

HAB FORUM

HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND

Advocating for

Independence, Equality, Opportunity

Vol. VI No. 1

March 2008

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
- Landa Phelan, self-employed
- Ronald Flormata – HAB Webmaster

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Warren Toyama



The Hawaii Association of the Blind is currently riding the crest of many very successful projects, dating back to our tremendous 40th Annual Convention.

Since last March, our monthly meetings have been very well attended. The following series of successful projects illustrate the positive character of the past year:

- 1) Thirteen people from Hawaii attended the American Council of the Blind national convention in Minneapolis.
- 2) HAB pledged funds to equip every blind vending facility with a surveillance camera after a blind vendor was burglarized.
- 3) A fruitful trip by five HAB members to attend the fall convention of the California Council of the Blind.
- 4) A wonderful Thanksmas dinner/party was held the

Saturday after Thanksgiving. HAB members donated over \$600 to the Salvation Army.

5) An ACB White Paper seminar on Rehabilitation of the Blind was held from January 18 – 20, 2008. Mr. Paul Edwards from Florida did a marvelous job of guiding a hearty group of twenty-five HAB members through two eight-hours-a-day sessions.

6) The sixth item is a very challenging 41st annual state convention slated for March 8, 2008. The outlook is that this year's convention has every chance of surpassing our outstanding 40th convention. All members are urged to attend all functions of the convention. All members of HAB and friends of HAB have a right to be proud of what our organization has achieved over the past year!

Enriching Our Members

Four members of HAB attended the 2007 fall convention of the California Council of the Blind (CCB). Warren and Julia Toyama, Norman Ota, and new member Keith Okazaki participated in the many convention activities of the CCB in October 2007. Warren met with CCB president, Jeff Thom about establishing a sister relationship between CCB and HAB. This idea was well received by President Thom. CCB Treasurer and

immediate ACB past president Christopher Gray, and newly elected ACB president Mitch Pomerantz both sat in on this meeting of presidents. As a direct result of this meeting, CCB will be sending a representative to HAB's 41st convention on March 7-8, 2008.

White Paper Seminar – Huge Success

The recent ACB White Paper Seminar held on January 19-20, 2008 was a huge success. Not only was HAB attendance surprisingly high (considering it was a two-day, 8-hour each day seminar), but discussions were dynamic, lively, open and very interesting. The speaker, Paul Edwards (three-term president of ACB) proved to be a top-notch resource person, knowledgeable in the various aspects of blindness in the US. He covered the history of the blind movement in the country, the differing philosophies between ACB and NFB, and discussed the three providers of rehabilitation services for the blind. Paul reiterated the need for blind individuals to accept their disability with humility and courage, walking through life's journeys with their heads held high with pride and confidence. Regarding rehabilitation services, Paul pointed out the need to have freedom of choice as opposed to what is currently practiced in most, if not all, rehabilitation centers in the US. As we all know, there are varying degrees of blindness: from the minimum definition of legally blind to being totally blind, with the partially sighted in between. Society does not fully

understand this phenomenon and categorizes a person only as either blind or sighted. Society has stereotyped the blind as somebody with old-fashioned dark glasses, face down, economically poor, pitiful, and dependent to name a few descriptive. This seminar regarding the ACB White Paper tackles all the issues relating to blindness: its history, rehabilitation, and what we as blind individuals can do. Members left the seminar with a good sense of conviction to carry on the principles stated in the White Paper and fight for freedom of choice. It is important to note that Hawaii is the first ACB affiliate where the ACB White Paper was presented and discussed quite thoroughly since it's official release a year ago (January 2007).

Much Aloha At Sagebrush

The world famous Aloha Spirit was in full display at the annual Sagebrush Conference for blind vendors in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Golden Nugget Hotel was the site for this year's conference from February 4-8, 2008. Attendance was very good (about 220), the program was rock solid, and the participation throughout the week by blind vendors, SLA staff and other guests was outstanding. Many conference attendees rated this Sagebrush as the best they had ever attended.

Conferees from Hawaii were: Walter Ishikawa, Tom Morikami, Filo Tu, Myles Tamashiro, Lynn Misaki, Julia Toyama, Warren Toyama, Miriam Onomura, Lauren

Kukino, David Cameron, Ivy Galariada, and Joanne Roquero. Department of Human Service staffers at the conference included: Joseph Cordova (DVR Administrator), Dave Eveland (Ho'opono Administrator), and newly hired Vending Specialist Kathleen (Kat) Fujimoto. Also seen visiting the conference was State Committee Chair Kyle Aihara from the NFB.

Vending News – Filo Tu



Happy 2008 to all of you! As we begin this new year, I am happy to say that for the first time most of the vendors are coming together to help the blind vending program in Hawaii.

