

FROM THE OFFICE OF

SENATOR STANLEY CHANG

East Honolulu Community Newsletter

April 2023



HAWAII'S FREE ONLINE COURSE MARKETPLACE

With your public library card, you can access over 1500 free courses in 17 categories, including AI, coding, computer basics, design, marketing, security and more. These courses are provided by the world's leading tech companies, such as Microsoft, Google, and Udemy. The lessons are short; you can complete half of all courses in 2 hours. You learn the skills you need, when you need them, and at your own pace. For more information, visit [skillfinder.librarieshawaii.org](https://www.skillfinder.librarieshawaii.org).



The East-West Center, located at 1777 East-West Road, will be hosting their annual East-West Fest on April 16, from 2 to 6 p.m.

With the theme of "Celebrating our Cultures, Sustaining our Communities," it will be an afternoon of family-friendly fun including dance and musical performances, cultural booths, storytelling, and food, representing

MAYOR'S TOWN HALL MEETING AT KALANI HIGH SCHOOL

Mayor Blangiardi is hosting a series of town hall meetings across O'ahu. The town hall meetings are an opportunity for the mayor and other senior administration leaders to listen to concerns directly from the public, answer questions about the City's top priorities, and brief residents about upcoming projects in individual neighborhoods.

The town hall will include an open question and answers session with Mayor Blangiardi and other City department directors and deputy directors. Mayor Blangiardi will be hosting a meeting at Kalani High School on Thursday, April 13th from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

For more information, visit [oneohu.org/townhall](https://www.oneohu.org/townhall).



Image Credit: City and County of Honolulu

people and places from across Asia, the Pacific and beyond. The event will be held at Jefferson Hall (inside the Imin International Conference Center within East-West Center) and is free to the public.

There are parking stalls along East-West Road. A larger lot is found at the beginning of East-West Road, across from the University Health Services building.

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808-586-8420

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▶ HANDY CONTACTS

State Pothole Hotline
808-586-7852

City Pothole Hotline
808-768-7777

State Homelessness
gov.homelessness@hawaii.gov
808-586-0193

City Homelessness
complaints@honolulu.gov
808-768-4381

Abandoned Vehicles
808-733-2530

Building Permits
808-768-8000

Trash Collection
808-768-3200

Street Light Repair
808-768-5300

IN THE COMMUNITY

Image Credit: Hawai'i State Art Museum



Grade 12 Category: Mixed Media

Title: *COVID-19*, Award: Silver Key

Grade 12 Category: Drawing & Illustration,

Title: *Home*, Award: Silver Key

Ryo Naiki

Grade 11 Category: Digital Art

Title: *Do What Excites*, Award: Silver Key

Grade 11 Category: Photography

Title: *Cloud Papa*, Award: Silver Key

Grade 11 Category: Photography

Title: *Lonely (Kyoto)*, Award: Silver Key

Kaiyana Peterson

Grade 10 Category: Drawing & Illustration

Title: *Siblings*, Award: Gold Key

Kalani Students Recognized at the Hawai'i State Art Museum

Eleven students from Kalani High School are part of a group of the most creative in Hawai'i intermediate and high schools. Their creations were on display at the Hawai'i State Art Museum last month as part of the Hawai'i Regional Scholastic Student Art Awards.

The annual student art competition and exhibition for Hawai'i students grades 7–12, ages 13 and up, is sponsored by the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts as the regional affiliate for the national Scholastic Art and Writing Awards competition. The following students were recognized on March 11 at the Hawai'i State Art Museum Award Ceremony:

Atona Chan

Grade 9 Category: Drawing & Illustration

Title: *Lost Friend*, Award: Gold Key

Kayli Lam-O'Leary

Grade 11 Category: Drawing & Illustration

Title: *Posed, For You*, Award: Silver Key

Yu An Ma

Grade 12 Category: Painting

Title: *Monet's Polluted Pond*, Award: Silver Key

Kaily Sato

Grade 10 Category: Photography

Title: *The Journey*, Award: Silver Key

Leona Stremick

Grade 11 Category: Drawing & Illustration

Title: *How Many More Do I Have to Count?*

Award: Silver Key

Tiffany Subramaniam

Grade 11 Category: Drawing & Illustration

Title: *Puppet*, Award: Silver Key

Grade 11 Category: Mixed Media

Title: *Matthew 7:15*, Award: Silver Key

Natalia Tangonan

Grade 11 Category: Photography,

Title: *Still*, Award: Silver Key

Isabelle Topacio

Grade 12 Category: Drawing & Illustration,

Title: *Oh Brother*, Award: Gold Key

Amber Uyehara

Grade 12 Category: Drawing & Illustration,

Title: *Oblivion*, Award: Gold Key

Congratulations to all the awardees!

REST IN PEACE



It is with a heavy heart that we regret to inform you that Marian Grey passed away on February 28th. She was a prominent community member in Hawai'i Kai who was active in various organizations, including the Marina Board and Hawai'i Kai Neighborhood Board, where she served for over a decade. She was also a valued member of the Livable Hawai'i Kai Hui, serving as Vice Chair and Assistant Treasurer. Her dedication to promoting open land for agriculture and preservation has left an impact on our community. Marian's legacy will live on through her tireless efforts to improve Hawai'i Kai. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Marian's family and loved ones during this difficult time.

Image Credit: the Office of Senator Stanley Chang

MOVING FORWARD



Important Medicaid Eligibility Renewal Information

Throughout the pandemic, all Medicaid members received continuous uninterrupted coverage amid the public health emergency. Med-QUEST Division (MQD) under the Department of Human Services, will begin reaching out to members in March to let them know what month their eligibility will be redetermined. This eligibility renewal work will begin in April and be spread out across 12 months.

