



Hau'oli Makahiki Hou!

In 2023, Kupu experienced its biggest year of growth in the history of the organization. Key achievements include:

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Urban and Community Forestry Program recently awarded \$20 million to Kupu to expand tree canopy, combat extreme heat, and improve access to green space in communities throughout the state over the next five years. More than \$42 million in federal grants were awarded to nine Hawai'i organizations—with the largest award going to Kupu
- Partnerships with Hawai'i Land Trust (HILT), UH-Maui College culinary program, The Ka'anapali Hub and Nāpili Hub increasing Maui wildfire relief efforts
- In partnership with the State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Kupu launched Nā Manu 'Elele Steward Program, which employs 24 individuals to steward important natural and cultural areas across the Hawaiian Islands
- Raised pay and expanded reach for paid positions and early career green jobs across the Hawaiian Islands to greater U.S. affiliated Pacific, including Guam, American Samoa, and Saipan

Kupu is excited for the growth ahead in 2024!

Lau Kupu Day 2023!



Check out this highlight video from our friends at ALTRES Foundation:

[Lau Kupu Day - 2023 Highlights](#)

Mahalo to everyone who attended Lau Kupu Day 2023 this past Saturday at Papahana Kuaola for National Make A Difference Day! On that beautiful, mālama 'āina-day of service with over 140+ volunteers cleared invasive brush around Ha'ikū Stream, removed invasive plants , and restored lo'i kalo (taro patches).

This day would not have been possible without our incredible host site partner [Papahana Kuaola](#) as well as the support of [ALTRES Foundation](#), [Enterprise Holdings and Affiliates](#) along with individual and family contributions.

We can't wait for next year!

Program Updates



Applications Now Open for Hawai'i Youth Conservation Corps Summer Program!

Kupu is currently seeking applicants for the Hawai'i Youth Conservation Corps Summer Program, which offers an intensive hands-on, rigorous experience into the world of conservation. Positions are available on Hawai'i Island, Kaua'i, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu.

Application deadline is February 16, 2024.

From June 3rd through July 21st, selected participants are partnered within a dynamic team of like-minded individuals to serve at a different partner site each week. The diversity of host sites provides a unique perspective on what conservation entails and what is being done to protect and restore the islands. Participants will learn about a variety of ecosystems, natural resource management techniques, and cultural practices unique to Hawai'i. All participants will receive First Aid & CPR

certification and gain valuable experiential environmental education, build close relationships with their peers, and make connections with professionals in the field.

All positions are paid. To learn more, visit www.kupuhawaii.org/hycc-summer/

Online Application: kupuhawaii.tfaforms.net/308

For questions, email hyccsummer@kupuhawaii.org or call 808.735.1221 x2001.

[Click here for more details and to apply online.](#)

Kupu New Hires

Kupu welcomes **Cheyenne “U’I” Jesse Kealanahele** as Administrative Assistant. She is currently a senior at UH Manoa, majoring in Hawaiian Studies with a concentration in Malama Aina. She graduated from Kamehameha and has nearly a decade of experience in administrative work.

“I grew up in Kapahulu in a single-family household and was always at the beach in Waikiki so I have a fondness for Waikiki, which is what got me interested in conservation,” she relates. “I plan to use my college degree to help protect and preserve Hawai‘i’s natural resources and biodiversity. Hence, Kupu!



Keao Rivera-Leong joins Kupu as program coordinator. In this role, she will support Kupu’s conservation programs in Maui and Molokai, with a focus on providing enriching experiences for participants and fostering connections with the broader conservation community. With 10 years of industry experience, Keao worked as an ORISE Environmental Education Research Fellow with the Environmental Protection



Agency for three years prior to Kupu. Born and raised in Hilo and Puna, Keao graduated from Waiakea High School and earned a B.A. in Science, Technology, and Society with a minor in Asian Studies from the University of Puget Sound. She currently resides in Waipi'o.

Mahalo Mentions!

We are filled with gratitude as we conclude the year surpassing our target goal for Kupu's 2023 Annual Campaign - Kupu A'e Ke Aloha (aloha sprouts forth). The success of this campaign stands as a testament to the unwavering aloha and support from our valued partners, dedicated board members, committed Kupu staff, and our vibrant community.

Special thanks are extended to our friends at Alaska Airlines for their generous donation of two round-trip tickets for eligible campaign participants. Stay tuned, as we will soon announce the winner! Mahalo nui to everyone who participated; your support and partnerships are integral, and we couldn't carry out this important work without you.

