

**SE KON WON** +

MD, Cardiologist, Hawai'i Pacific Health Medical Group, Straub Medical Center

**LUISA OGAWA** +

MSN, APRN-Rx, NP-C, RN-BC, Continuing Care Nurse Practitioner, Kaiser Permanente

**MANDY KĪ'ĀHA** +

BS, RN, MSN, NP-C, Senior Advocate, CareSift for Seniors

**LIGAYA "JOY" VILLANUEVA BERCASIO** +

BSN-RN, Nurse Liaison, St. Francis Healthcare System

**RACHEL LAFFIN** +

CNA, Certified Nursing Assistant, Palolo Chinese Home



# 2021 HAWAI'I HEALTHCARE HEROES

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**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor,  
State of Hawai'i

## MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR DAVID Y. IGE

On behalf of the people of Hawai'i, I send a warm aloha to everyone working in Hawai'i's healthcare industry. Whether you are currently working in healthcare or have retired, Hawai'i owes you a debt of gratitude regardless of your specific role or field.

The pandemic has brought extraordinary challenges, and you have outperformed with exceptional skills and constant compassion to meet the needs of the people of Hawai'i. You have put your lives on the line to keep our communities healthy, and worked long hours, sacrificing time with your families to ensure that the loved ones of other families survive.

Long before the pandemic, more than 30,000 Hawai'i residents who are healthcare workers had been selflessly serving our community during the most important times of our lives — from birth to death, and life-changing moments in between. They're our neighbors, family members and friends.

Today we place a spotlight on the 2021 Hawai'i Healthcare Heroes, five exceptional healthcare professionals who were nominated for this recognition by their own patients. This award, presented by the Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), is the nation's only patient-nominated recognition program in the country. Patients enthusiastically nominate the outstanding healthcare professionals who have made a significant difference and quietly dedicated their careers to helping their communities.

This year's honorees also include HAH's peer-nominated healthcare industry awardees as well as students who have received healthcare scholarship dollars from HAH. All honorees are particularly important this year because HAH's annual awards program was cancelled last year due to the pandemic, just as our healthcare professionals were called upon as never before in the face of a previously unknown and aggressive disease that has killed millions around the world.

I'm delighted and honored to help recognize HAH's 2021 Hawai'i Healthcare Heroes, the peer-nominated honorees and the many bright scholarship recipients who hold the future of healthcare in their hands.

Mahalo to HAH for bringing these exceptional individuals to the attention of Hawai'i at large. More than ever, we know a strong healthcare industry is vital to all of us in our island state.

Congratulations to all the deserving awardees and scholarship recipients. Each of you is a true bright light in your communities.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Y. Ige".

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

# A MESSAGE FROM HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

On behalf of the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i (HAH) — and our 170+ member healthcare organizations — it is a true pleasure to acknowledge Hawai'i's healthcare workforce through the pages of this publication. After 18 months of turmoil and crisis brought about by the pandemic, I can say unequivocally that Hawai'i has some of the most remarkable healthcare professionals around the nation.

The award winners you'll be meeting in the following pages shine particularly brightly against the backdrop of a worldwide pandemic that surged, receded, and surged again through evolving COVID variants. It has been an honor to see, firsthand, how Hawai'i's healthcare workforce and community members banded together to ensure that our state had continued access to quality care.

We will never be able to thank these healthcare workers enough. Today, you'll meet some of the people who were part of the massive effort to provide healthcare around the clock to everyone who

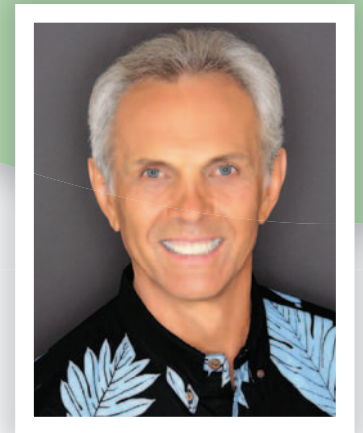
needed it. You'll see some of the faces of those who advanced the effort — and you'll see them from a number of angles, such as administering vaccine, providing direct patient care, advocating for better laws, and even providing a shoulder to cry on at a time when fear and uncertainty ruled the day.

I send congratulations to all of this year's award winners, and I lift up everyone who works in the healthcare delivery system in our state. Each and every one of you is truly remarkable. Mahalo.

Sincerely,



Hilton R. Raethel, MPH, MHA  
President & CEO, Healthcare Association of Hawai'i



**HILTON R. RAETHEL,  
MPH, MHA**  
President & CEO  
Healthcare Association  
of Hawai'i

# GETTING TO KNOW HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII

In a time of unprecedented change in society and the resulting need for health-care, the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i (HAH) is committed to working with providers across the continuum of care toward a healthcare system that offers the best possible quality of care for the people of Hawai'i.

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Hawai'i's Healthcare Heroes and the facilities they represent are commended for their dedication and commitment to the well-being of communities across the state.

HAH has served as the leading voice of healthcare since 1939. Its 170-plus member organizations include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, Medicare-certified home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities, Type II adult residential care homes, durable medical equipment suppliers and home infusion/pharmacies. Members also represent healthcare providers from throughout the continuum of care, including case management firms, air-and-ground ambulance companies, the Blood Bank of Hawaii, dialysis providers and more.

The primary focus of HAH is working with healthcare executives and their approximately 30,000 employees on crucial industry issues including advocacy (in Washington, D.C., and Hawai'i), quality of care, reimbursement improvement, strategic education, emergency preparedness, public relations, shared savings and cost reduction, education and workforce development.

