiibwa.org

Message from the President: Linda Nagai

Our Steering Committee has been working on the 18th World Buddhist Women's Convention, which will be held in Hawaii in September 2027. We are in the process of selecting a theme for the conference and have sought the assistance of Rev. Higa and Bishop Umitani to guide us in choosing the perfect theme. Additionally, we are collaborating with Kintetsu Hawaii and JTB Hawaii on housing and the registration process. Workshop ideas will be discussed at our Spring Representatives meeting.

Members from various districts have been actively engaged in our Hongwanji Theme: Building Healthy Sanghas. Hawaii Island United has been diligently tending to their temple and community needs. Hilo BWA prepared 200 bags of hygiene items and healthy snacks for homeless women and children in shelters. Honokaa organized a garage sale, bake sale, and silent auction, donating the proceeds to Maui Strong. Kona participated in the Annual Kona Coffee Cultural Festival by opening the Holualoa Hongwanji doors and sharing the Nembutsu with the community. Naalehu

prepared food for the community, and a member operating a Honeybee farm on Temple grounds shared his honey with members. Puna members held a chili and rice fundraiser for the community and made floral bouquets for the interfaith Community Memorial Day Service held in December.

Honolulu United held a joint Education and Membership Conference with the theme "Together We Share... Our Struggles, Our Joys." The conference had 68 attendees, and the education workshop focused on Mental Health, led by Rev. Shindo Nishiyama. Mrs. Lois Toyama discussed how she helped teens navigate emotional challenges. Dana awards were distributed, and Honolulu presented a Humanitarian Dana Donation of \$3,000 for Lahaina Hongwanji to HHMH, received by Bishop Umitani. Other Dana awards went to Adult Friends for Youth, We are Oceania, Honolulu Police Community Foundation, and Hawaii Project. Project Dana is designated a perpetual awardee

and receives \$2,000 each year.

This marks the 25th year of the Kauai BWA

Lonesome Grave Project. Members gathered at the Kauai Veterans Cemetery, placing fresh flowers and greenery on each gravesite. Unfortunately, it is with a heavy heart that we report Kapaa Hongwanji will not have a BWA Unit in 2024, leaving Kauai United with only two BWA Units, Lihue and West Kauai. Despite our membership decline, we continue to follow in the footsteps of Eshinni and Kakushinni, assisting our temples in transmitting the Dharma through various activities. As Eshinni and Kakushinni represented the confident women of the Kamakura era, the BWA of today represents a new era as we continue to support our temples, from which Shinran Shonin's teaching can be shared for many generations.

Respectfully Submitted
Linda Nagai



MAUI UNITED BWA

Sharon Nohara



Maui Strong, BWA Strong!

The BWA women and men of Maui are strong. With ease and grace, they carry on their individual and collective work for themselves, their families, their community, and the greater outside world.

As Maui United President Diane Nako of Makawao Buddhist Temple says, "As

we enter the New Year, I look forward to working alongside with our Maui BWA Units as we continue to demonstrate Dana and compassion, both at our temples and within the community. Most importantly, let us enjoy working together by "Sharing Nembutsu Moments."

November 25

was the Fall General Assembly hosted by Wailuku Hongwanji. Thank you Sharon Higa for your leadership in 2023 and Best Wishes to 2024 President Diane Nako of Makawao. A memorial service, business meeting, and installation of new officers preceded brain exercises and stretching activities, followed by a delicious catered lunch.

December 9 was the Alzheimer's Walk at Kaahumanu Shopping Center with BWA members and Wailuku Hongwanji Dharma School students joining the hundreds of marchers.



BWA Units collected donations of spam, slippers, and towels for A Cup of Cold Water, a Maui based community outreach program providing food, clothing and hygiene products to the poor and needy. After the August wildfires, aid was also provided to displaced Maui residents.



Sharon Nohara wove a beautiful t-leaf lei to adorn the Martin Luther King Jr. plaque in front of Kalana O Maui County Building on January 15. Although the yearly March has not returned after Covid, BWA members continue to honor the legacy and ideals of Dr. King.

Maui Strong, BWA Strong
"Sharing Nembutsu Moments."

HAWAII ISLAND UNITED BWA

E. Okano & J. Kim

With the theme of "Sharing Joy Together," our General Membership Meeting and Buddhist Education Seminar were held on October 28, 2023, at Kona Hongwanji's Social Hall. Rimban Kazunori Takahashi, Reverend Blayne Higa and 29 members were in attendance. While partaking of the delicious array of morning refreshments, they filled the hall with warm conversation as they gathered for this second in-person meeting.

An aspiration by Rimban Takahashi and a moment of silence was observed for the victims of the devastating Maui

wildfires. We have since donated \$1,000 to HHMH to support the Maui Wildfire Disaster Relief Fund.

No centenarians were honored this year, but six new members from Honokaa BWA were recognized as follows: Sandy Rivera, Kristina Adams, Stephanie Campos, Karee Hall, James McCrory and Lucinda Moran. A few amendments to our Bylaws were approved, and the updated document has been posted on the BWA website.

