



Island Community Report: Moku o Keawe

Executive Summary

This Executive Summary of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA) Island Community Report presents an annual overview of key issues affecting Native Hawaiian communities on Moku o Keawe (Hawai'i Island). It highlights community concerns monitored by OHA, current Native Hawaiian data, and updates on OHA's grant and loan initiatives. Topics covered align with OHA's four Strategic Directions: Educational Pathways, Health Outcomes, Quality Housing, and Economic Stability.

Current Statistics

- Moku o Keawe has a Native Hawaiian population of 60,382 representing 30% of the island's total population (200,468) and 19% of the state's total Native Hawaiian population (310,789) (2017-2021).¹



Educational Pathways Data

- Approximately 32% of Moku o Keawe Native Hawaiian public high school graduates enrolled in colleges across the nation, compared to 42% of all Moku o Keawe public high school graduates and 36% of all Native Hawaiians statewide (2024).²
- There are six Hawaiian Focused Charter Schools and five Hawaiian-medium programs/schools on Moku o Keawe (SY24-25).³



Health Outcomes Data

- 75% of Native Hawaiian adults on Moku o Keawe report having a physical checkup in the past year, compared to 70% of all Moku o Keawe residents, and 74% of Native Hawaiians statewide (2023).⁴
- 59% of Native Hawaiians on Moku o Keawe report that they are able to converse in 'ōlelo Hawai'i at at-least a beginner level, compared to 12% of non-Hawaiian Moku o Keawe residents, and 50% of Native Hawaiians statewide (2025).⁵



Quality Housing Data

- 44% (3,033 of 6,858) of Native Hawaiian renters on Moku o Keawe pay affordable rent (<30% of household income toward rent), compared to 44% (9,392 of 21,580) of all households on Moku o Keawe, and 42% (13,778 of 32,538) Native Hawaiian renters statewide (2017-2021).⁶
- 59% (9,698 of 16,556) of Native Hawaiian households on Moku o Keawe own their homes, compared to 70% (49,822 of 71,402) of all households on Moku o Keawe, and 57% of all Native Hawaiian households statewide (43,870 of 76,408) (2017-2021).⁷
- 25% (2,541) of all Department of Hawaiian Homelands leases statewide (10,048) are on Moku o Keawe (2024).⁸



Economic Stability Data

- Native Hawaiian median household income on Moku o Keawe is \$64,385, 94% of the median income of all Moku o Keawe residents (\$68,399) (2017-2021). Statewide, Native Hawaiian median household income is \$83,317 (95%), compared to \$88,005 for all households.⁹
- There are 2,850 Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs on Moku o Keawe. This is 28% of the 10,193 Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs statewide (2021).¹⁰

OHA Activities

This section outlines key opportunities and challenges affecting beneficiaries on Moku o Keawe, organized according to OHA's four strategic directions. OHA continues to monitor these issues closely and respond with appropriate actions as needed.

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS

Early Learning Apprenticeship Program

During the early years of life, a child's brain development is most rapid. Quality early learning programs can provide a foundation for later success. However, across the State of Hawai'i there is a shortage of early learning professionals to serve keiki, including on Moku o Keawe. In 2025, OHA supported HB 549, a bill to enable early learning service providers to participate in federal and state apprenticeship programs, expanding the number of qualified early learning professionals available to teach our keiki. This bill died in conference committee but OHA plans to champion it again during the 2026 legislative session to help ensure universal access to quality early learning programs.

Na Wai Ola Public Charter School

Na Wai Ola Public Charter School presented at the Hawai'i Island Community meeting in 2024. They showcased their work in culturally-sustaining, 'āina-based education in partnership with community. They also expressed a need for parity in funding to achieve their long-term goals as a school. OHA's Strategy and Implementation division explored potential ways in which OHA could support schools like Na Wai Ola, including inquiries into the process by which a school can access OHA funds.

HEALTH OUTCOMES

Protections for Funerary Objects

Since 2018, OHA has been working with Na Hoa Aloha o Ka Pu'uhonua 'O Hōnaunau to effectuate the return of funerary objects removed from Hale o Keawe in the early nineteenth century and held abroad since that time. Through this effort, an akua hulu manu was returned to Moku o Keawe in March 2024 and a mahiole and a burial kapa were repatriated in June 2025. OHA's Compliance division actively monitors and enforces institutional compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in order to ensure sacred items such as these are returned to lineal and cultural descendants.