For more information, visit [hah.org](http://hah.org) or call 808-521-8961. You can also connect with HAH on Facebook, Twitter (@healthcarehah) and Instagram (@hahhawaii), as well as on Pinterest.

HANA SUIISO, RN  
The Queen's Health Systems



*Mahalo*

# TO ALL OF OUR HEALTH CARE HEROES

YOUR COURAGE AND COMPASSION  
SHINES BRIGHT IN OUR COMMUNITY



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*Hawai'i Healthcare Hero Award*  
**Se Kon Won, MD**  
 Cardiologist  
 Hawai'i Pacific Health Medical Group  
 Straub Medical Center



*Executive Award*  
**Melinda Ashton, MD**  
 Hawai'i Pacific Health



*Physician of the Year Award*  
**Rayji Tsutsui, MD**  
 Hawai'i Pacific Health Medical Group  
 Straub Medical Center

Hawai'i Hospital Education  
 and Research Foundation  
 Scholarship Recipients

Tania Guerrero  
 Kylie Kwak  
 Steven Migdol  
 Briana Ortiz

Their dedication to others  
 is an inspiration to us all.

We're proud to help recognize the members of our extended Hawai'i Pacific Health family who have been honored for their commitment to creating a healthier Hawai'i.

*We're reimagining health care.*

PRESENTING THIS YEAR'S

## HAWAI'I HEALTHCARE HEROES!

Each year, the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i (HAH) issues a public call for patients to nominate healthcare professionals who have made a huge impact in their lives. In 2020, this program was cancelled due to the pandemic. Currently, in 2021, HAH is pleased to honor its seventh group of Hawai'i Healthcare Heroes. The following stories shared from their nominations tell you a little bit about their incredible acts and journeys.



# LIGAYA "JOY" VILLANUEVA BERCASIO

BSN-RN, NURSE LIAISON, ST. FRANCIS HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

An angel in disguise. That's the description Roland Bueno Jr. chose when expressing his appreciation and gratitude for Ligaya "Joy" Villanueva Bercasio, a nurse liaison with St. Francis Healthcare System.

Bueno Jr. recalls the first time he met Bercasio. It was noon, at his home on Sept. 23, 2020. She was there to complete paperwork for his father, Roland Bueno Sr., who had been referred to hospice care. He had been admitted to Pali Momi Medical Center the previous week due to dehydration and pneumonia.

Bueno Jr.'s mother, Maria, greeted Bercasio at the door as she did with

all visitors. As Bueno Jr. recalls, the meeting, which immediately followed his father's assessment at the hospital, was "divine." Maria and Bercasio instantly connected and realized they were from the same town in the Philippines. They shared photos, stories and laughter.

Right after the meeting, Bercasio and Bueno Jr. were startled by a loud crashing sound from the kitchen. The two rushed in to find Maria collapsed on the floor and seizing. Although Bercasio had been there to complete paperwork for Bueno Jr.'s father, she immediately performed



cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on his mother and helped her as the ambulance was called. Bueno Jr. recalls his mother's body going limp, despite the efforts to resuscitate her. It was then that he realized she passed away.

"This story plays over and over in my mind, and I realize God's perfect timing each time I think of it," Bueno Jr. says. "Woven within this story is an angel in disguise: Ligaya Villanueva Bercasio. As I got ready to follow Mom to Kaiser that Wednesday, she told me firmly, 'I am your 'ate' (which means sister in Filipino) now. Anything you need, please call me.'"

"At that moment, she became instant family, reminding me to drink juice before I got in the car because she was concerned about my sudden state of shock and didn't want me to collapse."

As was her original role, Bercasio assisted the family in finding superior care for Bueno Sr. until he passed away on Oct. 19 of last year. Bueno Jr. was comforted when Bercasio joined loved ones at his parents' joint funeral mass on Nov. 21, 2020, and stays in touch with his "angel" as the two are Facebook friends.

"Manang' (Filipino for older sister or a third parent) Ligaya has been the perfect example of a dedicated frontline healthcare hero, giving faithfully and selflessly to our family," Bueno Jr. says.

# LUISA OGAWA

MSN, APRN-RX, NP-C, RN-BC, CONTINUING CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER,  
KAISER PERMANENTE



**E**rin Pinto's mother suffers from dementia. And Pinto's family was struggling with how to cope with her mother's moodiness, unwillingness to seek medical care, lack of self-care, and difficult behaviors. That's when a Kaiser Permanente nurse jumped in to help.

Pinto describes Luisa Ogawa, a continuing care nurse practitioner with Kaiser Permanente's Maui Lani Office, as being "nothing short of a miracle for my family."

"Luisa immediately made everyone feel comfortable and confident that we were in great hands," she said. "She has lovingly cared for my mom and built rapport with her and our entire family. My mom claims her as a daughter and expresses her love for Luisa every time she comes to the house!"

Ogawa has been helping teach Pinto and her sister the tips and tricks to care for their mother and meet her ever-changing needs. Due to the dementia, Ogawa sometimes sees an angry side of Pinto's mother. She typically begins their visits with suspicion and resistance because of her memory difficulties.

"But, ev-

ery time she sees Mom, Luisa quickly breaks down the barriers and gets my mom cracking jokes and doing whatever Luisa asks her to do. It always astonishes me how quickly, skillfully and seemingly effortlessly she does this," Pinto says.

Pinto's mother is in a wheelchair and doesn't leave the house, so Ogawa has now become her lifeline to the outside world. She provides excellent quality healthcare and has become a wonderful friend to the entire family.

