



Mālama Learning Center (MLC) was founded in 2004 with the mission to teach and inspire communities to create healthy living environments.



Community Roots

The center evolved as a collaborative response to serve two area needs: Kapolei High School wanted to build a **performing arts auditorium** for the community, and an environmental group, The Nature Conservancy, wanted to establish a **conservation learning center**. Community members joined the effort and the resulting “hybrid” is MLC, a private non-profit organization envisioned as a place in West O’ahu that brings art, science, conservation, and culture together to promote sustainable living throughout Hawai‘i.

Challenges of Growth

The push to expand Kapolei as Oahu’s “New City” has stimulated tremendous growth marked by

stark disparities. Here in West O’ahu live destitute families camping on beaches; middle-income families in housing developments; and “snow birds” vacationing in resort condominiums.

Unfortunately, academic success and economic prosperity elude many local youth, who struggle against soaring high school drop-out rates, low college enrollment, and few self-sustaining job opportunities. At the same time, these youth face continuing degradation of their remarkable natural environment that is integrally connected to their culture.

Greening West O’ahu

To positively address these challenges, MLC is expanding educational opportunities with an **emphasis on green jobs** and improving individual, community, and environmental health in West O’ahu.

MLC offers **hands-on learning opportunities for youth and adults**. Participants gain real-life experience with innovations that integrate culture and tradition with technology and science. By actively engaging area residents in nurturing each other and their environment, MLC strives to unify West O’ahu around a **shared ethic of caring and conservation**.



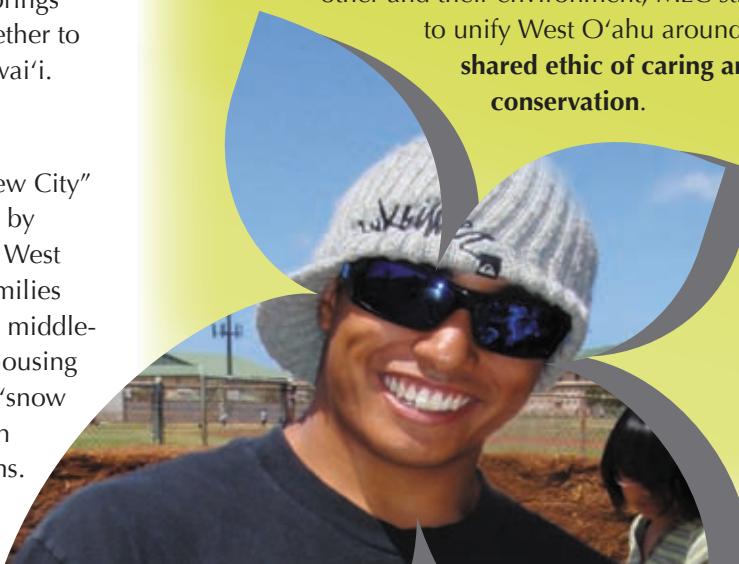
Current Programs:

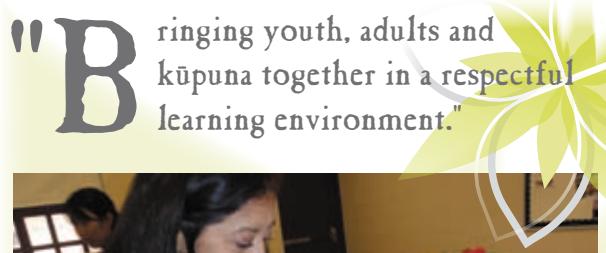
Hawai‘i Green Collar Institute

in partnership with Leeward Community College, teaches West O’ahu high school and college students and teachers about local environmental challenges and the jobs related to solving such challenges, and engages them in ecosystem restoration projects.



School Sustainability Projects: MLC provides content and support to West O’ahu teachers whose students conduct projects that study sustainability in today’s context and cultural practices. Projects culminate in a student-driven hands-on fair.





Monthly Hands-On Workshops promote healthy living and sustainability as well as link nature to culture (e.g. growing and using Hawaiian medicinal plants). Community practitioners teach these popular half-day workshops.

Hawai'i Environmental Education Alliance: MLC is working closely with government agencies, non-profits, and businesses to build this Alliance to support networking, professionalism, and increased effectiveness in environmental education. See www.heea.org.



Mākeke Kapolei is a weekly green/farmers' market in Kapolei that features fresh, locally grown food and food products, native plants and other green products, and cultural and educational demonstrations and performances.

Programs on the Horizon:

Greening of Schools is a concept that is taking root in Hawai'i, with schools seeking to create gardens, provide more locally grown food, and reduce waste while reducing expenses. MLC intends to guide school administrators, educators, students and community members in making their schools green and healthy.

Performing Artist in Residence: Partnering with established performing artists and groups, MLC seeks to link youth interested in performing arts with local, national and international artists who incorporate sustainability concepts in their creative work.

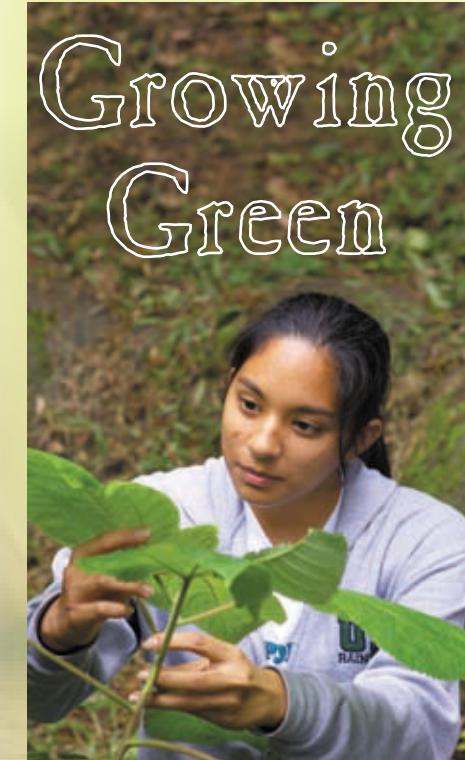
Mahalo all of our program supporters, too many to list here, but all very important to us and our community.



Mālama
Learning
Center

P.O. Box 75467
Kapolei, Hawai'i 96707
info@malamalearningcenter.org
www.malamalearningcenter.org
Phone: (808) 692-8200 ext 2267

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Community Programs of the Mālama Learning Center



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create healthy living environments.