



## ISLAND MATTERS *Mufi Hannemann*

# Record Money Raised For Charities

One of the definite highlights of HLTA's annual Visitor Industry Charity Walk, in addition to the walk itself, is presenting the many deserving non-profit agencies that apply for funding through the charity walk with grant money. Last Wednesday, HLTA distributed nearly \$330,000 across 120 of these commendable charities at our annual Oahu Charity Walk Allocation event held at Blue Note Hawaii at Outrigger Waikiki Beach Hotel. It was heartwarming to see representatives from the various organizations filled with joy and appreciation as they received their checks.

This year was the 38th annual Visitor Industry Charity Walk, and HLTA elevated the bar again by raising a record \$2 million to spread among 346 charities statewide, which also set a new record for the number of charitable organizations helped. Additionally, we saw many charities involved in the walk for the first time, and judging by their comments, this won't be the last. Says an excited Michael Hane, director of planning and program development at Honolulu Community Action Program, "We definitely plan to be back and will do

more next year." HCAP made its debut in the charity walk with an impressive 83 walkers.

On some islands, including Oahu, all the money raised by charities at the respective walks goes directly back to them. Moreover, they are able to add to that total if they are instrumental in providing volunteers and other manpower services that help ensure the success of each of these walks. It provides a great incentive for the organizations to become more engaged with one of the biggest charitable events in the state.

Maui County distributed its funds among 115 nonprofits, including Westside Hoops basketball club, which raised more than \$90,000 and brought in the highest amount from a nonprofit in the state. Friends of Molokai High and Middle School raised \$10,000 this year to help student-athletes with travel, supplies and uniforms. Lanai Arts Center brought in \$11,000, almost double what it raised last year, to support its many art programs for residents and visitors.

On Hawaii island, where 49 charities were funded, Waimea Wranglers, a roller derby club, brought in more than double the funds it raised in last year's walk, and volunteered to cone



The 2016 Oahu Charity Walk recipients happily pose for a group photo with HLTA staff at Blue Note Hawaii

PHOTO COURTESY GREG YAMAMOTO

off and set up the entire course — much to the delight of HLTA Hawaii chapter.

Over on the Garden Island, Lihue Lutheran Church, which provides snacks for needy children through its Mobile Munchies program, continued its tradition of donating three charity walk-themed quilts to the Countdown to Charity Walk at Kukui Grove. Last month, Mayor Bernard Carvalho and Council Chairman Mel Rapozo joined me in making 62 organizations extremely happy as they received their checks at a special breakfast reception at Grand Hyatt Kauai.

On Oahu, we saw a great mix of organizations this year that have joined us in previous

charity walks, such as Winners Camp Foundation, American Diabetes Association and Hospice Hawaii, as well as first-time participants Ho'ola Na Pua and Waipahu High School's Academy of Hospitality & Tourism. Ho'ola Na Pua helps victims of sex trafficking through comprehensive care services. The charity walk funds it received will help expand its mentoring program to continue healing and empowering the victims it serves. Waipahu High, in its quest to become the first Hawaii high school to have its Academy of Hospitality & Tourism attain national accreditation, plans to use its funds to provide enriching beyond-the-classroom education

experiences for its students by learning from successful members of the hospitality industry.

"We are very grateful to HLTA for always being at the forefront at helping our youth prepare for a better tomorrow. Their leadership on behalf of the hospitality industry in giving back to the community is most appreciated," says Waipahu High's respected principal Keith Hayashi.

The funds for HCAP will go toward its Kumuhonua Transitional Living Center, which provides support services for single adults and couples who are homeless or at-risk for homelessness.

Planning for the 2017 charity walk already has begun.

Former Outrigger executive Dean Nakasone, who did a fantastic job as this year's statewide walk chairman, is turning over the reins to Scott Ingwers, Trump International Hotel Waikiki's regional vice president and managing director. Ingwers, who recently was named HLTA's chairman for 2016-17, is "anxious to get going." He boldly proclaims: "I am looking forward to working with my visitor-industry colleagues in raising the bar even higher in 2017." That only can mean good news for statewide charity groups come May 2017, when we launch the 39th annual Visitor Industry Charity Walk. Indeed, it has become a way of life and "a tradition of



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## Smart And Safe

giving” for the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association signature fundraising event to help the people of Hawaii.

We all know that, when emergencies happen, every second counts. When calling 9-1-1, there’s a process of disclosing personal information with the operator about you and family members. While sharing these details is critical, in many emergencies it can be difficult or unsafe to communicate them to a 9-1-1 operator. That’s why, when police officers Taylor Hoopii and Spencer Anderson, with the solid support of Honolulu Police Department and SHOPO, introduced me to a new system called Smart911, I was all ears. I had known and worked with both gentlemen when I was Honolulu mayor, and found them to be extremely diligent and dedicated.

Smart911 is a free 9-1-1 planning service that ensures that the details you would need to tell 9-1-1 are available immediately in the event you cannot verbally provide such vital information. All you have to do is sign up through the private and secure system and share information you want 9-1-1 to know in the event of an emergency. This can include your phone number, addresses, medical conditions, family members, and vehicles — even pets. Signing up is quick and

easy, and you always can log back in to add or update information.

Smart911 also works for institutions and organizations. The Smart911Facility service helps protect employees, visitors and properties by keeping track of a building’s floor plans, exits, property contacts, gate or access codes and other information that is critical to help streamline response.

From a hospitality-industry perspective, I immediately recognized the huge benefits to making this service available to all of our hotel properties and surrounding businesses, which not only can help our hotel employees, but also visitors who frequent our Islands.

Safety and security continue to be top of mind throughout our nation, and one of Honolulu’s biggest assets is that it is one of the safest big cities in America. This new safety feature can buttress that claim. Officers Anderson and Hoopii run a two-man operation out of HPD, educating and sharing Smart911 with the community, so if you are inclined, help them spread the word by signing up on Smart911.com, and share the link with your family, colleagues and neighbors. Think of it as another great initiative to make our ohana and our communities safer.

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<sup>2</sup>Please see the Consumer Deposit Account Agreement and Disclosure Statement and Bankoh Consumer Electronic Financial Services Agreement and Disclosure Statement and Fee Schedule for Personal Checking and Savings Accounts for terms, conditions, fees, and additional restrictions that may apply.

<sup>3</sup>Waived bank closing costs include \$125 mortgage documentation fee, \$75 trust review fee, and \$75 condominium review fee. If escrow is required, we will provide a credit of up to \$175 to offset escrow fees related to paying off existing liens. Payments to third parties of certain fees, which generally total between \$0 and \$5,600 may be required at closing, and are not waived as part of this offer.

<sup>1</sup>#1 Home Equity Lender ranking is for total number of home equity loans made and total dollars committed by lenders in the State of Hawaii from June 2015 to June 2016. Information derived from State of Hawaii Bureau of Conveyances property information for 2015 - 2016. Information is deemed reliable but not guaranteed.