

THE SCHOOL NEWS

1 KEKAHA

St. Theresa School

We will be bringing our own Christmas aloha and festive spirit to the **Kukui Grove Shopping Center** this year. The school will perform its annual Christmas program on the Center Stage on Dec. 14, at 6 p.m. The staff and learners are very excited about this chance to share some of their talents and gifts with the larger Kauai community. The school will celebrate with songs, a hula and some other special surprises. According to **Principal David Verdugo**, "We won't have a chance to rehearse at the Grove before the performance. So, we are asking our learners to perform on an unfamiliar stage, with a very different sound system and in some very different lights. It will be a lot of fun!" The school hopes that its performance will be an extra special present to the Kauai 'ohana this Christmas season. *(Reported by Wendy Castillo)*



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2 HONOLULU

Holy Family Catholic Academy

Our school recently raised awareness and funds for the **Hawaii Children's Cancer Foundation (HCCF)**, culminating in a **Turkey Trot** of activities before Thanksgiving break. This is our third year supporting this wonderful, local organization and our students had a blast engaging in a friendly competition among homerooms. Mahalo to **Mrs. Burch** for leading this event, all our parent volunteers who pitched in to help, and our families for sending in generous donations! We are blessed with a school community that values teaching our students to help those in need. Pictured from left: **Assistant Principal Jocelyn Burch, HCCF representative Tara Humphreys, Principal Celeste Akiu and Whiskers the Wildcat.** *(Reported by Julia Hudson)*



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EDITOR'S CHOICE



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3 MAKAWAO

St. Joseph Early Learning Center

Happy Thanksgiving to all. We are thankful for **Father Edison Pamintuan, M.S.**, for celebrating our Thanksgiving prayer service with our **students, staff and families.** The students participated with the reading of the prayers of the faithful, liturgical dance and dressing up as Wampanoags and pilgrims and offertory. Students also brought in canned food to support the food bank here at the parish. Have a blessed holiday season. *(Reported by Helen Souza)*



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4 KAILUA

St. John Vianney School

Santa's elves came to visit Dec. 6. Students in **ELC3 through grade four** brought new, unwrapped toys or gift cards to give to Santa's helpers, who in turn presented them to our parish **Giving Tree** and **Toys for Tots.** Pictures of our little ones were taken with our SJV elves (**Father Vincent Vu** and two teachers). Older students participated by bringing gifts to the school office. ... All are invited to our annual **Open House** on Dec. 8 from 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Come tour our beautiful campus. All classrooms will be open, our amazing teachers will be on hand to answer any questions, and our awesome students will personally escort visitors around campus. Light refreshments will be served and our hula halau will perform. We will also be accepting appli-

cations for new students for the 2025-2026 school year. Tuition assistance programs are available. ... Our **Holiday Concert**, Dec. 13 at 10 a.m. in our church, joyfully celebrates the birth of our savior Jesus Christ. The concert will feature our bands, orchestras and choir performing traditional holiday selections. ... Our school will be on winter inter-session and Christmas break Dec. 16-Jan. 3. Classes resume Jan. 6. Wishing our students, staff and everyone a holy Advent season, a joyful Christmas and a Happy New Year. Pictured are **Dr. Kapi'i DeMello** and **Owen Kanahele.** *(Reported by Earl Walker)*

5 WAIPAHU

St. Joseph School

Congratulations to our amazing robotics teams! We are so proud to celebrate the success of our two robotics teams: **The Lady Knights**, who won the award for Innovative Project and **The Knights**, who were recognized for their outstanding core values! Both teams have qualified for the State

LEGO League Competition, and we couldn't be more excited for them! A heartfelt mahalo to our supportive parents and our phenomenal coaches, **Dr. Yamashiro** and **Mrs. Yamashiro**, for their dedication and guidance. Let's cheer on the Lady Knights and Knights as they continue to shine — Go Team St. Joseph! *(Reported by Beverly Sandoval)*

