

island scene

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RAE HUO



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PUBLISHER/EDITOR

Lisa Maneki Baxa

ART DIRECTOR

Lawrence Esperanza

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

Caryn Saito

FOOD EDITOR

Marlene Nakamoto

COPY EDITOR

Marlene Nakamoto

WRITERS

Craig DeSilva

David Frickman

Robyn Kuraoka

Marlene Nakamoto

Courtney Takabayashi

Allison Valdez

DESIGNERS

Rodney Amian

Jocelyn Cua-Racoma

Tedra Hackett

Fannie Niyama

Garry Ono

Megan Wakayama

Brandon Young

WEB TEAM

Lei Mano'i

Courtney Takabayashi

ADVERTISING

Shere Sasaki

Lynn Shibuya

HEALTH INFORMATION

REVIEW COMMITTEE

Stefanie Park, M.D.

Andrew Perry, M.D.

Jeffrey Tom, M.D.

Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D., F.A.C.S.

NUTRITION ADVISERS

C. Alan Titchenal, Ph.D.

Joannie Dobbs, Ph.D.

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COVER: The Suzuki family and Sumida Farm.
Article on page 20 by Marlene Nakamoto.
Photo by Rae Huo.

aloha members,



One of my favorite television sitcoms is ABC's hit series *Modern Family*, which was popular for its entire 11-year run.

Its quirky and idiosyncratic characters created and celebrated a true extended "modern family" that featured an elder statesman (Jay) married to a sexy Colombian immigrant younger than his grown children, Jay's son Mitchell in a same-sex marriage to the high school football coach and their adopted Vietnamese daughter, and Jay's daughter Claire married to the eccentric Phil and their three children: ditzy teenager (with her even ditzier boyfriend), genius nerd daughter, and offbeat son.

This show won 22 Emmys and became one of the most-watched comedies of all time.

When I take a moment to think about why this show was so popular for so long, I come to one inescapable conclusion: The show features a story that people want for themselves.

Yes, it's funny. Yes, it's clever. Yes, it's entertaining. But at the end of the day, it's a story about unique people who take on life's challenges in their own particular ways and always love and support each other through thick and thin. It's the warm feeling you get after you watch the show that makes you come back week after week.

And in Hawai'i, we've known about the value of extended families for generations. We call it 'ohana. It's the people we've grown up with, the people we work with, the people we've helped and who have helped us learn and grow by sharing knowledge and experiences. It's the people we love.

In this issue, we'll talk to members about what defines their 'ohana and how these relationships and connections impact and nurture their health and well-being. And make life worth living.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark M. Mugiishi'.

Mark M. Mugiishi, M.D., F.A.C.S.
President and Chief Executive Officer



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dear friends,

I love this issue of *Island Scene*, our 'ohana issue. If you're a Disney fan like me, you can probably already hear Lilo's sweet voice saying, "'Ohana means family. Family means nobody gets left behind or forgotten." Smart girl.

We often stretch our 'ohana circle to include extended family, friends, family pets, and more. And we celebrate all of them in this issue.

- Families come in many shapes and sizes. Read about the extended Baltero and Witeck family making it work under roof in Craig DeSilva's article on page 18.
- Our most loving family members sometimes have fur and four legs. Read about how they influence the health and happiness of their humans in an article by Courtney Takabayashi and Marlene Nakamoto on page 10. Find out about local dog toys from Dis-and-Bark, fostering kittens from Maui Humane Society, a cat café in 'Aiea that provides job training for young adults with developmental disabilities, and how dogs help us nurture friendships.
- 'Ohana-run businesses are key to Hawai'i's economy. This article by Craig DeSilva, Marlene Nakamoto, and Courtney Takabayashi on page 20 highlights the Asato Family Shop, City Mill and the Ai family, the Sumida watercress farm in 'Aiea, and Jimmy Chan and the Hawaiian Chip Company.

“THE BOND THAT LINKS
YOUR TRUE FAMILY IS
NOT ONE OF BLOOD, BUT
OF RESPECT AND JOY IN
EACH OTHER'S LIFE.”

: Richard Bach

Other family-friendly articles to check out include a surfing article by busy mom Natalie Iwamoto on page 14, treasured family recipes compiled by Marlene Nakamoto on page 58, and an article on surviving sending your kid away to college by Robyn Kuraoka and her daughter, Kiralee, on page 50.

As for my family, well, you're looking at some of my HMSA family's work. My co-workers are near and dear to me – the ones who work on *Island Scene* and the rest of our team. Amazing, wonderful, talented folks. Sending love to all of them, as well as my friends and extended family, with extra warm fuzzies for Dan, Comet, Nova, and Frankie.

Remember to make time to nurture the bonds with everyone you consider your family. Take care of yourself and each other.

Best wishes,



Lisa Maneki Baxa
Publisher and Editor

around the 808

kaua'i

Feeding the island, helping farmers

Construction is nearly complete on a first-of-its-kind food hub on Kaua'i. When completed, the Moloa'a 'ĀINA Center will help farmers and buyers with production, distribution, and marketing guidance and services.

It will also help the nonprofit Mālama Kaua'i scale its food collection and distribution efforts. The organization has purchased more than \$1.5 million in food from local farmers and food producers over the years, distributing it to tens of thousands of residents across Kaua'i.

"When you see how helpful our services are to kūpuna who have a hard time going shopping or a one-car household that has difficulty getting to a farmers market, that's where the magic is," says Megan Fox, Mālama Kaua'i executive director. "We're bridging the gap of affordability and convenience of food for people who need it the most so that we can all support our local food system."

Development of the facility is the result of a partnership between Mālama Kaua'i and Moloa'a Irrigation Cooperative, the largest group of small food producers on the island. Construction is scheduled to be completed in June.



big island

Where wildlife thrives

Humans aren't the only ones in need of emergency care. If a native bird or bat needs care right away, Hawai'i Wildlife Center can provide rescue, veterinary care, and rehabilitation services.

This nonprofit organization's main facility is in Kapa'au with satellite operations on O'ahu and Lāna'i and partners throughout the state. With a mission to "protect, conserve, and aid in the recovery of Hawai'i's native winged wildlife through hands-on treatment, research, training, science

education, and cultural programs," HWC is the first organization to create a purpose-built hospital to care exclusively for native Hawaiian winged wildlife.

HWC also offers wildlife rescue training and public education and outreach programs. Through their work, they help the native bird and bat populations coexist with humans and survive and thrive.

For more information, visit HWC's website at hawaiiwildlifecenter.org, email birdhelp@hawaiiwildlifecenter.org or call (808) 884-5000.

maui, moloka'i, and lāna'i

Buy Maui County

If you missed the Hawaiian Airlines Made in Maui County Festival in November, no worries. You can still support the vendors online.

Visit MadeInMauiCountyFestival.com to browse a list of vendors. Click Our Vendors for links to their websites.

For the past two years, the festival was held exclusively online. The live, two-day annual event at the Maui Arts & Cultural Center drew about 7,000 residents and visitors. Local manufacturers offered a range of handcrafted items such as clothes, jewelry, organic vegan treats, “barn to yarn” fibers, ceramics, and skin care products. Items from nearly 120 vendors can be ordered online.



For more information or to apply as a vendor for this year’s festival, go to the website, email office@MauiChamber.com, or call the Maui Chamber of Commerce at (808) 244-0081.



Have a great story, place, or event that makes your Neighbor Island community special? Share it with us at feedback@islandscene.com or call (808) 948-6839.



DIS-AND-BARK MODEL OHANA

This page: Kona and Kiki guard their stash of chew toys in the shape of iconic local foods. Facing page top, from left: Leah Lukela and Rollo among shelves of product; Pewa the husky with a mouthful of "powdered doughnuts"; Kaia, the goldendoodle, chewing on a "gummy worm".

all kinds of paw-some

words Marlene Nakamoto and Courtney Takabayashi



Lukela started Dis-and-Bark in 2021 in the midst of the pandemic. While she designs all the products, she answers to the CEO of the company, Rollo, her Rottweiler/German shepherd mix. "Rollo tests and approves all toys," Lukela says. "He has high standards!"

Since Rollo loves interacting with humans and other dogs, Lukela started planning dog meetups. "We hang out at the beach where the dogs can enjoy the sun, sea, and each other's company," Lukela says. "And the fur parents can talk story and relax."

Visit disandbark.com to browse and shop. Lukela is known for previewing new product releases on Instagram @disandbark.

There are many reasons people welcome a pet into their home. Whether it's for companionship, security, or just plain love, these creatures become part of the family. Owning a pet even has health benefits. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, walking or playing with a pet regularly can lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Pets can also help with loneliness and depression.

Here are a few stories of how four-legged friends influenced the health and happiness of humans.

Something to bark about

Sure, your dog can play with a pizza plushie or crinkle doughnut, but imagine them gnawing on an iconic white and red doughnut box complete with three squeaky powdered doughnuts. Thanks to Leah Lukela's ingenuity and creativity, your four-legged family member can play with plush toys shaped like shave ice, lau lau, Spam musubi, a bag of poi, and even Asato Family Shop sherbet.

Fostering fuzzballs and love

Jennifer Farey's love for animals started at a young age. She has fond memories of her cat, Chewie. "He'd curl up in my lap whenever I'd read," Farey says. "I loved him so much." Years later, when she saw that Maui Humane Society had a fostering program, she signed up.



Learn how to foster kittens on Maui at islandscene.com/more.

Farey has fostered a variety of kittens. "They've ranged from bottle babies to kittens with upper respiratory infections, to healthy ones that just needed time to get bigger," Farey says. "The first kitten I fostered needed eye drops twice a day and oral medicine once a day for 10 days."

Though it can be a lot of work, helping tiny kittens grow stronger is rewarding. "Fostering might be for you," Farey says, "if you're up for the challenge and have room in your home and heart."



