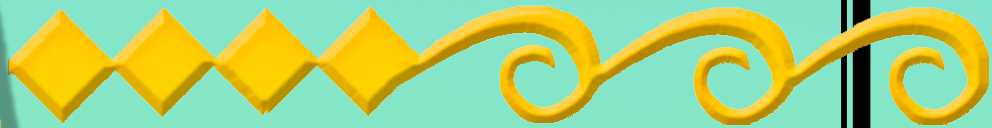




TOFA 22nd

Scholarship & Fundraiser Luau



Saturday, September 23rd, 2023

9014 Bruceville Rd, Elk Grove, CA 95758

Thank you to our sponsors:





Congratulations TOFA

on a successful

22nd Annual Scholarship & Fundraising Luau!

Asian Resources, Inc. is thrilled to support our Pacific Islander community in Sacramento



Asian Resources, Inc. (ARI) is a nonprofit community-based organization established in 1980 dedicated to providing multiple social services needed in our community and empowering everyone we serve to become a vital part of our changing, diverse society

Services We Offer

- Job Search
- Resume Building
- Mock Interviews
- Cover Letter Assistance
- Paid Youth Work Experience
- Direct Placement
- Individual Training Assistance
- Refugee On-the-Job-Training (OJT)
- Career Pathways
- Career Coaching
- Youth Programs
- Hate Crime Prevention & Intervention
- ESL/VESL Classes
- Citizenship Classes
- Free Tax Preparations
- Medi-Cal Enrollments
- CoveredCA Enrollments
- Immigration Services



AsianResourcesInc



AsianResourcesI



asianresourcesinc



www.asianresources.org

Malo e lelei, Talofa lava, Bula, Kiaora, Hafadai, Yokwe, Ia Orana, Halo ola keta, Fakalofa lahi atu, and Aloha!

On behalf of To'utupu 'oe 'Otu Felenite Association (TOFA) Inc. translated means Youth Leaders of the Pacific; we welcome you to the TOFA 22nd Annual Luau & Scholarship Fundraiser. Thank you for your support of this signature event.

The mission of TOFA is to preserve and enhance the Pacific Islander Community in the Greater Sacramento Region by providing resources that support and promote Health and Wellness, Higher Education, Community Leadership Opportunities, Civil Rights Awareness and Cultural Arts.

23 years ago, TOFA was formed as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization to provide a much-needed resource to the Greater Sacramento Pacific Islander community for issues related to education and the law. In 2023, TOFA continues to advocate for Pacific Islanders, and build upon the progress our community has made in becoming uplifting, productive, and contributing members of society.

Tonight, we will award scholarships to ten recipients in pursuit of higher education. We want to encourage these students to complete their studies and with their education and experiences, take an active leadership role in serving their communities.

Many thanks to all our partners, sponsors and donors who supported this event. Their sponsorship helped made this program possible. Our sponsors include InspirASIAN, Cosumnes Community Services District, Asian Resources, Lucy & John Oback, C.A.P.I.T.A.L and the Palu family.

I want to personally thank our volunteer board members, parents and many others for helping to make this event a success. I hope you enjoy this evening's program.

Sincerely,
Lisa Hafoka
TOFA President



Thank You to Our Supporters

Diamond:



Silver:

Asian Resources Inc



InspirASIAN

Palu Family

Gold:

Empowering Pacific Islander
Communities (EPIC)

John & Lucy Oback

Table:

C.A.P.I.T.A.L

'Perspective Builders

Full Circle Project

Sacramento City Councilmember Mai Vang

OCA Sacramento

Evening Program

Welcome by Hosts	Louina Hafoka, Fusimalohi Kefu
National Anthem	Luisa Lavulo
Prayer	Reverend Malakai Lose, PhD.
Recognition of Sponsors	Lisa Hafoka
Guest Speaker	Esiteli Hafoka, PhD.
Dinner & Entertainment	TOFA Heartbeats
Scholarship Presentation	Eliza Cocker
Past Scholarship Recipient Speaker	Frances Palu
2023 TOFA Program Presentation	Luisa Lavulo
Closing Remarks	Lisa Hafoka
Closing Prayer	Grace Fa'avesi

Guest Speaker Bio

"Wind's gonna blow so I'm gonna go
Down on the road again
Starting where the mountains left me
I'm up where I began
Where I will go the wind only knows
Good times around the bend
Get in my car, goin' too far
Never comin' back again"

