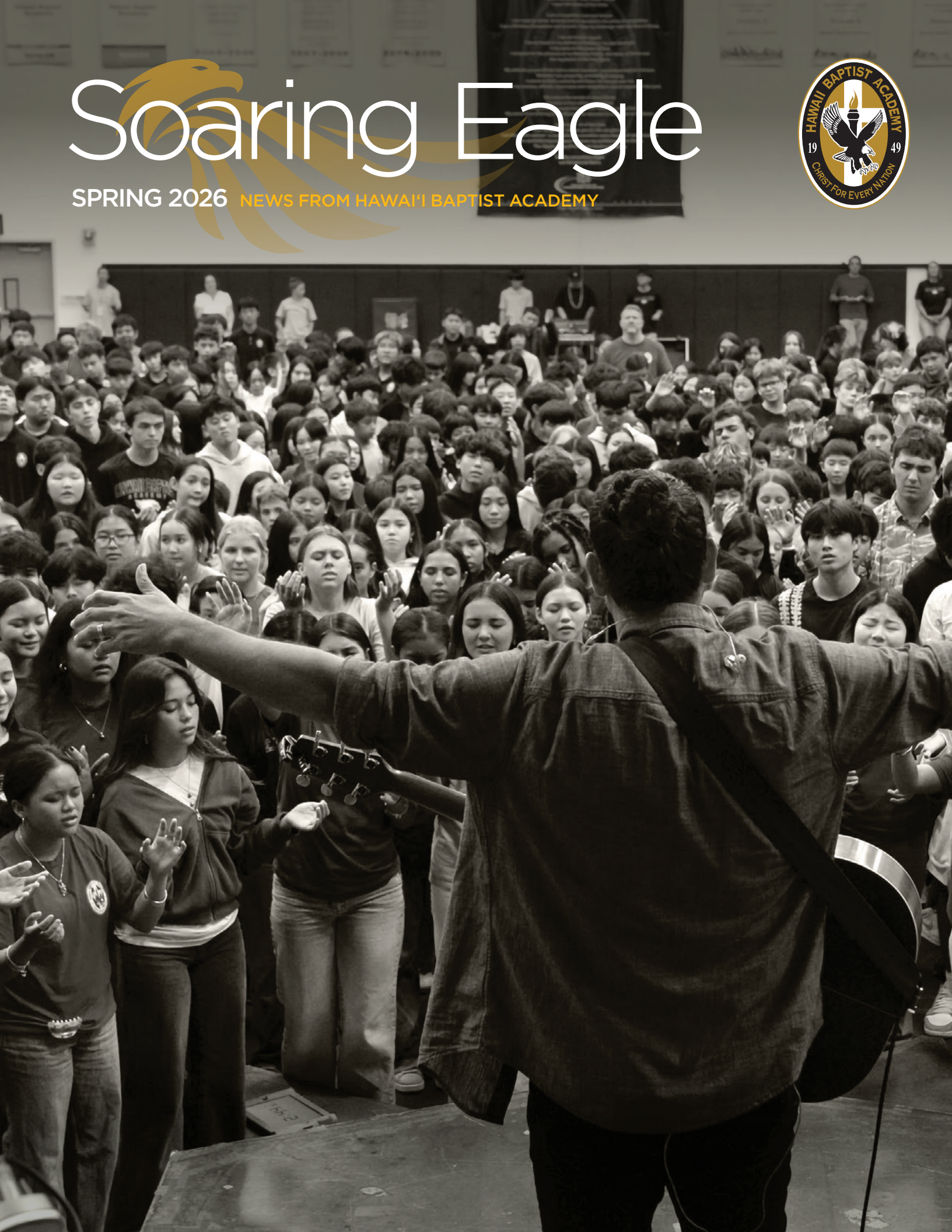
Soaring Eagle

SPRING 2026 NEWS FROM HAWAIʻI BAPTIST ACADEMY



HAWAIʻI 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'uanu 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.

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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.

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A Message from the President



Dear HBA ʻOhana,

As we reflect on this season at Hawai'i Baptist Academy, I am reminded that our calling as a school has always been clear and unwavering.

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. This mission is not simply a statement on paper. It is lived out daily in our classrooms, across our campuses, and through the hearts and lives of our students.

In this issue of *Soaring Eagle*, you will see that mission through the lens of Kingdom Impact—how God is working in and through our students not only during their years at Hawai'i Baptist Academy, but well beyond our school.

During Christian Emphasis Week, we witnessed God moving powerfully among our students as seeds of faith were planted, renewed, and strengthened. Through worship, teaching, prayer, and community, many students made decisions to follow Jesus for the first time or reaffirmed their faith. These moments remind us why Christ must always remain at the center of all we do.

You will also see how those seeds are taking root. As students lead in athletics, perform on stage, serve in our community, and engage in innovative learning, they are discovering that faith and learning are inseparable. Faith shapes how they think, compete, create, and serve. The result is young men and women prepared to influence their world for Christ.

This Kingdom Impact continues long after graduation. As alumni move on to college and into their communities, we are encouraged to see the fruit of what God has begun here—graduates growing in their faith, engaging in local churches, and serving as lights on their campuses and in their neighborhoods.

Our prayer is that as you turn these pages, you will see not only what our students are accomplishing, but who they are becoming—young men and women prepared to bring honor to God wherever He calls them.

Thank you for being part of the Hawai'i Baptist Academy story. Your partnership, prayers, and support make this mission possible.

With gratitude,

Ron Shiira '75
PRESIDENT



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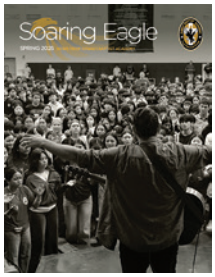
Soaring Eagle
SPRING 2026
NEWS FROM HAWAI'I BAPTIST ACADEMY

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On the front cover:
Worship led by Charlee Buitrago during High School Christian Emphasis Week chapel, centered on the theme Everyday Faith.



Elementary Campus CEW



Elementary students from the Christian Ministries team perform a skit during Christian Emphasis Week chapel, bringing the theme of Wide Open Spaces to life.

The theme of this year's Christian Emphasis Week on the Elementary Campus was Wide Open Spaces, anchored in Psalm 18:19: "He brought me out to a spacious place; he rescued me because he delighted in me." Throughout the week, students explored what it means to be rescued by a God who delights in them and invites them into wide open spaces of faith, courage, and purpose.

Each day invited students into a new reflection: a space to welcome others as God welcomes us, a space to wonder in awe of the world He created, a space to act on what we believe, a space to choose how we will respond to His love, and a space to celebrate the joy of belonging to Him. Students were encouraged to stay curious, stay connected, and remain in wonder at all God has created while reflecting on their role in the life He has given them. Rooted in this truth, they were reminded that faith grows as we step into the space God creates for us.



Blessing Our Neighborhood

Christian Emphasis Week extended beyond chapel and classrooms into the surrounding community. On Friday, every Elementary student created Thanksgiving placemats or turkey cards to share words of gratitude and encouragement. Students then delivered these gifts to neighbors including Hoʻopono Service for the Blind, Kuakini Care Center, Malulani Hale, REHAB Hospital of the Pacific, Lanakila Meals on Wheels, and Nuʻuanu area neighbors such as Conversations Café Liliha and the local Fire Station. Through these visits, students experienced firsthand that faith is not only something we learn about, but something we live out through compassion, gratitude, and service.



HFD Station No. 4 on North Kuakini Street off Liliha Street.













Top row (L–R): Liliha Street businesses Bella Banh Mi Cafe, the original Liliha Bakery on Kuakini Street, and Creations by You (bead craft supply store).
Bottom row: Aloha Animal Hospital Associates, Conversations Café Liliha, and Perry's Cuts (barber shop).

Wider Spaces to Serve

Christian Emphasis Week also provided opportunities for students to participate in broader outreach initiatives that extended beyond our campus.

Through Operation Christmas Child, students packed 300 shoebox gifts filled with thoughtful items for children around the world. Families also had the option to build a box online. Shoeboxes were returned and prepared for delivery, giving students a tangible way to share God's love with children they may never meet.

Students also collected hygiene items for Wide Hands, supporting young people aging out of foster care. Donation boxes were placed near each grade level, and items were gathered by the Christian Ministries Team. This effort reinforced that faith is not only something we believe, but prompts us to explore with compassion and dignity the needs of others and the ways we can demonstrate practical care and generosity.

Middle & High School CEW



Christian Emphasis Week at the Middle and High School campus centered on one unifying theme: Everyday Faith—a faith that extends beyond chapel walls and into conversations, classrooms, friendships, and future callings.

Each day, students gathered for chapel, engaging in dynamic, Spirit-filled worship led by Charlee Buitrago. Through music, prayer, and reflection, students were invited to respond personally to what God was stirring in their hearts. Guest chapel speaker Victor Magallon challenged students to consider how faith is not built only in defining spiritual moments, but formed through daily surrender, consistent obedience, and trust in God's presence.

High School Christian Ministries Assistant Noah Pourciau reflected on the heart behind the week:

"Christian Emphasis Week is about helping students take their next step in their faith journey. The mission is for every student to have an everyday relationship with Jesus Christ. We focused on rescue stories and dove into what it looks like to live in rescue daily. Through seminars, worship, and chapel, students were shown the love of God and taught how to have that love change their lives. Through preaching, worship, and discipleship, students at HBA are being rescued and learning how to go deeper into Christ and further into the world on mission."

Beyond chapel, more than 50 seminars were offered across the middle and high school campuses, led by faculty, alumni, pastors, and guest speakers. Topics ranged widely, including *Everyday Conflict, Everyday Truth: The Bible and Dinosaurs*, *Everyday Encouragement*, *Everyday Wisdom*, and *Everyday Christian Perspective: Finding God in K-Pop Demon Hunters*. Each session reflected a shared conviction: faith is not compartmentalized. It shapes how we navigate relationships, engage culture, pursue truth, and prepare for life on college campuses and in the workforce.

Among the many voices, alumnus Stephen Stinton, Class of 2002, led seminars on *Everyday Prayer in a Noisy World* and *Everyday Faithfulness in a College Dorm*, encouraging students to develop spiritual rhythms now that will sustain them in new and challenging environments.



"It was genuinely a privilege to be part of what God was doing at CEW this year. It's easy for us to associate our faith with going to church on Sundays or going to chapel at school. I hope that students caught a vision for how our faith fits into our everyday life: Monday through Sunday. And not only Sunday."

—Stephen Stinton '02

Service was also woven into the week through *Every Day Hope: Blankets of Hope*, led by former HBA educator Maurine King. Partnering with The Salvation Army, students helped pin patchwork baby blankets that will be distributed to families in need. Rooted in Matthew 25:40, the project offered a tangible expression of compassion in action.

Throughout the week, students were reminded that everyday faith is steady and intentional. It is practiced in small decisions, strengthened through community, and carried forward wherever God calls our students next.

CHRISTIAN EMPHASIS WEEK RESPONSES

Christian Emphasis Week created intentional space for reflection, worship, prayer, and next steps. While numbers never fully capture what God is doing in a heart, they offer a glimpse into how students responded across our campuses. Each response represents part of the ongoing work of Christian Ministries as we disciple students toward a lifelong faith in Christ

ELEMENTARY CAMPUS

30 First-Time Commitments to Christ

Breakdown

- 30 students (grades 2–6) indicated first-time commitments during Christian Emphasis Week
- 18 fourth graders made first-time commitments earlier in the year during Bible class but indicated this during CEW.

Ongoing Discipleship

- All 6th graders are engaged in Grow Groups
- 10 faculty members serve as 6th grade Grow Group facilitators
- 5 Grow Groups launched in the fall for new believers in grades 4–6
- Lunch Bunch everyday faith conversations for 4th grade girls

Christian Emphasis Week on the Elementary Campus is not a one-week experience. Through Grow Groups, Bible instruction, Lunch Bunch, and faculty mentorship, students are intentionally supported as they continue growing in their faith.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS

Faith Commitments During Christian Emphasis Week

- 24 students accepted Christ
- 11 students recommitted their lives to Christ
- 34 seventh graders indicated they had accepted Christ

Middle School is a formative season of spiritual development. Christian Emphasis Week provided space for students to take new steps of faith, reaffirm commitments, and continue growing within a supportive Christian community.

HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS

At the conclusion of Christian Emphasis Week, high school students were invited to reflect on their spiritual journey through a voluntary survey. Their responses offer a snapshot of where they are in their faith, how they are engaging with what they heard, and the ways they are considering their next steps.

107 shared that they are following Jesus and doing well

109 want to talk more about faith, Jesus, or spiritual questions

Student Response Highlights

- 17 indicated they wanted to accept Jesus
- 109 want to talk more about faith, Jesus, or spiritual questions
- 27 want to be connected to a church
- 32 want to be part of a core discipleship group
- 103 requested prayer
- 107 shared that they are following Jesus and doing well
- 39 indicated they were not ready to make a commitment

These responses reflect spiritual honesty and depth. Some students took decisive steps of faith. Others asked important questions, sought prayer, or expressed that they are still discerning. Christian Ministries and faculty will continue walking alongside students as they grow in faith during their time spent at HBA.

Grade 6










Grade 7






Good News, Bad News, Good News

Above: Seventh grade students gather around the campfire, roasting marshmallows during their first middle school camp. *All Grade 7 photos by Jaydi Dakujaku.*

Grade 8



What is God's Plan?



What's my part in this plan?




Freshman 2025









Romans Road







Sophomores 2026









5 Love Languages



Juniors 2026







3 Big





Questions





FINISHING WELL

BY LAUREN ESPIRITU '26 | *EAGLE EYE* — SEPT 2025



Photos by Aaron Brock

Cruising on a boat along the Kona Coast, HBA seniors watched the clear blue waters of the Pacific go by. Suddenly, gasps of surprise filled the air as they spotted pods of grey bottlenose dolphins and flying fish that flew like fairies by the boat. Two days before this, the seniors had arrived on Hawai'i Island just in time to see the Kīlauea Volcano in action, spewing fountains of lava in the Halema'uma'u crater in Volcanoes National Park. These and many other memorable moments marked this year's Senior Retreat in early September, providing the Class of 2026 with a final chapter of shared experiences as they finish out high school.

The seniors' first stop on the retreat was the Kīlauea Military Camp (KMC) in Volcano. Jordan Tam had been monitoring the volcanic activity with his family, hoping that it would erupt while the seniors were in Volcano. Kīlauea has had numerous episodic eruptions since December 23, 2024, and most of the episodes have been short-lived. When Tam realized that he would actually get to see the lava flowing, he was ecstatic. Christina Yasutomi, Student Activities Director, said that she "felt like a kid on Christmas morning." Drew Lohr, who returned to see the lava again that evening with a smaller group of students, recalls sitting down "to take in all of God's creation." He said, "[The scenery] was very special to me and something you can only experience once in your lifetime."

After the seniors got settled into their accommodations at KMC, they gathered for a relay race organized by the class council. Lauren Okuda, class president, shared that her council was motivated to "go all out" since it was their last year together. Zoë Naso, who was a part of the team that won the relay, loved how her team did not care about getting messy. "We chugged [Sprite] and dumped it on our faces and we got really drenched in the soda...The mess was part of the fun," she recalled.

The seniors were also introduced to the theme of camp: R.A.F.T., which stands for Reconciliation, Affirmation, Farewell, and Think Destination. Led by the Christian Ministries team and senior advisors, chapel sessions at the retreat focused on helping the seniors finish the year well. Many seniors felt challenged by the topic of reconciliation. Charles Poore, high school Christian Ministries Coordinator, believes that reconciliation is a crucial step in finishing well. "I don't think the other parts of the theme are possible without beginning with reconciliation," he explained. Poore also reminded the seniors that reconciliation is also about becoming reconciled with Jesus Christ even as they work on reconciling any broken relationships.

The following day, the group woke up at 6 A.M. to make their way to Kona, with a stop at Punalu'u Black Sand



Beach on the south side of the island. Tam said that this was one of his favorite days at the retreat because he was able to swim at the beach and also hang out with friends over a picnic. After arriving at their Kona hotel, the seniors had some free time to get ready for a special dinner at Kahua Ranch, an 8,500-acre property on the western slopes of the Kohala Mountains. The ranch welcomed the group with a range of activities, from lassoing and block printing to stargazing and line dancing. There was also time at the ranch to complete a camp theme activity, which focused on "Affirmation." The seniors were asked to write affirming statements on a piece of paper taped to each other's backs. In a short span of time, everyone's blank paper was filled with encouraging notes from their classmates.

Dinner at the ranch—featuring prime rib—was another highlight of the trip for many seniors. Miah Nakamura said that the meal was one of her favorite memories from the week because she was able to share a delicious dinner and a wonderful view of the sunset with her friends.

The following day, the seniors embarked on a snorkeling boat tour. The boat itself provided lots of entertainment for the group, with its water slide and floaties. Vice Principal Ryan Frontiera was on a mission to teach everyone and anyone to do a backflip into the water. Okuda's favorite moment that day was when classmate Jacey Kage finally did a backflip after many tries.

Back on land that evening, the seniors ended the day with karaoke and bowling. Prescott Yamanaka was happy to beat two of HBA's varsity bowling team members in their game. Lohr enjoyed being able to "sing and harmonize with [his] friends" and thought that the evening was a great way to end the trip. From "Baby" by Justin Bieber to "My Way" by Frank Sinatra, and from gutter balls to strikes, the seniors made the most of their last night on the retreat.

The next morning, before their return home, the seniors went to Kona Baptist Church for a final chapel. English teacher Alexandra Taylor, one of the senior advisors, hopes that the R.A.F.T theme will motivate seniors to follow through on what they've learned. She said, "You want to take some actions now to make it a little easier and know that when you look back, you'll be proud of what you did." Senior Jacey Kage summed up what she learned, saying, "We're all this one boat together, drifting throughout high school." Kage shared that she did not realize how hard and important it was to say a final farewell. "As a Lifer," Kage added, "HBA is really like a home to me." Kage was reminded that it would be good for her to say goodbye to all her elementary, middle, and high school teachers, as they are people who have helped her grow and mature.

Poore hopes that the retreat will have equipped the seniors for their next chapter after high school. He also shared that he has a special affinity for the Class of 2026 as they were freshmen when he began his first year at HBA. Addressing the class, he said, "Well, you've grown in all the -lys, right? Spiritually, intellectually, academically. But most importantly, it's good to see how the Lord is working in your class." Yasutomi, too, hopes that the retreat will have a long-lasting impact. "It's giving you guys the skills and the tools to be able to say [goodbye] well. It really sets you up for life."

A Legacy of Innovation. A Mission in Action.



The Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center showcases the heart of Hawai'i Baptist Academy. Founded on faith and shaped by bold vision, HBA has always believed that learning and mission go hand in hand.

FROM HONORING OUR FOUNDERS and celebrating the opening of this new space to the hands-on learning and student-led projects now unfolding inside, the Innovation and Discovery Center is a place where ideas are explored, creativity is encouraged, and faith is lived out. Here, students are not only learning concepts, they are bringing ideas to life in ways that serve others and bring honor to God.

As a Christian school, innovation at HBA is purposeful. We equip students to think deeply, collaborate well, and use their God-given gifts with intention. The stories that follow highlight how this new center is shaping students today and laying a foundation for what is still to come.

Honoring Our Original Innovators

THE OFFICIAL NAMING of the Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center honors more than the founders of Hawai'i Baptist Academy. It recognizes a legacy of faith, courage, and bold obedience that made the school itself possible.

Hugh and Mary McCormick were missionaries in Nigeria before God led them to Hawai'i with a vision to establish a Christian school. They were not trained educators. Hugh was a pastor. Mary was a nurse. Yet they trusted God's calling and stepped forward in faith, believing He would use their obedience to shape future generations.

That same spirit of faith-filled innovation is what made naming this building after them so meaningful.

During a visit to campus earlier this school year, their grandson John McCormick toured the new Innovation and Discovery Center and reflected on the courage it took for his grandparents to follow God's lead.

"When you start looking at what they did when they did it, it just showed how strong with the Lord they were," John shared. "That boldness is what I see here."



He recalled stories passed down through his family, including his grandmother's amazement at how much Hawai'i Baptist Academy had grown over the decades.

"My grandmother was here for the fortieth anniversary, and I had heard from my parents, especially my mother, that she was astounded by the growth that had taken place in the forty years since it had begun," he said. "I think she would be overwhelmed with where it is now. I don't think she could have ever envisioned this building. It's just incredible."

For John, the naming of the Innovation and Discovery Center represents a fitting tribute to the sacrifices his grandparents made in obedience to God's call.

"I can't think of anything that would honor them more than to have a building at this school with their name," he said. "They gave up a lot to tend to the calling God gave them, and I fully believe God called them here. This school is an example of that calling."

He reflected on how faith was central to every step they took.

"The faith they had throughout their life was the cornerstone," John shared. "They were not trained to be educators, but they saw and innovated this school. They had the vision to make this happen 75 years ago."

Today, as students bring ideas to life inside the Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center, their story serves as a reminder that innovation at Hawai'i Baptist Academy has always been rooted in faith. What began with prayer, courage, and trust in God continues to shape how students learn, create, and dream boldly for the future.



"The faith (my grandparents) had throughout their life was the cornerstone."

John McCormick

Grand Opening Celebration



Mary and Hugh McCormick

On September 13, the Hawai'i Baptist Academy community gathered to celebrate the Grand Opening of the Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center. The day was a meaningful expression of gratitude, vision, and faith as we dedicated this new space to the Lord and to the generations of students who will learn within its walls.



Charles Y. Kaneshiro, G70.

The celebration welcomed 65 guests to a special blessing ceremony, followed by public tours with 289 RSVPs. Families, alumni, donors, and community partners walked through the Center, experienced the learning environments firsthand, and saw how innovation and mission come together at HBA.

More than a ribbon cutting, the gathering was a moment to pause and give thanks for God's faithfulness, honor the generosity of our supporters, and celebrate the legacy of our founders Hugh and Mary McCormick. Guests also caught a glimpse of the future as they explored spaces designed to support hands-on learning, creativity, and collaboration across our campuses.

The Grand Opening reflects an important chapter in the life of our school. What began with faithful obedience decades ago continues today as Hawai'i Baptist Academy equips students to bring honor to God through discovery, innovation, and service.

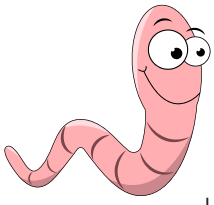


Cindy Gaskins, Christian Ministries Coordinator K–6, with elementary student storytellers.



President Ron Shiira with HBA senior leadership.

A First Look at Student Projects



During the first half of the school year, students from kindergarten through sixth grade stepped into the Innovation Station and got to work. These early projects offered a first glimpse of how hands-on learning is coming to life inside the Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center. From environmental exploration to problem-solving and robotics, students collaborated, experimented, and created together.

Illustration: iStock/Alexander Timoshin

WORM FALL HARVEST

Students rolled up their sleeves and discovered how everyday waste can be transformed into something valuable. Using the school's worm bin, they learned how composting worms and the FBI (fungus, bacteria, and invertebrates) work together to break down cardboard, paper, and leftover lunch scraps into nutrient-rich soil.

The experience gave students a tangible look at sustainability in action. Even more meaningful was the teamwork involved as students worked side by side, observed the process over time, and celebrated the transformation they helped create.





ROBOTICS CLUB

Under the direction of Traci Morihara '91, third graders in Robotics Club explored the foundations of STEM through coding and robotics challenges. Working in teams, students learned to problem-solve, think critically, and experiment with new ideas as they built and programmed their creations.

Each session encouraged collaboration and perseverance, giving students confidence as they learned that innovation often comes through trial, error, and teamwork.

These projects represent just the beginning of the learning taking place inside the Innovation Station and set the stage for even more student-driven creativity in the months ahead.