Jennifer Farey and a few of her fostered "fuzzballs."



Momoka Gillis thrives in her varied roles as server, barista, and cat hostess at Toe Beans and Dreams.



Helping cats and humans

Anyone who isn't allowed to have a pet at home but still would like to enjoy feline companionship can visit a cat café. Originating in Taiwan in the 1990s and gaining popularity in Japan, cat cafés recently made it to Hawai'i.

Toe Beans and Dreams in 'Aiea is more than the typical cat café. While they offer refreshments and the chance to play with cats and adopt them like other cafes, Toe Beans and Dreams also provides job training for young adults with developmental disabilities.

Kat Charities, a nonprofit cat rescue, started the café to help connect animals in need of homes with those who are ready to enter the workforce, but could benefit from on-the-job training. Employees can choose whether they want to learn server skills or how to care for cats.

One employee, Momoka Gillis, always dreamed of being a barista. However, due to her anxiety, working in a high-stress environment didn't seem possible. The first time she walked into the cat café, she was so nervous she could barely speak. Now, she's a trained junior barista who greets customers and takes and makes orders. "Working at Toe Beans and Dreams taught me employable skills while building my confidence," Gillis says. "I've also made wonderful friends and discovered a sense of purpose in life." She's currently broadening her skill set and is training to be a cat hostess as well. "I'm on my way to making my dreams come true."




To learn more about cat adoption, programs, or volunteer opportunities, visit toebeanshi.com or call (808) 488-7369

Forever dog families

Dogs do a lot for us. They make us laugh, calm us when we're agitated, and surprise us with apparent forethought or perception. Dogs can also test our patience, annoy us, and maybe destroy something valuable. But it's OK because their eyes beam with unconditional love.

Having a dog in the family is like having a foot in the door to friendships that extend beyond the dog park. Even the most introverted individuals readily reply when a stranger asks, "What's your dog's name?" It's especially easy to reply when the stranger has a dog, too.

Eventually, the strangers learn each other's name and chat about sports, binge-watching TV shows, food, music. As friends, they share difficulties and challenges, gains, losses, and vents.

Many friendships endure after the dogs have gone over the Rainbow Bridge. But long before that, the friends were already family. That shared experience, that shared pain, serves to bond them further. 



Top two photos: Gary Funasaki Jr. and Marlene Nakamoto with Shadow, who passed three months after her 18th birthday.

Bottom: These schipperkes have gone over the Rainbow Bridge, but their humans' friendships endure. Left to right: Doug Sakamoto, Colette and Miles Kinoshita, writer Marlene Nakamoto and husband, Gary Funasaki Jr., and Sandy Tanaka.



surf lessons

words Natalie Iwamoto

photos Matt Heirakuji



Ari (left) and Natalie Iwamoto


Surfing is something I always wanted to learn, but never had the opportunity until I was in my 40s. After a few sessions, including one with a professional instructor, I fell in love with the sport.

The more I went out, the more I realized that surfing was much more than just fun. For these reasons, I wanted my 12-year-old daughter, Ari, to experience the same joys and life lessons I learned from being on the water.

- The ocean is energizing and cathartic. It's a good way to hit the reset button on your brain.
- Learning something new forced me out of my comfort zone. It takes courage to do something that doesn't come easy. In this case, the frustration of missing a wave or wiping out in front of others, especially around people you know.
- I've learned the importance of humility. I've had my share of bad etiquette while learning the ropes and have had to apologize for unintentional mishaps. When a fellow surfer demonstrates understanding and compassion, I remember that gesture and try to pass it on when I have the same opportunity.
- It's a great activity to ditch the screens and live in the real world. You gain a newfound respect for Mother Nature while learning about the tides, winds, and the multitude of other factors that allow us to catch waves.
- Surfing is transgenerational. My college-age nephew and 20-something niece are always down for a surf sesh!
- Surfing has become a medium for me to make new friends and reconnect with old ones, including a high school classmate I hadn't seen in over 20 years.
- Perseverance. If you really want to do something, it takes work and commitment.

A few sessions in, Ari realized that maybe she's not as passionate about surfing as she thought. But that's OK – it's more about the personal growth and connection we gain when we take up an activity together.

And while I love surfing, Ari doesn't have to love it. We may still surf on occasion, but we can also look for other interests to do together.

Whatever the activity, I look forward to the lessons and memories to come. 



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all in the 'ohana

words Craig DeSilva
photos Rae Huo



Lia Baltero never thought she'd be living with her parents as an adult. But when she got divorced, her parents suggested she move back to the family home in Kapālama Heights. As a single mother, Baltero thought it made sense.

The house is bigger than the Waikele town house that she was raising her twins in. Her parents take the twins to school and pick them up while Baltero commutes to and from her teaching job at Mililani Middle School.

Beyond the convenience, living together has strengthened family bonds.

"It gives my kids quality time with their grandparents, instead of occasional weekend visits," says Baltero. "During the pandemic, we stayed together instead of isolating from each other."


In Hawai'i, it's not uncommon to see several generations of a family living under one roof. Hawai'i's high cost of living is one reason families choose to stay together. They may add a new unit or floor to an existing home to increase living space.

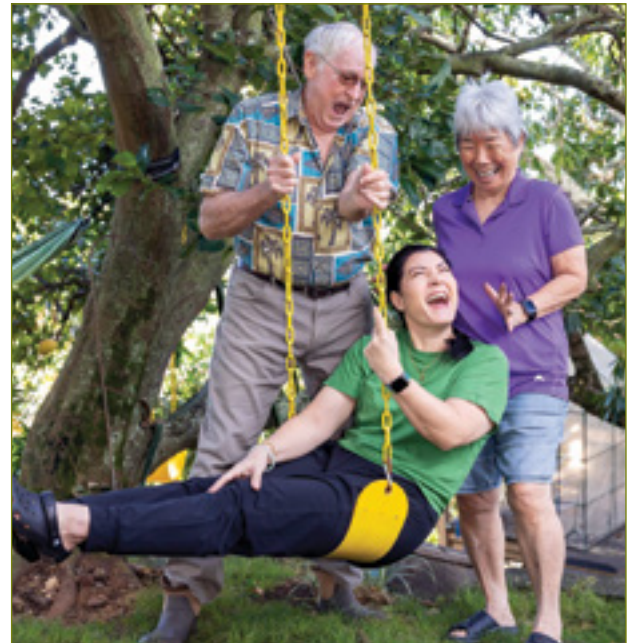
But aside from economics, Hawai'i's strong sense of 'ohana is another reason that keeps them together, spreading love and providing support when needed.

Baltero's parents, John and Lucy Witeck, didn't hesitate to ask their daughter to move back home. It brings them closer to their grandkids.

"The kids keep our minds and bodies active," says Lucy. They get to be part of the twins' school functions and activities like hula and choral singing. "We get to see the world through their young eyes. That's special. So much of their imagination carries over to us. It keeps us feeling young."

If there are disagreements, they work at achieving common ground with communication and compromise. "We pretty much share the same values," says Baltero.

"Overall, living together has added a positive, new element to our lives," says Lucy. 



Facing page: John and Lucy Witeck (back row) with (from left) grandchildren Skye and Jett, and daughter Lia Baltero.



the business of family

words Craig DeSilva, Marlene Nakamoto,
and Courtney Takabayashi

There's something comforting and familiar about a family-run business. There's a warmth and friendliness that customers immediately pick up on. Fortunately, those businesses aren't hard to find in Hawai'i.

Here are four families whose hard work and commitment to each other and their community have earned them a faithful, supportive customer base.



Nourishing the community

Whether you drive past Sumida Farm every day, once a month, or once every 10 years, it always looks the same. Green patches of watercress in various stages of growth, sprinkler heads mounted on tall poles spraying water in a lazy rotation, and that little hut thatched with coconut fronds. There's also urbanization, development, and a highway surrounding the farm and rail tracks overhead.



Moriichi and Makiyo Sumida started the farm in 1928. Ninety-five years later, Kyle Suzuki and his wife, Emi (nee Sumida), are the fourth-generation stewards of the family's legacy.

The Suzukis took over the farm in 2020 after the sudden death of Aunt Barbara, who was the farm's president. With the guidance of operations manager Uncle David and the support of the community, "we were able to transition into taking over the farm," says Kyle.

The foundation of the farm's future, Emi says, is her and Kyle's belief that the farm represents "nourishment." "It's more than just watercress on your plate. Nourishment is about education, culture, history, music, art, and more," says Emi. She's grateful for her parents and what they taught her and the experiences they allowed her to have at the farm.

"My father, Stephen, taught me from an early age that it's not about our family," she adds. "It's about how we're just a blip in the history of this area that Native Hawaiian farmers managed for centuries before us."

"It's an honor for us to carry on," says Emi.

Facing page: The Sumida's vibrant watercress farm is an oasis in a sea of urban development. From left, Kyle and Emi Suzuki with their daughters, Clare (10) and Alice (7).

Left: Emi's Uncle David and father, Stephen, fishing with their cousin on the farm in the 1950s.

See watercress facts on page 61.



Sweet success

Asato Family SHOP

When he was a child, Neale Asato tried to create his own version of Tasaka Guri Guri sherbet. “We wanted to enjoy the beloved frozen treat without going to Maui,” Asato says. It’s no surprise that Asato grew up to run a successful sweet shop. His mom’s side of the family has long been in the restaurant industry and Asato worked at places like Victoria Inn in Kaimukī and H&T Burger. “We love to eat and cook, so starting a food business felt like a natural move,” Asato says.

Honing his culinary skills on the job and at home, Asato started an ice cream business. “I launched an Instagram account and created an ice cream subscription business out of our apartment,” he says. “The first sherbet flavor was Green River Shochu Guri Guri.” About four months in, Asato Family Shop transitioned to focus more on “local kine” flavors. Some of their most popular flavors include Rainbow Skittles, Tomoe Ame Rice Candy, and White Rabbit.

