

# Soaring Eagle

SPRING 2025 NEWS FROM HAWAI'I BAPTIST ACADEMY



## INSIDE:

Founders Day • 75th Anniversary Concert • Come & See Gallery • Camps • CEW • Spirit Week • Sports Recap • MAC Week • Institute of Hope Leaders • Travel to Japan, Texas, Maui, Hawai'i Island

## HAWAI'I BAPTIST ACADEMY

Hawai'i Baptist Academy (HBA) is a top Christian school serving students from preschool through high school. HBA's elementary, middle, and high school campuses are located in Nu'uuanu Valley on the island of O'ahu. HBA's first satellite preschool is located in Mililani Mauka in Central O'ahu. Established in 1949 by missionaries of the Southern Baptist Convention, the school is affiliated with the Hawai'i Pacific Baptist Convention.

HBA is a member of the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools and the Association of Christian Schools International, and accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. HBA is licensed by the Hawai'i Council of Private Schools.

## HAWAI'I BAPTIST ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Director of Institutional Advancement

Mike Martin, Director of Finance

## MISSION STATEMENT

Hawai'i Baptist Academy is a Christian college preparatory school that equips students spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally, so that they bring honor to God.

**Soaring Eagle** is a publication for alumni, parents, friends, and supporters of Hawai'i Baptist Academy. It is produced with aloha by the Communications Department and Office of Institutional Advancement.

An online version of this newsletter is available at [www.hba.net](http://www.hba.net).

Please send address changes to:  
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# A Message from the President



Dear HBA 'Ohana,

As we reflect on the 2024–2025 school year so far, we are grateful for God's faithfulness and the incredible achievements of our HBA family. This has been a season of celebration, service, and spiritual growth—one that truly reflects our mission and values.

Last year, we marked a historic milestone with our 75th Anniversary and Concert, a joyous celebration of God's gracious hand upon HBA for over 75 years. Your dedication made this unforgettable event possible, and we continue to see that same commitment in all areas of school life.

Our Christian Ministries and Student Activities teams have created opportunities for spiritual renewal, including Christian Emphasis Week (CEW), camps, and service projects. We've rejoiced in witnessing new salvations and recommitments of faith while also strengthening our community through events like MAC Week and mission trips.

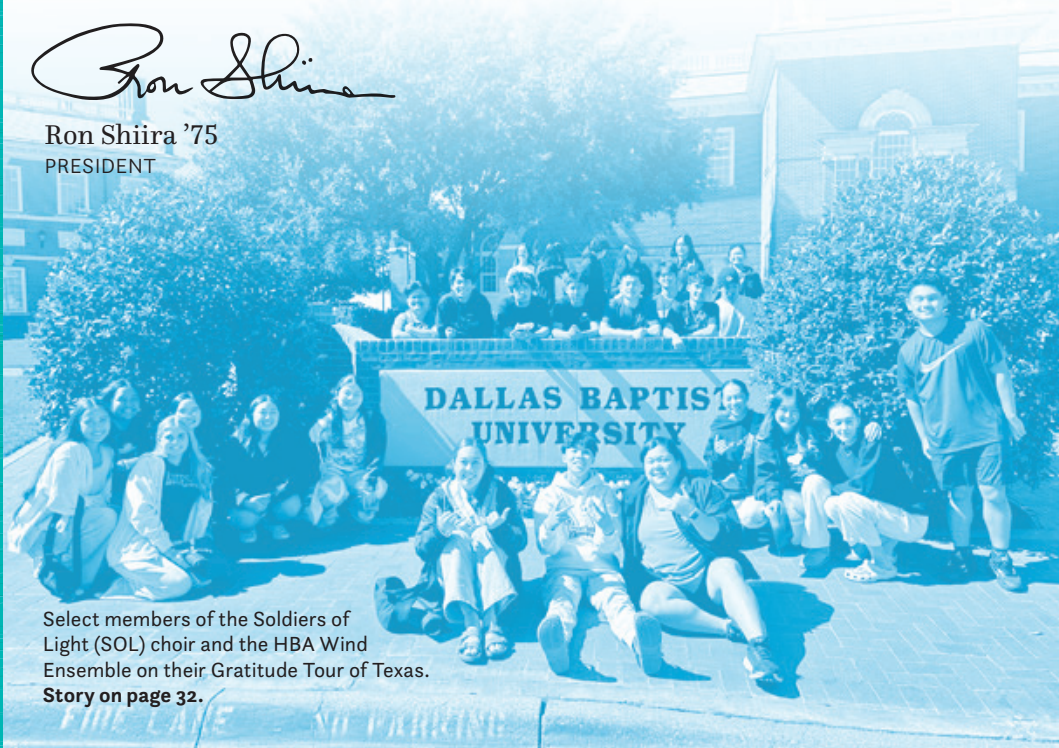
Academically, our students have excelled across disciplines. The HBA Legal Eagles won the 2025 Hawai'i High School Mock Trial State Championship, and 17 students earned 34 Scholastic Art Awards. Three students from the Class of 2027 placed first in the Japan Wizards Competition, earning a trip to Japan, while 24 elementary students medaled in five Science Olympiad events.

On the courts and fields, our Division 2 Girls Varsity Volleyball and Division 2 Boys Cross Country teams claimed state championships, showcasing the dedication and teamwork of our student-athletes and coaches.

This Soaring Eagle edition celebrates all that HBA has accomplished so far. Thank you, HBA 'Ohana, for your unwavering support and prayers. Together, we continue shaping lives for service to God and our community.

With gratitude,

Ron Shiira '75  
PRESIDENT



Select members of the Soldiers of Light (SOL) choir and the HBA Wind Ensemble on their Gratitude Tour of Texas.  
Story on page 32.

FAITH • INNOVATION • LEADERSHIP

**SOAR**

**spirits**

where

HAWAI'I BAPTIST ACADEMY



Learn more at [HBA.net](http://HBA.net)



PRE-K THROUGH GRADE 12

# Soaring Eagle

SPRING 2025



NEWS FROM  
HAWAI'I BAPTIST ACADEMY

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### On the front cover:

Collage include founders and former presidents, GracePoint pre-K students nativity story re-enactment, elementary and middle school students during CEW, SOL choir performance at the 75th Anniversary Christmas Concert.



A REVIVED TRADITION

# Founders Day



Fifth grade students of Mrs. Desiree Ichiki-Igarashi pose with Elementary principal Dr. Emmett Winters (backrow center) and honored guest, former HBA president Richard Bento.

This Year, HBA revived an old tradition: Founders Day, honoring the legacy of our school's founders, Hugh and Mary McCormick. Across both campuses, the celebration was filled with worship, history, and fellowship, bringing our community together in joyful remembrance.

## Elementary Campus Celebration

The festivities began on September 4th at the elementary campus, where junior kindergarten and elementary students gathered for a special chapel service. Ms. Cindy Gaskins, our Campus Ministries leader, led students in worship with fun songs and dance.

During chapel, students learned about the incredible journey of our founders and the history that shaped our school. The day ended on a sweet note with a cupcake party, leaving smiles on everyone's faces.



## Upper Campus Celebration

The celebration continued the following week on the upper campus, bringing together middle school and high school students for a special joint chapel in the Dan Liu Gymnasium. Led by our Christian Ministries team—Mr. Rob Lockridge, Mr. Charles Poore, and Ms. Hanna Marie Clements—the service reflected on the school's heritage and celebrated the enduring impact of our founders.

Special guests added to the significance of the day, including Kiyo Itokazu, a member of HBA's first graduating class of 1954, and Maurine King, a beloved Legacy teacher. Joining them were Christian Chee, class of 2015 and now an HBA high school economics teacher, and Billie Lueder, class of 1994 and the school's Director of Institutional Advancement.

The day concluded with cupcakes and fellowship, as students, faculty, and staff shared in the joy of this memorable milestone.



**Top:** A panel consisting of (from left) Kiyo Itokazu '54, Maurine King, Billie Lueder '94, and Christian Chee '15, expressed how their experiences at HBA influenced their lives.

**Upper left:** The ministries band lead everyone in song.

**Above:** Charles Poore gives the benediction.

**Left:** (L–R) Charles Poore, Kiyo Itokazu '54, Ron Shiira '75, and Rob Lockridge.



**Left:** Kiyo Itokazu (center) is joined by Board of Directors member, Terrance Arashiro (left) and high school principal Elton Kinoshita (right). Mr. Itokazu was just 1 of 3 students of the first graduating class of HBA in 1954.



Advisory Board member Jarrett Walters '00 greets the venerable former HBA teacher Ms. Maurine King.

# Celebrating 75 Years

For 75 years, Hawai'i Baptist Academy has shaped tomorrow's leaders, fostering spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional growth. With God's abundant blessings, we've empowered generations to bring honor to Him. Join us in celebrating 75 years of growth and success as we reflect on HBA's journey through the past, present, and future.



Mary and Hugh McCormick

"Christ for Every Nation" was the vision that led Southern Baptist missionaries to establish Hawai'i Baptist Academy. In **1949**, founders **Hugh and Mary McCormick** welcomed 36 students to a campus in Honolulu's Makiki district, using army barracks as classrooms. By **1953**, HBA served grades 1-12, expanding its mission beyond the church to the wider community. HBA's first graduating class consisted of just three students in **1954**; today, we celebrate a legacy of over 5,000 alumni.



Stan Sagert with student council

**1963** Operation of the school is transferred to the Hawai'i Baptist Convention. The McCormicks and other missionary teachers retire and move back to U.S. Mainland. ✦ Kindergarten added.

**1970** Retiring U.S. Air Force **Col. Stanley Alan Sagert** is elected by the HBC Board to head HBA as superintendent and authorizes him to raise critical funds to support the school.



**1972** aerial photo of Nu'uaniu property between Pali Highway and Nu'uaniu Stream.

*Photo courtesy of R.M. Towill Corporation*

**1972** The 13.6-acre estate in Nu'uaniu estate at 2429 Pali Highway is acquired through public auction for \$553,000. This property provided land for what would become the middle and high school campus. The school at this time was located on 1234 Heulu Street in Makiki.

1949

1955

1960

1965

1970

1975

1980

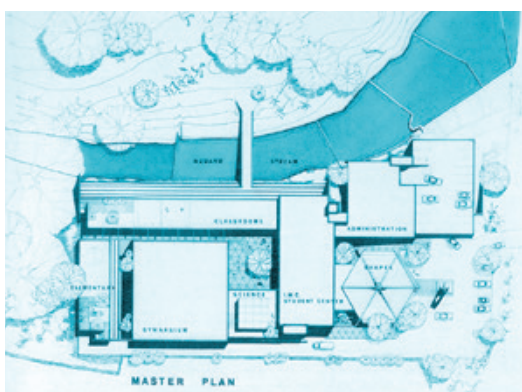
1985



Early classrooms were converted barracks



HBA's first graduating class in 1954: (L-R) Phillip Perreira, Kiyoichi "Kiyo" Itokazu (valedictorian), and Harry Uyenten. All three boys were honor roll students.



**1973** architectural rendering of the master plan (above) for the high school building named in honor of HBA benefactor Bessie M. Fleming (current view below).



**1973** Construction starts on a 4-level classroom building on the Pali property. ✦ **The Rev. Daniel H. Kong**, resigns as pastor of Olivet Baptist Church and joins HBA as vice-president of development to help raise funds on the mainland. Grades 7-12 meet at Makiki Christian Church's educational building.



Dan Kong



**1975** The Bessie Fleming Building on the Pali Campus is completed. Grades 7-12 move to the new Pali campus.

Mrs. Bessie Massey Fleming (1904-1981) of Fort Worth, Texas, created an endowment fund for HBA through the Baptist Foundation of Texas. She and her husband, William, owned Fleming Oil.