Pōhakuloa Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)

In April of 2025, the U.S. Army released its Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) proposing to retain 22,750 acres of land at Pōhakuloa Training Area (PTA). On May 9, OHA joined the community in calling for the rejection of the FEIS and the recognition of Native Hawaiian interests in these former crown and government lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom. OHA's testimony highlighted that the FEIS was deficient because the Army failed, among other things, to: (1) consider a shorter lease term option; (2) fully and transparently commit to funding and implementing clean up; and 3) adequately survey the affected area for iwi kūpuna and other cultural resources or to conduct a Ka Pa'akai analysis. The Board of Land and Natural Resources sided with the community in rejecting the Army's deficient FEIS.

QUALITY HOUSING

Expanding Kauhale and 'Ohana Zones Initiatives

During the 2025 legislative session, OHA supported HB 431 (Act 309), which authorized funding to expand Kauhale housing projects statewide. On Moku o Keawe, the Kauhale initiative helped fund the Kauhale I Ke Kula Uka project which features 99 units priced for households earning up to 60% of area median income. Recognizing that Native Hawaiians are overrepresented in the houseless population, OHA's testimony highlighted the importance of investing in diverse housing models to meet the needs of the various segments of our community facing housing insecurity.

ECONOMIC STABILITY

Workforce Initiative for Healthcare

A 2024 survey conducted by the Healthcare Association of Hawai'i found that there are nearly 4,700 openings for non-physician positions in nursing homes, clinics and other health care facilities across the state. The Hawai'i Healthcare Workforce Initiative has played a crucial role in training local residents to fill these positions through two key programs: (1) the public high school health care certificate programs; and (2) the certified nurse assistant to licensed practical nurse glidepath program. In 2025, OHA supported HB 714, a bill to continue funding these vital workforce development programs. This bill died in conference committee but OHA plans to champion it again during the 2026 legislative session.

OHA Funding Activities for Moku o Keawe

OHA disbursed nearly \$11.19 million in funds to 24 grantees providing services on Moku o Keawe that range from supporting culturally grounded preschools, community-based 'āina programming, emergency financial assistance, and workforce development. Of these OHA grants, 15 provide services exclusively to Moku o Keawe, while nine provide services to Moku o Keawe beneficiaries through statewide programs.

- 24 active grants provide services on Moku o Keawe; \$7,161,440 disbursed
- 15 of these grants are exclusive to Moku o Keawe; \$4,031,406 disbursed

OHA offers a variety of personal and business loans designed to support the financial wellbeing of Native Hawaiians. These loans can be used for purposes such as consolidating debt, covering educational expenses, making home improvements or addressing personal emergencies. OHA disbursed \$573,447 in loan funds on Moku o Keawe through the Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund program in Fiscal Year 2025.

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS

GRANTING ACTIVITIES

Moku o Keawe Island Only

- Charter School Funding (FY26-27)
 - Ka 'Umeke Kā'eo, Hilo - \$353,000 total; \$176,500 (FY26), \$176,500 (FY27)
 - Kanu o ka 'Āina, Waimea - \$538,986 total; \$269,493 (FY26), \$269,493 (FY27)
 - Ka Ana La'ahana, Hilo - \$353,000 total; \$176,500 (FY26), \$176,500 (FY27)
 - Ke Kula 'o Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u, Kea'au - \$551,800 total; \$275,900 (FY26), \$275,900 (FY27)
 - Kua O Ka Lā, Pāhoa - \$353,000 total; \$176,500 (FY26), \$176,500 (FY27)
 - Waimea Middle School, Waimea - \$353,000 total; \$176,500 (FY26), \$176,500 (FY27)