Asato Family Shop is truly a family endeavor. Pitching in to do whatever’s needed are Neale’s wife, Eryn; and his parents, siblings, children, aunty, cousin ... even his dog! When they’re not working, the family likes to travel, go to the beach, and support new and old-school mom-and-pop shops statewide. “As long as we’re together,” Asato says, “we have a good time.”



RAE HUO



RAE HUO

Top: Neale Asato with his daughter Mila and son Bradyn adding finishing touches to the sherbet.

Middle: A variety of colorful and delicious flavors.

Bottom from left: Bradyn; Asato's mother, Colene; Mila; Asato; and Asato's father, Nathan.



RAE HUO



Remembering their source

How has City Mill remained a longtime kama'āina business for more than a century?

"We're part of something that's bigger than us," says President Steven Ai. "We're here for Hawai'i's communities."

Ai's grandfather started City Mill in 1899 after immigrating from China. The stores continue to be there for local families for home and gardening supplies and to prepare for storms and rebuild after. In 2018 during heavy floods in Hawai'i Kai, City Mill provided neighborhood residents with buckets and gift cards.

"There's a Chinese saying: 'When you drink water, remember the source,'" he says. "The source of our success is our

CITY MILL

communities and team members [employees] who treat our customers like family."

Steven and his sister, Vice President Carol Ai May, are mentoring Carol's son, Evan Killips, to lead the family legacy into the next generation.

"My grandfather started this business as a rice mill," Ai says. "If we were still a rice mill, we wouldn't be in business. We must change with the times, but still keep my grandfather's commitment of caring for our communities."

Top: From left, Evan Killips, Steven Ai, and Carol Ai May.

Bottom left: City Mill prides itself on serving its customers.

Bottom right: In 1899, City Mill opened in Chinatown on O'ahu.



RAE HUO

Everyone chipped in



Over 20 years ago, James "Jimmy" Chan saw a popular chef make sweet potato chips on the Food Network. "That gave me the idea to make chips using Okinawan sweet potatoes," Chan says. When the chips were a hit with his taste testers, Chan expanded to taro chips, selling both at swap meets and craft fairs until he opened a shop in Kalihi. Hawaiian Chip Company was born.

Chan's parents not only invested monetarily in their son's business, but they also labeled bags, peeled taro, and helped with sales. "Two decades later," Chan says, "my mom is worried I'll put her to work if she visits from Hilo."

Chan also received early support from someone special. "My girlfriend at the time, now wife, Kammy, bagged chips with me at 2 a.m. and sometimes fell asleep standing up," Chan says. "She eventually helped establish the factory retail store, setting the foundation for its success."

Chan and Kammy have a 9-year-old daughter, Holly, who has a rare genetic condition called Rett Syndrome. "It presents many challenges," says Chan, "but she continues to charge on enthusiastically."

To raise awareness about Rett Syndrome and other neurological disorders and to raise funds for family empowerment programs and research, the Chans started Holly's Fountain of Hope. Hawaiian Chip Company donates a portion of all sales to Holly's Fountain of Hope. Other companies in Hawai'i have also pledged to make donations from sales of Holly's favorite products designated with a Holly's Choice sticker. "A cure for Holly," Chan says, "could help many other families coping with neurological disorders and make a huge impact on their lives."



RAE HUO



COURTESY JAMES CHAN

Top: Jimmy Chan in Hawaiian Chip Company in Kalihi.
Middle: Fresh taro and sweet potato chips made to order.
Bottom: Chan with his daughter, Holly, and wife, Kammy.

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kidney disease: a killer in the shadows

words David Frickman

art Garry Ono

GFR
<15



*I was a healthy young man and I
thought I was invincible before
I was diagnosed with kidney disease.*

Former NBA star Sean Elliott



It's a disease that affects 37 million Americans with one-third of the U.S. population at increased risk for it. Early detection can prevent its progression, but it often goes undetected until the disease is advanced and dialysis or a transplant is needed.

Kidneys clean the blood and help balance fluids in the body. When kidneys don't work well, it can lead to swelling, low blood levels, and difficulty controlling blood pressure.

Kidney disease decreases the kidneys' ability to filter blood. Chronic kidney disease can worsen or cause high blood pressure, anemia, osteoporosis, weakened immunity, heart disease, and even premature death.

"Kidney disease impacts a number of different organs," says Jared Sugihara, M.D., a nephrologist who helped start the Mālama Kidney Center in Honolulu. "Patients need to understand how something like high blood pressure that seems unrelated to kidneys is affecting their life."



Dr. Jared Sugihara

Sean Elliott was fortunate that his kidney disease was detected early. After receiving a kidney from his brother in 1999, Elliott became the first professional athlete to return to his sport after a kidney transplant.

But there are barriers to early detection in Hawai'i, which has a 30% higher rate of kidney failure than the national average, according to the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum. Dr. Sugihara says one of those barriers is the lack of nephrologists in the state.

"It's been a long-standing problem," he says, "but it's exacerbated by the fact that all of us are getting older and more and more nephrologists are retiring."

In addition, chronic kidney disease usually has no symptoms until later stages. So, "learning to be a 'kidney whisperer' and learning how kidneys express being loved, neglected, or traumatized can help you prevent, detect, delay, slow, or better manage kidney disease," says Ramona Wong, M.D.




Dr. Ramona Wong

Dr. Wong, a retired Honolulu nephrologist, created a series of classes in 2005 that became Aloha Kidney in 2013. Aloha Kidney provides free education for anyone interested in a holistic understanding of the cumulative effects of their daily choices that nudge them toward or away from chronic disease. "People throughout the spectrum of health, from being healthy to kidney failure, have told me these classes helped change their perspectives," says Dr. Wong. "They became more mindful of each moment, what's important in life, and what they're willing to do to buy more time in their body. This translated to improved health for many."

Dr. Wong says Aloha Kidney can teach patients how to better work with their doctor and health care team to reach their life goals.

If kidney disease isn't detected until it's at or near the chronic stage, patients can turn to Mālama Kidney Center for help. Dr. Sugihara says, "There are people who are seen for the first time in the emergency room who didn't even know they had kidney disease."

The center's mission is to delay the progression of kidney disease and improve the quality of life for patients with chronic kidney disease. It works as an extension of the nephrologist's office providing education, support, and care coordination.

"We started Mālama Kidney Center to try to delay the progression of kidney disease so people don't get as sick as they do and end up on dialysis," says Dr. Sugihara. "In Hawai'i, the number of people on dialysis is significant." 

To learn more about Aloha Kidney, visit alohakidney.com or call (808) 585-8404. For information on the Mālama Kidney Center, call (808) 953-2502 or visit malamakidney.com.

it takes a team



Nursing students (from left) Elizabeth Tan, Hannah Ocampo, and JT Kim participate in a simulated exercise with actor Joshua Tavares portraying a cancer patient in pain.

It's true. Teamwork leads to better outcomes. Hundreds of experts and self-help books will tell you it increases effectiveness, raises morale, encourages efficiency, and enhances learning. And when you're working in the health care field – where it's extremely unlikely that one person knows all the answers – success often depends on communication, collaboration and knowing the roles and responsibilities of your interprofessional team.

It's a challenge that the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing has long been aware of. Now, with funding from supporters like HMSA, they're building programs and curriculum to teach Hawai'i's future health care workers how to be a part of an interprofessional team from the first day they join the workforce.

words Robyn Kuraoka

photos courtesy of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing



Theatre & Dance actor Christine Chang portrays a woman experiencing psychosis in a simulated exercise.



Nursing students experience what it takes to comfort actor Emily Steward, who plays a soldier experiencing a PTSD-related flashback.

"Can you imagine what it's like to be a brand-new nurse in a situation where a patient is deteriorating?" says Interim Dean and Professor Clementina Ceria-Ulep, Ph.D., R.N. "Who do you call for help? Then in rushes a team of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and social workers. Who's supposed to take the lead? What's my role? It's overwhelming. There's nothing in a textbook that can prepare them for that."

"That same collaborative approach needs to be applied if you're working with a homeless single mother whose child comes in with asthma but is also experiencing problems in school. How do we work as an interprofessional team to support the mother and the child? We know that an interprofessional team approach will provide the best patient outcomes, but where do students learn to collaborate?"

Fortunately, for students at UH Mānoa, the first time they're faced with situations like these won't be on the job.

"Can you imagine what it's like to be a brand-new nurse in a situation where a patient is deteriorating?"

: Clementina Ceria-Ulep,
Ph.D., R.N.



Interprofessional team training event with nursing, social work, and medical students on O'ahu collaborating with pharmacy students in Hilo.

"The funds from HMSA may have been given to the nursing school, but it's going so much further than helping only future nurses," says Interim Associate Dean and Director of the UH Translational Health Science Simulation Center Lorrie Wong, Ph.D., R.N. "Students from various professions are invited to participate in carefully planned simulations to get hands-on experience of real-world events. They work with medical, pharmacy, social work, and public health students to understand other's roles and practice communication, collaboration, and teamwork skills. Upon entry into the workforce, they'll know who to turn to, what information to share, and what to do." ¹⁵



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Waiwai Health fellows gather at a small park near Kalihi Stream.

health and healing in the heart of kalihi

While many Hawai'i teenagers spend their summers going to the beach and hanging out with friends, participants of the Waiwai Health Fellowship spend five weeks learning about community health and health care as a career.

The fellowship is open to students entering their junior or senior year of high school or those who've recently graduated. The program gives aspiring health professionals an inside look at different careers in the health field and expands their understanding of community health. Waiwai Health Fellowship is offered through Kōkua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services (a federally qualified health center) and the Health Careers Opportunity Program.

words Courtney Takabayashi
photos courtesy of WaiWai
Health Fellowship



Top: Waiwai fellows participate in the KVICE program to build and fix bicycles.