Visit by John McCormick

August 25, 2025

During his time on campus, John McCormick reflected on the legacy of his grandparents and the vision that continues to shape Hawai'i Baptist Academy today. As he experienced the Innovation & Discovery Center and engaged with students, he pointed to what matters most.

"To see a space like this come to life is meaningful, but what matters most are the students who will be formed here as leaders and innovators for what's ahead."

VIDEO
Watch full interview with John McCormick



L–R: President Ron Shiira '75, Billie Takaki Lueder '94, John McCormick, Brynda McCormick, and Dr. Emmet Winters.

Student Innovation Takes Root







Illustration: iStock/Alexander Timoshin

As the Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center reaches its final stage of completion, one of its newest features reflects the very purpose of the building: hands-on learning with real and lasting impact.

Along the walkway between the plaza and amphitheater, vertical garden planters now stand as a student-designed and student-built addition to campus. These planters were part of a third grade-wide economics project during the 2024–25 school year under the guidance of Mrs. Venegas and Mrs. Imamura.

Students worked in teams to design vertical garden planters that balanced creativity, functionality, and budget. Their proposals were intended to become a permanent feature of the Innovation and Discovery Center, making this more than a classroom exercise.

To prepare for the project, students learned directly from industry professionals. Brenden Inglis of Allied Builders and Kevin Loo-Chan of G70 shared insight into the purpose of the rooftop space, along with the colors and materials used throughout the building. Students also participated in a video call with the University of Hawai‘i Urban Garden Center, where they learned about plant selection, growing conditions, and the unique considerations of designing a rooftop garden.

Each team applied what they learned to develop detailed proposals that integrated structural awareness, sustainability, and thoughtful budgeting. Designs were presented and evaluated by a panel of judges, and the winning plan created by Hannah Okawara, Aiyla Murakami, Dante Woodall, and Leif Stensgaard was selected for installation.

Now fourth graders, these students have quite literally left their imprint on the Innovation and Discovery Center.

The planters are currently displayed along the walkway and will eventually be relocated to the rooftop deck once the water spigot is installed, completing the original vision for the space.

More than a classroom project, the rooftop garden represents the Innovation and Discovery Center in action. Students are not simply learning concepts. They are applying them in meaningful and tangible ways that shape their school community.



Every Tile, A Testament.

Whether you're honoring a loved one, giving back, or planting seeds for the next generation—your gift will bear fruit in the lives of students for years to come.

SECURE YOUR PLACE IN THIS LEGACY.
Be part of our God-size vision and leave a mark that reflects what matters most.

Your generosity will be recognized on the Donor Recognition Wall in HBA's new Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center.

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HAWAII BAPTIST ACADEMY 19 49 CHRIST FOR EVERY NATION

FAITH. Innovation. LEADERSHIP.

The Campaign for Transformation

Christmas Play

DEC. 12, 2025



















Holiday Parade

DEC. 6, 2025





Elementary Campus Christmas Play



This year's Elementary Campus Christmas Play brought together students from preschool through sixth grade to share the true meaning of Christmas. Centered on the story of Christ's birth, the performance reflected the heart of our school and the way faith is woven into learning, creativity, and community life.

The nativity story was led by students in grades four through six who are part of the Christmas Play Club, under the direction of Music Teacher Mr. Sam Browning and Third Grade Teacher Mrs. Dani Wilson. Younger students from across the Elementary Campus also took part, filling the stage with music, movement, and Scripture as they helped tell the story of Jesus' birth.

For Mr. Browning, the purpose of the Christmas play has always remained clear. "The goal of every annual Christmas play is to keep the main thing the main thing," he shared. "That main thing is the true meaning of the Christmas story, Jesus' birthday. I want everyone who is a part of or in attendance of the Christmas program to be able to spread this good news to their neighbor, just as the shepherds did more than 2,000 years ago."

Throughout the semester, students were encouraged to take ownership of the production. From choosing lines in the script to selecting instruments for songs, students were given opportunities to lead creatively and spiritually. Rehearsals were framed with prayer, inviting students to see their preparation as an offering to God and to the HBA community.

"It deepened my understanding because baby Jesus wasn't an ordinary baby. He was a king, but he was born in a stable that showed how humble he was."

Juliette Brownfield, Grade 5

"My favorite part of being part of this club was performing in front of everyone."

Suvi Hanson, Grade 5

"From day one of rehearsals, we prayed and asked God to use us as we gave our gift of the Christmas story to HBA students, faculty, families, and friends," Mr. Browning said. "I wanted the students to see this as their play and to truly own it."

One of the most meaningful moments for Mr. Browning came not during the performance itself, but during rehearsals. "We begin and end our club rehearsals with prayer," he shared. "When I ask for prayer volunteers and see hands go up, it reminds me why this work matters. Our students are not ashamed of Christ and are willing to lead us as we talk to God together in Jesus' name."

The Christmas Play also reflects the broader culture of Hawaiʻi Baptist Academy, where faith is openly expressed and integrated into all areas of student life, including the performing arts. Through music, storytelling, and collaboration, students are learning to use their gifts to glorify God and serve others.

"I love ministering at this Christian school, where knowing Christ, experiencing Scripture, praying, and fellowshipping together are valued and lived out," Mr. Browning shared. "Christ is shared through the many artistic performances at HBA, and that has eternal value."

As families gathered to watch the performance, the message was clear and consistent. The Christmas Play was not simply a program, but a testimony. Through the voices and hearts of our students, the good news of Christ's birth was shared once again, reminding our community of the hope and purpose found in Him.

A Game Well Played











SPIRIT WEEK 2026 was a celebration of creativity, competition, and community, all centered around the theme Board Games in Real Life. From playful dress up days to high energy assembly challenges and the long standing Pepper Squad tradition, the week felt like one big game where every class showed up ready to play.

Each day brought its own twist, starting with Athletes vs. Mathletes, followed by Stay Afloat, Wacky Wednesday or Anything But a Backpack, and culminating in Pepper Squad Day, when classes took center stage to bring classic board games to life through live performances.

The week concluded with Homecoming celebrations and the awarding of the Mana Cup, but the true victory was the unity on display across campus. From Middle School through Seniors, Spirit Week 2026 proved that when our community comes together, it is always a game well played.

MIDDLE SCHOOL (7TH AND 8TH GRADE) — CLASS OF 2030 AND 2031

Middle School students kicked off Spirit Week with contagious energy and enthusiasm. From dress up days to assembly challenges, 7th and 8th graders showed up ready to participate and cheer each other on.



Their Pepper Squad performance, inspired by *Sorry!*, stood out for its bright colors, playful creativity, and one of the most memorable end chants of the night. The performance captured the fun loving spirit of Middle School and set the tone for the rest of the week.

VIDEO: Middle School Pepper Squad highlight

FRESHMEN — CLASS OF 2029

Spirit Week marked an exciting milestone for the freshman class as they made their Pepper Squad debut at the high school level. Throughout the week, freshmen embraced the fun, showing enthusiasm during dress up days and assembly competitions.

Their Candyland-inspired skit featured dramatic music, on-point choreography, and vibrant visuals that brought the board game to life. The performance showcased teamwork, creativity, and a confident start to their high school experience.

VIDEO: Freshmen Pepper Squad highlight















SOPHOMORES — CLASS OF 2028

Sophomores brought a bold presence to Spirit Week, consistently raising the energy during assemblies and challenges. Their creativity and confidence were on full display throughout the week.

Inspired by *Monopoly*, their Pepper Squad skit featured distinct characters, perfectly timed hype music for each role, and nonstop entertainment from start to finish. It was a performance full of personality and fun. The sophomores definitely brought the money.

VIDEO: Sophomore Pepper Squad highlight



JUNIORS — CLASS OF 2027

The junior class leaned fully into storytelling this Spirit Week, blending strategy, humor, and theatrical flair. Their *Chess* inspired Pepper Squad performance was filled with twists, emotion, and high energy moments.

With a storyline reminiscent of reality television love drama, the juniors reminded the audience that every move matters, especially when it comes to dance offs. Strategic, intentional, and entertaining, their performance was a standout.

VIDEO: Junior Pepper Squad highlight

SENIORS — CLASS OF 2026

As the final Pepper Squad performance of the day, the seniors delivered a strong and unforgettable close to Spirit Week. Their *Clue* inspired skit featured a witty storyline, clever twists, and familiar faces, including humorous impersonations of faculty and school leadership.

It was anything but clueless, the seniors' performance was filled with laughter, confidence, and sharp execution. It was a fitting way to close out their final Spirit Week, culminating in their Mana Cup victory.

VIDEO: Senior Pepper Squad highlight

England Trip: A Literary Pilgrimage

BY LAUREN ESPIRITU '26













DURING FALL BREAK, 32 juniors and seniors, joined by six chaperones, set out on a 10-day pilgrimage across England, a journey I was grateful to experience firsthand. The biennial HBA England Trip happened again this year taking literature students from Edinburgh, Lake District, York, Haworth, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Oxford, London, and finally their last stop in Canterbury. This trip covers a vast area of England including the rural and urban areas. Whilst in the countryside, we were able to see lush greenery, sheep, cows, and horses. Heading into the city, we were able to see the transition of the countryside to the bright lights of the bustling city of London. London was complete with streets filled with a variety of stores, bright red double decker buses, Big Ben's sonorous ringing, and the sound of the King's Guard changing stations.

During the trip we were given literature booklets to help us remember and reflect on the places we visited and activities we completed. We ended or started each day with the booklet to ponder about what we learned.

THE ENGLAND TRIP provides students with the opportunity to connect what we have learned in English literature to the places we have visited and activities we take part in. For example, in English 11 classes, students read *The Canterbury Tales* written by English poet and writer, Geoffery Chaucer. *The Canterbury Tales* encompasses 24 short stories about 24 out of the 31 pilgrims who trek to Canterbury to visit and touch the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket. These short stories were a part of a storytelling contest that was held on their long walk to Canterbury.

Back then it was rumored that if one touched Saint Thomas Becket's shrine, they would be healed in an instant. Just like all the other pilgrims, the HBA juniors and seniors made that same trek to the Canterbury Cathedral on our last day.

Besides Canterbury, literature students were able to visit other famous English writers and poets' birthplaces such as William Wordsworth, the Brontë sisters, and Shakespeare. We also got the chance to experience two Shakespeare plays: *Measure for Measure* which we saw at the Royal Shakespeare Co. and *Twelfth Night* which we saw at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. I believe that visiting these historical sites and being able to watch those two plays allowed us to appreciate literature even more. For me, going on this trip felt like a rewarding and fun learning experience. It was as if all the homework, studying, and essays in English class came to fruition. Having the opportunity to see all these historical sites that inspired writers and poets left me in awe and appreciation of the craft.



On the trip we were all invested, eagerly asking tour guides questions about a monument, if we could explore further into the city, and trying out English food. Although we were all constantly tired from traveling, we pushed through to see the beauty of literature, architecture, people, nature, food and so much more that England has to offer us.

BY RANDIE LUEDER ’25

Randie Lueder ’25 (second from left) plays Kiyo in *Peace on Your Wings*.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION! Although many students at Hawai‘i Baptist Academy thrive academically and athletically, there’s a special group of students that despite their many accomplishments choose humility above praise. These students dedicate countless hours to rehearsals, performances, and personal training while still remaining outstanding students and contributors to the HBA community. Their pursuit of excellence in their various performing arts endeavors expand well beyond the walls of HBA and even the country. This past year, alumni and current students alike took the locally written and produced musical ***Peace on Your Wings*** to Hiroshima, Japan, while another young Eagle worked his way up to First-Runner Up Best Male Dancer at America’s biggest dance competition. And, even in the heart of Honolulu, several Eagles helped bring to life Tim Rice and Elton John’s ***The Lion King*** with New Hope O‘ahu. We interviewed these star studded Eagles in hopes to bring to light their God-given talents and the stories behind their storytelling.

Peace on Your Wings

“I will write peace on your wings and you will fly all over the world.” — SADAKO SASAKI



Hannah Cheng (front, center), as Sadako, in the 2023 production of *POYW* in Honolulu.



