

# ANNUAL REPORT ~ 2023/2024

***Waimea Country School's mission is to educate children to become confident, responsible, and compassionate people.***



The WCS Board of Trustees appointed veteran teacher **Laurel Matsuda** Interim Head of School in April, 2023. With faculty and staff support, Laurel transitioned from Koa Lead Teacher, a position she'd held since 2006, to become the permanent Head of School in November, 2023. With her extensive experience, institutional knowledge, and significant contributions to developing and strengthening the culture of our school over the last 17 years, Laurel is uniquely qualified to lead WCS forward.



As Mrs. Matsuda transitioned from leading the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> multiage class to leading the school, Koa students benefited from working with a team of teachers who each brought their own expertise, gaining a feel for the middle school experience. Mrs. Matsuda and **Ms. Aceret** led the team for the first semester, and **Kelsi Johnson** joined WCS in January to become the lead Koa teacher. Ms. Kelsi is an experienced educator who has worked extensively both in Hawaii and on the mainland, including teaching 'Ohi'a and Koai'a students at WCS in 2021, enabling her to build on her positive relationships and prior experience to further students' learning. **Auntie Kelly** wielded her years of experience in the Koa class to maintain continuity through this transition. Curriculum highlights included learning about Polynesian voyaging, United States history and geography, and earth science, including the biennial trip to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park to explore up-close the effects of earthquakes and volcanism.



Team Koai'a - **Hannah Ediss** and **Auntie Jen** - led our 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> multiage class through an exciting year of learning. They adapted lessons for student interests and circumstances - when students were enthralled by a crop of mushrooms that sprouted overnight, math turned into mushroom graphing and students exercised creativity writing about them. A student and his family taught about and shared their culture and heritage during the unit on Native Americans. Science Fair was a flurry of creativity as students used the engineering process to design toys, elevators, bubble machines, and marble coasters using simple machines. Throughout it all, Koai'a students supported and encouraged each other.



'Ohi'a class thrived as **Kendra Powers** and **Auntie Didi** continued to provide tailored lessons to meet the individual needs of our K/1<sup>st</sup> students, challenging each child while allowing them to work at their own pace. Regular use of interactive activities such as science experiments, art projects, and math manipulatives kept learning relevant and concrete, and centers focusing on reading, writing, math, and fine motor skills ensured that students remained engaged while working on diverse tasks. Nature walks and outdoor exploration enhanced science lessons. Students celebrated individual and group successes - fostering a sense of community, promoting kindness and respect among peers, and cultivating a positive classroom culture.



In her second year as Reading Specialist, **Cindy Aceret** strengthened and expanded her support of literacy for all students, establishing a consistent program in the 'Ohi'a class, assisting with implementation of the Daily 5 in Koai'a class, and working one-on-one to support students in all classes, using multi-sensory language strategies to build literacy skills. 100% of 'Ohi'a students that were not reading at the beginning of the year were able to read consonant-vowel-consonant words in stories accurately by the end of the year, and students in all classes demonstrated increased skills and motivation to read.



Ms. Aceret also teaches music to the 'Ohi'a class, building connections that boost literacy. Learning rhythm, rhyming, and patterns in music, as well as practicing listening to and distinguishing sounds, all help children learn to read.



# Mahalo Nā Keiki

A NIGHT TO BENEFIT WAIMEA COUNTRY SCHOOL



**\$30,388**



## Master Class

Thank you to our good friends who donated their time and talent to teach a Master Class.

### Kuleana Rum Works

**Ka'iulani Blankenfeld**     **Sina Ebersole**  
**Carrie Culverhouse**     **Angel Prince**  
**Dagan Bernstein**     **Randy Campbell**

**Ticket sales - \$8,875**

**Stand Up For the Arts - \$3,175**

**Auction - \$16,838**

**Donation - \$1,500**

### Stand Up For the Arts

- Andy Behrle
- Dana Bostrom
- Ali Buscher
- Randy & Joan Campbell
- Stefanie Cooke
- Sina & Mark Ebersole
- Leilani Engstrom
- Jennifer Haywood-Farmer
- Rene Leonardi
- Didi & Jim Lyke
- Melissa Lytle
- Na Young Ma
- Melissa Morgan
- John & Amy O'Meara
- Andrew & Mary Beth Odell
- Tamara & Joel Payne
- Elle & Brian Phillips
- Amy Salling
- Hilary Saner
- Hannah Simmons & Roger Schaffer
- Margo Yoell



