

# Ohana Happenings

DECEMBER 2019

ISSUE 4

## Makana Pono: Employee Giving Program

“Since I’ve learned about Islands’ giving program, I always wished that I’d get to show up to someone’s job with a check that would change lives.”



ANGEL FAUMUI  
Administrative Assistant,  
Town

NONPROFIT:  
CUP OF WATER OUTREACH  
CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

From L to R: Angel Faumui,  
Baby Theo, Lealoa and  
Eugene Lee Piliati

This month, Angel Faumui is doing just that. As December’s Makana Pono recipient, she has chosen to direct her donation to the church she’s attended since she was a teen — the Cup of Water Outreach Church of the Nazarene in Ewa Beach.

The Cup of Water Outreach is near and dear to Angel’s heart. At less than 50 members, it isn’t the largest congregation, but that has not deterred the church from fulfilling its mission to help others in need. Angel has been a big part of that. Since middle school, she has served the church in various ways: as a youth leader, praise and worship singer, board member and treasurer.

Helping people comes naturally to Angel, and as the administrative assistant for Islands Hospice’s town office, it is an integral part of her job. “I am the first face you see when you walk in and the last when you walk out,” she said. She speaks with patients, families, pharmacies, insurance companies, doctors’ offices and mortuaries. She assists the supply department, payroll and benefits, and many other areas. “I have to do my best to support both the office and medical field staff, so they can better serve our patients and families.”

Her \$5,000 donation will help the church help those in need in its community. “If you’re struggling with personal issues, the Pastor intercedes for you and counsels you through your

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## Hospice Hero Town

GRACE GALAPON, CNA

*Like many of her colleagues at Islands Hospice, Grace Galapon, CNA, found her calling in hospice care through a personal experience.*

"I was first exposed to hospice when my mother needed services. My family definitely benefited from the experience," she said. "It has shaped the way I care for my own patients."

After graduating from high school, Grace immediately went down the path to becoming a CNA to assist

her family with their Community Care Foster Family Home, which provides care for up to three individuals in a family environment. As fate would have it, she found her career path incredibly rewarding and has been a CNA ever since.

Grace starts her day early, commuting into town to see the majority of her patients in the morning. Sometimes she stops mid-day to pick up supplies before completing her patient visits in the afternoon. She helps with personal care, emotional support and activities of daily living, including bathing.

"A good number of my patients remember that I always wear a bandana around my head when I help them with their showers and baths. One Christmas a patient gifted me with a handmade red floral print bandana so I could use it during my visits," she recounted. It's one of her most special memories from her seven years working at Islands Hospice.

She acknowledges that the support and encouragement of her colleagues has kept her at Islands Hospice for so long. "It's nice to know that the people you work with are rooting for you to be the best you can be with our patients and are willing to lend a helping hand."

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trials. If you need food and money, the board members of The Cup of Water Outreach will do their best in assisting you are making sure your needs are met," said Angel. "The church has gone out of its way for the less fortunate through feeding, toy giving, prayer meetings, counseling sessions, and all this is done out of pocket."

Giving back has always been a part of Angel's life. She used to be involved with Toys for Tots and Helping Hands, and she also helped make breakfast and provide meals for homeless individuals. Since she works two jobs, she isn't able to volunteer as much as she would like, but still regularly attends the Cup of Water Outreach.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### Upcoming Holidays

Christmas Day  
December 25

### Upcoming Events

Winter Gala  
(End of the Year Party)  
December 14  
6:00 pm  
Royal Hawaiian

### New Employees

Scott Ferrin  
Rachael Smith  
Kanoa Lee

With her Makana Pono donation, Angel is grateful to give back to the church that she says has given so much to her over the years. "Everything I've seen growing up in this church and seeing the impact was enough for me to decide that this is where I'd like to sow what I've reaped. I'm not perfect, but I can honestly say that I wouldn't be the person I am if it wasn't for the teachings of this church."





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## ***Hospice Hero*** ***West Oahu***

ROMELYN AGONoy, RN

Registered Nurse

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***Sometimes, making a connection is all about speaking the right language.***

Romelyn Agonoy, RN, had a patient whose family couldn't communicate in English, but fortunately, she spoke the same dialect as them and was able to provide support and comfort.

"I learned that we are remembered and appreciated not because of the amount of education we provide or medications we administer, but because of our loving presence," she said.

