

HAB FORUM

HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND

Advocating for

Independence, Equality, Opportunity

Vol. IV No. II

August 2006

ALOHA! The Hawaii Association of the Blind (HAB) is proud to introduce everyone to the **HAB Forum**. This newsletter is published twice a year.

HAB is an organization comprised of blind and sighted members, who strongly believe in advocating for independence, equality, and opportunity for all blind persons. The officers are:

- President: Warren Toyama, vendor at the Tripler Army Medical Center
- First Vice-President: Filo Tu, President and CEO of Blind Vendors Ohana
- Second Vice-President & Scholarship Chairman: Don Thomson, Professor at Leeward Community College
- Secretary: Maureen Sheedy
- Treasurer: Amelia Cetrone, retired hotel CEO
- Board Members:
 - Myles Tamashiro, vendor at Kona Airport
 - Norman Ota, dark room technician at Tripler Army Medical Center
 - Ronald Flormata – Sales Associate at Blind Vendors Ohana

· Betty Mason



PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Warren Toyama

HAB envisions a lively second half of 2006. All members are called upon to participate in the planning and implementation of the various projects slated to take place.

- 1) Begin planning for our 40th Annual Convention set for March 16 – 17, 2007. We will strive to make this our very best Convention!
- 2) Membership chair Norman Ota is grooming his Committee to deal with the goal of nurturing and strengthening HAB's membership.
- 3) Scholarships to post-secondary students will continue to be offered. John Burrows received a \$500 scholarship in March at the 39th Annual HAB Convention Banquet. In June, a \$2,000 scholarship was approved by the membership to be given to Grant Ne of Molokai.
- 4) From July 8 – 15 delegates Donald Thomson, Warren Toyama, Myles Tamashiro, and Norman Ota attended the 45th Annual Convention of the American Council of the Blind in Jacksonville, Florida. Also attending from Hawaii were Lance Cho, Shelford Cantan of the Big Island, and Ho'opono Mobility Instructor Michael Hughes. A lot of fellowship took place among the conferees. Next year's Convention will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, so plan to attend! It's been a year since thirty-five of us flew to Las Vegas for the 2005

ACB Convention...my how time flies!

- 5) In the Fall, the State of Hawaii Association of Educators and Rehabilitation Workers (SHAER) will sponsor a seminar featuring Dr. Karen Wolff as the key-note speaker. HAB will probably participate in this worthy project.
- 6) HAB will participate in the September Convention of HAPVI (Hawaii Association of Parents of the Visually Impaired). HAB members will also participate in the October Convention of the Hawaii Blind Vendors Association.

At the recent Convention in Jacksonville, Florida I was re-elected as Second Vice-President of the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America (RSVA). I also serve on RSVA's Legislative Committee.

Louise Horio and Beth Flormata, co-chairs of the Social Committee are planning a picnic, Karaoke Night, and a Thanksmas party. Stay tuned for more details...

HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND 39TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

The 39th Annual Convention of the Hawaii Association of the Blind was held on March 15 – 16, 2006 at the Pagoda Hotel. Ms. Pam Shaw represented the American Council of the Blind as our keynote speaker. Pam is the Director of Pennsylvania's Blind Services Division, and was our most effective Convention guest ever!

The Convention Banquet demonstrated HAB's wide range of activities. John Burrows received a \$500 scholarship. All DOE districts (except Windward) were awarded monetary grants through the itinerant teacher of the blind to assist blind students. Ho'opono, the Library for the Blind, and the Hawaii Center for the Deaf and Blind all received monetary grants also.

The Eva H. Smyth Award was presented to Maureen Sheedy for her steady and long tenure of service as HAB's Secretary. Also receiving the Award was long-time HAB leader Norman Ota, who heads the Membership Committee.

The State Senate presented a Resolution congratulating HAB on its 39th Convention and for its outstanding service to the blind community. Similar Senate Resolutions were presented to HAB President Warren Toyama and First Vice-President Filo Tu for individual leadership in the field of improving the opportunities for Hawaii's blind citizens.

DOE Superintendent Patricia Hamamoto joined us for dinner for the very first time, and we all enjoyed having her there.

