

## PŪ‘Ā I KA ‘ŌLELO, OLA KA ‘OHANA: THREE GENERATIONS OF HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

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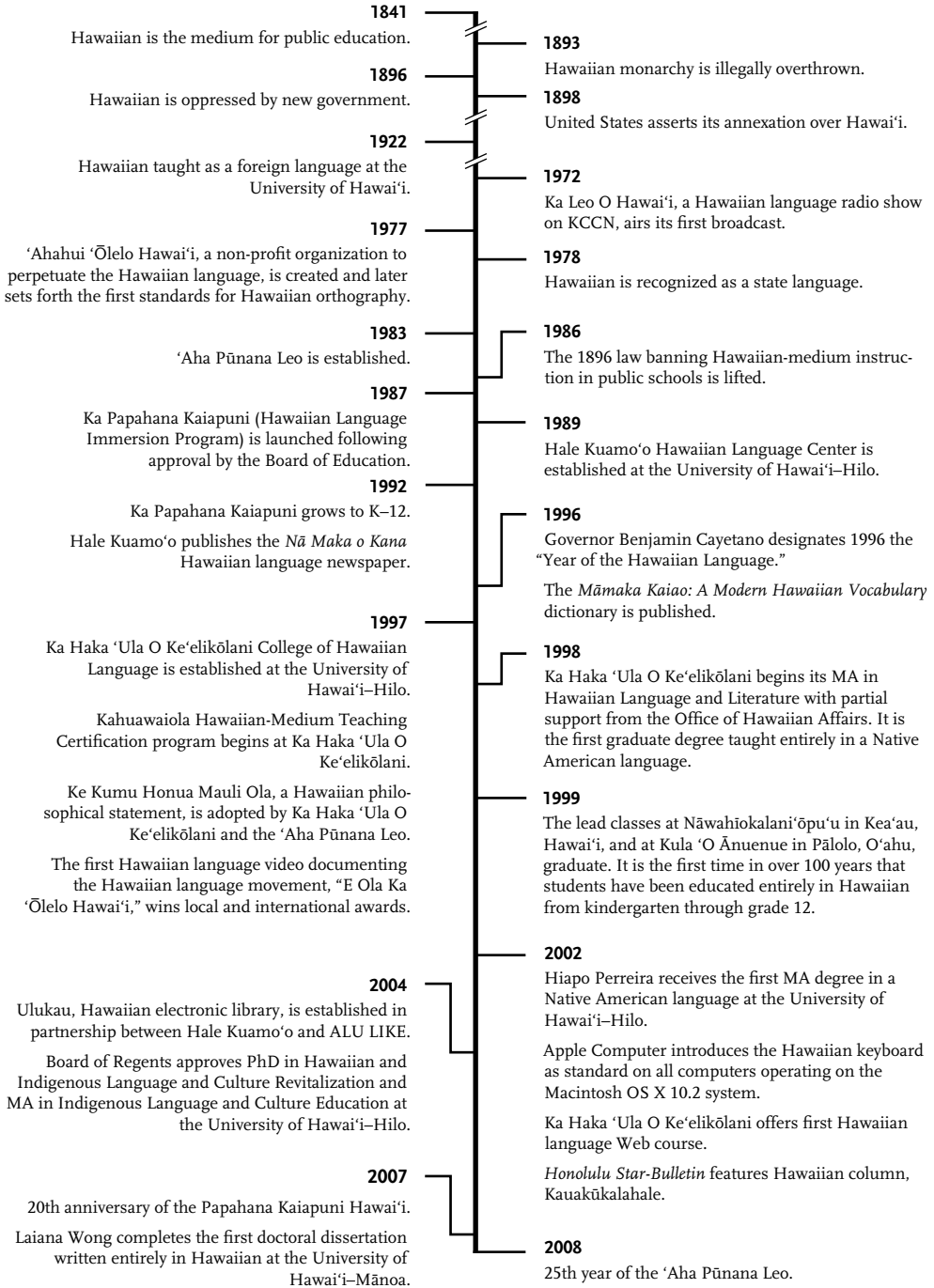
In the early 1980s, the Hawaiian language had reached its low point with fewer than 50 native speakers of Hawaiian under the age of 18. Outside of the Ni‘ihau community, a small group of families in Honolulu and Hilo were raising their children through Hawaiian. This article shares the perspectives of three pioneering families of the Hawaiian language revitalization movement over one generation of growth, change, and transformation. Our living case study stands as a testament for other Hawaiian language families who have endured the challenges of revitalizing the Hawaiian language as the living language of the home, school, and community. The article also celebrates the legacy of the Hawaiian language movement upon the 20th-year anniversary of Hawaiian-medium education within the public sector.

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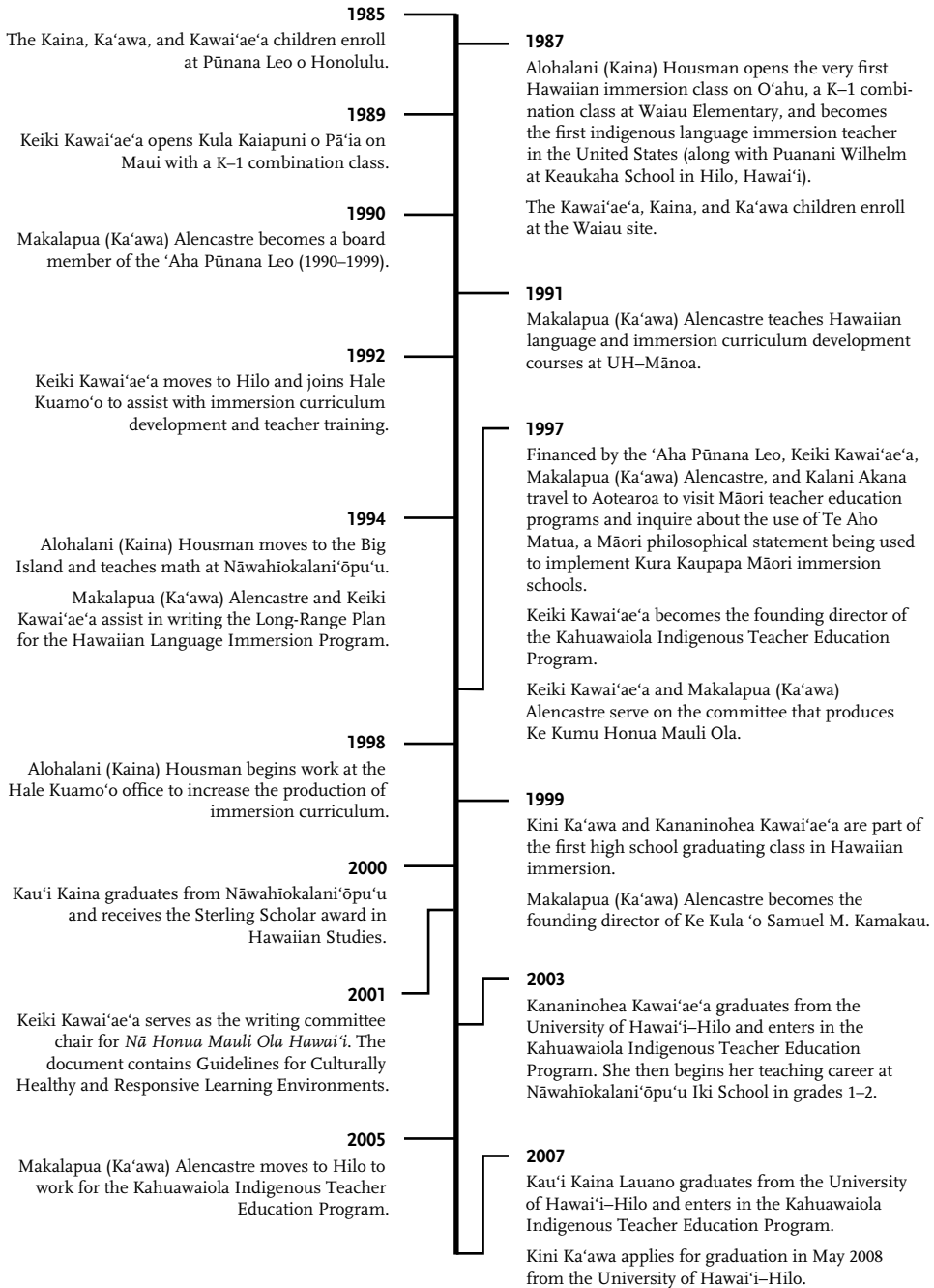
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## Milestones in Hawaiian Language History\*



\* See Appendix for additional milestones and descriptions.

## Our Family Ties to the Hawaiian Language Revitalization Movement



**B**efore the invention of modern food grinders and manufactured food, traditional families fed infant children by passing food from mouth to mouth. The Hawaiian word *pū‘ā* (to feed) creates an image we can use for passing the language from one generation to another. The learning of our mother tongue as second-language speakers and then passing it on to our children as their first language sustains our families as we move from one generation to the next. The decision to do so has transformed our lives and families and touched the lives of other families in ways we could not have fathomed 20 years ago.

From the beginning, our dream was simple and clear. We wanted to pass on to our children the jewel of our culture—*kā kākou ‘ōlelo makuahine*—our mother tongue, the Hawaiian language. It was our deepest desire, our unwavering focus, and our families’ mission to raise our families through Hawaiian. Although we began as separate families speaking Hawaiian to our infant children, our lives eventually intertwined, as we became Hawaiian immersion families, raising children and eventually becoming immersion educators ourselves to contribute to a growing movement. As the movement expanded, our lives took us in different directions, and one generation later, it has brought us back together in the same Hawaiian language community as grandparents.

Although the challenges are many, we rejoice in the successes of the Hawaiian language revitalization movement and in the ongoing quest for sustaining our *‘ike kupuna* (ancestral wisdom). As the last of our native-speaking *hulu kūpuna* (prized and precious elders) dwindle with the passing of their generation, we are encouraged to remember the lessons that they have left us. In our memories and experience with those who have shared their knowledge so selflessly, we are grateful and humbled. Their lessons are not forgotten. They live on in our children.

To our *kumu* (teachers), we applaud you for your tireless efforts in teaching our children and seeking to maintain high standards of language, and cultural and academic excellence. To other *‘ohana* (families) who seek the same road, we encourage you to be vigilant in your efforts. To our communities, we embrace you as we continue to engage through Hawaiian toward building healthy and vital Hawaiian-speaking communities. To the *‘Aha Pūnana Leo* (<http://www.ahapunanaleo.org/>), the Board and Department of Education (DOE) *Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai‘i* (Hawaiian Language Immersion Program) (<http://www.k12.hi.us/~kaiapuni/>), the Hawai‘i State Legislature, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and many others, we express our gratitude for taking the bold step to build schools where learning is imbued through Hawaiian. Among these

people, we would be remiss without mention of Larry Kimura, 'Īlei Beniamina, Hōkūlani Cleeland, Kauano'e Kamanā, No'eau Warner, Koki Williams, William "Pila" H. Wilson, Nāmaka Rawlins, Charles Toguchi, Francis McMillian, Darrow Aiona, Margret Apo, Garrett Toguchi, Lokomaika'i Snakenberg, Senator Daniel Inouye, Michael Kahikina, Clayton Hee, Hīnano Paleka, and Oswald Stender for their vision, support, and leadership during the past 25 years. Their work has impacted the institutionalization of Hawaiian-medium education as a public school option for all of Hawai'i's children.

The stories we share are but a sample of many others yet untold. They tell of hope and dedication to a collective mission to reestablish Hawaiian as a living language within its homeland. We offer these perspectives through our personal and family stories in praise of our kūpuna (elders) who planted the seeds within us and set the standards of language and cultural excellence. As families and as language communities, we celebrate a generation of Hawaiian language revitalization effort that continues to grow. Pū'ā i ka 'ōlelo, ola ka 'ohana—pass on the Hawaiian language, the family will prosper.

## KA 'OHANA KALUHIOKALANI KAINA HOUSMAN

My involvement in the Hawaiian language immersion program started more than 20 years ago, first as a parent of children in the Pūnana Leo o Honolulu preschool, then as a Hawaiian language immersion teacher in the classroom for 14 years, and finally as a curriculum developer and indigenous teacher trainer for 9 years. The journey has been one of the most challenging and yet rewarding experiences in my life. Over the years, I have been fortunate to have worked with the most visionary, committed, steadfast, and hardworking group of people who have dedicated their lives to the perpetuation of the Hawaiian language for the benefit of our children and future generations of Hawaiian people.

