

# Asking the Questions

The 2002 Alumni Survey reveals Kamehameha Schools graduates are proud of their Hawaiian heritage

According to a recent alumni survey, graduates from Kamehameha Schools are proud of their Hawaiian heritage and are involved in activities that perpetuate Hawaiian culture.

In addition, KS alumni are more likely to have higher levels of education, higher rates of employment and higher family income than the Hawaiian community at large.

"The results from this study show that Kamehameha Schools plays a significant role in educating Hawaiians so they can understand their roots and succeed in today's global society," said Dr. **Shawn Kanaiaupuni '83**, director of KS' Policy Analysis & Systems Evaluation (PASE) department.

Nearly 4,000 surveys (out of approximately 17,000 alumni) with 49 questions were completed and returned to Kamehameha Schools. Seven out of 10 respondents currently live in Hawai'i. The average age is 43 years, with the oldest from the Class of 1930 and the youngest from the Class of 2002.

"This survey gives us a unique snapshot of the KS 'ohana," Kanaiaupuni said, "and confirms that our alumni base is one of the best sources of information on how effective Kamehameha Schools has been and how it can improve in the future."

## 'Ike Hawai'i

Over the past few decades, Kamehameha Schools has redoubled its commitment to help students learn what it means to be Hawaiian.

Results from the 2002 Alumni Survey confirm that students are receiving more opportunities to learn and practice Hawaiian culture, and that these experiences are highly valued by graduates. A significant majority of respondents marked "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" to the following statements:

- I am happy that I am Hawaiian (98 percent).
- I feel good about my Hawaiian culture and background (96 percent).
- I participate in Hawaiian cultural practices such as special food, music or customs (75 percent). The survey shows an increase from 73 percent for the oldest graduating classes to 80 percent for graduating classes since 1990.
- I have spent time trying to find out more about Hawaiian history, traditions and customs (69 percent).
- It is appropriate for Kamehameha Schools to educate all its students about Hawaiian culture and values (98 percent).
- I am satisfied with the opportunities I had to learn about my Hawaiian heritage while a student at Kamehameha Schools (68 percent). The survey shows an increase from 44 percent for graduating classes of 1960 and earlier to 88 percent for graduating classes since 1990.

The survey also indicates an increase in the use of the Hawaiian language by recent alumni. Eight percent of students who graduated since 1990 report that they sometimes use Hawaiian to converse with family members, and 15 percent use Hawaiian in conversation with friends.

In comparison, 3 percent of alumni who graduated before 1990 use Hawaiian to converse with family members, while 4 percent use Hawaiian in conversation with friends. Overall, fewer than 4 percent of any graduating class reported that Hawaiian was sometimes the language of conversation in their homes while growing up.

## About PASE

PASE is staffed by a team of researchers trained in sociology, education, demography, statistics and psychology. "Our job is to gather knowledge," Kanaiaupuni said. "We analyze surveys and conduct ongoing research, and then translate the data into understandable and useful information. Our findings help inform decision-makers at Kamehameha Schools and other organizations about the Hawaiian community."

Examples of current PASE projects include:

- The Preschool and Beyond Study, a longitudinal study that examines the role of preschools in preparing children for kindergarten by tracking the educational progress of 500 children born in 1997.
- The Hawaiian Community Survey is an annual survey that gathers information about the needs of Hawaiian children, adults and communities, particularly in relation to the educational priorities of Kamehameha Schools.
- The Evaluation Hui, a group of nearly 60 evaluators, program administrators, researchers, and educators who share the common goal of establishing "best practices" for evaluating Hawaiian educational programs.
- To learn more about PASE activities, call Kanaiaupuni at 541-5365 or visit the PASE Web site at [www.ksbe.edu/services/PASE](http://www.ksbe.edu/services/PASE).

Watch for more articles about the 2002 Alumni Survey in upcoming issues of *I Mua*. Findings will also be published about the experiences of our KS alumni and financial aid recipients in higher education.



Kamehameha's PASE department is staffed by, from left, secretary Cara Woo, research scientist Dr. Zijin Yang, research assistant James Harman, research scientist Katherine Tibbets, associate scientist Koren Ishibashi, research scientist Dr. Nolan Malone, director Dr. Shawn Kanaiaupuni '83, research assistant Alma Trinidad, and science editor/writer Matthew Corry. Not pictured are Ho'oulu Hawaiian Data Center manager Daniel Nahoopii and data center clerk Trisha Plemer.

## WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!

*Mahalo* to all those who participated in the KS alumni survey. For those who have not yet turned in their survey, it's not too late! You may complete the survey online at [www.markettrendspacific.com/ksalumni\\_survey](http://www.markettrendspacific.com/ksalumni_survey) or request a copy by calling Trisha Plemer at 534-3856 or 1 (800) 842-4682 ext. 3856. Please encourage your alumni friends and family to complete their surveys. Your collective input is crucial to decision-making for the future of Kamehameha Schools.