



*ʻE haʻalahi mai*

Office of the Mayor  
County of Kauaʻi

# Proclamation

*Older Americans Month 2021*

**WHEREAS**, every year, more and more Na Kupuna are making a positive impact in and around our island, building strength and resilience over their lives through successes and difficulties; and

**WHEREAS**, in tough times, communities find strength in people, and people find strength in their communities. In the past year, we've seen this time and time again in our friends, neighbors, and businesses, and especially in our older adults; and

**WHEREAS**, as volunteers, employees, employers, educators, mentors, and advocates, older Americans offer insight and experience that benefit the entire community which is why Older Americans Month has been recognizing the contributions of this growing population for 58 years; and

**WHEREAS**, this year's Older Americans Month theme, "Communities of Strength" recognizes the important role older adults play in fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities; and

**WHEREAS**, strength is built and shown not only by bold acts, but also small ones of day-to-day life such as a conversation with a friend, working in the garden, trying a new recipe, or making time for someone else on a busy day. When we share these activities with each other—even virtually—we help them build resilience; and

**WHEREAS**, we all recognize our need to nurture ourselves, reinforce our strength, and continue to thrive in times of both joy and difficulty; and

**WHEREAS**, Kauaʻi can foster communities of strength by creating opportunities to share stories and learn from each other, engaging older adults through education, recreation, and service; and encouraging people of all ages to celebrate connections and resilience.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, DEREK S. K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR, COUNTY OF KAUAʻI,** do hereby proclaim May 2021 as Older Americans Month, and I urge every resident to recognize Na Kupuna and the people who support them as essential contributors to the strength of our community.



County of Kauaʻi  
State of Hawaiʻi  
May 6 2021

Derek S. K. Kawakami  
Mayor, County of Kauaʻi  
State of Hawaiʻi



*Haʻakani ka pahu*

# OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



COMMUNITIES OF STRENGTH: MAY 2021

## 2021 Outstanding Older Americans Recognition Ceremony



Agency on Elderly Affairs  
County of Kauaʻi  
4444 Rice Street  
Lihue, HI 96766



Aloha,

This year's Older Americans Month theme **Communities of Strength** recognizes that older adults have built resilience and strength over their lives through successes, failures, joys, and difficulties. Their stories and contributions help to support and inspire others. We celebrate the strength of older adults and the important role they play in fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities.

Strength is built and shown not only by bold acts, but also small ones of day-to-day life—a conversation shared with a friend, working in the garden, trying a new recipe, or taking time for a cup of tea on a busy day. And when we share these activities with others—even virtually or by telling about the experience later—we help them build resilience too.

Together, we can find strength by sharing and connecting through the following ways:

**Look for joy in the everyday:** start a gratitude journal or call a friend or family member to share a happy moment or to say thank you.

**Reach out to neighbors:** offer to help with outdoor chores or deliver a home cooked meal.

**Build new skills:** Learn something new or take a course online or teach someone.

**Share your story:** Interviewing family, friends, and neighbors can open up new conversations and strengthen our connections.

As we celebrate Older Americans Month, let us strengthen each other through small acts of kindness and service.

Malama pono,

Kealoha Takahashi  
Executive on Aging



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### MUSIC

Award Winning Paul Togioka

### PUBLICITY/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Mayor's Office

### NOMINATORS

Katherine Alisna  
Wilma Chandler  
Nikki Cristobal  
Mary Kay Hertog  
Coleen Kasperek  
Anne Miyamoto  
Aida Shen

### PHOTOS

Dennis Fujimoto

### KAUAI STATE LEGISLATORS

### KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL

### AEA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Julie Souza, Chair  
Janice Bond, Vice Chair  
Gloria Acain  
Lola Cruz  
Pualei Kaohelauii  
KipuKai Kualii  
Anne Miyamoto  
Elodie Moniz  
Dr. Dennis Pezzato

### AGENCY ON ELDERLY AFFAIRS STAFF

*Mahalo...*

The Agency on Elderly Affairs, a designated Area Agency on Aging and recently functioning as an Aging and Disability Resource Center has been providing critical and essential eldercare services to Kaua'i's kupuna so they can continue to live a dignified life in the community or environment of their choice.