"Waimanalo Blues"



An Employee Group of AT&T



Previous Scholarship Recipient Speaker



Frances Palu

California State University Alumni

Growing up in Richmond, Vallejo, and Oakland, I picked up survival traits that some would call “ghetto” or “hood” but it’s because of those traits, I am where I am. Passionate is all encompassing with the other 2 words that describe me; Servant and Hood. One of my favorite scriptures, Joshua 1:9, provided a firm foundation for my 11 years in the military, when I became a single mother and enrolled at American River College and Sacramento (Sac) State. Not only did I graduate with my AA in Social Science, BA in Sociology and MA in Political

Science but my son graduated from high school and is creating his own path in adulthood. I surfed the advancement wave through different jobs at Sac State. Starting as a temporary hire to becoming a manager within 5 years! The most rewarding and fulfilling moments that I encountered, while employed at Sac State, would be integrating, and immersing myself with the Pacific Islander student body. I became their catalyst and advocate in higher education. I took on the gratifying title of “Aunty” and acknowledged and celebrated their accolades. I joined amazing non-profits, more notably, TOFA and served on diversity and inclusive committees at Sac State such as Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Faculty and Staff Association. Recently, an opportunity presented itself and during this time, I was looking for a challenge. So, who do she think she is? *shaking the interviewer’s hand* Hi, I’m Frances Losana Palu and I am the Director for Internal Fiscal Services at Yolo County Office of Education where I oversee the organization’s \$71 million dollar budget. I am passionate, hood and a faithful servant. Servant to the Lord and servant to all the Pacific Islander community. Embrace Joshua 1:9. It continues to serve as my strengthening mechanism, my humble cloak, and my security blanket. I am not done with surfing. I am not done with serving. I am not done.

Scholarship Recipients



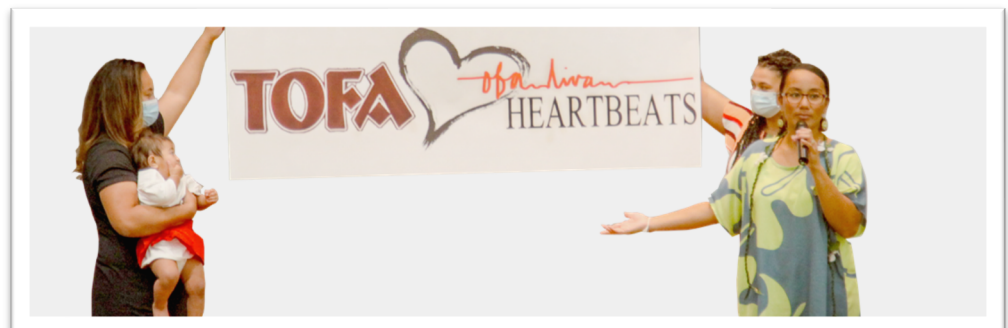
DALLAS FINEANGANOFU – LUCY & JOHN OBACK SCHOLARSHIP

College of San Mateo

In my senior year of high school, I was assigned to two little brothers, buddies, from the Elk Grove Jr. Pee Wee football. I attended their practices and helped with developing football skills, building a relationship of trust with them. I also attend their football games.

I play both offense and defensive lineman and my buddies played the same position, so it was easy for me to help them. I gave pep talks to motivate them not to hold back but give their all when they tackled. What really impressed me was how much respect they had and how they took every bit of advice to heart. This helped me with my leadership skills as I connected with each of them and realized how much both really looked up to me. I really enjoyed being able to teach football!

At the College of San Mateo football program where I currently attend, there is a similar program that allows us to help and mentor elementary/middle school football players. As I continue to help with mentoring the youth, I enjoy giving back what I was able to gain in whatever small way that I can to help mold and develop our future athletes to be the best they can be.





