



Hāmākua Youth Foundation, Inc.

Embracing the Importance of Youth

September 2021

Welina,

Years ago, on a trip back to my home island of O‘ahu, my family was invited to participate in the rebuilding of a loko i‘a or Hawaiian fishpond. Hundreds of people were there to learn and work together in the restoration of a site that had for centuries been integral to indigenous foodways and land stewardship. Gathering to set our intentions, we learned that much work had already been done. ***Dedicated community members had taken up the kuleana - the responsibility - to set in place the boulders that would anchor the smaller stones my family was placing that day.*** Through the advance work of a few, an entire community was able to come together and share in the reconstruction of that historic fishpond. In the ocean that day I learned a valuable lesson that continues to shape the ways I show up for my community.

Now, I would like to invite you to do the same. In November 2019 the Hāmākua Youth Foundation took an important step in our own restoration project with the purchase of the historic Okada building as the permanent home for the Hāmākua Youth Center. To drive the purchase and renovation, HYF secured funds from federal and state grant programs. We also conducted a robust capital campaign, initiated by board contributions of \$40k and closing with a total of \$87k in community donations. **To date, HYF has secured \$350k to support the renovation project.**

Unfortunately, historic buildings hold unexpected surprises and we uncovered many in the early stages of the renovation process. We learned of extensive contamination surrounding the building that will require costly abatement that dovetails with much needed foundation work. **Instead of closing in on our initial fundraising goal we saw that goal expand to a revised budget of \$1 million.**

With renewed commitment HYF is once again taking up the kuleana to set in place the figurative boulders that will anchor and bring together our entire community.

Led by our board through a \$20k commitment, we are pursuing a 2021 capital campaign goal of \$150k. This is an important figure for our renovation project because it marks 50% of the total revised budget and opens foundation funding opportunities that slipped out of reach when our budget expanded with unanticipated costs. ***For those who are able to support this effort, we humbly ask for assistance in placing the boulders needed to continue this project.***

Supporters can **text HAMAKUA to 50155** or reach out to me for additional ways to contribute. I appreciate and mahalo your time. Should you wish to learn more about what we do at the Hāmākua Youth Foundation, we have enclosed our 2021 Year in Review. And, as always, it would be a pleasure to connect and learn what sorts of things we can accomplish together.

Me ke aloha,

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