



SPRING 2025

PROJECT HO'OKU'I GRADUATION EDITION

Ho'oku'i VI Scholarships at More UH Campuses Draw Large Pool of Applicants

BY CARYL HITCHCOCK

For the first time, Ho'oku'i VI students were offered the opportunity to apply for first-year scholarships not only at UH Manoa (Ho'oku'i V), but also at UH Hilo. Both campuses with 4-year-programs proved to be very popular with 14 applications to UH Manoa (compared to 4 last year), and 10 at UH Hilo. At UH Manoa, the most popular programs were in STEAM fields including biology/microbiology, computer science, electrical and civil engineering. At UH Hilo, Hawaiian Studies led the way as the most popular major.

There were also new Career and Technical Education (CTE) first-year scholarships and these received 6 applications. The CTE scholarships could be used at any of the UH Community College campuses and provide a wide range of career options for students who were interested in a shorter program of study (typically two years) that would result in a well-paying job as well as meet community workforce development needs. The most popular programs among our CTE scholars were health care and agriculture. We expect the numbers to grow in future years as the cost of higher education rises.

In addition, scholarships (three) were offered for graduate study or Doctoral Degree Programs. We also expect the number of applicants to grow given the challenge of obtaining funding at this level of higher education and as the word spreads among former Ho'oku'i scholars.

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Ho'omaika'i!!!! 2025-2026 Project Ho'oku'i First Year Post- High Scholarship Awardees

OAHU FARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

UH MANOA

Alexis D'Angelo Agaran
Eunice Anne Aggacid
Jeremiah Aldos
Karla Meh Guiang
Jingying He

CTE

Meekah Paula Rabang

CASTLE HIGH SCHOOL

UH MANOA

Paige Namahoe-Maeda

CTE

Thomas Hardy
Kiley Murakami
Keahi Naber
Shaelyn Naihe-Andrews

UH HILO

Trystin Lum

KAUAI WAIMEA HIGH SCHOOL

UH MANOA

Alexander Sasaoka

UH HILO

Jeydon Lee Moises



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Ho'omaika'i!!!!!! 2025-2026 Project Ho'oku'i First Year Post- High Scholarship Awardees

MOLOKAI MOLOKAI HIGH SCHOOL

UH HILO
No'eau Len-Wai
Chloe Manaba
Halena Peterson
Kaia Yamashita

CTE
Ka'ulalani Puua
Chloe Tancayo

AKA'ULA
UH HILO
Sonny Kaneakua-Chang

LANAI LANAI HIGH SCHOOL

UH MANOA
Sharmaine Mae Elan
Meyah Fujie-Decastro
Carla Ramos

CTE
Masin Troy Molina

MAUI HANA HIGH SCHOOL

UH MANOA
Mikkel Bakkum

HAWAII
KANU O KA AINA - KA OHA
UH HILO
Nanea Kahaikupuna



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Ho'omaika'i!!!! 2025-2026 Project Ho'oku'i First Year Post- High Scholarship Awardees

HAWAII
HAWAII ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE
UH HILO
Madelyn Lawrence

KEALAKEHE HIGH SCHOOL
UH MANOA
Noah Rosenbloom

Big Plans for Ho'oku'i Kapa'a Graduates

BY KAHELE KEAWE

Sage Keller has been accepted to Princeton University and is thrilled! Sage will be part of the class of 2029, and plans on majoring in the School of Public and International Affairs with a minor in Environmental Studies. Her interest in environmental studies is a reflection of growing up on Kauai and learning what it means to take care of a place. She says "Project Ho'oku'i helped me figure out how to turn that into action. Our huaka'i to the lo'i in Lumaha'i stands out in my memory. We started with an oli, introduced ourselves in Olelo Hawaii. The stewards there didn't only tell us what to do- they shared their stories, showed us why this work matters. As we carefully removed snail eggs from the kalo, I saw what real environmental protection looks like: people showing up every day, caring for the land, and passing on knowledge. It wasn't about big policies or regulation - it was about relationship with place." While Sage was a Junior at Kapa'a High School, she attended the Ho'oku'i college campus tour at UH Manoa - she says it opened her eyes to new possibilities. She listened carefully as a Professor from the oceanography department discussed her research. "She was doing real work to protect our island's resources." Her conversation with principal investigator, Lisa Uyehara along the way brought things into focus. Sage stated, "She helped me to see that my education didn't have to stop after four years- that going further could give me more ways to help Kauai. That's when my path started becoming clear. My heart is set on coming home to Kauai. This island raised me, and Ho'oku'i showed me how I can give back."



