

What does Kaiser Mean to Me?



Growing up in Hawaii Kai my entire life, I looked forward to one day attending Kaiser High School. Now I am here in my senior year, reflecting on my last 4 years as a student. I have learned what it means to be part of a family of diverse individuals--the Cougar 'Ohana. Family can be interpreted in so many different ways, and not always about blood--instead, working together, supporting, and respecting one another.

Throughout high school, I was a member of the Kaiser Marching and Symphonic Band. With this group, I first hand experienced coming together with others to create something special--music. I felt that the true beauty of music shone through when playing as a collective. The sounds of different instruments blend to create a range of emotions, from pleasant harmonies to dark tones. However, none of this could be accomplished without the contributions of individuals to the ensemble-- similar to how a family relies on one another for support. The band was also always involved at sports events, graduation, and community parades, showcasing endless support from one Cougar to another.

In my sophomore year, I joined the Wipeout Crew—a student-led environmental club based at Kaiser. With this group, I joined with others from the school and community to tackle an array of environmental issues like plastic pollution, climate change, coral bleaching, invasive plants, and pesticidal farming to raise awareness and spark changes. Through all these opportunities to work with others, I have learned that any problem, big or small, can be faced with the help of others. Wipeout Crew has not only been a learning experience for me, but also

one of bonding. Our club is inclusive of everyone-- no matter our different backgrounds, working together towards the same goals.

In the summer of 2020, I started a booth at the Kaiser Market with my friend. It takes a lot of hard work to prepare for the market--frying poi mochi, making li hing mui lemon peel gummies, and hand painting rocks. With the support of my community, I have kept coming back every week with more products. Selling at the market has broadened my idea of family-- members of the Kaiser community--students, parents, faculty, and neighbors, come together every Tuesday to support local business vendors. I have had many repeat customers who return because they love my food. The aloha that I feel from others inspires me to reflect it back and share it with the people that I meet.

Being in this Kaiser family has, and continues to teach me valuable lessons. I was given many opportunities to become involved in my community, connecting myself to new people and ideas. Over the years, I have felt an endless amount of love and support from all different areas of Kaiser. I have grown under the influence of the aloha spirit, and pass on this positivity to others that I encounter. Kaiser is and will always be my second family.