



New Year greetings to all of you:

We've seen another year slip into history, but none of us can say that it was uneventful or forgettable. Marked by tragedy and significant achievements, we say goodbye to 2023 and look forward to the challenges and opportunities of a New Year.

In the aftermath of COVID, we celebrated hard-won victories in our effort to secure temporary hazard pay for all of you who continued to provide uninterrupted public service during the pandemic. Early arbitration victories with the County of Maui and Department of Education were soon followed by a hazard determination in Kauai County. We look forward to more victories and a final resolution of this issue in 2024.

At the Legislature, HGEA led the way to secure passage of a law that gave public sector unions a greater say in our representative on the Hawaii Labor Relations Board. The net result was one of our own staff being named to the board — a voice for workers on the board is secured.

This year was marked by the tragedy of the Maui wildfires. Even in the face of disaster, HGEA members shined, providing early and continuing support to the folks impacted, including the financial support from all of you and the actions of our board of directors. We will continue to stand with the Maui community as our attention turns to rebuilding.

None of our successes would be possible without the strength and solidarity of our HGEA members. As an organization we stand tall amongst our peers as the most effective and influential union for working people. As we head into 2024, I wish to thank all of you for standing HGEA Strong, remaining loyal to our union. It continues to be my privilege to work with all of you, and I have never been prouder than I am today of being associated with Hawaii's public workforce.

From our board of directors and all of us on staff, best wishes for a happy and prosperous 2024. I know we're ready to make this another successful year for HGEA.

In solidarity

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

**Debra Kagawa-Yogi**Deputy Executive Director - Field Services

**Malulani Moreno**Communications Manager

Wencie Hoang
Communications Specialist

Kristina Lum

Senior Communications Specialist

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# LEGISLATIVE VICTORY: HAWAII LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

In a major victory for HGEA members, Act 260, a measure balancing the power on the Hawaii Labor Relations Board, officially passed the Legislature this year. This allows the exclusive representatives of public sector employees to choose the labor representative on the HLRB.

The board helps to fairly resolve labor disputes and enforce the rights of unionized employees. The previous process for appointing members of the board was flawed, with the governor having power over all three seats. The labor representative was selected by the governor from three recommendations from the unions. Obviously, this gave the governor significant influence over the board. Act 260 ensures that labor has a genuine seat at the table.

Following this victory, Gov. Josh Green accepted the unanimous nomination of all six public employee unions of former HGEA Advocacy Chief Stacy Moniz to the HLRB.

Moniz comes with a wealth of experience fighting for public employees, most recently leading the ongoing effort to secure COVID-19 temporary hazard pay for HGEA members across the state.

He began his HLRB appointment in August and will serve through June 30, 2029.

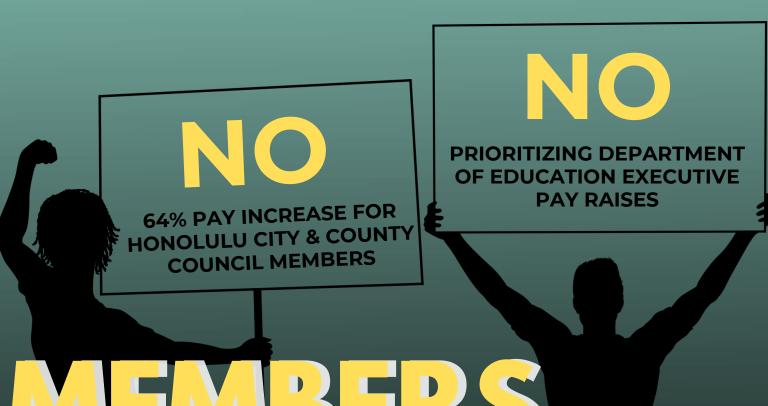
# **SUBMIT YOUR CONTRACT PROPOSALS**



Current contracts for all bargaining units expire on June 30, 2025. We encourage you to submit a contract proposal if there is something you would like your negotiating team to consider for the successor bargaining agreement beginning on July 1, 2025.

Proposals must be submitted no later than January 31, 2024.





