

**Hawai'i Federation of Junior YBA's**

# *Serendipity*

*Winter Edition*

Honolulu | Maui | Hawai'i | Oahu

**2023-2024**



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# Presidents Message

新年明けましておめでとうございます。

今年もよろしく申し上げます。

Happy New Year, Year of the Dragon!

I hope everyone had a restful winter holiday! I know I definitely caught up on sleep after enduring my first semester of final exams. Three consecutive stem exams really tested me!

Now that the new year has started, it is time once again to set new goals for the coming months. I want to commend each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication throughout the past year. Being a college student myself, I understand the importance of balancing commitments to such an organization.

I also wanted to thank the United of Hawaii for planning this year's Winter Federation Meeting! In addition, thank you to the United of Maui for tirelessly planning the 67th State Convention which will happen in June! It is a grand task!

With the start of a new semester, I encourage you all to continue persevering through hardships and trying your best! I also wanted to send a message to the Class of 2024 as you are halfway through your senior year. I understand that the last few months have been chaotic and overwhelming for many of you attempting to juggle academics, extracurriculars, and college applications.



# Presidents Message Continued...

I hope now that it is over you can relax a bit and take the time to make memories with friends and family (time really flies!) I wish you the best of luck as you wait for replies and let us know where you got accepted!

In the spirit of the Year of the Dragon, let us approach challenges with resilience and determination. I encourage everyone to share their ideas and aspirations for the upcoming year. This organization is a space for innovation, and your input is invaluable. Let's make this year a memorable one filled with meaningful experiences and positive impact.



In Gassho,  
*Chad "Chihiro" Okawa*  
Federation President



# Letter from The Editor

Hello Everyone !

Happy New Year! Welcoming 2024 has me reflecting on the whirlwind that was 2023. Time really does have a way of slipping through our fingers, doesn't it? I hope you all had a time to reflect on all of the memories you made in 2023 and hopefully cherish those memories. With this New Year, I encourage all of you to set a New Year's resolution for yourself. This resolution will hopefully better yourself and will help set a goal for yourself. I know it is very difficult to keep New Year's resolutions but I believe in you and I know you are capable of achieving your goal. The New Year is a perfect time to refresh and reflect. Refresh all of the difficulties you may have had last year and reflect all of the memories you had made in 2023 whether they are good or bad memories.

If you did not know this year I will be graduating ! It is truly a bitter-sweet moment for me. I am so glad I joined Jr.YBA because it has allowed me to make lifelong friends and create memories I will cherish forever. To be completely honest, when I first joined Jr.YBA I was very skeptical and barely talked to anyone at all. I was barely involved and just joined because my brother Kai had joined. After a few months of attending meetings and as well as attending my first federation meeting I had realized I loved being a part of this association. Everyone involved with Jr.YBA had been so insanely nice and welcoming to me I had felt like I belonged. In other words, I highly encourage you to spread the word of Jr.YBA. This association has helped me in countless ways and I highly motivate you to let all of your friends enjoy the fun and teachings of Jr.YBA.



In Gassho,  
*Kaylie Okuni*  
Federation Vice President





*United  
Reports*





# United of Honolulu

**President: Riho Umitani**

Hi everyone!

Since the last Federation meeting, the United of Honolulu has been keeping busy this past holiday season! In addition to monthly in-person meetings, we did several service projects and activities. On November 12, we participated in the coloring of drawings for the nonprofit organization Color A Smile (which sends our drawings to Senior Citizens)! December was filled with events, beginning with a rehearsal for the Betsuin Bodhi Day Service, which our United was fortunate enough to coordinate. The following week was the Betsuin Bodhi Day Service, which ended up being a huge success! Jr.YBA members did numerous roles such as MC, chanting, and even bringing refreshments! At the same time, our United participated in Adopt-A-Family, which is a seasonal program that connects families in need and donors together! We adopted a small family, and every Jr.YBA member donated some gifts for them! As a whole, we donated nearly \$500 worth of gifts and gift cards to the family! On December 16, members from the United of Honolulu and United of Oahu threw the Genki balls (previously made at the Fall Federation Meeting), into the Ala Wai Canal! It was a very nice experience. We ended the year with a holiday party/meeting at the Betsuin Lounge, in which we played holiday games, ate good food, and even Secret Santa! We also gained two new members this holiday season, and we are all looking forward to 2024! Hope to see you soon!