Kailee Davenport (left) as Kazuko



Randie Lueder (right) as Kiyo

Peace on Your Wings is a locally written and produced youth musical retelling on the short life of Sadako Sasaki and her movement to spread peace around the world in order to advocate for atomic bomb survivors like herself. Sadako was two years old when the atomic bomb on Hiroshima was dropped, causing her to develop leukemia leading to her death at age of 11. This musical features students of ‘Ohana Arts, a local youth performing arts company, and is a fabulous, fun, and grief-filled retelling of Sadako’s life. Since the show’s debut in 2014, *Peace on Your Wings* has not only become a national sensation but a worldwide one. In the summer of 2025, for the 80th anniversary of the atomic bomb, the cast of Peace on Your Wings took to Fukuoka and Hiroshima. During their time in Japan, the cast met Sadako’s brother, visited Sadako’s gravesite, participated in the 80th annual Peace Day ceremony, and got to perform for Crown Princess Kiko and Princess Kako of Japan. Sharing about their experiences from previous and this most recent tour are Hannah Cheng ’24, Kailee Tooka-Davenoport ’28, and Randie Lueder ’25.

Peace on Your Wings (CONTINUED)

Hannah has been involved in the arts since kindergarten singing in her church choir. However, she joined ‘Ohana Arts in the 3rd grade and first joined *Peace on Your Wings* as Kiyo in the 2023 Tri-city tour. She later took on the role of Sadako in the 2023 Moanalua School Tour run. Kailee began theater at the age of 7 when she played Fluff the Duck in *Honk Jr.* at Hongwanji Mission School. Since then she has been participating in ‘Ohana Arts’ summer program annually and joined the most recent 2025 Hawai‘i and Japan Tour run of *Peace on Your Wings* as Kazuko. Randie began dancing at 2 years old which introduced her to musical theater and voice. She’s been in numerous community theater productions over the years and joined *Peace on Your Wings* in 2023 for the Moanalua School Tour run in the ensemble. She then adopted the role of Kiyo for the 2025 Hawai‘i and Japan Tour. All of these Eagles are proud members of Soldiers of Light and the High School Chapel Worship Team. Hannah continues to lead worship at her home church and at her church in California where she attends Pepperdine University, and Randie is studying Music Business at Dallas Baptist University where she is also a Chapel Worship resident.

Q&A



What was your favorite part or favorite memory during your time in *Peace on Your Wings*?

Randie Lueder ’25: “My favorite memory from my time in Japan was definitely the Peace Day ceremony. A few of us in the cast have a friend, Joey Fujioka, who passed away last January, and getting to honor Joey’s legacy at the lantern ceremony was a monumental and emotional moment for us. Personally, that moment at the lantern ceremony was when Sadako’s story became reality to me. We see Sadako’s goodness in Joey and transforming our grief into a legacy was a mission we all had going into the tour.”



How has this show challenged you as a performer and individual?

Kailee Tooka-Davenport ’28: “I have put more hours into *Peace on Your Wings* than any other show. We got casted in October of 2024 and finished our Japan tour in August of 2025. From all the music rehearsals, vocal lessons, fundraising events, and then our everyday rehearsals in the summer, I had to push myself both physically and mentally in order to perform to the best of my abilities each time I stepped on that stage. I wanted to make sure that my performance not only looked visually appealing, but also portrayed the message of *Peace on Your Wings*.”



How has *Peace on Your Wings* enabled you to serve others through arts, specifically music?

Hannah Cheng ’24: “I think being able to communicate beautiful stories through the abilities God has given me is one way I can serve others through the arts. I saw the influence that *POYW* had on people’s emotions both in Hawai‘i, on the mainland, and in Japan. It helped people to understand a different perspective of what thousands may have faced as a result of the atomic bombs. Seeing their reactions and how moved they were by the story helped me to understand that I was able to use my talents and God-given abilities to serve others and tell beautiful stories through the arts.”

In what ways has *Peace on Your Wings* influenced your personal ministry by using your God given gifts in a secular show?

Kailee: “This show has such an important story behind it and the idea of peace for me also relates to my faith. World peace has so many deeper concepts within it and for me, I think of the fact that we are all created in God’s image to love one another as he loves us. Taking this show, which means so much to me, and relating it to my faith not only allowed me to see how God works in everything I do, but also honor him and pursue a more rooted relationship with Christ.”

Randie, you play one of the few non-fictional characters in the show, Kiyo. How did you lean into developing Kiyo as a character while remaining true to the real Kiyo Okura?

Randie: “Luckily for me, Kiyo wrote a book before her passing about her experience living with Sadako. Kiyo was Sadako’s hospital roommate and became Sadako’s big sister figure. As an older sister, Kiyo came very naturally to me — she begins reserved and snarky but softens the more she gets to know the hospital kids. It was important for me to characterize her correctly, to portray her trauma, grief, and sadness, but also her admiration for Sadako, her warmth, and her goodness. We even changed her costume mid-tour to make her more girly and really enhance her ‘big-sis everyone looks up to’ role. Kiyo passed away in 2005, but I hope she would be proud of my portrayal of her and my effort to honor her legacy.”

Hannah, how did your time in Japan impact your performance, especially how you leaned into Sadako during the Moanalua run?

Hannah: “I think performing in Japan helped me to get into the role of Sadako a little better. After such an amazing experience in Hiroshima, it was easier to tap into the emotions necessary to try to convey Sadako’s character on stage. I also think through playing Kiyo, I really thought about Sadako’s impact on those around her, which helped me to get into Sadako’s character better because I could see the impact Sadako had on Kiyo and further translate that into how Sadako had a larger impact on many people’s lives.”

Lion King











Top row: Zoë Naso ’26, as Rafiki, the madrill monkey shaman and advisor to Mufasa. **Bottom row**: Cyrus Tsui ’27 as Scar.

In 1994, the musical genius of Elton John and Tim Rice took the world by storm with their masterpiece *The Lion King*. This classic Disney movie was soon adapted into a Broadway musical in 1997, which still runs on Broadway as the 3rd longest running Broadway musical of all time. The story follows young Simba into his adulthood as he battles loss, guilt, freedom, and redemption after the death of his father, the King of the Pridelands. The musical is a beautiful, rich portrayal of the Disney classic that includes several new songs and fabulous dance numbers to accompany the original storyline. The musical’s Disney charm and hopeful message has made it a fan favorite among youth theater companies and has most recently been put on at New Hope Oʻahu and starred two talented Eagles: Zoë Naso as Rafiki, and Cyrus Tsui as Scar.

Both Zoë and Cyrus are prominent members of the HBA performing arts community with Zoë being a proud member of the HBA Theater Department and Cyrus a Soldier of Light. Both are members of the Chapel Worship team and are prominent athletes as well as performers. Zoë is a current senior at HBA and is a legacy student — daughter of Courtney (Glaza) Naso ’89. She comes from a musical family and has been studying piano since the age of 2, but eventually she developed a love for dance which led her to musical theater at the age of 7. Since then, she has been active in community theater life on O’ahu and takes private voice lessons alongside productions. Cyrus is a junior and has been attending HBA since the 9th grade. Similarly to Zoë, Cyrus is also very involved in community theater and recently starred as “Horton” in Seussical with H.E.A.R.T.S. (Hawaiʻi Education of the Arts). However, Cyrus remains involved in nearly all musical ensembles at HBA as a member of the Soldiers of Light, Chapel Worship Team, and Contemporary Band Club. His talents extend beyond his voice, for he can also be found shredding on the guitar or keeping rhythm on the drum kit.

Cyrus Tsui as Horton the Elephant in the 2025 HEARTS production of *Seussical the Musical*.

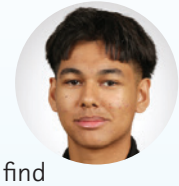
Lion King (CONTINUED)

Q&A



Describe to me your experience being part of this production: the audition, the preparation, and the performance? What's it like being part of such a well beloved and acclaimed show?

Zoë Naso '26: "I had a week to prepare my audition, and I knew from the start I wanted the role of Rafiki. *Lion King* had been a dream show of mine and I was beyond grateful to be bestowed such an important character! Rehearsals went amazing, as the cast bonded immediately! When the time for the performances came, everything was flowing smoothly through preview shows, up until the night before opening night. I got laryngitis and lost my voice and my hearing became muffled and limited. A few hours before the second show, the directors and I figured out a plan. I would go on as Rafiki, and I would lip sync to another cast member singing and talking for me. We had five minutes before the show started to figure out timing, and it felt rushed and we were both scared. Then, the show went amazing! We were so in sync, the audience couldn't even tell that wasn't my voice. I was on vocal rest, so absolutely no talking for two weeks so I could recover. I'm very grateful for her, as we became a powerful team. The show must go on!"



Cyrus, as a male in a woman dominated field, what advice would you give to other boys looking to explore musical theater and performing arts in general?

Cyrus Tsui '27: "I thought I wouldn't be able to find any friends going into a women dominated field, but I was very much mistaken. I've come to find that no matter which performing arts groups/activities I have got to be a part of, there will always be people to become close friends with, especially since you are all tied together by your love for the art. Never back down from making the first leap and trying it out."

Photos: Pacific Academy of Performing Arts (PAPA), Hawai'i Education for the Arts (HEARTS)

What do you love about performing arts, why do you love it, and what motivates you to continue performing?

Zoë: "Performing has always sparked an excitement in me. The music, the dancing, the emotions, it all spoke to me in such a way that I knew I was meant to be a part of that. I love immersing myself in whatever show I'm in, and I become my character. When I perform, it's not me on stage, I become someone else. I become who I portray with my own twist on it. Performing has become a part of me, and I couldn't imagine my life without it. This is a part of me forever, and the joy and love for it keeps me performing."

How have your interactions with performing arts at HBA, like Soldiers of Light, helped prepare you for external performance opportunities like this?

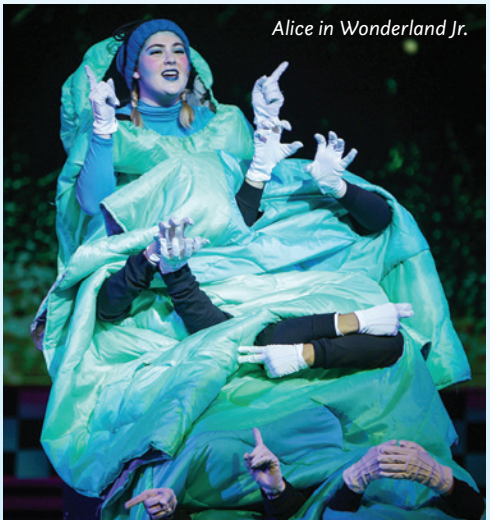
Cyrus: "On top of the many blessings Soldiers of Light has to offer me, it is one of my classes so being able to sing in class at least three times a week has reinforced my singing voice. They do say the voice is a muscle and to put that muscle to work multiple times a school week allows for my voice to stay nice and warmed up, while simultaneously training better vocal techniques. Soldiers of Light is also a ministry that outreaches to churches around the island as well as families in the community. It is safe to say that being a part of SOL has expanded my vocal abilities to achieve more select performing roles, for example a lead role, as well as built up my confidence to back it up."

How has God allowed you to use your gifts and talents to serve him, specifically through musical theater?

Zoë: "Singing is my way to worship the Lord. God gave me music as a talent, whether it be piano, dance, or singing. When I perform I embody my character and channel my emotions to the fullest extent. My goal when I perform is to make the audience feel what my character is feeling. I want to touch the hearts and change the audience members positively. I also love leading worship in church and school, so I am able to use my God given gifts to praise Him and lead others in worshipping the Lord."



Seussical



Alice in Wonderland Jr.



Into the Woods Jr.



Finding Nemo Jr.