Bottom: Fellows prepare food for the Roots Café.

A five-week journey

The cohort spends its mornings in small groups participating in activities and meeting a diverse range of health professionals. Activities include:

- **Cultural enrichment sessions:** Mark Tang, kumu hula and cultural adviser for KKV's youth programs, teaches an appreciation for Hawaiian dance and associated arts. He shows that the core values of aloha (love), ha'aha'a (humility), and lōkahi (unity) can positively impact health and well-being. Pacific Voices provides cultural education (e.g., chants, dance, stories, etc.), traditional arts and crafts, bilingual/translation services in their origin language, and community navigation.
- **Gulick Elder Care:** To help keep Kalihi seniors in their homes, this program provides medical, dental, and behavioral health care; socialization; and other types of support such as respite care, hot meal deliveries, and transportation. Fellows engage kūpuna with exercises, wellness activities, and talking story.
- **Ho'oulu 'Āina:** KKV's 100-acre nature and cultural preserve is where participants learn to mālama 'āina, or care for the land. Activities include cultivating native species, managing invasive species, community gardening, traditional healing, and learning about natural medicines.
- **KVICE (Kalihi Valley Instructional Bike Exchange):** With the help of mentors, KVICE participants learn to build and fix bicycles, be responsible, and other important life skills.
- **Maternal Child Health:** Combines perinatal, family planning, nutrition education, family strengthening, and parental aid into one program. Fellows learn how to support a community with healthy, resilient, and empowered families.
- **The Roots Café:** A gathering place to relax and enjoy fresh food sourced

from local farmers. Roots also runs the Pharmacy, which sells produce and cultural food products from food hub partners. Through the café, fellows learn food-industry-related skills as well as nutrition and dietetics, how culture influences food, and how food can be medicine.


Creative and practical activities

Other activities include creative reflection, taking photographs of people and places and writing an accompanying narrative, mapping events that have impacted their family's health, and visiting significant places in Kalihi that tie into health.

Fellows also practice completing applications for health professional schools and programs. They work on written statements, which they share with their cohorts to give and receive constructive feedback.

Leading with aloha

For the past three years, Victoria Pun has served as a co-leader for the fellowship. "Participants learn the importance of celebrating what we have and helping others recognize that abundance," Pun says. "They have a hands-on opportunity to understand how food, land, and ancestral wisdom can help make communities healthier."

The fellowship celebrates cultural diversity and shows that healing comes in many forms. "Being a healer means many different things," Pun says. "Whether it's strengthening relationships, promoting health literacy, or caring for the 'āina, we can all be healers." 

For more information about the Waiwai Health Fellowship or to apply, visit kkv.net/waiwai-fellowship-program, email rmangayayam@kkv.net, or call (808) 791-9400.

HMSA Health Education Workshops

Join us at these free upcoming workshops.

BONE-ified Talk: A Workshop on Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a disease characterized by low bone mass and structural deterioration of bone tissue. This workshop will provide you with a better understanding of your bones and how to keep them strong and fracture-free.

April 28, 2–3 p.m.
HMSA Center @ Hilo

May 23, 10–11 a.m.
HMSA Center @ Honolulu

May 24, noon–1 p.m.
Online at hmsa.com

June 9, 10–11 a.m.
HMSA Center @ Pearl City

June 23, 2–3 p.m.
HMSA Center @ Kahului

Make a Muscle

Did you know that you have more than 600 skeletal muscles in your body? Learn how your muscles work, how to build or maintain muscle strength, and the importance of recovery after exercise.

April 21, 10–11 a.m.
HMSA Center @ Honolulu

April 26, noon–1 p.m.
Online at hmsa.com

April 28, 10–11 a.m.
HMSA Center @ Hilo

May 2, 10–11 a.m.
HMSA Center @ Pearl City

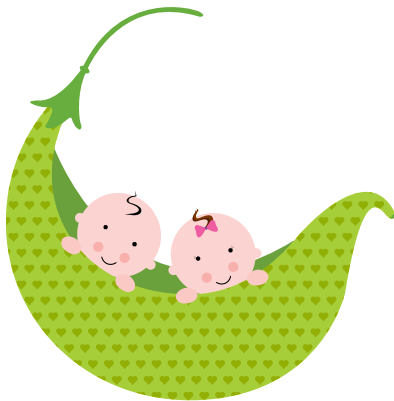
June 23, 10–11 a.m.
HMSA Center @ Kahului

Workshop dates and times are subject to change. To learn more or to register, visit hmsa.com/HealthEducation or call 1 (855) 329-5461.



twice as nice

words Robyn Kuraoka



Twins have always been a source of fascination. And as we look around us, it seems they aren't as uncommon as they used to be. At the mall, more families are pushing keiki in double strollers. On social media, George Clooney, Jennifer Lopez, and Neil Patrick Harris are just a few of the celebrities sharing announcements and photos of their twins.

But are there really more of them now or are we just noticing them? We'll tell you what's for real and what's not.

Fact or fiction: There are more twins now than ever before.

Fact: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, twin births began climbing in the early 1980s, rising 79% from 1980 to 2014. In Hawai'i, the increase in twin births was higher than the national average, increasing 103% from 1980 to 2009.

True or false: Identical twins run in families.

False: While there are a few families with more instances of identical twins, research suggests that genetic factors don't play a part. However, fraternal twins are more likely to run in families. In fact, a person is twice as likely to have fraternal twins if a close relative has had them.

For real or not: Twins are more likely to be born to older mothers.

For real: According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, women over age 35 are more likely to release more than one egg during a single menstrual cycle than younger women, so yes, older women are more likely to become pregnant with multiples. HMSA Medical Director Brian Wu, M.D., also notes that the introduction of fertility treatments such as ovulation induction, ovarian stimulation, and in vitro fertilization has been identified as the other main cause.

Yes or no: Caring for twins is twice as challenging.

Maybe: This answer depends on who you're asking. "If you're a soon-to-be parent of twins, it's important to be prepared. Talk to other twin parents, go online, find a twin parenting group," says Andrew Perry, M.D., a pediatrician, HMSA medical director, and father of twins. "But even with all the planning and research, know that you're still going to have moments that are overwhelming. Having family, friends, and as many people as possible in your support group will help you find your calm."

health matters

Aggravating allergies

Cleaning and dusting household surfaces can stir up allergens that may cause sneezing; itchy, watery eyes; and other irritating symptoms. "Some of the major triggers here in Hawai'i are dust mites, cockroaches, and molds," says Jeffrey Kam, M.D., an allergist and chief of the Allergy and Immunology department at Straub Medical Center.

"Preventing allergy triggers should always be your first step," Dr. Kam says. He suggests reducing clutter and cleaning thoroughly – instead of doing light housekeeping frequently – to prevent allergen buildup. As for dust mites, Dr. Kam suggests "allergy encasements for the pillow and mattress, vacuum cleaners with HEPA filters, and frequent washing of bedding using a sanitizing cycle are helpful."



Spring cleaning for your gut

Spring cleaning can be for more than just your home. Do a deep clean of your intestines by adding more dietary fiber to your meals. Fiber, which is found mainly in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes, can help normalize bowel movements, maintain a healthy weight, and lower your risk of diabetes, heart disease, and some types of cancer.

Studies show that many people fall short of the fiber they need. The American Heart Association recommends about 28 grams of fiber per day for most people.

Mental detox

To “clean” your mind, consider unplugging from technology. Taking a break from social media is the most popular way to detox that can result in benefits such as:

- Reduced anxiety and depression.
- Improved self-esteem.
- Increased productivity.
- Better sleep.



April is Stress Awareness Month

While not all stress is bad, long-term stress can have harmful impacts on physical and mental health. HMSA's Behavioral Health Program can connect you with providers, programs, and services to help you manage stress, including post-traumatic stress. We also offer telehealth appointments with psychologists, counselors, and more through HMSA's Online Care®.

To learn more, visit hmsa.com/well-being/ or call (808) 695-7700.

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Staci Fujikawa with daughters Lily (left) and Riley.



family first

words Craig DeSilva

photos Lew Harrington


Staci Fujikawa understands the importance of quality health care and a health plan you can count on. Several years ago, her youngest daughter underwent multiple doctor visits, tests, and hospitalization at Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children for a rare bone condition. She's better now, but it was the first major health scare that Fujikawa had to deal with as a mother.

"It was an uncertain time for my family, but I was so impressed by the coordinated care she received from the doctors and nurses in the hospital," says Fujikawa. "It hit home how you can't take health care and your health plan for granted. And because we have HMSA, I didn't have to worry about insurance. I could just focus on my daughter getting better."

Fujikawa has always put family first, both in her personal and professional life. After graduating from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa William S. Richardson School of Law, she started her career as an attorney at Watanabe Ing LLP specializing in employment and labor law. She's currently director of human resources at 'Iolani School.

"What attracted me to both workplaces is how everyone treats each other like family," she says. "They're local organizations with community ties. There's a sense of caring and mentorship to help each other succeed."

That sense of family continues in her work as a new HMSA Board member.

"If there's anything we learned coming out of the pandemic, it's how important employees are," she says. "They kept things going during the shutdown by balancing family life and working from home. Employees are the heart of any organization. We need to make sure they're valued and supported." 



Visit [islandscene.com/more](https://www.islandscene.com/more) for a family recipe and a video of the Fujikawas cooking at home.





fighting heart disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the state, according to the Hawai'i Department of Health. Cardiovascular disease is responsible for three out of every 10 deaths.

Ornish Lifestyle Medicine Program at Straub

Managing heart disease is a difficult task. Reversing the disease would be a dream.

