

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***Schools receive garden grants from The Kohala Center***

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—December 14, 2011—Sixteen Hawai‘i Island schools have received grants from The Kohala Center to support funding for garden educators, for curriculum development, and for garden supplies. The Kohala Center funding supports school garden programs at participating K-12 schools in order to improve the quality of food and agriculture sciences education in Hawai‘i.

Recipients of The Kohala Center’s 2011-2012 Hawai‘i Island School Garden Network (HISGN) matching grants are:

- Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School
- Honaunau Elementary School
- Honoka‘a Elementary School
- Honoka‘a High School
- HPA Lower School
- Hua O Ke Ao/Amy Greenwell Garden Youth Agriculture Program
- Hualalai Academy
- Innovations Public Charter School
- Kalaniana‘ole Elementary and Intermediate School
- Ke Kula ‘O ‘Ehunuikaimalino
- Kohala Elementary School
- Mala‘ai Culinary Garden at Waimea Middle School
- Na Kahamoku - Kealakehe Middle School
- Parker Middle and High School
- Pa‘auilo Elementary and Intermediate School
- Waimea Country School

“In the past four years we have been able to assist all school garden programs that have asked for HISGN support,” said Nancy Redfeather, coordinator of HISGN. “More schools this year have been able to give financial support to their school garden programs. We hope this trend will continue as many principals across Hawai‘i Island are advocates for ecoliteracy education. The idea of public/private funding draws resources from a wide range of sources to support this renewal of experiential outdoor learning programs that connect food, health and wellness, environmental stewardship, and culture.”

At the start of the current school year, schools that had a garden or were beginning a garden were invited to apply for HISGN funding. Schools were asked to match the amount of their Kohala

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Center grant with money from their school budget or with funds from other grants and fundraisers. Also, selected schools were offered gift certificates for \$1250 worth of merchandise at Home Depot in appreciation for their participation in a professional evaluation of their programs.

Hoā ‘Aina O Makaha on O‘ahu was awarded a grant for their partnership with HISGN in hosting the 2011 Summer School Garden Teacher’s Conference, “Planting Hope: Growing the Next Generation.” An HISGN grant was also awarded to Dr. Corilee Waters at University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, to create middle school curriculum to connect STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and nutrition education through garden-based lessons.

HISGN began in January 2008 and offers professional development for school garden teachers, curriculum development, volunteer recruitment, identification of funding opportunities, and local agricultural resources. Sixty Hawai‘i Island schools are now part of the network, including public, private, and charter schools which serve students in grades K-12. Participating schools are committed to using school gardens as settings to provide hands-on learning experiences for all grade levels, foster healthy lifestyle choices, and promote environmental stewardship.

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 family networks in food production.

“School gardens reconnect our children and youth to the source of their food, expand their nutritional knowledge, and increase their environmental literacy,” said Redfeather. “HISGN is helping island schools to become centers for food production and for educational opportunities that serve our school communities and beyond.”

HISGN welcomes public contributions in the form of funding, sharing of resources, and volunteering time at one of the school gardens. See [www.kohalacenter.org/HISGN](http://www.kohalacenter.org/HISGN) for more information.

Support for HISGN school grants comes from the Ulupono Initiative ([www.uluponoinitiative.com](http://www.uluponoinitiative.com)), a Hawai‘i-focused social investment organization. Ulupono—meaning to prosper through the right, or *pono* path—is rooted in the local wisdom that a healthy environment and a healthy economy go hand in hand.

The Kohala Center is an independent, not-for-profit center for research and education *about* and *for* the environment. The Kohala Center builds teaching and research programs for energy and food self-reliance, as well as ecosystem health, to enhance island environments, serve island communities, and advance the work of the academy. See <http://www.kohalacenter.org>.

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[photo caption] Students at Ke Kula ‘O ‘Ehunuikaimalino tend their *kalo* patch.