



Ola Lokahi

Creating a Healthy Hawaii Together

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Emerging Public Health Nursing Leadership to Nurture Healthy Communities in Hawaii



“My philosophy is to help individuals and families reconnect with their sense of place and culture in order to reconnect with health. In working with communities, we work towards strengthening their voice. How we strengthen their voice is through listening before we respond.” Joan Takamori

When **Joan Takamori** talks, people listen. Joan is the chief of DOH’s Public Health Nursing Branch in the Communicable Disease and Public Health Nursing Division. She speaks from 28 years of dedicated work in Public Health Nursing (PHN), 15 as a Public Health Nurse on the North Shore, 10 years promoting PHN staff development within the branch, and 3 years as the branch chief. She knows Hawaii, its story and its people.

Joan was recently selected by the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to participate in their Public Health Nurse Leaders program. Only 25 nurses are selected nationwide. The Foundation notes, “The two-year leadership development program is designed to strengthen the capacity of senior public health nurses to improve population health, address social determinants of health, respond to emerging trends in health and health care, influence policy, and lead collaboration in their communities.” Joan is already engaged in many of these issues and public health nurses are well equipped to be improve population health, address social determinants of health, lead community collaboration and engage important facets of public health delivery.



The goal of RWJF is to “strive to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come.” Joan Takamori’s philosophy of nursing is in keeping with this objective and is well grounded in the culture of the islands, as she remarked, “My philosophy is to help individuals and families reconnect with their sense of place and culture in order to reconnect with health. In working with communities, we work towards strengthening their voice. How we strengthen their voice is through listening before we respond.”

Joan Takamori is well respected by her staff and everyone she works with. She is a natural team builder. She believes and practices respect, communication and teamwork. Summing up her perspective, Joan says, “My message in transforming our practice is strengthening partnerships, better collaboration, breaking down the walls within our own department. In working with other DOH programs, other departments, other community organizations, we work towards the best interest of people regardless of what program, department or agency we work within.”

Joan’s ability to talk story and network with people and organizations is legendary. Her selection, and participation in RWJF’s prestigious Public Health Nurse Leaders program is an investment that will benefit the people of Hawaii.