Seussical

Jake Sato— Glory in Motion

Photo illustration: abstraction from video still
Event: The Dance Awards Las Vegas 2025
Dancer: Jake Sato
Studio: 24-VII Dance Force
Category: Junior Contemporay Best Dancer Solo



VIVA LAS VEGAS! HBA seventh grader, Jake Sato, is a proud member of 24-VII Danceforce tucked in the corner of Windward Mall in Kāneʻohe, Hawaiʻi. 24-VII has produced many successful dancers that have toured for performers such as BlackPink and Lady Gaga just to name a few. However, in order to train such professionals, 24-VII is well known in the youth dance competition world for their daring hip-hop numbers and talented soloists. This past summer, Jake traveled to Las Vegas to compete in The Dance Awards (TDA)—the biggest, most famous dance competition in the world for young dancers. TDA is known for turning young dancers into stars and is famous for their several tiered improv and solo competitions called "Best Dancer." And, out of the many candidates from across the country to receive this coveted title for Junior Male Best Dancer, this eagle was first runner up.

Jake Sato has been dancing for 7 and a half years. He discovered a love for dance and began to attend classes weekly. His passion eventually transformed him into a fierce competitor, and he began competing in dance just this past year. From all his competitions through May to July (the Hawaiʻi dance competition season) he consistently placed 2nd in the Junior solo category. However, his crowning achievement was coming in first runner up at The Dance Awards in Las Vegas, and we interviewed Jake to tell us all about it.



Q&A



Tell me about your experience at The Dance Awards: was it awesome, scary? Give me all the details.

"When I first got to Las Vegas I was super excited. On the first day I had to compete my solo that I had previously done in the other competitions. And, on the second day, convention classes rolled around and I was very nervous. I had to audition and this was my first ever time competing for best dancer! I got my number and waited for six hours before I learned 2 combinations and spoke! On day three we took dance classes from famous choreographers from all over the world. But on day four was the freestyle "Dance down" when they narrowed down the top 10 Best Dancers to top 3. I was super super scared but went up and felt really good afterwards! On the 5th day we continued taking dance classes from more choreographers. Finally, on the last day, we found out who won Best Dancer, which I was really excited about. When it was finally my turn, they announced I was 2nd, and I was totally shocked, happy, excited, and nervous all at the same time! I thought I was just a Hawaiʻi boy from a small studio, but God had other plans and decided to bless me that day. I'm super grateful for everything!"

How has God enabled you to use your gift to serve others?

"I believe that God has enabled me to serve others with dance by sharing stories about my life with others, sharing emotion, and coming together as one."

CHILDREN'S BOOK

Lani's Adoption Day

How God connected a student and an author through a new children's book





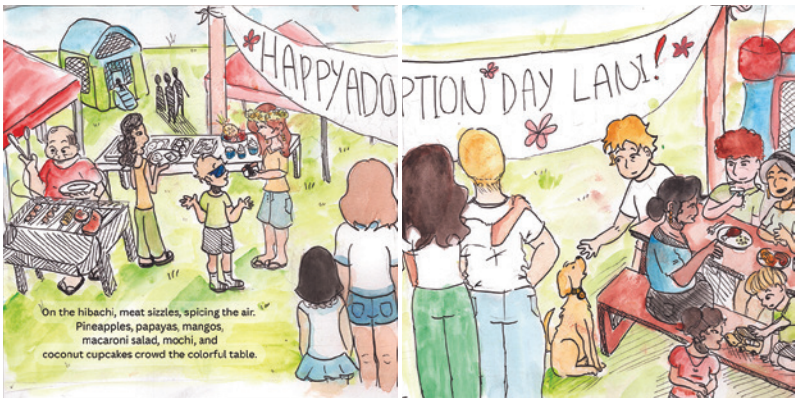
"My Adoption Day made me wonder about Japan. About my mother there." Lani's words seem to stick in her mouth. "Has my mother in Japan forgotten me?"



Sometimes, the most powerful stories begin with a single question —"Does my mother in Japan remember me?"

For author Susan Coryell, that question came from the voice of a five-year-old child on her adoption day. That moment stayed with Susan, shaping what would eventually become *Lani's Adoption Day*, a gentle children's picture book that explores the joys, care, and complexities of adoption while celebrating the diversity of modern families. Rooted in compassion and cultural understanding, the book invites young readers to engage with meaningful life questions in a thoughtful, age-appropriate way.

"Gentle children's picture books are important in helping our youngest understand and deal with life issues of all kinds." —SUSAN CORYELL



On the hibachi, meat sizzles, spicing the air. Pineapples, papayas, mangos, macaroni salad, mochi, and coconut cupcakes crowd the colorful table.

For Susan, the project was also deeply personal. Her connection to Hawai'i Baptist Academy spans decades. She and her husband, Ned, taught at HBA from 1968 to 1970, marking their first full-time teaching experience. Susan taught English and Speech. Ned taught Physical Education and Health, coached basketball for two years, and served as athletic director. Today, she is the mother and mother-in-law of two teachers at the Middle School. She's also a proud grandparent of two current HBA students. After more than 55 years in education, she never imagined that one of her most meaningful collaborations would once again involve an HBA student.

A PROVIDENTIAL CONNECTION

When Susan began searching for an illustrator, she did not know where, or with whom, the journey would lead. Through what she describes as God's providence, HBA art teacher Juri Yamashita learned of Susan's search and immediately thought of one of her students, Sophia, then a freshman with a quiet dedication to her craft.

"I feel my opportunity to collaborate with Sophia was providential."

After meeting Sophia and observing her maturity, work ethic, and artistic sensitivity, Susan felt confident entrusting her with a task rarely given to a high school student: illustrating a traditionally published children's book.

It was a bold step of faith on both sides.



Sophia Tung '28 with author Susan Coryell and elementary librarian Yumi Lee.

Sophia, who had always viewed art as something she enjoyed on the side, suddenly found herself facing a project that stretched far beyond the classroom.

"I always thought of art as a hobby. I never imagined I could be a published illustrator."

Watercolor, her chosen medium, was unfamiliar territory, but with mentorship, encouragement, and hands-on guidance from Ms. Yamashita, Sophia leaned into the challenge. The months-long process required discipline, perseverance, and confidence as she balanced schoolwork and extracurricular commitments.

The result was a collection of hand-painted watercolor illustrations that beautifully captured the tenderness of the story along with the warmth, culture, and sense of place unique to Hawai'i.

"Through her art, Sophia brought something special to the story, capturing the caring and compassion I wanted the book to convey."

DISCOVERING GIFTS AND USING THEM

For Sophia, the experience became transformational.

What once felt like a hobby became an opportunity to see her God-given gifts in a new light. Illustrating the book helped her overcome fear, trust her abilities, and recognize that her creativity could be used to serve others.

"Illustrating an entire book felt daunting, but it helped me overcome my fear of sharing my art with others."

With consistent support from teachers and mentors, Sophia gained confidence not only in her artwork, but in herself.

"Knowing I had teachers rooting for me made me more confident, not just in my art, but in myself."

—SOPHIA TUNG '28

For Susan, mentoring Sophia was a full-circle moment. As a lifelong educator, she understood the significance of trusting a student with real responsibility and providing guidance while allowing room for growth.

"After more than 55 years in education, working once again with an HBA student was deeply gratifying."

A STORY WITH KINGDOM IMPACT

The impact of *Lani's Adoption Day* is already reaching far beyond its pages. The book has been selected for the children's reading list of United Women in Faith, a nationwide Christian fellowship focused on social justice, spiritual awareness, and global mission work.

Closer to home, the story came full circle on January 21, when Susan and Sophia returned to campus to read the book with HBA kindergarten students alongside their fifth-grade buddies. As younger students listened intently and older students modeled care and leadership, the moment reflected the very heart of the project.

"This project showed what can happen when students are trusted, mentored, and given real opportunities to use their gifts."

LIVING OUT THE HBA MISSION

At Hawai'i Baptist Academy, our goal is to equip students so they bring honor to God.

Susan and Sophia's story is a living example of that mission in action. Through mentorship, trust, and meaningful opportunity, a student discovered her God-given gifts and used them to serve others, creating a story of collaboration that continues to inspire.

And it all began with a heartfelt question and a God-orchestrated collaboration.





(Birth mother wrote:) "I'm glad my baby will live with a loving family in Hawai'i. I will never forget her. … (Daddy says:) "On your first birthday (your birth mother) sent a gift … your stuffed doggie Inu …."

Craigside Partnerships

15 Craigside — Assisted Living & Continuing Care Community





Christmas



Valentine's Day









Serving Through the Game They Love

Two Hawai'i Baptist Academy eighth graders use their love for basketball to create a clinic for children with special needs, partnering with Hoops for Christ to bring encouragement, inclusion, and joy to the court.



AT HAWAI'I BAPTIST ACADEMY, eighth grade students are challenged to think beyond themselves through the Capstone Project, a year-long experience that encourages students to turn their interests and passions into meaningful service for others.

For Alyssa Wong and Cassia Lee, that passion was basketball.

Both members of HBA's ILH championship JV girls basketball team, the two students set out to use the sport they love to create an opportunity for children with learning disabilities and special needs to experience the joy of the game. Their Capstone Project led them to organize a basketball clinic in partnership with Hoops for Christ, an organization that shares their vision of using sports to encourage and uplift young people.

HBA Middle School Principal George Honzaki says the Capstone program is designed to help students take ownership of an idea and learn how to lead.

"The Capstone Project gives our students the opportunity to dream big and turn their ideas into action," Honzaki explained. "It's a year-long, student-led experience where they develop leadership skills, problem-solving abilities, and a heart for serving others."

Inspired by their love for basketball and their desire to create a more inclusive space, Alyssa shared how the idea came together.

"At first we didn't know what we were going to do, but we knew it was going to be connected to basketball in some way," she said. "In the end, we decided to do this project because both our moms worked with kids with special needs, and I know people personally who are sometimes overlooked and given limited opportunities, especially when it comes to sports. My partner and I wanted to change that."

Cassia shared a similar heart behind the project.

"We wanted to make something where everyone could feel included and just have fun," she said. "Basketball is something we love, and we wanted to share that with kids who don't always get the opportunity to play."

Their vision became a reality when the clinic took place on President's Day in February, welcoming children and families for a day centered on encouragement, inclusion, and fun.

The clinic brought together 13 participants and six volunteers, creating a supportive environment where students rotated through skill stations and helpers cheered along the way.

"All the families had a good time," Alyssa shared. "In a survey I sent out, multiple responses came back saying we should host more events like this. It made me realize how rare it is for these kids and their families to experience something like this."

Their Capstone Project became more than just a basketball clinic. It became a day where every participant felt seen, valued, and included. Alyssa and Cassia learned what it means to lead by serving others.

Equipping Hawai‘i’s Next Generation to Serve Through Healthcare

On Saturday, February 28, Hawai‘i Baptist Academy hosted its inaugural Convention for Future Medical Leaders, welcoming over 70 students from 20 O‘ahu high schools for a day of exploration, learning, and connection in the medical field.

VIDEO:
Watch event highlights.

What made the event especially meaningful was its origin. The convention was envisioned and led by students as part of HBA’s National Honor Society.

The idea began with Callie Kawaguchi ’26, whose experience in the Medical Diagnosis and Treatment (MDT) program at the John A. Burns School of Medicine gave her early exposure to the world of medicine.

“There have been career days just for your own high school,” Kawaguchi said. “But I wanted something focused on medical careers for students across the island.”

Alongside fellow National Honor Society member Anika Chang ’26, Callie helped bring that vision to life. What began as a personal experience grew into an island-wide, student-led convention designed to equip and inspire future healthcare leaders.

The free event brought together more than 40 medical professionals from across Hawai‘i, many of whom volunteered their time to lead breakout sessions and mentor students. Fields represented included primary care, nursing, research, public health, and more. Notably, one-third of the guest speakers were Hawai‘i Baptist Academy alumni, returning to invest in the next generation.


Callie Kawaguchi ’26 (left) and Anika Chang ’26

Keynote speaker Dr. Randall Suzuka encouraged students to think deeply about their path.

“Medicine is a hard field, and it’s a long road,” he said. “It should be more than just a job. It should be something that you’re called to do.”

