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HAWAIʻI COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Connections

Quarterly spotlights on our collective work
for an equitable and thriving Hawaiʻi.

FALL 2023



This newsletter is devoted to updates relating to the

Maui fire relief and recovery efforts through the Maui Strong Fund.

Mahalo to YOU for partnering with us to support Maui.

Reflections, Three Months After the Fires

From Michelle Kaʻuhane,

HCF senior vice president and chief impact officer

In late September, when Lahaina families began returning to what was left

of their homes, the ʻāina (land, earth) they came back to was almost unrecognizable.

As people walked through their charred homes—bundled in head-to-toe personal protective equipment—they also began to run into their neighbors. One resident shared that it was the first time they had seen folks who they used to connect with every day. They exchanged questions: "How's your mother doing? Where are you guys living now?" It made me think: The structures may be gone, but the community is still here.

It was a powerful reminder. The heart and soul of Lahaina lives through the people. No fire, no hurricane, no natural disaster, can take that from us. **Read more of Michelle's reflection here**.



Maui Families Belong on Maui

The affordable housing crisis on Maui has been at a critical point for years now, leading HCF to launch the House Maui Initiative in 2020, with the goal of creating affordable housing solutions on Maui so that local families can continue to call Maui home. On August 8, the fires displaced more than 13,000 families and individuals, shining a brighter spotlight on the already existing housing shortage on the island. **Click here to learn more** about how the fires have affected the House Maui Initiative's work and priorities, going forward.



Malia Purdy, Maui Strong Fund grantee leader, shares her thoughts on how to support people through tragedy

The nonprofit Hui No Ke Ola Pono, a Maui Strong Fund grantee, stepped into action after the fires, operating out of a new location on the west side to provide medical care, social services, and other support for thousands of people affected by the fires. We asked executive director Malia Purdy for her thoughts on what could help support people through this tragedy. **Watch this short 2-minute video** to hear her response.



One HCF Maui Team Member's Experience Responding to Crisis

Inger Tully, HCF's director of philanthropy for Maui County, shares her experiences in the days and weeks after the disaster, including how the Maui community took action to support those who have been impacted, how generous donors around the world responded, and what the greatest needs are right now. **Read the Q&A here**.

Maui Strong Fund Impact Spotlights

Thanks to the outpouring of support from donors, in the three months since the Maui fires, HCF's Maui Strong Fund has distributed more than $32 million in grants to 134 partners doing essential work on the ground on Maui. Below are snapshots that represent the kindness and compassion happening in Maui.



Between August 9 and September 1, 2023, **Common Ground Collective** helped provide over 128,000 meals and 3,000 produce boxes to those affected by the Maui fires.



Hawai‘i Animal Rescue Foundation has been providing food, shelter, and medical care for owned dogs, cats, and farm animals evacuated from fire zones.



Mauliola Pharmacy has been delivering life-saving medications to those who lost everything in the fire, free of charge.



Nā Keiki o Emalia has been offering direct grief support services for children, teens, and families affected by the Maui fires, to help them process and heal.



Pacific Birth Collective has been providing essential care and support to pregnant, birthing, and postpartum families in Lahaina and Kahakuloa who have been displaced and negatively impacted.

In the News: More Maui Strong Fund Impact

Many people across Hawai'i took in Maui individuals and families affected by the fires who needed a place to stay. A new, first-of-its-kind program by HCF, the Red Cross, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, and the County of Maui, called the **Maui Host Housing Support Program**, is putting resources back into the pockets of families housing affected residents. – Maui News

For many affected by the Maui fires, finding childcare has been a top priority, especially as they rejoin the workforce and rebuild toward normalcy. A **new after-school program by the Maui YMCA** is helping to fill the gaps in coverage. –Lahaina News

Maui Strong Fund grantee Spirit Horse Ranch has been offering free emotional health therapy to more than 250 Maui residents affected by the fires, including first responders, using equine treatment. The technique uses **calming and centering exercises with horses** to help children and young adults recover from trauma. –Civil Beat

HCF CEO and president Micah Kane says that **HCF is in the process of moving phases** in its Maui Strong relief efforts, from rapid response to recovery and stabilization, which can often be the most difficult part of a disaster. –Hawai'i Public Radio's The Conversation

After a disaster, relief assistance can come in many forms, but often there is no substitute for the most direct kind of assistance: Cash. Maui United Way, with the support of a Maui Strong Fund grant, has been able to give more than **7,000 fire survivors $1,000 in cash each**, helping them recover in the ways they need most. –Lahaina News

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