**KEALAONAONAHO'OKIPAMALAHINI (KEALA) HAFOKA – TOFA INC. SCHOLARSHIP
California State University, Sacramento**

I graduated from Bonita Vista high school in San Diego, California. After hearing and seeing the injustices that took place during COVID-19 quarantine, it was one of the first instances that sparked my interest in civil rights issues and wanting to study law. Tongan and Samoan is an ethnicity that many at my school were not aware of, which put me in a category of others. Because I was different, kids would often make fun of me. It made me feel so inferior and I did not know how to process my emotions at that time. These small interactions truly stuck with me since and have pushed me to want to study law. At a young age I knew I wanted to make a difference within our community and try to make the world a better place. After my undergraduate program, I plan to attend law school and prepare to sit the bar exam. I love to help others in any way I can, and what best way to do this than by working in a court of law fighting for what is right. I aspire to be a voice for those who look like me and pave the way for the next generation of South Pacific Islanders.



**EMMA HAUNGATAU – INSPIRASIAN SCHOLARSHIP
College of San Mateo**

I am Tongan and Samoan, and one of two of the only Pacific Islander (PI) students from my high school to graduate with honors in the International Baccalaureate program. As a current student at the College of San Mateo I aim to get my AS in Business Management by 2024. I aim to one day fill the gaps in my community and create a space where my peers can buy a service from someone with our community in mind and not only for personal gain. I volunteer two weekends out of every month to help serve and distribute food at the Samaritan house in San Mateo. Whether it be at church leading my young women group or my current job as a Teacher at a Polynesian enrichment camp, Camp Unity. The work we do combines the arts of performing, language, visual, and health and wellness. At our 6-week camp PI youth are empowered and seen by staff who look like them. I find great joy in being a part of growing future Pacific Islander leaders in the Bay Area. I acknowledge the work and community building TOFA provides giving PI students the opportunity to continue in higher education.



**SALOTE KIOA – TOFA INC. SCHOLARSHIP
Brigham Young University, Hawaii**

I have been blessed to travel the world with my family and explore different countries and cultures. My most memorable trip was to Fiji where we were able to tour a local elementary school and sit in a class at the local elementary school. It was an eye-opening experience and such a contrast to my school in San Mateo, California. The way they communicated with each other was more like a big family unit, taught with love. Being able to witness smaller towns and communities that lack so much convenience compared to the US, but who had everything with just the necessities of life was refreshing and humbling. I came home with a renewed way of how I want to build relationships with others and appreciate the traditions of my Tongan heritage which grounds me along with my faith. I try to represent my Tongan values by participating in volunteer and fundraising opportunities within my church. Some of these included local park and beach clean-ups, donations to global natural disasters, and helping struggling families with financial aid to attend activities.





LETIA MAKASINI – INSPIRASIAN SCHOLARSHIP

Brigham Young University, Provo

As I have strived to reach perfection in the academic world, I have stumbled upon many obstacles that reminded me that the challenge and struggle are what really provide satisfaction in the end. One of my greatest challenges has been depression. Low mental health and self-love prevented me from reaching my full potential. Through covid-19 and the quarantine, I learned to focus on the good in my friendships and family and not to take what I have for granted. As a volleyball player, being a community volleyball team coach provided an avenue to give back to the youth. In the community I taught recreational sports and safety education to multiple youth groups. I never felt like I belonged in my community due to being Tongan, so I sought out my culture at the

Tongan church I now attend. Hearing the language my dad grew up with and participating in dances connected me to my culture enough to share it with others. My passion for politics, public speaking, and interacting with people will help me become a voice for the groups of individuals who feel as though they are not represented. This mix of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is what makes me the person I am today and every challenge I face or continue to face will add to my desire to succeed.



LYDIA MALAGA- TOFA INC. SCHOLARSHIP

California State University, Sacramento

I am the oldest and only girl in a family of seven. I have four brothers and I identify as Samoan American. Growing up, our family encountered many financial hardships. I watched my parents struggle to pay rent and bills on time. My brothers and I accepted and wore hand-me-down cloths because there were necessary living expenses to be paid. We only had one car, so when my dad worked overtime, my brothers and I would wake up extra early to walk to school.

I have lost a lot of loved ones to gun violence and terminal illness such as cancer. It took a lot in me to grieve these losses while staying focused on doing well in school. During my senior year of high school, my family and I lost our matriarch, my great-grandmother. She was the pillar of our family and someone I looked forward to celebrating my life's accomplishments with. She ingrained in me a love for our cultural dances and music. She taught me the importance of knowing and learning about my Samoan heritage and cultural identity. Although I miss her dearly, I believe she is my biggest cheerleader from heaven, and her legacy will continue through me.



