



# HO'ŌLA NĀ PUA

## Pearl Haven Two Years in Review





PEARL HAVEN

# Hope Blossoms Here

*Just an ordinary clamshell, that's what you see.  
But you don't know the process, the journey of  
perfecting me. The pain that I endure and the fear  
hidden inside me- You'll never know the heartache  
or the moment that I died. I died and built layers.  
Layers around my heart. Layers to protect me, to  
save me from falling apart. It's been a life of  
survival; it's how I make it through each day.  
But then someone reached out they said there is  
another way. They said that I have value -  
that I have the ability to shine! Some say the world  
is your oyster, and now I can make it mine.  
Just an ordinary clamshell- that may be what you  
saw, but now I'm a **Pearl - Beautiful and Raw.***

~ By Ashley Romano, R.N





# About Ho'ōla Nā Pua

Considered a national partner and rising standard in the global effort to stop sexual violence among children and youth, Ho'ōla Nā Pua is leveraging over a decade of experience to lead the effort in developing a comprehensive, sustainable model of care for victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking. Since its inception in 2009, our integrated programming has filled a critical gap in the prevention of child sex trafficking and provision of care for children who have been exploited, reaching over 150,000 individuals since inception on all major islands. Our advocacy work has reached tens of thousands around the globe. What started as a spark of light from a nurse has now created a chain reaction of light shining around the globe.

## Table of Contents

- 02 Message from the Program Director
- 03 Experiential Programs
- 04 The Pearl Haven Music & Cultural Arts Program
- 06 Heart, Horses, Equine Therapy
- 08 Education at Pearl Haven
- 10 We Need Your Support!





## *A MESSAGE FROM THE PEARL HAVEN PROGRAM DIRECTOR*

# Elizabeth Ku'upuamailani Porter

2022 has been a year filled with excitement and growth at Pearl Haven. There have been so many reasons to celebrate and be grateful for the opportunity and privilege we have to serve our youth. During this past year, our expansion efforts have been focused on enhancing clinical programming and developing and training our employees to meet the growing needs of the youth in our communities. We've been encouraged by the increased awareness of trafficking in our communities and know we still have a long way to go in helping our youth.

During 2022, Pearl Haven doubled its census. As the census has grown, so has our programming. Pearl Haven added several expressive and cultural arts programs to promote the healing of our youth from the inside out. Funded by our generous donors, these programs have included equine and animal counseling, cultural arts, music and dance with Kapena School of Music, therapeutic gardening, and our newest program, surf therapy!

These programs have many essential components that help our youth connect to their heritage, a connection many have lost over years of traumatic experiences. Our youth have enjoyed having these programs as an integral part of their treatment, and the benefits are inspiring.

Some of the comments we've heard from the youth include, "I finally feel safe" and "I have never been somewhere that I feel so cared for." The equine and animal-assisted therapies have brought the youth, in their words, "joy, hopeful, loved and connected." These are experiences all children should have in their healing process.

Pearl Haven has had amazing volunteers from the community who have come in to teach the new skills, serve as caring adults, and, most of all, have helped make our youth feel seen and heard. Our youth have been able to share their stories and feel cared for while working toward their goals, which is not an easy road.

In return, the Pearl Haven Youth Council independently decided they wanted to give back to the community and planned several community service events this past year. One youth shared, "I had been so disconnected from my home culture, and I did not realize until I found it again how much it helps me."

As we look forward to 2023 at Pearl Haven, we see the opportunity to continue being the light and the hope for our youth until they can see and hold it for themselves. We will continue to inspire growth and development in our clinical team and our programs as we focus on training and continuous equality improvements in our programs.

Mahalo for being a part of our Pearl Haven 'Ohana. We look forward to continuing our partnerships with you as we continue to work diligently for the youth in our care.

Mahalo Nui,





# Experiential Programs



In 2022, Pearl Haven expanded its expressive, culinary, and cultural arts programs. This has been a vital component of clinical programming and, in many ways, has helped the youth find healthy ways to express and process memories and emotions that have been stored in their bodies from past traumatic events. Some youth have stated that they did not know how much they missed their cultural and spiritual heritage until they had the opportunity to participate in the cultural arts program at Pearl Haven. Other youths have shared a sense of calm and well-being in finally finding a place where they feel safe.