At Straub Medical Center, that dream is a reality for many patients who've participated in the Ornish Lifestyle Medicine™ Program. Dean Ornish, M.D., developed this program that has been proven to prevent, stop, and even reverse heart disease and significantly improve other chronic conditions.

The nine-week program focuses on nutrition, stress management, fitness, and group support.

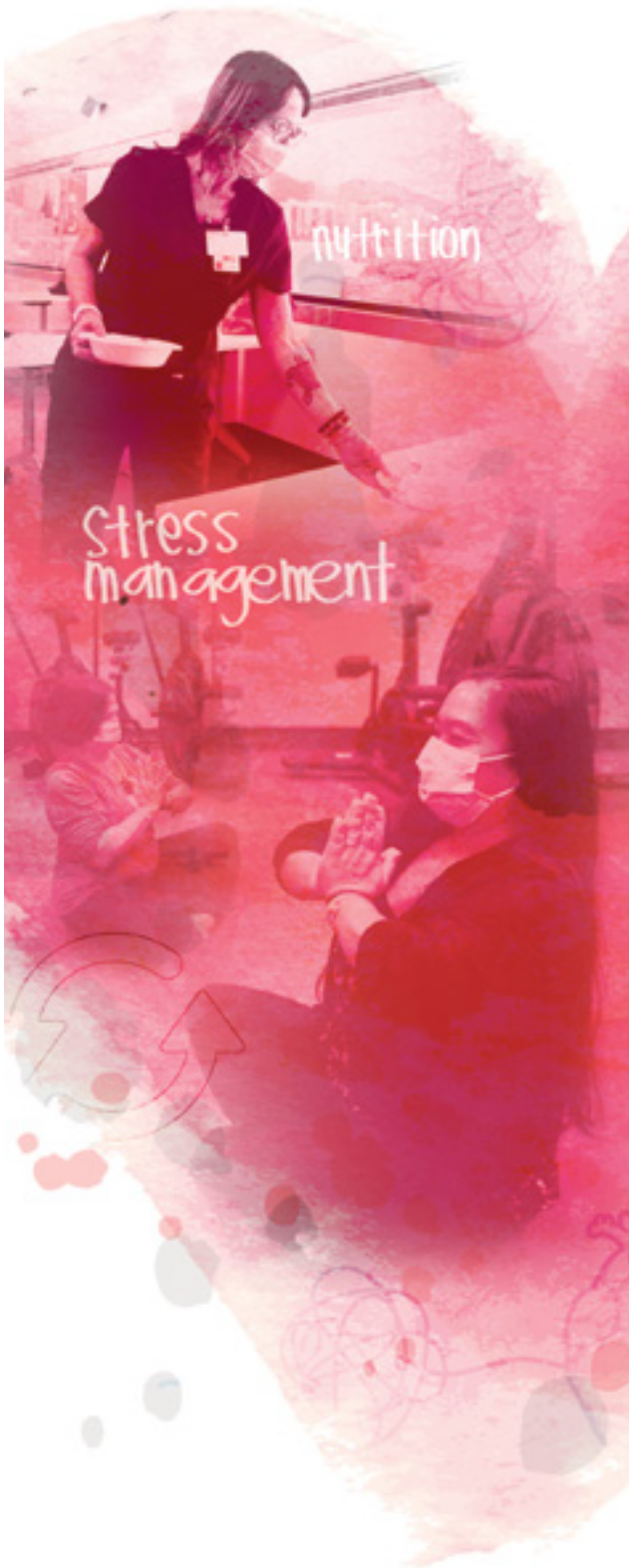
"Patients come here twice a week for four hours each visit," says Tasha Brown, a case manager for the Straub Ornish program. Each session includes one hour of exercise, one hour of stress management, one hour of group support, and one hour of learning about Ornish Lifestyle Medicine Program-approved meals.

"Patients come to us at all different levels of readiness," says Straub Ornish Program Case Manager Jennifer Taoka. "For the people who aren't so ready or are apprehensive about the program, once they start the first class and experience the program, they're usually a little bit more open to the changes that they're going to make."

words David Frickman

photos courtesy of Straub Medical Center

photo illustration Brandon Young




ornish
lifestyle medicine™

"By the time they're done, they see benefits," Taoka says. "They see how their energy level improves, their blood pressure lowers, and their weight comes down."

"About 95% of my patients have enjoyed the program and some have had their lives changed by it in ways we had only dreamed would be possible," says Marti Taba, M.D., a family medicine doctor at Straub's Kailua clinic who's referred numerous patients to the Straub Ornish program. "I have a male patient with severe congestive heart failure who could barely walk due to his weak heart. He's much more active now and credits it to Ornish."

Straub Ornish Program Manager Susan Fujita says the program is unique in its approach. "It's a comprehensive program that's so different from others because it includes stress management and group support. And I think those two, along with nutrition and exercise, make it a complete plan of action for many who really need it."

The ultimate goal, says Taoka, is to make a lifelong difference for patients who complete the nine-week program.

"We encourage them to practice all the things they've learned, such as implementing some of the nutritional practices into their cooking, exercising regularly, practicing stress management, and just being connected with their family and friends. When they're done with the program, they can maintain those new habits." 

Learn more about the Ornish Lifestyle Medicine program at Straub at hawaiiipacifichealth.org/heart-centers/ornish-lifestyle/. Or call (808) 949-WELL (9355).

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- Hereditary angioedema
- Human immunodeficiency virus
- Inclusion body myositis
- Juvenile idiopathic arthritis
- Multiple sclerosis
- Myasthenia gravis
- Parkinson's disease
- Polymyositis
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Scleroderma
- Sickle cell disease
- Systemic lupus erythematosus
- Ulcerative colitis

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more feedback, please




Thank you for the valuable feedback you provide to us throughout the year. We appreciate your calls, letters, and visits to our HMSA Centers. We're especially grateful when you complete our surveys.

Why do we ask you to complete surveys? Will one member – you – really make a difference? As someone who works closely with survey data, I can say that the answer is "yes." You absolutely help shape health care for all HMSA members.

Recently, you may have received a Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems survey, which is also known as the CAHPS survey. It's a standard survey that's completed by millions of people across the U.S. every year.

In Hawai'i, thousands of members like you complete and return the survey to SPH Analytics, the company that administers the survey for us. After compiling the results, they share the feedback with us, which we share with our network providers and HMSA departments. All of this happens with strict confidentiality – your name never appears with any information and a completed survey never affects your health plan benefits.

We appreciate both positive and negative feedback. Positive feedback shows us what's working well so we can strengthen those practices. Negative feedback shows us where we need to focus our efforts to improve programs and services that are important to you.

So if you received a survey and haven't completed it yet, please take a little time to do so. Thank you in advance for filling it out and sending it back. We know you're busy and we really appreciate your time. 



Frequently asked questions

Is the survey confidential?

Yes, it is. We contract with a company called SPH Analytics to collect and combine survey responses. Personally identifiable information is never made public.

Who receives the survey?

The survey is sent to a random selection of HMSA members.

When will I get the survey?

If you were selected to receive a survey, you would have received it in February or March. We ask that you complete it by the end of April.

words Kara Kitazaki-Chun, HMSA Vice President, Quality Programs



What the CAA means for you

words David Frickman

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, or CAA, establishes wide-ranging provisions to help protect health care consumers and keep them informed about costs. The \$2.3 trillion legislation also includes COVID-19 pandemic emergency relief.

Here are three of those provisions and what they mean for you.



No Surprises Act

Nonparticipating providers are now prohibited from “balance billing” patients in certain situations. This means that patients can’t be charged the remainder of what their health plan doesn’t pay for covered services in these situations:

- Health plans must cover services administered in an emergency department and apply in-network benefits for care received from any provider (participating or nonparticipating).
- HMSA will cover certain nonemergency services from nonparticipating providers at participating facilities and apply in-network benefits. Facilities include hospitals, hospital outpatient departments, critical access hospitals, and ambulatory surgical centers.
- Air ambulance services that are a benefit of the plan are also covered at the in-network benefit level even if the provider is nonparticipating.

“We want members to be aware of their rights and protections so that they can be savvy consumers,” says Chris Lynch, HMSA Provider Operations senior manager. “While it’s better to see participating providers for a variety of reasons, members are protected in situations where they’re unable to do so.”



Membership cards

The law requires health insurance companies and group health plans to include details about their cost-sharing obligations on membership cards.

“Individuals have often found it difficult to track their out-of-pocket costs,” says Troy Enoki, HMSA Customer Relations supervisor. “This provision helps them access and understand the costs they may bear for medical care.”


HMSA has accomplished this with a QR code on membership cards. The code is linked to a website with deductibles (if applicable to the member’s health plan) and out-of-pocket maximums. The cards also have a phone number and website where members can get other information. To scan a QR code, use the camera on your smartphone, point it at the code, and click the link that appears.



