



islander

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 29, 2018

CONTACT: Laurie Au, 808-371-2809
laurie@islanderinstitute.com

40 PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS STATEWIDE HONORED IN ANNUAL ISLANDER SCHOLARS PROGRAM

HONOLULU, HI – Forty high school juniors statewide will be honored this summer as their school’s “Islander Scholar,” in the third annual program that recognizes students for their character and commitment to upholding the values of Hawai‘i.

Islander Scholars, created in 2016 by [Islander Institute](#) and [Mālama Learning Center](#), grew out of a desire to honor students who demonstrate a deep commitment to Hawai‘i and who care for the well-being of their schools, families, and communities as much as or more than their own individual pursuits. The criteria for this award go far beyond typical measures like grades, test scores, and extracurriculars.

“The test for measuring an Islander Scholar is life itself,” said Andrew Aoki, co-founder of Islander Institute and father of two public school students in Kailua. “These remarkably resilient students are truly educated. They are the product of a whole school community working together to prepare them not just for college, but for leading a positive island life. Islander Scholars give us a glimpse of the full potential of public education in Hawai‘i.”

Principals at traditional and charter public high schools were invited to select one junior as their school’s Islander Scholar based on six comprehensive learning outcomes rooted in Hawai‘i. These outcomes—collectively called [Nā Hopena A‘o](#) and adopted as policy by the state Board of Education—include a sense of **B**elonging, **R**esponsibility, **E**xcellence, **A**loha, **T**otal Well-Being, and **H**awai‘i, spelling out BREATH or HĀ in Hawaiian. Principals were given sole discretion to develop a selection process, with many involving teachers, counselors, and others in discussions about the students in their school.

“More schools, principals, teachers, and community members are engaging in meaningful ways that are strengthening HĀ outcomes,” said Cheryl Ka‘uhane Lupenui, co-founder of Islander Scholars and the former BOE member who led the development of Nā Hopena A‘o. “Islander Scholars is a community catalyst for realizing our goals of public education in Hawai‘i.”

As part of this honor, all 40 Islander Scholars will come together for the Islander Scholars Academy at Camp Pālehua from June 1 to 3 in Kapolei—a special experience for scholars to learn from each other, participate in ‘āina-based and cultural learning activities, build leadership skills, and make lifelong connections with past Islander Scholars and island leaders.

“I not only learned about students and teachers from all around the pae ‘āina, but I also learned quite a lot about myself,” said 2017 Islander Scholar Paisley Richards, who recently graduated from Hālau Kū Māna. “From discussing personal buried topics to individual leadership qualities in each of the students, I learned how much power each of us there held within us. As a result from going to this amazing program, I now view myself as more of a leader. Before I came to this program, I saw myself only as a follower, so the amount of development that I went through within those three short days was incredible.”

(MORE)

Many community groups are working together to put together a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the 2018 Islander Scholars. Kamehameha Schools has been a major partner, providing both funding and leadership. Other partners include Ho‘olā Mokauea, Kōkua Kalihi Valley, Consuelo Foundation, Kualoa-He‘eia Ecumenical Youth Project, The Kohala Center, and HMSA Foundation. Partners providing funding for the program include Alaska Airlines, Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, Hawai‘i Government Employees Association, Honu‘apo, Hawai‘i State Teachers Association, HEI Charitable Foundation, and Nā Lei Aloha Foundation.

“The people of Hawai‘i are yearning to rediscover the things that allowed our islands to thrive,” said Alapaki Nahale-a, Senior Director of Regional Strategies for Kamehameha Schools on Hawai‘i Island. “Islander Scholars are the leaders we have been looking for. They quietly sacrifice for family and community in the same way that our ancestors did for all of us.”

All Islander Scholars are expected to return to their schools and communities in their senior year to uphold the values of the program and to serve as role models for their peers.

The 2018 class of Islander Scholars representing six islands is:

Kaua‘i

- **Charlene Tan**, Kaua‘i High School
- **Shyli Lacaden**, Waimea High School

Lāna‘i

- **Ka Mele Mano-Nakooka**, Lāna‘i High & Elementary School

O‘ahu

- **Janeil Famacion**, Aiea High School
- **Madailein Miller**, Castle High School
- **Joseph Roberto**, Campbell High School
- **Kimberly Delos Santos**, Farrington High School
- **Kekai Mahiai**, Hālau Kū Māna
- **Iris Machado**, Kaimuki High School
- **Tehina Misi**, Kaiser High School
- **Azure-Paige Kaopua**, Kalaheo High School
- **Tianna Au**, Kalani High School
- **Leea Boyce**, Kamaile Academy
- **Franceddie Neru**, Kapolei High School
- **Kalehuakea Kelling**, Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M Kamakau Laboratory Public School
- **Lanaki Sanford-Kalauli**, Ke Kula ‘O ‘Ānuenue
- **Ikaika Morgan**, Kula Kaiapuni Hawai‘i ‘o Kahuku Academy
- **Makamae Gomes-Madela**, Moanalua High School
- **Logan Hansen**, Nānākuli High & Intermediate School
- **Chanel Hunter**, Pearl City High School
- **Kailee Jackson**, University Laboratory School
- **Paia‘ala Wilcox-Molina**, Wai‘anae High School
- **Ashlee Balignasay**, Waipahu High School

Maui

- **Tia Caulford**, Baldwin High School
- **Marissa Pu**, Hana High and Elementary School
- **Jay Baptista**, Lahainaluna High School
- **Hunter Nahooikaika**, Maui High School

Molokai

- **Kaitlin DeRouin**, Molokai High School

Hawai‘i Island

- **Mailani Mahiai-Kuamoo**, Hilo High School
- **D’Artagnan Kunishige**, Honoka‘a High and Intermediate School
- **Ikaika Krakovic**, Kanu o ka ‘Āina New Century Public Charter School
- **Uilani Muller-Afong**, Ke Kula ‘Ehunuikaimalino
- **Kala‘akea Aguiar**, Ke Kula ‘O Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u
- **Kiele Glimane**, Kea‘au High School
- **Roxie Umu**, Kealakehe High School
- **Mekaila Pasco**, Kohala High School
- **Alexios Smith**, Konawaena High School
- **Zerasha-Rashan Carden**, Kua O Ka Lā Public Charter School
- **Jareese Amaral**, Laupāhoehoe Community Public Charter School
- **Jason Hale**, West Hawai‘i Explorations Academy

A video that provides an overview of Islander Scholars can be found here: <http://www.islanderinstitute.com/scholars>

###

Islander Institute is a social enterprise that works with community-based organizations and leaders. We are committed to make Hawai'i better by focusing on core island values like building strong communities, caring for our land, honoring traditions, and living a life of responsibility and aloha.

Mālama Learning Center (MLC) is a non-profit organization located in Kapolei, O'ahu with the mission to teach and inspire communities to create healthy living environments. Since its inception in 2004, it has worked to unify schools, residents, and businesses through education that weaves art, science, conservation, and culture. MLC uses a hands-on approach, preparing its participants for diverse real-world experiences and 21st century careers.