



MidWeek

This column by Senator Michelle Kidani was published in MidWeek's **Central** and **West Oahu** VOICE sections on Wednesday, November 25, 2015.

Excellence, Tradition, Pride

This Thanksgiving marks the end of the fall high school sports season in which we saw two Mililani High School teams and their student athletes excel. The girls varsity volleyball team, led by **Head Coach Val Crabbe**, went through the OIA West Division undefeated with ten wins and no losses. They entered the State Championship Tournament and eventually finished with a record of thirteen wins and three losses. Setter **Hope Carter** was named OIA West Division Player of the Year and three others were named to OIA All-Star first and second teams.

The 2014 State Champion Mililani Football team, under **Head Coach Rod York**, won the OIA Blue Division with a perfect 7 and 0 record, then finished as runners-up in the OIA tournament. A first-round win in the State Championship Tournament sent them to the semifinals, where they fell to a strong St. Louis team of the ILH. Our season ended with 10 wins and just 3 losses. Mililani's **Vavae Malepeai** was named OIA Offensive Player of the Year, deservedly so since he broke the state high school rushing record set some 17 years ago and he currently holds the record for most rushing touchdowns. Nine other MHS varsity players were on the OIA first and second team all-star rosters. Vavae

We are so very, very proud of the efforts put forth by both of these teams and other MHS student athletes in other sports over the last several months. Thank you Trojan Nation for an awesome fall season.

Learning about MyMoney at Waipahu High

MidWeek reported earlier this month that an online financial literacy program – called *MyMoney* – is now available to students at Waipahu, Waianae and Farrington High School students – thanks to resources and support from First Hawaiian Bank. Waipahu High already does well in the annual LifeSmarts competition that teaches real-life skills in this and other areas, and the new program will be a welcome supplement to LifeSmarts and the school's already well-established Business Services career pathway. WHS students also help to staff a mini-branch of the Hawaii USA Federal Credit Union on campus.

Mahalo to FHB and to **Waipahu Principal Keith Hayashi** for his participation in the several important Financial Literacy Task Force sessions that have been underway at the State Capitol. The Task Force was formed as a result of a resolution I introduced to make recommendations for curriculum. They are wrapping up their meetings and will have a report soon.

We also send our best wishes to WHS students **Tiannah Marie Ohta** and **Sydney Millerd**. They are two of just 25 students statewide who excel academically, demonstrate leadership, and provide service to their schools and communities. The State DOE has submitted their names to the US Department of Education as possible recipients of US Presidential Scholars Medallions. They're at the beginning of the selection process that could lead to national recognition and an invitation to Washington, D.C. We've got our fingers crossed for Tiannah and Sydney. Good luck and congratulations!

Opportunities for public service

Governor Ige has issued an appeal to qualified and dedicated Hawaii resident volunteers to consider applying for positions on State boards. Service on these boards and commissions offer a great opportunity for citizens to have a voice in their government and to influence decisions that shape the quality of life we all enjoy.

The State's 185 boards and commissions cover a wide variety of expertise, including the Board of Health, State Board of Nursing, Veterinary Examiners, Taxation Review, the Real Estate Commission; Board of Electricians and Plumbers, and many, many more.

For more information about opportunities to serve your State government and to learn about available board positions, go online to boards.hawaii.gov. You can even start the application process at that site.

The holidays are upon us

This week we pause for Thanksgiving. My fondest hope is that you all have much for which to be thankful, and that you are able to enjoy the day in the company of family and friends. I wish everyone a warm and peaceful remainder of 2015 as the holidays approach.