

September 14, 2009

Kohala Center sponsors benefit for school gardens

*Janis Wong
Reader Submitted*

The Kohala Center celebrates the 26th Annual World Food Day with a benefit "Seeds of Hope" luncheon for the Hawai'i Island School Garden Network (HISGN) from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. October 16 aboard the Golden Princess docked at Hilo Harbor. Reservations are required by September 30.

"Children's garden programs are sprouting and growing in schools all across Hawai'i Island," said Nancy Redfeather, HISGN project director. "Forty-nine schools on Hawai'i Island have garden programs, which provide outdoor living laboratories for students to develop ecological literacy, provide hands-on learning experiences, develop healthy lifestyle choices, and participate in environmental stewardship.

"A school garden is the perfect tool to provide the kind of learning (Ma ka hana ka ike—"In working, one learns") that our keiki and youth need today. Building gardens, preparing and nurturing the soil, planting and harvesting food, preparing and eating healthy foods that grow well on our island will help to prepare our young citizens for building a more sustainable world for our island's future," Redfeather said.

HISGN is a Kohala Center project and part of The Kohala Center's food self-reliance initiative. The Hau'oli Mau Loa Foundation and the Ulupono Initiative are supporters of the Hawai'i Island School Garden Network, along with the Hawai'i Community Foundation's Youth Matters Network and many individuals who believe that communities are well-tended gardens.

"Flourishing gardens mean flourishing communities," said Matt Hamabata, executive director of The Kohala Center. "Something really good must be happening on Hawai'i Island because the Hawai'i Island School Garden Network is working with an amazing 49 school gardens. Wow!"

The benefit includes a HISGN program and a preview of Hawai'i filmmaker Danny Miller's "Seeds of Hope" documentary, which was filmed for Hawai'i Public Television and features teachers and students in our island school garden programs. Featured speakers Mayor Billy Kenoi and Senators Russell Kokubun and Dwight Takamine will share their visions for a more sustainable and self-reliant food future for Hawai'i.

Tickets are \$50. Reservations are required by September 30. Contact Molly Hui at mhui@kohalacenter.org or 887-6411. See www.kohalacenter.org/seedhope/aboutseed.html.

World Food Day is a worldwide event designed to increase awareness, understanding and informed, year-around action to alleviate hunger. To learn more, see www.worldfooddayusa.org.