ALUMNI PARTICIPANTS

Jennifer (Tong) Altomare ’90
Taylor Eleola ’19
Kathy (Naito) Morimoto ’86
Lynne (Nohara) Nohara-Kido ’92
Cheri (Teranishi) Teranishi-Hashimoto ’93
Kelli (Kaneda) Williams ’90
Jenee’ Brown ’15
Kara (Suehiro) Crosson ’99
Shaynie Fukuda ’16
Devin Shoji ’10
Angelica Perreira ’12
Lauryn Liao ’18


Kathy Morimoto ’86

The convention also created space for meaningful conversations between students and professionals, an important step in addressing Hawai‘i’s growing need for healthcare workers.

“Hawai‘i Baptist Academy has a very special place in my heart,” said Kathy Morimoto ’86. “It gave me the chance to share with students how important it is to use the gifts God has given them to provide healing and hope through healthcare.”

More than just a one-day event, this student-led initiative reflects Hawai‘i Baptist Academy’s commitment to developing leaders who are prepared to make a meaningful difference in their communities.


Hawai‘i Baptist Academy National Honor Society volunteers.

Ono no Komachi 小野小町
Heian era poet, mid-9th century. Ukiyo-e woodblock print, ca. 1766, by artist Suzuki Harunobu 鈴木春信.

HBA Sophomores Win Japan Wizards Statewide Competition







Above (L–R): Cami Choy ’28, Keira Liew ’28, and Kelsie Takeuchi ’28 with HBA Japanese language teacher Elena Yoo.







Three Hawai‘i Baptist Academy sophomores earned first place in the private school division of the 23rd Annual Japan Wizards Statewide Academic Team Competition, held February 21 at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Campus Center.

The HBA team included Keira Liew ’28 (team captain), Camille Choy ’28, and Kelsie Takeuchi ’28. The statewide competition brought together 99 students from 18 schools, challenging teams to demonstrate their knowledge of Japanese language, culture, and history.

Students competed in a fast-paced academic quiz covering a wide range of topics including Japanese geography, politics, anime, Japanese-American history, and samurai-era traditions. Through strong teamwork and quick thinking, the HBA team secured the top finish in the private school Level A division.

The victory marks the second consecutive year Hawai‘i Baptist Academy has won the Japan Wizards competition, following the school’s championship title in 2025.

As the grand prize, the team will travel to Japan this summer, giving the students the opportunity to experience firsthand many of the cultural and historical topics highlighted in the competition.


23RD ANNUAL JAPAN WIZARDS COMPETITION
JAPAN TRIP AWARD CERTIFICATE
THIS CERTIFICATE IS PROUDLY PRESENTED TO THE
LEVEL A TOP-SCORING TEAM
REPRESENTING A PRIVATE SCHOOL
For their diligence, dedication, and outstanding performance in the competition
Dated this 21st Day of February 2026
JAPAN-AMERICA SOCIETY of HAWAII

Award-Winning Student Artists

Eleven Hawai‘i Baptist Academy students were recognized by the **63rd Annual Hawai‘i Regional Scholastic Art Awards**, one of the most competitive student art programs in the state, with more than 2,000 entries in past years from middle and high schools across Hawai‘i.



Keira Chang
Unexpected Guests | Printmaking

GOLD KEY works will be featured in the statewide exhibition at Capitol Modern. All award-winning pieces will also be showcased at the **HBA Arts & Film Festival** during the Awards Assembly in May. We are proud to celebrate the creativity, dedication, and excellence of our student artists.

Gold Key Medal Awards
Keira Chang (Grade 10)
Aila Krekel (Grade 9)

Silver Key Medal Awards
Lily Ames (Grade 12)
Keira Chang (Grade 10)
Chloe Harada (Grade 12)
Emma Lee (Grade 9)
Sophie Tran (Grade 9)

Honorable Mention Awards
Mia Huang (Grade 10)
Joelle Lum (Grade 12)
Kai Nakanishi (Grade 9)
Kira Tanaka (Grade 12)
Vivien Wong (Grade 12)



Lily Ames
Modern Medusa | Illustration



Emma Lee
Blooming Ray | Printmaking



Kai Nakanishi
First Stop in Japan | Acrylic



Joelle Lum
San Nin Fai Lok | Ceramic

Legal Eagles Defend State Title

ON SATURDAY, MARCH 7, Hawai'i Baptist Academy's Mock Trial Black team successfully defended their State Championship, continuing a strong tradition of excellence in the courtroom.

Competing at the Hawai'i Supreme Court, the team advanced through the tournament with a perfect 6–0 record. HBA defeated Moanalua in the semifinal round before facing Punahou in the championship match. After a compelling final round, the Legal Eagles secured the victory to claim the state title for the second consecutive year.

In the championship round, a key point in the case was ultimately ruled in favor of the defense, helping seal the win for the Legal Eagles.

Robert Weismantel '99, Social Studies Department teacher and Mock Trial faculty advisor, reflected on the accomplishment and the work the students put into preparing for the competition.

"I am proud that this student-led club emphasizes teamwork and mentoring other members over winning only for oneself," Weismantel said.

Volunteer attorneys also supported the team by providing feedback on performances and helping students



better understand legal rules and terminology. These volunteers included Nathaniel Higa, partner at Chun Kerr LLP; Higa's father Emlyn Higa, a retired state prosecutor; and Richard Philpott, a retired judge. Social Studies teachers also assisted by listening to student performances as part of an effort to strengthen courtroom presentation skills in the classroom.

Senior Lauren Espiritu, a member of the team, shared what the experience of competing in the championship round meant to the students.

"We knew that we had to give it our all and refine our presentation skills, objections, and questions before heading into champs. Because we made it to nationals last year, we wanted to show the other teams how confident and determined we were to win states for a second time in a row. I also felt that we had a reputation to uphold because we were first last year, so I was a little nervous."

The achievement also marks the third straight year the team has reached the state finals, reflecting the students' dedication, preparation, and ability to present arguments with clarity and confidence.

Through the Mock Trial program, students develop critical thinking, public speaking, and collaboration skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the legal system.

Math Team Excels in O'ahu Mathematics League

HBA's Math Team is excelling in the O'ahu Mathematics League (OML), with the Varsity team winning five meets in the Newton Division and the JV team placing 2nd at five meets in the JV Open Division. After six of seven meets, HBA is currently in 1st place in the Varsity Newton Division and in 2nd place in the JV Open Division in the season standings. Meet 7, the final meet of the season, will take place on April 18, 2026, at Kalaheo High School.

SEASON RESULTS BY MEET

Meet 1 (HBA)—Varsity 1st, JV 3rd

Meet 2 (Mililani)—Varsity 1st, JV 2nd

Meet 3 (Waipahu)—Varsity 1st, JV 2nd

Meet 4 (HPU)—Varsity 1st, JV 2nd

Meet 5 (Kapolei)—Varsity 1st, JV 2nd

Meet 6 (Kaiser)—Varsity 2nd, JV 2nd



Victory over Bulldogs sends Eagles to States



EAGLE PRIDE WAS ON FULL DISPLAY AT SPIKE NITE as our Junior Varsity and Varsity Girls Volleyball teams took the court in front of a packed gym. The night was a celebration of school spirit and a fitting send-off into Fall Break.

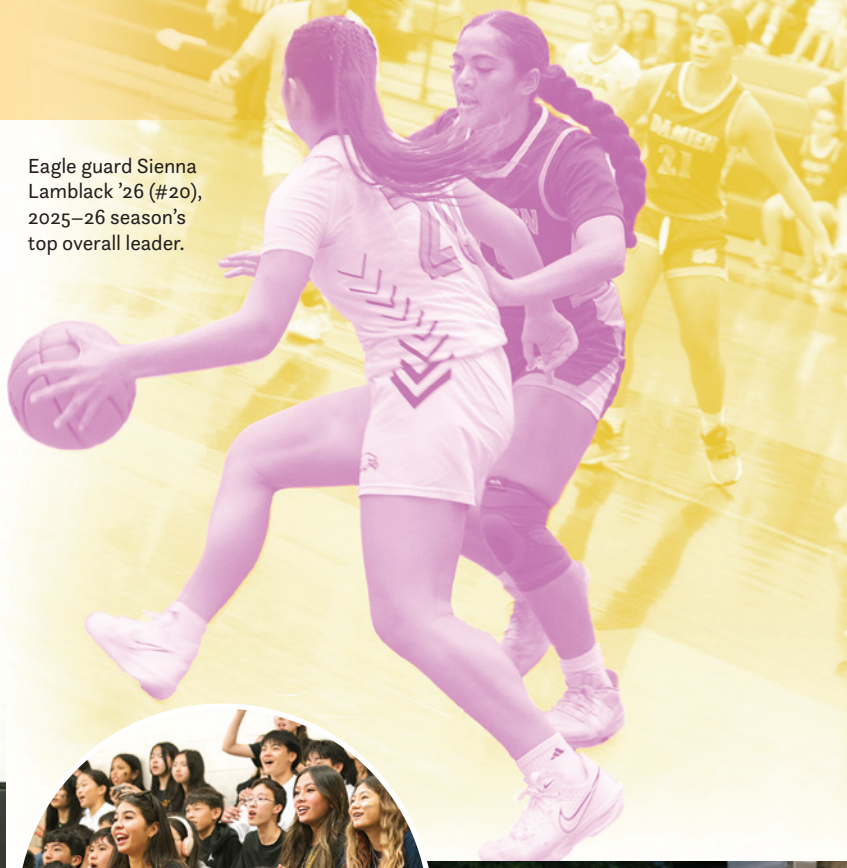
Our varsity girls closed out the evening with a four-set win over Le Jardin (21–25, 25–18, 25–11, 25–20). We also celebrated four students in their final year of eligibility, honoring their leadership and impact on the program.

The team went on to place second in the ILH and advanced to the state tournament, competing to defend their Division II State Championship.





Lady Eagles soar over Monarchs



Eagle guard Sienna Lamblack '26 (#20), 2025–26 season's top overall leader.

HOMECOMING was the perfect way to close out Spirit Week, with a packed gym and strong school spirit throughout the night.

Our varsity girls secured a commanding 57–23 win over Damien, while our varsity boys battled hard in a 45–57 matchup.

Mahalo to our Athletics Booster Club for making the night extra special with free mochiko chicken bentos for our community.















Above: Eagle guard and forward Alex Fujimoto makes a layup jump shot.
Right: Mascot, "Endurance," strikes a pose with fans behind the Spirit Week Mana Cup.



Left: HBA Varsity Bowlers. **Below:** Girls Intermediate Basketball team.



Boys Varsity Bowling Wins ILH Championship

The HBA boys varsity bowling team finished with a 22.5–7.5 record to claim the Interscholastic League of Honolulu Division 2 Championship. The Eagles also won the Mel Masumura Team Baker title, the ILH's post-season tournament. HBA defeated Kamehameha in the final and also bested Iolani and Division 1 Champion Punahou.

The team was led by Michael Riley McMann '29 who posted the league's top average of 214.95. Not far behind him was Ken Shimokawa '27 at 199.22.

At the State Championships November 6–7 at the Schofield Bowling Center, Shimokawa finished as the 10th place medalist. HBA finished 8th as a team.

HBA was guided by longtime coach and PE teacher Greg Hayashi. All six of HBA's state championships have come under Mr. Hayashi's leadership. Team members were McMann, Shimokawa, Derek Cheung '26, Kameron Fujioka '26, Talon Ganiko '26, Brian Hafele '26, Jacob Hofacker '26 and Jonathan Wong '26.

Girls Intermediate Basketball Wins Multiple ILH Championships

For the first time in about 15 years, HBA fielded two girls intermediate basketball teams (HBA has fielded two boys intermediate teams for decades). And commendably, both teams won their respective ILH Championship.

The Division 2 team finished with a 9–0 record to edge runner-up Sacred Hearts Academy by a game. The team was led by Coach Darren Wada '87. Team members were Kaila Brownfield '30, Madisyn Cayetano '30, Bella Hafele '30, Brooke LaBarre '30, Kacie Lau '30, Cassia Lee '30, Brandi Shinagawa '30, Alyssa Wong '30 and Tamiah Bell '31

Not to be outdone, the Division 3 team also posted an undefeated record, finishing with an identical 9–0 record. Hawaiian Mission Academy finished in second place at 6–3.

