



Full of Happiness

Piha me ka Hau'oli

Meals from the Heart, Food for the Soul

Hawai'i Meals on Wheels Newsletter

Spring 2021

Reflections from Our CEO

Answering Every Call to Help Homebound Kūpuna

There is no doubt 2020 will be remembered as a year of growth for Hawai'i Meals on Wheels. The pandemic created new needs in our community. Every day, we received urgent requests for help that challenged us and stretched our capabilities in new ways.

Food insecurity became a top concern for many households. Hunger and isolation especially impact those with limited mobility and declining health, and the pandemic added further complexity. Numerous questions swirled in our heads with each new request: Are we capable of meeting these needs? How do we rise to the occasion? How can our team adapt to meet new challenges?

And while we felt so vulnerable at that time, we simply went with our gut and answered each call. We will never forget the sense of desperation in the voices of those who reached out to us and the resulting transformation in their lives:

- A young, blind gentleman, too scared to go to the grocery store, called because he was unable to see the 6-ft markers on the floor. In addition, the plexiglass shields confused him as he didn't know where to put his money. We served him for a month and then referred the client to a grocery service so that he could continue to cook his own meals.

Continues on next page.



" . . . We simply went with our gut and answered each call."



Your generous donation will help feed our kūpuna. Visit www.hmow.org and learn how you can support our efforts.



Piha me ka Hau'oli

is a publication for supporters of
Hawai'i Meals on Wheels.

Our Mission

Hawai'i Meals on Wheels, Inc., a private, not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization, is dedicated to helping O'ahu's elders and individuals with disabilities preserve their independence at home. We do this by providing nutritious meals and regular, personal interaction with those we serve.

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Reflections from Our CEO Continued

- A 74-year-old woman who was mobile but sheltering in her home called for meals because she didn't want her daughter driving from Kapolei to assist her. We continue to serve her today as the family realized she needed specialized diabetic meals.
- A 57-year-old woman who lives alone called to request home-delivered meal service for two months while she was undergoing chemotherapy for breast cancer. We provided medical meals with minimal citrus, lean protein, and vegetables with no starch. Our program team stayed in touch with her, and after two months, she regained her strength and transitioned to a grocery service.

We brought hope, human connection, and a sense of self-empowerment.

Our journey is not always easy. The mission we strive to fulfill is challenging. But for each senior we help, there is a deep sense of humanity and satisfaction knowing that we are able to improve the quality of life. And our hearts overflow with gratitude because you have chosen to join us in this journey.

Mahalo for your support,

Michelle Cordero-Lee
CEO



We are indebted to you as your generous support helped us deliver much more than meals and basic physical necessities.





1,283

homebound clients

92%

of clients are 60 years old or more

156,000

meals delivered

47%

of clients are 80 years old or more

821

new clients

20

clients are 100 years old or more

62%

female clients

\$1,545,000

spent on meals

79

median age of clients

13

kitchen partners

40%

of clients are at or below the poverty line

74

delivery routes



TOP 10 ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 2020

Hawai'i Meals on Wheels recognizes that all of our achievements are the result of the generosity of our donors and volunteers. Everything we do is truly a community effort.

#1 Setting new records for meal deliveries

In 2020, we expanded our program criteria to include hundreds of additional seniors. As kūpuna and those at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19 sheltered in place, requests for our home-delivered meals surged. We served 1,283 homebound clients on O'ahu – up from 758 the previous year! In 2020, we easily set a new record, delivering more than 156,000 meals.

#2 Preserving independence and protecting kūpuna

We continue to help many kūpuna to age in place. The median age of a Hawai'i Meals on Wheels client is 79. In 2020, we served 20 clients age 100 and above! The oldest male and female clients we served were both 104 years old.

#3 Expansion throughout O'ahu

Hawai'i Meals on Wheels opened 21 new routes. We ended the year with 74 routes to serve communities throughout O'ahu, which includes nine senior housing residents in Honolulu and Windward communities.

#4 More kitchens on board!