**During the past year, the youth spent more than 550 hours in the following programs:**

- **Koa Yoga**
- **Kapena Music, Dance, and Unspoken Word**
- **Therapeutic Gardening**
- **Expressive Arts Group- Jewelry Making, Sewing, Clay Modeling, and Lei Making**
- **Wave Alliance Surf Therapy**
- **Pono Choices**
- **Mindful Movement**
- **Recreational Therapy- Pickleball, Basketball, Tennis**
- **Music Therapy**



All these services help our youth heal through self-expression when there are no words to describe what they are feeling or what they have experienced. Many times, when our youth have been actively working through their trauma in treatment, they ask if they can feed the turtle, hold the guinea pigs or take a walk to sit by the horses. When our youth turn inward and ask for what calms their nervous system and minds, we are teaching them to listen to what their bodies need at the moment. This replaces the need to participate in self-harming behaviors, running from their feelings, using substances to numb their feelings, or stuffing their feelings, as they have done in the past. These programs and the talented consultants who help us do this work are providing excellent clinical work.





## The Pearl Haven Music & Cultural Arts Program

The Pearl Haven Music and Cultural Arts Program is an opportunity for our youth to further immerse themselves in the Hawaiian culture to embrace the true spirit of Aloha fully. In doing so, they inherently develop a positive sense of identity through connections and applications that are Hawaiian-based values. The youth begin to evolve their understanding that they are part of something greater than their trauma.

This program would not be as successful without the right Kumu (source) or facilitators, we are fortunate to have partnered with Kelly and Leolani DeLima of Kapena's School of Music and Kapena, the band, one of Hawai'i's premier island bands. Kelly is a founding member and band leader. Each week, Kelly and his wife Leolani share lessons around the value of living Aloha through music, songs, ukulele, hula, and 'ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) with the youth of Pearl Haven. This program provides experiential learning that aids in healing while intentionally creating spaces for self-reflection and identity building and fosters a positive connection with the Hawaiian culture. Participants reconnect to their authentic selves and their true nature as it leads to intentionality, presence, mindfulness and profound respect not only for Hawaiian traditions but for their Kumu, Uncle Kelly and Auntie Leo, who have become part of the Ho'ōla Nā Pua 'ohana.





## Thoughts from Kelly and Leolani DeLima

An important part of Hawaiian cultural learning is showing your Kumu that you've mastered an understanding of their lessons, this is called hō'ike. This year, the girls were able to showcase their newly acquired knowledge, skills, and talents at our First Annual Hō'ike. Kelly and Leolani share their thoughts after the event.

First, we are so proud of the girls. We knew how special their performances and sharing would be, but we were moved beyond expectations. For us, it is important that our lessons are applicable in daily life. This is what we experienced with the girls, the Hawaiian culture being taught, learned, and expressed beyond knowledge and into practice. In our opinion, they have clearly articulated a Hawaiian mindset. Some of the lessons were grounded in Aloha and its meaning. We've also shared the value of kuleana or responsibility. We've been taught that kuleana goes beyond individualism and operates in the collective. For instance, we have often been taught- It's not Hawaiian to have an attitude like 'I got mine, go get your own.' "We take care of each other, if you're getting yours, get for everyone. Share with everyone. Care for everyone. Not just yourself. It's a cultural attitude and lifestyle we're encouraging. To love and care for not just yourself but others as well.

We've seen growth in each girl around Hawaiian culture and arts. We hope this has left a lasting impression that encourages all of us to live aloha and give aloha. We are humbled and honored to partner with Ho'ōla Nā Pua. We pray we can make a positive impact in the lives of all these beautiful youth.





# Heart, Horses, and Equine Therapy



Pearl Haven partners with Heart Horses which incorporates horses for growth, learning and healing as it engages youth in activities with horses to encourage an experience that effects positive change. Horses, with a keen sense for interpreting human emotion, provide therapists with valuable information about the client that might not come to the surface with talk therapy alone.

## EQUINE-ASSISTED THERAPY TARGETS:

- Nervous system regulation
- Connection, relationship building
- Social skills training with emotional safety
- Nurturing and care-taking
- Trust-based activities
- Healthy stress responses



## THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE HUMAN-HORSE CONNECTION:

- Promotes awareness of mental and physical state for teens. Allows them to learn to regulate and co-regulate.
- Horses are mindful animals and process in real time which is a visual process.
- Allows teens to externalize, make it about the horse.
- Coherent heart rate (pattern) which is why we “feel better” when we are around them.
- A coherent heart pattern is indicative of a system that can recover and adapt to stressful situations very efficiently.



*"Having the animals here reminds me that I am needed, and something does care about me. I haven't felt this way before, and it is helping me find a sense of hope again."*

*-Pearl Haven Youth*

## Animal Assisted Program Launched

We incorporate animal assisted counseling into the array of clinical treatment services as an innovative approach to treating complex trauma. Animal assisted therapeutic programming is an emerging best practice in the field of trauma work and is aimed at helping our youth with calming their nervous system. Individuals with complex trauma often live in a state of survival in which the nervous system is stuck in a state of arousal. When youth are in a constant state of survival, they are not biologically able to access the logic side of their brain that allows them to access coping skills or learn new coping strategies. Incorporating the use of animals allows our youth to experience feelings of calm and a regulated nervous system, therefore, in a place to actively participate and grow in their recovery.