For me, it is important to start at the very beginning of my journey and how that has led me to be involved with the Hawaiian language revitalization movement. That journey starts with who I am and where I come from. My childhood influences are what have led me on the way. I was born in a small town called Delran in the state of New Jersey. At birth I was given the name of April Ruth Kaluhiokalani.

I am the last of six children. My parents' first child died at birth, so I grew up with three brothers and one sister. My twin brother George and I are the youngest in the family. My mother, Ruth Anna Hubbs Kaluhiokalani, was of full English descent. My father, Joseph William Thomas Kaluhiokalani, was half Hawaiian and half German. How is it that my family ended up on the East Coast of the United States? It is a rather remarkable story. My grandfather, George Ho'okano Kahoaleawai Kaluhiokalani, left Hawai'i in 1900. He was only 16 years old at the time. He was of full Hawaiian descent. He was a youth at the time of the overthrow of the monarchy. When the girl he loved married his brother, he left Hawai'i with a broken heart. He, along with several other Hawaiian friends, decided to leave Hawai'i on a steamship. They worked in the boiler room for 10 years before they were able to step off the ship onto land. When the ship docked in Philadelphia in 1910, my grandfather and his friends left the ship and never went back. It was in Philadelphia that my grandfather met my grandmother of pure German descent. They got married, settled down in New Jersey, and had 16 children together. My mother and father grew up in towns that were located right next to each other. They got married and had six children. So that is how we ended up in New Jersey.

Although I grew up thousands of miles away from Hawai'i, I feel that my grandfather raised his family in Hawaiian ways of thinking, doing, and knowing. In turn, my father passed down the same belief system and values. I was raised on a farm. We learned at an early age the importance of being industrious (*pa'ahana*), doing our best (*'oi kelakela*), getting a good education (*'imi na'auao*), and behaving in a proper manner (*pono*). I have the best memories of my childhood. I had wonderful parents who loved and guided me and taught me the most valuable lessons of life. Since I had a really long last name (Kaluhiokalani) that was unusual for someone who lived in the East, I received a lot of attention from my teachers, classmates, and anyone else I met. Surprisingly enough, everyone seemed to know that I was Hawaiian. People had only nice things to say about Hawai'i. I always felt proud to be a Hawaiian while I was growing up. My father made it a point to take us to hula classes every weekend, and he taught us everything else he knew about Hawai'i. My uncle had a *lū'au* (Hawaiian feast) business, so we frequently danced at the *lū'au* and were able to eat Hawaiian food. *Poi*<sup>1</sup> was flown in from Hawai'i, and pig was prepared in the *imu* (underground oven) in my uncle's backyard.

When my twin brother and I graduated from high school, we decided to go to college in Hawai'i. I always felt awkward when people asked me where I was from. For some reason I was afraid someone would think I was less Hawaiian if they

knew I was raised in New Jersey. Usually I would reply that my family was from Honomū on the Big Island because that is where my grandfather was born and that is where my ancestors lived for generations. While I was looking at my genealogy I discovered that some of my ancestors were also from the Puna district area.

One year before I graduated from Brigham Young University (BYU)–Hawai'i, I married Enoka Nohea Kaina. Enoka was my Hawaiian language teacher at BYU–Hawai'i and is the reason why I am so involved with the Hawaiian language movement. On the first day of class, I was so impressed with the way Enoka taught the class. There was something different about this experience. The best way I can describe it is spiritual. His demeanor, his tone, his speech, his behavior, the way he taught was humble and spiritual. For me, Enoka is the epitome of what it means to be Hawaiian. Through that experience I developed a deep desire to become a fluent speaker of the language. Enoka not only gave me the gift of language but also went on to become my mentor in many areas. He taught me to dance hula, to chant, to sing and compose Hawaiian melodies, the art of lei making, lauhala (pandanus leaf) weaving, and food preparation. I learned many Hawaiian values through interaction with his extended family. Enoka understood that it was up to our generation to make a difference. The survival or fall of the language depended on young parents' commitment to the language. Before we were married, we made a commitment to raise our children speaking Hawaiian. Hawaiian would be their first language. When the Pūnana Leo Schools opened in 1985, our two children were already speaking Hawaiian. I am still amazed that other young parents had the same vision of raising their children speaking Hawaiian, even before the Pūnana Leo School had been established. Is this a coincidence? I don't believe so. We knew what we had to do through our na'au.<sup>2</sup> We listened and we followed what we knew was pono (right).

Enoka and I were very strict about only speaking Hawaiian to our daughters, Kau'i and Hi'ilei. When they were small, Sophie Hi'ilei Kaina, their tūtū wahine (grandmother) who is a native speaker, cared for them in Waipi'o, O'ahu, while Enoka and I worked. We were fortunate to have her support. While the girls were growing up, they and their tūtū wahine never spoke a word of English to each other. Outside of the Ni'ihau community, this concept was unheard of for almost 60 years in Hawai'i. Most Native Hawaiian speakers stopped speaking Hawaiian to their children and grandchildren around the 1920s. In the early 1980s, Hawaiian was being spoken once again on a daily basis throughout Hawai'i.

The opening of the Pūnana Leo o Honolulu in 1985 was an answer to our prayers. Not only did we want our children to speak Hawaiian at home, but we also wanted them to be educated through the medium of Hawaiian. I still remember the excitement we felt at our first interview at the school site in Kalihi with No‘eau Warner, who was serving on the ‘Aha Pūnana Leo Board at the time. We wanted our daughters to be able to play and interact with other Hawaiian-speaking children. We understood that if Hawaiian was to flourish again, it needed to be spoken in various settings. It is for this reason that we will forever be grateful to the dedicated ‘Aha Pūnana Leo Board and the staff members of the Pūnana Leo o Honolulu: Larry Kimura, who served as the kahu (administrator) while he was also teaching at the University of Hawai‘i (UH)–Mānoa, and teachers Lolena Nicolas, Ululani Chock, Ipo Kanahele, Miki Hayes, and Wini Terada, who were meagerly paid but had lots of aloha (love) and were dedicated to teaching children and giving them the precious gift of the ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language).

It is through our Pūnana Leo experience that we met other young families, such as the Kawai‘ae‘a ‘ohana and the Ka‘awa/Alencastre ‘ohana, who had the same vision of raising their children speaking Hawaiian. Strong relationships were developed between the families through participation in school service, parent meetings, weekly language classes, and fundraisers. The Pūnana Leo is what tied us all together and kept the Hawaiian language movement progressing to the next level. As our children came closer to graduating from the preschool, it became apparent that we wanted our children to continue their education in Hawaiian at the elementary school level.

The ‘Aha Pūnana Leo Board and parents gave testimonies before the Board of Education and the state legislature. Through the united efforts of Native Hawaiian voices, the outcome was the approval of a Hawaiian language immersion pilot program to begin in the fall of 1987. This was a monumental step since the use of the Hawaiian language as a medium of instruction in public schools was banned almost 100 years before. Approval was given to open two K–1 combination classes, one on Hawai‘i island and one on O‘ahu, with the intention of adding a new grade each year. Since the program was only approved as a pilot program, the success of the students would determine the longevity of Hawaiian language immersion in the public school setting.

As the program overcame the first hurdle of approval to start, other obstacles quickly became visible. Where would the curriculum materials and books come from? Which principals would be willing to allow a Hawaiian language immersion program in their school? Who had a teaching certificate and could speak Hawaiian? How would the program be funded? The odds were stacked against the start of the program, and yet within weeks everything fell into place.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo agreed to translate materials and develop curriculum on a yearly basis. This was an arduous task as those who were doing the work were already working full time at the university. Two exceptional principals, Diana Oshiro at Waiiau Elementary in Pearl City and Patrick Seely at Keaukaha School, agreed to become the first principals of the Hawaiian language immersion program. Surely, other administrators thought they were absolutely crazy, but their willingness to take such a daring stand for the benefit of Native Hawaiians must be applauded.

Puanani Wilhelm became the first immersion teacher at Keaukaha School. She was working at a bank in Oregon when she received a call from Pila Wilson and Kauanoe Kamanā. She had a teaching degree and could speak Hawaiian. Amazingly, she agreed to take on the task and moved back to Hawai'i within weeks. Three part-time teachers who assisted her the first year were Nāko'olani Warrington, Lehua Veincent, and Kahi Wright.

I was approached by No'eau Warner to become the first teacher at Waiiau Elementary. Even though I felt inadequate and unprepared, I accepted the position. I knew that if I didn't, there was a good possibility that the opportunity to start a Hawaiian language immersion class on O'ahu might not come around again. Parents worked so hard to get the approval to start the program. I knew that I couldn't refuse. I was also looking forward to my own daughter being part of the first class at Waiiau. No'eau arranged for me to fly to the Big Island to meet with Puanani, Pila, and Kauanoe. They supplied me with books and materials, songs and chants, and confidence to start the new program.

When I got back to Waiiau Elementary, I was pleasantly surprised by the arrival of Kalani Akana, my previous Leeward District Resource Teacher partner, and a group of kūpuna from the Leeward District Hawaiian Studies Program. They were there to help me set up the classroom and put up colorful butcher paper on the walls. Their aloha was so evident as we sang, laughed, and worked together. They stayed with me until the classroom was ready to open up its doors to students. They said their goodbyes with lots of hugs, kisses, and well wishes. I felt blessed

to have such wonderful support. The kindergarten teachers from the English side were also very helpful. They were so willing to share their ideas, materials, and supplies. Although Hawaiian immersion was a brand new idea to them, they did all within their power to support us in any way possible.

The first year of the Hawaiian language immersion program was probably one of the most difficult in my life. Every day I started work at 7 in the morning and stayed until 7 at night with my two small children by my side. We spent every holiday and every Saturday at Waiiau Elementary School preparing materials and translating books during the first year. A great relief to me was the hiring of a part-time teacher, Lilinoe Ka'ahanui. She was wonderful with the children and like a right arm to me. She would work with the first graders while I worked with the kindergartners on focused skills appropriate for their grade level. Our classroom was a dark and dreary portable attached to the PE room, in the furthest corner of the school campus. It seemed that every hour a PE class would enter the attached PE room and would warm up with exercises. Especially during the jumping jacks, our whole room would vibrate up and down while PE students counted out very loudly. The only thing that can compare to it was teaching at Keaukaha Elementary School where commercial airplanes landed frequently at the nearby Hilo Airport.

The next several years continued to be difficult since translation of materials was an ongoing process. Money was limited. Resources were few. The first educational specialist at the state level who was in charge of the pilot project did not embrace the vision of the program, which made funding and resources difficult to acquire. When I requested funds to purchase books, I was told that we should only focus on speaking the language and not on reading and writing and therefore the students didn't need books. Pressure was put on teachers to adopt the bilingual education model used with immigrant children focusing on transitioning to English at least by the second or third grade, but teachers remained steadfast to the immersion model. Instead of giving in, teachers spent hundreds of dollars of their own money to purchase reading books and other supplies for the classroom. Lilinoe became the additional full-time teacher at Waiiau the following year. Two part-time teachers, Keikio'ewa Ka'ōpua and Ku'ualohanui Kaulia, were hired to assist us in the classroom. It was a great asset to the Waiiau program to have two Hawaiian male teachers as role models for the boys. During the first two years of the program, my mother-in-law, Hi'ilei Kaina, volunteered her time to come to the school to share mo'olelo (stories) and also teach food preparation, weaving, fishing, and other cultural activities. Kupuna Elizabeth Kauahipaulā also spent many years

at Waiiau teaching the children many valuable lessons and Hawaiian insights as a native speaker. Like Kupuna Kaina, the presence of Kupuna Kauahipaulā was essential to the whole program as they modeled high standards of Hawaiian excellence for all of us to follow.

Most people probably do not realize that the Hawaiian language immersion program did not begin immediately as a fully incorporated program of the Department of Education. The 'Aha Pūnana Leo board voted to open a kindergarten called Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i (Hawaiian Environment School) and made it available without tuition normally charged for Pūnana Leo families. There was not enough room at the Pūnana Leo o Honolulu to open such a program, but there was at the Pūnana Leo o Hilo. The following year, Superintendent Toguchi agreed to incorporate the Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i into the DOE on both O'ahu and Hawai'i where it remained a pilot project for two years.