Our 2023 Dana donation of \$511 was given to Hope Services Hawaii, whose mission is to inspire hope and change lives. Their team of professional advocates reach out to the unhoused, and "have provided shelter to those in need, offered crucial mental health services, and empowered individuals with the tools to rebuild their lives." The problem of homelessness still persists so in 2023 they started a campaign to raise \$50,000.

Kona served an oishii bento lunch that was followed by Honokaa

hosting the BES. The seminar focused on the importance of increasing our island's self-reliance to help decrease dependence on mainland agricultural products. Dr. Russell Nagata, a graduate of UH Manoa with BS and MS degrees in Tropical Horticulture presented a workshop on container gardening. He demonstrated how easy and dependable backyard gardening is when done using proper-sized containers, with the right medium and location for growing vegetables.

Unit Activities: As always, members see to the needs of their temples and communities by providing manpower for cleaning temple areas, arranging altar flowers, preparing meals for the homeless/various temple events, distributing packaged groceries, helping Project Dana, and visiting care facilities. They hold numerous fundraisers to support their temples, and others who need help.

A special note for Hilo: At their Eshinni/Kakushinni Day service on April 28, their guest speaker will be Linda Nagai, our Federation President who recently attained her tokudo status as an ordained minister.



KAUAI UNITED BWA

Lynne Matsumura and Shirley Kakuda

November 10, 2023 marked the 25th anniversary of the Kauai United Hongwanji BWA's Lonesome Grave Project.

Members of the three BWA units, along with friends, gathered to decorate graves at the Kauai Veteran's Cemetery, making sure that each grave had fresh flowers and greenery. To commemorate the anniversary, Rev. Tomo Hojo conducted a service before work began. Dan Funamura, husband of Barbara Funamura who initiated the project in 1998, was invited as a

special guest. Dan played the ukulele and appropriately sang "Where Have All the Flowers Gone." The program ended with a presentation of a certificate by Commander Edward Kawamura, representing the Kauai Unit of the Disabled American Veterans to whom the BWA made its Dana Donation this year.

The Lihue Hongwanji Women's Association hosted the Fall Conference and General Membership meeting on October 22, 2023.

Members and Rev. Hojo who attended the BWA World Convention in Japan told of their experiences and encouraged everyone to get involved in the upcoming 2027 World Convention in Hawaii. Furoshiki wrapping and a card-making workshop completed the program.

Lihue Hongwanji Women's Association held its Installation of Officers on January 21, 2024 along with their first meeting, followed by a luncheon at Puakea Grill.

We are sad to report that Kapaa Hongwanji will not have a BWA unit in 2024. Kauai will have just two units at Lihue and West Kauai Hongwanji Mission.

The Kauai United Hongwanji BWA held its first meeting via Zoom on January 25, 2024. We set dates for meetings and events and confirmed committees and elected a new Auditor. Information about the 2027 World BWA Convention was shared.



OAHU UNITED BWA

Susan Morishige



Oahu United BWA's Annual Conference was held at Waipahu Hongwanji on October 28 with the theme, "Building Healthy Sanghas: Coping with the Future." Rev. Eric Matsumoto was the keynote speaker at the Memorial Service. At the Membership Meeting, officers were re-elected for another year except Janet Kaya replaced Annette Sekine as an Auditor. See website: <http://hawaiiowa.org/oahu-district/> for names and photo.

Donations were collected for the Ministerial Welfare Fund and Orei was presented to the Oahu District ministers for their service. Our educational speaker was Chikako Nago

from EM Hawaii, who conducted a workshop on Bokashi, an enzymic process to make compost and other helpful byproducts from table scraps. Pearl City Hongwanji was the lucky recipient of a Bokashi kit. Everyone went home happy with the lucky number drawings of gift cards and eggs from Peterson's Upland Farm. Thank you to Carolyn Uchiyama and her planning committee, and the host Waipahu Hongwanji for a successful conference.

At the next Board meeting, Carolyn Uchiyama was re-elected as Oahu's

Federation Director, June Asato volunteered to be Oahu's representative for the 2024 Student Exchange program, and a committee was formed to plan for the upcoming 2026 State Conference. Quarterly Board meetings for 2024 will be held on February 11 at Aiea, May 19 at Mililani, August 25 at Pearl City, and November 17 at Waipahu. The Annual Conference will be held on October 26 at Mililani.



Unit reports: Aiea BWA co-hosted a drive to encourage participation of Aiea members at PBA's Lighting Our Way Banquet.

Despite the extensive renovation of the hall foundation and flooring, the BWA hosted a belated Hosha Year End/Welcome luncheon for Aiea's new minister and wife, Rev. Eric and Mrs. Tamayo Matsumoto, and co-hosted the December 30th Mochitsuki, and January 27th Shinnenenkai. A special effort was made to attend the New Year's Eve and New Year's Day services and enjoy refreshments provided by Tamayo and friends. Monetary donations were made to the Lahaina Disaster and to Rev. Ai Hironaka. Members are currently crafting every Sunday in preparation for the Craft Fair and Bazaar on March 22 and 23.

