



hawaii pacific gerontological society

Volume 47, No. 2

February 2026

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HPGS has open enrollment for new members throughout the year. HPGS members may renew for 2026 any time online at [www.hpgs.org](http://www.hpgs.org) or print the form and pay with a check.

The Hawaii Pacific Gerontological Society distributes monthly newsletters and hosts three general membership meetings.

HPGS encourages all members to submit articles, email the board with suggestions for speakers, and/or volunteer on a committee.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**



KRISTINA WONG  
PRESIDENT

February Updates and Continuing the Momentum at HPGS

Aloha everyone,

As we settle into February, I want to thank you all for the continued energy and engagement you bring to HPGS. The start of the year has already been a great reminder of how much we can accomplish when we stay connected and involved.

Our January general membership meeting was a wonderful way to kick things off. A special thank-you to HPGS partner, Roger Higa, for sharing his knowledge and insights on long-term care. The discussion was both informative and timely, and it was great to see members coming together to learn, ask questions, and share perspectives. Your participation truly made the meeting a success.

Looking ahead, I'd like to share a few updates on our fundraiser for the year. Planning is underway for our annual Tony Lenzer Scholarship Fundraiser, and we are hopeful to have an honoree selected by next month. The event is scheduled for September 11th at 15 Craigsid. As plans continue to take shape, more details will be shared, and we'll be reaching out for ideas, volunteers, and support to help make this event another meaningful success.

As always, your involvement is what keeps HPGS strong. Whether it's attending meetings, contributing ideas, or lending a hand when opportunities arise, every bit of engagement makes a difference.

I'm looking forward to another productive and connected month ahead.

Mahalo nui loa,

Kristina Wong

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of HPGS is to increase awareness of and interest in the field of gerontology by providing networking and educational opportunities, as well as scholarships, to Hawaii's workforce or other interested parties, and otherwise to support the creation of needed policies and programs that will enhance the quality and number of age-friendly services to our Kūpuna in Hawaii.

## WELCOME TO HPGS

eXp Realty - 808LIVING Team  
Waimanalo Health Center

## MAHALO FOR RENEWING

HPGS appreciates the 2026 renewals from the following HPGS members since the last newsletter:

### INDIVIDUALS

Kathryn Braun  
Courtney Di Maggio  
Babette Galang  
Kimberly Oshiro  
Savy Makalena  
Tadahiro Meya  
Barbara Service  
Nargis Sultana

### COMPANIES

15 Craigsides  
AARP Hawaii  
Alzheimers Association  
Capt Cook Coin Co of Honolulu  
Financial Benefits Insurance  
The Ihara Team - Keller  
Williams Honolulu

## SPRING RECIPE

### Dressing for Spinach Salad

3/4 cup White Sugar  
2 cup Salad Oil  
1/2 cup Vinegar - Red  
Wine, Apple or Garlic  
2 tbsps Worcestershire Sauce  
1 tsp Salt  
1/3 cup Ketchup

Blend all ingredients together.

### Salad

1 lb Spinach  
2 Hard Boiled Eggs - Chopped  
5 pieces Fried Bacon - Bits  
1 can Mandarin Oranges

## HAWAII'S OUTSTANDING OLDER AMERICANS

Hawaii's Outstanding Older Americans Award is an annual recognition program held in May, during **Older Americans** Month, to honor kupuna (aged 65+) for their community service, leadership and contributions to society. Each county (Maui, Kauai, Hawaii and Honolulu) selects outstanding individuals to highlight their impact on the community and to encourage aging with purpose.

The program is administered through the Hawaii State Executive Office on Aging in coordination with each county's aging office. Applications are being accepted to recognize the exceptional kupuna volunteer. For information in your local area, please contact your county office on aging: Honolulu - (808) 768-7700 • Hawaii - (808) 961-8626 • Maui/Molokai/Lanai - (808) 270-7774 • Kauai - (808) 241-4470

## HPGS ELDERCARE WORKER AWARD

**Shirley Romualdo** was the first recipient for the HPGS Eldercare Worker Award this year. This scholarship is open from January to December for \$750 per awardee. She emailed the following message to Sherry Goya, HPGS Executive Director:



"I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to you and everyone at the Hawai'i Pacific Gerontological Society for the scholarship that allowed me to attend my CNA training.

Because of your generosity and support, I was able to complete the CNA program and now to successfully become a CNA with the State of Hawaii. This opportunity truly meant so much to me. Your encouragement and belief in my journey gave me the confidence to keep pushing forward, even when it felt challenging.

I am deeply thankful for the investment you made in my education and future. It is my hope to use what I have learned to give back by providing compassionate, respectful care to our kūpuna and community. Please extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone involved. I will always be grateful for the role HPGS played in helping me reach this important milestone."