To meet the rapidly growing need throughout O'ahu, we began partnering with new two kitchen

partners: Habilitat and Sullivan Family Kitchen. Thirteen kitchens now help us prepare 20,000 meals each month. **450 clients receive medically-tailored meals; we offer over 20 options!** Clients who have difficulty eating can choose specially-prepared meals, including soft, pureed, chopped, or minced meals. Clients can also choose from a menu of options that meet specific dietary needs, including low-sodium and low-cholesterol meals.

#5 New convenient frozen meals

To address the safety of clients, staff, and remaining volunteers and to ramp up deliveries, we immediately contacted two new kitchen partners who could provide frozen meals. As an organization that previously operated on the traditional model of serving hot meals once a day, we soon learned that offering many options – hot, refrigerated, and frozen – allowed us to respond with immediacy to the mounting number of new requests.

#6 Fresh produce deliveries

During the summer, we partnered with Show Aloha Challenge and USDA to provide over 2,000 grocery boxes full of fresh produce to kūpuna and families. Many able-bodied kūpuna, who never imagined they would be homebound, enjoyed cooking with fresh ingredients while sheltering in place.



#7 Honoring our advocates

We held our first-ever drive-thru fundraiser on Thanksgiving Day and honored **A Catered Experience**, our long-standing kitchen partner, who quickly helped us prepare thousands of frozen meals at the onset of the pandemic. We awarded A Catered Experience the 2020 Kūpuna Advocate of the Year Award. As a result of this fundraiser, we raised \$75,000. Mahalo to our top event sponsors UHA Health Insurance and First Hawaiian Bank.

Pictured opposite page (left): Fundraiser co-chair **Walter Kinoshita** with UHA Health Insurance volunteers at the Thanksgiving day drive-thru fundraiser.

Pictured above (left): **Ralph Zarate**, A Catered Experience driver, helps deliver meals every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. He proudly wears his blue Hawai'i Meals on Wheels T-shirts on these special delivery days.

Pictured above (right): A Catered Experience General Manager **Ron Hattori**, pictured above with CEO **Michelle Cordero-Lee**, leads a dedicated team who has helped Hawai'i Meals on Wheels prepare over 10,000 additional meals per month during the pandemic.

#8 New partnerships

Mahalo to Hawai'i Public Health Institute, Kūpuna Food Security Coalition, and Kūpuna Power— local organizations that share our vision of helping

kūpuna preserve their independence. We are especially grateful to Show Aloha Challenge and St. Francis Healthcare System for their creative collaboration, which allowed us to serve restaurant-quality meals to thousands of additional homebound kūpuna. Mahalo also to the social workers of St. Francis' Franciscan CARE Plus program, who provided our clients with a suite of wraparound service, including ongoing wellness checks.

#9 Launch of the Hoaloha phone line

While COVID-19 has forced us to distance physically, we remained resolute that we will not allow our kūpuna to distance socially. In September 2020, we launched a pilot program – the Hoaloha phone line. In October, we trained five volunteers to check in weekly with a cohort of clients by phone and walk them through a health and wellness questionnaire. Our staff and volunteers are the first to know when a client needs extra support and services.

#10 You!

During an incredibly challenging year for Hawai'i's kūpuna, our supporters and friends met every challenge with positivity and generosity. Whether it was donating; supplying our staff, volunteers and clients with homemade masks; or making cards for our kūpuna, your acts of kindness directly impacted the lives of those we served. **Mahalo!**

Honoring our volunteers:**Volunteers make sure no kūpuna is forgotten**

For more than 40 years, Hawai'i Meals on Wheels volunteers have played a critical role in carrying out the mission of our organization. Now more than ever, during a year of unprecedented demand for services, our volunteers' home meal deliveries and check-ins create a vital lifeline for seniors.

Welcoming new volunteers

At the start of the pandemic, our programs quickly adjusted to the impacts of the virus to keep both our homebound clients and the volunteers who serve them safe. Because many of our volunteers are older, they are themselves in the COVID-19 high-risk category. While they remain in their homes to stay safe, many younger volunteers have stepped in to help.

Meals delivered with aloha

While our meal delivery model typically includes a friendly, in-person visit, we modified our approach to accommodate physical distancing requirements. Volunteers now leave food at their clients' doors, knock and step back at least six feet to wait for an answer. This gives volunteers the opportunity to connect with clients in person but at a distance, making sure they are alright.

