

# HOTSHOTS



## ▲ Funding Security Patrol In Chinatown

Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, Hawai'i Hotel Industry Foundation, Hawai'i Tourism Authority and the state of Hawai'i presented a \$15,000 check to Chinatown Improvement District for its security patrol pilot program. Pictured are (from left) Mufi Hannemann, HLTA president and CEO; City Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi; HPD Chief Susan Ballard; HPD deputy chief John McCarthy; Kainoa Adolpho of Chinatown Improvement District; Lt. Gov. Josh Green; Lee Stack, Chinatown Improvement District president; City Councilwoman Carol Fukunaga; Chris Tatum, HTA president and CEO; Lynelle Yuu of Chinatown Improvement District; and state Rep. Daniel Holt.

PHOTO COURTESY HLTA

## ► Kaiser Donates \$10,000 To AccesSurf

Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i donated \$10,000 to AccesSurf Hawai'i in recognition of outstanding volunteer efforts of Yvette Torres (right), director of environmental services. Torres is the fourth of six employees recognized by Kaiser Permanente for her Volunteer Service with the opportunity to donate \$10,000 to a nonprofit of her choice as part of Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i's 60th anniversary celebration. Pictured with Torres is Cara Short, executive director of AccesSurf.

PHOTO COURTESY KAISER PERMANENTE HAWAII

## MidWeek Mystery Shopper WINNER

### Rho Hiro Wins \$150 Shopping Spree At Foodland

On Friday, Rho Hiro went to Foodland in Kapolei for some groceries. As she left the store with her purchase at 2:15 p.m., MidWeek's representative approached Rho with a simple question. She answered correctly and instantly won a \$150 Foodland shopping spree.

"Everything here is fresh," said this week's Mystery Shopper on

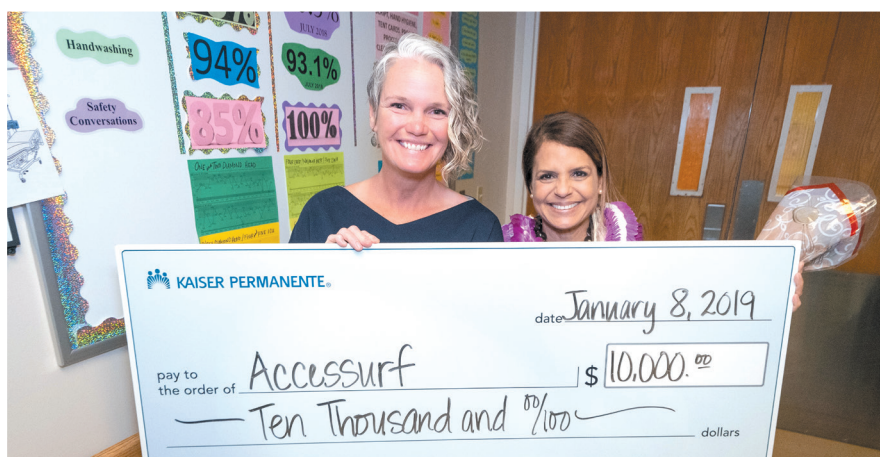
why she likes shopping at Foodland. "Also, it's clean, and the clerks are friendly and helpful."

Rho was born and raised in Kāne'ohe, and graduated from Castle High School in 1979. In her free time, she enjoys reading, coloring, doing Diamond Dotz and puzzles, and watching game shows. She also likes to read *MidWeek*.



Rho Hiro

"I like the Poll question and book reviews (by Nicole Kato)," she said. "I also like to read Pamela Young's Applause section and Alice Inoue's A Mindful Moment. I've read a couple of her books already."



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## ISLAND MATTERS *Mufi Hannemann*

# Securing Homelessness Funding For Chinatown

Chinatown may seem far removed from Waikīkī, the heart of tourism, but this historic part of Honolulu is not only a popular draw for visitors but also faces the same challenges. One of the biggest is homelessness.

