

Celebrating Empowerment and Achievements 2016



NEWSLETTER FIRST QUARTER, 2017

Full Life assists in the empowerment of individuals with developmental disabilities enabling them to achieve and enjoy a self-determined quality of life.

Aloha Kakou,

It is with joy that we continue Full Life's annual tradition of celebrating individual achievements and accomplishments. This year our "Hollywood Red Carpet" theme embodies Full Life's spirit of having fun. Full Life measures our success one person at a time. We believe that our mission of assisting in the empowerment of people to enjoy a self-determined quality of life requires us to customize services person by person, family by family, and community by community.

Reflections on the year

In my first full year as Executive Director, I am grateful for so much. We have an amazing staff of nearly 90 who are committed to the empowerment of people with disabilities and their families to live full lives. We have an incredible Board of Directors ensuring our mission reaches far into our community. We have supporters and partners all over the Big Island sharing their resources, support, acceptance, and love. I am grateful to witness people of all abilities and their families advocating for a desirable future and realizing dreams. I am so proud to be a part of the Full Life 'Ohana.

2016-2019 Strategic Plan

With the input from many people committed to the future of the organization, Full Life adopted our 2016-2019 Strategic Plan. One key goal is to expand awareness and involvement in the community. Board Director Olga Salvatore, memorably stated that "Full Life needs more bling." We have made so much progress toward that goal this year! We have collaborated with many community organizations, elevated our social media presence, and through our annual celebration we continue to raise awareness of the capabilities of people and their families.

A second goal of our Strategic Plan is to expand programs including art and recreation. Through an "Empowering Creativity" grant with the County of Hawaii we emphasized our programs supporting people to become self-employed in the arts culminating in the fantastic first annual "Pua Na Pua" collaborative art festival in Kona featuring artists with and without disabilities.

A third goal of the strategic plan is to empower Full Life staff to make a difference and cultivate the 'Ohana culture within Full Life. We have taken many opportunities this year to gather together, celebrate, talk story, and even dance together.

Challenges and Future Opportunities

It has become apparent that government funding alone is not adequate to support the cost to provide quality services. There has not been an increase for service reimbursements in over 11 years. We need your kokua. Full Life relies on the generosity of caring individuals, businesses, and foundations to help us continue providing supports for community members with disabilities and their families. We need your support to fund our learning center to become a community hub for learning. We need your support to expand opportunities for participating in our vibrant art culture. We need your support to help those who desire to work to learn job skills and obtain fulfilling employment. We need your support to help develop and empower direct support workers to continue providing incredible care supporting people to achieve success.

Mahalo nui loa for your support,
Jim Kilgore

The Palace Theater Presents

Dreams of Wonder

MAGIC SHOW

International Award Winning Magicians
Bruce & Jennifer Meyers

With Special Guest Performances by Aerial Artist Luna Sophia,
Josie The Jokester and Keiki Magicians of Meyers' Magic Camps

*Full Life Entrepreneurs
Art Event*

full life
Empowering
People with
Disabilities

MARCH 11TH
2:00PM

A Portion of the proceeds benefit AHA, Full Life and The Palace Theater

PALACE THEATER

Palace Theater
38 Haili St • Hilo
808-934-7010

Pre-Sale \$12 Adults • \$8 Keiki 12 & under
Show Day \$15 Adults • \$10 Keiki 12 & under

Tickets can be purchased at the box office,
over the phone at 934-7010 (M-F 10a-3pm)
or online at www.brucemeyers.com

HIGHLIGHTS 2015-2016

Annual Participants Awards Celebration

On January 14th, Full Life celebrated its seventeenth year of providing service to our Big Island community members in East and West Hawaii. The celebration took place at the Kahilu theater in Waimea and was attended by participants, family members, and support staff and community members. The theme of this year's event was the Oscars. Participants received certificates of recognition for their outstanding achievements and, in addition, each participant received an Oscars award! We extend a big Mahalo to the many people who made this event a success. [Check out the photos!](#)

Upcoming Events

On March 11th, Full Life participant Josie Harding will perform her comedy routine as the opening act for [Dreams of Wonder Magic Show](#) at the Palace Theater in Hilo. The show begins at 2:00 p.m. and tickets are available pre-sale or on the day of the show from the Palace Theater box office. A portion of the proceeds from this event will benefit Full Life and AHA.

On April 7th and 8th, Full Life participants and staff will perform in collaboration with The Seattle Theater Company and East Hawaii Cultural Center in an original stage production, based on Full Life participant Jennifer Poblano's book Fuzzy Land. Showtimes are to be determined.



- Dehstanie Cantebeos became an active member of the Full Life Next Chapter Book Club. She was supported by her DSW, Linda Berry, to read aloud from braille printed books and to teach others about braille.
- Zac Kosak used his technical skills to develop a movie sound effects wikipage
- Preston Buckley, known in his community as Mr. Aloha, is spreading joy at his new dream internship at the Kahilu Theater.
- Shea Burns was supported in the purchase of a golf cart whereby he makes friends by giving people in his neighborhood rides. This has helped him to be fully immersed within his community as he is teaching others about people with disabilities and about self-determination.
- Casey Hayden was hired at Patz Pies in Captain Cook and has taken on progressively more responsibilities. This year he publically honored his employer at Le Lei Kukui (The Lei of Light) workforce development event.
- Jackie Hopf rode a wave on a surf board for the first time at Kahaluu Beach Park with her friends from the Full Life Learning Center.

Full Life Collaborated with Donkey Mill Art Center, Abled Hawai'i Artists, and the County of Hawaii to organize "Pua Na Pua" a celebration of diversity in art. The festival hosted 25 vendors with and without disabilities. Full Life artists generated income and showed their works to hundreds of visitors. 29 West Hawai'i business and individuals donated to the silent auction. The next steps in our partnership is to collaborate on developing art classes and additional outlets for marketing creative works and products.

One of the best Learning Center highlights of this year was the successful induction of a monthly Dental cleaning and education program. Many people have a natural fear of going to the dentist to have their teeth cleaned. This program allowed those individuals to overcome their fears and learn to relax, participate, and even enjoy the process of cleaning their teeth. Additionally, they learned how important dental hygiene is. It has become an event people look forward to participating in each month!

The Next Chapter Book Club has been led by our amazing Barbara Hoist since 2013. A core of 10 committed members with several other occasional visitors attend the group. This year the club picked and read classics such as *Matilda*, *Mary Poppins*, *Pinocchio*, and *Charlotte's Web*. The book Club also read *FuzzyLand* written and illustrated by Jennifer Poblano (Full Life Superstar) and Kat Bellechi (Superstar DSW). It was wonderful to read the book with the author and be able to ask her questions. Jennifer explained the effort it takes to write a book. We hope this inspires other potential authors. Also, this year while Barbara was visiting family on the mainland, two long time book club members took the reins and facilitated the meeting!