Staying connected

Because connection to community is a necessary ingredient we all need to survive and thrive, Hawai'i Meals on Wheels found a way to provide a bit of socialization remotely. In September 2020, we launched the Hoaloha telephone check-in program to frequently touch base with our homebound clients. Thanks to the help of our train volunteers call clients daily to check in, say hello and make sure they are OK.

Celebrating our volunteers

The tremendous amount of energy and compassion of our volunteers can be felt every day by our clients – whether they are talking story from six feet away or by phone. Thanks to their dedicated support, we have provided our clients both the meals and connection they need to thrive in their communities.

At this year, we will recognize special anniversaries of volunteers who served with us in both 2019 and 2020.



Congratulations to Our Volunteers!

35 Years of Service

Sandy Delmonte

25 Year of Service

Tammie Ackerman

20 Years of Service

Waiokeola Church

Verna Chock

Jeanne Davis

Dora Johnson

Barbara Huonker

Piilani Kaopuiki

Roy Miyahira

Carolyn Ng

Michael Sawai

Jennifer Shintani

15 Years of Service

Easter Seals Hawaii
Na Pono No Na Ohana

Candace Chang

Reynold Choy

Alvin Fujioka

Mary Jane Honrales

Susan Koki

Dani Mccarthy

Faye Miyamasu

Shirley Morgado

Jake Murakami

Kathleen Nagahama

Kiyomi Smothermon

Helen Taufaasau

Julie Teruya

Joy Yoshihara

10 Years of Service

COMPACFLT

Kahala Nui

Windward Ymca

Mark Alameida

Kathleen Bow

Sean Davis

Jack Durham

Jean Endo

Suzanne Evans

Sharon Gillespie

Stella Hakikawa

Cynthia Hoffman

Linda Iwamoto

Milton Kakaio

Nadine Kapalu

Carol Kokame

Gena Lee

Rory Lee

Wesley Lum

Judy Maeyoshimoto

Mary Marko

Geraldine Motonaga

Shirley Murakami

Sharon Namahoe

Jill Oda

Kariann Phillips

Robert Putes

Karla Redding

Margery Sheehan

June Shinsato

Susan Quimby

Nancy Tagawa

Jennie Tamashiro

Bette Uyeda

Katherine Warner

Patricia Watson

Adele Wilson

Fumie Yamasaki

Roy Yokomizo

Leatrice Yukinaga

Yoshio Yukinaga

5 Years of Service

Dave Au

June Borreca

Jonette Callo

Charles Cabral

Jill Carter

Dashel Corpe

Jo Cerny

Courtney Ching

Kathy Christiansen

Eugene Defrancia

Gail Deleon

Ross Esaki

Henry Fong

Linda Foye

Tom Foye

Kelii De Francia

Bill Green

Maria Guardino

Noreen Hananoki

Lisa Higaki

Dennis Irie

Patsy Irie

Janice Ishiara

Amy Jampel

Riker Kasamoto

David Kawahigashi

Emily Kawahigashi

Jeremy Kawahigashi

Jarrett Keohokalole

Kuulani Keohokalole

Roxanne Lee Kwai

Naomi Mahiko

Martha Mcdermott

Keith Merriam

Ryan Merriam

Peter Mota

Rickey Murashige

Linda Nagamine

Carol Nakamura

Katrina Nakamura

Sherry Nunnally

Calvin Otsuka

Gladys Otsuka

Geoffrey Pang

Sam Suen

Carl Takeshita

Irene Takeshita

Robert Takeshita

Cade Yoshida

Fern Yoshida

Micah Yoshida

Joe Zimmelman



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**Walter Kinoshita
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 Chris Otto**

Celebrating Our 42nd Anniversary!
Hawai'i Meals on Wheels
Fall 2021 Meals-To-Go Fundraiser

This year marks the 42nd anniversary of Hawai'i Meals on Wheels!
 To celebrate, we will host a holiday drive-thru fundraiser.
 Please plan to join us for this celebration.
 Sponsorships details coming soon!



Your generous donation will help feed our kūpuna. Visit www.hmow.org and learn how you can support our efforts.