

# Mānoa Heritage Center Highlights 2024: Annual Report

Inspiring people to be thoughtful stewards of their heritage



# Mānoa Heritage Center: 2024 in Review



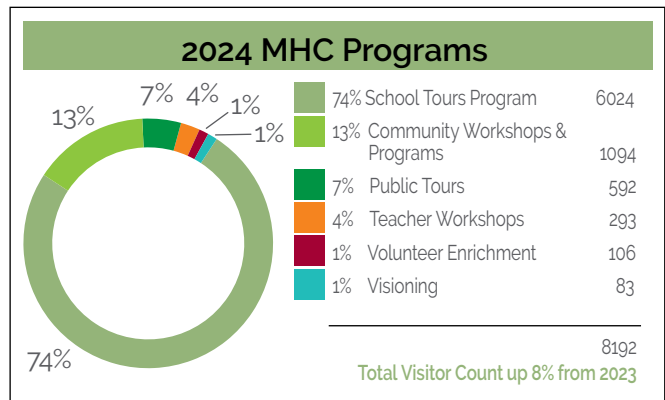
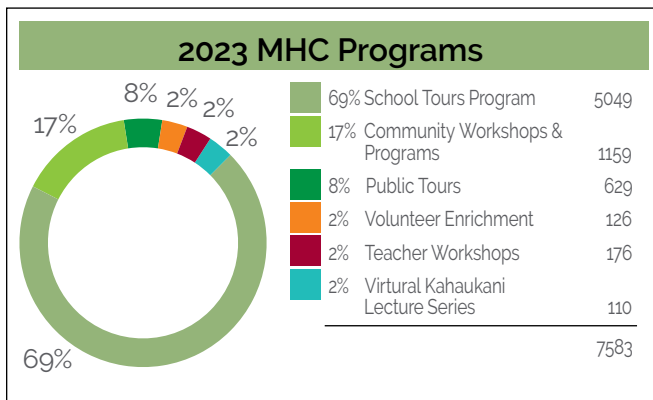
Building on a transformative 2023, this past year was one of reflection, momentum, and deepening connections at Mānoa Heritage Center. As we continued our journey to steward Kūali'i and Hogan House, we also embraced our expanding role as a place-based learning hub, rooted in Hawai'i's cultural and natural heritage. We welcomed our highest number of students and total visitors to date—more than 6,000 of whom were K–12 students in our free onsite and virtual programs. This growth reflects the generosity of our donors and the strength of our community partnerships.

We expanded curriculum tools, deepened longstanding school relationships, and offered intergenerational programs—from hula and

watershed camps to hands-on community workshops. Our first artist-in-residence, in collaboration with Hawai'i Triennial 2025, brought personal reflection and creative exploration into our space.

This year's Visioning Sessions invited community members to imagine the future of Kūali'i and Hogan House with us. Kūali'i remains closed to the public as we prioritize preservation and planning, guided by community input and Sam and Mary Cooke's vision.

As we look back with gratitude and forward with purpose, we mahalo all who contributed their time, insight, and aloha. Your support sustains our mission to cultivate learning, belonging, and stewardship for generations to come.



## Goal #1

*MHC will be an active resource for educators - helping their students connect with Hawai'i's cultural and natural heritage and inspiring them to act in their own communities.*

- We engaged with 6,020 students in our FREE onsite and virtual place-based programs. We also welcomed many new schools for the first time, granting priority access for tour registration to schools that had not visited before. Thanks to the generosity of individual donors and funders, we are able to provide school tour experiences, including bus transportation, at no cost to

PK-grade 12 students. If you would like to learn how you can support our school program, please contact [manoaheritagecenter.org](mailto:manoaheritagecenter.org).

