



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

**NEIL ABERCROMBIE**  
GOVERNOR

---

LORETTA J. FUDDY, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.  
DIRECTOR  
Phone: (808) 586-4410  
Fax: (808) 586-4444

---

For Immediate Release: July 19, 2013

13-043

**DOH SELECTS EMPLOYEE, MANAGER AND TEAM OF THE YEAR**

HONOLULU -- The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has selected Gary Ueunten as the department's 2013 Employee of the Year, Ron Balajadia as the Manager of the Year, and Tropic Care Kauai as the Team of the Year. These three department winners will go on to compete for the state awards at the Governor's Awards ceremony in October 2013.

Gary Ueunten is an environmental health specialist with the DOH Kauai District Health Office. Gary has been instrumental in enforcement actions related to water quality. His collection of data was critical to successful collaborations between the county, state and federal agencies that resulted in appropriate enforcement actions. Ueunten was commended in his nomination for his work in monitoring Japan tsunami debris.

Ron Balajadia is a public health program manager with the DOH Disease Outbreak Control Division. Balajadia oversees all aspects of the statewide operations of the Stop Flu at School program and was responsible for the planning phase and monitoring of temperatures of vaccine shipments. He also oversees the production of the Hawaii Vaccine for Children News, a quarterly newsletter from the Immunization Branch that provides information on immunization to Vaccine for Children Providers; as well as the Hawaii Immunization Registry, which provides information to the public through their healthcare providers.

The Tropic Care Kauai team was a collaborative effort centered on providing free professional medical services to residents on Kauai – but most importantly the medically underserved

(more)

populations. The seeds of this massive operation were planted in 2010 when the Kauai District Health Office drafted, designed and submitted an ambitious proposal to the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) group at the Pentagon. The benefits to Kauai residents were valued in excess of \$7 million.

The DOH conducts an annual awards ceremony each year to recognize employees who have excelled at leadership, teamwork and public service over the previous year. Nominations of those who demonstrated superior service are submitted by subordinates, peers and supervisors both within and outside of the department.

###

For more information regarding this news release, contact:

Jan Munemitsu  
Personal Management Specialist  
Human Resources Office  
Hawaii State Dept. of Health  
Phone: (808) 586-7395