**1977** The Mainland Advisory Council (MAC) holds its first meeting in Honolulu.

**1982** Isaiah 40:31 is adopted as the new Alma Mater.

**1983** The Shiraki Building is completed.

**1986–1998** HBA's Leeward Coast outreach brought education and faith to over 1,000 children, thanks in part to the generosity of John and Donna Stanford.



**1987** HBA purchases the Sacred Hearts Convent School at 21 Bates Street in Nu'uuanu for its elementary campus, a transaction that required Vatican approval.

**1988** Dan Kong becomes HBA president.



**Dan Kong Middle School Campus**

**2006** The middle school campus is completed and named after former school president Dan Kong.

**2013** The new Arts and Science Building is completed at the High School. The high school library is renovated in the Learning Resource Center.

**2014** Donor Wall on the Arts and Science Building is unveiled in February.



**Donor Wall**

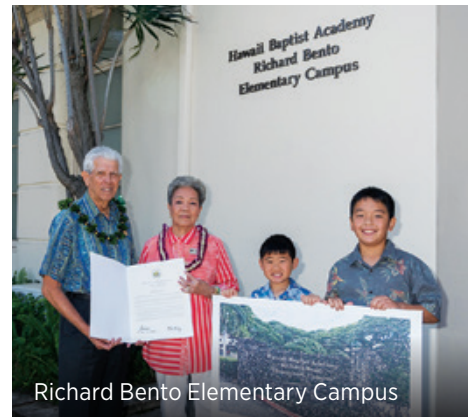


**Ron Shiira '75**

**2016 Ronald T. Shiira '75**, vice president since 2013, becomes HBA's fifth president. ✦ The elementary campus is named in honor of former HBA president Richard Bento.



**Arts and Science Building and Learning Resource Center (inset)**



**Richard Bento Elementary Campus**

**1990                      1995                      2000                      2005                      2010                      2015                      2020                      2025**

**1991** HBA hosts the 50th anniversary luau for Olivet Baptist Church at the Stan Sagert High School campus. The church became affiliated with the Southern Baptists in 1941 under the Rev. Victor Koon, a Baptist missionary from Texas who served in China. President Dan Kong, a former pastor of Olivet, spoke at the July 28 morning service.



**Richard Bento**

**1994 Richard T. Bento** becomes HBA's fourth president. In 1978 he began his service to HBA as chair of the School Program Committee (now known as the board of directors). From 1985 to 1992 he served as HBA's vice-president under Dan Kong. Bento became acting president upon Kong's retirement in 1992.

**1999** HBA celebrates its 50th anniversary, marked by a student challenge of 50 community service projects for the year—they exceeded their goal by performing 66 projects.



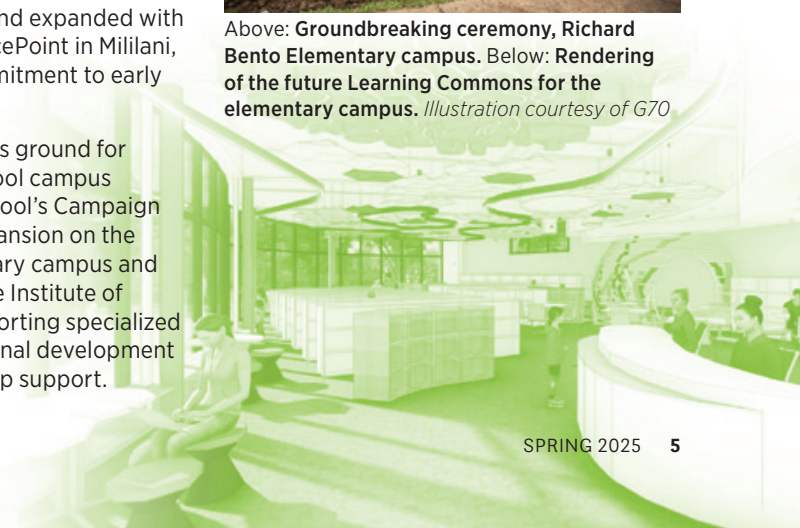
**Preschool at GracePoint Class of 2024**

**2020 and 2022** HBA opened the JK Preschool in Honolulu and expanded with a new preschool at GracePoint in Mililani, broadening HBA's commitment to early childhood education.

**2024** In May HBA breaks ground for its new elementary school campus facilities. Part of the school's Campaign for Transformation: expansion on the Richard Bento Elementary campus and the establishment of the Institute of Hope Endowment supporting specialized programs and professional development in addition to scholarship support.



**Above: Groundbreaking ceremony, Richard Bento Elementary campus. Below: Rendering of the future Learning Commons for the elementary campus. Illustration courtesy of G70**



## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

# 75th Anniversary Concert

**On Saturday, November 23**, Hawai'i Baptist Academy hosted a truly unforgettable event—our 75th Anniversary Concert! Held in two performances, this special celebration brought together students, faculty, alumni, and families to reflect on God's faithfulness over the past 75 years. Inspired by Psalm 118:23, "*Come and see... This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes,*" the concert was a powerful testament to HBA's legacy and bright future.



The evening featured a spectacular lineup of performances, showcasing the incredible talents of our students and faculty. Audiences were treated to inspiring music from Concert Band 1, Concert Band 2, and the Wind Ensemble, as well as moving choral performances by the Eagle Choir, Middle School Choir, Concert Choir, and Soldiers of Light. Worship and dance were beautifully woven into the program through Ho'omana (Elementary Sign Dancing Club) and Hālau Hula 'O Ka Lama 'Ula. The night concluded with a breathtaking performance of the Hallelujah Chorus, featuring not only our students but also faculty members, symbolizing the unity and shared mission of our HBA community.

Beyond the music, the concert was a time of gratitude, reflection, and celebration. Through powerful storytelling, testimonies, and worship, we honored our humble beginnings in 1949—



when HBA started with just 36 students under the vision of Hugh and Mary McCormick—and rejoiced in the growth and impact God has provided.

A heartfelt mahalo goes out to all the students, faculty, staff, and volunteers who made this event possible. Their dedication and hard work brought this celebration to life, reminding us all of the spirit of excellence and faith that defines HBA.

As we reflect on 75 years of *Christ for Every Nation*, this concert was more than just a performance—it was a declaration of God's continued blessings and a joyful anticipation of the future. We invite you to relive the magic of the evening through the photos on the following pages.



COME AND SEE: PHOTO BOOTH GALLERY



Guests enjoyed taking group photos at our HBA Photo Booth Gallery.



HONORED SUPPORTERS



# mahalo!

We extend our deepest gratitude to the generous sponsors who helped make our 75th Anniversary Concert a truly unforgettable celebration. Your support reflects the spirit of community that has guided HBA for the past 75 years.

## Diamond Sponsors

We are especially thankful for our Diamond Sponsors, whose extraordinary contributions made this event possible:

- Allied Builder Systems
- Honolulu Cookie Company
- Mickelson Family Foundation

## Endurance Sponsors

We also recognize our Endurance Sponsors for their steadfast support:

- HBA Board of Directors
- HEMIC
- Elton Kinoshita
- Ernest Lum Construction
- Florencia Stackel
- Jim and Susan '82 Utsugi



Your generosity enables HBA to continue providing an exceptional education grounded in faith, leadership, and innovation. Mahalo for partnering with us as we celebrate God's faithfulness and look ahead to the future!



# Live Performances

Between the two performances of our 75th Anniversary Concert, guests were invited to experience the Come and See Gallery, a special showcase celebrating the musical talents of HBA students. The atmosphere was filled with energy as three student-led groups took the stage, entertaining guests with heartfelt performances.



Elementary 'Ukulele Club

## Elementary 'Ukulele Club

Under the direction of Sam Browning, our young musicians strummed familiar tunes, bringing joy and nostalgia to the audience.

## High School Contemporary Music Club

Advised by Dwaine Woo, this talented group performed an eclectic mix of songs, highlighting their versatility and passion for music.

## Jam for Jesus

Led by Rhona Halmos, this group shared uplifting worship music, creating a moment of reflection and praise.

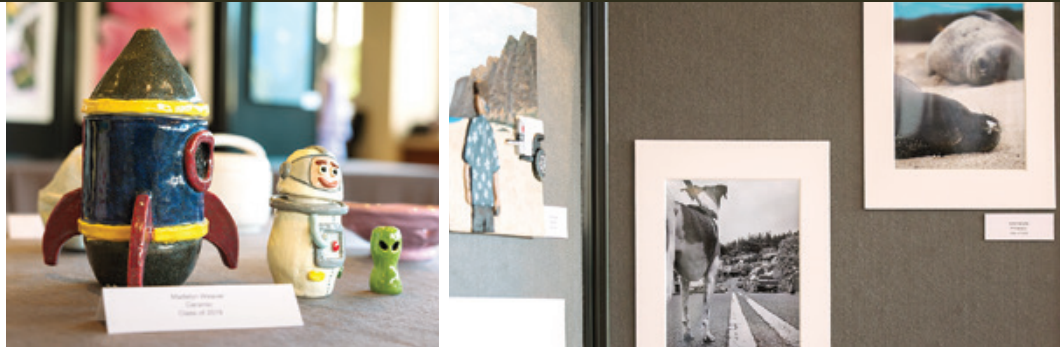


High School Contemporary Music Club



Jam for Jesus

# Art Gallery



Beyond music, the Come and See Gallery also served as a platform for HBA students to share their creativity and academic achievements. Guests were invited to explore the Art Exhibit, under the coordination of Juri Yamashita, which featured an inspiring collection of student artwork. Each piece reflected the skill, imagination, and dedication of our young artists.



## Capstone Projects

In the academic sphere, Capstone students, under the guidance of Middle School Principal George Honzaki, presented their year long research projects, demonstrating their problem-solving skills and commitment to making a difference:

### **Kiera Liew & May Shiraishi— Genki Balls for a Cleaner Ala Wai**

Kiera and May worked to improve water quality in the Ala Wai Canal by introducing Genki Balls—eco-friendly mud balls that help break down pollution. Partnering with their science teacher and The Genki Ball Ala Wai Project, they organized a school-wide Genki Ball Day and later helped launch over 1,000 Genki Balls into the canal.



### **Luke Uyehara, Luke Wrobel & Alex Fujimoto— Raising Awareness on Video Game Addiction**

This team researched the effects of video game addiction and created an educational video to spread awareness. After multiple outreach attempts, they partnered with Honu House Hawai'i, a nonprofit focused on addiction recovery, which now features their video as a resource on its website.

*Scan the QR Code to view their video:*



# Stories of Curiosity, Commitment, Love and Humility

As part of our 75th Anniversary celebration, we honor the stories of four key HBA community members whose testimonies illustrate our core values of humility, curiosity, love, and commitment. Their reflections highlight the shared mission of nurturing faith, fostering resilience, and building lasting connections.

## **Dayna Nakamura**

### *A Lifelong Curiosity: Inspiring Generations at HBA*

Mrs. Dayna Nakamura's testimony reflects over three decades of devotion as a 2nd-grade teacher at HBA, where she has inspired generations of students to explore God's truth with wonder. In her story, Dayna shares how HBA has deeply impacted her life, not only as an educator but also as a parent, providing a nurturing community for her own children's academic and spiritual growth. Throughout her journey, Dayna has cultivated enduring relationships with students, parents, and colleagues, embodying the school's core value of curiosity by fostering an environment where questions are encouraged, faith is explored, and learning is a lifelong adventure. As she looks back, Dayna reflects on how HBA has stayed true to its mission, allowing her to integrate her faith and calling to Christian ministry with each passing year.



## **Joyce (Lazo) Mickelson '82**

### *A Legacy of Commitment: Honoring Faustina Lazo's Impact*



Joyce Mickelson's testimony reflects on the remarkable legacy of her mother, Faustina "Tina" Lazo, who devoted 35 years to teaching at HBA with unwavering faith and commitment. Tina's influence extended far beyond academics; she instilled Christian values and a love for learning in generations of students. Joyce shares how her mother's passion for teaching, resilient spirit, and joy-filled approach left a lasting imprint on the HBA community and deeply shaped her family. Tina's legacy of faith continues to inspire, embodying the heart of HBA's mission.