HGEA leadership and members voiced opposition to measures that would prioritize pay raises for executives and elected officials.

As government struggles to recruit for job vacancies due to low salaries, the Honolulu City and County Salary Commission proposed big pay increases for officials such as a 64% raise for council members.

Members answered our call to action and submitted testimony against the proposal. A Unit 13 member wrote: "In my department, staffing shortages are the primary cause of the Superintendents received an adjustment in backlog of thousands of permits, which leads to months-long and sometimes year-long delays for citizens trying to improve their living conditions and the value of their homes. The starting salary for a building permit plans

examiner is around \$37,000 - simply not enough to hire and retain enough employees."

Members in the Department of Education responded to a similar call to action when the DOE proposed executive pay increases before attempting to resolve long-standing pay equity issues for school support staff.

With an overwhelming 200 pages of testimony submitted and in-person testimony of some members, the Board of Education reduced the DOE's proposal. Conference Area pay, but similar increases for other positions were deferred.

# VOICES FROM MAUI MEMBERS

STORIES FROM THE WILDFIRES

"IT WAS LIKE ALL OF MAUI WAS ON FIRE"

- MARIANNE WHEELER



WATCH INTERVIEW
WITH BARNES

Loud winds billowing through Lahaina woke Ian Barnes, an ocean safety officer from Maui County, from sleep at 4 a.m. He found the power out and smelled smoke entering the house through the windows.

Little did Barnes know that the fires raging on the West Side of Maui would get increasingly more devastating — and deadly — as the day progressed.

"I kept seeing the black smoke," said Barnes, a Unit 15 member with HGEA. "We felt this big wind shift and all of a sudden it got super hot."

The first thought on Barnes' mind was the safety of his children. He scrambled to collect his six-year-old daughter and four-year-old son before evacuating with them to Napili. In the days to come, he would realize the extent of the destruction.



WATCH INTERVIEW
WITH WHEELER

It was mid-afternoon when Marianne Wheeler, principal of Kula Elementary School and Unit 6 member, was notified about fires nearing her house. She left work but road conditions prevented her from making it home, and she made the call for anyone at campus to evacuate.

"It was like all of Maui was on fire," said Wheeler as she recounted seeing the glow of the Pulehu and Kihei fires as the plume above Lahaina still hung heavy in the sky.

Residents struggled to get their basic needs met in the small upcountry community after fires ravaged pasture lands and left the water system contaminated. Wheeler had the added responsibility of taking care of her students and staff, but she was not alone. "Everybody I know stepped up to the plate and went above and beyond to make sure kids were welcomed back in a safe and nurturing environment."





WATCH INTERVIEW
WITH DEAN

Jeri Dean, vice principal at King Kekaulike High School and Unit 6 member, was thousands of miles away from home taking one of her children to college when she heard that Lahaina was burning.

Dean relied on messages from Maui friends and family to piece together what was happening as she desperately tried to get ahold of the rest of her children and loved ones: "Throughout the night, I was learning that the outlet mall burned, this gas station burned, that Lahainaluna homes are burning."

She flew home the next day, but it would take her three days to locate and confirm the safety of her children.

Dean is thankful for the assistance she received in the aftermath from the community and her union ohana, noting that HGEA Maui staff reached out to her immediately. "I want to say I appreciate HGEA for seeing us as individuals who need a certain kind of support right now."

# **UNIONS HELP WILDFIRE VICTIMS**

Following the wildfires, the HGEA Board of Directors approved the use of \$100,000 in relief funds for members who were directly impacted. Members received funds, which amount to \$500 for active and retired members and \$250 for associate members. This program is in addition to support from affiliate unions. Both the Hawaii State AFL-CIO's Employees Lifeline Program and AFSCME's Fallen Heroes Fund have distributed \$250 gift cards to affected union members.

Impacted members were also invited to "shop" the Maui island Division office's donated store of household goods and supplies, much of which came from donations by AFL-CIO in Los Angeles.

"Many of our members have lost their homes, cars and their way of life," said Randy Perreira, executive director of HGEA. "Our members are the lifeblood of our union, and we want them to know we stand with them as they recover from this tragedy."