Blind guests included: Alfred and Connie Gil from Seattle, Washington; Robert and Donna Seliger from Des Moines, Iowa; and Mitch and Donna Pomerantz representing the California Council of the Blind. The inspiring message for the evening was delivered by Pam Shaw from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE – Norman Ota and Filo Tu

For the last two to three years, HAB's membership list has been really growing. We believe the reason for this is that people are becoming aware of the philosophy and accomplishments of HAB in Hawaii and across the nation. They, too, want to be a part of an organization that tries to do everything in their power to help blind people regain status as important, outstanding, and contributing members of society. The membership of HAB and others are realizing the importance of working together cooperatively so we can make a difference in the lives of blind people here in Hawaii and across the nation. We always look forward to welcoming new members to our great organization.

The Hawaii Association of the Blind is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, which is a national organization. However, our number one goal is focused on the people of Hawaii.

You should know that the members of HAB are a very hard working group of people. But we also have lots of fun. So, if you want to help the Blind and have some fun while doing it, then think about joining HAB and sing our song. Wondering what our song is? Well, just join us and you can find out! Aloha!!

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FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE – Myles Tamashiro



The Fundraising Committee ran another successful chili and bread sale with Zippy's. Norman Ota and Amelia Cetrone did a terrific job of coordinating the sale. Thank you to all HAB members for your cooperation and hard

work!

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND, 49TH ANNUAL CONVENTION – Norman Ota

The ACB Conventions seem to be alike in a lot of ways: 1)There were activities with tours, 2)Special affiliate activities, 3)Workshops, 4)Seminars, 5)Getting to know the area around the Convention site, 6)Exhibits, 7)Scholarship Awards, 8)Banquet, 9)Meeting people, 10)And finally just being there among the excitement of the Convention with all the opportunities for enrichment, education, sharing of ideas, and working together for the betterment of the blind across the nation.

There were seven of us from Hawaii attending the Convention: President Warren Toyama, Don Thomson, Myles Tamashiro, two students (Shelford Cantan and Lance Cho), and Mike Hughes the Mobility instructor from Ho'opono.

Highlights for me were the legislative seminar, voting machines, accessible voting issues, Medicare prescription problems, and a workshop on how to get rid of clutter and organize your things. Another thing that caught my interest was a guide horse; I was fortunate to talk with a woman who used a

guide horse instead of a guide dog!

I thank HAB for sending me to this year's ACB Convention. Next year's Convention will be in Minnesota, so let's all make an effort to attend.



TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE – Ronald Flormata, Webmaster

· Technology

We all know about the myriad of technology out there which promises to make life for a blind or visually impaired person better, easier, and more fun. We are also aware of the fact that most of these things are economically far from the reach of an average blind or visually impaired individual. It would be remarkable to know that the latest technology can actually get into the hands of a significant number of people without spending an arm and a leg. Electronic devices which offer technology for blind and visually impaired people to “see” (Braille displays, note takers, video magnifiers, talking computers, talking PDA's [personal digital assistants], talking cellphones) cost thousands of dollars. Fortunately, in America we have the Department of Human Services which assists blind or visually impaired individuals to achieve their vocational goals with the help of assistive technology. On their own, it would be highly improbable, if not outright impossible, for these persons to obtain these devices. Nothing should stop you from using technology. You just need the proper information on what and where to get it, and not have to worry about the cost.

- HAB goes Multimedia

The last HAB Convention held on March 11, 2006 showcased how the organization has moved one step further than just mere text on the web. We have gone multimedia! Featured on the HAB website are the recorded footages of the actual Convention. Those of you who were not able to make it to the annual event can now listen to the proceedings and view pictures. Visit <http://www.acb.org/hawaii> and follow the links to the audio files.