Watch **Spotlight Testimonies** at [hba.net/concert](https://hba.net/concert)



## The Brock 'Ohana

### *The Power of Love: Strength Through Community and Faith*



Aaron and Soyeon Brock, both high school teachers at HBA, experienced unimaginable loss when their home in Lāhainā was destroyed by fire—all during their first year teaching at the school. In the face of devastation, the Brock family was met with an overwhelming response from the HBA community, embodying the school's core value of love and its mission to share the love of Jesus. As the Brock family navigated this difficult season, they found strength through their faith and the steadfast support of their HBA 'ohana, who provided comfort, hope, and practical assistance when they needed it most.

This love extended beyond the Brocks to the larger Maui community through HBA's Maui backpack drive, initiated to support families affected by the fire. This outreach effort, spearheaded by HBA, exemplified the school's mission to impact not only the HBA family but also the community at large, offering a tangible expression of Jesus' love. For the Brock family, this experience was a powerful testament to the strength of a Christ-centered community, one that stands together in times of need, sharing love that heals and inspires even through the darkest seasons.

## Ron Shiira '75

### *Humility in Leadership: A Journey Through Loss and Grace*

In his heartfelt testimony, President Ron Shiira '75 reflects on navigating the tragic loss of his wife, Cyndi. He shares memories of her impact on both his life and the HBA community, emphasizing how she embodied love and commitment to the school. Ron discusses how this experience reshaped his leadership journey, teaching him to lead with humility, deeply aware of God's sustaining presence and grace. Through this difficult time, he felt God guiding him, often in surprising ways, reinforcing HBA's core value of humility—a recognition of our place within God's vast and ongoing story.



# Growing in Faith & Community

At Hawai'i Baptist Academy, we believe that education is not complete unless students are spiritually prepared. Through chapels, Bible studies, student-led discipleship groups, and ministry opportunities, our students are encouraged to grow in their faith and develop a personal relationship with Christ.



**One of the most impactful ways** students experience spiritual growth is through our Christian Ministries Camps. These camps provide students with time away from the busyness of school to worship together, build strong friendships, and ask important questions about faith in a safe and encouraging environment.

Beyond camp, students also participate in on- and off-campus ministry opportunities, such as Operation Christmas Child, Christian Emphasis Week service projects, and outreaches with our student clubs which allow them to live out their faith through service.

Led by our dedicated Christian Ministries team, these experiences help students develop a faith that lasts beyond their years at HBA.

**Watch Event Highlights** at [hba.net/student-life/christian-ministries](http://hba.net/student-life/christian-ministries) 

## CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES TEAM

### Cindy Gaskins

Elementary Christian Ministries Coordinator

### Robert Lockridge

Middle School Christian Ministries Coordinator

### Charles Poore

High School Christian Ministries Coordinator

### Hanna Marie Clements

Christian Ministries Assistant



“Grow in the grace and understanding of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  
To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.”

2 PETER 3:18

# Good News, Bad News, Good News

YMCA Camp H.R. Erdman, Mokuleia, Waialua, O'ahu | August 21-22, 2024

For our middle schoolers, 7th Grade Camp was their first Christian Ministries camp experience, marking an important milestone in their transition from elementary to middle school. This special time away was filled with faith, fun, and meaningful connections, helping students build a strong foundation as they navigate this new season of life. The theme for this year—"Good News, Bad News, Good News"—reminded students of God's love, the reality of sin, and the incredible gift of Jesus paying the price for that sin. A key verse that shaped the camp was **Romans 8:38-39**, which powerfully reassures us that nothing can separate us from God's love.



## Faith in Action

Throughout the camp, students engaged deeply in their faith. Chapel sessions sparked curiosity and Family Groups provided a space for asking important questions. It was inspiring to see not only the 7th graders grow in their faith but also the student counselors who led discussions and guided younger students toward Christ.

## God at Work

One of the most powerful moments of camp was during worship in chapel. Students sang passionately alongside their friends, and many stayed afterward to pray for one another. It was clear that God was moving in their hearts, reminding them that His love is constant and unshakable, no matter what they face.

## Building Connections in a Challenging Season

Middle school can be a difficult time filled with change and uncertainty. This camp experience helped students feel a sense of belonging—not just in their friend groups, but in God's family. They were reminded that they are deeply loved and that true forgiveness comes through Christ. Romans 8:38-39 was a beautiful reminder that no struggle, fear, or failure can separate them from God's love.

## Finding Community Through Discipleship

To help students find their place, several unique clubs were created:

- **4-9 Club**—A group for students 4'9" or below, based on 1 Samuel 16:7, emphasizing that God looks at the heart, not outward appearances.

- **Wonderfully Wired Society (Braceface Banditos)**—Inspired by 2 Corinthians 12:9, this group celebrates that our weaknesses can be used for God's glory.
- **CATs (Chapel Advisory Team)**—A team dedicated to Bible study and brainstorming ideas for future chapels.

Through these groups, students found encouragement, support, and a sense of belonging.

7th Grade Camp was more than just a few days away—it was a time of transformation. As their first Christian Ministries camp, it helped them grow in their faith, build new friendships, and experience God's unshakable love in a whole new way.

"I learned that God's love can never be separated from us  
and that God's love will always be with us."

BROOKE LABARRE, 7TH GRADER

# Encountering the Gospel

The Salvation Army Camp Homelani, North Shore, O'ahu | September 18-20

Freshman Camp was a powerful time of faith, reflection, and life-changing decision as students explored the truth of the Gospel. Through discussions, scripture memorization, and creative activities, campers were challenged to answer key questions: Who is Jesus? What is the Gospel? How can we share it with others?

## Faith in Action

One of the most impactful activities was painting rocks with key scriptures from Chapel Services. These painted rocks served as lasting reminders of God's truth, reinforcing the Romans Road scriptures: Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:32, and Romans 10:9.


## Lives Transformed

The most exciting news? Twenty-three students made first-time commitments to Christ! Many others rededicated their faith, taking bold steps in their spiritual journey.

## A Lasting Impact

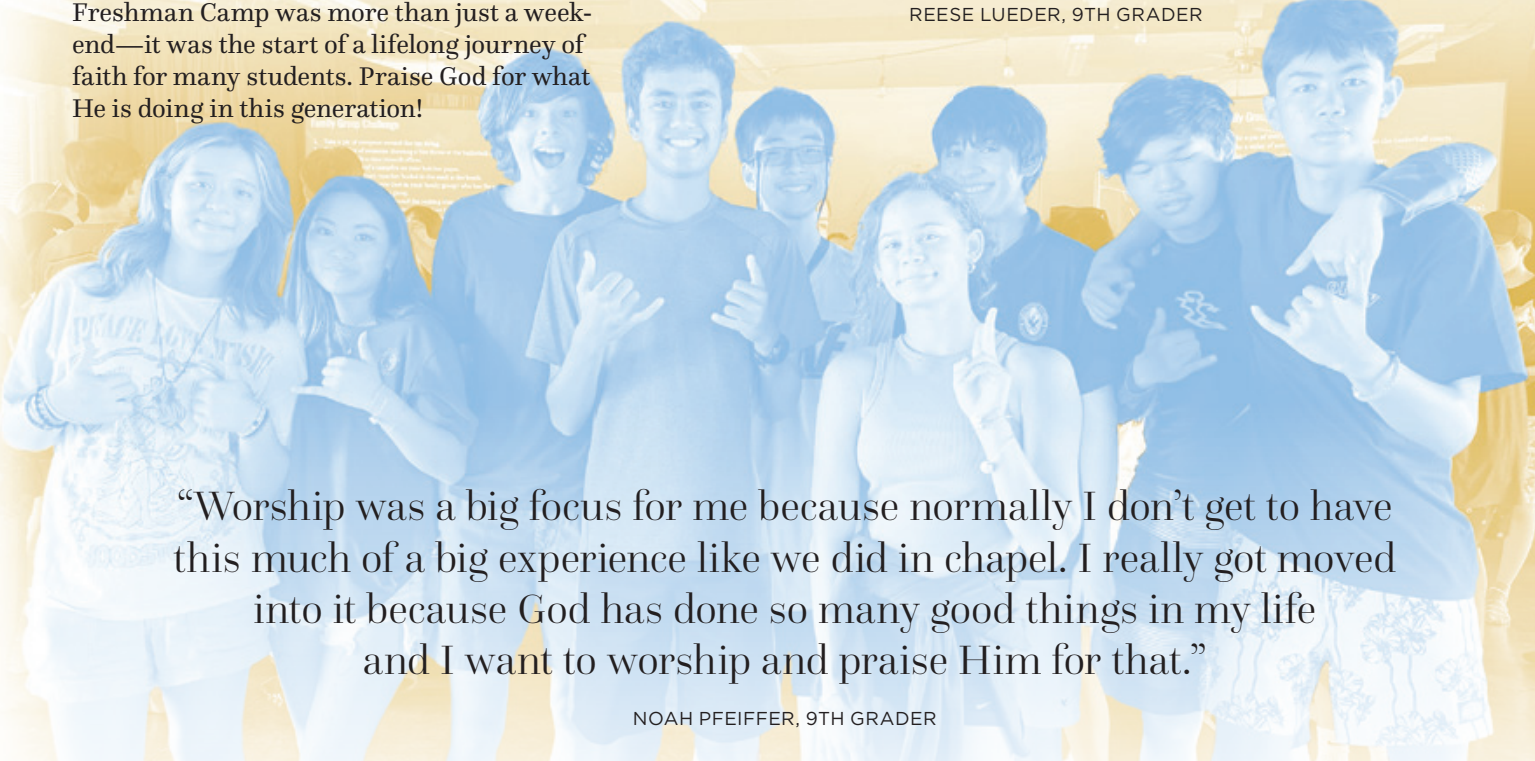
A highlight for leaders was hearing students recite scripture from memory, showing that God's Word was sinking deep into their hearts. Seeing students not only learn about the Gospel but own it personally was an unforgettable moment.

Freshman Camp was more than just a week-end—it was the start of a lifelong journey of faith for many students. Praise God for what He is doing in this generation!



“Something I love about camp is being able to bond with girls in my cabin and make new friendships. Some of the friends I made in my cabin I have never talked to before and I can already tell my new friendships are going to last a lifetime.”

REESE LUEDER, 9TH GRADER



“Worship was a big focus for me because normally I don't get to have this much of a big experience like we did in chapel. I really got moved into it because God has done so many good things in my life and I want to worship and praise Him for that.”

NOAH PFEIFFER, 9TH GRADER

# This is Love

The Salvation Army Camp Homelani, North Shore, O'ahu | February 12-14

Over a few meaningful days on the North Shore, our sophomore camp stepped away from the everyday rhythm of school life to reflect on one powerful truth: “This is love.” The theme of sophomore camp centered on understanding the depth of Jesus’ love; that He first loved us, and because of this, we are called to love others.

Through chapel messages, small group discussions, and team-building activities, students explored how Christ’s love shapes our identity and our relationships. A highlight of the weekend was learning about the Five Love Languages: a practical way to understand how we give and receive love. The Love Languages are:

- **Words of Affirmation**—Speaking encouraging and uplifting words that build others up
- **Quality Time**—Giving someone your full attention and being present
- **Acts of Service**—Doing something helpful or kind for someone else
- **Gifts**—Giving thoughtful or meaningful items that show you care
- **Physical Touch**—Using appropriate gestures like high-fives, hugs, or pats on the back

“Sophomore Camp is a chance for students to reflect on God’s love and how it transforms the way we love one another,” shared Charles Poore, High School Ministries Coordinator. “We talk about how Jesus expressed love through quality time with His disciples, affirming them, serving them—even ultimately going to the cross. The greatest act of service ever done for us is Christ’s death on the cross, and the greatest gift we can ever receive is salvation.”