You can still help union members on Maui receive much-needed assistance:

Hawaii State AFL-CIO's Hawaii Employees Lifeline Program supports union ohana on Maui with critical emergency assistance. You can make checks payable to the "Hawaii Employees Lifeline Program," and send to: Hawaii State AFL-CIO, Attn: Cathy Lederer, 888 Mililani Street, Suite 501, Honolulu, HI 96813

**AFSCME's Fallen Heroes Fund** was created by the International Union to help AFSCME ohana who have suffered losses due to natural disasters. Every donation made will support union members affected by the wildfires.

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# 2023-2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The election for the new board of directors was held in the spring. Directors will serve through June 30, 2025.



PRESIDENT
Ginet U. Hayes
Unit 13



VICE PRESIDENT
(UNIT 3 DIRECTOR)
Jon A. Gasper
Unit 3



SECRETARY
(HAWAII DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE)
Sandra "Sandy" Moses
Unit 3



TREASURER (UNIT 13 DIRECTOR) Bennett T. Yap Unit 13



OAHU DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE Helen H. Hamada Unit 8



KAUAI
DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE
Russell K. Wellington
Unit 13



MAUI DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE Cameron J. Dexter Unit 13



**PRESIDENT**Ethel L. Fleming
State President



**UNIT 2 DIRECTOR**Jason R. Locke
Oahu



**UNIT 3 DIRECTOR** Helena B.R. Brown Maui



**UNIT 3 DIRECTOR**Ebony V. Butihi
Maui



**UNIT 3 DIRECTOR**Ryvette G. Figueroa
Maui



**UNIT 3 DIRECTOR**Vernon L. Verzon
Oahu



**UNIT 6 DIRECTOR**James L. Sunday,
Oahu



**UNIT 8 DIRECTOR**Jaret K. C. Leong
Oahu



**UNIT 9 DIRECTOR**Josette K. Kawana
Oahu

|8



**UNIT 13 DIRECTOR**Joycelyn "Jolly" Iwata
Kauai



UNIT 13 DIRECTOR Cheryl Pokipala Maui



UNIT 14 DIRECTOR
Charles R. Among Jr.
Oahu



Jonah I. Romero

Maui

# **UNIT 4 SPECIAL ELECTION NOTICE**

Due to an unexpected vacancy in the Unit 4 seat on the State Board of Directors, HGEA is holding a special election. The elected member will complete the term of office through June 2025. Active members in Unit 4 interested in running for office will be able to access a candidate packet online at <a href="https://www.hgea.org">www.hgea.org</a> or pick up a candidate packet from any of our four HGEA offices starting Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023. If you have questions, contact Field Services Officer Chad Ngai at cngai@hgea.org or 808-543-0042.

### **KEY ELECTION DATES**

Dec. 28, 2023, 4:30 p.m. - Deadline to submit nomination petitions

Jan. 12 to Feb. 11, 2024 - Period for mailing ballots

Feb. 19, 2024, 4:30 p.m. - Deadline to request ballot (if new member or not received)

Feb. 26, 2024 - Last day to vote (Election Date). All ballots must be postmarked on the election date.

March 10, 2024 - Ballots counted and results certified

### IF A RUN-OFF ELECTION IS REQUIRED

March 24-31, 2024 - Period for mailing ballots

April 8, 2024, 4:30 p.m. - Deadline to request ballot

April 15, 2024 - Last day to vote; ballots must be postmarked on this date

April 28, 2024 - Ballots counted and results certified

# MAUI MEMBER STARTS CAR RECYCLING PROGRAM



Unit 13 Member Tess Herman, who runs Maui County's abandoned vehicle program, has been working tirelessly with her team to tackle a growing problem on the island: abandoned cars.

Across Maui Nui, it has become more and more common to find junk vehicles along the roads and highways, creating an eyesore and environmental hazards. "Every item has potential to be recycled. (Our program) develops programming for products that are not often thought about as traditional 'recyclables,'" said Herman, recycling specialist IV with Maui County.