## LTC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mahalo to Melvin Sakurai, Ph.D., Research Information Services, for sharing the following information on paying for long-term services and support:

The existential fiscal crisis of paying for essential long-term services and supports (LTSS) in Hawai'i and across the nation is undeniable. The plight of Hawai'i families coping with unsustainable costs and the financial and physical toll of caregiving is almost unimaginable. But there is reason for hope: **HB1804** and **SB2554** were introduced by Representative Lisa Marten and Senator Sharon Moriwaki on January 23, 2026, supported by 19 of their colleagues in the House and 7 in the Senate. The companion bills establish an independent **Long-Term Care Financing Advisory Commission** within the Legislature with a 3-year agenda to objectively assess public and private LTSS financing options that are affordable, sustainable, and intergenerationally equitable. Contact: repmarten@capitol.hawaii.gov, senmoriwaki@capitol.hawaii.gov, or msakurai@hawaiiantel.net.

## EVENTS

### Project Dana

Saturday, February 14th  
10am

Wait! Don't Die Yet! by Annette Kam  
In-person at Waipahu  
Hongwanji Buddhist Temple  
Or via Zoom

Wednesday, February 18th  
10am

Talk Story facilitated by Shelley Paet  
In-person at Honpa Hongwanji  
Hawaii Betsuin  
Or via Zoom

Monday, February 23rd  
6:30pm

Talk Story facilitated by Shelley Paet  
Zoom Only  
Email: shelley@projectdana.org

### Ohana Care Maui

Thursday, February 26th  
5pm to 5:45pm

Know the Signs - Prevent  
diabetic Amputations  
Kalama Heights, Kihei

Free and Open to the Maui community  
Email: jgalvez@ohanacaremaui.com

### Kokua Mau

Palliative Pupus  
Wednesday, Feb 18th  
5:15 to 6:30pm  
Via Zoom  
info@kokuamaui.org

**Palliative Pupus** is a unique opportunity to hear about a palliative care case. It is good for palliative care practitioners to learn and increase skills. It is also an excellent opportunity to learn about what palliative care really is and what our amazing colleagues actually do. Cases usually involve a range of practitioners including doctor, nurse, chaplain and social workers and cover physical, emotion and spiritual issues.

### Generations Magazine Senior Fair at Windward Mall

Friday, February 20th  
10am to 2pm

FREE and open to the public  
Over 40 tables of companies, organizations, and state agencies providing information for kupuna and their families. Many door prizes for those who complete their "stamp card" while visiting tables.

## HPGS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The first General Membership Meeting via Zoom for HPGS was held on Thursday, January 15th. Unfortunately, there were technical difficulties, so the meeting was not recorded to put on our website. Those who attended heard from **Roger Higa**, Roger Higa Financial Services, LLC. He spoke about long-term care (LTC) planning and provided valuable insight to help navigate the complexities of being prepared. As a licensed LTC specialist, he offered expert guidance with clear, concise, and locally-relevant information, such as "What qualifies as a LTC event?" and had local statistics on LTC needs. Roger dispelled the common myths about LTC planning and the best practices for LTC planning. Mahalo to Roger for taking the time to educate HPGS members.

Check out Roger's website at [www.rogerhiga.fun](http://www.rogerhiga.fun), or contact him by phone at 808-330-4691 or email at [roger@rogerhiga.fun](mailto:roger@rogerhiga.fun).

## AARP HAWAII'S ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

### AARP 2026 Advocacy Priorities

#### 1. Fraud Protection – Digital Financial Assets (SB 2387 / HB 2003)

This bill provides safeguards on crypto-ATMs/kiosks to deter fraudulent transactions and minimize financial loss to consumers. While several crypto-related bills will be introduced, we have attached AARP's preferred version for your reference.

**Note:** AARP is requesting a minor amendment on Line 9—deleting "or" and replacing it with "and." This amendment will be requested when Senate/House bills are scheduled by the first subject committee.

#### 2. Family Caregiver Tax Credit (SB 2863 / HB 1972)

This measure establishes a \$3,000 tax credit for unpaid family caregivers to help offset caregiving expenses such as in-home care services, prescription medications, durable medical equipment, and home modifications, etc. This helps families who receive and pay for HCBS services (home care, adult day care) and other costs out of pocket. Bill benefits tax filers with incomes below \$75,000 (individual) and \$125,000 (joint) and care recipient must reside in the community and not in nursing homes, adult residential care homes or assisted living.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or if AARP Hawai'i can be of assistance. We deeply value your partnership and look forward to working together this session. Office: (808) 545-6005 | Fax: (808) 536-2882 | Email: [asuganakagawa@aarp.org](mailto:asuganakagawa@aarp.org) | Web: <http://www.aarp.org/hi>

## ELDERLY AFFAIRS DIVISION

From the Elderly Affairs Division's **Senior Information & Assistance Handbook**, it says "The Elderly Affairs Division (EAD) has been the designated *Area Agency on Aging* for Oahu since 1973. Created by the *Older Americans Act of 1965*, it is one of 600 Area Agencies on Aging nationwide. Its mission is to develop a comprehensive and coordinated system of services to assist older persons in leading independent, meaningful, and dignified lives in their own homes and communities for as long as possible."

The **handbook** provides information from EAD, which coordinates advocacy efforts on behalf of elders, encourages partnerships to improve and expand services, and contracts with agencies to provide services to seniors and caregivers. The types of services contracted include: case management, personal care, homemaker and attendant care, home delivered and congregate meals, housing information and assistance, legal information and assistance, transportation, caregiver respite, support and education, health promotion and senior centers.