- Talking Cellphones

A friend told me about her ordeal of locating a cellphone dealer knowledgeable about talking cellphone units. These phones must have the capability of reading the screen, like that of JAWS in Windows. It's really frustrating because all the salespersons did not have a clue about what she was referring to. To help solve this, I would like to inform you about the National Center for Customers with Disability (NCCD) of Cingular Wireless. NCCD facilitates the provision of applicable Nokia cellphones that can accommodate the TALKS software enabling the unit to read whatever is on the screen. The software alone costs \$200, but it can be credited towards your bills. The TALKS/Nokia 6620 combination will allow Cingular Wireless customers to:

- Hear incoming Caller ID which allows you to be selective about the calls you answer
- Write and read notes, text messages, and email
- Compose and access multimedia messages (MMS)
- Add, edit, and dial entries in a contact database
- Use the appointment calendar, alarm clock, and other tools

For a limited time, Cingular Wireless customers with qualifying visual disabilities who purchase the TALKS software can receive a rebate of either \$100 or \$199 depending on the length of their service contract. Once the customer with the visual disability completes and returns the necessary application and certification forms, is approved for the rebate, and satisfies a 30-day waiting period after purchasing the software, the rebate will be applied to their wireless bill as a service credit. Call NCCD at 1-866-241-6568 for the application, disability certification forms, and other details. Hours of operation are: Monday – Friday from 7am – 9pm (ET), Saturday from 9am – 6pm (ET).

We encourage everyone to visit the HAB website at: <http://www.acb.org/hawaii>. For comments and suggestions, please contact HAB webmaster, Ronald Flormata via email at comhaus1@hotmail.com.

INTERNAL SUPPORT COMMITTEE – Beth Flormata



Lately, a number of our members have been challenged with health issues. It's a reminder that we need to take good care of ourselves so we can enjoy life a little better. Thanks to those HAB members who have provided info about fellow members who may have needed a boost or well wishes.

On the matter of pedestrian safety, this Committee has obtained support from HAB to commence a small project that I would like to name PROJECT AWARENESS. This project will aim to increase the level of awareness for current and future drivers concerning the safety of pedestrians, particularly blind and visually impaired pedestrians. While a number of pedestrian

safety programs and campaigns are currently in place, educating our future drivers through the Drivers Education Program would be a good starting point to get this project going. Groundwork is slowly on its way, so we need all your support to make this project a success. We will keep you posted of any developments.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE - **Beth Flormata and Louise Horio**

It's been a while since we all got together, and 2006 is already halfway through! Before we know it Thanksgiving and the Yuletide Season will be just around the corner. So how about a nice little gathering at the end of September? The Social Committee is planning a Karaoke Party for all members to enjoy, with light snacks and refreshments to fill us up while we sing to our hearts content. More details will be provided on the flyers that will be mailed to you. Keep September 30 (Saturday) open so we can all get together and have fun!

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TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE - **Louise Horio**

This Committee is involved in making sure that various transportation companies are aware of and adhere and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. I am a member of a sub-committee of the Oahu Transportation Service (OTS), Citizens for a Fair ADA Ride. Their mission statement is: The committee is committed to giving a voice to the disabled and the elderly consumer using TheBus and the Handi-Van to ensure accessible transportation in a safe and timely manner. The Chairman and Spokesperson is myself, Louise Horio, with Mel Nacapoy being the Co-Chairperson. The Secretary is Ethelreda

Kahalewai. This committee meets every third Sunday of each month in the lunchroom and cafeteria of the Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific on Kuakini Street. Meetings are from 1:00pm – 3:00pm. Bring your concerns about TheBus or the Handi-Van. The committee then meets every two months with the people from OTS to bring up these concerns. We hope to make a difference!



BLIND VENDORS OHANA - Filo Tu

On June 1, 2006 Blind Vendors Ohana celebrated its 12th anniversary. I want to give thanks to all the people of BVO for another successful year. I didn't think the celebration was going to be as big as it turned out to be. We celebrated Ohana's birthday for two days! On June first the entire staff of BVO was treated to a delicious birthday cake, and later that day the office staff was served a scrumptious lunch. On June second the office staff was pleasantly surprised with another wonderful lunch provided by Warren Toyama. Thanks Warren!

I have to say that 12 years is a long time to be in business at the Honolulu International Airport, and we are all so proud we were able to succeed on our own. You see, there weren't many people in the State Government who were willing to give us a chance because they felt we could not run businesses like Ohana by ourselves. Well, we did it and we the blind of Hawaii went out and proved that all we needed was a chance. We not only proved it to the State but we also proved it to ourselves. To me, that is the most important thing. Blind Vendors Ohana not only

helped the three Blind Vendors at the airport and their employees, but also helped all the Blind Vendors in Hawaii.