"It is impossible for me to put into words all that Luisa is to us and what she has done for this one patient, my mom," Pinto says. "I'm sure she has touched everyone in a similar fashion, whether they realize it or not. She is, hands down, one of the greatest healthcare heroes in all of Hawai'i."



# MANDY KI'AHHA

BS, RN, MSN, NP-C, SENIOR ADVOCATE,  
CARESIFT FOR SENIORS



**D**erek Ito's 96-year-old mother suffered a debilitating fall at home after living mostly without assistance until that time. Within a week, her health worsened to the point that 24-hour care became necessary.

This pressed Ito and his brothers into the unfamiliar roles of being around-the-clock caregivers for their mom. After consulting with friends and a doctor, the family was introduced to an organization called CareSift for Seniors. The organization connected the Ito's with a senior care advocate, Mandy Ki'aha.

"Mandy worked closely with us throughout the entire process and provided us with seven-day assistance throughout this difficult and stressful time. First, she gave us proper advice for Mom's overall healthcare and then, she made the referral and placement to the right care home," says Ito.

Ito says that Ki'aha recommended that his mother go to an emergency room and be thoroughly reviewed for any

## Congratulations Mandy!



Mandy Ki'aha, BS, RN, NP-C  
CareSift Senior Advocate  
HAH Hero 2021

Thank you for helping our clients at CareSift understand the complexities of their long-term care options.



CareSift congratulates all 2021  
Healthcare Heroes!

*Congratulations*  
to the 2021 Hawaii Healthcare Heroes

*Mahalo*

to everyone who works in health care.

Thank you for your compassion and caring.

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head injury or other serious injuries – even though her fall had occurred more than a week earlier. His mother received “excellent care and rehabilitation” at both Kuakini Medical Center and The Clarence T.C. Ching Villas at St. Francis over the course of two weeks.

Ki’aha then asked what the family needed in order to support their situation, and walked the Ito’s through the process of selecting the right care options, based on the physician’s notes. She thoroughly explained the medical terminology, differences among care settings, costs, options and preferences.

“She was very much an advocate for my mother. What impressed us the most was that she texted, emailed or conversed with us over the telephone seven days a week, and well into the

evenings,” Ito says. “She was always pleasant, and we appreciated the ongoing communication she always provided.

“I could see the passion she has for her patients as she carefully listened to our mother’s needs and those of our family. She always kept those in mind. We were fortunate for her nurse practitioner background, as we could ask her any health questions and she always knew the answers. She was truly the comfort we needed during this stressful time.”



HAWAII HEALTHCARE HERO 2021

*Congratulations*

ADVOCACY AWARD

WESLEY “WES” LO



caring for Kūpuna

# RACHEL LAFFIN

CNA, CERTIFIED NURSING  
ASSISTANT, PALOLO CHINESE HOME



When asked to describe the impact that Rachel Laffin, a certified nursing assistant from Palolo Chinese Home, had on Mark Kashiwamura and his sister Debbie Ha, they say she “has been a Godsend for our family.”

Laffin cares for Kashiwamura and Ha’s mother, Martha Kashiwamura. She is elderly and needs assistance carrying out activities in her daily living. The family has come to count on Laffin as they deal with the anxiety of giving around-the-clock care to a frail or elderly loved one.

“Rachel came to our family soon after we experienced a tragic loss,” Ha says. “We were grieving and sad, but Rachel brought a great deal of comfort and happiness, not only to our mom, but our entire family.”

This brother-and-sister team commend Laffin for always being upbeat and exhibiting a positive attitude. They say that she takes care of their mom as if she were her own family member. They admire Laffin’s commitment and dedication, as she goes the extra mile, and helps to clean Martha’s house.

“Everyone in our family loves Rachel, and although it’s been a short time, we consider Rachel family,” Ha says. “Even my mom’s dog loves Rachel. Rachel’s nature is to care for her patients, not for money or accolades, but be-

cause she loves to do it. She is a caregiver in the truest form. Our mom, and entire family, are blessed that Rachel has come into our lives,” Ha says.

“She encourages our mom to walk and exercise, even though mom sometimes gives her a hard time. Rachel makes sure that mom is always safe and happy. She not only takes care of mom’s physical health, but she also takes care of her mental health. She plays memory games with her and talks to her about events in my mom’s life, which make mom happy to relive. Rachel is sincerely interested in hearing the stories, and mom enjoys sharing them.”

# SE KON WON

MD, CARDIOLOGIST, HAWAI'I PACIFIC HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, STRAUB MEDICAL CENTER

**W**hen John O'Keefe began feeling chest pains around 9 p.m. one night, he brushed it off when the pain subsided. But when the pain returned and intensified at 2 a.m., and again at 6 a.m., he called 911.

"As I got into the ambulance that morning, I wondered if I would make it to the hospital," O'Keefe said. As it turns out, two of O'Keefe's arteries had been 90% blocked – something O'Keefe hadn't known.

O'Keefe was rushed to Straub Medical Center's emergency department. Dr. Se Kon Won, a cardiologist with Hawai'i Pacific Health Medical Group, saw him there. The experienced doctor immediately made the call to implant two stents in O'Keefe's arteries, giving John a "second lease on life" by opening the arteries, and administering blood-thinning and cholesterol-lowering medications.

"I'm so happy to be alive. If you can imagine, it was like having a gun held to your head and planning to lose your life, but then suddenly there's no gun and you're safe," O'Keefe said.