JAYDA MAUGA – ‘OFA MANN SCHOLARSHIP

California State University, Sacramento

As a Samoan woman, my love and admiration for our Pasifika people has no limits. At a young age, I never understood why my skin was darker than most, why I had the amount of hair I did, and why I had life challenges of trying to balance school with family and cultural obligations.

Through access to mental health and career-based resources I continued my journey in higher education with and ease, juggling family, school, work, and self-identity. I have since advocated as a Samoan American and to help others feel a sense of belonging as I so graciously found within the Pacific Islanders United Club at Sacramento State University. As a role model and school officer, I was adamant that connections made with other PI groups and organizations created

spaces to uplift and build our community and share our story with others. I am honored be part of building safe spaces within our Pasifika community and educating others on how to keep afloat in Higher Education. To have a role model in higher positions, who looks like you and resonates with you, is the ultimate goal. Being Pasifika in Higher Education is already challenging because the odds are stacked against you. The aim to have a sense of community has fully grown within my circle and I am delighted to have contributed to our culture.





KERINA PAAMA – TOFA INC. SCHOLARSHIP

Sonoma State University

For the first 10 years of my life, I was raised in American Samoa by my grandparents since my parents were in the United States for military service. In 2017, my grandfather was diagnosed with brain cancer that spread to his lungs, so our family made the decision to move to Hawai'i to pursue medical treatment for his condition that was not available in American Samoa. When my grandmother had to return to Samoan to renew her papers, I became his primary caretaker at home. Whatever time I didn't spend in school went toward taking care of him. Our routine consisted of checking vitals, preparing meals and medication, and accompanying my grandfather to his appointments. Those moments with him during his last year of life made me mature faster and really opened my heart and mind. Since my grandfather passed, I have opted for nursing as my college major, mainly because of the patient-care aspect. I also want to do well for myself and for my family who have always supported me by providing for my needs. As a Samoan-Tongan mixed woman, I rarely see people of my cultural/ethnic background at the college level of education and in the medical/nursing field, so I am also motivated to be a resource and hopefully an inspiration to others like me.



ANICIA TEUPA – TANIELA PALU SCHOLARSHIP

University of California, Irvine

My first name, Anicia, is the combination of my two grandmothers' names. Ane and Alicia. My paternal grandmother, Ane, taught me the importance of my Tongan heritage, and giving back to my roots. This led me to preside over the Polynesian Culture club at my high school and organize a Tonga Tsunami Relief Drive. From when I was young until she passed away, I was caretaker for my maternal grandmother, Alicia, who suffered from dementia. She was my first example of empathy and its necessity in relationships. I think of her as I exercised compassion with the young girls in my church. My middle name Joleen is a combination of my aunts, Joy and Aileen. Aileen, my mother's cousin, demonstrated the potency of speaking the unfiltered truth. Her resiliency has shown me how to lead and navigate advocacy groups such as the Shanti DEI Alliance and the Financial Aid Affinity Space. My dad's younger sister, Joy, is a woman of few words. Her softspoken-ness cannot compare to the volume of her actions- as she has sat in the bleachers of my volleyball games, I looked to her during an especially hard play to remind me that I am loved and supported. These women are my role models of humility, selflessness, and grit. My hope is that- as I move forward into higher education and my studies in urban living and psychology- I can share even just a fraction of their legacy.



NEHEMIAH TUPOU – TANIELA PALU SCHOLARSHIP

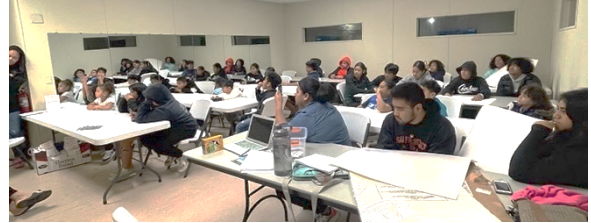
San Jose State University

I am the firstborn in a family of six. I have one brother and two sisters. I am pursuing a Business Accounting degree as I believe it is the most affordable major that I can apply to the real world. I have been blessed with strength and tenacity, which was heightened in 2016 when I found out that I had an autoimmune disorder. My immune system was attacking an area in my spine, inhibiting my ability to walk. One day I fell to my knees in front of my elementary school, and I was admitted into hospital. I spent six weeks going through tests and regaining my ability to walk. My life motto "Give back more than you take", comes from being raised in the 7th Day Adventist church, and I am working on giving back everything I took. Each sabbath day we partake in church services and events where my sister and I joined the church choir at our parents' encouragement. During the summer our choir holds concerts to raise funds for a Big Camp event. This event brings churches from across the country to grow together as a community, closer to nature, and to God. My life experiences, talents, broad array of interests, perseverance, and every person who has supported me to this point, has molded a man who will not forget their help and who will forever be grateful.