For the past 12 years, Ohana has contributed over \$1,200,000 to the retirement and medical funds for all Blind Vendors in Hawaii. We will continue to make these contributions as long as we run the Honolulu International Airport because of the settlement agreement from the lawsuit by the Blind Vendors which was headed by Warren Toyama and myself. Who can forget what HAB and its members did. HAB joined the Blind Vendors and raised and contributed money to help finance the lawsuit. HAB members also came out in full force to do whatever necessary to help the Blind Vendors. The combined efforts of the Blind Vendors and HAB led to a successful victory in returning the Honolulu International Airport to the blind of Hawaii. Thank you very much leaders and members of HAB for all you have done to help the Blind Vendors of Hawaii!

On behalf of Walter Ishikawa, Tommy Morikami, our families and employees of Blind Vendors Ohana, my heartfelt thanks for giving us the opportunity to be at the Honolulu International Airport, and we will do our best to preserve it for the future.

Vending News – Filo Tu

It seems like only yesterday when I wrote the article about the Blind Vendors and all the problems they were facing. Yes, we are still having problems, but for the first time I believe we are starting to work together with the State Agency for the blind. There are so many people I would like to give credit to

for their hard work because if it weren't for them, this wouldn't be possible. I want to thank Mrs. Susan Kern from the Attorney General's office for helping to make sure that the State Committee of Blind Vendors is being treated fairly by the Business Enterprise Manager. Credit also goes to Mr. Joe Cordova, the new administrator for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, for his role in making sure that the Committee of Blind Vendors is being given the opportunity to actively participate in decisions affecting the vending program.

There are also some blind vendors who played a very important part to start the ball rolling to make these things happen. As usual, Warren Toyama has never been given the credit he truly deserves for all he has done through the years to not only protect the blind vending program, but for all he has done to protect the rights and well-being of the blind people of Hawaii. Warren, thank you very much for your willingness to sacrifice your time and efforts so the blind people of Hawaii will have the opportunity to live in a society where they will have equal rights as everyone else, live independently, and be employed.

I truly hope that we will continue to move forward and work together with the State Agency for the blind so not only the Blind Vendors can be beneficiaries, but all the blind people of Hawaii.

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Hawaii Association of Parents of the Visually Impaired (HAPVI) – Amy Downard



HAPVI recently hosted a fun meeting, potluck, and ice cream social event at the Hawaii Center for the Deaf and Blind. A new family recently joined the group and they were happy to receive educational information and fellowship.

To increase membership, we continue to distribute our brochures to inform the public about our group. HAPVI is also exploring current hot topics regarding the education of our children, including the Visual Impairment teacher shortage,

the need for schools to provide resource rooms for visually impaired students, and the current lack of early intervention professionals for infants and toddlers who are visually impaired or blind.

The next HAPVI Convention is set for Saturday, September 16, 2006 from 8am – 2pm at the Pagoda Hotel in Honolulu. Speakers will be arranged and the annual elections will continue. The cost to attend will be \$22 per person, which includes all Convention materials and lunch. Members can pay their annual membership fee of \$5 per family at the Convention. The Friday night before the Convention (Sept. 15), HAPVI will host a free hospitality event for families at the Pagoda Hotel featuring good food and good times. Contact HAPVI President Myles Tamashiro at 626-0535 for further details and reservations.

Keiki and Parents of the Visually Impaired (KAPVI) – Carol Hotta

· Fishing – A Family Affair

Family, friends, and teachers came to cheer on eight visually impaired participants in the annual Maui Lions Clubs Fishing



Tournament in June. Four of the eight students won trophies for: largest fish, smallest and second smallest fish, and second-most fish. This year one student from Baldwin High School joined the group for the first time, and was almost dancing when he caught his first

fish! Besides helping students handle hooks and worms, the next biggest challenge for parents and teachers was stopping the students from looking at the wriggling fish from one inch away! Good Job, guys!