Christina & David Viviano

- |                              |                             |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Bamboo Restaurant</b>     | <b>Juice 101</b>            | <b>Pau Pizza</b>            |
| <b>Forc</b>                  | <b>Kona Brewing Co</b>      | <b>Poi Dog Deli</b>         |
| <b>Foster's Kitchen</b>      | <b>Kuleana Rum Works</b>    | <b>Pueo's Osteria</b>       |
| <b>Healthways Waimea</b>     | <b>Lava Lava Beach Club</b> | <b>Umekes Fish Market</b>   |
| <b>Island Hopper Taproom</b> | <b>Mauna Lani Coffee Co</b> | <b>Waimea Coffee Co</b>     |
| <b>Jade Palace</b>           | <b>Merriman's</b>           | <b>Willie's Hot Chicken</b> |

- |                                   |                                  |                                |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Ainaha Florals</b>             | <b>Gregore Salon</b>             | <b>Paradise Helicopters</b>    |
| <b>Auberge Mauna Lani</b>         | <b>Guardian Fire</b>             | <b>Prince Dance</b>            |
| <b>Beauty by Aloha</b>            | <b>Hamakua Macnut</b>            | <b>Rom Avendano</b>            |
| <b>Bite Me Sportfishing</b>       | <b>Hulakai Surf &amp; Paddle</b> | <b>Photography</b>             |
| <b>Blue Ocean Mariculture</b>     | <b>Ian Langevin</b>              | <b>Science Lab Hawaii</b>      |
| <b>Cadencia Photography</b>       | <b>KB Extreme</b>                | <b>Seth Engstrom</b>           |
| <b>Canada France HI Telescope</b> | <b>Kona Cliffs</b>               | <b>Stephen Winch</b>           |
| <b>Chris Neithamer</b>            | <b>Kona Diamond Co.</b>          | <b>Tommy Bahama</b>            |
| <b>CocoNene</b>                   | <b>Krisp Landscaping</b>         | <b>Ua Body</b>                 |
| <b>Dan Wilkinson</b>              | <b>Marcia Ray</b>                | <b>Uila Records</b>            |
| <b>Danger Island Hi-Fi</b>        | <b>Dan Wilkinson</b>             | <b>W.M. Keck Observatory</b>   |
| <b>Fairmont Kea Lani</b>          | <b>Mauna Lani Tennis</b>         | <b>Waikoloa Beach Marriott</b> |
| <b>Fairmont Orchid</b>            | <b>Mea Aloha Gift Shop</b>       | <b>Waikoloa Luxury Cinema</b>  |
| <b>Four Seasons Hualalai Golf</b> | <b>Montage Resort</b>            | <b>Waimea Yoga Studio</b>      |
| <b>Garland Universal Studios</b>  | <b>Kapalua Bay</b>               | <b>Wana Tattoo</b>             |
|                                   | <b>MW Designz</b>                |                                |

**Alumni Volunteers ~ Mahalo!**  
 Addison '20, Mia '20, Atticus '21,  
 Lana '21, Quincy '22, Savannah  
 '22, Lily '23, Taran '23

### Event Support

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Adaptations Kona</b>      | <b>KTA Superstores</b>                 |
| <b>Ahualoa Grown LLC</b>     | <b>Olakino Hawaii</b>                  |
| <b>Blue Dragon</b>           | <b>Parker School</b>                   |
| <b>Byerly 'Ohana</b>         | <b>Starbucks</b>                       |
| <b>Costco</b>                | <b>Suisan</b>                          |
| <b>Dagan Bernstein</b>       | <b>Sustainable Island Products</b>     |
| <b>Daisy Duke Florist</b>    | <b>Swept Away Events</b>               |
| <b>Ka'iulani Blankenfeld</b> | <b>Tea Blossom Flowers &amp; Gifts</b> |
| <b>Kekela Farms</b>          |  |

### Auction Donors



**Learning trips** to Pu'ukohola Heiau (Koai'a), Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (Koa), and a whale watch ('Ohi'a/Koa) enriched our learning program.



**Hui 'Ohana** created belonging, fostered multiage relationships, and was fun for all! Hui met weekly for reading and picnics and participated as a team in fun events and service projects.

