

Hawaii Association of the Blind Newsletter

October 1, 2023

Announcements

The HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF THE BLIND is excited to announce that effective September 15, 2023, we will be partnering with AIRA to provide

12 months of unlimited call services at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport in hopes to support Hawai'i tourism for visitors and Kama'aina alike

who are blind or visually impaired.

AIRA (pronounced eye-ruh). Founded in 2015, Aira is a live, human-to-human professional assistance service for the blind or visually impaired community.

Simply download the app with your smart phone/device and receive instant engagement and enhanced independence. With real-time assistance, an Aira agent will help navigate you, step-by-step with all of your airport needs. We hope to share the "spirit of aloha" with all of

Hawaii.

HAB joins fellow Aira Access partners, Procter & Gamble, Google, McDonald's, Starbucks and Target along with 39 College Universities and 48 Airports Worldwide and counting.

For more information on Aira, please visit: <https://aira.io>

For media inquiries, please contact either of the following:

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HAB Technology Chair

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President Hawaii Association of the Blind

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Upcoming Events

Hawaii Association of the Blind and the Parents and Youths committee is having the first Blind Awareness Fundraiser in order to support the organizations efforts to continuously raise awareness through advocating independence, equality and opportunity for the Blind. All of our efforts could not be done if it weren't for our community members such as yourselves. Please come and Join us!

Date: Saturday, October 7, 2023

Time: 3:00pm-7:00pm

Place: Palama settlement Dining Hall and Lanai

Location Address: Palama Settlement 810 N. Vineyard Blvd., Honolulu, HI 96817

To purchase tickets, please contact Anthony Akamine at (808)-372-2225.

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2023 White Cane Walk

Friday, October 20

Pre-walk starts at 9:30 a.m.

If you have any questions about the walk, please contact Gavan Abe at 808-586-5271 or gabe@dhs.

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Hawaii Fi-Do Fundraiser

Monday, October 23rd

The Hana Koa Brewery

5:30 – 9:00PM

Silent and live auction available

\$75.00 per person

If you have any questions, please call Vicky Kennedy at (808) 222-8862.

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Biographies

Hello my name is Myshya. I am 16 and a senior in high school. I have a twin sister and an older brother who currently lives in Utah. I'm going to start

this off by saying that I am a really artistic person who likes to explore a lot of things and discover new things. My hobbies include drawing, singing,

costume making, and my all time favorite voice acting! I love to create new characters or give my drawings funny little voices from time to time. Ever

since I was young my dream job was to be a voice actor for movies and shows! I am currently working up to that goal as of now. Fun fact — when it comes

to visual arts (drawing) I have never taken a class and that is something I'm proud of. I was able to learn a hard skill (in my opinion) by myself with

just the things around me. What do I like to draw you ask? I draw in more of a Japanese style, more cutesy in a way. I do have a bunch of other smaller

skills and hobbies as well that I can share in the future.

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September 5, 2023

My name is Aidan Camero. I have glaucoma and read large print.

I'm a senior at Mililani High School. I'm interested in computer science. My plan is to attend UH Manoa to earn a bachelor's degree in computer science.

I live with my parents and sister in Mililani. I have lived in Mililani all my life. It has been really nice. I haven't decided if I want to live in the dorm or at home. I've learned to walk home from school. Ms. Sherri asked the City and County of Honolulu to add audible signals to two traffic lights so that I could walk to and from school. Ms. Sherri started to teach me the UH campus for next school year.

I enjoy dancing. I played the snare drum. I enjoy ceramics and have produced some pieces that are displayed in my house.

* * *

September 5, 2023

My name is Jaeru Bondoc. I am a seventh grader at Wahiawa Middle School. I was born prematurely and have Retinitis of Prematurity (ROP) and nystagmus. I have only light perception in my left eye. I wear glasses and have corrected vision of 20/100 in my right eye.

I live at home with my parents, grandparents, and sister. I have lots of hobbies. I'm really good with a yo-yo. I like to dance and sing. I like magic and doing card tricks.

