



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE

GOVERNOR

VIRGINIA PRESSLER, MD

DIRECTOR

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FALL PREVENTION CONSORTIUM AWARD
FOUR INDIVIDUALS FOR REDUCING FALLS AMONGST HAWAII'S SENIORS**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health's (DOH) Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch and the Fall Prevention Consortium announced today the recipients of the Annual Fall Prevention Awards for Outstanding Community Service. Four individuals were presented with special trophies and proclamations for their service. The Plaza at Moanalua was a sponsor of the awards.

In Hawaii, a senior is transported to an emergency room due to an injury from a fall almost every hour each day. This equates to more than 8,050 falls per year. The toll in human suffering is staggering. Each year, the Fall Prevention Consortium identifies individuals who exhibit unique and passionate dedication to reduce the number and severity of injuries from senior falls, and honors their efforts to promote fall prevention initiatives in Hawaii.

"Fall injuries are tragic events for families throughout the year, but especially difficult for families during the holiday season," said Alvin C. Bronstein MD, FACEP, Chief of DOH's Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch.

This year's honorees are:

Lynn Sialana, Occupational Therapist, Veteran's Administration (VA)

Lynn is an Occupational Therapist with the Veteran's Administration (VA) who sees every challenge as an opportunity. As part of the Home Based Primary Care Program, Lynn spends a great deal of time caring for her clients both on Oahu and on the neighbor islands. Truly one of the great Fall Prevention ambassadors, Lynn never fails to show up if help is needed and willingly volunteers her expertise and assistance.

"Lynn is one of those rare individuals that truly can anticipate needs and steps forward without hesitation to fulfill those needs with rare skills and compassion," said Michael Dowell, Chair, Hawaii State Fall Prevention Consortium. "Thousands of kupuna have experienced first-hand how her smile can light up the room and make everyone happy to be there."

Mike Hirano, Home Safety Coordinator, Project Dana

Mike has been the Home Safety Coordinator with Project Dana since 2007. He started at Project Dana in 2001 as a volunteer assistant for the elderly, where he performed a wide range of services, from grocery shopping to respite for caregivers. His role has grown immensely, and he utilizes his knowledge of home safety to provide unique fall prevention resources for seniors. Mike's coordination has also helped to grow the program's volunteer base, which makes substantial contributions to Hawaii's seniors.

"You can hear the compassion for the seniors he works with in the tone of voice, and read it in his eyes, that he loves the works he does and truly cherishes the seniors he works with," said Rose Nakamura, Director, Project Dana. "Mike is a true gift to our community."

Rachelle Bachran, Health Educator, Kauai District Health Office

As a health educator with the department's Kauai District Health Office, Rachelle is involved with almost every fall prevention activity on her island. She assists the Kauai Fire Department with their Home Safety Assessment for Seniors program, Nordic Walking Classes, countless health fairs, and even Pickleball when time allows. As a Certified Instructor in Tai Chi for Health, a certification eligible for 13 continuing education credits from the American College of Sports Medicine, she also supports all tai chi classes offered at Kauai County Parks and Recreation and the many seniors who participate.

"Rachelle is a giving and compassionate health care professional working, and under her guidance, Kauai Fall Prevention has grown to be one of the finest neighbor island programs out there," said Ileina Ferrier, Master Trainer, Tai Chi for Health Institute. "Rachelle is a winner and we are grateful for all she does."

Walt Schroeder, Director, Transitional and Senior Care Strategy, Kaiser Permanente Hawaii

Walt is being honored for his dedication to preventing senior falls. He has devoted hours helping guide and evaluate various senior falls prevention programs within the Kaiser Permanente framework. Walt and his team integrated DOH within high level pilot programs like SWITCH, prioritized member preferences while creating new care plans, promoted Tai Chi for Health classes within Kaiser Permanente clinics, leveraged national support for a "home safety video" to serve its members, and attained a large grant from Kaiser Permanente to support DOH's and KHON Prime Time TV Special, "Fall Prevention: Securing Seniors Safety and Independence."

"We are very lucky that Walt had the ability and foresight to envision programs that would benefit Hawaii's seniors," said Stanley Michaels, Senior Fall Prevention Specialist, DOH. "We are eternally grateful to Walt and his team for guiding these initiatives to fruition."

Department of Health Acknowledges The Plaza at Moanalua

DOH awarded a special Fall Prevention Perpetual Trophy to honor the Plaza's dedication to preventing falls.

"The Plaza at Moanalua is pleased to help honor these selfless individuals that have dedicated so much of their lives to assist our kupuna with living safer and more independent lives," said Shannon Miyazaki, Administrator of The Plaza at Moanalua, which sponsors and supports a number fall prevention initiatives, including Tai Chi for Health Instructor (TCHI) workshops.

More Information

For a complete summary of the fall prevention campaign, to view a special video for seniors and/or their care-givers, and to see a recap of all the accomplishments please click on www.nogethurt.hawaii.gov and scroll to fall prevention campaign.

For further information and if you would like to get involved, contact Stan Michaels with DOH's EMS Injury Prevention Program at (808) 733-9202 or stanley.michaels@doh.hawaii.gov.

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