Ambassadors

Our purpose within the TOFA mission is to activate awareness, within the members of the Asian Pacific Islander Youth and their personal and civic duty to create change within the community.

Ambassadors meet twice a month from January – May at the Pannell Meadowview Community Center. They attend community events as TOFA Ambassadors, engaged in debate and Ambassador presidential campaigns and learn important networking skills.



For more information: Contact Luisa Lavulo (916) 256-5684 ambassadors@tofainc.org

Scholars

TOFA has provided over 100 scholarships to Pacific Islander students in higher education within the California region since its establishment in 2000. Recipients have gone on to be successful and contributing members of our local community. Our mission is to support our Pacific Islander students in higher education that they may be successful, give back to our community and be a support especially to the younger generation.

TOFA and community partners award scholarships to selected students attending higher education institutions during the current academic school year. Scholarships awarded are based on the availability of funds.

For more information on how you can be a scholarships partner or applicant please contact Eliza Cocker at scholarships@tofainc.org.



Heartbeats (Cultural Arts)

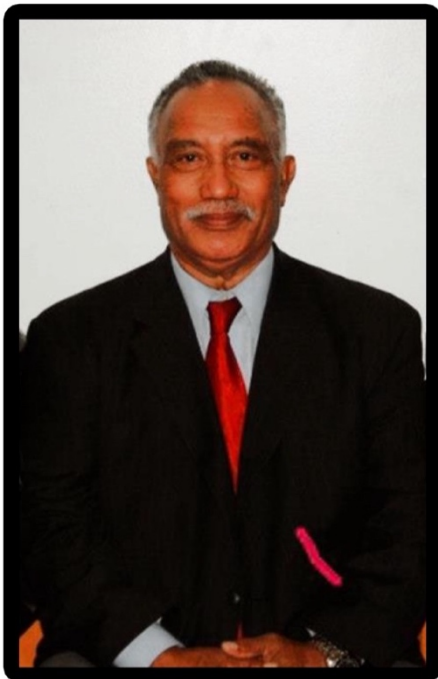
Pacific Islanders share family history and heritage through song and dance. Each island of the south pacific is unique in how they tell their stories, and these are the rich traditions we share with all. Our mission is to pass down the rich history and heritage of the South Pacific Islands to the youth of tomorrow.

Each year between May and June, Heartbeats are instructed in traditions of song, dance, and art and how grace plays a big part in every lyric or dance movement. Heartbeats perform at the California State Fair, TOFA Scholarships and Fundraiser Luau, and other community events to share these traditions with others.

For more information, please contact Etevis Mann at culturalarts@tofainc.org



TANIELA K. PALU



TOFA *in the Community*



AANHPI Women Leaders in STEM, featuring 15-year-old STEM Entrepreneur, Samaira Mehta. Hosted by APAPA.



PIEFEST Pasifika STEM Fair



2023 Elk Grove CSD Fit Fest



WHIAANHPI
Community Round table.



Sacramento Parks and Community Enrichment Commissioners meeting with SacPal Amazons and TOFA Ambassadors.



2023 National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walk



California State University, Sacramento Pacific Islanders United, Island Spotlight.



Elk Grove High School Family Night



California State Fair



Tonga High School Alumni,
High School Graduation Recognition



Right On! AANHPI Social Justice Art Walk



OCA Sacramento Dragon Boat Festival



College Esports International



APAPA - AANHPI Heritage Month
Launch



Sacramento Marshallese Community
Independence Day Celebration



WE INNOVATIVE
ARE INCLUSIVE
COSUMNES CSD INTENTIONAL



A regional leader...

dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for you, your family, and your neighbors.

Cosumnes Community Services District is committed to serving the unique needs of our diverse community through fire, emergency medical, parks, and recreation services that enrich the community and save lives.

CosumnesCSD.gov

8820 Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove, CA 95624
 916-405-5600



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