Mililani BWA held its annual membership dinner meeting in December with a great potluck buffet, a sing-along with Rene Mansho, and a fun tribute to outgoing President, Diane Yoa, who served for seven years. Mililani BWA

kicked off the new year with a new slate of officers to lead the group into the new year. The new President is Lani Yamami who reports that the BWA served zenzai at their Hoonko service and planned a Food Drive for their Dana Day service with special speaker Martha Samson, Project Dana Advisory Council Chair, and honorees Mililani's Project Dana volunteers. Mililani's annual BWA Bazaar is planned for March 23.

On Nov 26, Pearl City BWA held its annual Memorial Service, which honored BWA member Evelyn Ikeda. Rev. Mariko Nishiyama delivered the Dharma Message, as members recalled Evelyn, "an active BWA and Kyodan member for many years who attended meetings and volunteered in any way she could up to a few months before her passing." Following the service, the annual Rededication Luncheon was held in the social hall.

Waipahu BWA made a \$2,000 donation to the Lahaina Fire disaster. The BWA Hoonko service was held on Dec 17 with guest speaker Aryn Ishikawa of Mililani Hongwanji BWA. The 2024 general meeting and lunch was held on Jan 27. Thirteen members had a great time with a new member.



HONOLULU UNITED BWA

The Honolulu United BWA had its election of officers on Nov. 5, 2023 at Moiliili Hongwanji. Rev. Bert Sumikawa officiated since our Minister Advisor Rev. Shindo Nishiyama was unavailable.



The following are the officers for Jan. 2024-December 2025: L-R: Treasurer Gayle Hirohito Goto, Recording Secretary Donna Higashi, Honorary Advisor Yoshiko Umitani, Vice President Wendie Yumori, President Lois Ohta, Installation officiant Rev. Bert Sumikawa, Immediate Past President Dorene Toma, Corresponding Secretary Dianne Ida, Auditor Dorothy Colby, Auditor Judy Muramoto, Hawaii Federation Director Lynn Nakata

For many years, our Education Committee and the Membership Committee have worked together to present a joint event. We have a service where we remember members who had passed away during the year, a General Membership Meeting,

an educational workshop, Dana Award presentations, a fun activity, and of course, lunch. On Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 we had our Education/Membership Joint Conference. Wendie Yumori was

the Education Committee chair, and Lynn Nakata was the Membership Committee Chair.

The theme of the 2023 Joint Conference was Together We Share...

Our Struggles, Our Joys. Wendie Yumori described the workshop:

This was the first in-person Joint Conference since 2019, it was encouraging to see that there were 74 registered for this event; 68 attended. The Education Workshop addressed a topic of great relevance – mental health concerns. Rev. Shindo Nishiyama was the primary Education Workshop speaker. His remarks and his power-point presentation were focused on helping attendees attain greater awareness and understanding of what it means to struggle with anxiety and depression. He spoke of how challenges in life can affect one's mental health and

Dianne Ida



he emphasized the critical importance of speaking with a trusted individual, such as a helping professional.

Mrs. Lois Toyama, a retired school counselor, was the second Education Workshop speaker. She has helped many teens navigate emotional challenges. In working with suicidal teens, she shared how little things, like taking a walk with them in nature, or even doing something silly with them, could make a difference.

Dana Awards

Each year, the HUBWA selects one or two 501(c)(3) organizations that provide services to women, children, or elderly. Project Dana is designated as a perpetual awardee and is given \$2,000 each year. Other organizations are awarded \$1,000 for three years. The presentations are made at the Joint Conference.

Each recipient is given time to speak. Our members can see first-hand how appreciative the recipients are to receive the Dana Award!

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L-R: Donna Higashi (HUBWA Treasurer), Susan Okano, and Sandy Toma presented a Humanitarian Dana Donation in the amount of \$3,000 to Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani who received the donation on behalf of HHMH. This donation is intended for Lahaina Hongwanji Mission.

Honolulu United BWA continued from page 6

2024 Dana Awards continued

After a bento lunch and the Dana Award presentations, the group enjoyed a video of the Kyoto Joint Celebration and World Buddhist Women's Convention. The day ended with some origami fun. After months of planning meetings, the committee members were able to enjoy a very successful BWA day.



3rd year Dana Award to Adult Friends for Youth: Debra Spencer-Lum, Lisa Tamashiro, Susan Okano



Perpetual Dana Award to Project Dana: Cyndi Osajima and Susan Okano



2nd year Dana Award to We Are Oceania: Ranette Hector, Jocelyn Howard, Sandy Toma. (Right)

In Memoriam

Fusae Y. Kiyokawa

February 24, 1929 - December 08, 2023



Mrs. Fusae Kiyokawa (94) Hawaii Betsuin member, passed away on December 08, 2023 while residing at Arcadia Retirement Residence. She was the 2nd lay President of the Hawaii Federation of Buddhist Women's Associations, serving from 1994-1999. She served as co-chair of the 13th World Buddhist

Women's Convention at the Hawaii Convention Center in 2006. She is survived by sons, Karl and Guy, and five grandchildren. Services were held on February 3, 2024 at the Hawaii Betsuin.



1st year Dana Award to Honolulu Police Community Foundation: Chester Hughes and Sandy Toma.

(1st year recipient Hawaii Project: unable to attend)