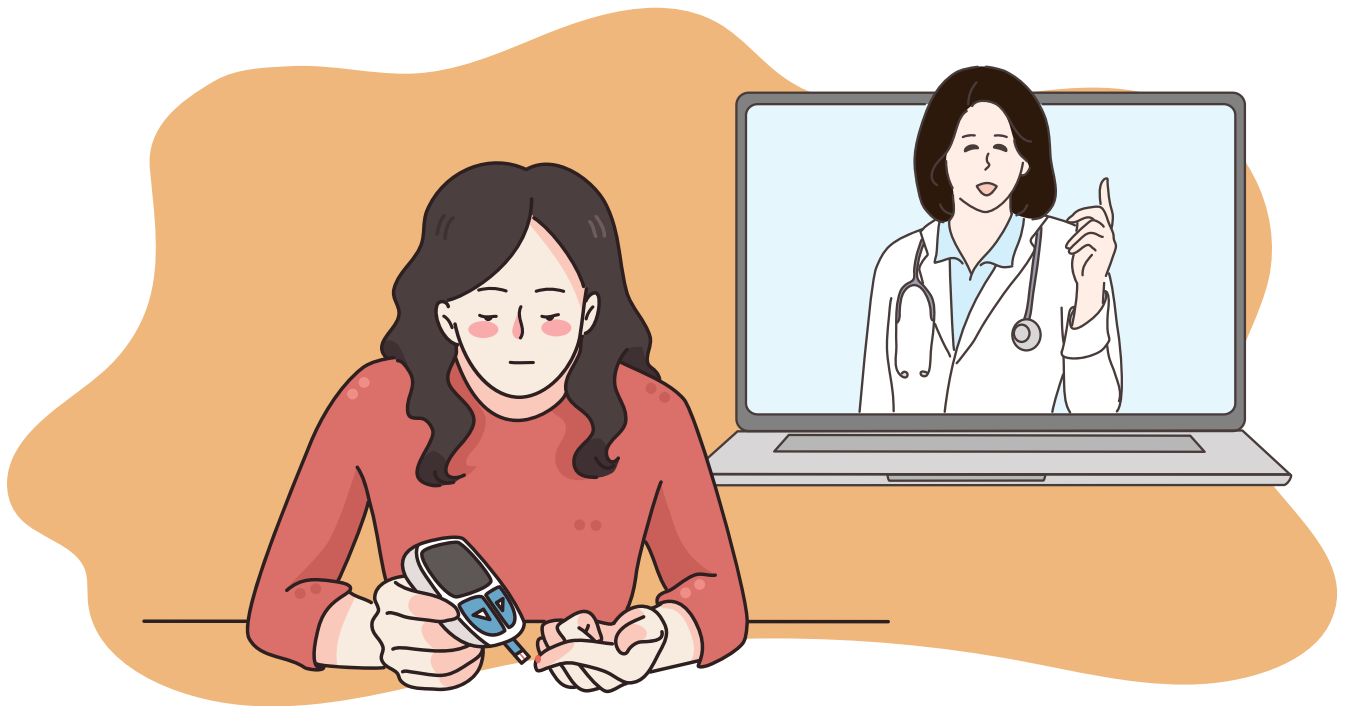
Find a Doctor

The CAA requires health plans to maintain up-to-date provider directories online. As of early 2022, HMSA requires providers in our network to confirm that their directory information is current every quarter. Providers who don’t confirm their information will have it removed from the Find a Doctor directory on hmsa.com.

Josh Medearis, HMSA Provider Operations senior manager, says having a directory with current information helps both providers and members.

“Everything we do around our provider directory is member-centric,” he says. “Can you imagine your uncle, auntie, or grandmother getting on a bus after finding the address on our site and finding out the office isn’t there when they show up?” 

for your benefit



Extra care for your condition

If you're living with a chronic condition, the HMSA Condition Care Program can help you reach and maintain your optimal health. The program works closely with your primary care provider and goes beyond clinical care with health coaching, access to community resources, and more.

Care managers provide support and information on how to access health screenings, tests, and treatments specific to your condition. You'll also learn lifestyle changes such as healthy eating, stress management, and how to increase physical activity.

This program is voluntary and available at no cost to HMSA members.

If you need support for a chronic condition and would like more information about the HMSA Condition Care Program, visit the HMSA Health and Well-being Support web page at hmsa.com/well-being/health-well-being-support/ or call 1 (855) 329-5461, option 1.

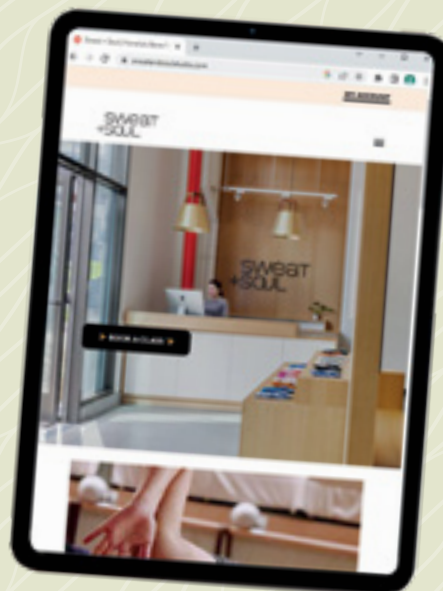
Discounts for your health

With HMSA365, you can save money on health and well-being products and services state-wide. To get a discount, just show your HMSA membership card at participating businesses. There's no paperwork to do or claims to file.

Check out these discounts:

- **Sweat + Soul Studio:** Save \$10 on any starter pack with code HMSASTART. Save \$50 on first-month's membership with code HMSA50. Or save \$100 on annual unlimited membership with code HMSA100. Restrictions may apply.
- **Hawaii Ballroom Dance Association:** Annual membership fee waived for first-timers.
- **Yanagida Strength and Fitness:** Get 10% off group training memberships.

Go to hmsa.com/hmsa365 and browse for more discounts by island or categories. If you have questions, call 1 (855) 329-5461.



The bittersweet college transition

words Robyn Kuraoka
and Kiralee Kuraoka

art Garry Ono



A Mom's Perspective

"Honey, no matter how old your kids get, you'll never stop worrying about them."

So true. As I virtually semi-stalked my daughter's whereabouts all the way across the country, I realized the truth of my dad's words. Don't get me wrong. I'm not a helicopter mom. But on weekend nights, I couldn't stop myself from checking to see if she'd made it back to her dorm safely. Everyone said, "the first year of college is the hardest." I failed to realize the person it was going to be hard for was me.

I've always taken a hands-off approach to parenting. I knew my daughter's friends, I knew their parents, and she held her own when it came to studying. So with the exception of the occasional "call your grandma" or "please clean your room," our job was easy. And since she only came home to eat, study, or sleep for most of her senior year in high school, whenever she worried about college, I reassured her it wouldn't be much of a change.

Saying goodbye in Boston taught me differently. More than once, as she went off to orientation activities, I found myself tearing up, asking questions like, "Now who am I going to hug each morning?" Her dad found this hilarious. Within a week, I went from being the reassuring mom to an anxiety-ridden crybaby.

Saying that I missed her (way more than she missed me) that first year was an understatement. But, thanks to iPhones and Facetime, I managed to sit tight in August and September and two weeks of October before flying back to Boston for parents' weekend. After all, we'd be irresponsible not to go, right?

As any seasoned college parent will tell you, it gets better. The frequency and length of my calls

dropped and I managed to cut down my stalking.

Turns out, Dad was right. While I never stopped worrying, I learned to appreciate that our time apart was teaching my daughter to do her own laundry, choose healthy meals, and basically grow up in a safe environment. Yes, it took 50 years to appreciate all that my parents went through in raising me, but I'm comforted knowing that someday, my daughter may have a child of her own and will get to experience just how hard that first year of college can be.



A Daughter's Perspective

Growing up in Hawai'i, I always imagined that going away for college would be life changing. I'd be moving away, living on my own, interacting with people who'd grown up in completely different worlds. And as an only child whose closest confidante was her mom, I was certain that living 5,000 miles away from home would be the hardest thing I'd ever go through.

Moving to Boston – a city whose pedestrians and cars ignore all traffic signals, where the sun doesn't come out for months at a time, and where my Japanese ancestry turned me into a novelty – was a major learning experience.

Most surprisingly, I learned pretty quickly that I didn't miss my parents nearly as much as I thought I would. What I missed

most was sunlight past 5 p.m. Nevertheless, I learned to appreciate the little things around me. I took pictures of pretty flowers and checked the weather every morning and caught myself smiling when it was finally forecasted to be sunny. So many of the things I took for granted at home helped me get through each day.

As many college students will probably tell you, I learned that college wasn't that much harder than high school. The main difference is that college courses require a higher level of self-discipline, as lecture attendance isn't mandatory. Luckily for me, I was determined to prove that I could keep my grades up and my weight down (no freshman 15 for me, thank you), so I had no trouble staying motivated.

The most important thing I realized was the distinction between being alone and being lonely. For most of my first semester, I surrounded myself with people who I didn't necessarily relate to out of fear of being alone. I got invited to parties, went to sporting events, and tried rushing a sorority (also not for me). While I had fun and met new people, many of those experiences left me feeling unfulfilled.

During my spring semester, I was fortunate to meet a girl who, in addition to sharing the same niche interests as me, was probably the most confident and self-assured person I had ever met. Spending time with her made me realize the importance of being my own person outside of my group of friends.

I began taking walks on my own, going to the dining hall by myself, and spending my weekends doing what I wanted to rather than forcing myself to be someone I wasn't for the sake of company. Being alone felt liberating rather than isolating. This change in perspective not only helped me through my first year of college, but continues to influence how I make choices about school, my friends, my family, and my life. 15

“

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Clarence T.C. Ching Hope Lodge®. The staff
members are incredible people with huge
hearts. I am thankful to each of them for
making me feel at home during my cancer
treatment. ”**

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A Public Service Announcement



**The American Cancer Society
Hope Lodge® provides cancer
patients and their caregivers a
home away from home during
treatment, free of charge.**

**For more information,
visit cancer.org or scan
the QR code.**



spring cleaning

words Courtney Takabayashi

although we can clean any time of the year, the idea of spring cleaning is appealing because it suggests a fresh start.

Here are some books to inspire you to declutter, organize, and maintain your space.



**Marie Kondo's Kurashi at Home:
How to Organize Your Space and
Achieve Your Ideal Life**

By Marie Kondo

Thanks to Marie Kondo's breakthrough book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*, we ask ourselves, "Does this spark joy?" whenever we clean up.

In her latest book, Kondo encourages readers to explore their *kurashi* or "way of life." She believes that when we examine our *kurashi*, we can embrace our internal compass and "find gratitude in the everyday and make more meaningful choices."

