

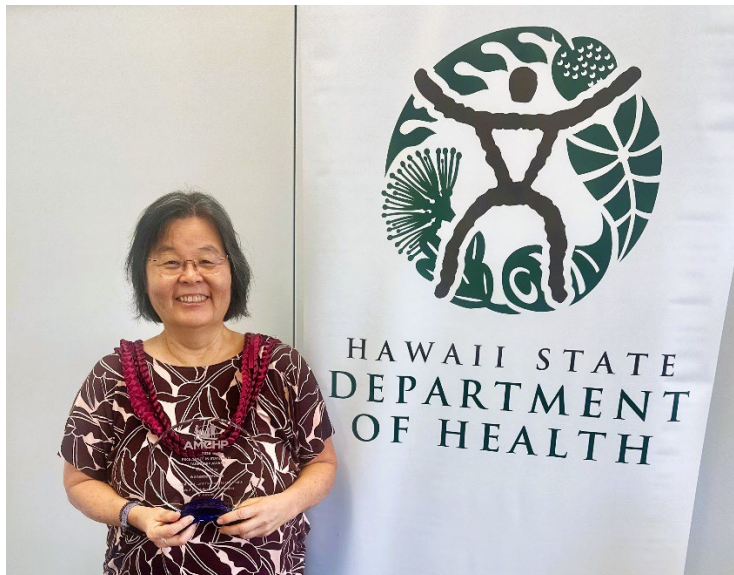
STATE OF HAWAI'I
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAI'I

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KE KIA'ĀINA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

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**DOH ANNOUNCES ANNETTE MENTE
AS 2026 AMCHP LEADERSHIP AWARD RECIPIENT**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2026

HONOLULU — The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Family Health Services Division (FHSD) is proud to announce that Annette Mente has been selected as the recipient of the 2026 [Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs \(AMCHP\)](#) Excellence in State Maternal and Child Health Leadership Award. The award recognizes her more than 25 years of leadership and service in strengthening the maternal and child health (MCH) system in Hawai'i.

As the FHSD Title V planner, Mente has played a central role in advancing statewide MCH initiatives, coordinating the annual Title V Report and guiding the FHSD through significant transitions — including economic downturns and the COVID-19 pandemic — while ensuring continuity of essential services.

“Annette has been a steady, knowledgeable and compassionate leader in maternal and child health,” said Matthew Shim, FHSD chief. “Her commitment to equity and Hawai'i families has strengthened our entire MCH system.”

A champion for health equity, Mente has played a pivotal role in ensuring that FHSD programs remain firmly centered on the needs of priority communities. She convened the division's ad hoc health equity committee and helped ensure data collection efforts continued to illuminate critical disparities to guide more equitable decision-making across the division's diverse programs.

Mente also helped strengthen collaboration with community-based partners, fostering relationships that advance culturally grounded and community-driven public health efforts. She has advanced family engagement by establishing the division Title V Family Engagement Workgroup and supporting parent leadership initiatives that elevate lived experience in public health decision making.

“Annette leads with trust, relationships and deep accountability to community,” said Tellie Matagi, Tagata Moana Hui Foundation executive director. “In places where systems have fallen short, her steady presence, active listening and partnership have helped create responses that are more grounded, culturally aligned and sustainable. This recognition reflects not only her leadership, but the collective strength and collaboration across our communities.”

Mente is known for her commitment to workforce development, supporting emerging MCH professionals, strengthening partnerships with the University of Hawai'i and connecting staff with national leadership development opportunities through AMCHP and the National MCH Workforce Development Center.

“I’m grateful for this recognition,” Mente said. “Our progress in maternal and child health reflects the dedication of our staff, partners and the families whose experiences guide our work.”

To learn more about DOH maternal and child health initiatives, visit the [Title V program page](#).

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