



Clearing He'eia of *hau* and mangrove was a combined project of Kamehameha and University of Hawai'i students.

Waipā students work in the *lo'i*.

Learning from the Land

Using an innovative approach, Kamehameha Schools is finding that learning doesn't always take place inside the classroom

Six Kapa'a High School students experienced a distinctive 2001 summer. They mapped an ancient *lo'i* system, and calculated taro yield based on *lo'i* size, density of planted *huli* and availability of water. They pulled taro, pounded *poi* and figured out that six teenagers could eat 63 pounds of *poi* per week or 3,276 pounds in one year. They also tested water salinity and bacterial counts of the river that irrigated the *lo'i*, and learned to identify the plant sources of nitrogen and carbon which create compost to enrich the soil.

This unique six-week summer experience took place in Waipā, an intact 1,600 acre *ahupua'a* owned by Kamehameha Schools on the North Shore of Kaua'i. The project was sponsored by the Waipā Foundation in partnership with Kamehameha, Alu Like and other community donors and volunteers.

"The pilot project's purpose was to utilize KS land to provide hands-on educational experiences and opportunities to steward natural and cultural resources," said Kamehameha Schools Land Assets Director and 'Āina Ulu Programs Coordinator **Neil Hannahs '69**. The program also provided opportunities for the students to apply their reading, writing and math skills to practical situations and exposed them to Hawaiian cultural perspectives on conservation and utilization of resources.

The Waipā program is typical of eco-cultural education projects in which the KS Land Assets Division partners with other community entities to fulfill Kamehameha's Strategic Plan objective to "*mālama i ka 'āina*: practice ethical, prudent and culturally appropriate stewardship of lands and resources."

KS Hawaiian Historical and Cultural Advisor **Lurline Nāone-Salvador '69** offered the name 'Āina Ulu, growing lands or inspirational lands, for these efforts to use KS land as an integrating context for education. The name suggests that the productivity of Kamehameha's legacy lands – 364,000 acres of Hawai'i land with agricultural or conservation zoning – will grow through uses and programs that also promote the reciprocal growth of participants in these activities.

