



We were invited to Maui to train alongside two amazing mental health professionals to deliver credentialing hours on ethics in trauma-informed care. Left to right: Keala Kaopuiki-Santos, project manager; Tikki Bisbee, wellness and resilience coordinator (WRC)(Maui); Trainer - Michelle Navarro Ishiki, LCSW, OWR community partner; Tia L. Roberts Hartsock, director; Anu Getgen, LCSW, OWR community partner and co-trainer; Leilani Willing, WRC (O'ahu); Rachel Nunies, OWR graduate research assistant.

CAN Prevention: Hawai'i Children's Trust Fund

Keala (left), our Maui-based project manager, and Hawai'i Children's Trust Fund meeting participants gather to learn and share about child abuse and neglect (CAN) prevention efforts in Maui County, including support for families affected by the fires through long-term recovery and explore how current work aligns with [Hawaii's Statewide CAN Prevention Framework](#).



Congrats, Kimmy!

Naomi Leipold, OWR's policy-focused project manager, celebrated Kimmy Takata, reentry oversight specialist with the Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission and [Peer Support Specialist Working Group](#) member, honored for her contributions to improve our corrections system with lived expertise.



About the Office of Wellness and Resilience (OWR)

Our kuleana is to strengthen our state service systems, using hope-centered principles as strategies to make Hawai'i a trauma-informed state. We break down the barriers that impact the well-being of Hawai'i's people - from keiki to kūpuna.

State of Well-Being Project ([Act 106](#))

The Project's main goal is to conduct a landscape assessment to evaluate and strengthen wellness and resilience services at the state and county level, including first responders, healthcare providers and public school staff. So far, we've met with 50+ county/state employees and other agencies and community organizations. Next, we'll analyze the data we've gathered, develop a survey and conduct focus groups with participants who are interested in sharing their insights and experiences. To learn more, visit [our website here](#).



Left to right: OWR's Trina Orimoto, deputy director, Mayor Kimo Alameda, Hawai'i County, Director Hartsock & Kev Thompson, project manager

"I really appreciate Governor Green's commitment to the Office of Wellness and Resilience effort and for the strong, informed voice in bringing these principles to bear and trying to make our government more responsive and more effective, to the needs of the folks its supposed to serve."

Chief Justice Mark E. Recktenwald

Perspectives on Reform: Building a Trauma-Informed Justice System

The Hawai'i State Judiciary's Committee on Equality and Access to the Courts (CEAC) and the King Kamehameha V Judiciary History Center partnered to present the Equitable and Sustainable Futures Speaker Series, building pilina (connection) between stakeholders across the justice system. Their last conversation focused on trauma-informed care.

Through engaging public discussions, the series seeks to drive critical change in law, policy and institutional practices to improve public awareness, safety and well-being. The series was co-sponsored by the Hawai'i State Bar Association.



Congratulations to our graduating graduate research assistants!



Kayla Altobelli-Libercent, MSW, worked on developing trauma-informed care training modules for our upcoming trauma-informed certification program.



Rachel Aquino, MSW, worked with us for two years. She supported our Maui response, including organizing semi-weekly calls, developing content and analyzing data. She also created training curriculum.



Catherine Piazza, MSW, helped to strategize and coordinate our work convening the Peer Support Specialists Working Group, advocating for the expanded role of peer support in our systems.



Angelina Bezenar, MSW, assisted Naomi, our policy lead, on legislative proposals and policy development this past legislative session.

Director's Message



Tia L. Roberts
Hartsock, Director

Aloha, mai kakōu,

Sine Die has come and gone, and we are in the slower interim season here at the Capitol. It's a time to celebrate, reflect, plan and work on what's to come.

A year after Governor Green released Executive Order No. 24-01, Making Hawai'i a Trauma-Informed State, we have been working diligently to implement this across many domains, and a big part of it is training and technical assistance. We have been busy providing trainings on trauma-related topics for state workers, and also trainings for multiple federal, county and non-profit agencies.

We've heard you – you want this information for both you and your employees, and you want it now!

We are excited to announce that we are finalizing our certification programs this summer, including the first state trauma-informed care certification and a train-the-trainer program! The certification will be open to all executive state department employees via the Dept. of Human Resources (DHRD) training platform. We'll be sure to share all the details here when we can.

Oh, and Happy Graduation season to all those we are celebrating! We hope for safe and joyous celebrations for all your keiki's wonderful accomplishments.

Mālama pono,

Tia

Policy Updates

It was a busy legislative session for us, as most of our bills made it to the last week of the conference committee phase, but ultimately did not move forward. We did, however, have two resolutions that were adopted by the Senate:

- [SCR73/SR56](#): Requests OWR to develop a report addressing the developmental needs of keiki born during the community traumas of the pandemic and Maui wildfires.
- [SCR135/SR114](#): Urges state departments to partner with OWR regarding data-sharing.

Below, OWR's Erica Yamauchi and Naomi Leipold join [Prevent Child Abuse Hawai'i](#), part of Hawai'i Children's Action Network, and other advocates to place blue pinwheels on the Capitol lawn in early April for National Child Abuse Prevention Month, symbolizing the hope and safety all keiki deserve.



Keiki Mental Health Matters: Supportive Talk Story

This year's May 2025 Children's Mental Health Acceptance Month theme is all about **Empowering Keiki** by encouraging supportive conversations about our feelings and learning about mental health needs and warning signs. A few tips: Acknowledge what they're going through and validate their feelings. It doesn't have to be unnatural – you can casually ask how they're doing during your usual hangout. Let them know it's ok to feel the way they do. Make sure they know you're not going to judge them. For more tips and to learn more, visit Hawai'i Dept. of Health's website: [KeikiMentalHealthMatters.com](https://www.hawaii.gov/health/keiki-mental-health-matters).



This newsletter is a publication of the Office of Wellness & Resilience (OWR), within the Office of Governor Josh Green, M.D.

Let's talk story!

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