



REPRESENTATIVE HENRY AQUINO

WAIPAHU COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

District 38



Hawaii State Capitol, Room 419 * Phone: 586-6520 * email: repaquino@capitol.hawaii.gov

February 2014

Aloha Neighbors,

As February comes to a close, we will be midway through another hectic but meaningful session. The 2014 session started off with the State being in the best fiscal position in years. And, this year is an opportunity for us to continue to work toward legislation and public policies that will better our community and state.

Early learning continues to be at the forefront of childhood development. This newsletter highlights the new change in kindergarten requirements as well as other learning programs.



Congratulations to Waipahu High School for their outstanding performance at the 10th Annual LifeSmarts Consumer Education Competition. And, a special aloha and mahalo to Tadao and Carol Nezu, owners of Futaba Restaurant and Catering, who announced their retirement and restaurant closure.

I will continue to work diligently to ensure the needs of the community and state are met. Please feel free to send me an email at repaquino@capitol.hawaii.gov or call me at 586-6520. Your feedback and comments are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

KINDERGARTEN AGE HAS CHANGED!

Starting August 2014, for Department of Education (DOE) school year 2014-2015, a child must be 5 years old on or before July 31 to be eligible to attend DOE kindergarten. DOE will not accept a child who is not 5 on or before July 31. For more information, please visit www.earlylearning.hawaii.gov or you may call (808)586-0796.



EARLY LEARNING

If your child is not eligible for kindergarten enrollment, families may consider other options, such as group child care centers, family-child interaction learning programs, and/or registered family child care for their children.

State funding for preschool programs is limited and based on several criteria including family income and family size. The Department of Human Services' (DHS) Child Care Program has two subsidy programs, the **Child Care Connection Hawaii Program** and **Preschool Open Doors Program**. Please visit, www.humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/child-care-program/ccch-subsidies/ for more information, eligibility, and application process.

PRESCHOOL OPEN DOORS PROGRAM



March 1 and April 30, 2014 – Preschool Open Doors Program Application Submission

If your child is not eligible for enrollment for kindergarten, DHS will be accepting applications for its Preschool Open Doors (POD) program between March 1 and April 30, 2014. Applications received during this period will be considered for preschool participation between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

POD promotes school readiness by providing child care subsidies to eligible families for the year prior to kindergarten. For the 2014-2015 school year, the priority will be children born August 1 – December 31, 2009, who are underserved or at-risk. Eligible families select the DHS-licensed group child care facility (i.e., preschool) of their choice. DHS contracts with PATCH to administer POD. The subsidies assist with payments to DHS-licensed group child care facilities (e.g., preschools).

POD applications will be available from the DHS contractor, PATCH, beginning March 1, 2014. To reserve your packet on Oahu call 791-2130. Applications must be received by April 30, 2014 to be considered for the 2014-2015 program year.



Head Start Teacher Nancy Okimoto and students pictured above and on page 1.

WAIPAHU HIGH SCHOOL 2014 LifeSmarts Competition State Winners

Waipahu High School (WHS) students took top honors at the 10th Annual LifeSmarts Consumer Education Competition held recently at the Hawaii State Capitol. The team will advance to the nationals April 26 to 29 in Orlando, Fla. ***Congratulations to WHS team members Roel Jake Ibanez, Maximiano Saludaes, Mark Abucay, Marc Dave Ramierez, Cia Dela Cruz and Coach Cindy Takara.***

The game show-style competition tested students on their knowledge of personal finance, health and safety, the environment, technology and consumer rights and responsibilities. The LifeSmarts program, run by the National Consumers League, is sponsored in Hawaii by the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Office of the Securities Commissioner, in partnership with the Hawaii Credit Union League.

Pictured at right are the WHS team members competing at the 2014 LifeSmarts Competition



GUARDING YOUR IDENTITY

Hawaii is best known for its aloha; however, identity theft is what the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs continues to work to protect the residents of the State of Hawaii. They provide us 10 ways to protect our identity.

1. Guard your personal information (Social Security Card, Birth certificate, Passport, Back Cards, etc.)
2. Use passwords on your accounts & memorize your PIN numbers
3. Use a locked mailbox for incoming mail and place your outgoing mail in a postal collection box
4. Shred all your personal information before placing it in the trash
5. Be aware of the people around you when using the ATM
6. Report lost or stolen credit cards immediately
7. Sign new credit cards as soon as you receive them
8. Match your credit card receipts with your monthly statement to make sure you don't have any unauthorized charges
9. Take your name off national or local marketing/calling lists
10. Review your credit reports annually to safeguard your identity

It's important we educate ourselves on identity theft here in Hawaii, so more information can be found at cca.hawaii.gov/identity-theft-information



FUTABA RESTAURANT AND CATERING

Another Waipahu long-standing business, Futaba Restaurant and Catering, will shutter its door at the end of February. Owners, Tadao and Carol Nezu, have offered Leeward Oahu residents nearly four decades of authentic Japanese cuisine. Island residents have been privileged to taste Tadao's cooking. Tadao was a chef for Japan's Emperor Akihito's wedding in 1959, where he received an official imperial proclamation.

Futaba Restaurant, alongside other well-known historical businesses like Arakawa's Store and Big Way Supermarket, have contributed to the culture and history of Waipahu. After nearly 40 years of serving Leeward Oahu communities, the Nezu family have decided to retire and close the family business.

I, along with many of its patrons, will miss the ono food and friendly service. But, most of all, we will miss the Nezu family.

Aloha and Mahalo!



Carol Nezu and patrons

FREE TAX HELP



Just in time for tax season. If you need help with completing your taxes, several community organizations offer free tax preparation. There are various island-wide locations for free tax help including Leeward Community College (LCC). LCC's free tax preparation is offered on a walk-ins only basis for a limited time as noted below.

For more Oahu locations, please call 2-1-1 or visit www.hawaiiataxhelp.org for more information.

Leeward Community College

96-045 Ala Ike Street, Business Education Bldg., Room BE-229

Starts February 4 and Ends on March 21

Days: Tuesday and Thursday

Time: 1:30pm to 5:30pm

Starts on February 1 and Ends on March 29

Day: Saturday

Time: 9:00am to 1:00pm (Door closes at Noon)

Free online tax preparation is also available at www.myfreetaxes.com/HACBED if you made less than \$58,000 in 2013. This site, available through the Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development, allows you to prepare and e-file both your federal and state returns for FREE.

WAIPAHU INTERMEDIATE AND HIGH SCHOOL Hawaii State SkillsUSA Program



Waipahu Intermediate and High School students enrolled in the Hawaii State SkillsUSA program visited the Capitol on February 20, 2014. The students met with Representatives Henry Aquino, Ty Cullen, and Ryan Yamane. SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce.