



2020 ANNUAL REPORT

*This face mask was  
hand dyed especially  
for you, from MEO  
Youth Services.  
Please wash before  
use, be safe. -Aloha*

# Message from our CEO

The year began like any other . . . buses were running, children were learning, youth were thriving, low income individuals were trained and employed and businesses were starting or expanding. In March, all of these activities came to a halt or were scaled back when the County of Maui went on lockdown to protect its residents from contacting and spreading the coronavirus.

The Mayor and Council acted swiftly to fund the Hawaii Emergency Lualaba Partnership (HELP) program to be administered by Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO). The HELP program provided food, rental, and utility and other essential bill payment assistance.

Along with administering the HELP program, staff looked for creative ways to remove barriers to service delivery while ensuring that clients and staff were safe.

MEO closed its offices to in-person traffic, modified its vehicle configuration for social distancing and held classes and meetings virtually. Staff were positive and committed to assisting folks in need. Thousands of individuals and families received assistance, many for the first time.

Misty, a single mother of eight, lost her family's only source of income and was able to access the HELP program to maintain her rent. She supplemented this with other federal assistance, such as the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Disaster Energy Crisis Intervention (ECI) Assistance, which allowed her to pay her utility bills as she waited for her Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim to get processed. She also accessed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to feed her children. She recently said, "Thank you from the bottom of my heart for feeding and housing my family during this crisis. Honestly, I don't know what we would have done without your help!! I will always be grateful to everyone who made this possible."

The Edmisson Family presents an example where both the husband's and wife's income went from stable and thriving to nonexistent due to the pandemic. The HELP program allowed them to provide food for their family. In a recent note from the couple, they state: ". . . It was such a huge help for me and my ohana. It is a wonderful feeling of comfort and security to have a supply of food." In addition, federal individual stimulus checks provided a huge source of relief for the family and allowed them to distribute and maximize other financial assistance to catch up on back payments and maintain some stability with their household expenses.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought out the best in MEO, which helped thousands of people and changed – or at least kept financially afloat – many lives. The flexibility, creativity and identification of critical needs of Maui County residents born of the pandemic are engrained in MEO's DNA and history.

Looking back over the more than five decades, it has been quite a ride, with this year being one of the most challenging in my 20-year career. We appreciate our funders and are grateful for the dedication, care and compassion of our staff, board of directors, partners and volunteers. Together, we are a force. Helping People. Changing Lives.

With aloha,

Debbie Cabebe, SHRM-SCP, SPHR, NCRT, Chief Executive Officer



# Message from our Board President

This past year, our entire community was challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic in many ways. This highly infectious disease impacted community members who are vulnerable to illness and resulted in mandated shutdowns, the decline of our primary industry and job losses, and a change in the very way we live and interact with our friends and neighbors. MEO services were deemed essential during the pandemic, so operations never stopped.

I am proud to say that in the face of these challenges MEO sprang to action to help economically disadvantaged Maui County residents impacted by COVID-19 in a number of ways. MEO administered the County of Maui Hawaii Emergency Lualaba Partnership or HELP program. This required an effort of the entire MEO team to assist 12,487 households and 33,715 individuals with paying for food, housing, utilities, and more.



MEO also began administering agriculture microgrants through the MEO Business Development Center (BDC). There was tremendous demand from farmers for these funds and by February more than 100 farmers had received funding. MEO BDC has also seen increased demand for its Core Four Business and its adult and teen financial literacy classes. BDC switched to all online classes, and the attendance is up for all classes. Our BDC helps small businesses by providing entrepreneurs with business plan training, credit assessment, and microloans for startup and expansion.

In addition to MEO's staff's tireless work, 80 hours a week for some on the HELP program, the team continued to operate MEO's existing programs, including Head Start for our keiki, transportation services for our kupuna and people with disabilities, youth services, our reintegration of formerly incarcerated people, energy assistance, rental subsidies, translation assistance, and job training and placement. MEO did all of this, while at the same time focused on the health and safety of our employees, clients, and volunteers.

I also want to thank MEO's volunteers and donors for their hard work and support over the last year. This last year, MEO saw 220 volunteers perform 4,108 volunteer hours, which saved MEO more than \$80,000. MEO's supporters are critical to the organization's mission, and we are grateful for their dedication.

I am confident that we will beat this pandemic by being strong and embracing the Hawaiian virtues of Lualaba (working together) and Malama (caring). Our community will emerge from this stronger and more resilient, and we will look back on MEO's response with pride. I appreciate all of you for what you do for MEO and our community.

With a warm aloha,  
Bard Peterson

# About Maui Economic Opportunity Inc.

Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO), was chartered on March 22, 1965, under provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. MEO is the only designated anti-poverty Community Action Agency (CAA) serving Maui County.

As a Community Action Agency, MEO must ensure low-income citizens play an active role in program design and administration, or “maximum feasible participation.” The Act mandates the board structure requiring tripartite representation. The MEO Board of Directors is comprised of low-income residents, private businesses, and public officials.

MEO connects children and families to greater opportunity, transforming their lives and making our community stronger with services located in the areas of greatest need. When a family or an individual faces a crisis, MEO is able to respond quickly with targeted forms of assistance appropriate to the situation. This may include the mobilization of help from our many private sector partners, volunteers, and faith-based groups.

The goal is to promptly stabilize a family, and thus avoid the long-term consequence of costly dependency. MEO also has the capability to sustain long-term involvement in a family’s progress to self-sufficiency, as well as in the development of the low-income community.

MEO provides tools to help people and change lives through five departments: MEO Business Development Center, Community Services, Early Childhood Services, Transportation Services and Youth Services.

MEO services ensured 1,566 seniors and persons with disabilities maintained an independent living situation; 1,305 individuals demonstrated increased nutrition skills; 50 individuals obtained employment to gain skills and/or income; 166 individuals improved their financial well-being; 1,389 children and youth demonstrated improved positive approaches to learning; 149 children demonstrated improved mental and behavioral well-being; 484 youth reported the ability to identify suicide tendencies and gained skills to prevent bullying.

