



HAU'OLI MAU LOA
FOUNDATION

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

Dear Friends,

According to the Hawaiian Dictionary, Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, the Hawaiian word for time of change is *huliau*. For a number of reasons, we have been especially focused on what it means to be in a time of change. We know that change is natural. We also know that it requires us to prepare.

Ako 'e ka hale a pa'a, a i ke komo ana mai o ka ho'oilo, 'a'ole e kulu i ka ua o Hilinehu.

Thatch the house before-hand, so when winter comes, it will not leak in the rainy month of Hilinehu.

Do not procrastinate; make preparations for the future now.

(‘Ōlelo No’eau #100)

More than half a dozen years ago, what was then our two-person board of directors, Hans Bertram-Nothnagel and Wayne Pitluck, began to think about and prepare for our future. They recognized that if Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation was to endure, we would need a new generation of leadership, excited about carrying our values into the future. They knew the time would come when they would step down and turn their responsibilities over to others.



One of the ways they have been preparing for this impending transition is by ensuring that all of us at the Foundation well understand the values of our benefactor, [Helga](#), whom they both knew. Stories of how she expressed her values and how those values informed her decisions are well known throughout the board and staff. Today, our values are documented. Yet, Hans and Wayne have made it clear that neither they nor Helga could know what the future holds. Because of that, they understand and accept that strategies the Foundation employs today will evolve to reflect future conditions and challenges. Still, as we face change, we want to remain faithful to the values, passed down through Wayne and Hans, that we have inherited from our benefactor.

Even though we have been preparing for more than half a dozen years, when Wayne leaves his seat as a founding director later this year and Hans follows about 18 months later, we will miss them both at our table. And while they will set aside their governing board member duties, their relationship with the Foundation will continue as they mentor and advise us. Wayne and Hans are taking to heart what our Partner, Gigi Cocquio from [Hoa 'Āina O Mākaha](#), reminded us when talking about leadership transition. *"You can retire from a job, but you cannot retire from relationships."*

We are not alone in preparing for the future. Leadership change is a reality that many of our Partners have faced in recent years and that others are anticipating. We are well aware that it can cause stress and anxiety, or worse. We also know how hard it is to think about planning when resources are constrained and demand for services is growing. In such circumstances, stepping back and preparing for future change is even more difficult. In particular, we know that planning for leadership transition takes time, focus, commitment and resources.

Nonetheless, the need to prepare for impending transitions does not mean that an organization's work will, as if by magic, ease off. Over the past year, for example, we were able to increase to more than \$55 million the total of all grants distributed since 2008 when the Foundation received full funding from Helga and hired its first staff. While

this milestone represented a great deal of work, it also means we were able to deepened existing partnerships as well as establish new ones. These partnerships are the center piece of our efforts and the primary means through which we carry out our mission.

We have learned through both our own efforts and our Partners' experiences that preparing for leadership transitions can help build greater organizational capacity. In an article on leadership transition, Bill Coy of [Hawai'i Leadership Forum](#) calls this a "disruptive opportunity." The time and effort to plan for leadership transitions can generate renewed understanding of internal strengths and strategies and can identify areas for developing bench strength. For example, *"Do we have the right people for our future needs? If not, how do we develop them from within or bring aboard new talent?"* For smaller organizations that cannot add to or diversify the makeup of the team, planning for the future may result in better understanding the roles and duties of the departing leaders and generate additional clarity about the skills and qualities needed in their successors.

There is much we can learn from those who have experienced both successful and challenging leadership transitions. We hope you will share your insights and lessons learned with us. We look forward to continuing to share our experiences with you.

Heeding the words of our ancestors, we must not procrastinate. We must prepare now for tomorrow.

Aloha,



Janis A. Reischmann

Executive Director

Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation



Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)