**KALIHI PALAMA HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUB**

**MAUNA’ALA KAHILI PROJECT**

**By Mark Vasconcellos and Leimomi Khan**

**BACKGROUND:** O/a May 2021, Clifford Loo brought to our attention the deterioration of two

Kahili in the chapel at Mauna’ala, in the hopes that the Kalihi Palama HCC might be willing to restore or replace it. Informal discussions among Kalihi Palama HCC members ensured with the

result of taking on this project and fund raising began to pay for materais. Mark Vasconcellos, a kahili maker and member of the Kalihi Palama HCC was consulted and has agreed to manage the cultural segment of this project, with Leimomi Khan agreeing to manage the program, budget and fundraising segments of this project.

**KAHILI:** The kahili has long been a symbol of the Hawaiian ali’I chiefs and the noble houses of the Hawaiian Islands. A kahili bearer (paa-kahili) is one who carries or bears the standard for the royal subject. A paa-kahili (kahili bearer) followed the king everywhere he went. The standard could be used as a fly-bruch and waved over the sleeping noble. The role was similar to that of a squire or page. The kahili signified power from the divinities. In earlier years, the Kahili was made using the long bones of an enemy king and decorated with the feathers from birds of prey. Bishop Museum has an extensive collection of feathered standards on the display along with portraits of the monarchs of the 19th century. Their collection is displayed in the “Kahili Room”.

The hana lawelawe of the paa kahili is an important ritual duty at the funeral of a Hawaiian noble’s funeral. From the time the body is laid out to the moment it is interred, the bearers wave the kahili above the deceased. Three of four kahili bearers stand on either side and at regular intervals raise the standards above the body until they meet the opposing feathered staff on the other side. The standards are then waved to the right, left, and then up while genealogy chants are sung detailing the deeds of the figure and their ancestors. When the body is transported from the home to the church, the hearse is surrounded by kahili bearers. Once at the chapel the ritual continues, as well as while transferring the deceased to the cemetery. Today, this ritual can be observed at the funeral rights of Royal Society members.

**PURPOSE OF PROJECT:**

1. To replace the two kahili at the Mauna Ala Chapel
2. To educate KPHCC members and others on the significance of the kahili and the role it played in the Native Hawaiian culture
3. To bring together members in fellowship to uplift this cultural practice
4. To develop a brochure on the kahili and make available to those who visit the Mauna’ala Chapel
5. To host an essay contest among the schools in Kalihi in furtherance of the educational goal of this project
6. To raise funds in support of the mission, programs and activities of the Kalihi Palama HCC

**BEGINNING AND ENDING DATES OF PROJECT**: August 2022 to February 2023

**LOCATION TO MAKE THE KAHILI**: Mauna’ala Garage of Curator, Kai Maioho, between the hours of 8:00 to 4:00 or 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**LABOR NEEDED**: Approximately 10 volunteers for average of five hours per person

**MATERIALS NEEDED AND BUDGET (TBD)**

**REVENUES**

* Donations
* Grants

2 yards black 3” goose feathers

2 yards yellow 3” goose feathers

Picks

2 yards satin material

2 styrofoam

2 Wood dowel

Glue

Plaque

Paint stain

Storage Bin

Kahili stand

Essay contest prize

Printing of brochure

Administrative supplies

First Aid Kit

Refreshments for Workers

Stipend for Mauna’ala Curator

Donation to KPHCC education fund to raise awareness

of breast cancer for men and women in support

of our cultural advisor’s passion and commitment to

this important health threat