6 HONOLULU

Saint Louis School

With immense pride and gratitude, we share the recent accomplishments of our incredible **Indigenous Science Class.** Recently, our students enhanced our campus by removing over 100 bromeliad plants from in front of our gym. These plants, while beautiful, had become a haven for mosquitoes. In their place, our students replanted native sedges and white hibiscus. On Nov. 9, junior **Gavin Yamane** led his **Eagle Scout** project with **Troop 32 from Waipio** cleaning a nearby stream and replanted the bromeliads, to thrive in a more

suitable ecosystem. With impressive teamwork, they removed 89 pounds of trash in just minutes and planted approximately 70 plants, including milo, sweet potato, soursop, jackfruit, and perennial peanut, to help prevent erosion from heavy rains. Gavin's passion and determination have left a lasting impact on our community. His parents, **Ryan Yamane '87** and **Jen Yamane**, played a vital role in supporting this effort. We are also grateful to **Rep. Calvin Say**, class of '70, for joining us in our stream clean up! We are so proud of Gavin, the Indigenous Science Class, and all who contributed to this effort, embodying the values and spirit that make our community truly special. *(Reported by Jon Watase)*

7 PEARL CITY

Our Lady of Good Counsel School

The school is thrilled to announce that this year's **Fun Run** on Sept. 27 was a tremendous success raising approximately \$52,000 in gross

profit! A special shoutout goes to pastor, **Father Santhosh**, who was the top fundraiser, contributing over \$6,500 to the impressive total! His dedication and spirit truly inspire the entire community. The ability to offer lower tuition is greatly supported by the success of fundraisers like this one. The school is incredibly grateful for the dedication and hard work of the families, who make these events not only possible but successful year after year. Their support helps enhance the educational experience for all students. Thanks to everyone who donated, participated, volunteered, and cheered on the runners! *(Reported by Chantelle Luarca)*

8 WAIALAE-KAHALA

Mary, Star of the Sea School

Grade three students enjoyed a hands-on **pumpkin pie-making experience** with their principal, **Mrs. Rufo.** The event combined fun and learning as students went shopping for ingredients, measured, mixed and baked, discovering the importance of teamwork and following directions. Mrs. Rufo was grateful for her parent volunteers and teachers who assisted her in guiding the students each step, sharing tips and encouragement. This delightful activity reinforced math and science concepts while fostering community spirit and holiday cheer. *(Reported by Margaret Rufo)*

9 KAILUA

St. Anthony School

For nearly 18 years, **Ms. MaryPat Kinsey**, our dedicated media literacy teacher, has been a guiding force in shaping students' relationships with reading and information. Known for her passion for literature and ability to inspire curiosity, Ms. Kinsey has made it her mission to instill the joy of reading while equipping students with essential skills to navigate today's digital world. Ms. Kinsey's impact is evident in how she helps students connect with stories — both in print and online. She dedicates time daily to ensure students meet their **Renaissance Accelerated Reading (AR)** goals while supporting the school-wide mission of improving reading and writing achievement across all grade levels. Her approach balances traditional reading with digital literacy, preparing students for the future. One of Ms. Kinsey's most beloved initiatives is the annual **Scholastic Book Fair**, which she has organized for years with the help of family volunteers. She has raised hundreds of dollars in book credits and donations, bringing new titles to the library and classrooms. The event has become a highlight of the school year, inspiring excitement for reading among students. As technology transforms education, Ms. Kinsey remains committed to evolving her teaching practices. Recently, she attended the **Schools of the Future Conference**, where she gained fresh insights into integrating AI and new technologies into the media literacy classroom. Her enthusiasm for blending these tools with her love for books ensures that her students are well-prepared for the digital age. With nearly two decades of service, Ms. Kinsey has become more than just a teacher — she is a true champion of education and an icon at SAS, empowering students to thrive in all areas of life. *(Reported by Bernie Camuso)*