By learning how Jesus modeled each love language, students were challenged to think about how they can love others well in their own lives. The weekend also gave students the chance to grow closer to their classmates, deepen their faith, and experience God’s love in a personal way.



Photos courtesy of Ashley Storm and Eagle Eye



“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

JOHN 3:16

# Launching into Senior Year

Hawai'i Island | September 3-6, 2024



**RAFT:** Reconciliation, Affirmation, Farewell, Think Destination

## A Meaningful Start to Senior Year

The Class of 2025 kicked off their final year with an unforgettable journey on Hawai'i Island, where Senior Camp and Senior Trip intertwined to create a powerful mix of spiritual growth, deep conversations, and lasting memories.

At Senior Camp, students reflected on their past, embraced the present, and prepared for the future through the theme RAFT—Reconciliation, Affirmation, Farewell, and Think Destination:

- **Reconciliation** (2 Corinthians 5:16-21)—Making peace with the past and strengthening relationships.
- **Affirmation** (Ephesians 4:29-32)—Writing heartfelt words of encouragement to one another.
- **Farewell** (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2)—Reflecting on how to finish high school well and leave a legacy.
- **Think Destination** (Proverbs 15:22)—Seeking God's guidance for the road ahead.

One of the most powerful moments was the Faculty Panel, where teachers answered students' biggest questions about college, faith, and the future. During this time of honesty and wisdom, seniors were reminded that God is in control of their next steps.

And the biggest praise report is that eleven students made first-time commitments to Christ!



## SENIOR TRIP

# Faith, Fun & Lasting Memories

Hawai'i Island | September 3-6, 2024



Beyond the deep conversations and spiritual moments, seniors also experienced adventure and fun, strengthening their friendships in unforgettable ways.

### TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

**Kahua Ranch Sunset Dinner**—Worship, laughter, and breathtaking views.

**Snorkel Tour**—Exploring God's creation in the crystal-clear waters.

**Beach Volleyball**—Friendly competition and bonding under the sun.

**Bowling & Karaoke Night**—Singing, cheering, and making hilarious memories.

**Shopping & Free Time**—Enjoying each other's company before heading home.

Whether it was worshipping under the stars, sharing words of affirmation, or snorkeling in the ocean, the Class of 2025 left this trip renewed, encouraged, and ready to step into their senior year with confidence in God's plan.



# Splashing Jesus' Love

Elementary School | October 28–November 1, 2024



**For one special week each year**, academics pause as students dive deeper into their faith during Christian Emphasis Week (CEW)—a time dedicated to discovering who Jesus is and what that means for our lives. This year, our elementary students embraced the theme “Splash Jesus’ Love,” exploring God’s love, His promises, and how they can share that love with others.



Each day was filled with exciting games, activities, and moments of worship, helping students understand that Jesus is a forever friend—one who walks with us through life’s challenges and joys. “Jesus knows what it’s like when we feel lonely, hurt, or when others say unkind things about us,” shared Christian Ministries Director Cindy Gaskins. “But He is the kind of friend whose love splashes and makes a difference—not just in the whole world, but for me and for you.”

For over 10 years, this week our students have ended with a walk through our Nu’uanu neighborhood, sharing the love of Jesus through songs, dance, and handmade gifts. They visited neighbors at Maululani Hale, 15 Craigside, Meals on Wheels, and Hawai’i School for the Blind, Kuakini Senior Care Home and the Rehab Hospital of the Pacific to brighten their day.

Back on campus, they continued to “Splash Jesus’ Love” with water-filled fun, including inflatable water slides, water balloons, and other exciting activities!



## CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS WEEK 2024

# Now You Know

Middle and High School | November 12-15, 2024



**HBA's middle and high school students** took a break from their regular schedules to dive deeper into their faith during Christian Emphasis Week (CEW). The theme, "Now You Know," challenged students to reflect on how the Gospel of Jesus transforms their lives today and gives them the assurance of eternal life.



Through daily chapel services, worship, and interactive breakout sessions, students heard powerful messages from HBA faculty and guest speakers who shared their personal faith journeys and how they live out their beliefs in everyday life. Middle and high school students also had the opportunity to choose from a variety of seminars, engaging in meaningful discussions about faith,



purpose, and how to apply biblical truths in their lives.

Beyond the inspiring messages, CEW was also filled with fun activities and moments of fellowship, creating an environment where students could grow in their relationship with Christ and with one another.

Now they know. But what will they do with this knowledge?

That's the challenge CEW leaves with every student—to take what they've learned and live boldly for Christ.



## Exploring Japan

Sapporo, Tobetsu, Kamakura, and Tokyo | October 6-16, 2024

札幌市



鎌倉市



**Top right:** Hase Temple (Kamakura). **Above (L-R):** shabu-shabu dining (Sapporo), meeting new friends at Clark Memorial International High School (Sapporo), and electronic billboards in Susukino, Sapporo, the largest entertainment district in Japan, north of Tokyo.

**In an age of Instagram and TikTok**, many students think they know Japan — its food, culture, and bustling city life. But over fall break, 20 HBA students and 10 chaperones (including faculty, staff, and family members) discovered that the Land of the Rising Sun is far richer than what's seen online. Led by Japanese teacher Mrs. Elena Yoo, the group embarked on a transformative journey through Tokyo and Hokkaidō, immersing themselves in Japanese life and traditions.

### Lessons in Independence & Cultural Exchange

From navigating Tokyo's crowded commuter trains without bumping into others to soaking in a traditional onsen (hot spring), students gained real-world experience in independence and responsibility. Managing their own budgets in Japanese yen, keeping track of passports and belongings, and learning to be punctual in a large group travel setting helped prepare them for the challenges of college life.

A visit to the Clark Memorial Sapporo Campus was a highlight, as students connected with their Japanese peers through fun games and local snacks. At Hokaido University, they explored campus life at a national

university, gaining insight into higher education in Japan.



**Left:** Asakusa Senso-ji temple and pagoda (Tokyo). **Lower right:** Make-your-own chocolate workshop at the Royce Chocolate Town (Tobetsu, Hokaido).

浅草寺

### A Unique Route & Unforgettable Moments

This year's trip took a special route to Hokkaido, where students enjoyed a cooler climate and breathtaking natural landscapes. Traveling by tour bus allowed for more face-to-face conversations rather than screen time, and their local tour guide quickly became a mother figure to the group.

Reflecting on the journey, Mrs. Yoo shared:

"For me and many of the students, we grew very close as we shared experiences and explored together. These memories will last a lifetime."

She also emphasized the value of cross-cultural friendships, saying:

"While we study vocabulary and grammar in the classroom, what truly matters when communicating with native speakers is the willingness to share our hearts. God wants us to live in communities, and I believe that traveling to foreign countries and making new friends is a way to build new communities, honoring God's command."

With the next HBA Japan trip planned for fall 2026, students are already looking forward to new adventures — this time in Kyushu, where they'll explore historic Christian sites and the city of Nagasaki.



FALL & WINTER HIGHLIGHTS

# HBA Preschool at GracePoint

95-1080 Ukuwai St, Mililani, HI | September 2024 — January 2025



## CHRISTMAS SHOW



# Childhood Characters All Grown Up

Middle and high school students brought the energy, creativity, and nostalgia for a week of fun, fierce competition, and Eagle pride. Day 4's Pepper Squad was the week's most highly anticipated event. Each grade transformed a childhood cartoon into a creative skit packed with spirit, humor, and iconic moments.

## **GRADES 7 & 8 (Class of 2029 & 2030)—Garfield**

Lasagna-loving chaos and clever cheers had the crowd laughing. These middle schoolers delivered big energy!



## **FRESHMEN (Class of 2028)—Curious George**

With unexpected romance, hilarious monkey business, and tons of personality, this skit was full of surprises.



## **SOPHOMORES (Class of 2027)—SpongeBob**

**SquarePants** From jellyfish fields to the Krusty Krab, the sophomore class recreated Bikini Bottom with a wildly funny underwater adventure.



## **JUNIORS (Class of 2026)—Phineas & Ferb**

Dressed in spot-on costumes, this crew went all out with props, set pieces, and choreography that brought summer vacation to life.



## **SENIORS (Class of 2025)—Dora the Explorer**

“¡Vámonos!” The seniors closed out the day with a show-stopping performance. Their Dora-themed skit had the whole gym chanting “We did it!” With sharp storytelling, vibrant dances, and that unbeatable senior spirit, they ended Spirit Week on a high.



After a week of themed outfits, exciting competitions, and unforgettable performances, the Class of 2025 claimed the crown as this year's Spirit Week Champions!

# Homecoming Victories & Mana Cup Glory for the Class of 2025

**Spirit Week 2025 ended with an unforgettable Homecoming night** filled with school pride, thrilling basketball, and a long-awaited victory for the senior class.

The girls varsity basketball team kicked off the evening with a strong performance against Mid-Pacific, closing out the third quarter 32–28 and powering through the final minutes to secure a 51–40 win.

The boys varsity game against Hanalani proved to be a nail-biter. After a back-and-forth battle that pushed into overtime, senior guard Colton Wong sank a crucial two-pointer and senior guard Samuel Lim ended the battle with a game-winning play, lifting the Eagles to a 52–51 victory and sending Eagle fans into a frenzy.



During halftime, all eyes turned to center court as the winner of the coveted Mana Cup was announced. In one of the closest competitions in recent memory, the seniors, Class of 2025, edged out the juniors by just three points to claim the trophy—a symbol of tradition, pride, and ultimate bragging rights.

The seniors dominated Spirit Week with near-perfect attendance in dress-up days, a first-place finish in both their pepper squad skit and cheer competition. The final rankings saw the juniors in second, sophomores in third, freshmen fourth, and the middle school finishing in fifth.

The energy, competition, and school spirit throughout the week reminded everyone why Spirit Week is one of the most anticipated events of the school year. This year, the Class of 2025 made it one to remember.



Homecoming photos courtesy of Abbie Kato '25

# HBA Wins Volleyball State Championship

By Deren Oshiro '86, Director of Athletics



**Front Row:** Katelynn Albano, Marisa Nakata, Rhyann Cobb-Dumlao, Jaclyn Miyazawa, Callie Kam, Emerson Sisco, Makena Lincoln, Coach Taryn Bohan Wells '10, Athletic Trainer Karin Carido, Coach Myles Shioji. **Back Row:** Coach Jared Gandia '04, Manager Maya Kim, Kate Iida, Asia Dela Cruz, Kylie Ancheta, Keira Liew, May Shiraishi, Makana Doane, Caroline Fisher, Blair Labarre, Brooke Brennan.

HBA has returned to the top of the girls division 2 volleyball mountain. The Eagles relied on precise serving and passing—along with their trademark defense—to defeat Le Jardin Academy 25-20, 25-20, 25-16 in the final of the New City Nissan/HHSAA Girls State Volleyball Championships on November 2, 2024 at the Cannon Activities Center on the campus of BYU-Hawaii in Laie.

Outside hitter Marisa Nakata '25 led the Eagles with 17 kills, 10 digs, and 2 service aces, while middle blocker Brooke Brennan had 7 kills (.333 hitting percentage) and 3 blocks. Kylie Ancheta '26 chipped in 6 kills and 10 digs. Libero Jaclyn Miyazawa '27 had 12 digs and middle Makana Doane '25 added 4 kills and 4 blocks. Setter Katelynn Albano '25— last year's starting libero— dished out 34 assists and added 8 digs and 2 blocks.

HBA won three consecutive ILH and state division 2 championships 2007 to 2009. They added a league and state title in 2015. In the past eight seasons, they had another league title and finished as state runner-up three times, most recently in 2022 when the core of this team was sophomores.