MEO works in concert with the resident, public and private sector, providing services to over 43,700 individuals and families, touching more than 131,000 lives throughout Maui County and the State of Hawai`i.



Lt. Gov. Josh Green, Debbie Cabebe, Ned Davis



MEO BDC Core Four graduates



Henry Robello, Allison Springer, Taiva “Koa” Wainui

## MEO’s MISSION

**Strengthen the community while helping people in need restore their hope, reach their potential and enrich their lives**



# COMMUNITY PARTNERS & ADVOCACY



Cassi Yamashita - Harry Johnson - Gay Sibonga - Debbie Cabebe - Rep. Troy Hashimoto - David Yanagisako - Edwina Snyder

To maximize engagement and stay connected to the community and the people we serve, we focus on listening to our clients' needs, educating and empowering them to be advocates for themselves and others. We also develop partnerships with various community and religious organizations and private businesses and secure funding from federal, state and local governments, private foundations and donors to fulfill our mission, while "Helping people. Changing lives."

MEO board members are a mix of leaders representing the clients that we serve, government and private businesses. Many board members also participate in other community organization boards and civic clubs.

Members of MEO's staff actively participate, many as leaders, on several local, statewide and national advisory boards. Through this participation we are continually developing relationships, gaining a better understanding of our role in the community and identifying community needs while working toward program improvements.

## MEO YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

- *220 individuals performed 4,108 volunteers hours on the islands of Maui, Lānaʻi and Molokaʻi*
- *1,633 individuals increased knowledge, skills and abilities to enable them to improve conditions in their community and enhance their ability to engage*

We partner with more than 150 organizations throughout Maui County and the state ranging from government, nonprofits, faith-based groups, educational and financial institutions, private businesses, consortiums and more.

Our volunteers range in age and represent a cross section of the community we serve. We engage our volunteers in community service and advocacy efforts to address issues important to our community. Volunteers work in our Head Start centers and/or sit on the Head Start Policy Council, are active with the Senior Planning and Coordinating Council, assist with surplus food distribution on the islands of Molokaʻi and Lānaʻi, work at events such as the Head Start Family Strengthening Day, Annual Kupuna Aloha Luncheon, the Senior Fair, Paratransit Advisory Council, Maui Homeless Alliance and the Maui Disability Alliance Legislative Forum, to name a few.



State Sen. Kai Kahele (currently U.S. Rep.) and Edwina Snyder

# Program Areas & Achievements

## **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

*The Business Development Center assists small business entrepreneurs with business plan training, credit assessment, and microloans for startup and expansion. A key component is our Core Four course, offered several times a year on Maui, Moloka`i and Lāna`i. Designed for entrepreneurs, this six week course spans 36 hours of engagement, offers opportunities for networking and helps participants to develop a business to develop a business plan. In the 2019-20 fiscal year, BDC also administered the Maui County Agriculture Micro-grants Program, which offered up to \$25,000 in grants to Maui County farmers.*

### **MEO: A Profile in Helping**

Brian Smith needed a dump truck to expand his business, and Maui Economic Opportunity’s Business Development Center helped him get it.

Affectionately known as the “Gravel Man” at MEO, Brian was shoveling cinders and wood chips into his Ford pickup truck for landscaping jobs. It was hard work, taking off the tailgate, shoveling the material into the bed and then unloading the material at the work site.

For larger jobs, Brian would subcontract to larger trucking companies, who got the lion’s share of the deal he secured.

Brian decided it was time to buy a dump truck, but he had some credit issues, which led financial institutions to deny his applications for credit.

He went to see the director of MEO’s Business Development Center (BDC), David Daly, who “helped me figure it all out.” Brian had his eye on a Ford F650 dump truck in Long Beach, Calif.

David helped Brian secure a \$25,000 BDC microloan and provided assistance and advice with shipping, insurance, registration and other financial matters. Brian said he listened to what David and others at BDC had to say, and “it worked.” Some of it was difficult, but Brian said he learned how to purchase and incorporate the dump truck into his business “the way it should be done.”

David and BDC then offered other advice and information to help grow his business. Today, Brian has “a true blue trucking company” – Maui Gravel and Soil -- with expanded operations and one employee on the payroll.

“Had it not been for David (and BDC) . . . I may still be driving around an old beat up pickup truck, taking off the tailgate and shoving out gravel,” Brian said.

“I highly recommend the MEO BDC for entrepreneurs and businesspeople as a source of help, advice and assistance,” Brian said in a letter of recommendation. “The team at MEO truly cares about the client and will provide guidance to enable Maui businesses to succeed.”



“Gravel Man” Brian Smith, old and new trucks

### MEO YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

- **823 entrepreneurs received training and technical assistance**
- **206 youths improved financial literacy**
- **71 individuals improved their financial well-being**

# COMMUNITY SERVICES

*MEO Community Services programs assist individuals and families achieve stability and economic security, strengthens the community, and engages individuals with low income in building opportunities in the community.*

- ◇ **BEST Reintegration**
  - Reentry support services, housing, employment and training and job placement
- ◇ **Enlace Hispano**
  - Acculturation, interpretation and support services
- ◇ **Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program and Energy Crisis Intervention**
  - Energy credits for low-income households
  - Crisis intervention
- ◇ **National Farmworkers Jobs Program**
  - Employment training and job placement
- ◇ **Senior Community Service Employment Program**
  - Employment and training for seniors 55 plus
- ◇ **Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program**
  - Locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables for kupuna
- ◇ **Persons in Need 60Plus**
  - Assistance with hearing aids, glasses, dental work and scooters
- ◇ **Planning and Coordinating Council**
  - Support senior clubs with recruitment, membership, advocacy and activities
- ◇ **Rental Assistance**
  - Up to six months of rental subsidy
- ◇ **Weatherization Program**
  - Energy education, audits and equipment
- ◇ **Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (Moloka`i and Lāna`i only)**
  - Surplus food
- ◇ **Financial Literacy**
  - Classes and one-on-one assistance with understanding and improving credit scores and developing and managing a budget
- ◇ **Senior Legal Services**
  - Pro bono services for simple Power of Attorney, Living Trusts and Advanced Health Care Directives
- ◇ **Senior Red Card**
  - Discounts on food and merchandise at establishments throughout Maui County



Nicanor Saladino and Client

## MEO YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

- *3,572 individuals reduced their energy burden*
- *1,247 seniors increased access to fresh fruit and vegetables*
- *173 individuals obtained employment, increased income and earned a living wage*
- *429 individuals secured and maintained safe and affordable housing*

# ***RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***



Flor Andrion

## **MEO: A Profile in Helping**

(Names were changed to maintain client identity.)