Through a service provider contract or AEA staff, the agency provides the following eldercare services:

- Information, Assistance, Referral
- Outreach
- Senior ID
- Transportation
- Legal Assistance
- Home Delivered Meals
- Congregate Meals
- Case Management/Coordination
- Personal Care
- Homemaker
- Adult Day Care
- Caregiver Respite
- Caregiver Counseling
- Group Support & Information
- Civic Engagement
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Health Promotion
- Disease Prevention
- EnhanceFitness Program
- Better Health, Better Choices
- Options Counseling
- Long Term Support Svcs Planning



For more information,  
call (808) 241-4770  
or visit [www.kauaiadrc.org](http://www.kauaiadrc.org)

# Russell J. Maeda



Russell is a humble and giving person, a true leader motivated by making a difference in his community.

He has served as Treasurer of the Kauai Veterans Council since 2014. He was instrumental in securing CARES Act funding to bring back furloughed workers and keep the Kauai Veterans Center open for use by Veterans, local churches and the general public. He took the lead for several fundraisers including a truck give-away.

The funds raised covered expenses to paint the inside of the Center, retile and paint the Purple Heart room, replace air conditioning, buy a new ice machine and start renovations on the Silver/Bronze Star room.

Russell was the Chairman of the Kauai Veterans Day Parade from 2016 to 2019. He organized the parade with 800 participants, recruited volunteers and assigned each one a specific duty. His attention to detail is what made these parades such a success and so much fun. Most importantly, it honored our Veterans for their service and sacrifice.

Mary Kay Hertog wrote, "Russell is 'all in' when it comes time to make life better for our veterans and he embodies, Serve before Self."

Russell's volunteer work goes well beyond working with his fellow veterans. He has served as President, Secretary, and Chaplain for the Kaua'i Association of the United Church of Christ. He currently serves as Treasurer. He is also the Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Lihue Christian Church.

Rev. Dr. James Fung wrote, "I have found Russell Maeda to be a person with deep spiritual and moral values, a team player who has earned the respect of others for his sense of responsibility, willingness to be helpful, and for his competence and dedication."

Russell's financial experience has also benefitted other organizations. He serves as Treasurer for the Kaua'i American Japanese (AJA) Baseball Association and has held this position for more than three decades.

Russell served as a member of the Kiwanis from 1984 to 2016, which oversees the Key Clubs for Kaua'i and Kapaa High Schools.

Experienced in architectural design, drafting and construction, Russell worked with Kauai Builders Ltd. from 1972 until 2002 as part-owner and served as the President of Kauai Builders from 1999 to 2002. He later joined SSFM International from 2003 until 2016, when he retired, as a Construction Manager.

Nominated by: Mary Kay Hertog - Kauai Veteran's Council

## 2021 Outstanding Older Americans Award Recognition Ceremony Program

### Welcome

Julie Souza, Chair, AEA Advisory Committee

**Pule:** David Martin, Associate Pastor of Lihue Missionary Church  
Alroy Enos, Patriarch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

### Opening Remarks

Caroline Cadirao, State Director, Executive Office on Aging

### Mayor's Message

Honorable Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami

### Governor's Message

Carrice Gardner, Governor David Ige's Liaison to Kauai

### Introduction of 2021 Outstanding Older Americans Nominees

PowerPoint Presentation

### Announcement of the 2021 Outstanding Older Americans Kauai Representatives

Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami

### State Legislators' Message

Senate President Ronald D. Kouchi  
Representative Dee Morikawa  
Representative Nadine K. Nakamura  
Representative James Kunane Tokioka

### County Council's Message

Chair Arryl Kaneshiro  
Vice Chair Mason Chock  
Councilmember Bernard Carvalho Jr.  
Councilmember Bill DeCosta  
Councilmember Luke Evslin  
Councilmember Felicia Cowden  
Councilmember KipuKai Kualii

### Closing Remarks

Kealoha Takahashi, Executive on Aging

Hawaii Aloha

# **Shirley Akita**



Shirley has been involved in community activities, both professionally and personally, for much of her life.