· People-To-People

More good news...Maui student and KAPVI member, Vavega Tialino, was chosen to be part of the People-to-People 2006, a student ambassador group which travels to other countries. This year the group, representing Maui and Oahu, is currently traveling in Great Britain. Besides touring, the visits include family home stays and meeting with students from host countries. To be accepted as an ambassador, Vavega, who is visually impaired, had to do research, pass an interview, learn two monetary systems, and fundraise for travel expenses. Good Show Vavega!

· Scholarship

Great news...Grant Ne, a visually impaired student from Molokai, received a \$2,000 college scholarship from HAB! Grant plans to attend Maui Community College. Grant, who works on the family farm and is already a role-model in his community, is planning a career working with children. Congratulations, Grant!

· Planning For Your Special-Needs Child

KAPVI parents met at the end of June for a seminar on estate planning for special-needs dependents. The session was presented by Met-Life, and it included planning for the future, living wills, trusts, guardianship, and eligibility for government benefits. As KAPVI president Marge stated, “If you don’t plan for your child’s future some stranger will”.

For information about KAPVI on Maui please call President Marge Masterson at 669-0928, or email Carol Hotta at hotta@maui.net.

State of Hawaii Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (SHAER)

– Amy Downard

SHAER is busy planning a Transition Conference featuring Dr. Karen Wolffe at the Queen Kapiolani Hotel on October 20 - 21, 2006. Topics will include the transition from high school to college, high school to work, and focusing on early work experiences. Vendors will present an Island Skills Gathering, featuring products and technology for blind and visually impaired consumers. Contact SHAER President Kristin Oien at HCDB for more details, 733-4999.



Auntie Weezie’s Corner – Louise Horio

Ola and Aloha ka kou!

Greetings go out to our new Head Administrator of Vocational Rehabilitation in Hawaii, Joe Cordova. I have spoken to

him on several occasions and I have found him to be intelligent, soft-spoken, and friendly. I look forward to working with him in my capacity as President of the Hui Kupuna VIP, the Elder Group of Visually Impaired Persons.

Hui Kupuna VIP meets every first Thursday of the month from 9:30am – 11:30am. We meet at the Hawaii Centers for Independent Living, 414 Kuwili Street, Room 102. Anyone is welcome, even if you are not yet 55+! We have speakers, we explore new restaurants, and go on field trips. Our officers are:

- President: Louise Horio
- Vice-President: Betty Mason
- Corresponding Secretary: Fay Solomon
- Recording Secretary: Mal Whiteclif

Please call Louise for more information, 488-0179.

Chicken with Mushrooms and Zucchini

- Four to six chicken thighs: cut into bite size pieces, lightly salt and let stand for a few minutes
- Clean and cut white mushrooms (in half, or in quarters)
- Two medium zucchini: cut into bite size pieces
- Oyster sauce, and a little garlic to your taste

Heat a little oil in a pan, fry chicken. Add mushrooms and oyster sauce to taste. When almost done, add zucchini (don't overcook!).

Taco Dip

Mix each in its own container until soft and smooth:

- 1 container Jalapeno Bean Dip
- 1 container Guacamole
- 1 container Sour Cream

Layer the above on a flat serving dish. Sprinkle with $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of Schilling Taco Seasoning package. Decorate with layers of:

- Shredded cheddar cheese
- Chopped lettuce, tomatoes, bell peppers, olives, pepperoni, etc.

Arrangement of colors is your best guide for an attractive dip.

Serve with taco strips or Tostitos.

Health Tips

1. Because most of us cannot see very well, we may place our bags and purses where there are GERMS! Many ladies place bags on restaurant floors, bathroom floors, or anywhere germs lurk. Then, we go home and place these same bags on countertops or tables where we prepare or eat food! This is a very good way to spread ecoli or hepatitis germs!! BE SMART! Discontinue this habit and pick up a new one...of using Clorox or Lysol wipes to wipe down the outside of your bags (don't forget to do the handles). If the bags are washable, use the washing machine. Men, this means you too! Backpacks and briefcases can also carry germs home!
2. Do not buy or use cake mixes, pancake mixes, and other mixes after the expiration dates. Since other stuff are added to make these mixes, a potent fungus may grow that could affect your immune system. When in doubt, throw it out!!

