

Ohana Happenings

OCTOBER 2019

VOLUME 1

Makana Pono: Employee Giving Program



CHERISH AQUINO

Accounts Payable Specialist,
Oahu

NONPROFIT:
'IOLANI SCHOOL

From L to R: Dr. Timothy Cottrell, head of school, 'Iolani School; Caydence Aquino, daughter of Cherish; Cherish Aquino, accounts payable specialist, Islands Hospice.

gave her daughter so much.

Accounts payable specialist and working mother Cherish has been at Islands Hospice for nearly five years,



where she works with business vendors, patients and families on financial matters, ensures billing is completed in a timely manner and assists with other non-clinical operations. However, she admits it can be a challenge to juggle work and raising a family.

Cherish had one wish for her eight-

year-old daughter, Caydence: to give her the opportunity to have an amazing education at a school like 'Iolani.

"When we thought our chances were slim to none, the wonderful administration at 'Iolani School found a way. I chose 'Iolani because of their astonishing scholarship opportunities and generosity to grant families like mine a chance to pursue a quality education for my children," she said.

She is grateful to 'Iolani for providing Caydence with the education and support to help her succeed. As this month's Makana Pono recipient, Cherish has chosen to direct her \$5,000 donation to the school that

"My husband and I can see that 'Iolani is providing the tools to help encourage and strengthen our daughter's passions and skills. Since being a part of the 'Iolani Ohana, her character has illuminated more of her creativity, compassion, perseverance, courage and altruistic spirit through everything she does in and out of school," she said. "There are many wonderful schools in Hawaii, but I am honored to give back to 'Iolani School because of the impact and opportunity they gave my children."

Cherish volunteers for lunch duty, class fieldtrips and class events at 'Iolani, and is also involved with the Wounded Warrior Project. She encourages her colleagues to get involved in causes they are passionate about. "No one can help everyone, but everyone can help someone," she said. "Pay it forward."





Hospice Hero Town

CHRISTINE ROMBAWA, RN

Team E, Oahu

Some people who go into hospice are inspired to do so because of their own experiences with hospice care.



Looking back on her father's time on hospice, Christine Rombawa, RN, remembers three nurses who would make him smile and laugh, even though he felt weak and sick.

"They enhanced the quality of life that he had left, and I thought to myself, I know I can do that for others with the aloha he has given and taught me."

She began her career in the medical field as a certified nurse assistant, then became a registered medical assistant, certified phlebotomist and

certified EKG technician, but it was her father who encouraged her to fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse. On his deathbed, he asked her to promise him she would go back to school to study nursing.

"I asked him, 'Why do you want me to promise you?'" she recalled. "He replied, 'I know you... you have plenty aloha and you're gonna make people feel better.'"

He was right. Christine graduated from KCC nursing school with honors and decided to go into hospice care to enhance the lives of patients like those three nurses who helped her father before he passed.

Christine joined Islands Hospice three years ago as a registered nurse for Team E. She feels privileged to work with people from many different backgrounds, ethnicities, cultural and religious beliefs. Providing care to her patients is rewarding and fulfilling. "If I can bring some of God's love, light, happiness, comfort, and even joy to my patients and families lives, I have done my job, done it well, and the rewards are eternal," Christine said.

Born and raised in Kaneohe, Christine still lives on the Windward side. She has three children and a grandson and enjoys making memories with them in her free time. Spending time with her loved ones is extremely important to her, and she counts her patients as part of her family.

"I treat my patients and families as if they are a part of my own ohana. I feel it brings them a special kind of comfort because they feel the aloha I have for them," she said.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Holidays

Thanksgiving

11/28/19

Christmas Day

12/25/19

Upcoming Events

Islands Hospice Remembrance Ceremony

10/26/19 4:00pm,

Central Union Church Women's Building

Christmas Party

12/14/19

TBD

New Employees

Glory Martin, QAPI

Kim Pavic, Clinical Liaison

Karen Wilhite, NP

Kwanza Washington, NP

Malia Woolsey, RN

Freddisha Williams, DCSA

Ryan Viernes, RN

Laura Ishioka, RN

Malanie Retotal, RN

Carol Stomberg, QAPI

Archie Antonio, CNA





Hospice Hero West Oahu

YOJANA TSUI, APRN
Traditional Care Nurse

When Yojana Tsui first started working at Islands Hospice more than five years ago as a hospice RN case manager, she admits she had no idea what hospice or case management meant.



However, within a couple of days, she knew this was exactly where she belonged.

"I like caring for patients, listening to their stories, and crying with them. Hospice and palliative care is my home!" she said.

Yojana also worked as a supportive care RN case manager and clinical liaison before transitioning to her

current role, Transitional Care nurse. Transitional Care involves educating patients and coordinating their care. Yojana visits patients in the community and at home, listens to their needs and works with insurance companies, health care providers, social workers, liaisons and other members of the care team.