- Launched the [hawaii kahuli.org](http://hawaii kahuli.org) website with a public program entitled “Endangered Endemics: A Peek into the Fascinating World of Kāhuli.” This public program, presented by Daniel A. Kelin II and David Sischo, was the culmination of the partnership that we had with Dan, supported by the Hawai'i Council for the Humanities.
- Developed curriculum activities to scaffold learning around core topics to make activities appropriate for multiple age groups. These core topics already had one station activity designed for a specific age group.
  - **Topic:** Mo'olelo mapping - added a Kahalaopuna color along for the youngest learners (PK-G2); created Mo'olelo Mapping mea kanu (G4-college) for students to explore the historical plant landscape of Mānoa, using excerpts from mo'olelo.
  - **Topic:** Kilo - added Kilo Ao (K-G9) as a tool to connect with and better understand our environment through engaging with different clouds and weather patterns; created Kilo 'Āina: Ho'onui, Ho'oiki (G1-College) - this nature journaling technique allows students to connect with nature from two lenses, small/detailed and big/broad. Students are tasked to observe something small in the garden and HO'ONUI (enlarge) /draw it big including detail, observe a broad landscape and HO'OIKI (reduce) /draw it small focusing only on the outline.
  - **Topic:** Native Plants - created a Hana Plant Scavenger Hunt (G3-G12) to better connect students to plants as important resources in the garden in an engaging way; added a Kāhuli Scavenger Hunt (G1-G9) inspired by Dan Kelin's work creating the [hawaii kahuli.org](http://hawaii kahuli.org) website, and to introduce students of all ages to the significance of these tiny decomposers as vital to the health of our native watershed; added Leaf Rubbing Mauka to Makai (G5-G12) and Leaf Characteristics (K-G5) as a way for students to use leaf rubbing as a tool to record observations about leaves and what their observations about size, shape, texture, and color reveal about the natural habitats the leaves thrive in.
- Continued longstanding partnerships with schools and teachers, including:
  - **Kapa Journey** Ka'ahumanu Elementary - 2024 marked the third year that we have collaborated with the entire fourth grade at Ka'ahumanu Elementary to visit Mānoa Heritage Center twice, observe a kapa maker making kapa, and design their kapala (stamp) which they can keep.
  - **Kilo Visits** Mo'O School - 2024 was the second year that Mo'O School students have visited twice a month, intending to select one spot on the Mānoa Heritage Center campus to make observations or kilo, each month to notice changes over time.
  - **Propagation Area Refurbishment Project** Hanahau'oli School - in 2018, Mānoa Heritage Center (MHC) worked with the Po'e Ka'ahale (4th/5th grade) teachers to design a year-long project that would have 52 students visit MHC nine times. Divided into six teams: Finance, Materials, Plants, Builder, Design & Engineer, and Documentarian, the students transformed the area from landscaped native plantings to a propagation nursery for native keiki plants. In 2024, with a grant from Mālama Mānoa, current Po'e Ka'ahale students returned to refurbish and even redesign some elements of the propagation area, based on the needs of MHC.
- Longstanding school partners like these provide unique opportunities that allow students to create deeper connections in their communities. For Mānoa Heritage Center, these students become advocates for native plants, Hawaiian culture, and a healthy watershed.
- Hosted 25 Kaiapuni Po'okumu (Hawaiian language Immersion school Principals) for a learning experience at Mānoa Heritage Center organized by the Office of Hawaiian Education.

## Goal #2

*MHC will be an educational hub for kūpuna, families, neighbors, cultural practitioners, and community organizations.*

- Hosted our seventh hula camp with Kumu Kilohana Silve! Offered once again to students of all ages, 14 adults and 13 keiki spent a full week at MHC, immersed in hula, oli, mo'olelo and Hawaiian culture. This year, hula camp included five family groups, whether siblings, mother and keiki, or Tutu and grandson.
- Hosted our first Watershed Camp! We had nine middle-school-aged watershed campers during the DOE fall intersession break! They spent the week engaged in different activities learning about climate, geography, botany, invasive species, soil science, and why we need to protect our native forests.
- Hosted our first artist-in-residence, Maui artist, Al Lagunero. In partnership with the 2025 Hawai'i Triennial, Al Lagunero spent three weeks at Hogan House. As the great-grandson of Ka'aha'aina-o-ka-haku Naihe, the practitioner of lā'au lapa'au who cared for Monte Cooke as a premature infant, it was a great honor to have Al working on-site, reflecting on his family and being inspired by the winds and rains of Mānoa Valley.

### Engaged with 1,094 people in the following workshops:

- *Papa Hula a 'Ōlelo Series with Kumu Momi Akana*
- *Intro to Papermaking with Allison Roscoe*
- *Nature Journaling with artist and author Kate Righter*
- *Paper Club: Color with Allison Roscoe*
- *Open Studio Paper Club: No Experience Necessary with Allison Roscoe*
- *Lauhala Fan Workshop with Kumu Wes Sen*
- *Palm Husk Basket Decoration with Dianne Ige*
- *Paper Production Marathon with Allison Roscoe*
- *'Ohana Mala: Kalo*
- *Aloha Māmā: Plant Make and Take for Mother's Day*
- *Kokedama Workshop with Dianne Ige*
- *Indigo Workshop with Ghislaine Chock*
- *'Ohana Kāhuli*
- *Pae Lā'au (Surf Wood) Workshop with Mahi La Pierre*
- *Hawaiian Solar Bot Workshop with Corinne Okada Takara*
- *Suob/Tuob: Herbal Steam and Smoke Workshop with Nicki Garces*
- *Unahon ang bugas...The Rice Comes First: Exploring the Significance of Rice during the Ber Months*
- *Kula pepeiao pololei with Kumu Wes Sen*
- *Hina'i Poepoe: Beginning Round Basketry with Ke Kumu Hawai'i - Kumulā'au and Haunani Sing*
- *Summer Hula Camp with Kumu Kilohana Silve*