He was discharged, in good health, the following day. "I don't have any limitations, so it really is amazing," he said. "I was released from the hospital the next day, and, after taking some medications, I've had no limitations on what I can do.

"I routinely check in with Dr. Won, and he is very interested in my welfare. He urges me to get in shape, eat better and exercise. He's a holistic doctor and very invested in his patients' health. It was clear that he was genuinely concerned with my overall well-being."

To this day, when O'Keefe checks in with Dr. Won, he makes sure to express his gratitude for giving him a second chance at life.

"He's very humble, but I can't help but say, 'You saved my life, and that didn't stop once I left the hospital.' I told him that I would gladly be his caddie for life, but he doesn't golf," O'Keefe said with a chuckle.



# 2021 HONOREES



## ADVOCACY AWARD

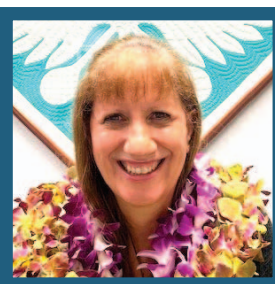
### WESLEY "WES" LO

CEO, OHANA PACIFIC HEALTH

Wesley "Wes" Lo has played an important role in supporting the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i's (HAH) advocacy positions at the state and federal level, especially as it pertains to long-term care.

As the chair of HAH's Long-Term Care Leadership Committee, Wes has helped to guide and prioritize issues that are most meaningful to HAH members and healthcare providers, such as pushing for a bill introduced in the U.S. Congress to allow for cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) to Hawai'i's skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) on their reimbursements under Medicare. He also advocated for the reauthorization of the critical nursing facility sustainability program, which helps to ensure access to nursing facility services for Hawai'i's kūpuna.

Wes has collaborated productively with his industry peers and other HAH members regardless of which type of facility they operate. He has been instrumental in helping to bridge gaps and start conversations on improving healthcare across the entire continuum of care. His work has helped to ensure that each patient and resident has access to high-quality healthcare.



## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

### CHARMAINE ANDERSON

OFFICE ASSISTANT, CARERESOURCE HAWAII

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Charmaine Anderson has been the backbone at CareResource Hawaii. She has taken on additional work to address the organization's many home health needs and its patients.

Charmaine is efficient, innovative, and uses creative thinking to ensure there are enough COVID-19 supplies on hand. Other daily duties include preparing COVID-19 kits and admission packets.

With more than 20 years of home health office experience, Charmaine is in charge of ordering, processing, and inventorying clinical staff and back-office supplies. When anything needs repairing in the office, such as the light fixtures or the air conditioning, Charmaine will immediately schedule an appointment for the repairman to come as soon as possible.

Coworkers say that Charmaine doesn't complain, and always exceeds expectations by working extra hours to guarantee that everything in the office and in the field stays in order. The leadership team and clinical staff really appreciate Charmaine because without her, things would not run smoothly. Even during the pandemic's stressful times, Charmaine continues to remain calm and always gets the job done. She exemplifies the true meaning of team spirit and customer service. CareResource is fortunate to have her be part of the team.



## EMERGENCY MANAGER AWARD

### ELIZABETH "LIZ" MAKARRA

DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS, WAIKIKI HEALTH

Elizabeth "Liz" Makarra, Director of Emergency Operations and Community Wellness at Waikiki Health, is passionate about emergency preparedness because she personally experienced a natural disaster. In 2004, Category 5 Hurricane Ivan struck the Cayman Islands, completely destroying her home and workplace. She was left without electricity or running water. This incident motivated Liz to take a four-day course in disaster relief team training, followed by Red Cross trainings when she later relocated to Hawai'i.

Since 2013, Liz has been directing the Incident Command Systems (ICS) Emergency Response Team at Waikiki Health, where she has developed its Emergency Management Plan, Emergency Preparedness Program, and the business continuity plan for its two homeless shelters. She also holds numerous trainings, shares best practices, and plans with the staff and local community health centers. Her colleagues say that the emergency preparedness programs are highly successful due to Liz's contributions, commitment, and because she holds them close to her heart.

When COVID-19 impacted Hawai'i, Liz used her planning knowledge and skills to install triage tents for screening, and managed supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE). She instituted N95 mask sterilization, decontamination workflows, and opened a vaccination clinic on January 2021. Liz is an invaluable asset to both Waikiki Health and the community health centers throughout Hawai'i.



## Congratulations to Hawaii's Healthcare Heroes!



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### EXECUTIVE AWARD

## MELINDA ASHTON, MD

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF QUALITY OFFICER, HAWAII PACIFIC HEALTH

Dr. Melinda Ashton is a shining example of a well-respected healthcare leader at Hawai'i Pacific Health (HPH) and a trusted general pediatrician in the community. Under her leadership as the Executive Vice President and Chief Quality Officer, Dr. Ashton has promoted significant improvements impacting patient care, such as pioneering the Training in Health Care Improvement (THI) program that measures healthcare providers nationwide in patient safety and quality.

As the COVID-19 pandemic started to escalate in Hawai'i, Dr. Ashton took the initiative to convene a response team at HPH, address internal and external communications needs, personal protective equipment (PPE) concerns, visitor management policies, and patient services procedures. She also collaborated with HPH's laboratory partner to enable all HPH employees and non-healthcare community partners to voluntarily be tested for COVID-19 antibodies.

Among many of Dr. Ashton's accomplishments are HPH's highly successful Pier 2 mass vaccination center, as well as the HPH COVID-19 Vax Squad bus, which has visited countless high schools and administered over 200,000 vaccinations. Dr. Ashton is also HPH's primary media spokesperson, having conducted nearly 100 interviews, and that number continues to grow.