Send Recipes or Comments to:

Louise Horio

99-691 Kaulainahee Place
Aiea, Hawaii 96701

Artist's Nook



Welcome to the summer edition of the Artist's Nook. This time I offer a couple of poems that I wrote on themes appropriate for the season. One subject that gets a lot of attention every summer, especially in July, is independence (that spirit of self-sufficiency to which many people profess to aspire). The ideal that comes up less often, but the one which I think might be at least as important is interdependence.

Interdependence

To accept your own weakness and see that you're strong,
To know when you're right, and admit when you're wrong,
To see when you're needed and when you're in need,
My friend, this is knowledge – great wisdom indeed.

To be an adult you must first understand
That the world is not yours to control and command.
To know how to give, and get gifts in return,
This is the best lesson in life you can learn.

This tower, Independence, where you once dwelt alone
It was a great building of smooth, heavy stone.
You climbed to its height and you stayed out of reach
Of all who would learn from you, all who would teach.

You have flown from your tower. Now you stand on the ground.
Take the time to discover just what you have found.
Go – take what you need, and then give when you may,
For the balance of life is maintained in this way.

Another thing that many of us love to do every summer is travel. Even if you don't have the money for a trip to some faraway place, you can always let your mind be your magic carpet to anywhere, as I did when I wrote *The Road*.

The Road

I took a road that passed my door
To find out where it led.
It took me on a journey far
From home and hearth and bed.

I wandered through the countryside
Past meadows green and fair.
The sun was warm, the day was young,
And spring was in the air.

The road became a forest track
That wound through cool, green shade.
I climbed a hill, and crossed a stream,
And found a sunny glade.

That night I slept in grasses soft
Beside the laughing stream.
And as the water sang its song,

I dreamed a happy dream.

I dreamed I walked along a road.

Through sunny fields I roamed.

It led me to my own front door,

To friends, and hearth, and home.

HAB Scholarship

The Hawaii Association of the Blind is offering scholarships to legally blind college students who are also Hawaii residents. The students may be attending any accredited university or college regardless of location. May 15th and November 15th are the deadlines for Fall and Spring applications.

Scholarships may be offered on an annual or a semi-annual basis as determined by the scholarship committee. The committee reserves the right not only to accept or deny scholarship applications, but also to determine the amount and duration of the scholarship. Scholarship recipients must re-apply in order to be considered for future scholarships. Those who are denied a scholarship are eligible to re-apply in the future. Scholarships will not exceed one-year in duration and are not expected to be less than \$500 per semester.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must be legally blind as defined by national standards.
- Must be planning to attend college for the period which

he/she is applying.

- Must be a resident of the State of Hawaii.
- Must not be a member of any national organization other than The American Council of the Blind, the parent organization of the Hawaii Association of the Blind (since other national organizations have their own scholarships).
- Persons who are not affiliated with any national organizations of blind people are encouraged to apply.

For further inquires, Phone: (808) 455-0367 or Email (thomsond@hawaii.edu)

College Scholarship Application Form

Hawaii Association of the Blind

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

College: _____ Major (if any): _____

Completed Credit Hours: _____ Class: _____

- Applicants must submit a letter of no more than two pages describing his/her educational goals, and informing us of information he/she deems relevant to the application.

- Applicant must provide the scholarship committee with official college transcripts. If the applicant has not attended college or is in the first semester of attendance, official high-school transcripts are required.
- Applicant must submit at least two letters of reference, one of which must come from a professor or teacher.
- The committee reserves the right to ask the applicant for further information.
- Relevant false information given will cause any scholarship recipient to have his/her scholarship terminated and a legal action will be taken to reclaim money already awarded.
- Information omitted which is relevant to the requirements of the scholarship shall be considered to be falsely presented, and thus will result in the same penalty.

Please send scholarship applications to:

Hawaii Association of the Blind
College Scholarship Committee
1255 Nuuanu Avenue, #1102E
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Hawaii Association of the Blind
1255 Nuuanu Avenue, #1102E
MATTER
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
THE

FREE
FOR
BLIND