## GINGER (\$1,000+)

Anonymous  
 Marc Baril &  
 Jennifer Haywood-Farmer  
 Matt & Janelle Byerly  
 Randy & Joan Campbell  
 Darrel & Siobhan Cavens  
 Hitchcock/Bowart/Dattera Foundation  
 Caroline Landry & David Kirk  
 John & Amy O'Meara  
 Andrew Odell & Mary Beth Laychak  
 Prince Family Foundation  
 Hannah Simmons & Roger Schafer



## PLUMERIA (\$1 - \$499)

Anonymous	Rachelle House & Ben Discoe
Dal & John Asher	Rene & Michael Leonardi
Jasmine Bailado	Jan & Melisa Levitan
Peter Balestrieri	Thomas & Pamela Lytle
Kelly & Greg Barrick	Ky Matsuda
Kamana Beamer	Laurel & Michael Matsuda
Catherine Breen	Kevin Painton
Al & Idelle Brown	Nancy Perry
Ali Ann & John Buscher	Kendra Powers
Tiffany & Jaiya DeCosta	John Ray
Maria Diaz-Lyke & James Lyke	Peter Relic
Natasha & Ilya Golubitskiy	Christina & David Viviano
Helen Gregg	Austin & Sonia Watkins
Robert Hastings	Fred Wawner & Dina Strittmatter
Jazmine Hicks	Cynthia & Max Yarawamai

# ANNUAL FUND

## \$35,370

Please report any errors or undocumented gifts to our office at 885-0067. Thank you!

## HIBISCUS (\$500 - \$999)

Sara & Justin Ballard  
 Andrew Carter & Jennifer Magoon  
 Peter & Lois Gregg  
 Na Young Ma & Mack Hill  
 Ian Massey  
 Gwen Pangle



## Student Financial Aid Fund \$40,630

- The McInerny Foundation
- The G.N. Wilcox Trust
- St. James Episcopal Church
- Malama Na Keiki Fundraiser
- WCS Parent Association
- Restricted Donations\*

*\*included in Annual Fund report*



## School Garden Program

Plant Sale ~ \$1,732  
 Donations ~ \$152

## Food Pantry ~ Mahalo!

Our **WCS 'Ohana** donated **250 lbs** of food and supplies to the Annunciation Community Food Pantry to help combat food insecurity in our community. **Koa Students** rebagged **995 lbs** of rice for distribution. This is the 16th year of our partnership.

# Congratulations to our 2024 Graduates!



- ☆ Parker School
- ☆ Parker School
- ☆ Hawai'i Preparatory Academy
- ☆ Hawai'i Preparatory Academy
  
- ☆ Parker School
- ☆ Parker School
- ☆ Hawai'i Preparatory Academy
- ☆ Hawai'i Preparatory Academy

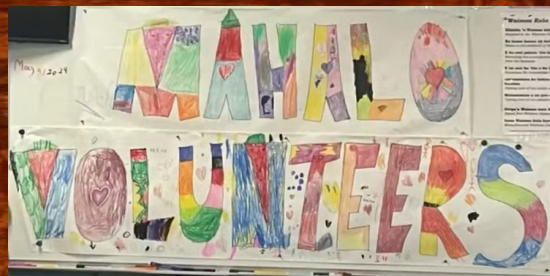


Waimea Country School has been a safe and fun environment for me to learn and grow as a person. This school will always be a part of my soul, and I will never forget this amazing place that I love so dearly. I will work to keep all the close friendships that I have made and hopefully return to visit often. My teachers at WCS have prepared me well for middle school, and I am confident that I will have an amazing next year at HPA.

~ Ona Bowart, WCS Graduate



## Our volunteers help us thrive! 118 people contributed over 1066 volunteer hours!



**Parent Association Projects**  
**Faculty Bathroom paint & refresh**  
**Kitchen Area Renovation**  
**Teacher Appreciation**



## WCS BOARD OF TRUSTEES



**Andrew Odell**  
President



**Jazmin Hicks**  
Vice President



**Amy O'Meara**  
Secretary

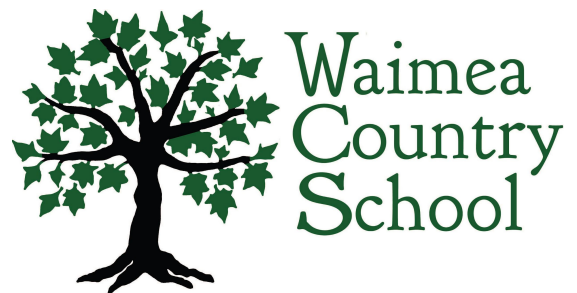


**Randy Campbell**  
Treasurer



**Matt Byerly**

Waimea Country School is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit incorporated in the State of Hawai'i. The WCS Board of Trustees governs the School. Board members are the fiduciaries who steer our organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as by making sure WCS has resources to advance our mission.



*Where Children Love to Learn*

808-885-0067



[waimeacountryschool.org](http://waimeacountryschool.org)