We are truly grateful for Dr. Ashton, who continues to give selflessly to HPH and the community.



### LEADERSHIP AWARD

## CHRISSEY MILLER, RN

EMPLOYEE HEALTH MANAGER, MAUI HEALTH

Serving as Maui Health's employee health nurse and manager, Chrissy Miller sees keeping employees safe as one of her top job priorities.

She leads efforts, often behind the scenes, to ensure employees meet their expected healthcare responsibilities. However, when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, the needs and demands were shifting daily, and Chrissy stepped to the forefront.

With courage and a positive attitude, Chrissy became the voice for Maui's vaccination efforts. She set up a testing site, a vaccine clinic, six in-hospital vaccine stations, and established protocols for screening and testing for all employees while actively administering the vaccine.

During the first week of the vaccine clinic, Chrissy and her team administered more than 4,600 vaccinations.

To date, they have administered more than 72,000 vaccinations. This was a huge accomplishment for Chrissy and the team. Vaccine recipients were emotional as they showed tears of gratitude and relief.

Chrissy continued to give back and meet the needs of the community by establishing a help desk to assist many kūpuna who struggled with the registration process.

She also staffed a hotline to assist Maui residents with vaccination questions and guidance. Her peers at Maui Health are so proud of Chrissy and all she has achieved under these difficult circumstances.

# Congratulations to Hawaii's Healthcare Heroes!

St. Francis Healthcare System congratulates **Ligaya Bercasio, RN, Nurse Liaison**, for being named one of this year's Healthcare Heroes! Mahalo to all other Healthcare Heroes for helping to meet the needs of Hawaii's patients and families during such a critical time.

***You give your best so that patients can enjoy full, rich lives. Mahalo!***



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### PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

## RAYJI TSUTSUI, MD

CARDIOLOGIST, HAWAII PACIFIC HEALTH MEDICAL GROUP, STRAUB MEDICAL CENTER

A cardiologist specializes in treating the heart. Dr. Rayji Tsutsui not only treats patients who have heart disease but is known to give his whole heart to treating his patients with sincerity and compassion.

He is constantly praised by his patients for his thorough and helpful expertise. He has the ability to take the time to listen to each patient, provides clear explanations, and expresses sincere concern for their wellbeing.

After joining the Hawaii Pacific Health Medical Group at Straub Medical Center's cardiology unit, Dr. Tsutsui led a quality improvement project that involved extensive collaboration and care coordination across Straub Medical Center. The collaborating units included the emergency room, cardiology, catheterization labs, pharmacology, quality, legal, and operations, which interfaced with the city's paramedic and emergency response programs.

One of his findings resulted in improving the response time to deliver care to affected patients in the shortest time possible to achieve the best outcomes. Changes were implemented to existing standards and procedures, and significant improvements were made in medical performance for heart patients in Hawaii.

Hawaii Pacific Health's mission and commitment to quality cardiac care in the state is the driving force behind Dr. Tsutsui embracing the highest level of positivity and professionalism needed to transform the future of healthcare.



### PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD

## CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON "CJ"

COVID-19 COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM SPECIALIST, HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Enhancing the community's education and outreach efforts has been vital for the Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Christopher Johnson "CJ" has played a pivotal role in building bridges and forming partnerships with Hawaii's underserved communities. This includes Native Hawaiians, various Pacific Islander groups, and Filipinos. This outreach has helped to increase vaccine confidence and improve access to COVID-19 testing, quarantine, isolation facilities, and vaccinations.

CJ frequently spends time listening to community members to better understand the health equity challenges which were exacerbated by the pandemic. He is always willing to talk with people in various communities and participate in town hall meetings to answer any questions or concerns the public may have. Due to cross-cultural communication being needed during the pandemic, CJ developed a robust set of multilanguage resources that are used and posted on hawaiiCOVID19.com, and maintained in partnership with community organizations. CJ says the most gratifying moments occur when the people he meets in the community share that they received a vaccination because their questions and concerns were adequately addressed during a virtual town hall meeting or an outreach event. He loves knowing they were able to move beyond their initial skepticism about the vaccine. CJ's hard work in communicating reliable, trustworthy information on behalf of DOH to the public makes him an invaluable asset to Hawaii.



### ROSE ANN POYZER CAREGIVER AWARD

## DEBRA "DEBBIE" BORSCHÉ

HOME HEALTH AIDE, CARERESOURCE HAWAII

Home health aide Debra "Debbie" Borsche is highly accomplished and has received numerous recognitions within CareResource Hawaii from patients, caregivers, co-workers and administrators. She has set the bar high for all those who have worked with her throughout her 25 years at the agency.

Debbie takes pride in her work as she focuses on her patient's independence in daily living activities. Patients appreciate her sensitivity and patience while they regain independence, such as learning to bathe and achieve self-care.

At times, it can be challenging or overwhelming for patients, but her supportive attitude helps them find courage within themselves to accomplish their goals. One patient remarked, "I thank our Heavenly Father for blessing me with an awesome home health aide and friend such as yourself." This is one of the many compliments she receives often from both patients and staff. Not only does Debbie truly care about her patients and families. She genuinely wants them to succeed.

This past year was quite challenging due to the pandemic, however Debbie was up for the task. She remained committed to her patients and continued to provide care in the safest and most compassionate way. As a supportive team member, Debbie works closely with certified occupational therapists to assure the best experience and possible care. You can count on Debbie to deliver exceptional care to the patients in her community.