Continued from page 4.



Left: Sage Keller
Right: Yeva Allyn



Yeva Allyn has been accepted to Stanford University and a nearly full-ride scholarship. Her plan is to major in Earth Systems, with a concentration in oceans, atmosphere, and climate. Her future plan is a career in conservation, which has been a passion that was shaped by being raised on Kauai. Yeva believes the major perfectly encompasses her interests in marine science and her commitment to caring for earth. She states, “the Ho’oku’i program as the gateway that made it feasible for me to take classes outside of what my high school offered. Unique classes like Oceanography: Science of the Sea, and Geology of the Hawaiian Islands, were subjects I was very interested in but would otherwise not have had the opportunity to study without Ho’oku’i. This program brought me together with teachers, professors, and fellow students who have all been invaluable resources to me. Surrounded by a cohort equally as inspired as I am, I have been able to grow incredibly.”

SPOTLIGHT ON HANA HIGH SCHOOL: MIKKEL BEKKUM

BY GENA SANSONE

In the remote town of Hana on the east side of Maui, a place known for its close-knit community, one student is proving that no obstacle is too great when fueled by passion, perseverance, and purpose. Mikkel Bekkum, a senior at Hana High and Elementary School, has been awarded the prestigious and highly competitive Ho’oku’i Scholarship - an honor that recognizes not only academic excellence but also a deep commitment to community, culture, and future aspirations. He has a profound interest in the fields of microbiology and biochemistry. Mikkel maintained an above 4.0 GPA during high school but his leadership skills extend into the community, athletics, and peer mentorship too. Off the athletic field, he is known among students and staff as generous and encouraging. Mikkel is always ready to lend a hand. The future is bright for Mikkel.





2025 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES HOLDING A.A. DEGREES SET A NEW RECORD FOR PROJECT HO'OKU'I

Project Ho'oku'i is thrilled to announce that there are **18** Ho'oku'i participants across the pae'aina who achieved their A.A. degree prior to finishing high school!

OAHU FARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Alexis D'Angelo Agaran
Eunice Anne Aggacid
Jeremiah Aldos
Evangeline Bernardo
Jemima Joyce Constantino
Karla Mae Guiang
Jing Ying He
Rylan Huang
Viane Nicole Ines
Kaitlin Monte
Ryu Zhernan Moreno
Mee Kah Rabang
Lovely Valencia
Anthony Vallesteros

KAUAI KAPA'A HIGH SCHOOL

Evan Daligdig
Rayko Farias
Kanoë Haneberg

HAWAI'I HAWAI'I ACADEMY OF ARTS & SCIENCES Madelyn Lawrence



Proud Holders of College Certificates

HAWAI'I
KANU O KA 'AINA
HAWAI'I LIFESTYLES CERTIFICATE
Lukela Landers
Solana Satterwhite

KEALAKEHE HIGH SCHOOL
HAWAI'I LIFESTYLES CERTIFICATE
Ku'uleonahe Ne

HAWAI'I ACADEMY OF ARTS & SCIENCES
SUSTAINABILITY
Madelyn Lawrence

HO'OKU'I ANNOUNCEMENTS

- RISING SENIORS - CHECK THE HO'OKU'I WEBSITE FOR FIRST YEAR POST HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION COMPETITIVE HO'OKU'I SCHOLARSHIPS IN FEBRUARY 2026.
- FILMING IS PROGRESSING FOR OUR SECOND DOCUMENTARY - WATCH THE ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR AIR TIME, DATE, AND CHANNEL.
- MAHALO TO THE HARD WORKING HO'OKU'I PROJECT STAFF, HIOE TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, AND PRINCIPALS.