*"MHC is a beautiful treasure and we feel so lucky to have the opportunity to visit, learn, and be nourished by our experience there. Thank you so much for fostering and maintaining such a courteous and generous educational space for our students, teachers, and the greater community." - 4th grade DOE teacher*

- *Watershed Camp with Botanical Educator Kanoa Nakamura*
- *Laukahi Workshop with Sr. Malia Wong*

**Presented public presentations:**

- *Acoustic Ecology and Conservation of Hawaiian Forest Birds with Dr. Patrick Hart (Virtual Kahaukani)*
- *Endangered Endemics: A Peek into the Fascinating World of Hawai'i Kāhuli with Daniel A. Kelin II and David Sischo*
- *In Contemplation of Ka'aha'aina-o-ka-haku Naihe: A talk with artist Al Lagunero*

**Promoted community collaboration by hosting retreats, meetings, and programs with partners including:**

- *Consuelo Foundation*
- *Stupski Foundation*
- *McRel International*
- *Hawai'i Green Growth*
- *Hua Nani Partners*
- *One Shared Future*
- *Doris Duke Charitable Foundation*
- *Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives*
- *Kaigen LLC*

**Total Volunteer hours in 2024: 1,936**

**Total Garden Volunteer Service Learning hours in 2024: 735**

## Goal #3

MHC will be a well-maintained facility with important historical and educational collections.

### The Gardens

MHC's garden spaces constantly evolved throughout 2024 to meet the needs of our human community, as well as the needs of our plant community! New plantings aim to highlight indigenous Hawaiian plants, food and medicine plants relative to our place in Mānoa, and intrapersonal connection to our natural resources.

More than 100 individual plants, over 20 unique species, were planted on campus by Fall Watershed Campers, Assets and Waldorf Highschool Mentees, and community volunteers alike. Their work is utilized during school and public tours when docents showcase themes of conservation, resource management, seasonal cycles and cultural practice.

As a site with 100+ plant species, over half of which are indigenous or endemic, MHC is constantly propagating keiki plants and looking for new ways to utilize our outdoor classroom! While many of these are given a home here, hundreds more are given away throughout the year to guests, or to other sites looking for native flora.



This past year when our primary plant propagation station was in need of refurbishment, Mālama Mānoa provided funding for a comprehensive overhaul done by Hanahau'oli School 4th graders. Following in the footsteps of the 4th graders in 2018, they designed shelving for potted plants and concrete platforms to support water catchments, as well as refinishing the existing woodwork in the nursery.

In order to provide space for the plants we grow, underutilized grounds mauka of the White Garden were transformed by Eagle Scout Kyle Hu, and his contingent of volunteers, into a cascade of three large terraces ripe for planting! Almost 100 individuals shared their time and energy to bring purpose to an otherwise underutilized area.

Our weekend workshopppers have been getting hands on as well, with Filipino Medicine practitioner Nicki Garces taking charge of the Acopan Garden, just behind the VEH! While using herbal products to educate others on traditional treatments for common ailments, she and other volunteers have turned this flagship community garden into a functional education space.

### Kūali'i & Hogan House Updates

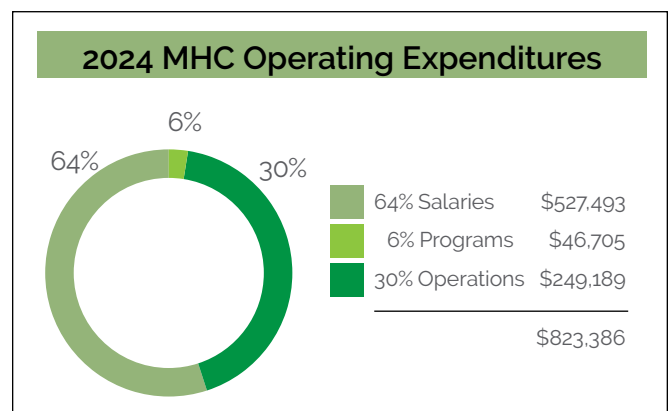
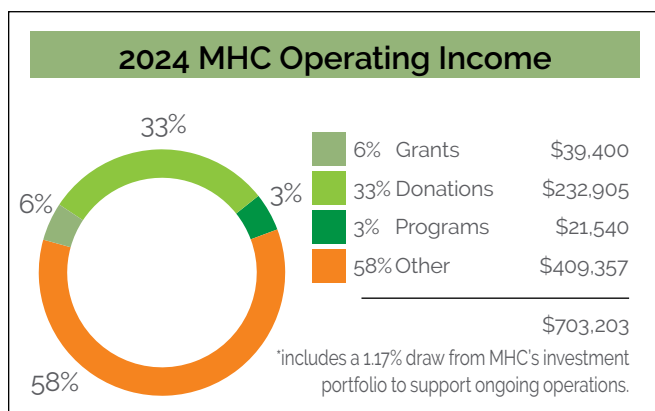
In 2024, Mānoa Heritage Center continued essential preservation work at Kūali'i, focusing on creating a healthier environment for both the structure and its collections during this transitional period. To help manage excess humidity and protect the interior spaces, we purchased and distributed dehumidifiers and air scrubbers throughout the home. These tools play a vital role in mitigating moisture-related risks, supporting a more stable environment for long-term preservation.