She has been a Hospitality volunteer with Immaculate Conception Church since 2017 and has participated with the Salvation Army as a bell ringer for their Red Kettle Christmas Campaign.

Shirley has been a member of the Lihue Neighborhood Center Bonsai Club since 1998 and has been volunteering with the Wilcox Hospital Gift Shop since 2012.

In 2016, Shirley was named a Living Legend by Kauai Museum.

Past and present, Shirley has sat on several boards and commissions. She is a past Director of the Wilcox Hospital Board and has been a member of the Liquor Control Commission since the year 2000. She has also been a Board Member and volunteer for the Kauai RSVP since 1996 and was instrumental in helping to align the Kauai RSVP by-laws with those of the State and National organization.

In addition, Shirley was one of the founders of the Kokee Discovery Center Association, whose mission is advocating environmental and cultural education.

Shirley had a long career in education and retired as the Department of Education District Superintendent for Kauai and Niihau.

Nominated by: Wilma Chandler - RSVP Advisory Board

# **Leonora Lizama**



Leonora comes from a large family of 9 children, instilling in her the importance of family. She believes family is the backbone of society and offers a strong sense of belonging to children. She loves gathering with family and traveling with family and is always ready to lend a helping hand to a family member in need.

Leonora has two adopted grandsons from China and the Philippines, and her patient nature has allowed her to work with them to increase their English proficiency and both boys are thriving.

For the past 10 years, Leonora has volunteered as a Foster Grandparent at King Kaumuali'i Elementary School in several different classrooms. She provides one on one assistance to the children, enhancing their educational and social skills. Leonora calls on the skills and patience she learned from working in customer service to help her assist the students with loving kindness.

This past year Leonora began volunteering with students in special education classes and quickly adjusted to their special needs. By being patient, flexible and understanding she helped the students flourish in their abilities.

Leonora has also volunteered with the Kauai Discovery Center for the past few years, conducting one on one youth activities. She feels conservation of our natural resources is very important for the benefit of current and future generations, and shares this through crafts and activities about ocean life with the children.

When school is not in session, Leonora and some of her fellow Foster Grandparents entertain residents and clients in long term care, assisted living and adult day care through music. Leonora is one of just a few solo singers.

Prior to retirement, Leonora worked as a cashier at various retail stores on Kauai ending with WalMart.

Nominated by: Anne Miyamoto - Foster Grandparents Program

# ***Crescencia Labuguen***



Crescencia is happy to volunteer her time to help others and she has been doing that for the past 40 plus years with St. Catherine Parish. Crescencia has lovingly offered her time in many different areas of the church such as; opening the church by 5:30 am to prepare for services, leading the Rosary, replenishing the candles for parishioners, being the lector for Tuesday morning mass and assisting with counting the offerings. She has also volunteered with the annual St. Catherine's carnival for over 40 years in various positions.

Crescencia has been an active member of the Kapaa Senior Center since the year 2000. She is part of the ukulele group which entertains several times a year at various care facilities, assisted living facilities and adult day health programs.

For the past several years, Crescencia has been a member of the St. Catherine Filipino Catholic Club. She has held the positions of President and Vice President and is currently the Chair of the Renewal Committee.

Crescencia worked as a Secretary for St. Catherine School and St. Catherine Parrish in the 1970s and retired from the State of Hawaii with Child Protective Services.

Nominated by: Katherine Alisna - St Chaterine of Alexandria Church, Filipino Catholic Club

# ***Anita Aquino***



Anita truly enjoys volunteering to help her community. For 17 years she volunteered with the Kauai Government Employees Federal Credit Union while simultaneously serving as a Board Member. Part of her tasks were reviewing loan applications, checking credit histories and helping the loan manager oversee operations.