Three or four years ago, I shared with you some articles and remarks by some blind vendors who said that Warren and I are out to destroy the vending program by going to state officials to request they fire the business enterprise manager. If you recall, we did not deny the accuracy of those reports; it is not a fabricated story. Warren, Myles, and I did ask state officials to remove the business enterprise manager because we saw what was happening to the vending program. And as we have done many times in the past, we stuck our necks out to protect the vending

program for the blind. It did take a little longer for many of the vendors to come around and realize what was going on, but I am proud to say that over this past year, most of the vendors have agreed with us. Even those vendors who accused us of trying to ruin the program are in agreement with us. Congratulations to all the vendors who believed in us and what we have been doing for the blind program for the past 40 years. I would also like to recognize some very special people who have become very special friends of the Hawaii Association of the Blind: Mr. and Mrs. Cordova, thank you very much for all that you have been doing to help the blind people in Hawaii! Congratulations to Blind Vendors Ohana, Inc. for receiving the 2008 Hawaii Small Business Success “Top Stories” Award from Hawaii Business Magazine!!

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



HAPVI members and participants enjoyed a wonderful convention on September 8, 2007 at the Pagoda Hotel. Convention presenters included DOE Superintendent Pat Hamamoto, Aida Yoshida from Family Protection Advocacy, Fusako Miyashiro

from the Library for the Blind and Physically

Handicapped, and HAB members Julia Toyama and Filo Tu to discuss attitudes relating to blindness. Some parents who attended were very happy to network and learn more about the services available to their families. Thanks to HAPVI for continuing to provide meaningful opportunities for parents and families statewide. Brownie Sale a Sweet Success: HAPVI members sold their boxes of brownies to our many sweet-toothed friends. These treats went fast. Thanks to all who supported this fundraiser. You're the Sweetest! HAPVI continues to advocate for the necessary services for children who are blind and visually impaired in DOE and DOH programs. Further discussions and recommendations with administrators from both agencies are ongoing. HAPVI's next group meeting will occur on Saturday, May 24, 2008 from 10am – 12pm at Ho'opono. Contact Myles Tamashiro at 626-0535 for info.

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

Visual Impairment teachers for DOE are serving as cooperating teachers for 10 Project Braille Teacher Candidates. These Teacher Candidates are current Special Education teachers in our state who are obtaining their Special Education-Visual Impairment Teaching

Certification. Research reflects the need to certify teachers who are current residents of our state. Recruiting teachers from the mainland for this position has not been successful. The Project Braille teachers will conclude their program this summer (in cooperation with UH Manoa, Portland State University, and DOE). We are very pleased with this “in-house” program. Many DOE students who are blind and visually impaired will be participating in some upcoming camps. The Ho’opono Camp for Young Adults will be at Camp Erdman the last week in March (24th – 28th). Camp Vigorous, a DOE/UH partnership, will be hosted at HCDB and community sites in June 2008. This event was “Tech Camp” last year, and was well attended by students in grades K-12.

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Assistive Technology User Group (ATUG) – Art Cabanilla

This year, the group’s meetings will again be held at the home office of Island Skill Gathering and hosted by Art Cabanilla. Future meetings will investigate various kinds of blind/low vision technology, including the Apple Macintosh platform as a fast, virus-free computing environment for JAWS, Window-Eyes, Zoomtext, and MAGic. Guest speakers are being coordinated to speak on topics as the NFB Reader,

Kurzweil 1000 versus OpenBook, and SARA, the Scanning and Reading Appliance. ATUG is inviting local and mainland vendors to host certain workshops on specific devices such as the PAC Mate, BrailleNotes, and the DeafBlind Communicator. There will be a forum for such topics as Braille usage in Hawaii and the blind/low vision support services from local vendors.

ATUG was founded by Art Cabanilla of Six Sense Solutions, and Island Skill Gathering Technology Specialist Mel Nakahara in July 2000. The pair created a group forum for the Honolulu disabled community focusing on high and low-tech devices such as computers with screen readers and voice navigation capabilities, magnification equipment such as CCTVs and lighted magnifiers, and assistive listening and alerting devices like a pocket-sized amplifier and vibrating alarm clocks. Mr. Nakahara handed the baton to Mr. Cabanilla, who has continued to maintain a lively group of technology enthusiasts through which many friendships have been born. ATUG has been meeting on a regular basis for the past 4 years. Meetings are held on various days and times, and about a dozen or more members gather regularly to exchange ideas and information on technology and community services. The forum is open to helping members utilize current technology, as well as keep members up-to-date on new and future products and services. For more information, contact Art Cabanilla by

email at Art.Sixsense@gmail.com ,
or phone 728-1554.

Happy Retirement Donald L. Thomson!

At the end of 2007, Donald Thomson retired from his teaching position at Leeward Community College. He started working there in the fall of 1971, and has taught Sociology and American Studies. He was the Chair of the Social Science Department for the last 7 years. He created the Legislative Committee of Leeward, and was the president of a group he created called the Friends of Jazz. He is also a mentor for a teenage student in the Youth Challenge Program. His hobbies are Jazz music, and collecting records and CD's. Don has been a longtime member of HAB, and we all wish him the best during his well deserved retirement!