That's why Hawai'i Tourism Authority and Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association joined with two civic-minded organizations to help address this concern last month, during which we took part in a grant presentation at Kekaulike Mall to nonprofit groups operating in Chinatown.

We awarded Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center \$90,162 for its homeless outreach program, which is modeled after Seattle's successful LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion). The center is working hand-in-hand with Honolulu Police Department to divert offenders suspected of certain low-level crimes to social services rather than criminal prosecution. The center collaborates with HPD Capt. Mike Lambert,



Heather Lusk of Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center speaks at a ceremony during which the nonprofit received a \$90,000 grant for its homelessness initiatives. Also pictured at the event are (from left) HPD Capt. John McCarthy, HPD Chief Susan Ballard, City Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi, Lt. Gov. Josh Green, City Councilwoman Carol Fukunaga, state Rep. Daniel Holt and the author. **GERALDINE ILAN PHOTO**

who is spearheading the department's homeless outreach unit and gets high marks from SHOPO.

Chinatown Improvement Association received \$15,000 to help fund a security patrol pilot program, which assists HPD and HHHRC in their endeavors. Both grants were dollar-for-dollar matches for money committed by each group.

The funding of these projects derives from public dollars allocated through Act 86 from the 2018 legislature, which matches private-sector donations with state money for programs combating

homelessness in tourism-impacted areas.

HLTA made this a top priority in our legislative agenda, and we're grateful to the legislature, Gov. David Ige's administration, particularly

comptroller Curt Otaguro, and HTA for their support in making this public-private partnership a success.

The contributions provided to these two programs are a direct result of keynote remarks delivered by HPD Chief Susan Ballard at our March Visitor Public Safety Conference. In her remarks, the chief emphasized the strong focus HPD is placing on the growing homelessness situation on O'ahu, and requested additional support from the visitor industry to assist in their mission.

Chinatown was a no-brainer in our minds for the use of these funds. It does draw its fair share of tourists, and we do know that there are some homeless individuals who, at times, relocate to Chinatown from Waikīkī.

At the award presentation ceremony, Lt. Gov. Josh Green, Ballard, HHHRC

executive director Heather Lusk and Chinatown Improvement district president Lee Stack joined HTA president and CEO Chris Tatum and myself in affirming the importance of this funding to downtown Honolulu.

Also joining us for the presentations were state Rep. Daniel Holt, Honolulu City Council Vice Chairwoman Ann Kobayashi, City Councilwoman Carol Fukunaga, HPD Deputy Chief John McCarthy, Lambert, area Neighborhood Board chairman Chu Lan Shubert-Kwok, Eric Wong and more.

This was just the latest in a series of initiatives HLTA has taken to stem the homelessness crisis. The hospitality industry has donated over \$2.5 million to service providers over the past several years, now supplemented with these

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matching-fund grants, and with lots more to come. It proves the importance, and results, of public-private partnerships in helping to solve our most vexing problems.

### Transferring HART To The City Not A Good Idea

A member of City Council has floated the idea of eliminating the quasi-independent Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation and return control to City administration. The idea is premature and unnecessary.

HART was authorized by voters in 2011. Yes, there have been problems with rail, but give HART a chance to work under its latest CEO Andrew Robbins, who has been turning things around given the problems he inherited from his predecessors, especially Dan Grabaukas, who operated under the watch of most of these same councilmembers and mayor.

The rail recovery plan has been hand delivered by Robbins to Federal Transit Administration, the P-3 process to enable private funding is poised to begin, and HART is pushing for an interim opening to start in the fall of 2020.

It doesn't make sense in the midst of these critical objectives for City Council to engage in micromanaging a project that will send mixed signals to D.C. again of the latest power play locally and create uncertainty with the private sector on whether this is a viable project to invest in.

Instead of doing away with HART, the Council should do a better job of holding the mayor and HART accountable for their actions, and exercise better judgment in the oversight responsibilities that they presently hold over the rail project.

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