While there were so many families that were assisted through the program, the Pua family in particular, sticks out among the many. This family was actually assisted in fiscal year 2019 for regular rental assistance from November 2018-January 2019. The applicant is a police officer, who at the time of the application, was recovering from a major car accident. He was out of work for more than 3 months and his wife to be was 8

## ***ENLACE HISPANO***

As the world moved into unprecedented territory and braced itself for the worst, the coronavirus ravaged entire communities around the globe in a matter of weeks. As such, having access to the latest information has been central in protecting and saving lives. That is why Enlace Hispano (EH) worked diligently to share the most up-to-date information from the likes of the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention in Spanish and our local and state government.

When Gov. David Ige announced an emergency proclamation to “Shelter in Place” EH was the only organization in Maui County to translate that into Spanish. EH continued to translate announcements of this nature and strived to do so quickly. Over the last quarter EH is proud to report that it translated half a dozen state and local emergency announcements and provided dozens of informational material in Spanish,

months pregnant with their second child and was forced to take maternity leave early to care for Mr. Pua and his older child. Mr. Pua was frustrated, and filled with grief as he felt hopeless due to his inability to provide sustainable income due to his injury and recovery. After assessing the household and determining eligibility, the Pua family was assisted with 3 months of assistance at a sliding scale while they prepared for a new addition to the household and Mr. Pua’s eventual return to work. Today, the Pua family remains in their home more than a year after receiving assistance. The assistance was able to ensure that this family was provided with the much needed rental assistance during their crisis, preventing them from losing their home and falling further into poverty.

It is important to recognize that the true success of the program is not always measured immediately and that the long term goals are what really make an impact on the community.



all of which resulted in the highest “traffic” to EH’s Facebook page in the history of its existence; averaging over 200 unique views per day over a 91 day period and up to 1,200 views in a single day.

The success of EH’s reach rests in the leveraging and effective use of technology. The use of Facebook closed the distance between EH and its clients with the added benefit of “organic spread” whereby organic shares effectively spread the word outside of EH’s immediate network and efficiently amplified the impact of a two person program. Communication with any community is an extremely valuable asset. And, as EH continues to expand its reach in the community, it is critical to keep up-to-date with the latest use of technology as a tool so that EH is able to move from strength to strength.



# ***EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES***

*MEO Early Childhood Services offers two programs for children and families and provides continuous training and technical assistance for staff.*

*The Kahi Kamali`i Infant and Toddler Center at the J. Walter Cameron Center in Wailuku provides quality early childhood services year-round for children 1 to 3 years of age. Three qualified caregivers are assigned to the same children each day to promote continuity of care. The County of Maui provides funding to keep costs affordable for income-eligible families, teen families, and for families with children receiving early intervention support through IMUA Family Services.*

*Head Start supports the entire family to achieve stability and promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children ages 3 to 5 by providing education, health, nutrition, social and other services to eligible children and their families. The core program is federally funded with leveraged funding from the County of Maui to offer an after-school and summer program.*

*In addition to the children and families, MEO supports staff career development through pre-service and in-service training and offers a tuition assistance program for people pursuing an early childhood teaching credential or degree.*



Rachelle Pedersen decided to seek a new career during the pandemic. A scholarship that allowed her daughter Savannah to attend Kahi Kamali`i Infant and Toddler Center at the J. Walter Cameron Center in Wailuku made the career change possible.

## **MEO: A Profile in Helping**

Rachelle Pedersen’s story embodies Maui Economic Opportunity’s motto “Helping People. Changing Lives.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Rachelle was furloughed from her job as a waitress at a restaurant in Lahaina when pandemic health measures took hold.

*“For about a month, I stayed home with my two little girls, and I had a lot of time to reflect on my life,” she said. “When COVID-19 hit Maui, I was working as a waitress, and I did not feel like my job was fulfilling.*

*“I always knew I needed to change something, and now I felt like I had the time to do something about it.”*

Rachelle decided to go back to school but could not pursue her new life-changing career path without child care for her 2 year old. That’s where MEO offered a helping hand.

Rachelle was able to enroll her daughter, Savannah, in MEO Kahi Kamali`i Infant and Toddler Center at the J. Walter Cameron Center in Wailuku on a full scholarship.

In January, Rachelle completed her studies and is now a COVID-19 case investigator with the Hawaii Department of Health.

*Continued on next page...*

# ***EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES***

*“I feel like I am actually making a difference in my community, which is very fulfilling for me,” she said. “I could not have done this without the help of MEO and Kahi Kamali`i’s wonderful staff in providing child care for my daughter.*

*“Kahi Kamali`i has made a major positive impact on my daughter’s life, as well as my own.”*

While 2020 began as “bleak,” Rachelle said, *“I will always remember it as the catalyst that changed my life for the better.”*

*“In all the darkness that 2020 shed, in my life a light has shone through and I owe that to MEO,” she continued. “I give thanks to Kahi Kamali`i and MEO for giving me the support I needed to be successful in changing my life for the better.”*

Rachelle thanked MEO and *“the amazing staff”* of Kahi Kamali`i Infant and Toddler Center.

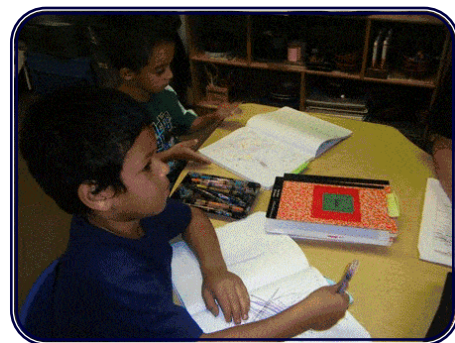
*“MEO has been a beacon of light in these difficult times of COVID-19,”* she said.



Rachelle Pedersen is shown with daughters Savannah (in arms) and Emmy Wood.

## **MEO YEAR BY THE NUMBERS**

- ***219 children demonstrated skills for school readiness***
- ***149 children improved emergent literacy skills***
- ***520 individuals improved skills related to adult role of parents and caregiver***



Head Start Classroom

# TRANSPORTATION

*Established in 1969, MEO transportation eliminates mobility barriers for low income and disadvantaged individuals, persons with disabilities, seniors, and youth. This vital service improves quality of life, eliminates barriers to employment, prevents youth from participating in risk-taking behavior, and leads to economic security for individuals and families.*

*MEO operates the MEO Human Services Transportation and Paratransit Services. MEO Human Services are offered throughout Maui County, providing specialized service, including door-through-door service to the most vulnerable clients, and rides to people who live outside the Paratransit Service area. Paratransit Service is operated complementary to the Maui Bus fixed routes on Maui-island, providing curb-to-curb service for persons with disabilities living within three-quarters of a mile from the fixed route.*

*MEO provides rides 365 days a year from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. with a fleet of more than 100 vehicles and is a part of the County's Emergency Response Disaster Recovery team.*

## **MEO: A Profile in Helping**

Maui Economic Opportunity bus rides helped put Alohilani Hue Sing on the road to her new life after a car accident left her paralyzed from the chest down.

"In 1982, when I got injured, I came home from rehab and to a new life," she said in an interview in February. "What am I going to do? I need to do something."

Alohilani decided to attend Maui Community College (now UH-Maui College) and learned that MEO offered transportation services.

"A big yellow school bus known as the dinosaur came to my home to pick me up and took me to the college," she said. "Returning to college was a great place for me to be soon after my injury. Being in school with my peers really helped to build my confidence."

She took up clothing construction with many of the same students in her classes. The instructor was accommodating, she added.

"If that yellow school bus was not available, I don't know if I would have been as comfortable and happy as I was," Alohilani said. "I look forward to getting out, being with others and having that social interaction. I'm always checking the weather forecast because I love being outdoors."

She had planned to use MEO paratransit services to go to the beach the day of the interview, but the weather was not too good. MEO drivers take her to the beach two to three days a week. She'll meet up with friends or find an isolated area away from everyone "and just enjoy that peace and solitude."

"Sometimes, I'll brainstorm or whatever it may be," she continued. "But I have that outlet because of the paratransit to get me there . . . It helps out with mental health and well-being."

MEO drivers also take her shopping and to visit friends and family and others in her "social bubble." Amid the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, MEO paratransit allows her "to have a safe place to go to."

She uses MEO paratransit services three to five times a



week, and the buses help her lead her active life. They took her to Mauna Kea rallies and to her Maui Wheelers, Legal Aid Society of Hawaii (she is a board member) and Adaptive Maui meetings and even to the airport.

(Maui Wheelers is a peer mentoring group of people who use wheelchairs, scooters or other mobility devices. Adaptive Maui is a recreational group for persons with disabilities.)

"I'm very pleased with it," Alohilani said of MEO's paratransit operations. The service is dependable and gets her where she has to go.

"The drivers are really awesome," she said. "We have become friends. They are like extended family."

Drivers are not supposed to have much interaction with riders, "but you can't help it when you see someone every day."

"Maui is small, we're very ohana-like," she continued. "So we also will share and make that connection . . . having that feeling of ohana."

"That is what MEO is."

Alohilani is thankful for MEO paratransit services that "really help me to be out there." She says people remark that she is so happy.

"It's because I have a good life. I'm able to participate and be with others and share my aloha," Alohilani said.

## MEO YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

- **4,246 individuals increased mobility and improved quality of life utilizing specialized transportation, receiving more than 288,799 rides throughout Maui County**
- **1,566 seniors and individuals with disabilities maintained an independent living situation**
- **87 low income individuals overcame barriers to maintain employment**

# ***YOUTH SERVICES***

*MEO Youth Services provides evidence-based education programs and activities for youths 11 to 18 years old in Central Maui intermediate and high schools. Prevention activities include substance abuse and alcohol use, cyber bullying and teen suicide. There is life and career skills training and gender specific programming. Youths also participate in out-of-school service learning and leadership activities and projects focused on community involvement and service and cultural awareness.*



## **MEO: A Profile in Helping**

Rocklyn Jones is a 7th grader attending St. Anthony School. She has been a part of MEO Youth Services Underage Drinking Prevention (UDP) program since the summer of 2019. Rocklyn has been a consistent in-person and virtual participant since the start of the pandemic and is always excited to

attend program activities. Rocklyn says her favorite part of the program is meeting new friends while visiting different places around Maui.

She first heard about the program from a friend who invited her to join. Rocklyn is an only child and found adjusting to distance learning virtual classes very challenging. Rocklyn's mother told staff that she is grateful that MEO is still having regular programming so that Rocklyn can stay connected.

This past September, Rocklyn participated and completed MEO Youth Services' first virtual training of the Underage Drinking Prevention curriculum. Rocklyn said she and her mom really enjoyed doing the Home Team activities together. Rocklyn lives in a rural Upcountry area so she appreciates the opportunity to stay connected with her community while learning life skills and different cultural practices and creating effective prevention campaigns.

Staff feels that as Rocklyn continues to attend MEO programs she will develop into a positive leader and effective role model and live a healthy and drug-free lifestyle as she continues her journey through middle and high school, and beyond!



