

# Ka Leo Kaulike

Newsletter

Winter 2008



LEGAL AID  
SOCIETY OF HAWAII

## Legal Aid of Hawaii Needs You!

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Aloha Kakou!

We hope this newsletter finds you well this holiday season. As you may know, we are fortunate to have in Hawaii, one of the premier legal aid programs in the country; assisting nearly 20,000 low and moderate-income people every year with critical legal needs.

While we are proud of the fact that Legal Aid has been able to serve so many, there are many more who need our help. Helping those in Hawaii who are less fortunate receive the most basic legal assistance is truly our obligation and responsibility as lawyers. If we do not do our part to meet that obligation and responsibility, we cannot reasonably expect others to be supportive.

As the year draws to a close, we write to you today to solicit your support for The Legal Aid Justice Campaign. As we hear news of a freezing economy and recession, our instincts are to cut back on spending and with that, giving. During times of economic hardship, the poor suffer the most and we see a significant increase in the demand for services. This is the time, more than ever, to dig our heels in and help heal and sustain our communities.

You may have seen some of the media attention given to the November 2007 report on civil legal needs for low and moderate-income residents completed by the Access to Justice Hui. Some of the key findings from that report are:

- Only 1 in 5 low to moderate-income residents have their legal needs met.
- Legal service providers are able to help only 1 in 3.
- In Hawaii, while there is 1 private attorney for every 361 persons in the general population, there is only 1 legal service attorney for every 4,402 persons living below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.

If you are a lawyer in private practice, we ask that you consider a pledge of three annual gifts that are each equivalent to at least the value of one billable hour. But, a gift in any amount will be greatly appreciated. Donations may be made either by mailing in the form on the back of this newsletter or online at [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org), Legal Aid's new website.

Your donation can help ensure that a frail, elderly individual receives the benefits needed to sustain daily life; assist a disabled individual in obtaining the Social Security payments he or she is entitled to; help prevent the wrongful eviction of a family from their home; help a domestic violence victim flee from abuse and live in a safe environment; help a family become stable and secure; and assist in placing a battered/underserved child into a loving, permanent, adoptive home. This is the kind of work Legal Aid does every day and with your support we can help even more of those in need in Hawaii despite the economy!

During this holiday season, please consider a gift to Legal Aid's Justice Campaign. We can assure you that your generous donation will go a long way towards helping those most in need.

With Warmest Aloha and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year,

Susan Li  
Campaign Co-Chair

David Fairbanks  
Campaign Co-Chair

If you are interested in reading the  
"ACCESS TO JUSTICE" REPORT  
visit our website: [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org)

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Legal Aid is Hawaii's oldest and largest non-profit law firm dedicated to assisting the low- to moderate-income community. Our mission is to achieve fairness and justice for Hawaii's people through quality legal representation, advocacy, advice, community partnerships, education and outreach.

Established in 1950, Legal Aid has 9 offices statewide, and over 60 attorneys, paralegals, and administrative staff all dedicated to achieving Legal Aid's vision of "Building a Just Society."

[www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org)

## Legal Aid Launches New Website and Online Staff Forum

Legal Aid has launched its highly anticipated website coupled with a national online forum designed to allow Legal Aid staff from around the country to network with each other on a variety of topics. [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org) was redesigned and launched on November 20th 2008 and includes comprehensive information about the firm and its services, the staff, its history and its mission.

Legal Aid's new website and staff forum are a part of an "update package" implemented by Kathryn Xian, an award-winning filmmaker as well as the firm's new Director of Development and Communications. Included in this new infrastructural tech movement are affiliated Facebook and Myspace pages to outreach to new volunteers as well as to a younger demographic, online funding widgets that anyone may post onto their websites to help Legal Aid fundraise, and a complete graphic revamping of brochures, annual reports, press releases, newsletters and informational materials.



"It's part of my job to promote the hard working attorneys of this amazing firm and I'm more than happy to do it," Kathryn added. "The attorneys, interns and volunteers are all incredibly busy helping people in very real ways and their deeds oftentimes go unnoticed. I can tell you, I'm having a great time making sure Legal Aid's mission, staff accomplishments, and new image reaches farther than it ever has through new technology."

