

Ohana Happenings

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Makana Pono: Employee Giving Program

JESSECA GUERREIRO,
LICENSED SOCIAL WORKER

ORGANIZATION: ALA KUOLA



During the stay-at-home orders in Hawaii and across the country, there was a drastic increase in domestic violence incidents. During this spike, advocates across the state worked tirelessly to help survivors stay safe through the pandemic. As restrictions ease, their work is ever-important, and Domestic Violence agencies continue to help survivors of violence find safety and hope.

It's because of these agencies and their critically needed services, Islands Hospice Social Worker, Jesseca Guerreiro, is directing her Makana Pono donation to Ala Kuola, an organization that once helped her and her son escape an unsafe relationship. Jesseca's selection of Ala Kuola also happens to coincide with October's Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a time to bring awareness to this serious crime that is often hidden from public view.

"I chose to donate to Ala Kuola, because domestic violence is a hidden problem. Many victims need help," Jesseca explained. "It is a way to give back to an agency that gave me hope when I was a victim of domestic violence."

Ala Kuola advocates for victims of domestic violence, assisting them with obtaining TROs against their perpetrators. They also work to educate the younger generation on self-love, safe love, and healthy relationships.

At Islands Hospice, Jesseca also plays the role of advocate and educator for our ohana. She helps patients and families with their end-of-life wishes and care by offering emotional support and resources to make the process more comfortable.

She remains an advocate for agencies like Ala Kuola who help others, especially those that assist with at-risk populations and minorities.



IH in the Community



Islands Hospice team members volunteered for the H3RC Food drop in Kaneohe and Kakaako last month. They helped to distribute dry goods, fruits, and vegetables to individuals and families in need. Way to go, team!

New Commercials

Be on the lookout for our new commercial airing now on KHON. There is also a special pride-themed commercial that will be airing on Thursday October 15th during the special televised Pride event.

WHEREVER THEY CALL HOME:



PRIDE:



Hospice Hero Town

FRANCIS PEREZ, CNA

In the Philippines, Francis Perez worked as a field service technician for a telecommunications company. Shortly after moving to Hawaii in 2010, he decided to switch course. Although he had never heard of CNAs and their employment opportunities, Francis soon found himself earning his CNA certification and then accepting a position at Avalon Care Center.

It wasn't an easy transition, but he ended up staying with Avalon for almost five years before joining the Islands Hospice team. "In the beginning, I did not like it, but I ended up liking it, and now I really enjoy what I'm doing," Francis recalled.

Francis credits a shift in mindset for his positive outlook. A self-proclaimed "happy person", Francis always attempts to start and end his day with a smile on his face. He has now been with Islands Hospice for over five years, assisting patients with their daily living needs.

Francis developed a long list of special memories from patients over the years and recalls one patient who had a playful demeanor. Francis recalls with fondness, "Every time I said, 'Goodbye' and 'See you on the next visit,' he would reply with a big smile, 'If you're lucky!'"

Francis enjoys spending his free time with his wife and two children, playing video games, toying with RC cars, and watching video blogs about cars.

Francis' advice to his colleagues is simple, "Just stay positive even though many things are happening right now and, be thankful for everything because we don't know what is ahead of us."





Hospice Hero West Oahu

MINAGRACE "GHIA" RAGONOT, RN

Our October West Oahu Hospice Hero, always shows compassion and care for our patients and their families, and works internally to improve Islands Hospice processes. As a registered nurse, Minagrace Ragonot is a critical member of Team Ekahi and cherishes the feeling of family amongst her coworkers.

When her father passed, Minagrace wished she had someone to explain the steps of care and his end of life plan, rather than feeling helpless in the final moments. Through her personal experience, she understands the impact that compassionate care can have on a patient's life and their families. Hence, she strives to give patients the best quality of life and peaceful departure while offering families the support they deserve.

Minagrace was born and raised in the Philippines where she attended nursing school before moving to Oahu. There, she developed a passion for hospice care, largely from seeing families struggle as their loved ones passed with little understanding of the end-of-life process. She spends her days caring for patients and walking families through the care hospice provides. Minagrace says, "A hug and thank you," from her patients and their families are all the inspiration she needs.

Over the last three years, Minagrace has worked with the West Oahu team to brainstorm and exchange ideas on how to provide the best possible care for their patients. "It's the culture of ohana," she explained.

During her spare time, Minagrace enjoys gardening and volunteering for Nursing Advocates Mentors Inc. (NAMI). This organization provides free review classes to foreign graduate nurses who will soon take the NCLEX exam.

Minagrace believes hard work speaks for itself and that her team's achievements are reflected in the impact they make in their patients' and families' lives. She explained, "A person doesn't need recognition to work harder. Let the product of your hard work speak for your achievements."

Volunteer Spotlight



MICHAEL ELABAROZA

For the past three years, Michael Elabaroza has spent his days off volunteering at Islands Hospice, providing musical therapy for patients by singing along with them to some of their favorite songs. While the joy he brings to our patients is irreplaceable, Michael says that our patients give back to him, too.