## Youth Leadership



KYLIE-LYNN TAKUSHI is an exceptional youth and exemplifies MEO's Underage Drinking Prevention (UDP) program success. She has been a constant figure in MEO's UDP program since the summer of 2013 and is now a 2019 King Kekaulike High School graduate.

Kylie decided to join the program due to her older brother, who was a program participant at the time. Since her first summer with MEO Youth Services, she fell in love with the program because it allowed her to meet new friends, visit new places around Maui, and provided her the opportunity to raise awareness on issues like tobacco/vaping, substance abuse, underage drinking, teen suicide, and cyber bullying prevention.

When Kylie entered high school, she joined MEO's M.A.U.I. Kanaktion Leadership Task Force, and since then she contributed in the "Be a Jerk" campaign, repealing Maui's 24-Hour Liquor Sales law, and Maui's Smoke-Free Cars w/ Kids law. In 2019, Kylie represented MEO at the Prevent Suicide Hawai'i Statewide Conference on O`ahu where she received a certification as a Gatekeeper Youth Suicide Trainer. Kylie served as Vice President on M.A.U.I. Kanaktion Leadership Task Force. The Task Force provided Kylie with the opportunity to learn leadership skills, college preparation, financial literacy, civic engagement, and creating new prevention campaigns.

Kylie is an amazing mentor and role model to the rest of the youths in the program. She has helped our younger participants with homework, making sure everyone feels welcomed, and has led by example, always volunteering first in every activity.

Kylie will be attending the University of Hawai'i at Hilo College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management (CAFNRM) this fall and has already found housing and employment. Staff is confident that Kylie's success in MEO's UDP program has prepared her to succeed not only in college, but in all aspects of her life.

### MEO YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

- ***1,199 youths avoided risk taking behaviors***
- ***1,199 youths improved their social/emotional development***
- ***423 youths improved physical health and well-being***

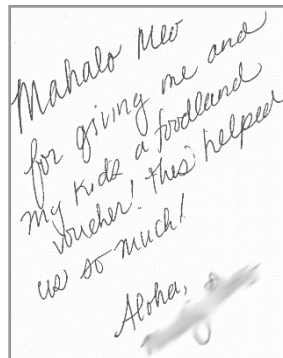
# HAWAII EMERGENCY LAULIMA PARTNERSHIP (HELP)

MEO has numerous stories of individuals and families who have benefited from various coronavirus relief funding programs. Many of those stories come from the Hawaii Emergency Laulima Partnership (HELP), originally funded by the County of Maui general funds at \$2 million and later supplemented by another \$8 million from County of Maui federal Coronavirus Relief Fund monies.

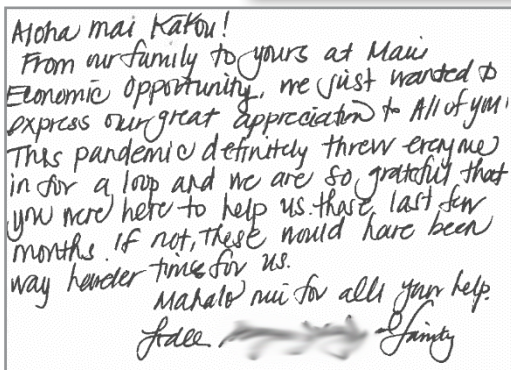
Under HELP, MEO provided financial assistance to more than 12,500 Maui County families to help pay for essential needs due to a layoff, reduction in hours or loss of income related to COVID-19. Assistance covered food, personal hygiene, household basics (cleaning products, paper goods, etc.), over-the-counter medicine, rent, mortgage, utility payments, phone or internet service, car payments, and other essential needs. An individual qualified for support if he or she was laid off or experienced a reduction in income due to COVID-19 and did not have more than \$5,000 in liquid assets (combined balances of checking and savings accounts).

The countless success stories show that relief

Here are images of just a few letters from MEO clients who can testify to the need for continued relief funding throughout our communities.



Mahalo MEO for giving me and my kids a foodland voucher! This helped us so much!  
Aloha,



Aloha mai kakaou!  
From our family to yours at Maui Economic Opportunity, we just wanted to express our great appreciation to All of you! This pandemic definitely threw everyone in for a loop and we are so grateful that you were here to help us these last few months. If not, these would have been way harder times for us.  
Mahalo nui for all your help.  
Aloha [Signature] Family

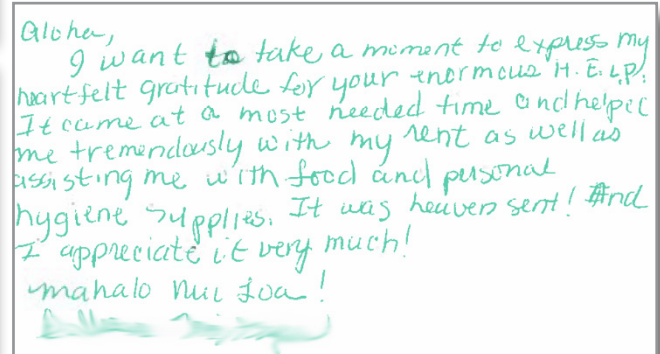
programs are needed and make a huge difference in the community. Those who did not qualify under one source of funding were referred to other services or service providers. The community has made it a priority to support one another to get us through these uncertain times. MEO clients are impacted at different times and in different ways – some from the start of the pandemic and others just recently. These relief programs are vital to maintaining the health, welfare and stability in our community.

## MEO YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

**MEO Assisted more than 12,500 households impacting nearly 33,700 individuals**

### Household breakdown:

- 10,571 received food vouchers
- 2,279 received rent/mortgage assistance
- 3,960 received utility assistance
- 782 received insurance assistance
- 1,467 received assistance for tuition or other essential needs



Aloha,  
I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for your enormous H.E.L.P. It came at a most needed time and helped me tremendously with my rent as well as assisting me with food and personal hygiene supplies. It was heaven sent! And I appreciate it very much!  
Mahalo nui loa!  
[Signature]

# Volunteers of the Year

## Arleen Gerbig



Arleen Gerbig has been a force in the West Maui kupuna community, especially during this time of COVID-19 and social distancing and other restrictions to the usual way of life.