Each year, over a five-year period, the 'Aha Pūnana Leo and parents went back to the Board of Education to request approval for additional grades and supportive program policies. The continuation of the program was questionable each year. A milestone was achieved on June 15, 1989, when the pilot status was changed to a permanent program status, but even then, the program was only approved to continue until the 6th grade. It wasn't until 1992 that the Board of Education approved to extend the program to grade 12. During the first five years, the continuation of the pilot project was contingent on the success of the program. Every year evaluators came into the classroom to observe the class, write notes, take pictures, assess individual students, and then write a qualitative report for the state superintendent and Board of Education to review.

Enoka, Tūtū Kaina, and Tūtū Kaluhiokalani were not able to be present at the girls' graduation from Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u School. Unfortunately, when Kau'i was 10 and Hi'ilei was 9, their father passed away. During their high school years, their grandparents also passed away. Although these important members of the family were not physically present, great joy was felt in knowing that the legacy of language that they left behind would be continued on in the girls and eventually in the next generation to come.

After the girls' father died, we were looking for a new start. We also wanted to be closer to my parents, who built a home and were living in Kurtistown on the island of Hawai'i. We moved to the Big Island in 1994. It was during this year that Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u opened its doors in downtown Hilo for grades 6 to 8. Kau'i

was in 7th grade at the time and Hi'ilei was in 6th grade. I was hired as a teacher along with Kauano'e Kamanā, Lehua Veincent, and Māhealani Jones. The following year, the Nāwahī School was moved to Kea'au. The 'Aha Pūnana Leo was instrumental in securing funds from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to purchase the Old Henry 'Opūkaha'ia School, which had closed down in Kea'au. After months of preparation and renovation during the summer, the Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u School opened and became the permanent site for the school.

A few years before our move to the island of Hawai'i, I met and married Timothy Housman. Even though Tim is not a speaker of the Hawaiian language, he has been very supportive throughout the years. We have two daughters together, Kawehi and 'Alohilani Housman. Both of them have attended the Pūnana Leo o Hilo School and are currently students at Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u School. Both of them were in my K-2 class when Nāwahī Iki was established and opened its doors in 2001. The school started with just two classes during the first year. Kauano'e Kamanā taught the grade 3-5 class. Loke Roseguo was also hired full time to teach science, nutrition, and the after-school program. Kanani Kawai'ae'a, a student in my very first class at Waiau and a graduate of Nāwahī, assisted me as a part-time teacher in the classroom. I taught at Nāwahī Iki for three years before I started working full time at the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center. In that capacity, I continue to develop curriculum materials and provide teacher training for Hawaiian language immersion schools.

Over the years we have met both supporters and critics of the program. The native-speaking kūpuna have been extremely supportive and have encouraged us to continue to teach our children in the Hawaiian language. Critics, usually those between their 20s and 40s, have asked why we were speaking Hawaiian since in their opinion Hawaiian was already a dead language. Sadly enough, many of these critics were Hawaiians themselves. They expressed their concern for our children's future, pointing out that they would be illiterate in the English language and would not be able to go to college. As parents, we trusted in the research that was done on immersion programs in New Zealand and Canada. The first classes of Hawaiian language immersion students graduated in 1999. We now have eight years of proof

to show that our graduates are thriving in many different fields and occupations, such as teaching, communications, politics, law, nursing, performing arts, agriculture, military, business, tourism, and so forth. They are fluent in Hawaiian and English. Many are honor students at the university level. Some have chosen to attend universities locally while others have chosen to pursue their education at some of the most prestigious universities throughout the United States and in England, such as Stanford, Loyola Marymount, and Oxford University. Nāwahī continues to have a 100% graduation rate, and 80% of the graduates continue their education at the university level.

The effort of revitalizing the Hawaiian language started 30 years ago for our family and continues on today with our four daughters: Kau'i, Hi'ilei, Kawehi, and 'Alohilani. Both Kau'i and Hi'ilei have graduated with honors at the university level. They have chosen to serve the Hawaiian community in the area of education. Kau'i is in the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program and will become a Hawaiian-medium educator at the secondary level in a year. Hi'ilei works at the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center, which develops curriculum and provides teacher training for Hawaiian-medium schools. Kawehi and 'Alohilani continue their education through the medium of Hawaiian at Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u and also play important roles in providing child-care service to their young nephews and niece in the Hawaiian language.

My heart delights in knowing that the legacy of the language continues on in my five small grandchildren, La'akea, Malelega, Akariva, Niu, and Tavaua. All are Hawaiian language speakers and attend Hawaiian-medium schools. Although three generations of our family are heard speaking Hawaiian at home, at school, and at work, we all realize that there are still many obstacles to overcome before our language is flourishing and thriving in Hawai'i. However, through the dedication of families such as the Ka'awa family, the Kawai'ae'a family, along with many other families who speak Hawaiian at home, the vision of language revitalization can be achieved. It is to this effort that we dedicate our lives. E ola mau ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i!

## KA 'OHANA KA'AWA

*Hele au i ke kula maika'i, i ka Pūnana Leo o Hawai'i,  
A'o au i ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i ma ka Pūnana Leo o Hawai'i.*

Resounding are the words and melody of this mele (song) as sung by my four-year-old mo'opuna (grandchild). With 'ukulele in hand, Kamalu stands among the pikake (jasmine) and gardenia plants sharing her impromptu repertoire of mele, oli (chants), and ha'i'ōlelo (speeches) with her backyard friends. She delights in the wind-blown branches swaying in time to her melodies, which she perceives as a favorable response and interprets to mean hana hou (do it again). The desire as well as ability of this young child to sing and speak fluently in Hawaiian is significant as it affirms Hawaiian as a living language. More than 20 years ago, my children were among the very first group of Pūnana Leo o Honolulu students who conveyed our aloha for the Hawaiian language as they sang this same mele. Singing, chanting, and speaking Hawaiian, our children's voices carried the message into our homes and communities that the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language revitalization movement) had begun.

The vision of "E Ola Ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i" (The Hawaiian Language Shall Live) is the inspiration and driving force for hundreds of Hawai'i's families and educators who are currently dedicated to the collective responsibility of bringing a renewed vitality to our mother language through increased awareness, appreciation, and value of being Hawaiian. Nurturing our maui ola Hawai'i (Hawaiian well-being) is an ongoing process of consciously reconnecting ourselves to our rich cultural heritage. Kūpuna to mo'opuna (grandparent to grandchild)—this is the essential relationship that transmits cultural wisdom from generation to generation, as well as the source of traditional knowledge. It is the connection that must be strengthened and maintained within our homes and communities as each generation plays a crucial role in seeking, living, and growing the cultural wisdom that we have inherited as Hawaiians. It is an investment in the continuity of who we are as a people, built on desire and ability. The manifestations of this desire and ability are the key ingredients in motivating active and sustained learning of our culture.

History, clarified by hindsight, provides us with a glimpse in which to understand the myriad circumstances and conditions each generation in Hawai'i has had to deal with to exist and survive. This understanding frames contemporary

perspectives and provides the passion and momentum for the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i. The immense changes that have taken place within the past few generations confirm the need and fuel the potential for positive change embodied in the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i.

We now know that during the 19th century, as our kūpuna experienced contact with world cultures and the Hawaiian language was developed into a written form, an extremely high level of Hawaiian language literacy was attained through a Hawaiian language medium public school system. Throughout the 1800s, Hawaiians became prolific writers chronicling the history, traditions, culture, politics, and current local and world events that are found in over 125,000 pages of Hawaiian language newspapers. These Native language writings represent the largest collection of indigenous language written literature in the Pacific and are evidence of the reports of very high literacy rates among Hawaiians at the time.

Tragically, the integrity of Hawaiian cultural, economic, and political sovereignty along with the population of Native Hawaiians diminished greatly from the time of Western contact to the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom in 1893 and continued throughout the 20th century. Within a few decades of U.S. occupation, Hawai'i's political and public education systems explicitly contributed to the demise of the Hawaiian language as generations of Hawaiian children were subjected to an English-only learning environment as provided for in Act 57 (1896). Implementing a Western-based pedagogy in Hawai'i's education system created a disconnect between academics and literacy from the Hawaiian language and culture. As the last of our native-speaking kūpuna have shared, they were shamed and punished as young children for speaking Hawaiian at school. This negativity was attached to being Hawaiian and permeated society, penetrating the very na'au of our kūpuna. As the norm within Hawai'i's public and private schools, the curriculum generally continues to ignore the very existence of Hawaiian history, culture, and language. Twentieth-century education in Hawai'i is characterized by an obvious void of anything Hawaiian; being Hawaiian was not considered as an important or positive attribute.

Within just a few generations, the Hawaiian language went from being a vital language spoken by all generations of multiethnic Hawai'i to near extinction. Except within the isolated Ni'ihau community and among kūpuna who were in

their 70s and older, Hawaiian was no longer used for daily communication. Fewer than 50 children were reported to be speakers of Hawaiian in the early 1980s, and a very real fear was that once our kūpuna were gone, so would our language. As these changes took place within just a few generations, the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i is having positive and profound impact on families and communities. And here we are, within one generation of creating Hawaiian language learning environments, where learners are immersed in the Hawaiian language as the primary medium of all communication and education, securing crucial reconnections between being Hawaiian and education spanning infant-toddler through doctoral levels.

The family-based Pūnana Leo in 1983 and the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i (Hawai'i DOE Hawaiian Language Immersion Program) were established in response to the reality of imminent language death. Inspired by the parallel realities and successful efforts of the Māori of Aotearoa (New Zealand) who had begun Te Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori-medium education programs in the early 1980s, Māori educational leaders, Dr. Timoti Kāretu and Dr. Tāmami Reedy, along with educators and families throughout Aotearoa, shared the progress, challenges, and successes of revitalizing the Māori language through education and inspired us throughout the past 25 years in realizing the potential of Hawaiian-medium education.

The foundation for the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i was laid by hulu kūpuna (esteemed elders), including Tūtū Lilia Hale, Kupuna Elizabeth Kauahipaulā, 'Anakala Eddie Ka'anana, Kupuna Josephine Lindsey, 'Anakala Joe Maka'ai, Kupuna Noelani McGuire, Tūtū Kainoa Wright, Kupuna Kāwika Ka'alakea, Tūtū Haleola Lee Hong, Lilia Hokoana and many, many others throughout our islands. Raised with Hawaiian as their first language by their kūpuna, each generously shared her or his knowledge and skills, provided encouragement and inspiration, modeled fortitude, and implicitly ingrained in us the importance of 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Subsequently, a strong commitment has grown from within the 11 Pūnana Leo throughout our islands and extended into homes and communities to do whatever is needed to ensure Hawaiian language education is available and of the highest quality possible.

My own family background is typical among families in Hawai'i, where within two generations of nonuse, the Hawaiian language was essentially lost to us. As a product of Hawaiian, Chinese, and Portuguese ancestors who lived on Kaua'i,

Maui, and O'ahu, Hawaiian was reportedly spoken by all of my great-grandparents and most of my grandparents' generations. My parents' generation could understand spoken Hawaiian but could not speak it. Growing up on O'ahu during the 1950s and 1960s, English was the primary language of the home, school, and community, and exposure to the Hawaiian language was mainly through music and hula and by overhearing kūpuna as they talked among themselves. With the urbanization of O'ahu, there was a prevailing thrust to become "Americanized," to the exclusion of who we were as Hawaiians.

My kūpuna taught me the great lessons of my life. Growing up, I spent a lot of time with my two grandmothers. Most weekends were spent in Kapahulu with my Nana, my Portuguese paternal grandmother, Josephine Alencastre Gilding, who was a teacher and principal and cultivated in me a genuine love of learning and adventure. Born and raised in Mū'olea in the Kīpahulu district of Maui, Nana would ride her horse to Hāna to teach school. She was a world traveler and conducted tours to foreign lands during her summers. My summers were spent on Kaua'i where my part-Hawaiian maternal grandmother, Grandma Jennie Dias Schumacher, lived. Grandma and her 10 siblings were gifted musicians and great cooks; music, food, and family get-togethers filled our days. Grandma exuded aloha in all that she did. She especially loved raising flowers, reef fishing, playing piano, and dancing hula. The importance of the kūpuna-mo'opuna relationship has been evident in my life as my two grandmothers were instrumental in developing my sense of responsibility, perseverance, and family.

I remember doing well academically in the private schools (St. Anthony's and Punahou) that I attended, yet it became increasingly difficult to relate and conform to the Western values and curriculum that was prevalent in those schools. As a teenager, I had given up on formal education, feeling there was something missing, although at that time I didn't recognize what it was. As the 1970s are known as the beginning of the Hawaiian renaissance, a renewed interest in and appreciation for the Hawaiian culture was taking place. Becoming a student of traditional hula in Hālau Hula o Hoakalei was a great source of inspiration for me and solidified the importance of learning the Hawaiian language and culture. This was a turning point in my life as I started my renewed quest for knowledge that eventually took me to college, where Hawaiian studies courses were just beginning to be offered. I had the opportunity to study Hawaiian language, poetry, and translation under mānaleo (native speakers) Mrs. Sarah Nākoa, Larry Kimura, and Haunani Bernardino, who provided the means to strengthen my cultural foundation.

During the ten years that I was the Hawaiian language teacher at Kailua High School, I married and had three children, Kini, Mike'ela, and Emilia. My goal as a parent was to provide my children with a strong cultural foundation and positive identity as Hawaiians. As a young family, we were really excited and appreciative of the opportunity afforded by the Pūnana Leo where our keiki (children) would have the opportunity to be educated in Hawaiian. I remember holding my son Mike'ela's hand and cradling Emilia, my newborn daughter, as we entered the Pūnana Leo for the very first time in 1985 and became a Hawaiian language immersion family. It was amazing to witness the keiki fluently speaking, singing, praying, learning, playing, creating, fighting, and, I would surmise, dreaming, all in Hawaiian. Both Mike'ela and Emilia are Pūnana Leo o Honolulu graduates and continued on in Hawaiian immersion at Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau, Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue, and Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau.

My eldest daughter, Kini, being a year older than the Pūnana Leo children, was already attending kindergarten in English when the Pūnana Leo started. With two siblings at Pūnana Leo, Kini really wanted to be part of Hawaiian immersion and after two years of requesting the school to accept her, she was finally allowed to join the lead class at Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau. This was important for my family and solidified our resolve to use Hawaiian as our daily language. As Hawaiian immersion students, my children have had many unique cultural and educational opportunities that they would never have experienced elsewhere. There was an 'ohana feeling within and among the schools, and I knew my children were being lovingly cared for and educated in the best way possible. Although Kini was later accepted into Kamehameha Schools for the seventh and ninth grades, no support was evident in their curriculum for Hawaiian immersion students to continue to strengthen their Hawaiian language skills. We decided to remain within the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i and help to create a secondary program.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo has provided the means for 'ohana to become the collective units to sustain the Hawaiian language. Along with the handful of families on each of the islands who were raising our children with Hawaiian as the primary home language, the Pūnana Leo environment provided the essential communities where young children and adults could interact with each other in our own language and culture. We were extremely fortunate that the first kumu of Pūnana

Leo o Honolulu included three mānaleo, 'Anakē Lolena Nicholas, Ipo Kanahele, and Ulu Chock, who shared the heritage of their Ni'ihau familial connections with us and provided a unique, loving, rich foundation for the keiki. With Kumu Larry Kimura as administrator, we set high expectations for ourselves and our 'ohana.

As one of the many who have grown up with the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i, my 'ohana is responsive to the kuleana (responsibility) of revitalizing our mother tongue by learning, teaching, and using Hawaiian in our homes, schools, work, and play. As a way of life for my three keiki and eight mo'opuna, we continue to be guided by the words of our kūpuna as we strive to increase our ability to live as Hawaiians. Daily tasks in Hawaiian, which range from the simple to the complex, involve the conscious use of appropriate language and behaviors, and we often rely on our recollections of how kūpuna would do it. Everything from household chores to sports activities, from helping with homework to greeting friends and family, from presenting at conferences to paddling canoe—all aspects and dimensions of language and culture are needed. Consciously applying the concept of kū i ka māna (the passing on of appropriate traits), we raise our children to reflect the positive dispositions that our culture provides.

Hawaiian immersion is a way of life. As a Hawaiian immersion community, our first decade was especially one of mutual support and cohesiveness throughout the islands as the program grew from 2 initial preschool sites to 20 preschool through middle school programs. Through unwavering determination and endless meetings, the initial one-year pilot program of 1987 eventually became a K–12 program in 1994. Parents groups were instrumental in assuring that each school became a reality and was successful. We gathered as members of the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i, as the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, as the 'Aha Kauleo advisory committee, as participants of the 'Aha Kūkā and 'Aha Leo Mohala statewide conferences and camps, as Leo Ola, Kūkamaile, and Kahuawaiola teacher training, as Ho'omau fundraiser concert organizers, as 'Īlau Hoe canoe paddling club. Our collective efforts were clearly focused as we congregated to discuss, commiserate, strategize, and celebrate successes. This solidarity was a positive and instrumental force in changing legislation and educational policies, opening new sites, and creating curriculum and resources.

In the early days, there were many who considered us positively as pioneers forging new ground in cultural education and have been genuinely supportive. There was pride evident in the faces of our kūpuna as they witnessed children being educated in a total Hawaiian immersion environment. As a student in the papa alaka'i (lead class) at Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau and Ānuenue, my eldest daughter Kini and her classmates were taught by courageous teachers who relied on their resourcefulness and creativity to implement a Hawaiian language curriculum in all of the required content areas. These students, along with their counterparts at Kula Kaiapuni o Keaukaha and Nāwahiokalani'ōpu'u on Hawai'i island, were in many ways fortunate to experience being the first and were afforded many opportunities to travel to each of the Hawaiian islands, to the continental United States, and to Aotearoa to expand their awareness of and internalize their role in language revitalization. As my three children grew up, they accompanied me to attend and participate in school-level meetings and activities, Board of Education and legislative hearings, as well as language, cultural, and educational conferences. Their presence contributed to an awareness of the plight of the Hawaiian language because they were living verification that Hawaiian immersion was working. In 1999, high school graduation at Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenue and Nāwahiokalani'ōpu'u marked the first time in over 100 years that students had been educated entirely in Hawaiian from preschool to grade 12 and was celebrated as a triumphant culmination of efforts.

Others in the community have been skeptical. Our children were often looked upon as novelties, perhaps as part of a passing fad. As we are frequently met with unsupportive policies, institutional resistance, and supporters of the status quo, we continue to relay our aloha for the language, sharing the potential of and need for Hawaiian language immersion education. In the early years of the Pūnana Leo and Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i, we were often asked, "What language are you speaking?" (note: it was Hawaiian); "Don't they [the immersion children] speak English?" "Aren't you afraid that you'll harm them [the immersion children] academically?" The many forms of criticism served to strengthen our resolve and promote continued growth. It is clear that building awareness takes time as it replaces the misconceptions and ignorance that have permeated Hawai'i's institutions for generations. Justifying the value and validity of our own culture is an ongoing task. As the first graduates of Hawaiian immersion are now graduating from colleges, their achievements speak for themselves.

As the Pūnana Leo and Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i grew, it was evident that a Hawaiian philosophy was needed to guide current and future efforts. Written in 1997, the Kumu Honua Maui Ola is based on traditional Hawaiian concepts of life and learning and provides a framework to develop, implement, and assess our work. Working within the DOE, the University of Hawai'i, and 'Aha Pūnana Leo in various capacities, I felt the need to advance Hawaiian immersion and develop a program that provided a seamless continuity of maui ola education. As honua maui ola, the Pūnana Leo 'o Kamakau and Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau Laboratory Public Charter School (Kamakau) were established in 2000 and included infant-toddler, preschool, and elementary through high school programs in Windward O'ahu. The principles embodied in the Kumu Honua Maui Ola are embraced in the school's daily activities, protocols, and pedagogy. Working with talented and passionate colleagues and families who shared the vision of creating and implementing optimum learning environments for families, we developed a holistic focus on indigenous health and wellness within a comprehensive 'ohana-based program. As parents and pioneers of Hawaiian immersion education in O'ahu's Pūnana Leo, we welcomed the opportunity to be innovative in creating a new extension of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo as an indigenous laboratory program of Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language and as a new startup public charter school. We collaboratively identified our optimal Hawaiian language immersion program as being multiage, culture-based, thematic, and experiential.

The first year's enrollment of 34 included my two mo'opuna, Kanoa and Māhiehie, in the infant-toddler program that Kini helped to create, and my youngest daughter, Emilia, as a ninth grader. Kamakau's families participated in the 'Ai Pono and 'Aiaola nutrition programs; the Mālama 'Āina, Mālama Kai environmental action program, and Lā'au Lapa'au traditional healing program strengthened our foundation as a learning community and as 'ohana. Each of these programs was integrated into the academic content of the whole school as a unique hands-on, minds-on curriculum. Emilia is one of Kamakau's 11 graduates who has blossomed into a young adult with a strong cultural foundation and the potential to positively contribute to her 'ohana and community.

As an aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i, our work has just begun. There is a tremendous amount of work ahead of us so the Hawaiian language may once again flourish. As we reflect on the small numbers of Hawaiian speakers in relation to Hawai'i's population and the percentage of Hawai'i's children who have the opportunity to attend Hawaiian immersion education, we see that there is no time for a complacent attitude. The very nature of public education is in need of transformation to assure Native Hawaiians with opportunities to be educated as Hawaiians in all of Hawai'i's communities. Emanating from a foundation of Hawaiian cultural values, beliefs, and wisdom, a comprehensive campaign is needed to increase awareness and commitment, to stimulate new phases of growth, and ultimately to mobilize resources of Hawaiian and public organizations to collectively focus on Native Hawaiian education. Program growth is crucial, Hawaiian immersion schools should be available in every Hawaiian community, and our current schools must continue to work hard to remain responsive to the needs of our keiki. Anything less than this may prove to be way too little and way too late and result in the status quo being maintained or an ongoing decline of conditions affecting our maui ola.

My children are now parents themselves. As they stand together with my mo'opuna among this new generation of Hawaiian youth educated in Hawaiian, our mother tongue resounds strongly from Hawai'i to Ni'ihau. As a Hawaiian mother, grandmother, and educator, I pray that the ancient voices of our kūpuna will never again be silenced.

## KA 'OHANA KAWAI'AE'A

Hawaiian-medium education has existed for over two decades within both the public and private sectors of education. The movement grew out of a grassroots effort in 1983 under the nonprofit organization called the 'Aha Pūnana Leo. This family-based organization opened up schools statewide for families like ours who desired to educate their children and continue to grow as Hawaiian-speaking families. The Kula Kaiapuni (immersion schools), also known as the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i (Hawaiian Language Immersion Program) was a response to those Pūnana Leo families who wished to continue their children's education through Hawaiian and other families who desired the opportunity for their children within public education.

The vision behind the movement “E Ola Ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i” became the call to action that brought children and their families together in a common cause to revitalize the Hawaiian language while addressing the educational needs of Hawaiian-speaking children built on ‘ike maui Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language, traditional knowledge, Hawaiian behaviors and actions and spirituality). This was not a simple call to action. It required us as individuals and as families to dig deep within ourselves and ask some serious questions about our own personal values and family goals, not simply as ideals but as serious commitments in action that would contribute to a growing movement of language recovery over the long haul and into the future.

For our family, we made a conscious decision to raise our children through Hawaiian as their first language. It was important to us for our children to have a good education, know who they are and where they come from, and have a set of solid Hawaiian values that would shape their characters and prepare them for adulthood. The Hawaiian language is the critical link to being Hawaiian and understanding what being Hawaiian is all about. The language carries the code of Hawaiian behavior, and through it, Hawaiian thinking makes sense and the culture takes on a deeper and richer meaning.

This revelation did not happen overnight. It is, in fact, deeply tied to who I am, where I come from, and the values that were instilled in me from birth. As far back as I can remember, I was drawn to things Hawaiian. My parents, as young adults, had gone off to college in California and Washington State and met after my father had been drafted into the military. I was born in the big, smoggy city of Los Angeles, California. There were many other Hawaiians and “local-born” families that lived around us. For most of my life, my Dad’s sister and her family lived just a few streets away. It was obvious to me as a child that we came from a different culture than the Hispanic, Black, or European families who lived in our neighborhood. We were known as the Hawaiian family, and from my earliest recollection of my own self-concept, I was Hawaiian.

Being away from “home,” our family took little for granted concerning culture. Like other Hawaiian and “Hawai‘i local-born” families in the 1950s and 1960s, we gravitated together and created a “Hawaiian world” around us with what we had to work with. Hawaiian organizations and events like the Hawaiian Civic Clubs, Daughters of Hawai‘i, hālau hula (hula schools), holokū balls,<sup>3</sup> lū‘aus, and backyard jams were created and practiced. The Hawaiian language defined

standards of cultural excellence and practice. For example, those who knew their family genealogy and could pronounce their family names correctly or those who used good pronunciation and the correct words when singing commanded a different community respect.

In our home, we ate poi flown in from Hawai'i, had i'a maka (raw fish) on a regular basis, and when there was no lū'au (young taro tops), we substituted spinach for lū'au, and ate it with butterfish. And so, the term lū'au haole has a historical tie to my childhood experience. The Hawaiian language and pidgin were our cultural identifiers. In our home, simple Hawaiian words and phrases, Hawaiian and local food, kihō'alu (slack key guitar) and Hawaiian songs were part of my daily life. My father planted fruits and vegetables in our yard and when our family went on outings, we did things like fishing for small he'e (octopus) or clams. As a child, I thought I was Hawaiian and Chinese. Chinese because my birth name was Chang and Hawaiian because our family life was so centered around the Hawaiian and Hawai'i local culture. It wasn't until I was in the fifth or sixth grade after doing a school project on Hawai'i that I realized my mother was not Hawaiian but Okinawan, and my father was Hawaiian, Chinese, and Caucasian.

My paternal Hawaiian grandparents had a tremendous influence on my life. I am so blessed that my parents recognized the importance of my grandparents' role in our lives and made sure that we spent time with them on Maui to learn and grow from their teachings. They are the defining factor for what I hold dear within my cultural core.

My part-Hawaiian grandfather was known to many as Eddie Chang of Makena, and he participated in the early days of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana movement and the Hui Alanui o Makena as a kupuna advisor. He was a naturalist and lived with the land and the sea. He knew the plants, rocks, winds, rains, fish, ko'a (fishing grounds), medicines, place names, and stories of Makena where our family, the Kukahikos, are from. He studied the land grants and land deed documents in Hawaiian, knew the family genealogy, and battled in court to protect our family lands. In the early 1940s, he was awarded his government homestead in Kahakuloa, Maui, just ma uka (inland) of Pu'ukoa'e where he moved the family. In his old age, he drove from one part of the island to the other on a regular basis to farm our family land in Pāipu, known as Chang's beach. From my grandfather, I learned that there were other dialects of Hawaiian different from what I was learning in

school as a first-year Hawaiian language student. I also learned to pay special attention to the specifics of the language. They revealed a different framework of thought from English and made a big difference in translation.

My grandmother Harriet Kulamanu Laumauna was from Waialua, Moloka'i. She was a teacher and a master quilter. She taught in the old country schoolhouses of 'Ulupalakua and Kahakuloa. After Kahakuloa School closed, she moved to Waihe'e Elementary, where she retired from teaching. She loved teaching and watching the students' joy in their discoveries through learning. She was the disciplinarian of the family and was very clear about the values, behaviors, and attitudes that were important in developing our characters as Hawaiians. Speaking Hawaiian was important to her. In her 60s, she enrolled in Hawaiian language classes to learn structure and syntax of her native tongue and to strengthen her language that she felt had become less proficient over the years.

Through example, I learned that our behaviors and actions, attitudes, language, and culture defined who we are, where we come from, and are the foundation for who we become. My grandparents made special time to teach me, the eldest mo'opuna, about the family knowledge, history, and stories and spoke Hawaiian to me. I was raised during a critical time when the use of Hawaiian language in daily interaction had been replaced with English. Fortunately, among my grandparents' generation, there were still fluent speakers of the language in our family, and they spoke to each other in Hawaiian, especially when they had things to say that were not meant for our ears.

In the 1970s, there were others like myself who were learning the language formally at the University of Hawai'i–Mānoa. Larry Kimura, Haunani Bernardino, Pua Hopkins, and 'Ioli'i Hawkins were my kumu. My Moloka'i family, especially my Aunty Ester Lin Kee, and my Maui family, my grandparents, Aunty Kuamo'o Peters, Aunty Alice Kuloloio, and others including Grandma Helen Kamanā, Zelie Sherwood, Kāwika Ka'alakea, Pāpā Kalāhikiola, Pāpā and Māmā Alapa'i helped to shape my early adult years and attitudes as a speaker of Hawaiian.

In 1976, I met Tuti Kanahale and we became good friends and later, housemates. Tuti was raised with the Ni'ihau dialect, and through her, I got to know her family and began to understand Ni'ihau Hawaiian. It was at this time in my life while still a language student and having native speakers around me on a daily basis that I began to use Hawaiian fluently, still as a fledgling student but emerging as a speaker of Hawaiian.

In 1979, I married my husband Claymat (Clem), and two years later in 1981, we had our first child, Kananinohea. Kananinohea was born at a time of change in our lives. Hawaiian language had become a part of who I am. Kananinohea had the senior lines of our family who spoke Hawaiian to her but they were quickly passing on. During the day, her Aunt Tuti took care of her and spoke only Hawaiian to her while raising her own daughter, Kawai, at home. In 1982, Aunt Lolena Ni'au Nicolas, also from Ni'ihau, became part of our extended 'ohana and cared for Kananinohea and our second child, Kamaulihewa, born in 1983.

Hawaiian was my children's first language because they were immersed in Hawaiian at home and outside of the home with native speakers like Aunt Lolena. In 1984, I attended a meeting to discuss the idea of a Hawaiian language preschool, the beginning of the Pūnana Leo o Honolulu. Aunt Lolena was hired as one of five kumu, so along went our two children with Aunt Lolena to the Pūnana Leo. We are so blessed with the aloha of people like Tuti, Aunt Lolena, and the Ni'ihau families for embracing us into the language as our family was growing.

The beginning years of the Pūnana Leo were hard work. What we had was what we created—kumu with children, parents with kumu, and parents with parents. We supported our kumu and each other's families, cleaned, rotated snacks, made materials and curriculum, continued language classes, and fundraised. The Ho'omaui concert was our first fundraising endeavor.

Kumu, families, and the Pūnana Leo organization contributed to the growing success of the program. Our children were happy learning and speaking Hawaiian. These early bonds of struggle and working together taught us valuable lessons about our power to make change. We continue to maintain the friendships between our families, and still to this day our children share bonds of connection, friendship, and happy memories.

The beginning of the Pūnana Leo was the launch of the aukahi ho'ōla 'ōlelo Hawai'i. We found that the more we participated, the deeper we became immersed and committed as a Hawaiian immersion family. In 1986, Kananinohea and Kala'i Honda graduated from Pūnana Leo o Honolulu. They were our first graduating class.

Both Kananinohea and Kala'i spent their kindergarten year at Kapālama Elementary School while we continued to support the 'Aha Pūnana Leo in its endeavor to convince the Board of Education to open two K-1 sites where the children could continue their education. Meanwhile, Kananinohea entered kindergarten and was tested as a SLEP (Second Language English Proficiency) student. Under the standard procedures and goals of the program, when a student entered SLEP, a teacher's aide of the student's native language was hired as part of the transitional process to move the student from his or her native language to English. This was not done for Kananinohea.

For our family, my husband and I were asked to stop speaking Hawaiian to our daughter in support of her transition to English. We were told that an Ilocano speaker was her language aide and they were using mainland-prepared curriculum that worked well with helping children learn English. The teacher very innocently explained the program and shared examples of the students' activities that week on snow—a foreign experience for a child living in Honolulu. Kananinohea spoke Hawaiian as her first language, but she also spoke English and pidgin since those were the languages in her environment.

It was a difficult year for our family to have our daughter go to an English-speaking school that had little understanding of the value and power that learning in one's native language contributes toward academic success and positive cultural and self-identity. The immersion experience does not handicap a child. It offers the opportunity to develop multilingual fluency; it challenges the complexities of the brain, broadens one's world perspectives, and grounds the child's cultural Hawaiian identity. One unique quality that sets immersion apart from monolingual (regular English) programs is in the sequence of learning English reading skills. Developing proficiency in Hawaiian literacy skills comes before English reading skills in immersion. By the fifth and sixth grades, students become proficient readers and writers in two languages, not one.

In 1987, two immersion classrooms were opened as a pilot project of the Department of Education. Our son, Kamaulihewa, had just graduated from the Pūnana Leo o Honolulu. Along with his sister, Kananinohea, they began their public school Hawaiian immersion experience at Waiuu Elementary School. Transportation was

a big issue since most of the families had to drive out of town and then back into the congested Honolulu town traffic to get to work. We were so elated to have a site, we were determined to make it work somehow. Thanks to the Fox family, Walter and Leona bought a van and transported several of our children to school. Others like the Walk family drove an hour and a half one-way to get their children to school.

It was a blessing to have Alohalani as our first teacher. She was not only an educator but also an immersion parent who understood and was committed to the vision. She worked evenings and weekends to prepare materials, and even though the families rallied to assist, and the Pūnana Leo provided curriculum support to the program, she worked beyond any reasonable expectation of what a good teacher is expected to perform. Our principal, Diana Oshiro, welcomed the idea and valued the potential of Hawaiian immersion as an emerging model of education. It was hard work, and a lot of personal sacrifices were made to ensure its success. Through the process, we all became stronger and clearer about the importance of the immersion model and the need to expand to grade 12 and increase the number of sites.

In 1988, while teaching at Kamehameha Schools, I received a phone call from a group of Pūnana Leo o Maui families wanting to open up the Kula Kaiapuni o Pā'ia. The program was growing and needed teachers to expand its reach. It was a big family decision to move to another island. I would open up a K-1 class, become my son's teacher, go back to school to finish my fifth-year certificate to apply for my public school teaching license, was expecting Kulamanu, my third child, and have to displace Kananinohea one more time out of immersion since she was going into third grade and no Hawaiian immersion option was available.

The movement was built on the vision "E Ola Ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i" at a time that required selfless actions that so many before me had made. It was my turn to give back, in honor of my Maui kūpuna, and to move to the next level of language commitment. Our Waiiau immersion experience was helpful, and I knew what the challenges would be with or without a supportive principal. The parents on Maui were energetic and enthusiastic, and in their eyes, I saw the same hunger and commitment we had as families at the opening of our own immersion site. In 1989, just prior to the opening of the school year and without a job contract in hand for either my husband or myself, we moved to Maui and lived with my parents for the first nine months.

The immersion families of Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Pā'ia made the program a special place during those early years. Together, we had cut and pasted all the translated books available, opened up a garden area, carved an immersion place within the school grounds, got private busing transportation, built a library section of Hawaiian language materials, had a winning volleyball team, and were starting to bring technology into the curriculum. Kupuna Kāwika Ka'alakea, a native speaker and traditional healer, became our kupuna, and Hōkūlani Holt-Padilla, one of our immersion parents, was the kumu hula. Parents provided daily snacks, found outside support funding, and organized and supported school and state activities like the first 'Aha Leo Mohala (State Hawaiian Language Immersion Family Retreat) and the fourth 'Aha Kūkā Kula (State Hawaiian Language Immersion Conference).

With all that we accomplished with the parents, and through the efforts of the kumu (including Lehua Veincent and Malia Melemai who had also relocated to Maui), we still did not have ample curriculum materials or a school support system in place that average mainstream classrooms are provided. Despite the lack of these things, I believe our children still had more. When teachers and parents work together with the school, through a sense of passion, aloha, and common mission, a quality learning experience that is academically sound can be created and achieved and, in fact, makes a difference. To the work of my hoakumu (teaching colleagues) Lehua and Malia, and to the others who filled our places as we moved on to other levels of immersion work, including Pūlama Collier and Kahele Dukelow, and to all the 'ohana that made a difference because of their collective aloha for their own and each other's children with such vision and fortitude, I am humbly thankful.

In 1991, the Board of Education approved the establishment of two full immersion K-12 sites, one on O'ahu and the other on Hawai'i Island by 1995. In 1992, the board approved extension of the program to grade 12 with one hour of English literacy instruction beginning at the 5th-grade level. We moved our family to Hilo in 1992, and I began to work for the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center at the University of Hawai'i. The new position was designed to address the huge gap in immersion curriculum that existed across content and grades through grade 12, along with professional development training that would help the quickly growing program statewide. By this time, Kulamanu had graduated from the Pūnana Leo o Maui, and all three children were in elementary school. Kananinohea was happy to continue in immersion. Once again, we were a full immersion family with all three children enrolled at Keaukaha Elementary School.

The secondary years presented a new challenge. Curriculum needs were more intense, and finding teachers with the content, language, and cultural skills to meet the needs of a growing adolescent population presented new challenges. We did not want to separate our small class of students within a dominant English language environment. As much as possible, our desire was to keep them in a fully intact Hawaiian language environment. In 1995, with the financial support of the Pūnana Leo, the third floor of the old unemployment building became our new secondary site, the original Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u School. Alohalani also moved to Hilo with her family that year and taught at the new site. Then in 1996, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs provided a grant to the 'Aha Pūnana Leo for purchase of a permanent school site in Kea'au.

