

2016 CHARITY WALK RAISES \$2 MILLION STATEWIDE FOR LOCAL CHARITIES

HONOLULU – The record number of visitor arrivals to Hawai‘i took a back seat to the record-breaking 2016 Visitor Industry Charity Walk, which concluded its statewide campaign today on Oahu.

The Charity Walk, sponsored by the Hawai‘i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA) as a benefit for local charities, topped \$2 million this year, besting last year’s \$1.8 million. The walks, which bring together HLTA chapters, member hotels and businesses, and other sponsors, are held on six islands. Funds raised on each island this year were:

Hawai‘i Island: over \$300,000

Kaua‘i: over \$250,000

Lana‘i: over \$19,600

Maui: \$976,500

Moloka‘i: over \$40,200

O‘ahu: \$425,000 and counting

Statewide total: over \$2 million for local nonprofit organizations across the state.

The 2016 Oahu Charity Walk, which included nearly 7,000 participants, began at Ala Moana Park, proceeded through Waikiki via Kalakaua Avenue, and returned to the park. The event featured food and refreshments at stops along the route, entertainment, and door prizes. Kool Gold’s Uncle Tom Moffatt was the honorary chairperson. Dean Nakasone, HLTA chairperson-elect and general manager of Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort, served as the Charity Walk chair.

Mufi Hannemann, HLTA president and CEO, who along with his staff, coordinated the activities statewide said, “This was yet another splendid example of the hospitality industry working together to serve our communities. The generosity of the hoteliers and business members, the participation of employees and their families and friends, and the interest from the general public and community, especially non-profit groups, all contributed to another successful endeavor—and a record-breaking event to boot overall.

“This year we hit an all-time high of \$2 million raised, and donations are still rolling in. The Charity Walk is one way for us to thank the people of Hawaii for their support of our industry by raising money that will directly benefit local charities. Last year we helped 300 local charities and we hope to kokua more this year. We take tremendous pride in organizing this event and say mahalo to everyone for their involvement.”

The Charity Walk began in 1974 when the Hawai'i Hotel Association, predecessor of the HLTA, organized a "super walk" to benefit a major charity. In 1978, the association expanded the event to be a statewide fundraiser for numerous local charities. Since its inception, the Charity Walk has now raised \$30 million, including this year's total. All the donations stay in Hawai'i and benefit local charities exclusively. The grant application process is still open for Oahu (until May 31) and Kauai (until June 30). Grant applications can be found at www.charitywalkhawaii.org.

About the HLTA:

The Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association is a non-profit, statewide trade organization of lodging properties, lodging owners and management companies, suppliers, and related firms and individuals. It was founded in 1947 and is now the state's largest private sector tourism organization. Today, HLTA consists of 700 members representing the state's leading industry, 166 of which are lodging properties comprising almost 50,000 rooms. The HLTA is a partner state affiliate of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, the largest organization of its kind in the world.

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