The head coach for the team was Jimmy Mageo. Team members were Sophie Brassfield '29, Kaila Masaki '29, Lydia Miyashiro '30, Sophia Parker '30, Lauren Quan '30, Sabay Street '30, Bentley Uyeda '30, Evelyn Lui '31 and Faith Rogers '31

FALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Several Eagles garnered ILH recognition for their accomplishments. Here is a list of all-star teams published at the time of printing:

Kamalei Canionero '27—ILH Shooter of the Year and ILH Champion (Sporter Air Riflery)
Michael Riley McMann '29—ILH Bowler of the Year (Bowling)
ILH Co-Coaches of the Year—**Greg and Lynne Hayashi**
Ken Shimokawa '27—ILH First Team All-Star (Bowling)
Kylie Ancheta '26—ILH First Team All-Star (Volleyball)
Allie Tom '29—ILH First Team All-Star (Volleyball)
Jaclyn Miyazawa '27—ILH First Team All-Star (Volleyball)
Maya Kim '27—ILH First Team All-Star (Volleyball)
Kate Iida '26—ILH Honorable Mention (Volleyball)
Blair LaBarre '28—ILH Honorable Mention (Volleyball)
Jalen Romero '28—ILH Honorable Mention (Volleyball)
Kaycie Hayashi '28—ILH First Team All-Star (Cross Country)
Kelsie Takeuchi '28—ILH First Team All-Star (Cross Country)
Madan Abe '27—ILH Second Team All-Star (Cross Country)
Kysen Oumi '28—ILH Second Team All-Star (Cross Country)
Zoe Lim '27—ILH Second Team All-Star (Cheerleading)
Elizabeth Ragain '26—ILH Honorable Mention (Cheerleading)

HBA Wins Girls Basketball State Championship



HBA IS BACK ATOP THE STATE IN DIVISION 2 GIRLS BASKETBALL.

The ILH champion and top seeded Eagles needed a late comeback—following a 20 minute delay due to a power outage—to power to a 45–41 victory over OIA champion and third seeded Pearl City in an exciting final game of the Flying Hawaiian Foundation Division 2 Girls Basketball State Championships.

The tournament was played—as it is every three years—on the Big Island. First round games were held at Keaau High School, and the final three days were held entirely at the Afook-Chinen Civic Auditorium in Hilo.

The Eagles, last year's runner-up, made good on their quest to return to the state final, but they finished the job this time around. It is their fourth title in program history and their first since 2022.

Right: Senior Sienna Lamblack (#20) is HBA's overall top scorer.
Photos: HHSAA/Harley Simon

Eagles celebrate their State Champ win (**above**). **Front** (L–R) Emily Ching '27, Gianna Gosiaco '27, Sienna Lamblack '26, Lauren Okuda '26, Shaila Terry '27, CinnamonLee '28. **Back** (L–R): Kira Wong '27, Kate Ragain '27, Taylor Shinagawa '29, Hallie Chock '28, Mari Casamina '27, Blair LaBarre '28, Kayla Wainwright '29, Kate Iida '26.



Senior guard Sienna Lamblack led the Eagles with 14 points, 9 rebounds, 3 assists, and 5 steals. Fellow guard Lauren Okuda added 12 points and 4 rebounds. The senior also added 3 assists. Sophomore Hallie Chock chipped in 9 points. All 3 players made the All-Tournament Team.

HBA got off to a hot start in the first quarter as Lamblack made 2 three-pointers. When junior Emily Ching also hit a trey, the Eagles led 14–9. Pearl City senior forward Riya Tobosa ruled her offensive side of the court scoring 9 of her team's 10 first quarter points.

The Eagles continued the momentum in the second quarter extending the lead to 10 at 22–12. However, the Chargers closed the quarter with a 11-3 run of their own, to trail by just 2 points at 25–23. Tobosa tallied 6 points and 4 rebounds in the quarter, while freshman guard Kyrie Chen contributed with 4 points on two key jump shots.

The Chargers outscored the Eagles 9-6 in the third quarter. HBA went cold, shooting just 1–11 from the floor. During the break between the third and fourth quarters, the Eagles focused much of their attention on continuing to defend Tobosa by committee.

"We had to figure out a better way to stop (Tobosa)," said HBA Coach Robin Yamaguchi '77. "We felt that defending would be the difference and we were able to pick it up late in the game. She is a great scorer and a tough cover, but we played her about as well as we could in that fourth quarter."

Tobosa, who was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player, led all scorers with 26 points and 12 rebounds. But over the game's final 5:03 she was limited to a single point until 2 free throws with 3 seconds left in the contest and the outcome already decided. HBA freshman Kayla Wainwright and sophomore Blair LaBarre joined Okuda in locking down the Chargers' star.

With 4:45 left in the final quarter, the game took a strange turn. Pearl City was slowly taking control of the game and appeared poised to extend their lead. Charger senior Chloe Bulatao was fouled on a three-point shot attempt by Taylor Shinagawa. It was the HBA freshman's disqualifying fifth personal foul. Then the lights flickered before going out completely. At that point, Pearl City led 35–31.

By the time the lights returned to full power and both teams were given a five minute warm up, about 20 minutes had elapsed. Coming out of the delay Bulatao made just 1 of the 3 free throw attempts.

HBA then went on an extended 14–5 run to end the game.

Okuda and Lamblack finished on drives to the basket. Chock made a layup and scored off an assist from Okuda. And Lamblack and Chock coolly shot a combined 5–6 from the charity stripe for the Eagles' final 5 points, pushing the Eagles across the finish line.

Coach Yamaguchi was not surprised with how the game unfolded. "On film we saw that number 20 (Tobosa) was a player who could dominate the game on both ends of the floor."

He added, "We knew it would be a battle and we feel very fortunate to get the win. It's so difficult to get to this final game of the tournament. So to begin (the season) with this goal in mind and to get back and to finish this year, it is as much a relief as it is exciting. I am proud of how our players pushed through when we were tested this season and in this tournament."

"I am so happy for them... and their families, for our coaches and for our school community, too."

WINTER SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

Congratulations to...

- Pac-Five girls varsity soccer for winning the HHSAA Division 2 Soccer State Championship! The six Eagles on the team were **Stephany Galicinao** '26, **Ashley Ragain** '26, **Gabriella Subia** '27, **Kaycie Hayashi** '28, **Stella Leong** '28, and **Sophie Fe Cadiz** '29.
- **Maya Wong** '28 for finishing as the runner-up in the 105 lb. weight class of the HHSAA Wrestling State Championships! **Sydney Lau** '26 also qualified in the 100 lb. class and won two matches.
- **Grayden Takara** '26, **Matthew Baker** '29 and **Blayke Takara** '29 for qualifying for the HHSAA Swimming State Championships!
- **Pollen Rarangol** '29 for winning the junior varsity ILH Precision Riflery Championship!
- **Kamalei Canionero** '27 for finishing as the varsity 3rd place medalist for ILH Precision Riflery Championship!
- HBA girls intermediate basketball for winning the ILH Division 2 Championship!
- HBA girls intermediate basketball for winning the ILH Division 3 Championship!
- HBA boys intermediate tennis for winning the ILH Division 2 Championships!
- HBA girls intermediate tennis for winning the ILH Division 2 Championship!
- HBA boys intermediate basketball for posting a 7–3 record in ILH Division 1 play! It was the Eagles' first time competing in D1 since 2018.

Scholarship Celebration Honors the Impact of Generous Giving











ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2025, Hawai'i Baptist Academy welcomed scholarship donors and student recipients for the annual Scholarship Celebration, an evening dedicated to gratitude, connection, and the shared mission of making an HBA education accessible to families who desire a Christ-centered school community.

The gathering brought together donors, students, and school leaders to celebrate the impact of scholarship support and the lives being shaped through that generosity. Throughout the evening, students had the opportunity to share their personal stories, express their appreciation, and connect with the donors whose gifts help make their HBA education possible.


Harrison '31

This year, 27 percent of HBA's K–12 student body, representing 279 students, received financial aid, with an average award of $7,000. In total, $1.7 million in financial aid grants and scholarships were accepted by families.

Among this year's recipients were 86 students who received Eagle's Wings scholarships, which support students with demonstrated financial need. Forty-four students received Endurance scholarships, which recognize academic merit and achievement. In total, 143 scholarship recipients were recognized for the 2025–2026 school year.

The evening also highlighted the many individuals, families, and organizations whose generosity sustains these opportunities. Scholarships awarded this year included the Mainland Advisory Council (MAC) Scholarship, which supports 24 students across twelve grade levels, along with scholarships such as the Joan Trew Scholarship Endowment, Takushi Family Foundation Scholarship, Hilda Shiraki Memorial Foundation Scholarship, Robert L. and Mary Lenora Coder Scholarship, and the Fund for Excellence Scholarship, among many others.

In addition, 13 senior scholarships totaling $12,500 were awarded to graduating seniors earlier in the year to support their continued education at the college of their choice.

While merit-based and senior scholarships were recognized during the Academic Awards Ceremony in May, the Scholarship Celebration provided a special opportunity to honor Eagle's Wings recipients and the donors who make these awards possible.

Beyond the statistics, the evening served as a reminder that scholarships do more than provide financial support. They open doors for students to grow academically, spiritually, and personally within the HBA community.

Through the faithful generosity of donors, Hawai'i Baptist Academy continues its commitment to making an excellent Christian education accessible to students who are called to learn, lead, and serve.

Mainland Advisory Council Week 2026









ELEMENTARY CAMPUS VISIT **Above:** MAC members spent the morning at the Richard Bento Elementary Campus interacting with students and experiencing the joy and energy of HBA's earliest learners. Highlights included one-on-one classroom visits, chapel together, and the highly anticipated potluck coordinated by our Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF).







Hawai'i Baptist Academy recently welcomed members of the Mainland Advisory Council (MAC) and special guests from across the mainland for MAC Week, an annual gathering that celebrates the partnership, prayer, and generosity that have supported HBA's mission for nearly five decades.

Throughout the week, MAC members visited all three Nu'uanu campuses, spending time with students, faculty, and staff while learning more about how God continues to work through the school. These visits provided opportunities for meaningful conversation, fellowship, and prayer while allowing the HBA community to express its gratitude for the faithful love and support MAC members have shown the school over the years.

MAC WEEK BEGAN with a welcome gathering at the Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center, followed by Tuesday's kickoff meeting at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. On Wednesday, MAC members visited the Richard Bento Elementary Campus before gathering that evening for a special evening service at Olivet Baptist Church. Thursday brought MAC members to the Stan Sagert High School Campus, and the week concluded on Friday with a visit to the Dan Kong Middle School Campus and the annual Aloha Banquet.

For nearly five decades, the Mainland Advisory Council has played an important role in supporting Hawai'i Baptist Academy through prayer, encouragement, and generosity. As Billie Lueder '94, Director of Institutional Advancement, shared, MAC members have long been faithful partners in the school's ministry.

The week also included a devotional message from Dr. Craig Webb, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Pacific Baptist Convention, who joined pastors and ministry leaders attending alongside MAC members.



WELCOME GATHERING MAC members were welcomed to campus at the Hugh & Mary McCormick Innovation and Discovery Center, beginning a week of connection, fellowship, and gratitude. For many MAC members, it was their first time seeing the building since its opening earlier this school year.

"The partnership is so important because the Mainland Advisory Council supports the mission of Hawai'i Baptist Academy. It is a relationship built on trust, love, and a shared commitment to Christ." — JULIE REYNOLDS, MAC CHAIR

Carrying the Torch of Our Legacy

"Every year we come back, it feels like family. Even though we live thousands of miles away, we feel deeply connected to HBA."

— VICKY JORDAN, MAC MEMBER



THE WEEK CONCLUDED with a remarkable Aloha Banquet celebrating the theme Carrying the Torch of Our Legacy. Nearly 200 guests gathered for an evening that honored the legacy of the Mainland Advisory Council and celebrated the enduring impact of Christian education at HBA.