**Mahalo**  
for helping  
Hawaii  
thrive



Luisa Dalit-Ogawa, MSN, APRN, NP-C; Continuing Care

You're a pillar of our healthy community. Thanks to you, Hawaii is thriving more and more every day.

We're proud of you, Luisa! Congratulations to you and your fellow honorees.



### SENATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

## JARRETT KEOHOKALOLE

HAWAII STATE SENATE

In 2021, Sen. Jarrett Keohokalole served his first year as chair of the Senate Health Committee. He helped pass the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i (HAH) priority measures important to Hawai'i's healthcare delivery system, such as the hospital and nursing

facility sustainability programs.

In past years, Sen. Keohokalole has supported mental health services in the state and addressed health disparities. He has helped guide legislation and funding to support these issues, which are critical to the health of patients and the community.

An attorney by training, Sen. Keohokalole has helped improve quality of care and addressed issues such as homelessness, substance abuse, and how to treat patients who might lack the capacity to make their own medical decisions.

This award recognizes the work that Sen. Keohokalole has done in these past difficult years in order to increase access to care and help ensure a robust response to the pandemic.



### REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR AWARD

## RYAN YAMANE

HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

For more than a decade, Rep. Ryan Yamane has been an important figure in Hawai'i's healthcare policy.

He was instrumental in passing the hospital and nursing facility sustainability programs that support our local healthcare delivery system, which helps ensure access for Medicaid enrollees throughout the state. Rep. Yamane has first-hand experience of the industry as a social worker. He brings a sense of pragmatism into how Hawai'i can make healthcare delivery more effective for patients throughout the state.

He is currently the Chair of three committees critical to healthcare and has been a leader in working with the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i (HAH) members in finding ways to improve the healthcare system and support the work of Hawai'i's healthcare providers to deliver high-quality care.

This past year, Rep. Yamane was once again a leading force in reauthorizing the hospital and nursing facility sustainability bills, and also helped to shepherd an HAH-supported bill that provided clarity for patients in Hawai'i seeking services through telehealth.

*We couldn't do what we do  
without you doing what you do.*

*Congratulations to all  
2021 Healthcare Hero Award  
& Scholarship Recipients.*



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# CELEBRATING SCHOLARS

We knew even before the pandemic began that Hawai'i needed more healthcare workers, and that students in healthcare fields required help paying for their education and training. The HAH members and their employees support each other by donating to the annual silent auction at the Awards and Scholarship Gala, and the auction proceeds support healthcare scholarship recipients.

Due to the pandemic, HAH did not have the silent auction or the Awards and Scholarship Gala for two years in a row. However, HAH was fortunate to distribute \$9,000 to five recipients this year.

One student assists cancer patients throughout their cancer journey and is working to become a registered nurse. Another student overcame a horrible human trafficking experience and wants to help other victims in the behavioral health sector. They all show a love for helping others.

We all depend on our healthcare workers to care for us, and the people we love. By helping students who are aspiring to work in the healthcare industry, we can develop and bolster Hawai'i's healthcare workforce.

Donations to the scholarship fund are welcome at [hah.org](http://hah.org). Mahalo for your support!

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE CATEGORY

\$1,000 Scholarship

### BRIANA ORTIZ

of Pali Momi Medical Center  
Medical Assistant/Oncology Program Liaison for the  
Navigation and Infusion Department

Pursuing an Associate of Exploratory Health Science  
degree in nursing from Leeward Community College

## BACCALAUREATE CATEGORY

\$2,000 Scholarship

### ERIC BATALON

of Palolo Chinese Home  
Fund Development Manager

Pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in health  
administration from the University of Phoenix

### YIZHENG LOGAN

of Kona Community Hospital  
Certified Nurse's Assistant

Pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology  
from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

## MASTER'S DEGREE CATEGORY

\$2,000 Scholarship

### STEVEN MIGDOL

of Straub Medical Center  
Clinical Research Coordinator

Pursuing a Master of Science in applied anthropology  
from the University of North Texas

## DOCTORATE DEGREE CATEGORY

\$2,000 Scholarship

### KYLIE KWAK

of Straub Medical Center  
Registered Nurse (RN)

Pursuing a Doctorate of Nursing Practice in the family  
nurse practitioner program from the University of Hawai'i  
at Mānoa, Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing

## HAH AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE AND JUDGES

Jerry Danao

Wendy Odo

Julie Ford

Margaret Salvador

Colleen Garrett

Emilie Smith

Bess Hayashi

Corinne Suzuka

Sharie Higashionna-  
Ibarra

Liz Chun Uyehara

Beth Hoban

Jamie Velasco

Janna Hoshide

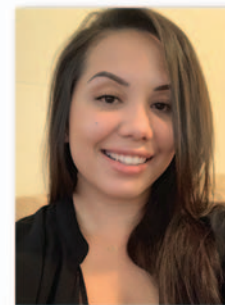
Stacy Wong

Glenda Lau

Alette Yoshii-Ho

## Congratulations to our Healthcare Heroes!

Palolo Chinese Home is thrilled to recognize our  
exceptional team members who went above and  
beyond to care for our kupuna and their families.



**Rachel Laffin,**  
2021 Healthcare Hero



**Eric B. Batalon,**  
2021 Hawaii Hospital  
Education and Research  
Foundation Scholarship  
Recipient



**PALOLO**  
CHINESE HOME  
Better Care. Better Lives



*A new name*

to honor a  
transformative gift



## NANCY ATMOSPERA-WALCH SCHOOL of NURSING

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa has renamed the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene after UH Mānoa Nursing alumna Dr. Nancy Atmospera-Walch, who made a transformative gift to the school. Her gift will have an enduring impact on the quality of nursing education, student success, community service and the nursing profession by:

**Improving school health for Hawai'i children** by creating an endowed professorship that will support the Hawai'i Keiki Program.