With large face-to-face gatherings prohibited, Arleen continued to make sure seniors stayed connected and physically and mentally healthy. She also made an effort to become “Zoom-literate” in these days of virtual meetings and gatherings.

Arleen became a member of the Lahaina-Honolua Senior Citizens Club in 2003 and remains a member today. In 2016, she took over as club president after the sudden passing of beloved president, Mae Fujiwara.

The year 2020 was the Lahaina-Honolua Senior Club’s 50-year anniversary and a grand celebration was planned. COVID-19 has delayed celebration plans until things return to normal.

Another activity put on pause because of the pandemic was the club’s lei-making and sales at the Baldwin Home Museum. The funds raised are used for scholarships for Lahainaluna High graduates.

From 2014-19 and 2020-present, Arleen has been a member of the MEO Board of Directors and served as secretary from 2017-19. She has served on different board committees during the years, including Finance, Planning and Evaluation, Executive and Personnel

committees, and as president of the Senior Planning and Coordinating Council.

Arleen also was on the advisory board for Kaunoa RSVP from 2014-18 and handles all bookings for Na Kupuna Serenaders and dancers. Na Kupuna provides entertainment to both Hale Makua facilities, under the Banyan Tree in Lahaina, The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua, and the Lahaina Cannery Mall.

She makes it a point to participate in MEO’s Kupuna Luncheon, Senior Fair and other events, and marshals club members to testify at public hearings on issues of importance to seniors in Maui County and for MEO and to regularly attend West Maui Taxpayers Association meetings.

During the pandemic, she volunteered for food distribution on the third Thursday of the month and personally delivered food boxes to members who were afraid to leave their homes or could not get to the site to pick up a food box.

Arleen is someone you can count on when needed even though she claims to be shy and nervous at times. She is a great example of someone who has compassion for her community and works well with everyone. She makes things happen and is especially committed to making her club members happy, healthy and active.

## Jaimie Dukelow



Jaimie Dukelow shares her time, knowledge, experiences and insights on banking and entrepreneurial endeavors with attendees of Maui Economic Opportunity's business planning and financial literacy classes.

Jaimie, Hawaii State Federal Credit Union business development officer, has been a business presenter for the MEO Business Development Center's Core Four Business Planning Course and Teen Financial Literacy Workshop, which teaches Maui County teens about budgeting and saving goals, basic banking, how to apply and interview for a job, and credit.

In addition to MEO, Jaimie has volunteered at the Maui Food Bank, Maui Friends of the Library, King Kekaulike High School as a Senior Project judge, Halau Ke'alaokamaile silent auction team leader and volunteer. She also provides financial education presentations at University of Hawaii Maui College, high schools and intermediate schools and different organizations on Maui.



Core Four Banker's Night



# Benefactor of the Year

## Maui Soda & Ice Works, Ltd.

Maui Soda & Ice Works, Ltd., a company with a history spanning 137 years, believes in nurturing relationships to help build a better and stronger community. “Our community is what makes us successful, and in turn, giving back to our community will encourage its continued growth and success,” said a company official.

The Nobriga family is transitioning to a fourth generation of ownership. Manuel Nobriga began working for the company in 1922, and the family bought the company in 1946. Maui Soda began as an ice and refrigeration company, adding soft drink distribution in the 1920s with Coca-Cola products bottled in Wailuku from 1924 to 1988. Ice cream production began in 1932 with the Roselani premium line introduced in 1972.

Maui Soda currently has three divisions – ready to drink, food service beverage and frozen products. In addition to Coca-Cola and Roselani products, the company distributes Popsicle, Monster Energy and Ben & Jerry’s lines.

Maui Soda has been a friend of Maui Economic Opportunity donating \$12,500 in the past three years. Michael Nobriga, grandson of Manuel Nobriga, sits on the MEO board of directors, representing state Rep. Kyle Yamashita.

In addition to MEO, Maui Soda benefactors include the Maui Food Bank, currently the No. 1 receiver of product donations, other nonprofit organizations, first responders and schools. The company grants 85 to 90 percent of donation requests, and donates about 5,000 cases of products annually.

During the holiday season, Maui Soda selects a nonprofit or other community supporter, to which company employees can give. The benefactors in recent years have included the Maui Food Bank in 2018, five families for The Laulima Giving Program in 2019 and Imua Family Services in 2020, with the company matching employee donations.

In 2019, Maui Soda sponsored and participated in the Maui Ocean Center’s International Coastal Cleanup Day.



Maui Soda & Ice Works was named 2021 Maui Economic Opportunity Benefactor of the Year. Shown at the company’s Wailuku plant are James Nobriga (from left); Bard Peterson, president of the MEO board; Debbie Cabebe, MEO CEO; Mike Nobriga, president of the Maui Soda board and member of the MEO board; and Buddy James Nobriga.

# Kupuna Advocates of the Year

*An advocate is someone who can help you speak up so that your needs are heard, your rights are understood and your problems are resolved.*

## ROY KATSUDA



Roy Katsuda is the former executive director of Hale Mahaolu, a private nonprofit low-income housing corporation. Under Roy's leadership, the organization grew from 300 to 400 units at two sites to more than 1,000 units at 13 sites throughout the County.

Roy didn't just focus on housing, he spent time getting to know his residents and understanding their needs. He participated in social gatherings at the various sites took a genuine interest in the residents.

Roy and his staff noticed that some of their clients were leaving Hale Mahaolu's independent living sites for care homes because they couldn't take a bath or cook for themselves. As a result, the agency established a personal care program.

In his spare time Roy was an active board member for Maui Adult Day Care Centers and a member of the Maui Nonprofit Director Association. He is still a member and active with the Kauai Housing Development Corporation, the Hawaii Public Housing Authority Board and the Hawaii Community Reinvestment Corporation.

Roy has been described as a visionary and doer. "I had the privilege to work with Roy in different capacities over the years, and I can say he is one of the good guys," said MEO Executive Director Debbie Cabebe.