Before moving to Hawaii and joining Islands Hospice as a volunteer, Michael shared his musical gifts with hospice patients on the mainland for over 20 years. He holds one experience in North Carolina particularly close to his heart. His memory of a family who had just lost their loved one, moments before Michael arrived at their home, and their request that he sing Amazing Grace at their loved one's bedside, is one experience he will never forget. Michael started singing and soon, the whole family joined in. Michael reflects that through music, he was able to bring a sense of peace to this family, and it was a very touching moment for all.

While Michael works as a full-time security guard at the Bishop Museum, he spends a large portion of his time off giving back to the community. On days that he isn't spreading joy through music, you can find him volunteering with Gideon's International, helping to deliver Bibles to hospitals, schools, and prisons. We are fortunate and grateful to have someone as compassionate as Michael, be a part of the Islands Hospice Volunteer team.



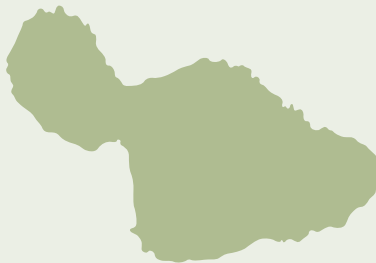
MAUI CORNER



GLORIA BENNETT

Chaplain

Get to know our Maui Team



How long have you worked at Islands Hospice? Eight years

What do you do at Islands Hospice? I provide spiritual and emotional support for patients and their families. During the time patient is on service and after the patient passes.

Describe a typical workday. Check my emails to see who may have had a difficult night, any deaths, new admissions, and then plan my day accordingly. Visit families

Have you held any other positions here? Yes, I started as a nurse.

What is your favorite part about working at Islands Hospice? Being able to provide comfort for people in their time of need.

Do you have any special memories from your time working here? Yes, I remember a couple that was so close that she passed on Thursday, and he passed on Saturday.

What is your background? I am originally from South America. I was raised in the Caribbean until I graduated high school. I have traveled a lot both as a child and as an adult. I have one son and two granddaughters. I have been in Maui for over 20 years and love living here.

Is there anything about your background that inspired you to work at Islands Hospice/in hospice care? Hospice came and found me. I enjoy the end of life care, especially in the capacity of spiritual care.

What do you like to do in your spare time? I love traveling, public speaking, reading, and beach time. I love God and people.

Is there anything else you want to share with your fellow colleagues? My goal as a hospice chaplain is to reduce the fear of dying and bring encouragement and comfort to hurting families.



ASK THE EXPERT



JEN EATON

COO

What's the deal with EQ?

Many people have heard of IQ as a determinant of intelligence. However, many are still learning about emotional intelligence or EQ. Early on in my career, I first came across the term from my former supervisor and organization president. He helped me recognize the importance of EQ while I was managing multiple agencies across several states with a growing family. His mentorship was vital and key towards my personal development of EQ.

In a nutshell, emotional intelligence is generalized awareness for our feelings and the feelings of others. EQ is made up of five pillars:

- **Self-awareness** is understanding your personal needs, challenges, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. What causes personal fears, frustration, or anxiety?
- **Empathy** is understanding the needs, challenges, emotions, and perspectives of others. What are they personally going through?
- **Self-management** is the ability to bring awareness to our personal perspective or intentions, staying calm in emotional situations and fighting impulses of triggered reactions.
- **Motivation** often presents itself as the desire to work with a passion. Why do you do the work you do? What makes you feel appreciated and supported?
- **Social skills** are about communicating and interacting with others while adjusting our behavior during specific situations.

Three ways to raise your EQ

As employees in a highly emotional field, EQ is vital within our roles and the work that we do. As clinicians, we must use EQ to deliver sensitive news and communicate important medical information to our patients and their families. We can all use EQ to connect with colleagues or navigate issues in our personal lives. Here are four simple ways to raise your EQ.

Ask for feedback and deliver it constructively. I like to refer to weaknesses not as weaknesses, but opportunities. We all have opportunities to learn, grow and improve our performance. Be open to receiving feedback about your strengths and opportunities to improve from trusted friends, family, colleagues, and managers. If you are providing feedback, try to understand where the other person is coming from, what obstacles they may be facing, and what additional stresses they might be dealing with.

Practice active listening. In conversations with patients and coworkers, try to communicate with empathy. For example, take the time to ask someone how they are really doing.

Be transparent. Being transparent is not about revealing secrets. It is about communicating openly, honestly and with intention. A vital part of our work is communicating transparently with empathy. Open communication can assist us in reaching solutions and improved processes.

Those who have EQ are often expert communicators and leaders who can improve relationships through solid communication. If we all improve our emotional intelligence, we will be able to better understand our emotions, deliver feedback in a way to provide personal growth, manage and navigate conflicts, and contribute to a positive team culture.

