

## For Immediate Release

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### *Annual statewide school learning gardens symposium announced* **Bringing Schools to Life and Life to Schools**

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—May 7, 2013—School garden teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, staff, volunteers, and interested community members from around the state may register now for the annual Hawai‘i Island School Garden Network (HISGN) summer symposium in June on Hawai‘i Island.

The symposium, “School Learning Gardens and Sustainability Education: Bringing Schools to Life and Life to Schools,” will be held June 7–8 in Kamuela at the Gates Performing Arts Center at [Hawai‘i Preparatory Academy](#) (HPA) and [Mala‘ai: The Culinary Garden of Waimea Middle School](#).

Symposium registration is from 7:30–8:30 a.m. Friday, June 7. Friday’s keynote address will be followed by 15 breakout sessions and a Hawai‘i Farm to School and School Garden Hui panel discussion with representatives from each island. Friday evening will feature the West Hawai‘i premiere of the documentary [Na Kupu Mana‘olana - Seeds of Hope](#), Danny Miller’s new film on Hawai‘i’s agricultural history and promise.

The agenda on Saturday, June 8, includes a presentation by Pomai Bertelmann, followed by tours of up to six school gardens in the Kamuela area, and concludes with a garden luncheon at Mala‘ai with [Slow Food Hawai‘i](#).

Symposium registration is \$50 per person and includes conference materials and breakfast and lunch on both days. Registration and payment are due by June 5. Register online at [higardensymposium.eventbrite.com](http://higardensymposium.eventbrite.com) or call 808-887-6411. Also see the Web site for information on interisland travel and accommodations.

The [Kokua Hawai‘i Foundation](#) has funded 30 Teacher Travel Scholarships for registrants traveling from other islands. The scholarships are \$200 each and will be made payable to the registrant’s school. Download the application at [www.kohalacenter.org/HISGN/symposium13.html](http://www.kohalacenter.org/HISGN/symposium13.html) and follow the submission instructions. Application deadline is May 17.

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This year's keynote speaker, [Dilafuz Williams](#), is a professor of educational leadership and policy at Portland State University. She has studied the effects of ecological education on academic achievement and social skills acquisition for more than 20 years.

Williams also served as chair of the board of the Council of Great City Schools, comprising 66 of the nation's largest school districts. She has distinguished herself in sustainability education, environmental education, learning gardens, garden-based education research, K-12 leadership and policy, diversity, social justice, service-learning, and community-university-school strategic partnerships. Williams will also be serving as a mentor for the second cohort of Ku 'Aina Pa, the new school learning garden teacher training program for Hawai'i's teachers.

Symposium participants may order William's book, [School Learning Gardens and Sustainability Education: Bringing Life to Schools and Schools to Life](#), at a discount when they register for the event.

The first cohort of Ku 'Aina Pa will present their year-long action research projects at the symposium. The class of 26 teachers from Hawai'i Island has been working individually and together to deepen their knowledge and skills in the art of teaching in school learning gardens. The cohort will present on subjects that integrate core curriculum and learning in the outdoor school garden classroom. Ku 'Aina Pa was created under a USDA/SPECA "Ag in the Classroom K-12" grant to HISGN.

#### **About HISGN**

HISGN is a program of The Kohala Center. The goal of HISGN is to help island schools build gardening and agricultural programs that will significantly contribute to the increased consumption of locally produced food by involving students, their school communities, and their family networks in food production.

#### **About The Kohala Center**

The Kohala Center (<http://www.kohalacenter.org>) is an independent, community-based center for research, education, and conservation. The Center was established in direct response to the request of island residents to create greater educational and employment opportunities by enhancing—and celebrating—Hawai'i's spectacular natural and cultural landscapes.