

Mother of the Year

Kapālama Campus Parent Coordinator **Mervlyn Swain Kitashima '73** is named Hawai'i and National Mother of the Year

The mother of seven children – all of whom are Kamehameha Schools graduates – Mervlyn “Merv” Kitashima has been selected the National Mother of the Year by American Mothers, Inc.

American Mothers, Inc. is a national organization selected to be the official sponsor of Mother’s Day and has as its purpose the strengthening of the moral and spiritual foundations of the family.

Kitashima was honored in May at the AMI convention in Washington, D.C. after winning Hawai’i’s Mother of the Year title in April.

Mervlyn is married to **Dan Kitashima '71** – the former highly successful Kamehameha Schools girls varsity volleyball coach – and their children are: **Heidi**

Kitashima Aceret '90, Heather Kitashima Park '92, Shon '93, Summer Kitashima Bloomfield '94, Jarom '97, Kauai '98 and Pili '02.

“Our children were always reminded that it was a privilege to be at Kamehameha Schools,” Mervlyn said. “They were further reminded that they were expected to put their best foot forward at

Kamehameha – or make way for someone else willing to step into their shoes.”

Originally from Kaua’i, Mervlyn was a boarding student at Kamehameha from grade seven. “The value of my education at Kamehameha was priceless. The school had a great influence on the way I raised my children and helped instill in them the realization of how important it is to have a good education.”

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Mervlyn '73 and Dan Kitashima '71

for someone else’s growth, learning, beliefs and values,” she said. “It’s my job as a mom to develop good and industrious children, and it’s essential for me to be a role model for my sons and daughters. I’ve tried to take every opportunity to teach my children and I hope that the examples I tried to set for them will take root.”

Believing that the development of the whole child is essential, Mervlyn said she involved her children in not only academics but the arts, sports, extracurricular activities, community service and a family commitment to God. “The emphasis was always on doing the best you can, and that regardless of the end result, mom and dad would always be there to lend support,” she said.

Already an accomplished and well-known speaker from her earlier work with the state school system’s parent-involvement programs, Mervlyn realizes her national title gives her

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instant credibility as Kamehameha’s Kapālama Campus parent coordinator.

“I tell people that it’s not so important to be the ‘perfect mom,’ but it is important to share the message that being a mom is one of the most vital roles we will ever want to have. No matter whatever else you do in your life, this is a job that affects the generations to come – that’s what being a mom means. Motherhood should never be put aside. Motherhood is forever.”



The Kitashima family includes, from left, Shon '93, Heidi Kitashima Aceret '90, Summer Kitashima Bloomfield '94, Jarom '97, Heather “Kela” Kitashima Park '92, Kauai '98 and Pili '02.



KE ALI'I PAUAHI FOUNDATION

Kamehameha Schools license plates to benefit Ke Ali'i Pauahi Foundation

As part of an innovative fundraising program, Hawai'i drivers can now purchase special organizational license plates adorned with the blue and white seal of Kamehameha Schools.

The plates can be purchased through the city's Division of Motor Vehicles. Cost is \$30.50 for the initial year, and \$25 for every year thereafter. Ke Ali'i Pauahi Foundation, a charitable support organization of Kamehameha Schools, will receive \$20 from those annual fees.

Proceeds will go toward building scholarship funds to help extend the reach of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop to the greater Hawaiian community.

For more information, please contact **Kawehi Bright** Yim '79 at 534-3945, toll free at 1-800-842-4682 x3945 or via e-mail at kawehi@pauahi.org.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

567 S. KING STREET, SUITE 301, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

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