**Addressing the state's nursing workforce shortage** by providing operating funds to expand the Hawai'i State Center for Nursing.

**Supporting future nurses** by funding endowed scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students and contributing to the dean's fund.

**Developing early career nursing faculty** by creating two endowed professorships and supporting the school's recruitment efforts.

*Congratulations to the 2021 Healthcare Heroes & Scholarship Recipients!*



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII<sup>®</sup> at MĀNOA<sup>®</sup>  
NANCY ATMOSPERA-WALCH  
SCHOOL of NURSING  
[nursing.hawaii.edu](http://nursing.hawaii.edu)



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII<sup>®</sup>  
FOUNDATION  
[uhfoundation.org](http://uhfoundation.org)

# HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII MEMBERS

## Acute Care Hospitals and Hospital Based Long-Term Care

Adventist Health Castle  
 Hale Ho'ola Hamakua  
 Hawaii State Hospital  
 Hilo Medical Center  
 Ka'u Hospital  
 Kahuku Medical Center  
 Kaiser Permanente - Moanalua Medical Center  
 Kapiolani Medical Center for Women & Children  
 Kauai Veterans Memorial Hospital  
 Kohala Hospital  
 Kona Community Hospital and Kohala Hospital  
 Kuakini Medical Center  
 Kula Hospital

Lanai Community Hospital  
 Leahi Hospital  
 Maui Memorial Medical Center  
 Molokai General Hospital  
 Pali Momi Medical Center  
 Queen's North Hawaii Community Hospital  
 Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific  
 Samuel Mahelona Memorial Hospital  
 Shriners Hospitals for Children, Honolulu  
 Straub Medical Center  
 Sutter Health Pacific Kahi Mohala  
 The Queen's Medical Center  
 The Queen's Medical Center - West Oahu  
 Tripler Army Medical Center  
 Wahiawa General Hospital  
 Wilcox Medical Center

## Type II Adult Residential Care Homes

Aiea Heights Senior Living  
 Caring Manoa, LLC  
 Hale Ku'ike  
 Hale Ku'ike Bayside LLC  
 Hale Ku'ike Pali, LLC  
 Holy Family Care Home  
 Kuakini Home  
 Living Manoa Gardens, LLC  
 Pohai Nani - Good Samaritan Society  
 Wilson Senior Living

## Affiliate Members

Advantage Healthcare Provider, Inc.  
 Ai Pono Hawaii  
 All Island Case Management Corporation  
 American Medical Response  
 Blue Water Resources, LLC  
 Chaminade University of Honolulu School of Nursing  
 Evergreen Adult Day Care Hawaii Inc.  
 Hawaii Life Flight  
 Hina Mauka  
 Ho'okele Health Navigators, LLC  
 Mastercare  
 MedData Inc.  
 Pharmicare Hawaii  
 Providence Treatment  
 U.S. Renal Care  
 UH Hilo, the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy  
 University of Hawaii at Manoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing  
 University of Hawaii JABSOM  
 VA Pacific Islands Health Care System  
 Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center  
 Weinstein Pharmacy

## Assisted Living Facilities

15 Craigside  
 Arcadia Retirement Residence

Hawaii Kai Assisted Living & Retirement Community  
 'Ilima at Leihano  
 Kahala Nui  
 Kalakaua Gardens  
 One Kalakaua Senior Living  
 Pohai Nani - Good Samaritan Society  
 Regency at Hualalai - A Regency Pacific Retirement Community  
 Regency at Puakea - Kauai  
 The Plaza at Mililani  
 The Plaza at Moanalua  
 The Plaza at Pearl City  
 The Plaza at Punchbowl  
 The Plaza at Waikiki

## Associate Members

Accenture  
 Altres Medical  
 American HealthTech  
 American Organization of Nurse Leaders (AONL) Hawaii  
 AON Risk Services, Inc. of Hawaii  
 Atlas Insurance Agency  
 Blood Bank of Hawaii  
 Cardinal Health  
 Charter Communications - Spectrum Enterprise  
 Clinical Labs of Hawaii  
 CW Associates, CPAs  
 Dentons USA LLP  
 Diagnostic Laboratory Services, Inc.  
 Ernst & Young LLP  
 Financial Benefits Insurance  
 Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel LLP  
 Harmony Healthcare International (HHI)  
 Hawaii Association of Directors of Nursing Administration/LTC (HADONA)  
 Hawaii Central Federal Credit Union  
 Hawaii Senior Care  
 Hawaii State Center for Nursing  
 Hawaiian Islands Medical Corp.  
 HiHealthcare  
 Inlight Risk Management, LLC  
 Insight Imaging  
 Intellimed International  
 Invision Imaging  
 ISI Services LLC  
 Kahu Malama Nurses  
 Kokua Mau, A Movement to Improve Care



**Shriners  
 Children's™**  
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**From our superheroes to yours.**

Congratulations to all 2021 Healthcare Association of Hawaii award recipients.

