

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



## DR. TIMOTHY KALE

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### **A mission to help disadvantaged kids in Hawaii succeed with basic vision testing**

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"I'll put them in front of my window during an eye exam, put the lenses up, and you just see their whole face light up because they never saw the leaves on the trees before," Dr. Kale says. "One little girl came up to me and said, you know, there's lines in between the telephone poles. All she saw before were the poles, not the lines."

Hawaii does not require any type of vision screening in schools, which has come at a high cost, Dr. Kale says, especially on the rural outer islands where many families are on public assistance.

"Many of our keiki cannot achieve the academic success that they are capable of simply because they have problems seeing at a distance or reading comfortably," Dr. Kale says. Over time, he says, poor vision can affect confidence, self-image and can contribute to behavioral problems.

"In my experience, about five percent of the kids I've screened in a class have vision problems," Dr. Kale says. "But take that five percent in one class and multiply that by the number of children in every school, year after year, and it adds up."

"By giving a child a chance to flourish in school, it not only helps the child succeed in life but positively affects our whole island community in the long term," Dr. Kale says.

### **A mission to provide screening kits to 125 schools**

To help these keiki, Dr. Kale and his staff started the nonprofit Na Maka Apau ("Eyes that see forever") two years ago. The need for such an organization became apparent when