Entering as the ILH champion and the tournament's top overall seed, the Eagles faced MIL runner-up Seabury Hall in the quarter-final round and posted an efficient 25-7, 25-16, 25-21 victory. The semi-final against KIF champion Kapa'a was anything but easy. After dropping the first two sets decisively, the Warriors rallied to win the next two sets, fighting off two HBA match points the fourth set.

The teams traded points in the fifth set before the Eagles ultimately pushed through, narrowly escaping with a 25-16, 25-18, 20-25, 25-27, 15-11 victory over the upstart Warriors.

Nakata was named the tourney's Most Outstanding Player. Joining her on the all-tournament team were Albano, Ancheta, and Miyazawa. Other team members were Asia Dela Cruz '25, Makena Lincoln, '25, Caroline Fisher '25, Emerson Sisco '26, Kate Iida '26, Rhyann Cobb-Dumlao '26, Callie Kam '27, Abigail Marchenko '27, May Shiraishi '28, Keira Liew '28, and Blair LaBarre '28. The coaches were Myles Shioji '94, Jared Gandia '04 and Taryn Bohan Wells '10. Congratulations to our Eagles!



# HBA Boys Cross Country Claims State Championship

By Deren Oshiro '86, Director of Athletics

## HBA again sits atop the state in Division 2 boys cross country.

The Eagle boys won the 2024 Honolulu Marathon/HHSAA Division 2 State Cross Country Championship November 2, 2024 at the Keopuolani Regional Park in Kahului, Maui.

HBA's 39 points provided a surprisingly comfortable margin over defending D2 state champion Seabury Hall (53). The other Division 2 schools posting team scores were (in ranking order) Hawai'i Prep, Hanalani School, Kamehameha-Hawai'i, Parker School, and Kaua'i High. Had all schools been scored together in one division, HBA would have placed 5th overall out of 21 scoring teams.

Leading the way for the boys was Xan Waialeale '25, whose time of 17:14 was good for 16th place overall. Other scoring runners were Madan Abe '27 (22nd, 17:27), Codey Chung '26 (29th, 17:49.54), Cade Matsumoto '26 (30th,



Left to right: Talin Giang, Logan Watkins, Kyson Oumi, Dylan Djou, Xan Waialeale, Cade Matsumoto, Codey Chun, Daniel Nagao, Madan Abe.

17:49.72) and Dylan Djou '25 (81st, 18:38). Also competing were Daniel Nagao '26 (101st, 18:54) and Kyson Oumi '28 (112th, 19:10). The top twenty finishers were awarded medals.

The HBA boys have now won two of the past three D2 state titles and have

a state-leading six overall. The Eagles won the inaugural D2 Championship in 2012.

The team was coached by Aaron Kondo '05, who notched his fifth title as the leader of the boys program.

# HBA Girls Cross Country in 3-way Tie for First

**THE EAGLE GIRLS** barely missed matching the boys' feat as they finished in an unprecedented three-way tie for first place (43 points apiece). However, in the tie-breaker, they finished second to Hawai'i Prep and ahead of Seabury Hall. The girls were coming off an ILH Championship two weeks earlier where they defeated all league schools including perennial cross country power Punahou.

This marked our HBA girls team's third runner-up finish (2016 and 2017). The team won four consecutive state championships between 2018 and 2022 (No state championships were held in 2020).

Leading the way for the Eagles was Rylee Sato '27, whose time of 20:18 was good for 13th place overall. Other scoring runners were Elizabeth Ragain '26 (25th place, 20:48), Kaycie Hayashi '28 (26th, 20:48), Kelsie Takeuchi '28

(38th, 21:15) and Natali Nomura '25 (75th, 22:29). Also competing were Kayla Teruya '28 (86th, 22:51) and Callie Kawaguchi '26 (113th, 23:37). The top twenty finishers—regardless of division—were awarded medals.

The team was led by head coach Shelby Tanaka '11.

Assistant coaches for the girls and boys cross country program were Brent Wakuzawa '13, Ian Doi '07, Nina (Cheong) Kondo '09, Jada Inouye '19, HBA staff member Thatcher King, Allyson Scott, and HBA alumni parent Manami Keuning (mother to Anika '18 and Kai '21 and wife of David '85).

Congratulations to all of our Eagle athletes for their outstanding seasons!

## SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENTS

# HBA Legal Eagles Soar to State Championship Victory!



The HBA Legal Eagles celebrate their championship victory with Hawai'i Supreme Court Justice and HBA alumnus Todd Eddins '82.

**The HBA Legal Eagles have claimed the 2025 Hawai'i High School Mock Trial State Championship, earning the title at the Hawai'i Supreme Court!**

This year's competition featured a modern adaptation of the 1994 O.J. Simpson trial, set in Hawai'i, and developed by the Young Lawyers Division of the Hawai'i State Bar Association. Competing teams meticulously analyzed affidavits, exhibits, and witnesses to build their strongest cases.

This mixed-grade team was led by seniors Robert Nordin and Sage Shiroma, along with junior Jordon Tam and sophomore Ava Ortega. Their dedication and leadership helped propel the team to victory.

The full roster of outstanding team members includes: Anika Chang, Emma Lee, Sarah Bryer, Kylie Kono, Lily Ames, Aaron Corpuz, Joshua Murakami, TJ Koki, Jacob Barnett, Lauren Espiritu, David Sakoda, Ethan Nouchi, Andy Fang, and Taichi Wong.

A heartfelt thank you to the parents for their unwavering support: spending weekends cheering on the team and providing much-needed snacks to keep them energized. Their dedication, combined with the professionalism and advocacy skills demonstrated by these students, made this championship victory even more special.

Congratulations, Legal Eagles!

# HBA Math Team's Winning Streak Continues!

**HBA's Math Team has had a dominant season**, securing first place in every meet so far in the Newton Division of the O'ahu Mathematics League. With one final competition remaining on April 12 at Kaiser High School, the Varsity team hopes to end strong, showcasing their dedication and excellence in problem-solving. The Junior Varsity team has also been excelling, including a record-setting third-place finish at Meets 5 and 6, in competition with much larger schools.

The high scorer designations have been shared by Brady Katano, Jaden Oki, Mina Kwon, Kyler Hasegawa, Max Okazaki, and Kenshin Casamina. Team members achieved perfect event scores across algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. About 40 HBA students have participated in Oahu Mathematics League competitions this year.

In middle school competition, Devyn Ames ('29) and Kole Hashimoto ('29) qualified for the Hawai'i State MATHCOUNTS Competition, where Kole placed 16th earning an Honorable Mention Trophy. Their success

followed a strong showing at the Honolulu Chapter MATHCOUNTS Competition, where HBA's team finished 7th out of 18 schools, securing a top 10 trophy.

With one final meet ahead, HBA's High School Math Team is on track to secure the overall championship, a testament to their hard work and perseverance. Congratulations to all our mathletes on an outstanding season!



Middle school team at the Honolulu Chapter MATHCOUNTS Competition.

# HBA's Rising Star: Meet Khaleesi!



Most third graders spend their days learning, playing, and making memories with friends—but for **Khaleesi Lambert-Tsuda**, this year has been extra special. The HBA student from Kāneʻohe isn't just a regular Disney fan, she is part of the magic. Khaleesi is the voice behind Moana's little sister, Simea, in *Moana 2*, the highly successful sequel to the beloved animated film.

**Born and raised in Hawai'i, Khaleesi grew up surrounded by the beauty of the islands and a strong sense of community**—values that reflect the Polynesian culture that inspired *Moana*. When she got the chance to lend her voice to the film, it was a dream come true.

To celebrate her big-screen debut, Khaleesi's classmates at HBA organized a special screening at Windward Mall, where friends and family members came together to watch the movie with her. Seeing her voice come to life on screen with so much support from her school community made the moment even more meaningful.

Despite her newfound experience on the big screen, Khaleesi remains a

down-to-earth and faith-filled student who loves school, her friends, and having fun. Below, she shares more about her experience in *Moana 2*, how her faith guided her, and some fun personal facts.

**Q:** How did you feel when you found out you got the role in *Moana 2*?

**A:** Khaleesi: I felt nervous but excited at the same time.

**Q:** What was the most exciting or surprising part about recording for a Disney movie?

**A:** Khaleesi: I was just so thrilled to be a part of the Disney 'ohana. Not a lot of Hawai'i kids get to have this opportunity.

**Q:** How did your faith play a role in this journey?

**A:** Khaleesi: I feel like God gave me this opportunity. I auditioned for *Lilo and Stitch* and I wasn't chosen, but that led to this role and I felt it all happened because of God.

**Q:** How did it feel to have so many of your classmates come watch the movie with you?

**A:** Khaleesi: I felt so blessed to have so many friends who support me.

**Q:** What is your favorite thing about being a student at HBA?

**A:** Khaleesi: My favorite thing about being at HBA is I get to praise God and make lots of good friends.

**Q:** If you could voice any other Disney character, who would it be and why?

**A:** Khaleesi: Ariel so I could sing my heart out under the sea.

**Q:** What's one fun fact about you that people might not know?

**A:** Khaleesi: I could swim since I was 3 years old.



MAC WEEK 2025

# Mainland Advisory Council (MAC) Gathers for a Week of Fellowship and Impact

February 17–21, 2025



MAC friends are welcomed by HBA students at the middle school campus for breakfast followed by grand group photo.

The HBA 'ohana recently welcomed our beloved Mainland Advisory Council (MAC) for a week filled with meaningful connections with students, activity-filled campus visits, and devotional time. Kicking off with a special Monday night fellowship, the week culminated in the cherished Aloha Banquet, where MAC members enjoyed heartfelt testimonials and student performances.

## Who Are Our MAC?

Since 1977, the Mainland Advisory Council has been a devoted group of 200 friends who have faithfully supported Hawai'i Baptist Academy. Through prayer, financial contributions, and recruiting new donors, MAC members have played a pivotal role in shaping HBA's legacy. Their support extends far beyond Hawai'i's shores, connecting generations and fostering lifelong relationships. Representing 25 states, MAC members look forward to their annual meeting in Honolulu—a time of revival, reunion, and recommitment to HBA's mission.

## A Week of Impact

One of the most anticipated events of the year, MAC Week brings our mainland friends together with students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and grandparents. This year marks the 48th annual gathering, where members receive updates on HBA's vision for the future and witnessed firsthand the transformative work their generosity makes possible. This year, the attendees raised over \$114,000 as part of a matching gift towards the Campaign for Transformation! This included a special gift from Warren Baptist Church in the amount of \$35,000 towards the Institute of Hope Endowment that is part of the Campaign efforts.

## Welcoming New Friends

This year, we were blessed to host 56 attendees from seven states: Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. Of these, 34 are registered MAC members, while others joined as first-time guests. Their presence provided a wonderful opportunity to share HBA's mission and values, and we look forward to growing our MAC 'ohana!

Mahalo to our MAC members for their unwavering support, prayers, and generosity. Your partnership strengthens our mission and ensures HBA's legacy for generations to come!



## MAC WEEK 2025



Robert Whitfield (far left) with Genelle and Michael Sweitzer of Texas



Donna Stanford (left) accompanied by Reese Lueder '28



Keynote speaker Dr. David H. McKinley with Billie Takaki Lueder and Ron Shiira



Mr. and Mrs. Don Randall



**Above (second row):** Following a morning visit to the high school campus (top row), MAC visitors were able to witness the construction of the new elementary campus facility in progress.



MAC given a celebrated send-off on their last day at the Aloha Banquet.



The Gorham family visit with students at the elementary campus.



HBA Special Events Coordinator Aloha Mussell '20 (left) chats with a MAC friend at the Aloha Banquet located at the Ala Moana Hotel.