The program featured inspiring performances from students across all three campuses, including the Soldiers of Light, Concert Choir, Middle School Choir, Hālau Hula ʻO Ka Lama ʻUla, Wind Ensemble, and Eagle Choir. Together, nearly 170 student performers filled the evening with music, worship, and celebration, creating what many described as a powerful "Wow, God" moment.

The evening also included testimonies from legacy families and students who shared heartfelt gratitude for the opportunities they have received at Hawaiʻi Baptist Academy. Their stories reflected the lasting influence of the school and the vital role MAC members have played through both spiritual encouragement and financial support.

MAC members also continued their strong support of HBA's Campaign for Transformation. Last year, outgoing MAC Chair Don Randall challenged members to raise $2 million toward the campaign. To date, they have contributed $1.8 million, with more than $84,000 raised during MAC Week 2026 alone.

Beyond the numbers, MAC Week remains a powerful reminder that Hawaiʻi Baptist Academy does not walk this mission alone. Through prayer, generosity, and enduring relationships, the Mainland Advisory Council continues to help carry forward the legacy of faith that defines HBA.

As President Ron Shiira '75 reflected at the close of the week, the blessings of MAC Week once again exceeded expectations. "We expect God to show up. And what resulted was even more than we expected," Shiira said.











"Seeing the students' love for Jesus and the way they care for one another has been incredible. You can see how HBA is shaping the next generation of leaders." — JAMES AND SUSAN SEE, FIRST-TIME MAC GUESTS

MICHAEL ’66 & GAIL ’67 (LAM) TANIGAWA

Carrying the Torch of Faith

The story of the Tanigawa family reflects the lasting impact of seeds planted at Hawai‘i Baptist Academy.

Michael Tanigawa began attending HBA in sixth grade while Gail joined in ninth. In those early years, the campus looked very different, with classrooms in former army barracks and an asphalt basketball court. Yet what remained constant was the Christian environment that shaped their lives. During his junior year, Mike made the decision to follow Christ, encouraged by Gail and supported by teachers who modeled faith and mentorship.



Their relationship, which began in high school, has now spanned more than six decades. Their connection to HBA also continued long after graduation. Michael returned to campus in 1998 to serve as registrar for more than a decade, helping transition the school to a new grading system while mentoring students as they planned for college. Gail faithfully served the school for 21 years in several departments, including the elementary office, the high school registrar’s office, and Institutional Advancement, where she later retired.

Over the years, Michael and Gail carried forward the faith foundation they received at HBA, raising their two sons, Shane ’94 and Brent ’00, with the hope that they too would come to know and follow the Lord.



Michael and Gail Tanigawa were honored guests at MAC Week 2026. They are shown here with their son Pastor Shane Tanigawa ’94, accompanied by his wife, Maela, and sons, Preston and Justice.

Today, that hope has come to life in a remarkable way.

Their eldest son Shane now serves as the lead pastor of University Avenue Baptist Church and is actively involved in leadership within the Hawai‘i Pacific Baptist Convention. Looking back, Mike and Gail see God’s hand at work through the many seeds planted over the years.

“God is good. He leads you and places you where you should be.” — Gail Tanigawa

Their story is a reminder that the seeds of faith planted today often grow in ways that unfold over generations.

VIDEO: Watch Michael and Gail’s testimony.

SHANE TANIGAWA ’94

Continuing the Legacy

VIDEO:
Watch Pastor Shane’s story.

Shane Tanigawa ’94, son of Michael and Gail, reflects the seeds of faith planted during his time at Hawai‘i Baptist Academy.

In 2002, while serving with Baptist Collegiate Ministries at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, he sensed a call to vocational ministry. That calling led him to earn his Master of Divinity from Gateway Seminary and serve in ministry roles in California.

In 2022, Shane returned to O‘ahu as Senior Pastor of University Avenue Baptist Church. He also serves as First Vice President of the Hawai‘i Pacific Baptist Convention.

Shane and his wife, Maela, have two sons, Preston and Justice.



Class Notes





THE HBA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PAU HANA WAS A SUCCESS! Mahalo to all the alumni who came out to support or who contributed from afar to meet the night’s goal to help fund the HBAAA scholarship. Grateful to have President Shiira ’75 share a message of thanks and growth of our school. Go Eagles!

1970

CALLING THE CLASS OF 1976! Your 50th class reunion is around the corner on June 26, 2026 at Maui Brewing Company and on June 27, 2026 at HBA’s Ho‘olaule‘a. You won’t want to miss this unforgettable time together! For more information, contact Jerry Okimoto at (925) 212-3999 or jsokimoto1@gmail.com.

1980

GET READY, CLASS OF 1981! Your 45th class reunion is coming up on July 10, 2026 at Natsunoya Tea House and July 12, 2026 at Bellows Air Force Station for a scenic picnic. We can’t wait to hear about it! For more information, contact Keri (Sumida) Kobayashi at mightyclassof81@gmail.com.

WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS... gets shared with the HBA ‘ohana! Members from the **Class of 1982** recently enjoyed a night of laughter and memories together. #hbaalumni



L–R: Lori (Nakanishi) Griffith, Lynne (Sato) Yamamoto, Kathy (Leong) Ramek, Joyce (Lazo) Mickelson, Jamie (Hidalgo) Soquena, Jeff Matsuo

HBA CLASS OF 1985 REUNION

The Class of ’85 reconnected over a memorable Labor Day weekend filled with laughter, memories, and friendship!

Saturday, Aug. 30—The celebration kicked off with dinner at Stage Restaurant.

Sunday, Aug. 31—Classmates gathered under the lights at Kaneohe Yacht Club for an evening of fun and fellowship.

Monday, Sept. 1—The weekend wrapped up with a casual backyard hangout.

Nearly 40 years since their HBA days, the Class of ’85 continues to show what it means to be lifelong Eagles.



Front Row (L–R): Naomi (Uyeno) Kuwaye, Sheila (Kinoshita) Cottingham, Ann (Miyashiro) Hisanaga, Lorrie (Luke), Debi (Fairbairn) Ortiz, Lannette (Berryman) Stewart, Miss Pat Ota. **Second Row (L–R):** Darlene (Fujimoto) Itomura, Alison (Chock) Wai, Lorna (Yamaoka) Wong, Reid Yamamoto, Jaleela (Dymally) Capoulade, Brent Takushi, Keith Ito, Donna Ann Minakami, Lynley (Murakami) Honbo. **Back Row (L–R):** Lisa (Lau) Mock, Julie Noe, Karla Brundage, Julie (Klingler) Chapman (she didn’t grad with us but was a former classmate), Steven Isobe, David Keuning, Kalani Kaleleiki, Cindy (Vargo) Siok, Reid Honbo

HEADS UP, CLASS OF 1986! Your 40th class reunion is happening on June 27, 2026 at HBA’s Hoʻolauleʻa and on June 28, 2026 at Side Street Inn. New memories await! For the latest details, contact Melissa Young at hbaclassof1986@gmail.com.

2000

WE CELEBRATE THE BIRTH of Waylon Gray Wallace McDonald on August 4, 2025 to proud parents **Jeni (Takekawa) ’05** and Graham McDonald! Big brother William is overjoyed to welcome his new little brother into this world!



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2005 who gathered for their 20-year class reunion at Natsunoya Tea House on November 28, 2025! Classmates enjoyed an evening of laughter, shared memories, and reconnecting with friends. It was a joyful celebration of two decades of life’s milestones, careers, and growing families since graduation.



Back Row (L–R): Marissa Ono, Justin Matsukawa, Nathan Yoshimoto, Cory Haruki, Ricky Tsukamoto, Colin Inamasu, Casey Kodama, Robert Wong, Yoshi Takahashi, Lance Oshima, Matthew Ogoshi, Ryan Kagimoto, Evan Ogata, Robert Kim, Chris Ho, Landon Sakuda. **Middle Row (L–R):** Nicole (Say) Yoshimoto, Chloe Miyashiro, Geri Hirata, Rayna (Kitaguchi) Cheong, Miki (Uto) Tonaki, Keri Wong, Wendy Tamashiro, Jared Higashi, Kim Uyehara. **Front Row (L–R):** Nicole (Matsusaka) Kamada, Jennifer (Gibo) Calderon, Mark Stinton, Jennifer Wasano

2000s (continued)





Congratulations to **Edward Saito '06** and Karen Heisler on their newest addition to their family, Noah Robert Mitsuo Saito, born on April 12, 2025! Big sisters Adelaide and Ellie are in love with their new baby brother!

2010

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2010 who gathered for their 15-year class reunion at Side Street Inn on December 26, 2025! After a virtual class reunion over Zoom in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this gathering was a momentous occasion of reconnection and celebration.



Back Row (L–R): Brock Wong, C'era (Olivera) Norris, Devin Shoji, West Hatae, In Sik Seo, Holden Paulino, Bryan Smitts, Nick Nakamura, Sarah (Yee) Aguirre, Evan Monma, Kelsey Hamano- Monma, Remi Yasui, Joanna Nakama, Garrett Loo. **Front Row (L–R):** Michelle (Chinen) Wong, Jessica (Ignaccio) Messer, Shaina (Inn) Yeung, Brianna (Lovett) Wilson-Ku, Darlene Fukuji, Stacie (Lee) Shoji, Tiahina Weaver-Maeva, Nicole Watts

CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2015— it's been 10 years since graduating! The Class of 2015 gathered at Off the Wall Craft Beer & Wine for their 10-year class reunion on December 27, 2025. The evening was marked by warm memories, joyful connections, and plenty of fun. To many more class reunions ahead!



Back Row (L–R): Brianne Higa, Dylan John Loo, Sydney Lau, Domo Hart, Kim Yamamoto, Jonathan Higa, Francis Sonoda, Joshua Kishaba. **Front Row (L–R)**: Anne Shiraishi, Jenee Brown, Riley Cammack, Deanna Sanekane, Rika Shinsato, Chie Watanabe (former HBA teacher), Candace Minami, Charisse Agraan, Amelia Mckenzie, Danielle (Toda) Higa, Nicole Lopes, Rylie (Sumimoto) La Grange, Deanna Wong

2020

On Monday night we welcomed the **CLASS OF 2025** back to the Eagle's Nest for Home for the Holidays. It was a sweet evening of reconnection, laughter, and fellowship bringing together our newest alumni and some of their beloved teachers. As we breathe new life into this tradition, we're reminded that HBA will always be home. We're here to cheer you on and pray for you through every season of life.



IN MEMORIAM

Aloha ʻOe

ALUMNI

Thomas Sylva, 58, class of 1985, passed away on March 5, 2025, in Castle Rock, Colorado.

Bradley Uyehara, 49, class of 1994, passed away on February 15, 2026, in Kaneohe, Hawai'i.

ASSOCIATE ALUMNI

Nikki Okazaki, 69, class of 1973, passed away on November 2, 2025, in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

FORMER FACULTY

Eugine 'Genie' Dunn, 91, passed away on May 17, 2025, in Harlingen, Texas.

MAINLAND ADVISORY COUNCIL

Shirley Causby, 91, passed away on September 21, 2025, in Belmont, North Carolina.

H. Wayne Hodge, 93, passed away on April 10, 2025, in Houston, Texas.

Shirley Taliaferro, 86, passed away on June 14, 2025, in Louisville, Kentucky.

THE ALOHA COUNCIL

Jerome Ching, 79, passed away on September 11, 2025, in Kaneohe, Hawai'i.

Lester Yonamine, 89, passed away on February 17, 2026, in Kailua, Hawai'i.

HBA 75TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE BOOK





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Alumni Celebration 2026

SAVE THE DATE!

2026
2021
2016
2011
2006
2001
1996
1991
1986
1981
1976
1971
1966
1961
1956
1951



Thursday, June 25 — Alumni Legacy Dinner
Hosted by President Ron Shiira ’75





Monday, June 22 — Golf Tournament
Organized by the HBA Athletic Booster Club

Saturday, June 27 — Hoʻolaule'a
Organized by the Office of Institutional Advancement

Find out more information and to register for these events go to

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.

facebook.com@hbaalumni instagram.com@hbaalumni