**The Gentle Art of Swedish Death
Cleaning: How to Free Yourself
and Your Family from a Lifetime
of Clutter**

By Margareta Magnusson

Death cleaning, or the practice of getting rid of excess belongings so they're not a burden to loved ones after you pass, may seem grim.

But Margareta Magnusson says it's a labor of love. With practical advice about what to keep or give away, she also helps the reader become comfortable with the idea of letting go.

The Year of Less

By Cait Flanders

When Cait Flanders realized that she was caught in an endless loop of buying more and wanting more, she embarked on a year-long journey of buying only necessities. Flanders bought groceries, toiletries, and gas for her car.

She also decluttered, fixed broken items instead of throwing them away, and more. Flanders found that the less she consumed, the more fulfilled she felt.

**Chasing Slow: Courage to
Journey Off the Beaten Path**

By Erin Loechner

The slow living movement is all about a meaningful and conscious lifestyle that's in line with what's important to you. Instead of trying to do things faster, strive to do things better. This could mean doing less and prioritizing the time you spend on the things that matter most to you.

In her book, Erin Loechner shows how she downsized her belongings, obligations, and fears, thus upgrading her life.



For cleaning tips, go to
[islandscene.com/more](https://www.islandscene.com/more).



patchwork of memories



For Allan Wang, M.D., losing his husband was the hardest thing he's had to deal with. They were together nearly 40 years before Tom Humphreys, a University of Hawai'i scientist, died of cancer in 2014. It was understandably painful when Dr. Wang had to clear out Humphreys' belongings, particularly his aloha shirts.


"They are so evocative of him," says Dr. Wang, an allergist/immunologist who practices in Honolulu and Kona. "Meaningful reminders of what he wore during our times together. I saw him in those shirts for decades. Seeing those shirts makes me relive those moments."

Dr. Wang had about 40 of Humphrey's aloha shirts, some with classic and vintage designs from the 1950s. "There was so much good material," he says.

Instead of donating the shirts to thrift stores, he had them made into patchwork quilts. He cut out the back of the shirts and sent them to a seamstress on the Mainland who's known for making quilts out of loved one's T-shirts. This was her first time quilting with aloha shirts.

Within a few months, Dr. Wang received two happy remembrances of Humphreys. One quilt lies on his bed at his home in Kona and the other hangs in his living room in Honolulu. "It's sentimental for me to see and touch them," he says.

Dr. Wang is now considering ways to use the buttons that he removed from the shirts. Many are made of coconut shells, mother of pearl, and brass.

"The quilts are gratifying and useful keepsakes of someone I loved and miss," he says. "It turns my loss into something positive." 


words Craig DeSilva

photos Earl Yoshii

keiki corner

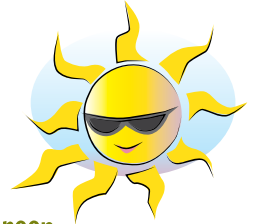
Spring bingo

It's the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors. See how many activities you can cross off the bingo card. Get five in a row or better yet, aim for blackout bingo!

| B | I | N | G | O |
|---|---|--|--|--|
|  Fly a kite |  Go to the zoo or park |  Wash the car |  Pick flowers |  Play frisbee |
|  Take family pictures |  Read a book outside |  Eat a meal outside |  Have a garage sale (or donate items) |  Find a new-to-you walking or hiking trail |
|  Plant an herb or a vegetable |  Watch a sunrise or sunset |  FREE |  Stargaze |  Sketch something outdoors |
|  Cloud-gaze |  Pick up litter at the beach |  Try a new sport |  Get creative with sidewalk chalk |  Blow bubbles |
|  Go birdwatching |  Start a new family tradition |  Camp in your backyard |  Collect rocks |  Make slime |

Picnic puzzles

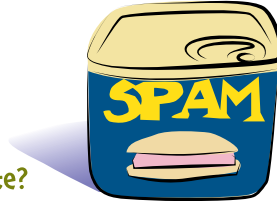
It's time to go on a picnic! Finish the poems with the appropriate rhyming word. If you get stuck, the illustrations are hints!



The ants are getting hungry,
They're going for my pie.
There's something buzzing in my ear.
I think it's a _____.



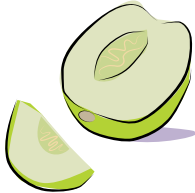
Some like eggs,
Some like ham.
But on my musubi
I want _____!



Put on your sunscreen
And let's have some fun.
We're going on a picnic
Under the _____.



Let's play soccer,
Hit the ball with your head.
By the end of the day,
We'll be ready for _____.



I packed mangoes
And lychee, too.
Did you bring your favorite?
Sliced _____.

DIY playdough

Here's an easy playdough recipe that uses simple ingredients.

You'll need:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup fine table salt
- 1 Tbsp. cream of tartar
- Plastic bowl
- Whisk
- 1½ tsp. vegetable oil
- ½ cup boiling water
- Food coloring
- Rubber spatula
- Latex gloves (optional)

In a plastic bowl, whisk together flour, salt, and cream of tartar. Make a well in the center of the mixture and add vegetable oil, boiling water, and food coloring (15-20 drops for bright colors, 8-10 drops for pastels). Using a rubber spatula, stir until a dough forms. When the dough is cool enough to handle, use hands (you can wear latex gloves) to mix and knead until all flour is incorporated and dough is soft and uniform in color. Let playdough cool completely before playing with it.

Store playdough in a zip-top bag and place in an air-tight food storage container at room temperature. No need to refrigerate.



Note to parents: Playdough isn't just fun, it's a great way for keiki to develop fine motor skills, encourage creativity, improve social skills, and more.

Answers: Clockwise from top left: sun, Spam, fly, honeydew, bed

handed down with love

Whenever families gather, there's always food. Often, that's how treasured recipes are passed from a parent, grandparent, or other relative. Or even friends. These are dishes that are on regular rotation at your home or ones that emerge once a year on specific holidays. Dishes that remind you of a special someone or occasion.

These handed-down recipes may not be too high on the healthy scale, but their sentimental value for people who treasure them is through the roof.



words Marlene Nakamoto

photos Rae Huo

food styling Cedric Fujita



Kwong Hing Lum's Famous Fried Rice

Relatives of Kwong Hing Lum looked forward to his fried rice at Christmas brunch. His nephew, David, says his uncle recommended using rice that has been refrigerated at least overnight. "And the one ingredient you can't leave out is the oyster sauce."

- 12-oz. package lup cheong
- 8 slices bacon
- 2 cups diced lean hickory smoked ham
- 6 eggs
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 10 cups leftover cooked rice
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup oyster sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shoyu
- 2 cups chopped green onion

Steam lup cheong and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces; set aside. Slice bacon into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces and fry until almost crisp; set aside. Save 2 tablespoons of the drippings. Cook ham in the same skillet and set aside.

Scramble two eggs at a time and cook into thin crepes. Slice into $\frac{1}{4}$ -by-2-inch strips; set aside.

Heat a wok or large pot with 2 tablespoons bacon drippings. Stir-fry onion and celery until onion is translucent. Add lup cheong, bacon, and ham. Sauté 1 minute until warm.

Add cooked rice and stir until heated through. Add oyster sauce and continue stirring until evenly distributed. Stir in shoyu and mix well. Stir in egg strips and green onion. Makes 14 servings.

Per serving (about 1 cup): 400 calories, 17 g fat, 5 g saturated fat, 120 mg cholesterol, 1,600 mg sodium, 39 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 2 g sugar, 20 g protein

Grandma Tapparra's Pancit

Like most kūpuna, Ramona Tapparra rarely referred to recipes when cooking. This pancit recipe survives because her daughter, Irene, scribbled notes as Tapparra prepared it.

Grandma Tapparra died in 1988, but now, Irene's daughter, Jocelyn Chun, holds on to the recipe to cook for family gatherings.

Not surprisingly, Grandma only measured the sesame oil and oyster sauce. Here's how Jocelyn filled in the missing measurements.

- 8 oz. pancit canton (Filipino wheat noodles)
- 2 tsp. vegetable oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Tbsp. dried shrimp
- 8 oz. pork, diced small
- 1 Tbsp. sesame oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ onion, thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ medium cabbage, shredded
- 4 oz. string bean, sliced diagonally
- 1 carrot, peeled and julienned
- 2 Tbsp. oyster sauce

Parboil pancit canton in briskly boiling water for 1 minute. Drain and set aside. In a large nonstick skillet, heat vegetable oil over medium heat. Add garlic, dried shrimp, and pork. Sauté until pork is brown. Add sesame oil, onion, cabbage, string bean, carrot, and oyster sauce. Stir-fry until vegetables are crisp-tender. Add pancit canton and toss gently until combined. Makes 6 servings.

Per serving (about 1 cup): 370 calories, 22 g fat, 12 g saturated fat, 30 mg cholesterol, 750 mg sodium, 31 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 4 g sugar, 13 g protein



Mrs. Akamine's Korean Chicken Wings

Colette Kinoshita got this recipe from a friend's mom in the 1970s. "I make it about once a year, usually during the holiday season," she says. Kinoshita notes that monosodium glutamate was considered harmful decades ago without scientific evidence; she's made these wings with and without it. "It really adds to the flavor," she says, "and it has one-third the sodium of table salt."

3 lbs. chicken wings
½ cup cornstarch
¼ cup flour
¼ cup sugar
1 tsp. salt
1½ tsp. Ajinomoto
(monosodium glutamate)
¼ cup plus 1 Tbsp. shoyu
2 eggs
2 stalks green onion, chopped
2 Tbsp. sesame seeds
Vegetable oil

Slice wing tips off at the joint and either save for stock or discard. Slice drumette and wingette at the joint to separate. Wash and pat dry. Combine remaining ingredients except vegetable oil in a large bowl and add chicken, stirring to coat. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

In a large saucepan, heat oil to 375 F. Deep fry chicken in batches about 8 minutes or until golden brown. Makes 6 servings.