- 'Ākoakoa Event Sponsorships (FY25-26)
 - Keaukaha Community Event – Keaukaha Community Association - \$5,000 (FY25)
 - Ka'e Lehua – Pōhāhā I Ka Lani - \$5,000 (FY25)
 - Annual Prince Kūhiō Day Ho'olaule'a – Hana Laulima Lahui O Ka'u, Inc. - \$3,000 (FY25)
 - Maku'u Ku'i Fest – O Maku'u Ke Kahua - \$3,500 (FY25)
 - Mele Manaka 3-day Community Event – Hawaii Rise Foundation - \$9,450 (FY25)
 - Merrie Monarch Festival – Merrie Monarch Festival Committee - \$25,000 (FY25)
 - 2025 Summer Jam – Big Island Substance Abuse Council - \$11,250 (FY26)
 - 2025 Ola ka 'Ie'ie Workshop – Hiki Ola - \$4,100 (FY26)
 - Hala Festival 2025 – Pohaku Pelemaka - \$9,834 (FY26)
 - 2025 Hawai'i Island Festival of Birds – Hawai'i Wildlife Center - \$5,770 (FY26)
 - 'Ohana Day 2025 – Hāmākua Youth Foundation dba Hāmākua Youth Center - \$5,875 (FY26)

Multi-Island/Statewide, including Moku o Keawe

- Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana [Hawaiian-Focused Charter Facilities Funding] - \$2,850,000 (FY24-25)
- Kanu o ka 'Āina Learning 'Ohana [Federal Advocacy] - \$500,000 (FY24-25)
- Ea Ecovercity - \$401,440 (FY24-25)

LOAN ACTIVITIES

Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund (NHRLF) Mālama Education Loan Activity on Moku o Keawe

- No Mālama Education Loans as of 6/30/25

HEALTH OUTCOMES

GRANTING ACTIVITIES

Moku o Keawe Island Only

- Keaukaha Pana'ewa Community Alliance - \$100,000 (FY24-25)
- Hui Mālama i ke Ala 'Ūlili - \$100,000 (FY24-25)
- Aloha Kuamoo Aina - \$100,000 (FY24-25)
- The Men of PAA - \$100,000 (FY24-25)
- Akaka Foundation for Tropical Forests - \$194,717 (FY24-25)
- Hale Mua Cultural Group - \$145,000 (FY24-25)
- Five Mountains Hawaii dba Kipuka o ke Ola - \$500,000 (FY24-25)
- Humanity Hale - \$500,000 (FY24-25)
- Kelii William Ioane Legacy Foundation - \$310,295 (FY24-25)
- Kū Anuenue - \$100,000 (FY24-25)

Multi-Island/Statewide, including Moku o Keawe

- Mana Maoli - \$300,000 (FY24-25)
- Polynesian Voyaging Society - \$200,000 (FY24-25)
- Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition of Hawaii - \$500,000 (FY24-25)

LOAN ACTIVITIES

OHA Consumer Micro Loan Program Loan Activity on Moku o Keawe (for funeral and emergency health purposes)

- No Funeral and Health Consumer Micro Loans as of 6/30/25

QUALITY HOUSING

GRANTING ACTIVITIES

Moku o Keawe Island Only

- No active Quality Housing grants

Multi-Island/Statewide, including Moku o Keawe

- No active Quality Housing grants

LOAN ACTIVITIES

NHRLF Mālama Home Improvement Loans on Moku o Keawe

- Open Mālama Home Improvement Loans as of 6/30/25: six loans, total disbursed \$220,089

NHRLF OHA Consumer Micro Loans for unexpected home repair purposes on Moku o Keawe

- No Consumer Home Repair Micro Loans as of 6/30/25

ECONOMIC STABILITY

GRANTING ACTIVITIES

Moku o Keawe Island Only

- La'ī'ōpua 2020 - \$400,000 (FY24-25)
- Changemakers Community Economic Development Corporation - \$400,000 (FY24-25)
- The Men of PAA - \$400,000 (FY24-25)

Multi-Island/Statewide, including Moku o Keawe

- Homestead Community Development Corporation - \$500,000 (FY24-25)
- Hawaiian Community Assets, Inc. [Kūkulu Kahua] - \$1,660,000 (FY24-25)
- Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association - \$250,000 (FY24-25)

LOAN ACTIVITIES

NHRLF Debt Consolidation Loans on Moku o Keawe

- Open Debt Consolidation Loans as of 6/30/25: 13 loans, total disbursed \$203,357