View **MAC Week Moments** photo archive at [hba.net/MACWeek2025](https://hba.net/MACWeek2025)



## TEXAS GRATITUDE TOUR

# Miles of Gratitude: HBA Students Thank MAC Supporters in Texas

By Kellan Imaguchi

September 28– October 16, 2024



**Over fall break, select members of the Soldiers of Light and Wind Ensemble embarked on a special journey to Texas,** where they reconnected with members of the Mainland Advisory Council (MAC) who now reside in the South. The two-week-long Gratitude Tour brought music and discipleship to churches, schools, and communities across the state, blessing audiences with heartfelt performances. Though the schedule was packed, every moment was worthwhile for the students, who returned home with stronger bonds—both with each other and with God.

The purpose of the tour was to answer the question: How far would you go to say thank you? For years, MAC members have generously supported students' journeys at HBA, investing their time, prayers, and resources to help them grow in faith and education. This tour was an opportunity for students to express their deep gratitude, traveling the distance to personally thank those who have given

so much. Through worship, service, and song, they aimed to bless the hearts of those who have blessed them.

Beyond the performances, students also had the opportunity to explore the Lone Star State!

### Trip Highlights:

- Volunteered in McAllen to serve Border Patrol families
- Attended Sunday services at Calvary Baptist Church and First Baptist Belton
- Visited the Rio Grande, the river marking the U.S.-Mexico border
- Enjoyed dinner with MAC/McAllen hosts, Othal and Sarah Brand
- Explored the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston
- Shopped at Texas favorites like Buc-ee's, Trader Joe's, and The Silos at Magnolia
- Met with alumni and toured Baylor, Mary Hardin-Baylor, and Dallas Baptist University

- Performed special concerts at:
  - University Baptist Church (Houston)
  - River Oaks Baptist School (Houston)
  - The Legacy Senior Community and First Baptist Church Richardson
- Reconnected with longtime MAC members and supporters

A particularly meaningful moment of the trip was the chance to reunite with Genie Dunn, HBA's very first choral director. Her passion for music and ministry has left a lasting impact on generations of students, making this meeting a special full-circle moment.

Through music, service, and shared experiences, the Gratitude Tour was a testament to faith, fellowship, and appreciation. For the students who participated, it was more than just a trip—it was a way to honor those who have helped make their journeys at HBA possible.

# Cultivating Servant Leaders: HBA's Inaugural Aspiring Leaders Academy



**Above:** ALA program leader Amy Vorderbruegge joins in the award ceremony remotely while President Ron Shiira '75 presents Valerie Coryell '88 her certificate. **Left:** The first cohort of ALA. Front row (L–R): Ross Mukai, Patricia Chang, Valerie Coryell, and anonymous. Back row: Zach Markwith, Mindy Swanson, Ryan Fontiera, and Thatcher King. Not shown: Tammie Bell and Samantha Mira.

Hawai'i Baptist Academy's Aspiring Leaders Academy (ALA) launched its first season this past year, marking an exciting step forward in the school's commitment to leadership development. As part of the Institute of Hope—a pillar of HBA's Campaign for Transformation—this initiative seeks to equip prospective leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary to serve with humility and a heart for Jesus.

## A Vision for Growth and Impact

The foundation of ALA is deeply rooted in biblical leadership. Just as Jesus mentored a small group of disciples and empowered them to lead others, ALA fosters leadership development in an intentional, relational, and mission-driven way.

Amy Vorderbruegge, Vice President of Academics and leader of the ALA program, shared the vision behind this initiative:

“The goal of the Aspiring Leaders Academy is to equip prospective leaders with the skills and knowledge necessary to be servant leaders with a heart for Jesus. The program was initiated to grow leaders from within HBA, expanding their leadership skills in their current positions while also engaging them in the prospect of additional leadership roles. Learning from both current HBA leaders and leaders in the Hawaii

community allows us to experience the core value of humility—knowing there is always more to learn.”

As the program evolves, its reach will expand beyond HBA's faculty and staff. The first two years of ALA focus on nurturing leaders within HBA. By year three, the vision is to extend an invitation to the broader Christian school community, offering this transformational leadership experience to other educators and leaders across the state.

## A Year of Learning and Leadership

The Aspiring Leadership Academy is a year-long program featuring 10 dynamic sessions that equip participants with essential leadership skills, strategic thinking, and communication tools.

Sessions focus on team dynamics, self-awareness, vision and strategy,

delegation, decision-making, and corporate communication. Participants also develop skills in navigating crucial conversations, organizational awareness, and financial stewardship in ministry. The program culminates in a capstone project, where cohorts present actionable solutions to real challenges at HBA.

By integrating HBA's core values, ALA fosters a culture of servant leadership, empowering participants to apply their learning in meaningful ways that will shape the school and beyond.

## Meet the Inaugural Class of HBA's Inspiring Leaders Academy

The first cohort of ALA represents a diverse group of HBA educators and staff who are committed to personal growth, professional development, and kingdom impact. The first inaugural class is photographed and listed above.

“Building relationships with those around you is an essential part of leading well. Taking time to really know the people you are leading allows the group to work well and flourish.”

# Fourth Graders Explore Maui

March 5-7, 2025



Fourth-grade HBA students beside a HC&S cane hauler, Alexander & Baldwin Sugar Museum, Pu'unene, Maui.

For 16 years, Hawai'i Baptist Academy's fourth graders have embarked on an unforgettable journey to Maui, immersing themselves in the island's rich history, breathtaking landscapes, and vibrant culture. This annual trip not only brings classroom lessons to life but also strengthens bonds between students, teachers, and parents—all while deepening their understanding of God's creation.

## A Journey of Discovery and Fellowship

Reflecting on the value of this special trip, fourth grade teachers Mrs. Hasha, Mrs. Iseri, and Mrs. Rawlings shared:

"Visiting the island of Maui has been an amazing experience for the past 16 years. The fourth graders and their parents become awestruck with God's beauty as they visit various sites. Students become curious about the history and geography of Maui, including 'Iao Valley, the sugar and whaling industries, the impact of missionaries, unique tropical flowers and plants, and beautiful animals and marine life. It is truly a blessing to witness the bonding of faculty, parents, and their children while on the Maui trip. The fourth graders immensely enjoy the



Hawai'i Wildlife Discovery Center

fellowship with one another that is typically filled with joy and laughter. It is our hope and prayer that the fourth graders will cherish these experiences and memories for years to come."

## New Experiences

A significant part of past Maui trips included a visit to Lāhainā, where students explored historical sites such as the Baldwin Missionary Home, the banyan tree, and the Old Prison. However, following the devastating fires, adjustments were made to the itinerary.

"Usually, on day two of the three-day excursion, we would spend time in Lāhainā on the historical walking tour," the teachers explained. "Since the fire, we have made adaptations to our itinerary. This year, we visited the Maui Animal Farm, which quickly became a favorite with the kids. We also experienced our first-ever whale watch—a truly memorable addition to the trip!"

Despite the changes, the students experienced an enriching journey filled with exciting new stops, including: Alexander



Maui Ocean Center

& Baldwin Sugar Museum, 'Iao Valley Lookout Hike, Bailey House Museum, Maui Ocean Center, Whale Watching, Maui Animal Farm, Hawai'i Wildlife Discovery Center, and Maui Tropical Plantation.

## Faith in Every Step

Christian Ministries Coordinator Cindy Gaskins played a vital role in incorporating faith into the trip's discussions and reflections.

"Each evening after dinner, we closed the day with a recap of things students enjoyed and learned, making connections with scripture," she shared.

One such moment occurred at the Alexander & Baldwin Sugar Museum, where students learned about Samuel Baldwin, a key figure in the sugar industry. Cindy used this opportunity to draw a direct connection between Baldwin's legacy and the history of HBA.

"Samuel Baldwin was once the manager of the Haleakalā Ranch on Maui—one of the many enterprises under Alexander & Baldwin. He and his family spent time both on Maui and in Honolulu, where their estate was located at the corner of Bates and Nu'uuanu Street. That very property later became home to Our Lady of Peace School in 1933. In 1934, the land was transferred to the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts, and a new convent school—Sacred Hearts School—was completed in 1938. Decades later, in 1987, that very property became part of Hawai'i Baptist Academy."

This moment helped students see how history is not just a series of events, but a part of God's greater plan.

"I pointed students to **Acts 17:26-28**: 'From one man he made all the nations... and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God

did this so that they would seek him... though he is not far from any one of us.' You are not at HBA by accident; God has you in a place to know Him."

By tracing the path from Maui's sugar industry to the very land on which they learn today, students were reminded that God's hand is at work in every detail—past, present, and future.

## Experiencing God's Creation in a Meaningful Way

Throughout the trip, students encountered God's power and creativity in new and exciting ways.

"Creation is always a perfect way to see God's power, creativity, and beauty," Cindy said. "Listening to the whales sing when the boat captain placed the microphone in the ocean, holding critters at the animal farm, learning about plants and sugar cane—each experience pointed to how God provides through creation. Seeing the regrowth of the banyan tree in Lāhainā reminded us of beauty from ashes."

As the fourth graders returned home, they carried with them not only newfound knowledge but also cherished memories and a deeper appreciation of God's presence in all things. The Maui tip continues to be a transformative experience, one that students will hold in their hearts for years to come.



(L-R): Kammie Nishimiya, Karen Iseri, Christina Hasha, Jeri Rawlings, Trisha Lee '94, Cindy Gaskins.

'Iao Valley hike



Maui Animal Farm



Maui Animal Farm



Whale watching

# Aloha in Action: Warren Baptist Church Joins HBA in Blessing Lāhainā Students

March 6, 2025



During their trip to Maui, our fourth-grade students met with representatives of King Kamehameha III Elementary School.

When the devastating fires swept through Lāhainā, the Hawai'i Baptist Academy 'ohana responded with compassion, prayer, and support. Two years later, that spirit of aloha is still at work—this time through a special gift from our extended HBA community at Warren Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia.

Moved by the ongoing recovery efforts in West Maui, the Warren Baptist Church Foundation generously donated funds to HBA to support families affected by the fires. Their desire was simple: to bless the Lāhainā community in a meaningful and lasting way.

In God's perfect timing, the donation aligned with HBA's annual 4th Grade Maui trip. During the trip, students, teachers, and staff attended a special dinner banquet where they met with representatives from King Kamehameha III Elementary School: Charlotte Patao, acting vice principal, and Dorice Garcia, educational assistant. The school leaders shared heartfelt updates about their temporary campus, the resilience of their students, and the ongoing challenges facing their community—especially with many families still displaced.

With their guidance, HBA has committed to using the funds to provide uniform shirts and staple school supplies for the students of KKIII, helping ease the financial burden many families face as they prepare for the upcoming school year.

**Billie Lueder '94**, HBA's Director of Institutional Advancement, shared:

"Through the compassion and generosity of Warren Baptist Church and the faithful hearts of the fourth-grade class at Hawai'i Baptist Academy, we have the privilege of extending a gift to support King Kamehameha III Elementary as they continue their journey of rebuilding.

We recognize that this is a season of transition, filled with challenges but also with hope. In God's perfect timing, He has provided, and we are reminded of our responsibility to be faithful stewards of the blessings entrusted to us. It is our prayer that this gift will serve as a tangible reminder that the KKIII school community is not alone—they are loved, supported, and continually lifted up in prayer.

May God strengthen and sustain you as you restore and renew your school 'ohana. We stand with you in faith, believing that 'He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it.'"

“It is our prayer that this gift will serve as a tangible reminder that the KKIII school community is not alone—they are loved, supported, and continually lifted up in prayer.”

BILLIE TAKAKI LUEDER '94



**Standing (L–R):** Billie Lueder '94, Jeri Rawlings, Christina Hasha, Trisha Lee '94, Karen Iseri. **Seated (L–R):** King Kamehameha III Elementary representatives Dorice Garcia, educational assistant, and Charlotte Patao, acting vice principal.

This opportunity to give back also created a powerful learning moment for our fourth-grade students. As they listened and shared in stories, prayers, and fellowship, they experienced HBA's motto, “Christ for Every Nation,” and lived out the school's core values of humility, love, curiosity, and commitment.