Herman, over the course of more than a year, led her team to launch the Maui County Tow and Recycling Car Pilot Program. With the pilot program now up and running, Maui County residents can get free towing and recycling of their old unwanted junk vehicles.

"I am proud of this accomplishment because getting a new government program up and running is a major challenge we overcame, and this program is a win-win for both residents and the environment alike," Herman said.

WATCH OUR INTERVIEW
WITH HERMAN





# SCAM ALERT

Don't get taken in by anti-union organizations from outside Hawaii trying to scam you and your union sisters and brothers by soliciting your personal information.

These groups may contact you through the mail, email or by phone. Some may even fraudulently claim to be from HGEA.

These scammers allude to raises and savings and promote divisive issues to get you to click a link in an email, fill out a postcard or scan a QR Code.

Once they have your information, there's no telling where and how they will use it. Members have almost lost their union benefits when the scammers returned postcards in their name to HGEA. Questions or concerns? Contact the HGEA Member Service Center at (808) 543-0000 or email <a href="mailto:service@hgea.org">service@hgea.org</a>.

# 2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The HGEA Board of Directors approved the following legislative priorities for HGEA's State Committee on Political Action:



## RECRUIT AND RETAIN A STRONG GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE

Address pay equity, attract the next generation of employees, and develop benefits for a 21st century workforce.



# **ENSURE FUNDING OF VITAL SERVICES FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

Actively seek ways to generate additional state and county revenues to preserve government programs.



# PROTECT THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE, MAINTAIN CIVIL SERVICE, AND ADVANCE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Ensure civil service protections under Chapter 76, HRS and expand collective bargaining rights under Chapter 89, HRS.



## **OPPOSE PRIVATIZATION**

Services provided by government employees should be protected.



## PROTECT RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE RETIREES

Promises made to employees upon hire should be kept.

# Vorking for Hawaii



# Luke Shepardson

Luke Shepardson, ocean safety officer and Unit 15 member, made national headlines as the humble on-duty lifeguard who won the Eddie Aikau Big Wave Invitational surf contest.

Shepardson spent most of the day helping his fellow WSOs keep people safe during 67 rescues and 7,000 preventative actions at the Waimea Bay competition.

He surfed his heats during break time, and it was obvious that his first concern was safety. "I gotta get back to the (lifeguard) tower and make sure everyone's OK until the end of the day," he said to reporters immediately after being crowned winner.

AFSCME honored Shepardson's dedication with the Never Quit Service Award in June.



# Mari Vivision of Motor Vehicles

Immediately after the Maui wildfires, members volunteered over the weekend to help displaced residents obtain new state IDs and driver licenses.

Esther Kwon

Esther Kwon, assistant vice principal at Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School and Unit 6 member, received the Milken Educator Award on Jan. 31.

Referred to as the "Oscars of Teaching," this national award recognizes teaching excellence.

Kwon has an impressive, decade-long service record at her school which includes teaching in supplemental programs and after-school tutoring, mentoring new teachers, advising student groups and serving on the School Community Council. She has also published articles on project-based learning and increasing student engagement.



Give a Shaka

If you know of an HGEA member who is doing extraordinary work in the community, let us know!

HGEA.ORG/GIVEASHAKA

# HGEA ACHIEVES PAY PARITY FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS, TEACHING ASSISTANTS AND VICE PRINCIPALS

Following our urgent calls on the state to resolve pay equity for school employees, Hawaii Government Employees Association ratified a tentative agreement to address pay parity for those who help educate and care for Hawaii's students.

"This deal represents years of promises that are finally coming to fruition for these dedicated educators. Our work is not yet done, however. The rest of the administrative and support staff in our schools deserve pay parity with their education counterparts, as well, and the Green Administration has signaled a willingness to work with us on this," Perreira said.

The issue of pay inequality for school-level personnel intensified with recent pay increases for teachers. HGEA demanded that the governor and superintendent turn their attention to the rest of the team that educates and cares for our children. Educational assistants and teaching assistants in our public schools play a critical role in student learning, working side-by-side with classroom teachers, especially with the most vulnerable students. Historically, fewer jobs in the DOE paid lower than EAs, despite the vital nature of their roles.