The Collections Team undertook a significant effort to clear non-collection items from the attic and basement. This was part of a broader initiative to prepare the house for its future as a historic house museum. The team also began a thorough review and re-inventory process of Kūali'i's contents, which will result in a more accurate and up-to-date collections record.

Across the lawn, Hogan House—designed in 1962 by architect George V. Hogan and the former residence of Sam and Mary Cooke—became a dynamic working space this year. It now houses the Collections Team's temporary office and served as the site of our first artist work residency, welcoming Maui-based artist Al Lagunero in preparation for his participation in Hawai'i Triennial 2025. His presence marked an important moment in activating Hogan House as a site of creative reflection and cultural continuity.

## Financial Snapshot

The following graphs represent unaudited financials for the period ending December 31, 2024:



# Goal #4

MHC will be an efficient, financially stable non-profit focused on enjoyable learning.

The market value of the Sam Cooke Endowed Fund supporting MHC programs and operations is \$12,633,119 as of December 31, 2024. We continue to build this fund and every gift is matched dollar for dollar by the \$1 million challenge grant from the Harold K. L. Castle Foundation. Together, we are cultivating a legacy of learning and stewardship.

## Mahalo 2024 Donors

We are deeply grateful to the following donors who supported MHC's operations, programs, and the Sam Cooke Endowed Fund with contributions of \$1,000 or more during the period January 1 – December 31, 2024.

### Sam & Mary Cooke Circle (\$50,000+)

- Anonymous
- Cooke Foundation, Limited
- Harold K. L. Castle Foundation

### Benefactor Circle (\$10,000 - \$49,999)

- Robin Freeman Bernstein, Nat Bernstein & Matthew Bernstein
- City and County of Honolulu
- Monica W. Chun
- Hawai'i Tourism Authority Fund
- David A. Keliikuli & Ronald R. Bunn
- Kono Foundation Fund at the Hawai'i Community Foundation
- Louise and Y. T. Lum Foundation
- Marisla Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation
- State Foundation on Culture and the Arts
- State of Hawaii
- In Memory of Karen Stockton
- TSK Charitable Foundation

### Patron Circle (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

- Anonymous (2)
- Frederic A. Brossy, Jr.
- Mary Dobson
- Hawai'i Council for the Humanities
- John R. Halligan Charitable Fund
- Larry Johnson
- Ohuokalani Charitable Foundation
- Deborah L. Young

### Guardian Circle (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

- Tanya & Paul Alston
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- Jack & Janet Gillmar
- Michael & Linda Horikawa
- Ambassador Charles B. Salmon
- Jeri & David Simons
- The Richard Q. Y. & Esther A. Wong Fund

### Century Circle (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

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- Carolyn Heath

- Moana Heu
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- Lynne Johnson & Randy Moore
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- A.K. Shingle & Timothy Gaffney
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- Carmela Tafoya
- Sharon Twigg-Smith
- Paul Weissman
- Carol & Gaylord Wilcox
- Gregory Wrenn and Robert Pyburn
- Family of Micheline S. Wrenn

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Kelsey Hara - *Collections Specialist*  
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Kanoa Nakamura - *Botanical Educator*  
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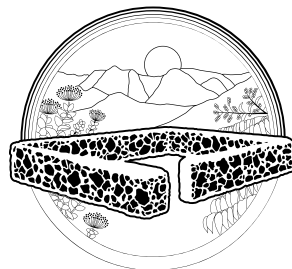
### Mahalo to Our Outgoing Board Members

We extend our deepest gratitude to the Board members who concluded their terms in 2024. Your thoughtful leadership and commitment helped guide Mānoa Heritage Center through a dynamic year of growth and transformation. Your contributions—both seen and behind the scenes—have strengthened our foundation and furthered our mission of stewardship, education, and cultural preservation.

#### With heartfelt thanks, we acknowledge:

Lynne Johnson (through September 2024)  
Ka'iu Kimura (through December 2024)  
Helen Nakano, Secretary (through March 2024)  
Ian Fitz-Patrick, Vice President (through May 2024)

*Mahalo nui loa for your service. Your legacy continues to inspire and shape the work ahead.*



Mānoa Heritage Center

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