## Maui Office's Nicole Forelli Honored by the Maui County Bar Association



Nicole Forelli, Managing Attorney of Legal Aid's Maui Office, was given The Lawyer Community Involvement Award (LCIA) by the Maui County Bar Association at the MCBA's Annual Dinner on December 5th. The LCIA is given to a Maui attorney who exemplifies admirable conduct and active participation with other groups and individuals in the community while ensuring equal justice for all.

Nicole assumed the role of Managing Attorney for Maui County (Maui, Moloka'i and Lana'i) in 2004. She uses her extensive experience in family law to assist in child welfare matters, and other cases. Previously, she was the Managing Attorney for the Domestic Violence Action Center's Maui Office. She also prosecuted domestic violence cases with the Maui Prosecutor's Office. Before moving to Maui, Nicole was an Assistant Attorney General on the island of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for eight years. She also served as a staff attorney for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in its criminal motions division and was an associate at a prominent San Francisco law firm in its environmental law group.

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## Deputy Director Honored by the HSBA

Deputy Director of Legal Aid, Nalani Fujimori, was selected by the Hawaii State Bar Association (HSBA) to be the recipient of the C. Frederick Schutte Award. The Schutte Award recognizes service toward the legal profession and is awarded to an attorney for outstanding and meritorious service to the legal community and the profession.



Nalani with HSBA President Jeffrey H.K. Sia

Nalani was recognized "for outstanding and meritorious services to the legal community and to the profession through work in improving access to justice for Hawaii's people and raising awareness to the public about the need for equal access to justice for all." She received the award at the HSBA Convention's luncheon on October 24th 2008.

On receiving the award, Nalani states, "I am honored to have received this award from the Hawai'i State Bar Association and even more honored by the members of the Access to Justice Hui who nominated me for this award. Access to Justice is critically important to the people of Hawai'i and is fundamental to what makes our country great. I am excited about the future work of the Access to Justice Commission and am proud to know that I played a role in helping the people of Hawai'i."



HSBA Convention's Keynote Speaker Neal Katyal



Left to right: Jay Kimura, Edmund Burke, Riki May Amano, and Nalani Fujimori

## About Nalani Fujimori

Nalani, a Kamehameha Schools graduate, joined Legal Aid in 1999 as a staff attorney on Moloka'i. She managed Legal Aid's Maui County Offices from 2001 - 2004 and was appointed Deputy Director in 2004. Nalani received her law degree from New York University School of Law and graduated Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa from Macalester College with a degree in Sociology. Prior to joining Legal Aid, Nalani did death penalty appellate work through New York University's Death Penalty Fellowship Program, assisted in the filing of a class action law suit for the sexual harassment of women inmates, clerked for a firm specializing in non-profit housing development and clerked with the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation.

## About Access to Justice

Legal Aid is a member of the Access to Justice Hui, which recently released the first civil legal needs assessment in 14 years. The Hui's goal was to carry out a statewide assessment of the civil legal needs of low and moderate-income residents of Hawai'i and to develop a community wide action plan to increase equal access to justice in Hawai'i. Nalani was key in coordinating the work on the research, survey, community focus group and community wide action plan, and for her tireless contributions towards the drafting of the assessment. Since the last U.S. Census Bureau's population survey in 2000, updated every 10 years, Legal Aid has served more than half the number of Hawai'i's impoverished families and individuals. Hawai'i's impoverished community comprises 18% of the state's population at 213,189—a 43% increase since the previous census in 1990.

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## Ways in Which Legal Aid Makes a Difference in People's Lives Every Day

### CLIENT 1 (NAME WITHHELD)

*Victim of Statutory Rape and Verbal Threats and Abuse Achieves Divorce*

Client was only 13 when husband, who was 24 at the time, got her pregnant with their first child. Client was 14 when husband got her pregnant again. She sought a divorce from her husband, who had repeatedly made verbal threats, and was verbally abusive to her and their 3 children throughout their marriage. The husband often told our client that he would kill her and "the other man" if she ever fooled around. He also told their children not to call his "f-ing phone," which was devastating to them. Client's children were acting out by cutting out of school and using drugs. Legal Aid represented client at both the Motion to Set and Child Custody hearings, which were contested. Our client's husband hired a private attorney to represent him. The divorce was finally achieved with a reasonable settlement of the contested issues, including division of Husband's Navy retirement account from his civil service job. Client was very grateful to be able to move on and to have a fresh start for her and her children.