From the age of 18, Anita began volunteering with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She volunteered in several different capacities revolving around children's and women's programs. She also served in the capacity of secretary for the Sunday Schools and Relief Society at the church.

Anita has been an active member of the Lihue Senior Center for several years, holding office and participating in the Kokua Craft group.

Anita is also a volunteer with Kauai Economic Opportunity, Inc and has been since 2014. Pre-Covid, she was volunteering in the food kitchen helping package lunches for homebound seniors. Anita faithfully showed up 3 days a week, always on time and helped assure the delivery people would be able to get the meals to the recipients on time. After all the food was packed, and on its way, she also made sure the kitchen was cleaned before she would leave for the day.

Prior to retirement, Anita had a 24-year career as a Secretary with the State Department of Agriculture.

Nominated by: Aida Shen - KEO (Kauai Economic Opportunity)

## **Yoshiko “Dimples” Kano**



Yoshiko Dimples Kano has the true heart of a servant. She has devoted many years to serving the Kauai community in several different capacities.

For almost 50 years she has been a member of the Zonta Club of Kauai and the Zonta Club of Kauai Foundation, holding many different offices and positions. She has been the Chair of the Christmas Fund for the past 25 years, helping to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for those in need.

Dimples has been involved with the Kauai Salvation Army since 1974, holding several executive positions. For the past 10 years, Dimples has chaired the Thanksgiving Luncheon, which provides Thanksgiving lunch to hundreds of individuals and families in need each year. She has also been a driving force behind the Kokua Soup Kitchen which provides weekly meals to people facing food insecurity. Dimples has assisted the new leadership by providing support and training in the areas of operations and budget management. Because of her countless hours of support, the Kauai Salvation Army has deemed her a Lifetime Member of the Advisory Board.

Dimples has also been active with the Kauai United Way since 1976 as an active Board Member and now as an Honorary Board Member. She still actively serves on the Golf Committee. In addition, she is active with the Kapaa Hongwanji, taking on organizational leadership roles, especially with the Hongwanji Women’s Association. She also organized their Centennial Community Celebration.

Dimples has a great passion for helping raise up leaders, especially women leaders, and for helping the houseless and food insecure members of our community, as evidenced by her involvement in the aforementioned organizations.

In 2011, the Kauai Museum recognized Dimples as a Living Treasure for her extensive community leadership and volunteerism.

Although Dimples will most likely never retire, prior to this phase of her life, she worked as a clerk for Lihue Plantation for 25 years and then attained her Real Estate License, making her the second Japanese woman to become a licensed Real Estate Agent. In addition, she has also been an active member and executive leader for the Kauai Board of Realtors.

Nominated by: Nikki Cristobal - Zonta Club of Kauai

## **Brian K. Kasperek**



Brian has inspired and motivated many AARP volunteers on Kauai, and organized tax preparation sites all over the island from Princeville to Lihue.

For 18 years Brian has worked with the AARP TaxAide Program, providing tax preparation services to the elderly and low income residents of Kauai. His role has gone from Tax Counselor, preparing tax returns, to the responsibility for training volunteers, organizing and supervising tax sites, electronically filing returns, maintaining and updating equipment for counselor use, and troubleshooting taxpayer questions. He dedicates his time each year from December thru April to provide the tax preparation service.

In 2016 Brian was recognized by the American Red Cross of Hawaii as Kauai Volunteer of the Year. He has been a Red Cross volunteer since 2014 and has acted as shelter manager during times when emergency shelters were opened in Kalaheo and Koloa for events such as fires, floods, and preparing for hurricanes. In September 2017 he was deployed to Florida to perform shelter work after hurricane Irma. He is part of the Kauai Disaster Action Team responding to house fires and other emergencies.

Brian retired after 33 years as an Electrical Engineer with the Department of Energy, and is also a retiree of the United States Air Force Reserves.

Nominated by: Colleen Kaperek - AARP Taxaide