I can play the piano and took private lessons for a long time. I play alto saxophone in concert band at school. I joined symphonic band and jazz band in after-school clubs.

I am taking an art class this school year. I learned that I really like art and started painting. I can paint seascapes, landscapes, and sunsets.

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The Power of a Good Story

By Antonio Vega

One of the most difficult things to do is capture and retain someone's attention. We're all busy people with a million things on our minds at any given moment. People simply don't have the mental space for every little thing that is trying to steal some of their brain space. So how do you do it? How can you get someone to really take an interest in something? In my opinion it all comes down to telling a good story. If you can hook people with a good story, they'll join you on whatever ride you take them on.

But so what? Yeah, people like stories but what does this have to do with the Hawaii Association of the Blind? Even though it may not seem like it at first, this has a lot to do with the Hawaii Association of the Blind. One of the missions of the Hawaii Association of the Blind is to raise awareness of people with visual impairments and what we are capable of. I firmly believe in this mission but here's the thing, this is not a particularly exciting mission for the average person.

If you're reading this, I'm sure you understand that most people have little to absolutely no contact with visually impaired individuals. Many people don't even realize that being visually impaired does not necessarily mean someone is totally blind. Yes, there are some people who qualify as totally blind but there's a whole range of people, all with different levels of visual acuity. However, the problem is that most people just don't care. And why should they? These are details that just aren't relevant to the average person. This is not something exclusive to the blind and visually impaired community either. This is the case for any community.

Let's use cars as an example. Some people like cars and others have zero interest in cars. When a car lover starts spouting off random car facts to someone who doesn't care about cars, what happens? The person who doesn't care about cars shuts down and all those car facts go in one ear and out the other. But it doesn't have to be this way. We can use the Fast and the Furious movie franchise to illustrate this point. Yes, this is a ridiculous franchise and I don't think most people would say they are masterpieces of storytelling. But they are fun movies that have managed to capture the attention of people around the world. In the process I am absolutely certain that a decent amount of people have come to appreciate cars more. Thanks to these movies, what once was a meaningless machine to someone can become a masterpiece of engineering that they absolutely must own and learn all about.

But what does this have to do with blindness and the Hawaii Association of the Blind? As you may know, the Hawaii Association of the Blind has voted to fund something I'm about to do. On September 19th, I will be getting on a plane and heading to Japan. Once in Japan I will be literally walking from the city of Kyoto to Tokyo. This is around 500 km or roughly 300 miles. I will be relying on Google Maps, help from my followers online, help from people I meet along the way, my cane and my wits to make my way across Japan. The goal is to do it in 30 days. This is absolutely possible but I will have to keep a good pace to make it to Tokyo in time. Further, there is also the possibility of typhoons and other unexpected challenges. This will not be easy. To be perfectly honest, I am nervous but I am also excited and eager to embark on this journey.

As for why I decided to do this, there's two big reasons; an obvious one and a less obvious one. The obvious one is that I am a content creator. I produce

shows in both English and Japanese for people in Japan and around the world. I have been educating people about Japan via my English language blog JapanKyo.com

since 2016. I also produce English language podcasts about Japan. These shows can be found on the JapanKyo YouTube channel and all the major podcast platforms.

Aside from that I have built a significant following of people from Japan interested in digital art and marketing information. So when I came up with the

idea of walking across Japan—along what is known as the old Tokaido road—my thinking was: I want to create something that will entertain both the English

speaking and Japanese speaking sides of my audience. Of course, in doing so, this will help me grow as a creator. That is the obvious reason for why I

decided to do this. However, there is more to this.

Anyone can do something like this. In fact, tons of people have done it and tons of people can probably do it faster than I will. But that doesn't matter.

I'm going to do this in my own unique way. I am going to document this process and by doing so show how I deal with the issues that come up due to being

someone who is legally blind trying to walk across Japan. And here we get to the other not so obvious reason for why I decided to do this. This will raise

awareness of what individuals of the blind and visually impaired community are capable of. And it will do it in an organic way that is far more likely

to have an impact than throwing facts and figures at someone.