Since the wildfire in August 2023, we have developed a meaningful partnership with Nāpili and Kā'anapali Hubs, allowing us to enlist their incredibly resilient and aloha-filled volunteers onto our payroll in order to provide compensation, health and education benefits for their contribution to the emergency response. Immense gratitude goes to the Hawaii Community Foundation, The Freeman Foundation, Kosasa Foundation, Par Hawaii Inc, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Dorrance Family Foundation, Maui Arts and Community Center, the Jeffrey and Alexandria Klein Fund, American Savings Bank, and other generous supporters for allowing us to support our Maui 'ohana. Your invaluable contributions and steadfast dedication have played a crucial role in our ongoing efforts on Maui. Article from Maui News Now: <https://mauinow.com/2023/12/07/kupu-announces-eo-maui-partnerships-with-community-hubs/>

Kupu is a proud recipient of new and continuing grants including;

- [ALOHA](#)
- [American Savings Bank's Lo'i Gallery](#)
- Maurice and Joanna Sullivan Family Foundation
- [Honolulu Cookie Company](#)
- [Alexander and Baldwin](#)

- [Macys](#)
- Tradewind Group Foundation
- [Dorance Family Foundation](#)
- [Fred Baldwin Memorial Foundation](#)
- [Atlas Insurance Agency Foundation](#)
- Keith and Polly Steiner Family Foundation
- [Zephyr Insurance Company](#)
- [Kakatu Foundation](#)
- [J Watumull Fund](#)
- [HawaiiUSA Federal Credit Union](#)
- [Howard Hughes Corporation](#)
- [The Maui Strong Fund of the Hawaii Community Foundation](#)
- [ALTRES Foundation](#)
- [HEI Charitable Foundation](#)
- [The Rockefeller Foundation](#)
- [American Savings Bank](#)
- [PASHA Hawaii](#)
- [Enterprise](#)
- [AES Hawaii](#)
- [PAR Hawaii](#)
- [Alaska Airlines Foundation](#)
- [Kosasa Foundation](#)
- [Freeman Foundation](#)
- [Harold K.L. Castle Foundation](#) and the [Stupski Foundation](#)
- [Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation](#)
- [Pisces Foundation](#)
- [Consuelo Foundation](#)
- [H.T. Hayashi Foundation](#)
- [Omidyar 'Ohana Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation](#)
- [Federal Home Loan Bank Des Moines](#)



Thank you to the Honolulu Cookie Company for their commitment to our work! Kupu was blessed with a \$25,000 gift from the net proceeds of their 25th Anniversary cookie box. Partners' belief in our programs empowers us to strive for excellence and reinforces the importance of the work we do.

Finally, and equally important, thank you from the bottom of our hearts to the talented artists who showcased their artwork in [American Savings Bank's Lo'i Gallery](#) which resulted in their artwork sales benefitting [Kupu's EŌ Maui Program](#). We are blessed to receive support from the Art community!

Kupu is deeply thankful for both new and long-standing partners who join us in our collaborative efforts to preserve and revitalize 'āina while empowering Hawaii's youth. The essence of 'laulima'—many hands working together—is what breathes life into this undertaking. As we step into 2024, our gratitude extends to the many partners of Kupu, whose support has not only amplified our impact but also propelled our mission forward. May aloha sprout forth, always.

Kupu in the News

- <https://www.lahainanews.com/news/local-news/2023/12/08/kupu-announces-ao-maui-expansion/>
- <https://mauiNOW.com/2023/12/07/kupu-announces-ao-maui-partnerships-with-community-hubs/>
- <https://mauiNOW.com/2023/11/30/hawai%CA%BBi-set-to-receive-7-6m-to-protect-coastal-communities-fish-and-wildlife/>
- <https://www.staradvertiser.com/2023/12/03/breaking-news/alaska-airlines-to-buy-hawaiian-airlines-in-1-9-billion-deal/>
- <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/local-news/2023-11-27/these-hawaii-nonprofits-are-boosting-spending-to-help-people-on-maui>
- <https://mauiNOW.com/2023/11/22/state-legislature-working-group-urgently-tackles-wildfire-prevention-in-hawai'i/>
- <https://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/subscriber-only/2023/11/24/hawaii-nonprofit-service-providers.html>
- <https://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/news/2023/11/24/nonprofit-roundtable-2023.html>
- https://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/potmsearch/detail/submission/6537532/John_Leong
- <https://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/news/2023/11/10/hawaiis-most-admired-leaders-2023.html>
- <https://kauainownews.com/2023/10/02/kupu-state-launch-na-manu-%CA%BBelele-steward-program-applications-open-now/>
- <https://mauiNOW.com/2023/10/02/kupu-announces-na-manu-%CA%BBelele-steward-program-applications-open/>
- <https://www.lahainanews.com/news/business/2023/10/02/applicants-sought-for-na-manu-'elele-steward-program/>
- <https://www.mauinews.com/news/local-news/2023/10/applicants-sought-for-land-stewardship-program/>
- <https://www.bizjournals.com/pacific/inno/stories/fundings/2023/10/06/local-nonprofit-kupu-receives-20m-grant.html>
- <https://www.hinowdaily.com/2023/10/10/hiremaui-is-getting-maui-back-work/>
- <https://www.hinowdaily.com/2023/10/18/kupu-hawaii-empowers-more-resilient-hawaii/>



Established in 2007 as a Honolulu-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Kupu empowers future generations to create a more sustainable Hawai'i. The organization provides hands-on training and national service programs that educate and mentor youth to become stewards of culture and environment. Kupu has trained more than 6,000 youth and adults in conservation, sustainability, and environmental education. These young adults have supported Kupu partners to provide more than 3 million hours of service, which has culminated in planting over 1.5 million native plants and removing over 151,000 acres of invasive species. For their service, Kupu has presented \$6.3 million in education awards to support the continued growth of its members. To date, Kupu has generated more than \$176 million in economic benefits to the state of Hawai'i.

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