# United of Maui

*President: Kaylie Okuni*

Hello Everyone !

As many of you are aware (and hopefully excited about), Maui United is proud to be hosting the 67th Jr. YBA State Convention this year. We have been working tirelessly to plan out details to ensure this convention will be one to remember. Our theme for the convention will be “Reach For The Stars”. The details of the convention will be on our flyer and will be sent at the winter federation meeting. We also ask you all to fill out the google form in order to register for the convention. Other than planning for convention, for this years HBY month we decided to make sweet potato manju ! We hand-made all of the manju at Makawao Hongwanji and had lots of fun in the process. We sold it to our respective temples and it was a huge success.







# United of Hawai'i

**President: Dari Nekoba**

Hello Everyone!

Since our Fall Federation Meeting, the United of Hawaii have continued to participate in a few events for the past few months. On December 2nd, we helped to give out poinsettias to temple members and other friends who had purchased a ticket. We had lots of help that day so things went very smoothly. On December 23rd, we invited current and past members to decorate gingerbread cookies to get into the holiday spirit! We had a fun time catching up with each other and eating delicious gingerbread cookies. From December 28-29, we also had our annual mochi pounding held at the Sangha Hall where the Jr YBA helped with washing the rice the day before, and helped to pound and make the mochi on the day of. We had a lot of participation from not only our members, but past Jr YBA alumni too. Along with that, we had our New Year's Eve service to help greet attendees, pass out programs and candles, and emceed.







# United of Oahu

*President: Diandra Thomson*

Hello Everyone!

Happy New Year Everyone! I am Diandra Thomson, President of Oahu United and since we last met at the Fall federation meeting we took the genii balls that we all made at aiea hongwanji and threw them into the Ala Wai. Recently we attended Aieas Mochitsuki with some of our old jr YBA members from the past and participated by pounding mochi while Chihiro and Ty played Taiko for everyone! We also had a thank you card making day.





# New Years Resolutions!

My New Year's resolution would be to get a job to start putting money towards my future and my family

-Diandra Thomson  
United of oahu President



My New Years resolution is to lose 12kg by the end of the year.

-Wayde Toyama  
United of Maui Advisor

My New Year's resolution is to do more fun activities and service projects. My personal New Year's resolution this year is to do more home cooked meals and to get an hour of exercise 3 days a week.

-Michelle Ojiri  
United of Hawai'i Advisor

I want to laugh and sleep some more

-Riho Umitani  
United of Oahu President

My New Years resolution is to workout at least 5 times a week as well as to stop procrastinating.

-Kaylie Okuni  
United of Maui President

To be consistent in making better choices for my health and wealth. To add value to Jr YBA. May this Federation meeting be one of our best.

-Gay Tanaka  
United of Oahu Advisor

My New Year's resolution is to put myself more out there and become more social in all my communities. I also want to get better at time management and knowing what I want to prioritize.

- Dari Nekoba  
United of Hawai'i President





# Contact us!

## United Of Hawai'i

**Dari Nekoba**

dmnekoba@gmail.com

**Michelle Soga**

soga.michelle@gmail.com

## United Of Oahu

**Diandra Thomson**

mumble808rules@gmail.com

**Gay Tanaka**

gaytanaka@gmail.com

## United Of Honolulu

**Riho Umitani**

riho.umitani@gmail.com

**Joy Nishida**

jwnishida@gmail.com

## United Of Maui

**Kaylie Okuni**

kkokuni06@gmail.com

**Wayde Toyama**

wayde.toyama@gmail.com

## Federation President

**Chad "Chihiro" Okawa**

chad.okawa@gmail.com

## Federation Vice President

**Kaylie Okuni**

kkokuni06@gmail.com

## Federation Secretary

**Emma Fujikawa**

emmamayumi@gmail.com

## Federation Treasurer

**Jaimee "Jay" Yokoyama**

markiplierandjacksepticeye2@gmail.com

## Federation Advisor

**Joy Nishida**

jwnishida@gmail.com



Thank you for  
Reading!