



EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING

**News Release**

**NEIL ABERCROMBIE**  
GOVERNOR

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For Immediate Release: May 3, 2013

13-025

**HAWAII HONORS SENIOR VOLUNTEERS DURING OLDER AMERICANS MONTH**

HONOLULU – Moments after proclaiming May “Older Americans Month” in Hawaii, Gov. Neil Abercrombie today recognized Betty Chieko Goya and John McGuire of Honolulu, two of eight exemplary kupuna selected from across the state to represent each of the four counties for their outstanding contributions to the wellness and quality of life of their individual communities.

“We celebrate Older Americans Month each year to recognize the vitality of older adults and their outstanding contributions to our communities,” Gov. Abercrombie said. “Each of the 2013 Older Americans Award honorees from across our state embodies this year’s national Older Americans Month theme, ‘Unleash the Power of Aging!’ Kupuna are taking on new roles in retirement. The people of Hawaii appreciate and thank them for their continuing service.”

Each of the counties hosts local events to recognize their noteworthy kupuna. Honolulu hosted an event on April 19. The Hawaii County honorees, Shirley Ito and Pete Hoffman were recognized on May 2. The Maui County and Kauai County honorees will be announced on May 7 and 9, respectively, at local events.

“Older Americans Month celebrations acknowledge the value that older adults continue to bring to our communities by making an effort to applaud recent achievements of local kupuna and inviting them to share the activities they do to unleash the power of age,” said Wes Lum, executive director of the state Executive Office on Aging. “Older Americans contribute essential

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services volunteering at meal sites and delivering meals to homebound seniors; they serve as escorts and provide transportation for older adults who cannot drive; they assist with home repair, shopping and errands; and they provide information and referral services. Their enthusiasm and commitment reminds all of us, not just senior citizens and their caregivers, to do their part to enhance the quality of life for all Americans.”

In Hawaii, kupuna are living longer and more active lives. There were more than 195,000 people age 65 years or older in 2010, about 14 percent of the total state population. The percentage is anticipated to increase to a remarkable 25 percent in the year 2035 while the proportion of those 85 years of age and older is expected to double. Life expectancy in Hawaii of 80.5 years of age is higher than the U.S. overall life expectancy, which is 76.8 years.

This month, communities across the nation will recognize older Americans as productive, active, and influential members of society. These celebrations will recognize the value that older adults continue to bring to communities through spirited participation in social and faith groups, service organizations, and other activities.

For more information contact, the Executive Office on Aging at (808) 586-0100 and local Area Agency on Aging by visiting the Aging and Disability Resource Center at [www.hawaiiadrc.org](http://www.hawaiiadrc.org), or call (808) 643-2372 to find ongoing opportunities to celebrate and support older Americans.

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