Of course, doing something like this is not cheap. There's the plane ticket, lodging, gear and other on the ground expenses. I was committed to doing this

even if I had to cover every expense completely on my own. However, I decided to reach out to the Hawaii Association of the Blind. I asked if the organization

would be able to sponsor me in this endeavor. I began by asking for much less money than I need. The board ended up voting to grant me \$5000. This is an

incredible help and I am truly grateful. To be clear though, I would not have approached the organization with my request if I did not think it was in

line with the overall mission of the Hawaii Association of the Blind.

I can't say the content I produce based on my trek across Japan will go viral. However, what I can say is that every single time someone sees me walking in Japan using my cane or hears me talking about how I got somewhere in Japan without being able to see street signs people will be learning about how individuals with visual impairments live their lives and what we are capable of. That is the power of a good story. Captivating stories makes people pay attention. They stick in people's minds. And they can change how people see the world. Thank you HAB for helping me tell this story.

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HAB Holo Holo Assisted Shoppers Second Home...Recap from September 8th event.

From Amy Downard

Have you ever had a community space that seems like a second home? Well that was the vibe last week as our HAB Holo Holo Shoppers group returned to Pearl City Foodland Farms. What a great, warm, inviting community space. It only has one entrance, avoiding any confusion of how to enter. As you enter and walk forward, you will locate the customer service area for any assistance. I must say, this store has very attentive staff and they are everywhere for assistance. To the left of customer service are the lined cashiers and behind the customer service counter is the small express checkout line. As you enter, to the right there are so many prepared food choices: Okazuya counter, chicken, pizza, sushi, burritos, bentos, mochi, salads, fruit trays, deli sandwiches, poke and more. You will never go hungry at this place!

The magical spot and best trait of this space is after you enter and turn left, you will walk past HI Steaks counter to a large open sitting area with booths, moveable tables and chairs. Like about twenty tables!! Even with 21 participants attending this event, we only used one third of this area.

For this event, we surprised Russell with a Happy Birthday song and a wonderful HAB member secretly provided cupcakes and a candle for Russell

to make his wish, I just know it will come true! Several participants also began to receive their new canes and tips from HAB's Safe Travels program.

The very best part, was seeing all the smiles! We had brand new participants who had never met another blind individual, a family who came with their son

who is receiving services at school, OM instructors who had a night off, but still came to chill with attendees and many who have come to almost all of

these gatherings at this location. Each attendee also received a small gift card for food and grocery purchases and had ample assistance to locate anything

and everything throughout the store.

So, if you want to enjoy a second home, with good food and lots of great company, we'll see you soon at many more HAB Holo Holo Shoppers events! Please

contact Anthony at (808)372-2225 for any questions or information on any upcoming HoloHolo events.

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Good e-Reader - Sunday, September 3, 2023 at 4:33 AM

Amazon Kindle for Mac is being discontinued in October 2023

<https://assets.goodereader.com/blog/uploads/images/2023/09/03042805/kindle-app.jpg>

Amazon has just announced that they are discontinuing the current Kindle for Mac software, and it will be shuttered entirely sometime this October. It

will be removed from the Mac Store completely. Amazon is replacing the current Kindle for Mac with an improved app, including an enhanced book reading

and library management experience. The new Kindle for Mac will be available to download from the Mac App Store sometime this month.

There isn't very much information currently available on what enhanced book reading and library management entails. I have a feeling the system will be similar to the Kindle for Android or Kindle for iOS, or even the Kindle e-reader. Amazon has been slowly homogenizing all of their software to make the experience similar, no matter what platform you are using. They are removing all of the old Java code and transitioning to React Native, hence the new Mac app.

A new Mac app will be a welcome change; the current app looks dated and is very similar to Kindle for PC. The last Mac update was five months ago.

Michael Kozlowski has written about audiobooks and e-readers for the past twelve years. Newspapers and websites such as the CBC, CNET, Engadget, Huffington Post and the New York Times have picked up his articles. He Lives in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

<https://goodereader.com/blog/kindle/amazon-kindle-for-mac-is-being-discontinued-in-october-2023>

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