There are a few other important challenges that warrant mention in the progression of the Hawaiian language revitalization movement that have assisted greatly in moving both the Hawaiian language and Hawaiian culture-based education forward. The Kumu Honua Mauli Ola document couched in traditional wisdoms and understandings was written in 1997 by a representative group of immersion parents, teachers, native speakers, and leaders in the movement as a guiding philosophy and conceptual framework. Later that year, a teacher education program directly serving Hawaiian language immersion known as the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program began with its first pilot cohort. In 2001, a 14-member task force representing a cross section of Hawaiian culture-based education began developing a set of cultural guidelines called Nā Honua Mauli Ola Hawai'i Guidelines for Culturally Healthy and Responsive Learning Environments. It is important to mention these challenges as they reclaimed old pathways of Hawaiian thought, philosophy, and practice for application in a current day setting. As the graduation of the first Hawaiian immersion class was upon us, these endeavors allowed us to reflect and focus on the core ideas within the vision in ways that moved the work forward for future generations of children.

Kananinohea graduated in 1999 with the first graduating class of Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u, then in 2002 with her bachelor's degree, and in 2004 with her teaching certificate from the Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program. She is now working on a master's degree in Indigenous Language and Culture Education at UH-Hilo and teaches at Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u School. We, like many other immersion proponents, have actively participated in the growth of the program through high school and into the higher education arena where Hawaiian language maintains its presences as a vibrant living language. We have

also been blessed to witness the “changing of guards” as the next generation makes their way forward. In 1987, Kananinohea entered Alohalani’s class as her first grade student, then in college she trained under Alohalani as her student teacher, and in 2001, Kananinohea began her pathway in education and taught Alohalani’s two younger daughters. As the cycle continues in 2007, our children are now parents and teachers of the new generation.

The immersion experience has changed our lives and who we are as people and parents. For my husband and me, becoming a Hawaiian-speaking family has been a transformational experience. It was not an easy road for Clem to learn the language. He returned to language class several times trying to keep up with his wife and children. It took humility and an inner male strength for him to stay the course, and that he did. He has been the wind beneath our family’s wings as we moved from island to island with the changes of my immersion work. I have grown as a mother and as a professional because of immersion. That change started for me as a parent, evolved into a need to become a teacher, and now in 2007, a trainer of mauli ola Hawai’i (Hawaiian identity) teachers.

As my husband and I begin our journey as new grandparents, we talk often about our excitement in being kūpuna ‘ōlelo Hawai’i (Hawaiian-speaking grandparents) and having the opportunity to do it over again, but even better. Our lives are a work in progress, and our immersion work is the family legacy we leave to Kananinohea, Kamaulihiwa, Kulamanu, and their future generations. Through the struggles and joys of being an immersion family, for the many sacrifices that Clem and the children made throughout the years, and for their enduring patience and stamina, we are and will continue to be an ‘ohana kaiapuni Hawai’i (Hawaiian immersion family). E mau nō ke ola o ka ‘ōlelo Hawai’i!

## LESSONS LEARNED AND WISDOM GAINED

Many obstacles have been overcome and many lessons have been learned over the past 20 years of Hawaiian language immersion education. The program started with 34 students in the first year. Twenty years later, the Hawaiian language immersion population has grown to more than 2,000 students statewide.

Through our firsthand experience, we have come to understand a profound truth about the importance of language, culture, family, community, belief, work, and responsibility. Here are some important thoughts we would like to share regarding our experience in the immersion movement:

**1. E ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i ma nā wahi a pau i nā manawa a pau!** (Speak Hawaiian everywhere and at all times). Being part of revitalizing the ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i is a contribution to Hawai‘i and our islands’ future. Become a fluent speaker of Hawaiian. Be brave to start from where you are and build your skills. Children do learn faster than adults. But parents, grandparents, and family show children how important Hawaiian language is when it is lived and practiced. The effort is worth the reward!

**2. Hawaiian language communities can grow anywhere.** Community is not determined solely by geographic location. Students in immersion attend schools from a number of communities within and outside the geographic location of the schools. Language is a social interchange, and as groups gather to use the language with one another, language communities are created. Immersion began with the assembly of Hawaiian speakers and families wishing to become Hawaiian-speaking families—a place and a purpose. Language speakers and those wanting to become speakers need to gather, speak Hawaiian together, work and play through Hawaiian together, and share with and help each other using Hawaiian as the medium of language. Grow your community of language speakers by using Hawaiian in as many situations and with as many people as you can. It changes the consciousness of the people in the place you call your community.

**3. The revitalization of the Hawaiian language using a maui-based educational philosophy provides a meaningful way to address the vision and goals for immersion education.** Supporting Hawaiian, the indigenous language of Hawai‘i, is our collective responsibility. Once our language is lost, Hawaiian thinking, perspectives, culture, and values will shortly follow. Unfortunately, many immersion schools are being threatened by the No Child Left Behind Act and are being forced to use English even in the lower elementary grades. Ironically, preliminary results on culturally based learning done by Kamehameha Schools have shown that

schools that focus on the Hawaiian language and culture make greater gains in standardized testing than schools with Hawaiian students in mainstream education. Cultural, linguistic, and academic competency is a goal of immersion education (State of Hawai'i Department of Education, 1994, May, p. vi). Revitalization of our language takes courage and vigilance that requires other nonmainstream ways of accountability.

**4. Our legacy is the Hawaiian language that lives on and continues to flourish in our children and our grandchildren.** We are, and continue to be, immersion families because we have experienced firsthand the benefits that immersion education provides for our children and grandchildren. Our children have become a part of each other's families—a new kind of extended family where aloha for our language and homeland is a common bond that binds us together in our work and mission. Our legacy to our children is the Hawaiian language and culture that lives on through them as they graduate and become parents themselves. As a Hawaiian language community, we have ingrained within our children an understanding of who they are, where they come from, courage, faith, patience, diligence, and excellence through the language and culture as a foundation for their future. The challenge that is left for their generation is to carve their own paths on the values that have been instilled within them as active contributors to their families and communities through Hawaiian.

**5. There is power in unity.** This is demonstrated by the grassroots effort to bring about the start of the Hawaiian language immersion program and its growth on islands statewide. Laws were changed, programs were started, curricula were developed, and obstacles were overcome because we were unified in purpose across the board—'Aha Pūnana Leo leaders, community members, kūpuna, teachers, parents, and students. Showing up, working, and being accountable together make a difference. Believe that it can happen and work together using the mission as the guide.

**6. Learning is lifelong.** Our fondest memories occurred during the first several years of the Hawaiian language immersion program. Leo Ola intense language training programs were a time when native speakers, Pūnana Leo teachers, and immersion teachers lived together at sites for two to three weeks during the summer. The training provided opportunities to converse with native speakers, attend classes to improve

our language skills, participate in cultural activities, exchange curriculum ideas, and write stories to be used in our classrooms. It was a time to revisit the vision and mission of the Hawaiian language immersion program, a time to renew our spirit, and a time to develop long-lasting relationships with other teachers. Other ways in which we can continue to raise the quality of our teaching is to learn through local community resources, read primary source materials available in Hawaiian, take classes, attend conferences, and pursue higher degrees.

**7. Parents are extraordinarily supportive!** Parent participation was cited by the first Hawaiian language immersion program evaluation team as one of the positive outcomes of the program. Parents participate in parent meetings, fundraisers, field trips, and in the early years spent many hours in cut-and-paste sessions on Saturdays to prepare books to be used in the classroom. Many parents have gone back to school to take Hawaiian language classes, pursue degrees, and make use of their Hawaiian language skills, including teaching, business, media and technology, law, and conservation. If language is to truly flourish, it needs to be used not only at school but also in the home, business, and the community.

**8. The principal of the school is what makes or breaks the program.** Diana Oshiro is a good example. She took a chance to allow the Hawaiian language immersion program to take root in her school at a time when it wasn't a popular thing to do. She was supportive of teachers, parents, and students. She was creative and had the ability to "think out of the box" before this term was even coined. It was with this attitude that she led Waiiau Elementary School as the principal of our children and during the seven years that Alohalani taught immersion at Waiiau. Makalapua is another good example. She became the administrator for Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau, a P-12 Maui Ola Hawai'i school site in 1999. The school was awarded numerous grants to develop a holistic health and wellness program that included curriculum for the students and their families through Hawaiian. Administrators who are risk takers, who are skilled in teambuilding, and who provide leadership built on their strengths, talents, convictions, and collective vision make a difference, as evidenced in schools like Nāwahiokalani'ōpu'u and Ānuenue School.

**9. Colleagues need to be cohesive and work together to achieve the vision and mission of the program.** Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani at UH–Hilo is a prime example. It is remarkable that such a small group of people have been able to accomplish so much with such limited resources over the years. The deep understanding of the vision and mission of the college and not the wants of individuals is the driving force of the college. Each member of the Hawaiian Language College has distinct traits and unique strengths. These talents are recognized and utilized in a collaborative effort for the benefit of moving the program forward. The college is working toward the development of a seamless P–20 system of Maui Ola Hawai'i education through a partnership with Nāwahī, 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Kamehameha Schools, ALU LIKE, and other schools and partners.

**10. Kūlia i ka Nu'u!** Never be satisfied with the status quo. Hawaiians have a proud history of remarkable achievement. This is evident in the language and literature, navigational feats, intricate irrigational water systems, fishing practices, pa'ūpa'ū (tapa cloth) making, and so forth. As we pause to reflect on the challenges and successes, we also take time to reevaluate and look toward moving to an even higher level. As teachers we need to continuously strive to improve our own language proficiency abilities, utilize indigenous teaching methods, and develop more culturally based curriculum. We cannot expect students to achieve high levels of language proficiency if we do not provide a good model for them to follow. As families, we need to remain steadfast in working and living the Hawaiian language dream through example.

The journey over the past 20 years has been an incredible one. To those who have supported immersion throughout the years—principals and administrators, legislators, communities, teachers—and mostly to our families who have sacrificed with us and for us through the years, we are grateful for your dedication and commitment in the revitalization of the Hawaiian language through education. As we have discovered, “Nui ka hana, nui ka loa'a” (when much is done, much is received). We have received much as speakers and teachers through our language. Our lives have been interwoven in many different ways and at many different levels. Our relationship began as parents of the first group of students to enter the Pūnana Leo o Honolulu, and then as teachers of the Hawaiian language revitaliza-

tion effort, and now as colleagues and teacher trainers at the University of Hawai‘i. The cycle has continued as our own children become teachers in Hawaiian-medium education and as our mo‘opuna have become classmates at the Pūnana Leo. Pū‘ā i ka ‘ōlelo, ola ka ‘ohana—pass on the Hawaiian language, the family will prosper.

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## A KOE NŌ NĀ PUA: THE NEXT GENERATION

We asked our eldest children, our three daughters, to share a brief reflection of their experiences as children who have been raised and educated through the Hawaiian language, and also to share their views as adults and parents for the future as they continue the legacy through their lives and choices. Their insights as adults and parents provide a closing testament to the Hawaiian language revitalization movement, now in its second decade.

### *Kini Ka‘awa*

I am Kini Kalaua‘eikauluwehioka‘āina Ka‘awa, the eldest daughter of Michael Ka‘awa and Makalapua Alencastre. Along with my younger siblings, Mike‘ela and Emilia, we have been raised as a Hawaiian language family and were fortunate to attend the unique programs of Pūnana Leo o Honolulu, Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau and Ānuenue, and Ke Kula ‘o Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau.

“E Ola!” is to live, to be healthy, to be alive; to cure, to recover; to be healed; to spare, to save, to grant life, to survive, and to thrive. “E Ola Ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i” is a vision for our language and for ourselves that has been ingrained within me throughout my life. When Pūnana Leo o Honolulu opened in 1985, it was one year too late for me to enter. I was disappointed to have started at Saint Patrick’s in kindergarten and later at Maunawili Elementary School for first and second grade while my two siblings attended Pūnana Leo. I remember continually begging my parents to send me where I felt I belonged, to the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai‘i (Hawaiian Language Immersion Program). Although I had to repeat the second grade to do so, I was finally allowed to enter Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau, where I attended grades 2 through 8 and graduated in 1999 as a member of the first class of Hawaiian immersion graduates at Ānuenue.