## J. KALANI ENGLISH



State Sen. J. Kalani English was born and raised in Hana and represents East Maui, Moloka'i and Lana'i. From 1993-1996 he was an adviser to the Permanent Mission of the Federated States of Micronesia to the United Nations. He was Chief of Staff for a

State Senator and served two terms on the Maui County Council. He joined the State Senate in November 2000.

Over the years, Senator English has served as the Senate Majority Floor Leader and on the Committees of Ways and Means, Health and Human Services, Hawaiian Affairs, Education, Commerce, Consumer Protection, Housing, International Affairs, Water, Land, Energy and Environment, Tourism and Intergovernmental Affairs. He chaired the Energy and Environment Committee and the Committee on Transportation and International Affairs.

Senator English has been a longtime supporter of MEO programs dating back to his days as a Maui County Council member. He has always looked out for the Kupuna and supported programs that would help make their lives better.

During this pandemic he personally reached out to MEO on a few occasions to enlist MEO's help ensuring Kupuna were safe and cared for.

He is a humble leader who truly cares for his community, champions their causes, and is a strong supporter of our Kupuna.

# Fiscal Summary

## Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. Annual Report Fiscal Summary October 1, 2019 - September 30, 2020

### Revenue by Source

County of Maui grants - \$13,245,520	64.82%	\$13,245,520
Federal grants - \$5,375,346	26.31%	5,375,346
State of Hawaii grants - \$518,121	2.53%	518,121
Private foundation grants and other contributions - \$462,761	2.26%	462,761
In-kind contributions - \$391,592	1.92%	391,592
Program Income - \$97,526	0.48%	97,526
Fundraising - \$87,169	0.43%	87,169
Rent Revenue - \$53,609	0.26%	53,609
Other income - \$202,089	0.99%	202,089
Total	100.00%	<u>\$20,433,733</u>

### Expenditure by Service

Transportation	46.24%	\$9,722,201
Crisis and Emergency Assistance	22.03%	4,633,408
Early Childhood Services	12.89%	2,710,713
Management and General	2.67%	561,594
Other Federal Programs	1.85%	389,864
Employment and Training	1.35%	284,117
Youth Programs	1.26%	264,920
Microloan and Business Development	0.80%	168,126
Other County Programs	0.56%	118,413
Reintegration	0.38%	80,401
Special Projects	0.38%	80,089
Enlace Hispano Program	0.30%	63,327
Weatherization Assistance Program	9.24%	1,941,651
Fundraising	0.05%	9,588
Total	100.00%	<u>\$21,028,412</u>

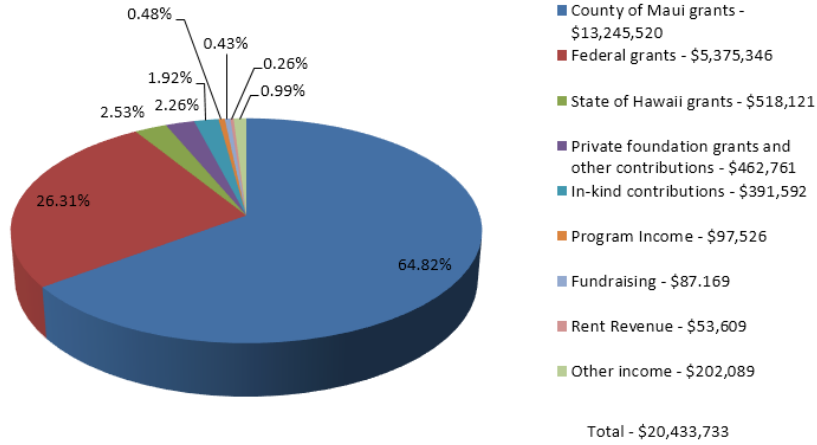
### Expenditure by Function

Program Services - \$19,077,173	90.72%	\$19,077,173
Fundraising - \$9,588	0.05%	9,588
Management and General - \$1,941,651	9.23%	1,941,651
Total	100.00%	<u>\$21,028,412</u>

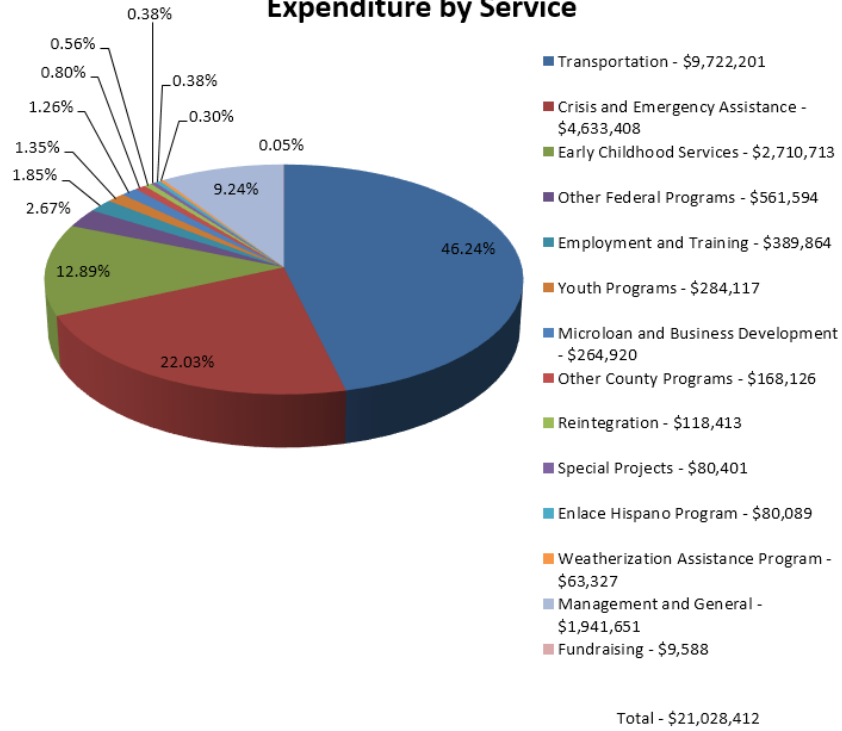
### Summary:

Revenue	\$20,433,733
Expenditures	<u>(20,630,580)</u>
Expenditures - Grant Purchased Assets	(397,832)
Increase(Decrease) in Net Assets	<u>(\$594,679)</u>
Net Assets, October 1, 2019	<u>\$ 29,215,924</u>
Net Assets, September 30, 2020	<u>\$28,621,245</u>

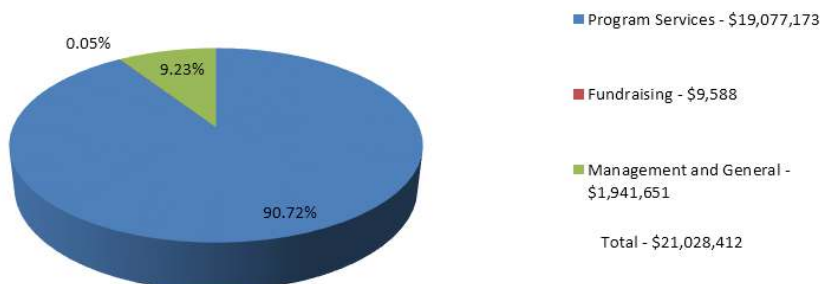
### Revenue by Source



### Expenditure by Service



### Expenditure by Function



# Grants

## **County of Maui:**

Transportation – Human Services  
Transportation – ADA Paratransit  
Transportation – Vehicle Replacement  
Head Start Afterschool and Summer Programs  
Kahi Kamali`i Infant Toddler Center  
Youth Services  
Being Empowered and Safe Together Reintegration (BEST)  
Underage Drinking Prevention Services  
Rental Assistance Program (RAP)  
Enlace Hispano  
Planning and Coordinating Council Senior Coordinator  
Maui Independent Living Center Program  
Senior Fair  
Project Graduation  
Business Development Center Microenterprise Program  
Hawaii Emergency Laulima Program (HELP)

## **State of Hawai`i:**

CIP Transit Maintenance Shop  
Vehicle Purchases  
Impact Grant for Community Based Profiles  
Employment Services for Low Income Persons and Legally Permanent Residents

## **Federal (Including State/County Pass Through)**

Head Start – Federal  
Community Services Block Grant  
Community Service Block Grant – CARES Act  
Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)  
Weatherization Assistance Program (LIHEAP)  
Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)  
USDA Child Nutrition Program  
Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program  
National Farmworker Jobs Program  
Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)

Corporation for National Community Services – AmeriCorps  
Community Talk Town Hall Meetings (SAMHSA)  
Hawaii Emergency Laulima Program (HELP) – CARES Act  
County of Maui Recovery & Resilience Program Adaptability Fund – CARES Act

## **Private Foundations:**

Hawaii Community Foundation Flex Grant  
Hawaii Community Foundation Resiliency Fund  
Hawaii Community Foundation Montage Kapalua Pono Program  
Hawaii Community Foundation Medication Reconciliation Program  
Smith Family Fund  
Hale Mahaolu HELP  
Hawaiian Electric Ohana Emergency Gift Program  
Agape Lanai Microloan Fund  
Atherton Family Foundation  
Weinberg Foundation – COVID-19  
A&B Kokua Giving Fund

## **Other:**

Head Start Federal – In-kind  
AmeriCorps Host Agency Cash Match and In-kind  
Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) In-kind  
Maui Senior Planning & Coordinating Council  
Hawaii Community Action Programs Directors Association  
Maui Homeless Alliance  
MEO Transportation  
Kihei Wailea Rotary Fund

# ***LEADERSHIP TEAM***

## ***MEO BOARD OF DIRECTORS***



### **Resident Sector**

Leilani Aquino  
Head Start Policy Council  
Representative

Danny Lau  
Kahului Seniors

Arlene Gerbig  
West Maui Seniors

Adele Rugg, Secretary  
Kula AARP Seniors

Dawn Bicoy  
Molokai Filipino Community Council

Nancy Tamashiro  
Lanai Area Council

Mahealani Goo  
Hale Mahaolu

### **Private Sector**

Randy Piltz  
Maui Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce

Brandon Higashi  
Central Pacific Bank

Sandy Ryan  
Maui Economic Development Board

Gemma Medina  
HAEYC

Peter Horovitz  
Maui County Bar Association

Joe Aquino  
ILWU

Carol Reimann  
A&B Properties

Mercer "Chubby" Vicens  
Emeritus

### **Government Sector**

Clifford B. Alakai, Treasurer  
Representing State House – Troy Hashimoto

Scott Okada  
Representing State House – Angus  
McKelvey

Michael Nobriga  
Representing State House – Kyle Yamashita

Ned Davis, President  
Representing State Senator- Roz Baker

Bard Peterson, Vice President  
Representing State House- Justin Woodson

Tasha Kama  
Representing the Maui County Council

Darlene Endrina  
Representing the Office of the Mayor

## ***MEO LEADERSHIP TEAM***

Debbie Cabebe, CEO	Dane Ka`ae, Youth Services Director
Gay Sibonga, COO	Yolanda Reyes, Moloka`i Branch Director - Not Shown
Debbie Lorenzo, CFO	Jonnie Oliveira, Hāna Branch Manager - Not Shown
Cliff Caesar, CHRO	Chantell Schilling, Lāna`i Branch Manager - Not Shown
Lee Imada, Administrative Assistant	
Mark Hammer, Facilities Manager	
Cassi Yamashita, Community Services Director	
Debbi Amaral, Early Childhood Services Director	
David Daly, MEO BDC Director	
Harry Johnson, Transportation Director	





Carol Davis, Atlas Ins. & Marvin DeCastro, Driver of the Year



Lahaina Honolulu Seniors



Community Partners Hale Mahaolu



Zilpah Kaimiola



Josh Kahala - Kupuna Aloha Celebration



MEO Staff Service Awards