By the time a youth enters a residential treatment center, the complex trauma they have experienced has negatively impacted many areas of their lives. They have experienced many forms of abuse and neglect that have threatened their overall well-being and have made their view of the world less than hopeful and safe. Most of our youth have been in other treatment centers and foster placements in which they were discharged as "unsuccessful." All of these traumatic events in their lives involved humans and, many times, trusted adults in their lives. This life experience can make it challenging for youth to open up to new adults while in treatment.





# *Education at Pearl Haven:* **A Foundational Pillar to Healing and Empowerment**

100% of the Pearl Haven youth self-reported academic difficulties with special education needs and school attendance and disruptions concerns preventing them from meeting grade level expectations at the time of intake. Despite these challenges - Our students were honored for the A/B Honor Roll, finishing their courses, and being a "Boss Babe," and one of them earned the "Pearl Award" for all of her hard work and never giving up no matter how hard things got. All of our youth have received honorable awards through their progress at Pearl Haven.



## *Academic Accomplishments*

- We have a student who utilized credit recovery and should leave us on the **correct grade level for her age.**
- Writing skills have improved, and **all seven high school students** can now produce an essay written with the appropriate focus and intent.
- **All current DOE students** accomplished passing grades and completed enough of their core content work to earn my recommendation for either promotion to the next grade or receiving high school credit for their respective courses.
- **At least three students** who were once trepidatious about their ability to pass school but are now self-driven to get higher grades.



# A Place for Our Youth to Thrive

- We have served **44 youths** since the opening of Pearl Haven.
- **78% of our youth** reported having four or more points on the ACES (Adverse Childhood Events Score), which indicates a high probability of chronic mental health and physical health conditions moving into adulthood.
- The primary diagnoses of youth in our care are depression, anxiety, PTSD, and ADHD.
- **100% of the kids we served** in 2022 have used illicit substances or have been addicted to illicit substances before beginning treatment at PH.
- **88% of our youth come from the foster care system** and have lived in multiple treatment facilities as well as group homes prior to coming to Pearl Haven.



## Empowering with Choice and Voice

Pearl Haven's Youth Council provides youth-based leadership on campus through elected youth representatives. The student body elects Youth Council Officers each semester, meet weekly with their volunteer supervisor and host monthly meetings with site leadership to discuss initiatives, events, and site activities planned for the month. During the monthly meetings with the Program Director and site leadership, Youth Council Officers may also discuss program developments, improvements, and concerns. Youth may provide feedback to their Youth Council Officers verbally or in writing, and their concerns/input will then be brought to the weekly and monthly Council meetings for discussion. Youth Council is also in rotation to host the weekly campus assembly to allow youth to provide leadership and plan fun activities and recognitions for their peers. Regular youth council meetings ensure youth have a voice in programming and decision-making and make the youth feel empowered. Youth Council members have expressed that the Youth Council helps them feel heard and part of program decision-making processes alongside Pearl Haven leadership.



# Sex Trafficking and Exploitation in Hawai'i

**The sex trafficking and sexual exploitation of youth and young adults happen daily across our state.**

Did you know in Hawai'i:

- The national average of the first sexual exploitation is **14 years old.**
- The average age of the first sexual exploitation in Hawai'i is **11 years old.**
- The average age of the first sexual exploitation on Hawai'i Island is **8 years old.**
- **64%** of sex trafficking victims have identified as being all or part Native Hawaiian.



## It's not a Myth, but an Issue



- **3 out of 4 victims** knew their trafficker (Family, friend, or boyfriend).
- **69%** of sex trafficking victims reported experiencing homelessness.
- **More than 60%** of sex trafficking survivors reported a history of being in foster care.
- **75%** are female, **13%** male, and **2%** other.
- **1 out of 3** reported technology had been used as part of their experience.

## Who are these youth?

**Who is vulnerable to sex trafficking and exploitation?**



**Sex trafficking and exploitation impacts ALL demographics.**

**Below are the most highly vulnerable:**



Homeless, runaway



LGBTQ Youth



Youth with a history of child abuse, neglect, and maltreatment.



Youth with a history of systems involvement.  
Foster care, juvenile justice, child welfare.



Substance use and addiction.



Mental health challenges.



Cognitive Physical Disabilities.