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A legacy of caring for Hawaii's keiki since 1923

[www.shrinerschildrens.org/hawaii](http://www.shrinerschildrens.org/hawaii)

Legacy of Life Hawaii  
 Medline Industries, Inc.  
 Monarch Insurance Services,  
 Inc.  
 Mountain-Pacific Quality  
 Health Foundation  
 Mutual of America Financial  
 Group  
 Newport Hospital Corporation  
 Pharmerica  
 Qmetis, Inc.  
 Reliant Rehabilitation  
 SH Consulting LLC  
 Silver Sage Physician Services  
 Sodexo Healthcare Services  
 Synergy RX PBM, LLC  
 TRANE  
 United Wound Healing

### Hospices

Bristol Hospice Hawaii LLC  
 Hawaii Care Choices  
 Hospice Maui, Inc.  
 Hospice of Kona  
 Islands Hospice  
 Kauai Hospice  
 Malama Ola Health Services  
 Navian Hawaii  
 North Hawaii Hospice  
 St. Francis Hospice

### Long-Term Care: Free-Standing Skilled Nursing Facilities

15 Craigside  
 Aloha Nursing & Rehab  
 Centre  
 Ann Pearl Rehabilitation and  
 Healthcare  
 Arcadia Retirement Residence  
 Avalon Care Center - Honolulu  
 LLC  
 Care Center of Honolulu  
 Clarence T.C. Ching Villas at St.  
 Francis  
 Garden Isle Rehabilitation &  
 Healthcare Center  
 Hale Anuenue Restorative  
 Care  
 Hale Ho Aloha  
 Hale Kupuna Heritage Home  
 Hale Makua  
 Hale Makua - Wailuku

### Home Health Agencies/ Home Infusion/ Pharmacies

Adventist Health Castle Home  
 Care  
 Bayada Home Health Care  
 Bayada Home Health Care -  
 Maui  
 CareResource Hawaii  
 Home Health by Hale Makua  
 Kaiser Permanente Home  
 Health Agency - Maui  
 Kohala Home Health Care  
 Oahu Home Healthcare  
 Prime Care Services Hawaii,  
 Inc.  
 Stay At Home Healthcare  
 Services  
 Wilson Homecare

Hale Malamalama  
 Hale Nani Rehabilitation &  
 Nursing Center  
 Hale Ola Kino  
 Hi'olani Care Center at Kahala  
 Nui  
 Islands Skilled Nursing &  
 Rehabilitation  
 Ka Punawai Ola  
 Kalakaua Gardens  
 Kauai Care Center  
 Kulana Malama  
 Legacy Hilo Rehabilitation  
 and Nursing Center  
 Life Care Center of Hilo  
 Life Care Center of Kona  
 Liliha Healthcare Center  
 Maluhia  
 Manoa Cottage - Kaimuki  
 Maunalani Nursing and  
 Rehabilitation Center  
 Nuuanu Hale  
 Oahu Care Facility  
 Palolo Chinese Home  
 Pearl City Nursing Home  
 Pohai Nani: Harry & Jeanette  
 Weinberg Care Center  
 Pu'uwai 'O Makaha  
 VA Center for Aging  
 Yukio Okutsu State Veterans  
 Home

## Healthcare Association of Hawaii

## Healthcare Heroes 2021



### LEADERSHIP AWARD WINNER

Mahalo and warm congratulations

*Chrissy Miller, RN*

Your dedicated leadership has inspired so many! Your commitment to making a difference for Maui Health employees and our community has been monumental. Because of your hard work, Maui Health has been able to provide over 72,000 vaccinations to our community, saving countless lives, and doing our part to end this pandemic.

Mahalo to all 2021 Hawaii Healthcare Heroes!

## Congratulations!

Waikiki Health is proud to have **Liz Makarra**, our Director of Emergency Operations and Community Wellness, being recognized as one of Hawaii's Healthcare Heroes in Emergency Management!



waikikihealth.org

**WAIKIKI HEALTH**  
 MEDICAL & DENTAL - BEHAVIORAL HEALTH - SOCIAL SERVICES

Maui Memorial Medical Center  
 Maui Memorial Outpatient Clinic  
 Kula Hospital and Clinic  
 Lana'i Community Hospital

mauihealth.org | #HEROESWORKHERE

**MAUI  
 HEALTH**

Community hospitals affiliated  
 with KAISER PERMANENTE.



# Hawaii Cancer Care



**Mahalo to the readers of the Honolulu Star-Advertiser for Voting Hawaii Cancer Care as the Best Cancer Care Treatment Center in Hawaii!**



## Locations



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500 Ala Moana Blvd.  
Suite 6-230  
Honolulu, HI 96813

*Telemedicine visits also available.*

Phone: (808) 524-6115  
Fax: (808) 528-1711

[www.HawaiiCancerCare.com](http://www.HawaiiCancerCare.com)

98-1247 Kaahumanu St.  
Suite 106  
Aiea, HI 96701

*Telemedicine visits also available.*

Phone: (808) 539-2273  
Fax: (808) 379-4799

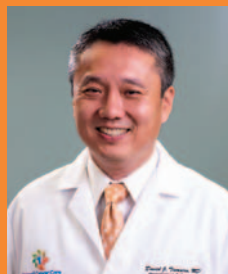
[www.HawaiiCancerCare.com](http://www.HawaiiCancerCare.com)



Jon Fukumoto  
MD



Melvin Palalay  
MD



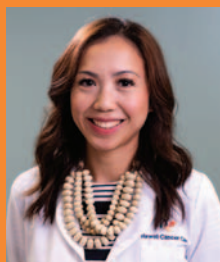
David Tamura  
MD



Arnold Yee  
MD



Ashley Springer  
APRN



Judy Ko  
APRN



Bryce Montalbo  
APRN