

# Sprucing up schools

<http://www.westhawaii.com/sections/news/local-features/sprucing-schools.html>

April 2, 2012

## SPECIAL TO WEST HAWAII TODAY

Kaiser Permanente Hawaii physicians and staff members volunteered their time working in sustainable gardens and on campus maintenance and beautification at Kahakai Elementary, Waimea Middle and Waiakea High school's in commemoration of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service in January.

"We are honored to volunteer side-by-side with our local ohana to help serve and sustain the communities we are so fortunate to live in," said Rick Fong, Kaiser Permanente's physician in charge for the Big Island. "Through this day of service, it is a privilege for Kaiser Permanente to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by giving back to the people of Hawaii."

Eight years ago, in honor and in recognition of King and his advancement of civil and human rights, Kaiser Permanente established an annual day of service that takes place on Martin Luther King Day. Rather than taking a holiday on that day, Kaiser Permanente employees and physicians take part in a day on of volunteering dedicated to King's memory.

The volunteer projects at Kahakai Elementary, Waimea Middle and Waiakea High were in partnership with Hawaii Island School Garden Network.

"The Hawaii Island School Garden Network partners with local schools and their students and families to help build gardening and agricultural programs that will significantly contribute to the increased consumption of locally produced food, student health, wellness and academic achievement," said the network's Program Director Nancy Redfeather. "We are so grateful to Kaiser Permanente and its physicians and staff members for continuing to partner with us through this annual day of service, and help to address the health of our community."

The physicians and staff members weeded, pruned and planted crops in the schools' sustainable gardens and at Waiakea High, weeded, cleared brush and cleaned the campus.