As a family, we were constantly involved in the efforts to revitalize the Hawaiian language. From a very young age, I experienced the sacrifices, blessings, and hardships of the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i. During my years as a kaiapuni student, I pondered how I would contribute to “ho'ōla” (perpetuate) the Hawaiian language and how the Hawaiian language would support my livelihood and my values. I've been blessed because I was raised with the perspective of thinking outside of the box—the belief that anything is possible if it is pono (right) and fits as an answer for my people. I have learned not to settle for the boundaries that others have set on us, on our children, and on our education.

I now have five children. The hiapo (eldest) is my hānai (adopted) son, Ka'imina'auao. My four children, Keaho, Māhiehie, Kaohanui, and Kinileihua, are all at Nāwahiokalani'ōpu'u while I am completing a Hawaiian Studies degree at Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani. As a kaiapuni Hawai'i mother, I know that my responsibility, my calling in life as I work to create a supportive home environment, is tied to the Hawaiian language and in developing the children's identity as Hawaiians. The Hawaiian language will live on through my children, the next generation who will move the language forward and carry it to another level of existence throughout Hawai'i and the world. I believe that language is the foundation of strong educated individuals of the Hawaiian nation. Every year that another Hawaiian immersion class graduates or another family chooses to make Hawaiian the language of the home is another demonstration of our achievements. Watch, “e nānā,” us as we ola (thrive) through our language and culture.

#### *Kananinohea Kawai'ae'a Māka'imoku*

My name is Kananinohea Kapāokalāikawaiola Kawai'ae'a Māka'imoku. My parents are Keiki and Claymat Kawai'ae'a. I am the hiapo of three children, including my brother Kamaulihwa and sister Kulamanu. We are all graduates of the Pūnana Leo and Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i Program. I was in the first Pūnana Leo o Honolulu class and a graduate of the first class from Nāwahiokalani'ōpu'u in 1999. Even though our programs lacked funding, curriculum materials, and other things that mainstream English classes had, I always felt that I had a full education. I always felt that we had much more than most classes. We had a huge extended 'ohana that was passionate about our well-being and the quality of our education. This 'ohana consisted of our teachers and all of our immersion families. Our teachers put aside their personal time and worked countless hours to prepare for each day

of class. Our families held fundraisers and went into the classrooms on weekends to cut and paste Hawaiian translations on the English words of our books. They were the warriors who made it happen. They had a vision of accomplishment for us keiki, and they never swayed from that vision.

Becoming a Hawaiian language immersion teacher was not a difficult decision for me. All of the values and aspirations that my parents, teachers, and Hawaiian immersion family had instilled in me throughout my life are part of who I am. It was a natural choice for me to choose education as my career. After I graduated from Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u, I knew that there would be many more graduating classes to come, and that the future students would need teachers who would work hard for their success. I want to take an active role in making sure that Hawaiian language immersion education is always here for the people of Hawai'i, and especially for the keiki, our future leaders.

My husband, Aaron Kamaka, and I are experiencing the joy of being new parents to our daughter Hāweo'ulakaumaka. I am excited for our future. I am overwhelmed with thoughts of what we will teach her and how we will shape the person that she will become. I will strive to instill in her the value of 'ohana, the power of knowledge, and the importance of a strong self-identity. I will raise her to have good values with strength in her character to bring honor to her family and her ancestors that came before her. I will raise her as a Hawaiian language speaker.

### *Kau'iwehelaniikapōmahinala'ila'i Kaina Lauano*

I am Puakahiki Kau'iwehelaniikapōmahinala'ila'i Kaina Lauano, daughter of Enoka Kaina and Alohalani Kaluhiokalani Housman. Over the past two and a half decades, I have had many positive experiences that have shaped and molded me to be who I am today. I have seen firsthand the sacrifices that my parents, my teachers, and everyone involved in the language and culture revitalization movement have made and are still making.

There have been many struggles along the way, and many who have doubted the potential of immersion education. Some have said that the Hawaiian language is dead and will never be as strong as it once was, that there is no purpose in speaking the language because English is the only language that will help our children succeed, that there is no future in learning the language because the only occupation or career for native speakers is being a teacher, or that our children

will be confused if they learn more than one language. The graduating classes of all the immersion programs have proved these statements to be false and far from the truth as we have ventured into many professions. My goal is to become a director and producer for Hawaiian legends and stories put into the cinema. My dream is to create movies in the Hawaiian language to further expand the language throughout the state and world.

Upon graduation, I attended BYU–Hawai'i for my first year and met my wonderful husband of Samoan descent. My children are the second generation of native speakers. The Hawaiian and Samoan language and culture are taught and spoken at home, because both my husband and I believe that our children's identity is what is most important. My eldest son is attending Ke Kula 'o Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u as a kindergartener. My daughter is attending preschool at Pūnana Leo o Hilo, and my youngest son is attending the Pūnana Leo o Hilo–Hi'ipēpē, which is a school for infants between the ages of six weeks and three years. I would not have it any other way.

As a parent, I realize and appreciate the way I was brought up, was schooled, and lived. I truly understand the reason and sacrifices of my parents, teachers, and family, as I too want my children to live Hawaiian, to learn and speak Hawaiian. For our children to find their sense of place and identity within the world is the greatest treasure there is. Without it, our children will be left confused and wandering in the world with no sense of purpose. We need to return to our roots and rebuild our foundation so that we can foster and steer our lives in the right direction.

Being a part of the Hawaiian language immersion program has played an important role in my life. We, the students, were taught to be steadfast and firm in our beliefs, to fight for what is right, to stand for truth and righteousness, to continuously seek for knowledge and enlightenment, and to have pride in knowing who we are, yet humble in our actions, thoughts, and deeds. My life would be so different if I had not been raised and schooled in the Hawaiian immersion program. I realize my responsibility and understand that everything I do is not only for my benefit as an individual but also for the betterment of the people, and more importantly, for the success of upcoming generations. I ka 'ōlelo no ke ola, i ka 'ōlelo no ka make (In language there is life, in language there is death). E ola mau ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i!

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#### NOTES

- 1 Poi is a traditional Hawaiian staple food made from cooked and pounded taro corms.
- 2 Na‘au literally means intestines, but it really refers to the inner Hawaiian heart, to feelings and knowing from the “gut.”
- 3 Holokū balls are formal social events where women wear holokū attire. A holokū is a long formal dress, usually with a train of varied lengths, that was adapted from the attire of the missionary women.

## APPENDIX

## HAWAIIAN LANGUAGE OVER 166 YEARS\*

**1841***Hawaiian is the medium for public education.*

Public education is established by the Kingdom of Hawai'i's building upon earlier community-run and missionary-run schools. Lahainaluna (1831), the system's teacher education college, was founded before any college or high school in the United States west of the Rocky Mountains.

**1893***Hawaiian monarchy is illegally overthrown.***1896***Hawaiian is oppressed by new government.*

HRS 298-2 is passed by the Republic of Hawai'i, and Hawai'i's first Hawaiian-medium school system is destroyed as a step toward annexation. Hawaiian language is forbidden in schools, and teachers are sent into homes to reprimand parents for speaking Hawaiian.

**1898***United States asserts its annexation over Hawai'i.*

Hawai'i is annexed to the United States, and Hawaiian language is outlawed in territorial schools.

**1919***Territorial government allows Hawaiian in high schools.*

Hawaiian language concerns result in the passing of a law by the territorial legislature requiring Hawaiian language to be taught as a course in high schools and in teacher preparation programs. The law is poorly enforced and the outcome ineffective.

\* This timeline was revised by Keiki Kawai'ae'a with special thanks to the Kōmike Ho'opuka o ka Piha Makahiki he 20, Hawaiian Immersion Teachers via phone and Internet contact, the 'Aha Pūnana Leo and the State of Hawai'i Department of Education Hawaiian Studies and Language Programs section (<http://www.k12.hi.us/~kaiapuni/HLIP/history.htm>; [http://www.ahapunaleo.org/eng/about/about\\_timeline.html](http://www.ahapunaleo.org/eng/about/about_timeline.html)).

**1922**

*Hawaiian taught as a foreign language.*

The University of Hawai‘i (UH) introduces Hawaiian as a “foreign” language. University programs develop very slowly until the 1970s during the “Hawaiian renaissance.”

**1972**

*Hawaiian gets radio airtime.*

Ka Leo O Hawai‘i, a Hawaiian language radio show on KCCN, airs its first broadcast featuring Larry Kimura with native speakers statewide for nearly 700 shows.

**1977**

*‘Ahahui ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is created.*

The ‘Ahahui ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is established as a non-profit organization to perpetuate the Hawaiian language. The 1978 Spelling Project set forth the first standards for Hawaiian orthography.

**1978**

*Hawaiian is recognized as a state language.*

At the State Constitutional Convention, the Hawaiian language is reestablished as an official language of the state of Hawai‘i. The constitution mandates the study of Hawaiian language, culture, and history in schools.

**1982**

*Hawai‘i learns of Māori Kōhanga Reo.*

The Kōhanga Reo “Māori language nest” center is introduced by Dr. Tāmami Reedy, then head of the Office of Māori Affairs. Dr. Reedy had earlier studied Hawaiian with Larry Kimura and others at UH–Mānoa.

**1983**

*'Aha Pūnana Leo is established and pro-Hawaiian legislation is proposed.*

On January 12, the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Inc. was formed as a grassroots organization dedicated to the revitalization of the Hawaiian language. Preschools established statewide are modeled after the Māori language nest concept engaging children, families, and communities through the Hawaiian language. The organization has expanded its outreach from its infant-toddler programs through higher education, community, teacher and curriculum development, business and media supporting Hawaiian language revitalization through its vision E Ola Ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (The Hawaiian Language Shall Live).

'Aha Pūnana Leo board members 'Īlei Beniamina and William "Pila" Wilson draft a bill to reestablish Hawaiian as a legal language of instruction in Hawai'i public schools with special focus on Ni'ihau Hawaiian-speaking children. The bill does not pass.

**1984**

*Pūnana Leo preschool opens on Kaua'i and push for legislation continues.*

The first Pūnana Leo preschool, Pūnana Leo o Kekaha, opens in Kekaha, Kaua'i.

Two bills are submitted to the Hawai'i State Legislature. One seeks to remove the original ban (1896) on Hawaiian-medium instruction in public schools. Another bill provides the Pūnana Leo with equal status as accorded to foreign language schools. Both bills do not pass.

**1985**

*Pūnana Leo open in Honolulu and Hilo.*

Two Pūnana Leo sites open: Pūnana Leo o Honolulu in Kalihi, O'ahu, and Pūnana Leo o Hilo on the Big Island.

**1986**

*Hawaiian makes critical gains in classrooms.*

The 1896 law banning Hawaiian-medium instruction in public schools is lifted through lobbying efforts of Pūnana Leo, families, and Hawaiian language educators.

Legal barriers to Pūnana Leo operating with uncertified, fluent Hawaiian-speaking teachers are removed to give Hawaiian language schools equal rights to those of foreign language schools where such uncertified teachers had long been allowed.

Pūnana Leo graduates its first classes in Honolulu and Hilo. Pūnana Leo o Hilo families decide to accommodate the kindergarten class until Keaukaha School opens the following year. The term Kula Kaiapuni Hawai'i ("Hawaiian environment school") is coined to reflect the kindergarten program and is later used to describe the Hawaiian immersion schools statewide.

**1987**

*Ka Papahana Kaiapuni is launched and Hawaiian language use begins to increase.*

On July 23, Superintendent Charles Toguchi of the Department of Education and the Board of Education (BOE) approve two Hawaiian immersion K–1 classes as a one-year pilot program (Ka Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i).

Pūnana Leo o Kekaha reopens in Puhi as Pūnana Leo o Kaua'i.

Pūnana Leo o Maui opens in Wailuku, Maui.

Hawaiian Lexicon Committee is organized to create, collect, and approve new vocabulary to support the revitalization of Hawaiian.

**1988**

*Ka Papahana Kaiapuni is extended and Leo Ola trains immersion teachers.*

After review of the program, the BOE extends the pilot program status of the two immersion schools for one year.

Larry Kimura organizes the first Leo Ola Hawaiian immersion teacher training through funding from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). The intensive, three-week training program brings native speakers, Pūnana Leo, Hawaiian immersion, and Hawaiian language teachers together in an intensive immersion live-in training to improve Hawaiian language, culture, and immersion delivery skills and to develop curriculum and support materials for the classroom.

**1989**

*Ka Papahana Kaiapuni is expanded and Hawaiian speakers further organize.*

On June 15, the BOE approves full implementation of the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program as a “limited K–6” program.