Per serving (3 pieces): 500 calories, 33 g fat, 6 g saturated fat, 200 mg cholesterol, 1,290 mg sodium, 23 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 27 g protein

blessed with watercress

Thanks to Sumida Farm on O'ahu, Hawai'i residents have enjoyed fresh watercress for 95 years. Grown in spring water from an aquifer, watercress continues to be an important staple in local agriculture.

Many cultures have embraced the versatility of the tender green leaves and crunchy stems, offering diverse ways to indulge in the vegetable's peppery bite. Enjoy some watercress trivia.

Yummy raw or cooked

Wash thoroughly!
Salad, sandwich,
stir-fry, soup.

Highly perishable

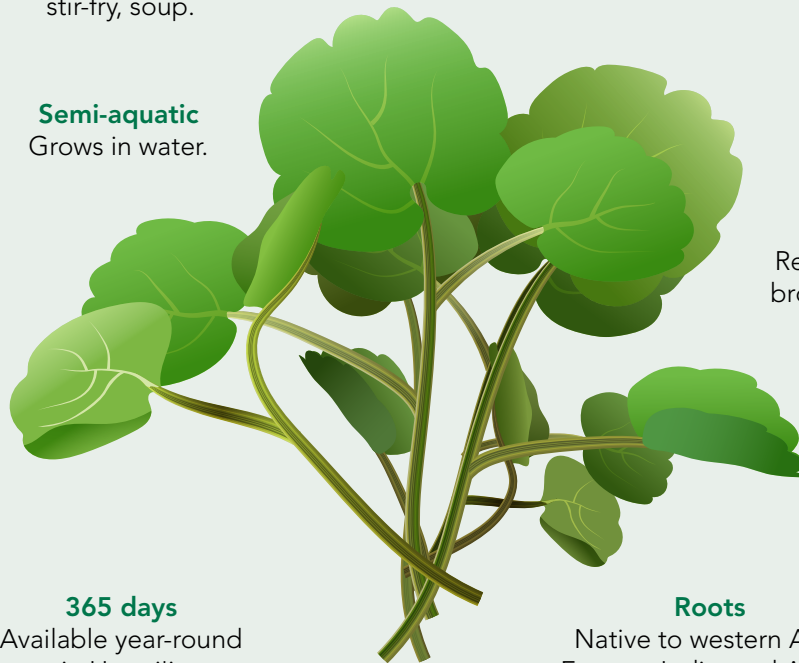
Refrigerate and use within
two days of purchase.

Semi-aquatic

Grows in water.

Fam bam

Related to cabbage,
broccoli, kale, radish,
and wasabi.



365 days

Available year-round
in Hawai'i.

Roots

Native to western Asia,
Europe, India, and Africa.

Drink it

One of eight vegetables in a popular brand
of vegetable juice.



Get the recipe for Grandma
Sumida's Pork Watercress Soup
at islandscene.com/more.

brunch bunch

words Craig DeSilva and

Marlene Nakamoto

photos Lew Harrington

food stylist Marjie Beaton

Welcome to the weekend!

You slept in past breakfast and now your stomach's telling you it's empty. There's no need to wait for lunch when you can enjoy an in-between meal. Here are some healthy dishes – savory and sweet – for weekends with family or friends.

Strata with Baby Bok Choy

- 10 eggs
- 2 cups low-fat (2%) milk
- 2 Tbsp. whole-grain mustard
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. pepper
- ⅛ tsp. nutmeg
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 4 cups coarsely chopped baby bok choy
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 cups cubed day-old whole-wheat sourdough bread
- 2 cups shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese, divided
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350 F. In a bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, mustard, salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Set aside.





Baked French Toast

3 eggs
¾ cup oat milk or other milk
¼ cup packed light brown sugar, divided
3 tsp. cinnamon, divided
¼ tsp. salt
Cooking spray
8 (1-inch) slices whole-wheat bread
¼ cup toasted sliced almonds
Powdered sugar
Maple syrup

Preheat oven to 350 F. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, 1 tablespoon of the brown sugar, 1 teaspoon of the cinnamon, and salt. Prepare a 13-by-9-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Dip bread slices in egg mixture and stagger them “standing” in the baking dish. Mix remaining brown sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle it over the top. Bake 30 minutes or until golden brown and crisp. Top with sliced almonds and sifted powdered sugar. Serve with maple syrup. Makes 8 servings.

Per serving (based on oat milk and not including powdered sugar and maple syrup): 160 calories, 5 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 250 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 7 g protein

Per serving (based on 2% cow's milk and not including powdered sugar and maple syrup): 170 calories, 6 g fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 250 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 8 g protein

In a deep 12-inch ovenproof skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add bok choy stems and sauté about 5 minutes until tender. Stir in onion and garlic and sauté another 5 minutes. Add bok choy leaves and stir until wilted, about a minute. Turn off heat.

Add bread cubes and 1 cup of the cheddar to skillet and toss to combine. Pour egg mixture over all and press down with a spatula. Let stand 5 minutes. Top with remaining cheddar and Parmesan.

Bake 40 minutes until bubbly and golden brown. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Makes 8 servings.

Per serving: 300 calories, 11 g fat, 4.5 g saturated fat, 245 mg cholesterol, 950 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 26 g protein

Mimosa Mocktail

Orange juice

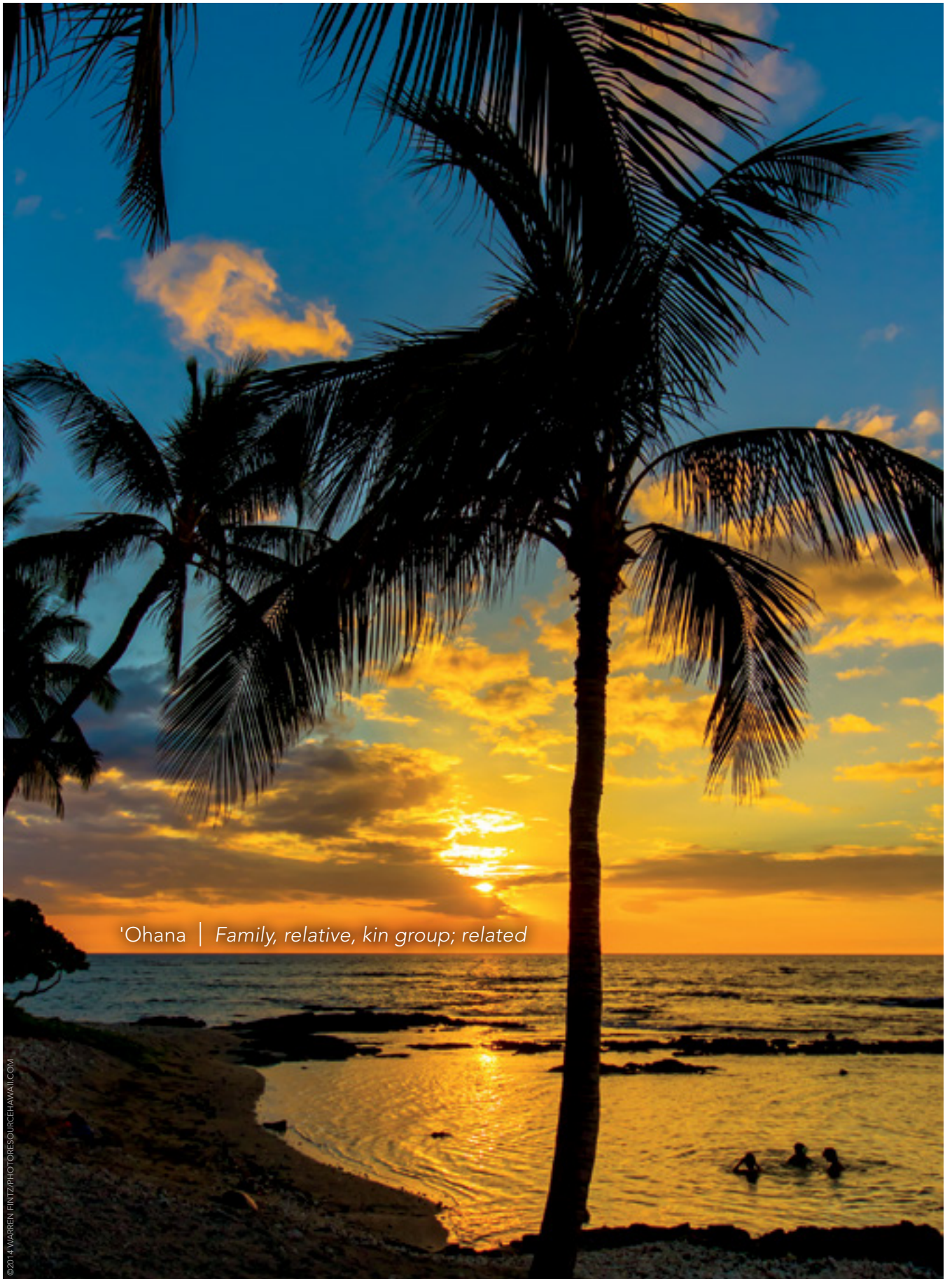
Sparkling water

Assorted fruit such as blueberries, raspberries, grapes, or sliced strawberries, oranges, apple, or pineapple*

Fill a large carafe with equal parts orange juice and sparkling water. Stir gently and pour into glasses. Spoon desired combination of fruit into each glass or use as garnish.

*These can double as a fruit salad to enjoy with the strata and French toast.





'Ohana | *Family, relative, kin group; related*

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