"While education officials have acknowledged outrageously low pay and a lack of career ladder for educational assistants since at least 2008, officials consistently failed to address the problem, creating a recruitment and retention crisis that has only deepened over the years," Perreira said.

For vice principals, state officials acknowledged that pay bumps for teachers created a situation where some teachers were making more than their supervisors. If the DOE is going to continue to recruit and retain high quality educators to become principals or vice principals, the pay should be competitive enough to entice teachers to leave the classroom to lead their schools.

The DOE is facing historic staff shortages in critical positions, with nearly 600 educational assistant vacancies and some 160 vice principal positions unfilled. This agreement, which is just a first step to addressing pay disparity, is a move in the right direction toward addressing the recruitment and retention crisis throughout the public schools.

Hawaii's students receive quality education in a safe and nurturing environment because a multitude of school-level professionals are on the job.

HGEA would like to thank Gov. Josh Green and Superintendent Keith Hayashi for their willingness to work with us to resolve pay equity among state workers, especially in the state Department of Education.

"This signals to public workers across the state that this administration, unlike its predecessors, desires increased collaboration with public sector unions to make state government work better for the people of Hawaii," said Randy Perreira, HGEA executive director.









With over 100 partners, the Makana Perks & Discounts program allows HGEA members to save on insurance, education, travel, recreation, professional services and more.

**VISIT HGEA.ORG/MAKANA** 

# **BECOME A STEWARD**



From left to right, Charles Among Jr. (Unit 14), Kat Moratin (Unit 13), and Vernon Verzon (Unit 3).

LEARN MORE ABOUT STEWARDSHIP

Stewards are essential to protecting workplace rights and improving the lives of their fellow public employees.

Think of them as an extension of the union stationed at your workplace. They can sound the alarm when something isn't right, such as an employer implementing new policies without proper consultation.

If you don't have a steward at your workplace, please consider becoming one.

HGEA offers Steward Academy courses and trainings for potential stewards.

# HGEA SCHOLARSHIPS GIVE MEMBERS AND DEPENDENTS A JUMP START





HEAR MORE FROM OUR SCHOLARS

Unit 3 member Evelyn Utai never thought at this point in her life she'd have the opportunity to further her education and advance her career. But that's exactly what she's doing, thanks in part to the generous donations to HGEA's C.R. Kendall Scholarship.

Majoring in special education at Chaminade University, Utai hopes to become a special education teacher at Farrington High School, where, for the past 11 years, she has been an educational assistant.

"Finances is definitely something that weighed on me," said Utai, who is a 2023-24 scholarship recipient. "It made me wonder if it was worth going back to school or if I was just stuck where I was at."

Utai said getting the Kendall Scholarship has lit a fire in her to "finish what I need to do" to get ahead. If she could give a message to the generous donors to the HGEA Scholarship fund it would be: "The money you donate matters. It's going to people who are making a change... Getting this scholarship means even at 42 my dreams don't end."

Since 1966, HGEA has given more than 2,000 awards to deserving individuals to pursue post-high school studies. Both active members and dependents of members are invited to apply.

Across town at the University of Hawaii-Manoa, Kaitlyn Tokunaga, the daughter of Unit 13 member John Tokunaga is studying to become an accountant. She and her sister, Marcy, are both 2023-24 scholarship recipients.

Tokunaga has stellar academic credentials, graduating a year early from high school and getting selected as one of the few "direct admits" to the Shidler College of Business. This year she's the activities coordinator for the campus Japanese Culture Club.

"In five years, I hope I'm a government accountant, because that's something I'm really interested in," she said.

The scholarship from HGEA, Tokunaga said, has helped to relieve some of the stress that comes with paying for education. With her sister battling vocal dystonia, a disorder that affects her speaking, medical bills added to the financial uncertainty of affording college.

"I wasn't sure how I was going to pay for everything," Tokunaga said. "Thanks to this scholarship, I am able to focus on my studies."



# **PAY IT FORWARD**

If only 3,000 members give just \$1 per paycheck through payroll deduction, we would raise \$70,000 a year toward sending dependents of members — and members themselves — to college.