**Charlotte Patao**, acting vice principal of KKIII, expressed her appreciation:

“Our students are recovering well, and our community continues to encourage one another. But housing remains a major challenge. Many families are still displaced and long to return to Lāhainā.

We're so grateful for this donation—it will directly impact our families. The cost of returning to school adds up quickly, so helping provide uniforms and school supplies is one less worry. It's a true blessing.

What's been most meaningful is seeing our students reunited with friends and teachers—even in temporary spaces. Just being together again has brought so much joy. And we truly feel your prayers. They make a difference.”

We are excited to continue this partnership with King Kamehameha III Elementary School and have plans to visit their campus in the near future. As we walk alongside our neighbors in Lāhainā, we give thanks for the connections God has orchestrated. Through prayer, generosity, and shared faith, we're reminded that the body of Christ is united, even from thousands of miles away.

We extend our deepest thanks once again to our friends at Warren Baptist Church for their generosity, compassion, and heart for Hawai'i. Your gift is making a real difference and reminding students and families in Lāhainā that they are seen, supported, and loved. We are grateful for your continued partnership in the work God is doing across our islands.



Funds used to purchase donated school supplies (above) were sourced from contributions from Warren Baptist Church.

# A Special 75th Anniversary Collection

For 75 years, Hawai'i Baptist Academy has been a place where creativity, community, and faith come together. To celebrate this milestone, HBA has partnered with three talented alumni entrepreneurs to create a limited-edition merchandise collection that reflects the heart and legacy of our school.



## DANIEL ARITA '03—grateFUL

Daniel Arita is a seasoned professional with over 17 years of dedicated service to American Floor and Home, formerly known as The Carpet Shoppe, Inc. His journey with the company began shortly after graduating from college and he currently serves as its President.

An entrepreneur at heart, Daniel started a local lifestyle apparel line called grateFUL which embodies the spirit of aloha, weaving together the threads of gratitude, creativity, and a deep appreciation for their customers and partners.

"Our name itself, with 'FUL' representing 'Floors You Love,' pays homage to our humble beginnings while signifying our evolution into a brand that enriches lives in more ways than one."

Website—<https://grateful.lifestyle/>

The pineapple is the unofficial fruit of the State of Hawai'i and has long been a symbol of hospitality which is referenced in the Bible several times.

*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.* —Romans 12:11-13

Elevate your game and your style. Featuring a body temperature-reactive fabric that intelligently adapts to your environment, ensuring unmatched comfort and performance whether you're on the green or on the go.

Perfect for a sunny day on the course or making a statement while out and about, this shirt is sure to become a staple in your wardrobe. Experience the perfect blend of performance and style.

Material and Care: Machine Wash Warm and Tumble Dry Low. Avoid using fabric softener or detergent containing fabric softener.

grateFUL



Men's black pineapple polo with HBA 75th anniversary logo



Women's black pineapple polo with HBA 75th anniversary logo



## JERRICA (LUM) CREMER '05—[Mana 'Ohana Boutique](https://mana-ohana-boutique.mysshopify.com/)

Jerrica (Lum) Cremer, owner and designer of Mana 'Ohana Boutique, is a 2005 graduate of Hawai'i Baptist Academy. Born and raised in Waimānalo, O'ahu, her business journey began with a desire to support her family, which soon turned into a path of self-discovery and expression. Each design is hand-drawn with intention, inspired by memories and her Native Hawaiian culture.

"My hope is that through every piece, we can share aloha and a sense of home with you."

Website—<https://mana-ohana-boutique.mysshopify.com/>

**KAHAWAI DESIGN:** This piece, entitled "Kahawai," is a thoughtful blend of Hawaiian beauty and Japanese-inspired artistry, crafted to capture the tranquil essence of Nu'uuanu Stream that runs through the three HBA Nu'uuanu campuses and administration office. The soft, flowing lines evoke the calm of the water, while delicate touches of white add a hint of lightness, inviting your eye to key details.

Without these highlights, "Kahawai" takes on a more understated look, allowing the fluid lines to blend harmoniously for a serene, peaceful effect—perfect for someone who appreciates subtle, nature-inspired art.



**MAUNA DESIGN:** Inspired by the serene landscapes of Nu'uuanu Valley, where the elementary, middle and high school campuses reside in addition to the preschool located in Mililani Mauka, this design, "Mauna," reflects the essence of Hawai'i's mountains. The triangular shapes, traditionally used by Native Hawaiians to symbolize mountains, convey strength, resilience, and stability. In Hawaiian, mauna means mountain, and this design honors the natural beauty and cultural significance of these towering peaks, evoking a deep connection to place and heritage.



**PAIGE (OSHIRO) SU '17—Poshiki LLC**

Paige (Oshiro) Su is a proud Daughter of HBA. She has many fond memories of growing up at HBA—from drawing imaginary creatures in 3rd grade art class to performing in plays with her friends in high school. She is grateful for all the teachers and staff who shared Christ's love and encouraged her to be creative.

Paige offers watercolor workshops, pet portraits, greeting cards, and gifts through her business, Poshiki LLC.

"My paintings celebrate the beauty of Creation—from the Ko'olau Mountains to a tiny sunrise shell—and the goodness of the God who designed it."

Website—<https://www.etsy.com/shop/Poshiki>



**ALL THESE LIMITED-RELEASE COLLECTIONS** are available for a short time, making it the perfect way to celebrate HBA's 75-year legacy. Whether you're an alum, parent, faculty member, or current student, these exclusive pieces are a meaningful way to show your HBA pride.

Shop the collection now by scanning the QR code at right or visiting [www.hba.net/alumni-collab](http://www.hba.net/alumni-collab)

Mahalo for supporting our alumni and being part of 75 years of HBA!

**IN MEMORIAM****Aloha 'Oe****ALUMNI**

Stephen Kubota '62, 80, passed away on October 7, 2024, in Bend, Oregon

Mary Breen '79, 63, passed away on October 14, 2024, in West Orange, New Jersey

Brian Sakamoto '91, 51, passed away on November 25, 2024, in Honolulu, Hawai'i

Peter Loo '94, 48, passed away on February 2, 2025, in Surrey, British Columbia

Trevor Hu '09, 33, passed away on February 22, 2025, in Honolulu, Hawai'i

Travis Kumura '86, 56, passed away on February 27, 2025, in Honolulu, Hawaii

Michael Maxfield '77, 66, passed away on March 10, 2025, in Mesa, Arizona

Brad Taylor '81, 61, passed away on March 15, 2025, in Salem, Oregon

**FORMER FACULTY/STAFF**

Nathan Petherbridge, 66, passed away on December 2, 2024, in Mililani, Hawai'i

Russ Robertson, 77, passed away on January 24, 2025, in Kailua, Hawaii

**MAINLAND ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Edward Zeigler, 99, passed away on September 22, 2024, in Seneca, South Carolina

June Hatley, 96, passed away on October 2, 2024, in Richardson, Texas

Opal Garner, 99, passed away on October 4, 2024, in Saint Louis, Missouri

Fran Byrd, 90, passed away on November 4, 2024, in Villa Park, California

Jareen Schmidt, 94, passed away on November 6, 2024, in Plano, Texas

Tina Whitehead, 96, passed away on November 18, 2024, in Stone Mountain, Georgia

John Sweitzer, 69, passed away on December 20, 2024, in League City, Texas

Joan Trew, 92, passed away on December 31, 2024, in Fort Worth, Texas

Benny Bankston, 87, passed away on January 3, 2025, in Tulsa, Oklahoma

Jane King, 88, passed away on January 20, 2025, in Fayetteville, Georgia

Jim Taliaferro, 88, passed away on February 2, 2025, in Louisville, Kentucky

# Alumni Class Notes

## 1970



On Friday October 18, 2024 HBA's Class of '74 kicked off three days of reunion celebration with a night of Karaoke fun at the Top of the World with senior class advisor **Mrs. Pauline Higa**. On Saturday October 19, class members and senior class advisor Ms. Pamela Metthe got together for a Prime Rib, Mahi Mahi and Pesto Chicken dinner at the (party room at the) Ko'olani in Ka'akako. Fun, games and friendly competition ensued. On Wednesday October 23, the class members met one last time to say farewell to class members, **George Barrett, Randall Kumabe, Curtis Sasaki and Eric Yamada** all who traveled from the mainland for their 50th year celebration. A generous class gift was made to HBA. Mahalo Eagles!

**CLASS OF 1974 50TH REUNION**—Front Row (L–R): Patty Tanaka (Miggins), Velina Sugiyama (Yim), Terri Ann Yamamoto (Follante), Pamela Metthe, Randall Kumabe, Lori Komo (Morita). Back Row (L–R): Eric Yamada, Dennis Jung, John Adversalo, Randy Sugiyama, Robin Obata, Bryan Yamashite, Curtis Sasaki. Note pictured: Pauline Higa and George Barrett.

## 1990



We are deeply grateful to **Dr. Jonathan K. Okinaga '94** for courageously sharing his personal journey of overcoming addiction through God's grace and unconditional love during a visit as a speaker at a high school chapel. Dr. Okinaga serves as an Assistant Professor of Biblical Counseling at the Jack D. Terry School of Educational Ministries, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Texas, where he also holds the distinguished Hope for

the Heart Chair of Biblical Counseling. A proud Southwesterner by academic heritage, he previously contributed as an adjunct professor of biblical counseling at the same institution.

With over a decade of experience ministering and counseling individuals recovering from addiction in various ministry contexts, Dr. Okinaga brings both professional expertise and personal understanding to his work. He is married to Nicole, and together they are blessed with a son, James.



**Quincy Tan** (far right), a 1995 alum, stopped by HBA for a tour! He reconnected with Dana Sato '00, Becky (Chong) McGuire '92, and his former teacher, Ms. Maurine King.



**LEGACY FAMILY ALERT:** A big welcome to **Jon Hong '94**, as his daughter Quinn begins her kindergarten adventure at HBA! The Hong family legacy continues to shine.



**Jenny (Hidano) Uribe**, Class of 1995, visiting campus with her son, Jaxson! It's always special when alumni return to HBA and share their experiences with the next generation.



L-R: Shaun Murakami '95, Becky (Chong) McGuire '92, Kyle Sunada '97, Darrin Imaoka '96, Kara Takata '99

A group of HBA alumni reunited at an ILH wrestling tournament—all there to cheer on their kids who now wrestle too! Kyle Sunada '97 spotted everyone and got them together for this awesome alumni photo. Fun fact: Kyle Sunada '97, Shaun Murakami '95, and Darrin Imaoka '96 all wrestled for HBA back in the day, and now their kids are continuing the tradition!

2000



LEGACY FAMILY ALERT: Aila takes after her mother Winnie Wong '00 in smiles and follows her HBA legacy! We are excited that Aila is joining us in kindergarten!



We were thrilled to welcome **Chad Uyehara '03** and his family to campus! Visiting from Fresno, CA, Chad wanted to share a special piece of his HBA journey by giving his family a tour of our high school campus. During the tour, they ran into HBA Director of Athletics, Deren Oshiro '86, who remembered Chad as a student. It's always heartwarming to see alumni reconnect with the people and places that shaped their journey!



Congratulations to Interventionist Cardiologist, **Dr. Jared Oyama '00**, for receiving the prestigious 2024 George F. Straub Award. This award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated the highest level of achievement and excellence in their professional and personal life, enhancing Straub Benioff's contribution to the professional and community. We are so proud of Jared and are inspired by his passion for serving others!



LEGACY FAMILY ALERT: A big welcome to **Jordan Yasutomi '03**, as his son, Zane begins his journey in Junior Kindergarten at HBA!