MQD wants to assure people that their Medicaid coverage will remain active until their case is up for renewal. They anticipate that most current members will continue to be eligible for coverage, but for those who may no longer be eligible, MQD staff will help connect them with affordable coverage on the **HealthCare.Gov** marketplace. Or, if Medicaid coverage is no longer needed, please contact MQD and let them know.

Members will receive a pink letter that contains eligibility renewal information one month prior to

their month of renewal. This means that renewal notices will go out as early as April 2023 (for May 2023 renewals) and as late as March

2024 (for April 2024 renewals). Please note that this notification process will happen over a one-year period. This means that not all Members will receive their pink letters at the same time. A plain white letter was sent in March to every Med-QUEST household letting them know the month of their scheduled redetermination, which will range from May 2023 to April 2024.

In preparation for this renewal period, Med-QUEST asks members to do the following:

- Be sure to update your contact information by logging into your account on **[medical.mybenefits.hawaii.gov](https://www.mybenefits.hawaii.gov)** or by calling the Health Plan number on the back of your insurance card.
- If you no longer need QUEST (Medicaid) coverage, call MQD at **800-316-8005**, (TTY/TDD 711) to let them know.
- Starting in April, be on the lookout for a pink envelope with a pink letter that will provide instructions on eligibility renewals. This pink letter may require a response in order to maintain health coverage. Be

sure to read the letter and follow all instructions, if applicable.

If you need coverage but no longer qualify for Med-QUEST, please check with your employer to see if you are eligible for health insurance coverage. If you are not eligible for health insurance through your employer, please visit the Health Insurance Marketplace at **HealthCare.Gov** or by calling **800-318-2596** to make sure you stay well and stay covered. “We emphasize to members that it is very important to update their contact information with their health plan and encourage them to respond to all Med-QUEST/Medicaid communication in a timely manner to ensure continuous coverage,” said Judy Mohr Peterson, Medicaid Director and Med-QUEST Administrator.

Before mailing a renewal notice, Med-QUEST first seeks to renew its members eligibility using available and approved data. Only if MQD cannot renew a member’s coverage using these data sources, will the member be asked to provide additional information listed within the pink letter. For those members whose cases MQD can renew without needing additional information, the pink notice will contain a confirmation of renewed coverage and no further action will be needed at that time.

To access the Frequently Asked Questions document, visit **[medquest.hawaii.gov/en/members-applicants/already-covered/Stay_Well_Stay_Covered_Toolkit.html](https://www.medquest.hawaii.gov/en/members-applicants/already-covered/Stay_Well_Stay_Covered_Toolkit.html)**.

YOUR CONCERNS



Image Credit: StateCourts

Registration NOW OPEN for Prospective Court Interpreters' Mandatory Orientation

If you speak English and another language and want to put your skills to good use, the Hawai'i State Judiciary wants you! Court interpreters are independent contractors and not Judiciary employees. They assist the courts in providing access to justice to

court customers with limited English proficiency. Depending on their performance on written and oral exams, court interpreters are paid \$25 to \$55 per hour with a two-hour minimum.

The Judiciary is conducting orientation workshops for individuals interested in interpreting for the Hawai'i State Courts. Attending a workshop is a mandatory requirement to become a state court interpreter. Individuals seeking to become a court interpreter must also pass a written English proficiency exam, court interpreter ethics exam, and criminal background check.

The two-day workshops will be held:

Maui: April 4-5 at UH Maui College
register by March 28

Kaua'i: April 11-12 at Pu'uhonua Kaulike (Kaua'i Courthouse)
register by April 4

Hilo: April 20-21 at Hale Kaulike (Hilo Courthouse)
register by April 13

O'ahu: April 28-29 at Hawai'i Convention Center
register by April 21

Kona: May 2-3 at Keahuolu Courthouse (Kona)
register by April 25

Register online at courts.state.hi.us/courtinterpreting. The registration fee is only \$25 (instead of the typical \$175), thanks to support from the State Office of Language Access.

For more information, contact the Office on Equality and Access to the Courts at OEAC@courts.hawaii.gov or 808-539-4860.

AlohaQ

O'ahu Residents Urged To Use AlohaQ System For Best Results

The Department of Customer Services is reminding residents that scheduling an appointment remains the fastest way to complete transactions at driver licensing centers and satellite city halls on O'ahu.

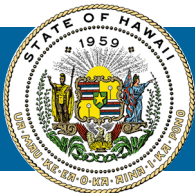
The reminder is in response to a 30 percent decrease last year in use of the city's AlohaQ appointment reservation system for basic government services such as renewing a driver's license, vehicle registration, or state identification card.

The decrease came after driver licensing centers and satellite city halls saw appointments for in-person services

more than doubled in 2021 to a record-high 408,915 bookings at their locations in the City and County of Honolulu. Since then, more residents have been skipping appointments, walking in and taking their chances with the standby option, which involves longer wait times and doesn't guarantee same-day service. "We are focused on encouraging the public to schedule appointments, which provide the fastest service at our driver licensing centers and satellite city halls, where appointments are often completed in less than 20 minutes," said Kim Hashiro, director of the city's Department of Customer Services. To schedule an appointment, visit alohaq.org.

Driver licensing centers and satellite city halls have activated more service lines and more appointment slots to assist customers. Driver licenses and state IDs can be renewed six months before they expire. Appointments can also be booked up to six months in advance.

Additionally, a limited quantity of next-day appointments are available at all driver licensing centers, starting at 3 p.m.



FROM THE OFFICE OF
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