Will you consider joining other HGEA members in giving regular, small contributions that make a big difference?

**VISIT HGEA.ORG/GIVE** 



# **APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**

Awards are available to members and their dependents who are attending or plan to attend on a full- time basis a university, college, community college, vocational or trade school, or pursue other post- high school study. Member must be in good standing for at least one year.

Applications are due Jan. 16, 2024.

# **VISIT HGEA.ORG/SCHOLARSHIPS**

# CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION JUNE 30, 2022 AND 2023

Hawaii Government Employees Association, Local 152, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO and Affiliate

ASSETS				
CURRENT ASSETS 2023	2022	REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT	2023	2022
Cash and cash equivalents \$7,433,740		Bargaining unit dues		\$11,657,417
Time certificates of deposit		Affiliation dues		3,939,757
Accounts receivable		Net investment return (loss)		(1,925,417)
Interest receivable		Associate member dues		956,773
Prepaid expenses and other current assets 150,074		Rental income and recoveries	•	476,884
Total current assets 9,396,065		Other gain, net		40
INVESTMENTS 12,069,869		Total revenues and other support	19,435,245	15,105,454
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET		•	i i	, ,
Total assets \$26,428,748				
		EXPENSES		
		Program Services:		
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		Field services	\$4,357,197	\$4,502,776
CURRENT LIABILITIES		Affiliation dues	3,985,625	3,939,757
Current maturities of notes payable \$15,256	\$14,844	Representation	796,932	764,156
Accounts payable		General assembly	652,405	
and other current liabilities 285,276	•	Communication	571,084	790,564
Accrued vacation payable 744,436		Legislation/political action	303,309	172,857
Payable to AFSCME 516,669	•	Unit appropriations	261,140	231,328
Due to bargaining units		Board of directors		25,393
Deferred income	21,723	Statewide recreation	111,774	69,403
Contract liabilities -		Negotiation/arbitration	107,281	5,169
assessments received in advance 597,094	895,862	Steward's incentive/training	1,999	
Current portion of postretirement		Total program services expenses	\$11,382,228	\$10,501,403
medical benefit liability	•	Supporting services:	4 4 0 5 7 0 0	4 4 0 4 7 0 0
Total current liabilities\$2,833,669	\$2,914,795	General and administrative	4,195,789	4,134,790
		Operations of the Association	1,092,252	693,953
NONCURRENT LIABILITIES		Property management	935,194	923,944
Notes payable, less current maturities \$326,144	4 \$341,400	Total supporting services expenses	6,223,235 17,605,463	5,752,687
Defined benefit pension liability		Total expenses	17,005,405	16,254,090
Postretirement medical benefit liability,	10,101,001	before other credits	¢1 920 792	\$(1,148,636)
less current portion	4 7,281,020	before other creaits	\$1,029,762	φ(1,140,030)
Total noncurrent liabilities				
Total liabilities		OTHER CREDITS		
, ,,,,,,,	, ,,,	Net periodic pension costs		
		other than service cost	\$(2,738,379)	\$(3,359,949)
NET ASSETS		Net periodic postretirement benefit		
Without donor restrictions:		costs other than service cost	(719,048)	(2,801,632)
Undesignated \$6,583,883		Total other credits	(3,457,427)	(6,161,581)
Designated for arbitration 1,312,79		Change in net assets	5,287,209	5,012,945
Designated for medical trust 1,959,58		Change in net assets attributable		
9,856,26	7 4,589,968	to noncontrolling interest in the		
Noncontrolling interests		Association	(20,910)	(9,232)
in the Association(126,321	.) (147,231)	Change in net assets attributable to	, ,,,,,,,,,	
Total net assets without	4 4 4 4 0 7 0 7	the Union	\$5,266,299	\$5,003,713
donor restrictions				
Total liabilities and net assets \$26,428,746	5 \$25,383, <del>9</del> 56	·		
		Net assets (deficit) at beginning of year	\$4,442,737	\$(570,208)
		Change in net assets	5,287,209	5,012,945
		Net assets at end of year	\$9,729,946	\$4,442,737



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