Blindsight News – Iolana (Landa) Phelan

What a wonderful experience and honor it has been for me to have been an HAB member for one year! Members are not out to see what they can get for themselves, but they all help each other to be independent and strive for the rights of all blind people. They give from their hearts and support each other. I am impressed by the respect

members have for each other and the understanding that we are all unique individuals who have all unique challenges. I have not observed anyone stepping on anyone's toes, or think they are better than the other person. Leaders are fair and present themselves with a wealth of experience and knowledge that they are willing to share. They embrace us with open hearts and have high but fair standards. We are given a voice, and discuss issues before voting. As a member of the Board of Directors, I find it to be a learning experience regarding the role HAB plays in our state and in the nation. I truly believe that there is no other organization in the state of Hawaii that has contributed more to the well being of the blind community in our state. As part of an outreach project to educate the public, HAB participated in the Liliha Day Health Fair. We had an impressive display of awards and letters from State Legislators, the Department of Education, and various schools in Hawaii. Even Representative Corinne Ching and Governor Linda Lingle stopped by our booth to chat. HAB advocates for the rights of all blind people and helps those who need a helping hand, but they are also known to have lots of fun together. At monthly meetings, members embrace each other and are happy to see each other again. They always have a need to talk story before the meeting starts and then again after the meeting. HAB has been there for me when I needed support, especially when my mom recently passed away.

Their kind words, donations, cards, and generosity helped me through this hard time. Julia Toyama, Jeanette Tu, Art Cabanilla, and Helga Cabanilla all gave so much of their time, checking on me to see if they could do anything. I am blessed to have a new family and friends.

I was so surprised at the huge attendance at HAB's 40th Convention, and I was even more surprised to have been one of the recipients of the Eva Smyth Award!

The president of ACB and several ACB members flew in from several states to join us, and they even took on various challenges like climbing to the top of Diamond Head, paddling in outrigger canoes, going whale watching, visiting the Arizona Memorial and the USS Missouri, and going to luaus. It was fun meeting the ACB members, and it was great to see them again at the national convention in Minneapolis. There, I bought a raffle ticket and won a Hamilton Beach talking microwave! I love it!! I have also become a member of HAPVI. This is the only group of its kind in Hawaii where parents gather to learn and advocate for the rights of their children, learn how the DOE process works, and find out who to go to for counseling or support. The members are composed of teachers, parents, and people who want to help. I enjoyed HAPVI's convention, where Pat Hamamoto gave an overview of the plans and positions that need to be filled to fulfill the needs for our blind children. HAPVI also participated in the Liliha Day Health Fair where they gave out balloons

to children and wrote their names in Braille. Many who stopped by the booths were not aware we existed, which shows how important outreach in the community really is. I am ready to start the new year, and am looking forward to the 2008 HAB convention coming up in March. Many ACB folks have made plans to attend, and I am helping to plan some fun things to do for our guests and members to do. Happy New Year to all, and I wish you success in your challenges, love, joy, and independence!

Auntie Weezie's Corner – Louise Horio



Aloha and Happy 2008! Hope you all enjoyed your holidays in 2007 with friends, family, and good food!!

Oriental Linguini Salad 1 pkg (8 oz) linguini noodles, cooked and drained ½ bottle Tropics light Oriental dressing ½ bottle Furikake nori ½ tub Taegu (if small tray, use all) 2 Japanese cucumbers, cut in strips 1 small tray imitation crab Optional: garlic powder (or garlic salt) to taste Mix thoroughly the night before and refrigerate.

Have you travelled lately? When traveling, and you must stay in a hotel...BEWARE!!

1. DO NOT use drinking glasses, coffee cups, or utensils in the room! It is a common practice of hotels not to wash the dishes you use, but to just rinse and replace with new paper envelopes as if it was newly washed.
2. DO NOT sit on bed covers without clothes on. They do not change or wash them for every new guest.
3. I would NOT SIT in any tub for a bath. Showers are best!
4. Use rubber zoris instead of bare feet when walking around the room.

Dangers of Artificial Sweeteners

There is an increasing number of testimonies of people who have used artificial sweeteners and have been adversely affected. Of course, there is controversy about this, but...I would be on the side of caution. One brand advertises that it is real sugar, but has no calories. Yes, it is. But, it has been chlorinated and affects the liver and enlarges the kidneys. As a diabetic, I am not going to take the chance of damaging anything!

Hui Kupuna VIP Our group has been very active in supporting and advocating for blind seniors. If you are a senior, or know of a senior who is blind or with low vision, join us for our meetings at the Hawaii Centers for Independent Living (414 Kuwili Street) on the first

Thursday of each month. We have had speakers from The Eye of the Pacific, Borthwick Mortuary, and Identification Theft Prevention, and we have more on the agenda. We go to various restaurants around the island, and go on many fieldtrips. We have community outreach projects (I Love Liliha Festival), we collect goods for a Domestic Abuse Shelter for Women and Children, and we make donations to various organizations and agencies. In 2007, we were part of the Inter-Agency Working Group on the Action Plan for 2008. We worked with the State, the City and County Civil Defense, the American Red Cross, and other agencies to ensure that disaster shelters throughout the State are prepared for emergencies and will be able to accommodate people with different kinds of disabilities and health needs. The Hui lost two longtime member: Don Okubo (October 2007), and Walter Okada (December 2007). They will be missed.

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

oflocation. 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