NHRLF OHA Consumer Micro Loans on Moku o Keawe (for auto repair, CDL, apprenticeship program, or career development course purposes)

- No Consumer Economic Stability Micro Loans as of 6/30/25

NHRLF Mālama Business Loans on Moku o Keawe (Loan amounts from \$2,500 to \$100,000)

- No Mālama Business Loans as of 6/30/25

NHRLF Hua Kanu Loans on Moku o Keawe (Loan amounts from \$150,000 to \$1,000,000)

- Open Hua Kanu Loans as of 6/30/2025: 1 loan, total disbursed \$150,000

SOURCES

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- ² Hawai'i Data eXchange Partnership. (n.d.). *College and Career Readiness Indicators Graduate Profile*. Accessed August 19, 2025. <https://www.hawaiidxp.org/data-products/college-and-career-readiness-indicators-graduate-profile/>; Hawai'i Data eXchange Partnership. (n.d.). *First fall college enrollment*. Accessed August 19, 2025. <https://www.hawaiidxp.org/data-products/first-fall-college-enrollment/>; Hawai'i Data eXchange Partnership. (n.d.). *College and career readiness indicators: Summary reports*. Accessed August 19, 2025. <https://www.hawaiidxp.org/data-products/college-and-career-readiness-indicators-summary-reports/>
- ³ Hawai'i State Public Charter School Commission. (2025). Find a charter school. <https://www.chartercommission.hawaii.gov/find-a-charter-school>
- ⁴ Annual physical checkup rate among adults reflects adults who have visited a doctor for a routine health checkup within the past year in the state of Hawai'i. Hawai'i State Department of Health, Hawai'i Health Data Warehouse, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. Preventive services- checkup within the past year, Age Adjusted by Year, Adults who have visited a doctor for a routine health checkup within the past year, Filter: 2023, Island: Oahu, Display By (category): DOH Race/Ethnicity. Accessed August 21, 2025. https://hhdw.org/report/query/result/brfss/ChkupPastYear/ChkupPastYearAA11_.html
- ⁵ Kamehameha Schools' Strategy & Transformation Group, Lili'uokalani Trust, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and Papa Ola Lokahi. (2023). Kamehameha Schools' Strategy & Transformation Group, Lili'uokalani Trust, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, & Papa Ola Lokahi. (2025). *2021 to 2025 'Imi Pono Analytic Dataset* [Unpublished dataset; to be made publicly available at a later date].
- ⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *2021 5-Year Estimates American Community Survey Selected Population Tables. B25070: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in the Past 12 Months*. Accessed August 20, 2025. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5YSPT2021.B25070?q=B25070&t=001:062:3925&g=040XX00US15_050XX00US15001,15003,15007,15009.
- ⁷ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *2021 5-Year Estimates American Community Survey Selected Population Tables. B25003: Tenure*. Accessed August 20, 2025. [https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5YSPT2021.B25003?q=Owner/Renter+\(Tenure\)&t=001:062&g=040XX00US15_050XX00US15001,15003,15007,15009](https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5YSPT2021.B25003?q=Owner/Renter+(Tenure)&t=001:062&g=040XX00US15_050XX00US15001,15003,15007,15009)
- ⁸ Hawai'i State Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. (Apr. 22, 2023). *Hawaiian Homes Commission Meeting/Workshop Agenda, Moloka'i* (Item No. D-1, Exhibit-A). Accessed July 7, 2025. <https://dhhl.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/April-22-23-2024-HHC-Packet.pdf>
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- ¹⁰ Due to sample size, Maui, Kalawao, and Kauai Counties are combined; State of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism). *Hawaii's Native Hawaiian Entrepreneurs. Table 4: Age of Native Hawaiian Entrepreneurs, by County*. Accessed May 15, 2025. https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/Hawaii_Native_Hawaiian_Entrepreneurs.pdf
- ¹¹ Hawaii State Teachers Association, Hawai'i Has a Teacher Shortage Crisis, <https://www.hsta.org/crisis>
- ¹² Healthcare Association of Hawai'i. *2024 Healthcare Workforce Initiative Report, pg 10-11*. <https://hah.sharefile.com/share/view/s2482a25b1f8e45199adfc3bc4e96263e>