Born and raised in the Philippines, Romelyn always knew she wanted to be a nurse. She left the country at 21 to pursue her dream, but after her father passed away, she was forced to put her career on hold so she could support her family. She worked two to three jobs, sending money back home, so her younger siblings could go to school. "My struggles motivated me to work my way up from a CNA to an LVN, then to an RN."

She was working as an RN at another facility when an Islands Hospice nurse came by to care for a patient. "I witnessed how she took great care of her patients and their families and made sure her patients' comfort was a priority. I was like, 'I want to do that, too!'" she said. "Just in time, I was looking for a change in specialty."

That was a year and a half ago. Now, the nurse she admired at her previous job is her colleague. Romelyn is grateful for the team she works with, who feels like family. "My supervisor is like our mother and my colleagues are like my siblings. Everybody makes each other feel accepted, supported, and appreciated."

Although the days can be long, driving to visit five or more patients a day, staying as long as needed to provide care and comfort, Romelyn is glad to be where she is.

"This profession is not easy and can be emotionally draining, but being able to support people through the most difficult time of their life is beyond fulfilling. It makes what I do more than just a job and me more than just a nurse."



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## ***Volunteer Spotlight***

RALPH KAHALEHAU, LANI KAHALEHAU

& ALLAN KANESHIRO

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A trio of volunteers are sharing their love of music with Islands Hospice patients. Ralph Kahalehau, Lani Kahalehau, and Allan Kaneshiro recently started performing musical ministry to bring some joy to patients receiving hospice in care homes.

Allan was inspired to start performing after he helped his own family members find peace and joy in their final days. "I was able to reach them through music," he said. "I had a desire to share that ministry with others."

The volunteers perform approximately twice a month at different care homes throughout Oahu. They perform songs that patients remember and stay to talk story with patients and staff after their performance.

Seeing the patients smile, laugh, sing and keep time with the music is especially rewarding. "I knew a patient that had rarely responded to singing and music in her days before she became ill," Allan recalled. "When we started to perform, she became excited and started to clap her hands in time with the music. We knew that she felt joy in that moment. That was special."





## ASK THE EXPERT

CHRISTINA ANDERSON

Intake Coordinator

### *It Really is All About the Patient*



*Sometimes the stresses of paperwork, phone calls and policies can fill our day and leave us feeling overwhelmed.*

During these times, it can be helpful to remember who we serve and why the work we do is so important. It really is all about our patients.

Some of us at Islands Hospice spend most of our time caring for patients, so keeping their needs front and center is always top of mind. Some of us may have roles that interact more with families, referral sources, care providers and others in the community. While every job is important, those of us who don't see patients all the time can find our focus shifting to other things — what will result in less paperwork? What does the doctor's office or hospital want me to do?

*Put the focus back on our patients with these tips:*

#### **1. Exceed expectations**

Often, when patients and families come to us, they don't know exactly what to expect. They believe hospice care is just about making the patient comfortable. While this may be true, we can also do more. We can celebrate their birthday or ask a volunteer to put in an extra visit to provide companionship. We can look for little ways to exceed their expectations and make their day better.

Once, a referral came to us for a patient who was living in a warehouse/garage, and the family wasn't sure if he would be able to receive hospice care in his home. We went out to see him as soon as possible to ensure his environment was safe to provide care, and we were able to admit him. It was a little unorthodox, but we were able to honor his wishes to stay at home.

#### **2. Build a relationship with your patients and family**

In order to bring the focus back to our patients, we need to know them — not just what their chart says, but what makes them happy, how their families prefer to receive information, etc. Spending time to talk with patients and family members to build those relationships makes a huge difference in making their experience meaningful and bringing them comfort.

It doesn't matter whether you are a nurse that cares for patients every day or a care coordinator that only sees patients in passing. Make our patients feel like they are at the center of your world.

#### **3. Attitude is everything**

Focusing on the patient can sometimes require us to go above and beyond, but it often only takes a few more minutes out of our day to make a world of difference. If we can do anything to bring them comfort, peace and dignity in their final days, it's well worth it.

When you have a heavy workload or a hard day, take a moment to put yourself in the shoes of your patients and their families, as much as possible. Think about what they're going through. Sometimes a shift in attitude can help push us through our difficult days to be at our best for our patients. Because what we do is all about them.

