

For Immediate Release

Contact: Liam Kernell
Director of Communications, The Kohala Center
lkernell@kohalacenter.org
808-887-6411

Love the beach? Volunteer at Kahalu‘u Bay! *Opportunities for visitor education and water-quality monitoring*

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—May 10, 2016—The Kohala Center’s Kahalu‘u Bay Education Center is seeking volunteers who love the beach and want to help protect Kahalu‘u Bay and its coral reefs, fish, and turtles.

ReefTeach volunteers (<http://kohalacenter.org/kbec/reefteach>) are “ambassadors of aloha” who welcome residents and visitors to the park. The volunteers teach visitors proper reef etiquette and help them identify fish, turtles, and invertebrates in the bay. With more than 400,000 people visiting Kahalu‘u Bay each year, the health of the bay’s corals and marine life depends on ReefTeachers who educate swimmers and snorkelers on how to enjoy the bay without harming marine life.

Citizen Science volunteers (<http://kohalacenter.org/kbec/citizen-science>) monitor and track environmental conditions at Kahalu‘u Bay by collecting weekly samples at specific sites. These data help to track the health of the bay, understand how events such as algae blooms impact water quality and the bay’s overall health, and act to correct any problems before they impact Kahalu‘u’s vibrant and colorful marine ecosystem.

Anyone with an interest in learning about water quality, sampling, data interpretation, and a healthier environment can be a Citizen Science volunteer—no previous experience or scientific knowledge is required. Training is provided.

To learn more or to sign up for either program, contact Cindi Punihaole at cpunihaole@kohalacenter.org or (808) 887-6411.

ReefTeach and Citizen Science are programs of The Kohala Center’s Kahalu‘u Bay Education Center (<http://kohalacenter.org/kbec>), which promotes environmental stewardship to ensure the bay remains a healthy and welcoming place for residents and visitors alike. A partnership between The Kohala Center and the County of Hawai‘i, Kahalu‘u Bay Education Center is based at Kahalu‘u Beach Park in Kailua-Kona and is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day that the park is open.

About The Kohala Center

Founded in the year 2000, The Kohala Center (<http://kohalacenter.org>) is an independent, community-based center for research, conservation, and education. We turn research and ancestral knowledge into action, so that communities in Hawai‘i and around the world can thrive—ecologically, economically, culturally, and socially.