Kula Kaiapuni o Kapa'a is established at Kapa'a Elementary School in Kapa'a, Kaua'i.

Kula Kaiapuni o Pā'ia is established at Pā'ia Elementary School in Pā'ia, Maui.

Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center is established at UH–Hilo by the state legislature to provide professional development, curriculum, lexicon, and a broad spectrum of multimedia resources, teaching aids, and enrichment materials to support the expansion and revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

First 'Aha Kūkā Kula Hawai'i conference gathers Pūnana Leo, Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i, parents, Department of Education staff, and private agencies to discuss issues and support actions for Hawaiian immersion.

**1990**

*Immersion movement acquires momentum in the state and nationally.*

BOE approves delaying the introduction of English in the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program until the 5th grade.

Kula Kaiapuni o Pū'ōhala is established at Pū'ōhala Elementary School in Kāne'ōhe, O'ahu.

'Aha Kauleo Kaiapuni Hawai'i Advisory Council is created by the BOE to provide input and recommendations for the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i from Kula Kaiapuni administration, faculty, parents, and support agencies.

First 'Aha Leo Mohala State Hawaiian language immersion family retreat is held in Ke'anae, Maui.

Native American Languages Act (NALA) sponsored by Senator Daniel Inouye is signed by President George H. W. Bush. Wording of the Act is based on a resolution of the Hawai'i State Legislature requested by the 'Aha Pūnana Leo.

**1991**

*Local communities rally behind immersion programs.*

Pūnana Leo o Moloka'i opens in Ho'olehua, Moloka'i.

First Ho'olauna Pūnua summer program is hosted by the Ni'ihau families on Kaua'i for the 4th-grade Hawaiian immersion students.

**1992**

*Ka Papahana Kaiapuni grows to K-12 and Hawaiian language use increases.*

On February 6, the BOE approves the expansion of the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i program through grade 12 with one hour of English a day at all levels beginning in the 5th grade. Board action includes the expansion of two K-12 total immersion sites on O'ahu and Hawai'i island.

Pūnana Leo o Kona opens as a Hui Hi'ipēpē mother-infant program and later becomes a full-day preschool program in Keauhou, Hawai'i.

Kula Kaiapuni o Kualapu'u is established at Kualapu'u Elementary School in Kualapu'u, Moloka'i.

Hale Kuamo'o publishes the *Nā Maka o Kana* Hawaiian language newspaper.

### 1993

*Community issues call for more immersion classrooms.*

Pūnana Leo o Wai'anae opens in Nānākuli, O'ahu.

Ni'ihau families on Kaua'i form Hui Ho'ona'auao O Nā Mākua and request a Ni'ihau immersion K–6 option at Kekaha School. Parents boycott when the request is denied. Parents seek options for opening a new school site.

First Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo Hawaiian language speech competition for immersion students statewide is held in Keaukaha.

### 1994

*More immersion schools open across the state.*

'Aha Pūnana Leo assists the families of the 6th–8th grade immersion students at Keaukaha school with the renting of a building to expand the intermediate/high school program in Hilo. The school is named after Joseph Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u, a renowned scholar and politician from Puna, Hawai'i.

Long-Range Plan for the Hawaiian Language Immersion Program was created and approved by the BOE. Its strategic dimensions include: ensuring qualified personnel, achieving a quality curriculum, ensuring quality facilities, and enabling local governance.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) provides funding to the 'Aha Pūnana Leo to establish a K–6 site to be called Ke Kula Ni'ihau o Kekaha for Ni'ihau children living on Kaua'i.

Kula Kaiapuni o Mākaha is established at Mākaha Elementary in Wai'anae, O'ahu.

'Aha Pūnana Leo and the Hale Kuamo'o establish the Leokī Hawaiian electronic bulletin board system and Kualono Web site.

## 1995

*Immersion schools continue to grow.*

Kula Kaiapuni 'o Kalama is established at Kalama Intermediate for grades 6–8 in Makawao, Maui.

Ke Kula Kaiapuni o Kona is established as a Hawaiian immersion site and maintains the kindergarten class at the Pūnana Leo o Kona.

Kula Kaiapuni o Mākaha moves to Nānāikapono Elementary School and becomes Kula Kaiapuni o Nānākuli in Wai'anae, O'ahu.

Students from grades K through 8 at Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau move to Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenuenu School in Pālolo, O'ahu. The BOE approves Kula Kaiapuni 'o Ānuenuenu on O'ahu as the state's first K–12 total immersion site.

Kula Kaiapuni o Waiau continues as an elementary site.

OHA provides a grant to the 'Aha Pūnana Leo to purchase the former Henry 'Ōpūkaha'ia School in Kea'au as a permanent site for Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u.

Pūnana Leo o Kawaiaha'o opens in Honuakaha, O'ahu.

Pūnana Leo o Waimea opens in Pu'ukapu, Hawai'i.

## 1996

*More gains are realized in the "Year of the Hawaiian Language."*

Kula Kaiapuni o Kona moves to Kealakehe Elementary School in Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i.

Kula Kaiapuni o Kapa'a is established at Kapa'a Middle School in Kapa'a, Kaua'i.

Kula Kaiapuni o Waimea is established at Waimea Elementary School in Kamuela, Hawai'i.

The joint partnership between the 'Aha Pūnana Leo and Hale Kuamo'o, the Hawaiian lexicon committee, publishes the first *Māmaka Kaiao: A Modern Hawaiian Vocabulary* dictionary.

Governor Benjamin Cayetano designates 1996 the "Year of the Hawaiian Language."

**1997**

*Hawaiian language groups seize upon new opportunities.*

Legislation under Act 315 is signed at the Native Hawaiian Education Summit establishing Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani, College of Hawaiian Language, at UH–Hilo. The act also establishes Ke Kula 'o Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u as a laboratory school of the college and mandates the development of a Hawaiian-medium teacher training program to be called Kahuawaiola.

Kahuawaiola Hawaiian-Medium Teaching Certification program begins at Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani with its first pilot cohort. This is the first culture-based teacher education program to be taught through the Hawaiian language. In 2003, the name is changed to Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program.

Ke Kumu Honua Mauli Ola, a Hawaiian philosophical statement, is written by a nine-member committee that includes elder and native Hawaiian speakers, immersion teachers, parents, administrators, and university professors. The Kumu Honua Mauli Ola is adopted by Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani and the 'Aha Pūnana Leo.

Kula Kaiapuni 'o Kekaulike is established at King Kekaulike High School in Pukalani, Maui.

Pūnana Leo o Ko'olauloa opens in Kahuku, O'ahu.

The first Hawaiian language video documenting the Hawaiian language movement, "E Ola Ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i," wins local and international awards for the 'Aha Pūnana Leo.

Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u Iki established an elementary school program at Kea'au, Hawai'i.

**1998**

*Hawaiian-medium education is available at the preschool, K-12, college, and graduate levels.*

Kula Kaiapuni o Ko'olauloa is established at Hau'ula Elementary School in Hau'ula, O'ahu.

Kula Kaiapuni o Kapa'a is established at Kapa'a High School in Kapa'a, Kaua'i.

Kula Ni‘ihau o Kekaha opens its new site in Kekaha, Kaua‘i, and expands to a K–12 school.

Pūnana Leo o Lahaina opens on Maui.

Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani begins its MA in Hawaiian Language and Literature with partial support from OHA. The graduate degree is the first to be taught entirely through a Native American language.

‘Ālana i ka Hikina Hawaiian language radio show launches on KWXX in Hilo.

### **1999**

*Graduates represent a return to Hawaiian-medium education.*

Kula Kaiapuni o Kona site moves from Kealakehe to Konawaena Elementary School.

Kula Kaiapuni o Moloka‘i secondary program is established at Moloka‘i Intermediate and High School in Ho‘olehua. The program is later changed to Hina I Ka Mālama.

The lead classes at Nāwahīokalani‘ōpu‘u in Kea‘au, Hawai‘i, and at Kula ‘O Ānuenuē in Pālolo, O‘ahu, graduate. It is the first time in over 100 years that students have been educated entirely in Hawaiian from kindergarten through grade 12.

Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau in Kailua, O‘ahu, becomes the second laboratory school of Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani.

### **2000**

*More Hawaiian immersion charter schools open.*

Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau officially opens.

Ke Kula Ni‘ihau o Kekaha becomes the third laboratory school of Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani.

Kula Kaiapuni ‘o Nāhi‘ena‘ena is established at Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena Elementary School in Lahaina, Maui.

**2001**

*Guiding principles of immersion education are shared.*

Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u Iki in Puna, Hawai'i, Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo (formerly Kula Kaiapuni o Keaukaha) in Keaukaha, Hawai'i, Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau in Kailua, O'ahu, and Ke Kula Ni'ihau o Kekaha in Kekaha, Kaua'i, are established as public charter schools.

Kula Kaiapuni 'o Kekaulike in Kula, Maui, graduates its first lead class at grade 12.

BOE recognizes the need for support and coordination of Hawaiian Studies and Language programs under policy #2104.

Native Hawaiian Education Council in partnership with Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani begins work on writing the first Hawaiian cultural guidelines document. A 14-member writing committee is assembled consisting of representation from public, private, and community sectors of education. The document, called *Nā Honua Mauli Ola Hawai'i*, Guidelines for Culturally Healthy and Responsive Learning Environments, is adopted in 2002.

**2002**

*Hawaiian achieves greater visibility in the public.*

Pūnana Leo o Kamakau opens in Kāne'ohe, O'ahu.

Kula o Kapa'a graduates its first lead class in Kapa'a, Kaua'i.

Kula Kaiapuni o Kona establishes a separate site and renames the school Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino. The new school is housed for one year in a temporary facility at the old Konawaena Elementary School.

Hiapo Perreira receives the first MA degree in a Native American language at UH–Hilo.

Developed by Keola Donaghy, Apple Computer introduces the Hawaiian keyboard as standard on all computers operating on the Macintosh OS X 10.2 system.

First Hawaiian language Web course offered by Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani includes student enrollment from seven states and three countries internationally.

*Honolulu Star-Bulletin* publishes Kauakūalahale, the first Hawaiian language column to be printed in the daily paper in almost 60 years. The column is coordinated by the Hawaiian Language Department at UH–Mānoa.

### **2003**

*Hawaiian immersion education comes a long way.*

20th year of the ‘Aha Pūnana Leo.

Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau and Ke Kula Ni‘ihau o Kekaha graduate their first lead class at grade 12.

Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau relocates to Kāne‘ohe, O‘ahu.

Ke Kula ‘o ‘Ehunuikaimalino moves to a newly renovated site at Konawaena Middle School in Kealahou, Hawai‘i.

### **2004**

*Building support for Hawaiian language remains a priority.*

Kula Kaiapuni o Kahuku is established at Kahuku High & Intermediate School in Kahuku, O‘ahu.

Ulukau, Hawaiian electronic library, is established in partnership between Hale Kuamo‘o and ALU LIKE.

Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani receives UH Board of Regents (BOR) approval to begin its PhD program in Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization and an MA degree in Indigenous Language and Culture Education. This is the first doctorate offered in the United States to focus on a Native American language.

### **2005**

*More milestones are attained in immersion education.*

Kula Kaiapuni o Lahaina is established at Lahaina Intermediate School in Lahaina, Maui. Its first teacher, Leinani Sakamoto, is a graduate of the lead class of Ke Kula ‘o Kekaulike, Maui.

Kula Kaiapuni o Moloka'i in Ho'olehua, Moloka'i, graduates its first lead class at grade 12.

Kula Kaiapuni o Kualapu'u Conversion Public Charter School is established in Kualapu'u, Moloka'i.

Hi'ipēpē infant-toddler program is established at Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u School.

BOR approves the MA in Hawaiian and an MA in Hawaiian Studies at UH–Mānoa.

## **2006**

*Hawaiian language continues to reach new heights.*

Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino implements a full K–12 program and graduates its first class.

Laiana Wong completes first doctoral dissertation written in Hawaiian at UH–Mānoa.

## **2007**

*20 years of Hawaiian immersion education*

20th anniversary of the Papahana Kaiapuni Hawai'i Hawaiian Language Immersion Program.

## **2008**

*What does the future hold for Hawaiian language?*

25th year of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo.

Kula Kaiapuni 'o Kawaikini Conversion Public Charter School to be established in Lihue, Kaua'i.

Television station KGMB9 to launch 'Āha'i 'Ōlelo Ola (Messenger of a Living Language), the first newscast to be delivered entirely in Hawaiian. It will air as a special segment on the morning show *Sunrise on KGMB9*.