### KRYSTAL WAIALAE

Krystal was repeatedly physically abused by her husband, often in front of their children. Her husband punched her in the head, leaving her with a black eye; pushed her into a car and hit her numerous times; hit her from the back; and repeatedly became violent



Krystal now has the ability to start a safe new life.

when he drank. He was convicted of several DUI's and assault of a police officer. In late 2006 Legal Aid executed a Temporary Power of Attorney authorizing her parents to take her two older children to the doctor if she is unable. In July 2007 Legal Aid assisted her with a paternity action for her youngest child. Our staff has also started divorce actions for her on several occasions. Krystal has finally gathered the strength to leave her abuser and Legal Aid is currently helping her through her divorce.

### SUNDAY MCENROE

*SSDI Approval for Struggling Hawaiian Family*  
Sunday has two children and was struggling due to her loss of Social Security and her husband's loss of work. She had been terminated from SSI a few years ago because of her husband's income. She was also denied SSDI. Sunday suffered from paranoid schizophrenia, a tumor, and various other ailments. She had also been physically abused by her previous husband. Legal Aid assisted by helping her complete and submit the necessary appeal paperwork to the Social Security Administration. Fortunately, client was approved for SSDI via an "on the record" decision by an administrative law judge. Sunday was finally able to make ends meet, and very grateful for Legal Aid's assistance.

## Please Help Us Continue Our Important Work!



You can help us continue our services to Hawaii's people and ensure access to justice for all. Please consider making a donation by purchasing a virtual ornament. When you make a donation or a pledge, you will see your ornament on our tree on the Legal Aid website. [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org)



Special thanks to Hasr Wine Co. and to Soul de Cuba Cafe (previous page) for their generous in-kind donations.

To donate, please fill out the **Tree Ornament Pledge Form** as a part of the **LEGAL AID JUSTICE CAMPAIGN** on the back of this Newsletter and mail it back to us with your tax-deductible donation. Mahalo!

To make a secure online donation, visit: [www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org)

## Happy Holidays!

Help us decorate the tree!  
Every ornament counts!



Legal Aid is Hawaii's largest and oldest non-profit law firm dedicated to serving Hawaii's impoverished communities.

## Happy New Year!

Support the important work of Legal Aid by purchasing a virtual ornament.



**\$1,000+ = Super Star:** Helps us ensure access to justice for all.



**\$175 = Champion:** Helps a battered victim safely leave an abusive household and start a new life.



**\$750 = Global Guardian:** Allows us to expand services to communities in need



**\$100 = Friend:** Helps prevent wrongful eviction of a family from their home.



**\$500 = Supporter:** Helps us to protect seniors from mortgage and loan scams.



**\$50 = Contributor:** Assists a disabled person in obtaining Social Security that they need.



**\$250 = Donor:** Assists in placing a battered child into a permanent, loving, adoptive home.



**\$25 = Giver:** Ensures that a frail elderly senior receives benefits needed for living.

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## LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF HAWAII

Telephone: (808) 536-4302 • Fax: (808) 527-8088  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 37375 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96837-0375  
924 Bethel Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

George J. Zweibel, Esq.  
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Charles K. Greenfield, Esq.  
Executive Director



### Legal Aid Decorate the Tree Holiday Pledge Form (a part of the Legal Aid Justice Campaign)

*Thank you for your support of this important campaign! Your gift will help ensure that the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii will be able to continue to address its mission of achieving fairness and justice for Hawaii's people through quality representation, advocacy, community partnerships, education and outreach. Mahalo nui loa!*

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#### PLEDGE AMOUNT AND METHOD OF PAYMENT

**SINGLE DONATION:** My firm/I pledge to give the following amount by June 30<sup>th</sup> 2009:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_.

**3-YEAR PLEDGE:** My firm/I pledge to give the following amount by **June 30 of each year** for the next 3 years: \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

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Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

- Please send me a reminder of my pledge at least 15 days before June 30<sup>th</sup> 2009.

**If you do not wish Legal Aid to recognize your contributions in its various program publications and in its Annual Report, please check the following box:**

If sending a check, please make payable to Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, or LASH.

Legal Aid Society of Hawaii is a charitable organization under IRS Section 501(c). All gifts to Legal Aid Society of Hawaii are tax deductible to the full extent provided by the law. Contributions will be used to fund activities permitted by LSC Law & Regulation.



[www.legalaidhawaii.org](http://www.legalaidhawaii.org)  
A UNITED WAY AGENCY

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924 Bethel Street  
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Tel: 808.536.4302  
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