# Donate Today and Continue Making a Difference

Ho'ōla Nā Pua relies on the support of generous donors that allow our team to continue raising awareness and providing critical programs and services to the community. Our organization is funded by 90% of private donors, and 83% of the annual funds raised are reinvested into community programs. We need your help to continue shining the light and fighting for the prevention of sex trafficking and exploitation of our keiki. Below are some ways that you can donate today!



## Annual Pearl Gala

The Pearl Gala is the premier fundraising event of Ho'ōla Nā Pua allowing us to perpetuate our mission and fund essential programming.



## Champion of Hope

These gifts are unrestricted gifts of support dedicated to our programs to ensure we can continue serving our community through education, awareness, and care for our vulnerable keiki.



## Pearl Society \$20,000 entry donation

Be part of a network of individuals that come together and stand up against sex trafficking and exploitation of our keiki.



## Matching Gift \$10,000-\$50,000

Throughout the year, we look for donors to partner with us to encourage the community to participate in our campaigns.

Scan Here to  
Make a Donation



Or contact our Development  
Team at [info@hoolanapua.org](mailto:info@hoolanapua.org).





# HO'OLA NĀ PUA

## A PATH TO A BRIGHT FUTURE

Ho'ōla Nā Pua's continuum of care framework addresses not only the traumatic impact of those who have been exploited but also focuses on the prevention and resilience of those who are vulnerable. This progressive pathway is individualized to meet specific needs, and includes the following integration to ensure a bright future:



### TREATMENT FOR THE VICTIMIZED

Pearl Haven  
Residential Treatment  
Campus



### REINTEGRATION

Starfish Mentoring  
Program/Care  
Coordination



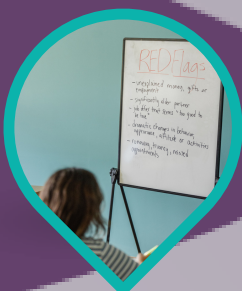
### EMPOWERMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

Advocacy  
Transition to Adulthood  
Care Coordination



### RESILIENCE IN THOSE VULNERABLE

Hōkū Group Services  
Group programming with  
community partners  
Starfish Mentoring Program



### COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Student and Community  
Education/Prevention & Awareness  
Professional Trainings

### ACTION STEPS

- Build programming frameworks that are trauma informed, trauma integrated, and uniquely designed for those at risk and those who have been exploited.
- Understand the vulnerabilities that lead to victimization and develop strategies to reduce those vulnerabilities.
- Survivor perspectives incorporated into all programming.
- Strategically build programming that both impactful and sustainable.



# Our Impact in 2022

## Preventing Trafficking Through Awareness, Education and Training

- Delivered prevention education and awareness training to teachers, counselors, faculty, professionals, and community members through **102 customized professional** training presentations, including **in-school sessions reaching 1,797 students in 5th – 12th grade** from schools throughout Oahu and Hawai'i Island.

## Building Resilience – Hōkū Group Services

- We safely delivered **312 Hōkū therapeutic group services** to **108 unduplicated youth** under 18 who are at the most risk for sex trafficking.

## Empowering the Vulnerable – Starfish Mentoring

- This past year, we served **75 youth and young adults** through **over 1,674 1-to-1 virtual, in-person and/or phone text sessions** with trained and vetted mentors as part of Starfish Mentoring.





# *A Letter From a Pearl Haven Youth*

I remember nights I used to cry. I remember nights when I used to wonder whether I am going to eat, Where I am going to sleep. I remember all of those people who looked me in my eyes and said everything will be fine...  
To leave me on the side of the road to DIE

I remember looking at myself in the mirror and telling myself how am I still ALIVE? I remember yelling for help as people laughed and passed me by.

Have you ever looked a child in the eyes and saw not a single drop of light?

But you never gave up on them and now see them glow, and their light shines so brightly it lights up the sky. Have you ever watched a child turn his or her life over to God? Have you ever stayed up nights crying and holding a child in your arms so that they know they are no longer in harm's way?

I remember times I would wake up in the middle of the night crying, and the Pearl Haven staff rushed by my side so that I would know that I was going to be fine.

When I first walked into Pearl Haven, I laughed at the staff and therapist in my head, thinking they wouldn't be able to change me. The crazy thing is that what I did not know was that the whole time God was smiling at me, saying...  
Daughter, just wait and see!

I have now been at Pearl Haven for 9 months, and I have learned for the first time in my life how love is actually supposed to be. I learned how to love myself but also allow others to show that they love me. I have learned about my Father in heaven, who has never left me or forsaken me. I have learned what it is like to be a child again. I have learned that I am able and capable to dream new dreams.  
My hope continues to blossom every day.

~ Pearl Haven Youth

## *Contact Us*

1.808.445.3131

info@hoolanapua.org

P.O. Box 22551 | Honolulu, HI 96823

www.hoolanapua.org