"I absolutely love each and every one of my coworkers," she said. "I work with wonderful individuals who have the biggest heart for the people in need and I am humbled every day by the amount of love and care they give to our patients out in the community. It's all about the teamwork!"

She recalls one patient who was in pain for months but did not want to question their provider's treatment plan. Yojana listened to the patient and encouraged them to visit an oncologist. After several visits, the

patient finally agreed to seek a second opinion and was diagnosed with early-stage cancer. Without the who program, Yojana says the patient may have waited too long to see a doctor and had far less treatment options.

Although her job keeps her busy, Yojana has managed to balance work with continuing her education. She earned her Master of Science in nursing from the University of Hawaii, and recently earned her post-master's adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner certificate from Hawaii Pacific University and is working toward her board exam. Being a nurse practitioner will enable her to expand her role and provide an even higher level of care to her patients.

Caring for people is Yojana's biggest passion. In 2016, she started a small children's home in Nepal, where she was born, to provide a place for children and their caregivers who don't have anywhere else to go. She enjoys spending time with her husband and two sons and considers her patients at Islands Hospice her extended family.

"I tend to get attached to [my patients]. I am always blessed more in return by their love, generosity and open arms," Yojana said. "They look forward to my visits and I look forward to visiting them."





Volunteer Spotlight

VICTORIA HALLETT
Oahu

The simple act of companionship can make a huge difference in the lives of patients. For UH Manoa student Victoria Hallett, volunteering as a companion is a way for her to make her mark and help families through a difficult process.

Victoria has been an Islands Hospice volunteer for two years. She provides companionship to patients at assisted living facilities and helps families with bereavement support.

"I feel that adult caregivers have such a tough job. Having some support and guaranteed company for

their loved one means they can take a short break without worrying," she said.

Volunteer companions like Victoria play an important role in fulfilling Islands Hospice's mission. Often, patients that are alone most of the day look forward to moments when they can talk with a companion, sharing stories about their lives, recalling happy memories and reflecting on their past.

Volunteers of all ages may find they share similarities or shared interests with patients, creating a special connection. Victoria remembers a patient she visited regularly who had grown up in the same area of Moiliili. They would chat about how the town had changed and what shops were still there.

Spending a few hours every month chatting with patients gives her a sense of fulfillment and inspires her to keep volunteering. "I get the sense that I'm genuinely helping out, even in my small way," she said.

Appreciation Breakfast



Mahalo for joining us at the Employee Appreciation Breakfast on 9/14 at the Sheraton Waikiki.





ASK THE EXPERT

BY: AGNES VILLANUEVA, RN
QAPI Director
West Oahu

The Power of Positivity in the Workplace

Maintaining a positive outlook can make our jobs feel less like work and more like a meaningful experience. It can also help us create a more positive experience for our patients, their families and our co-workers.

However, it can be difficult to stay positive when dealing with death, grief, and the added stresses and frustrations that come with any line of work. Focusing on mindset is key to thinking positively and resisting negative thoughts or influences. All around us, external factors are affecting our lives, but only we have the power to decide how we're going to feel about them. When life is so short, why spend our time feeling negative when we can focus on the positive instead?

A positive mindset can help overcome many challenges. Here are a few ways to stay positive and pass your optimistic outlook on to your colleagues, patients and family.

Write down three things you are grateful for every day. Get into the habit of reflecting on what you are thankful for, no matter how big or small. Make this part of your daily

routine and you will soon begin to see that your life is filled with positive influences.

Release your negative emotions.

Feeling overwhelmed, sad, angry or frustrated is perfectly human, but you don't need to spread negativity or take your emotions out on others. Acknowledge what you are feeling, but don't dwell on it. Step outside for a second, take a deep breath and take a break.

Practice counterfactual thinking.

When something really bad happens, try to think about what could have happened, instead. For example, if your home got broken into and your TV and money were stolen, you'd be upset. But what if someone had gotten hurt? What if your sentimental items had been taken? Thinking about what might have been worse can help you see the positive side of a situation.

Be nice. Take a moment to be conscientious of your own body language and how you're communicating. Are you saying hi to your colleagues in the morning? Are you smiling, acknowledging

them and making them feel important throughout the day? The simple act of being nice can easily be taken for granted, but it makes a big difference.

Be generous with gratitude. Saying "thank you" doesn't cost a thing.

Try to be specific — what are you thanking that person for and how did it make a difference to you? That will make it more meaningful than a generic "Thanks!"

Don't bring negativity into a situation. We've all dealt with difficult patients or family members and may dread interacting with them, but that can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Let go of your preconceived notions and approach each situation with positivity.

Practice empathy. You never know what a person is going through. In hospice, patients and their families often feel lost and confused by what's going on and you may be the one to bear the brunt of their emotions. Listen, offer support and be empathetic. It will make all the difference in helping them through a difficult time.

