

Hawai'i Island Portuguese Chamber of Commerce

December 2024 Newsletter



Feliz Natal e Prospero Ano Novo!

**A VERY MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and Happy New Year!**

We have much to be thankful for this year and much to look forward to in 2025. We began the year with the Malasada Shuffle 5K and Spring Festa at Aunty Sally's in February with fresh malasadas for the 5K participants, Portuguese food, exhibits and genealogy, plus music and Aunty Mary's Store. March followed with the sale of the house donated to our Center providing the final push in private funds to enter a contract for site work in July, followed by site work beginning in September. Our General Membership meeting in May featured a presentation by relatives from the Azores sharing their story from the perspective of those left behind as Portuguese families emigrated to Hawaii. The year- end highlight was our Founders Gala in September which once again recognized Founding Donors, historic buildings and individuals, who have supported or represented our Portuguese culture in a number of ways.

A big **MUITO OBRIGADO** to all as we anticipate our new Center in 2025.

Mahalo Nui, Archie Hapai III, HIPCC President, 2019-2025

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We Had A Great GALA Time!

The HIPCC Cultural & Educational Center's 2024 Founder Gala was held on Saturday, September 28, 2024 at the Fairway Grill, 340 Haihai Street in Hilo was a GREAT success! The evening began with a social hour and Silent Auction. Guests then enjoyed a fabulous dinner prepared by Chef Mark Mattos and his culinary team.

The program for the evening celebrated a historical Portuguese building, our 2024 Founding Donors, and key individuals who have significantly impacted the Hawaii Island community through their work and help in supporting and sharing the Portuguese culture.

The Andrade Building received a 100th Anniversary Commemorative Award. Built in 1924 by John Jose and Rose Andrade, it is one of seven Portuguese buildings contributing to the establishment of Honokaa town, Hawaii's second largest town at that time. Members of the Andrade Family were in attendance to accept the award.



Founding donors (donors donating \$10,000 or more) for 2024 included Theresa Perreira Zendejas and Andrade's Honokaa Café.



Upon being diagnosed with an advanced case of cancer, Theresa gifted her Pahoia home and property to the Center to make sure it was built and it sold in March of 2024 providing the final monies needed to do the site work. Very active in the Blue Zone project, Theresa was also the Champion Shuffler of the Center's Malasada Shuffle 5K. Annette Aiona, our Realtor who represented the Center in the sale of the property, accepted Theresa's award on her behalf.



Andrade's Honokaa Café, owned and operated by Marlene and Archie Hapai, was re-opened on July 3, 2020, three months after COVID hit, to honor Rose and JJ Andrade, Marlene's grandparents, who built the Andrade Building in 1924 which at the time housed a restaurant, bar, 15 room hotel, dance hall, butcher shop and gas station out front which fueled their bus service providing transportation between Honokaa and Hilo.



As in years past, we once again presented Outstanding Community Service Awards to individuals who have made significant contributions to the Portuguese community of Hawai'i Island and to our Center.



Kahealani Martins Curammeng was honored for her work as President and Director of the non-profit organization Portuguese Family History Collections of Hawaii, her books documenting Portuguese emigration and her many hours helping people trace their genealogy. Kahealani and her daughter Kanela Curammeng Wells were surprised with a gift of a beautiful painting done by Tony Rebelo of Ontario, Canada.



Daniel Santos and Jeanette Santos (In Memorium) have each served as President of the Big Island Portuguese Culture Club and were honored for their leadership in promoting and perpetuating the Portuguese culture through a wide range of activities including dancing, making malasadas and bisca card playing. Daniel Santos and his family accepted the award.



(Gala continued)

Kaiali'i Kahele, former Hawai'i Island U.S. Congressman and Hawai'i State Senator, earned our title of "Center Champion" with his major support in helping the Center receive a \$1 million State of Hawai'i Grant in Aid in 2016 which launched initial funding for our Portuguese Cultural and Educational Center. Kai and his wife Maria were in attendance to celebrate his award.



Hawai'i State Representative Chris Todd, another Center Champion, was honored for his long-term commitment to helping support funding for the Center, helping to acquire three additional State Grants in Aid adding substantially to needed funding. Chris Todd and his family were in attendance to celebrate his award.



Hawai'i State Representative Mark Nakashima was honored (In Memorium) for his strong and unwavering support and tremendous guidance from 2016 to the present providing his legislative leadership resulting in a total of \$1.35 million received for Center funding. Mark's wife Yvette Lee Nakashima and his mother Betty Nakashima accepted the award on his behalf.



Muito Obrigado, Mahalo, and Thank You to all those who attended and contributed to making our 2024 Founders Gala a great success! Visit our website at hipcc.org/events to view the photo gallery.

Saudades Update

Upon selling Theresa's home and property, our Portuguese Cultural and Educational Center had enough private funding to contract to begin its site work this September. The pad for the building is almost ready and the parking lot is taking shape. A big thank you to Edwin De Luz Trucking, presently owned and operated by Debbie and Kevin Balog, for their donation of materials to help transform our site. Building construction should begin in early 2025. Drive by 671 Ponahawai Street in Hilo and watch it come to life.



Photo Credit: Irene Sagon

Your continued support is most appreciated and a year-end gift to the Center is welcome.

Mail to: HIPCC CEC, P.O. Box 1120, Hilo, HI 96721 **Donate Online:** hipcc.org/donate **Muito Obrigado!**

Malasada Shuffle 5K and Spring Festa

The 2025 Malasada Shuffle 5K and Spring Festa will be held on Sunday, February 4th at Aunty Sally's Luau Hale in Hilo and dedicated to Theresa Perreira Zendejas, our Star Shuffler, who at 83 shuffled around Wong Stadium for a full 5K and donated her home and property to the Portuguese Cultural and Educational Center when she was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer in January of 2023 and passed away in May of that year. Her wish was to have this Center be the best in Hawaii and we continue to take it in that direction. More details to follow.



December 2024



HIPCC

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The 3 Arms of our Chamber continue to fulfill our Goals with the Chamber addressing Business and the Economy; the Scholarship Fund and Center, Education; and the Center, our Portuguese Culture.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 2, 2025 – Malasada Shuffle 5K and Spring Festa
Aunty Sally's Luau Hale
799 Pi'lani Street
Hilo, Hawai'i**

Race Course in the surrounding area