2010



High School sweethearts, **Keri-Ann (Ogoshi) Wong '11** & **Matthew Wong '11**, both HBA Lifers, recently visited the Elementary campus! They reunited with their former teacher, Mrs. Nakamura, whose son & daughter-in-law, Micah & Aimee, were their classmates. They also caught up with Mrs. Gaskins, mom of their classmate Caleb, and Mrs. Benn, mom of their classmate Sage.

Shining on stage and in life, congrats to HBA's alumna **Alexia Sommers '16**! Alexia recently placed 3rd Runner-Up at the Miss Hawaii USA pageant, and we couldn't be prouder! Not only is Alexia an inspiration on stage, but also encourages others through her work as the founder of "She Means Business," a nonprofit dedicated to helping women gain confidence, independence, and the tools to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.



Congratulations to **Kyra (Tengan) Miyasato '14** & **Caleb Miyasato '14** on their beautiful wedding! The two tied the knot on August 15, 2024, at the Hyatt Regency Waikiki in Honolulu, HI. Adding a special HBA touch, their ceremony was officiated by HBA high school counselor Danford Chang! Wishing Kyra & Caleb a lifetime of love, joy, and blessings!

**CLASS OF 2014 10TH REUNION**—A decade later, the bonds are still strong! The Class of 2014 came together at Natsunoya Tea House for a night filled with laughter, memories, and reconnecting. Here's to the next 10 years!



**Back row (L–R):** Robert Bueche, Ryan Frontiera (Advisor), Jordan Kauwe, Geoffery Ing, Sean Motogawa, Nathan Cheong, Evan Yamaguchi, Christian Pingree, Jacob Nelson, Jolie Ayabe. **Row 4:** Shane Goo, Matthew Lee, Robert Weismantel (Advisor), Jensen Vinca, Lawrence Ong, Joshua Kinoshita, Chase Perry, Nicholas Lum, Byson Hirokawa, Preston Kauwe, Walden Butay, Keelen Custino, Ryan Mickelson, Kane Verity, Kyle Kadamoto. **Row 3:** Eunice Sim (Advisor), Elise Uyehara, Daniel Kimoto, Michelle Horio, Jarrett Lau, Dallas Wong, Matthew Kishaba, Trent Tsukimura, Brent Vargas, Jason Shon, Westin Saito, Ryan Chang, Warren Wakuzawa, Randall Baniaga, Brenden Higa. **Row 2:** Lindsey Lee, Kylee Takata, Kelsey Nakanishi, Tara Kagimoto, Alix Cortez, Amanada Lee. **Front row:** Mark Shiroma, Jennifer Bunch, Chaney Takiguchi, Catherine Kimura, Michelle David, Arilyn Au, Jaryn Ramos.

2020



**Danford Chang**, HBA Director of Counseling, and **Tara Gruspe**, HBA Counselor, visited our alumni college students and had the opportunity to pray and encourage them. We are so proud of our HBA alumni who are now college students! They are a testament to our current students that you can thrive academically, athletically, and socially through faith-centered learning.



1 Biola: **Miya Yukumoto** '23 (Child Psychology) and **Zoe Yee** (Communication Sciences and Disorders); 2 USC: **Aliisa Tong** '24 (Pharmacy); 3 USC: **Kai Moriyama** '23 (Neuroscience); 4 UCLA: **Summer Lee** '21 (Business and Economics), **Amanda Sato** '22 (Biology) and **Yoyo Xia** '24 (Business and Economics); 5 Occidental College: **Shane Kawakami-Williams** '23 (Kinesiology), 6 Cal Lutheran: **Joey Lin** '23 (Biology) and **Aaron Yoshida** '22 (Business Administration) and 7 USC: **Megan Lee** '23 (Engineering).

**HBA COLLEGE CONNECT NIGHT** was an insightful evening with recent HBA alumni, students, and families.



The panel of alumni sharing their experiences were (L-R): **Riley Lorenzo** '24, Loyola University, IL; **Cameron Pien** '23, Cornell University, NY; **Miya Yukumoto** '23, Biola University, CA; **Isaac Wrobel** '21, Baylor University, TX; **Timothy Shimizu** '23, Princeton University, NJ; and **Shane Kawakami-Williams** '23, Occidental College, CA.



Congratulations **Ian Yamashita**, Class of 2022! After six and a half months of intensive training at the Honolulu Police Academy, Ian graduated on January 31, 2025, as the youngest in his class (#214).

Ian is the son of **Eric Yamashita** '84, owner of Everyday Better, and has always been driven by a passion to serve his community, a legacy that runs deep in his family.

After serving on the President's Aloha Council throughout high school, Ian took the next step toward his dream job—becoming a Honolulu Police Officer. This achievement marks a proud moment for the Yamashita family, as Ian follows in the footsteps of his grandfather, a retired Honolulu Police detective who served in law enforcement for over 50 years.

**In 2024, Hawai'i Baptist Academy established an Advisory Board comprising individuals with a special connection to the school**—whether as alumni, current or past parents, or grandparents. This dynamic group provides invaluable input, support, and key influence with external constituencies, fostering relationships and advocacy to further HBA's goals and mission.

While the Advisory Board is not a governing body, its members play a crucial role in offering guidance as HBA leadership navigates strategic opportunities and challenges, makes informed decisions, and secures the resources needed to fulfill the school's mission.

Each of these individuals brings a unique perspective, deep expertise, and a shared passion for HBA's mission. We are grateful for their leadership, insight, and commitment to the school's continued success.



**KATHY ARASAKI** As Senior Vice President at Honolulu Cookie Company, Kathy oversees operations, administration, and leadership development, fostering a culture of care and growth for team members. A graduate of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Shidler College of Business with a BBA in Accounting, she is also a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). Kathy's extensive nonprofit experience includes serving as HBA's Business Officer from 1998 to 2001. She and her family are proud HBA parents and active members of Metro Christian Church, where she has served on the Church Council since 2017 and as the Council representative for Metro Christian Academy Preschool.



**LEIGHTON M. HARA '95** is an attorney and the Managing Partner at Ota & Hara, LLC, where he represents clients in employment, contract, personal injury, medical malpractice, and commercial disputes. He holds Martindale-Hubbell's highest possible rating (AV Preeminent) for legal ability and ethics and has been selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America®, a peer-reviewed distinction awarded to top attorneys.

Leighton graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, William S. Richardson School of Law and has a BBA in Marketing from UH. He is a proud son of HBA (having attended since kindergarten) and past president of the Hawai'i Baptist Academy Alumni Association. He is married to Cori Hara, a current HBA PTF board member, and they have three sons.



**KIMO KIPPEN '77** A Hawai'i native and global advocate for learning, Kimo Kippen is a former executive at Hilton and Marriott and was named Chief Learning Officer (CLO) of the Year in 2015 by CLO Magazine. He has served as chairman of ATD (2007) and APIASF, and he continues to advise organizations such as The Conference Board, CAEL, GP Strategies, Skillsoft, CTDO Next, and Education Reimagined. An adjunct professor at Catholic University of America and George Mason University, Kimo holds an M.S. from Rochester Institute of Technology and a B.S. from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He splits his time between Hawai'i and Poland.



**RYAN MASUNO '09** earned his degree in Business Information Systems from Oregon State University and has spent the past decade at First Hawaiian Bank where he is currently a wealth advisor. A former Rotary Club President, he actively participates in community programs such as Junior Achievement and First Hawaiian Bank's Community Care initiatives. A passionate traveler and food enthusiast, he names Japan as his favorite destination. Though a lifelong dog lover, he eagerly awaits the day he can finally adopt one—or maybe two!



**CANDICE NAITO** is a retired Senior Vice President and Region Manager at First Hawaiian Bank, where she led key strategic and regional initiatives. A graduate of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, she brings decades of experience in banking and community leadership. She currently serves as Vice President of the Japanese Women's Society Foundation and is a board member of the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce. Over the years, she has also held leadership roles with organizations such as Goodwill Industries of Hawai'i. Candice is a valued member of the HBA Advisory Board, as a past parent and current grandparent of an HBA student, she continues to support education and community engagement.



**PAUL NASO** joins us from Hawai'i Employers' Mutual Insurance Company, Inc. (HEMIC), where he has served as Chief Legal Officer for the past 16 years. He oversees all legal matters for HEMIC and its subsidiaries and leads its legislative team, working with lawmakers, the governor's office, trade groups, and other stakeholders to advance issues benefiting the insurance industry and the State of Hawai'i.

Paul holds a bachelor's degree in political science from East Carolina University and a Juris Doctor from the University of San Francisco School of Law. He is a member of both the Hawai'i and California State Bar Associations and currently serves as a director of the Hawai'i State Bar Association. He also sits on several national insurance boards and local advisory councils, including Hawai'i Baptist Academy, where his wife, Courtney (Class of 1989), is an alumna, and his daughter, Zoë, is a current junior.



**QUIN OGAWA** A current HBA parent, Quin Ogawa serves as Chief Financial Officer for Hawai'i Dental Service and brings over 30 years of healthcare finance experience, with 20 years in executive leadership roles. A graduate of McKinley High School and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, he is also an alumnus of the Pacific Century Fellows program. Quin is a dedicated community servant, serving on the boards of Susannah Wesley Community Center, Public Schools of Hawai'i Foundation, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawai'i, McKinley Business Academy, and HBA's Advisory Board. He has been married for 30 years and has three wonderful children and a beloved dog.



**JESSICA SCHLAIS '98** holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Master's in Social Work from Point Loma Nazarene University and Loma Linda University. As a hospice social worker at Bristol Hospice Hawai'i, LLC, she has dedicated 19 years to supporting patients and families through serious illnesses and end-of-life care. In 2023, she became the owner of Keiki Kits, an online business providing customized school supply kits for students. She is married to Greg Schlais '94, and they have three children, two of whom currently attend HBA.



**BRYCE TANI '88** is the First Vice President and Residential Loan Manager at American Savings Bank. With over two decades in the mortgage industry, he currently oversees sales teams on 'Oahu and Maui for the bank. He is an active member of the Mortgage Bankers Association of Hawaii and serves on the Board of the Hawaii Homeownership Center. Bryce earned a BS degree in Organizational Management from Santa Clara University's Leavey School of Business. He and his wife, Liza, have a daughter who graduated from HBA in 2022 and a son currently in the sixth grade at HBA.



**JARRETT WALTERS '00** (HBA) and '04 (Princeton University) is a proud HBA alum who credits the school for instilling Christ-centered servant leadership, hard work, and integrity. He currently serves as President of Hawaiian Properties, overseeing the management of over 42,000 doors statewide. Prior to this, he spent nearly 19 years at Hawaiian Building Maintenance, where he served as President and CEO.

Jarrett is actively involved in the community, serving on the HBA Alumni Advisory Board and the boards of Holy Nativity School, Waikiki Improvement Association, and the 'Ilikai AOA. He is a past Event Chair of the GIFT Foundation of Hawai'i and is rejoining the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) board as Membership Chair, having previously served as Chapter Chair. His past leadership roles also include Board President of Palama Settlement, Chapter President and Area Director for Toastmasters International, and positions with Men's Leadership of Hawai'i and BOMA Hawai'i.



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# Alumni Celebration 2025

**HELEMAI**—Come, join us  
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Ronald Shiira  
Dale Shoupe  
Jon Simpson

Randall Stewart  
Howard Suite  
Philip Swig  
Carrie Takahara  
Pamela Tetra

Brian Tamm  
Gregory

**Thursday, June 26 — Alumni Legacy Family Dinner**  
Hosted by President Ron Shiira '75

**Saturday, June 28 — Ho'olaule'a**  
Organized by the Office of Institutional Advancement

**Monday, June 30 — Golf Tournament**  
Organized by the HBA Athletic Booster Club



Find out more information and to register for these events go to [www.hba.net/alumnicelebration](http://www.hba.net/alumnicelebration).

Alumni spotlights will be shared throughout the month on our website and social media platforms!  
Be sure to follow us on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.



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