

Summer Newsletter
July 2024

E KĀKOU

OLA HAWAII
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CORE NEWSLETTER



CEC in Action: Staff and Hui Members Engage at Public Health and Education Conferences

RCMI Conference



The Ola HAWAII CEC team presented a poster, “Tools for the Long Game: Cultivating Communities in the Research Pipeline by Intentional Design” for the 2024 RCMI Consortium National Conference in Bethesda, Maryland. Our CEC activities were showcased in our poster presentation, highlighting our latest initiatives and achievements. During the Community Engagement Core (CEC) convening, we shared valuable lessons learned from our experiences, contributing to the collective knowledge of community engagement practices. We connected with CEC from different academic institutions and listened to their activities that complement our work in Hawai‘i. A discussion on sustainability of the programs and community engagement emerged. We highlighted the importance of non-profit partnerships to move the dial toward equity in health research including the transfer of resources from academia to community members.

Additionally, we met with NIH project officers to update them on our recent events and exchanged ideas on how to strengthen support for community organizations within our partnerships. The conference served as a platform for knowledge exchange and the promotion of a research pipeline that is community-centered.

CEC core staff reported back on our activities to attendees of the conference and shared best practices for sustainability of the research pipeline (pictured).

National Network of Public Health Institutes

Our CEC Hui Co-Director, Dr. May Rose Dela Cruz, attended the National Network of Public Health Institutes conference in May 2024 at New Orleans, Louisiana. She presented multiple posters, including one on her COVID-19 outreach grant and another on the Ola HAWAII CEC. Her CEC poster, "Building Equitable Community and Academic Partnerships in Health Research," featured the CEC Hui, report to the communities, and collaborative community engagement in research. Representatives from Public Health Institutes commended Ola HAWAII on the academic and community partnership. They expressed their desire to integrate community engagement into their research activities within the organization. There was significant interest in understanding the subcontracting process with community-based organizations and inquiries about the diverse communities in Hawai‘i.

Dr. Dela Cruz attended the plenary sessions, enjoyed the networking, and met with a new colleague she met at the RCMI conference, Dr. Tyra Gross, an associate professor at Xavier University of Louisiana. They were able to continue their conversation about community-led research.



May Rose presented a poster on CEC’s activities in New Orleans (above).

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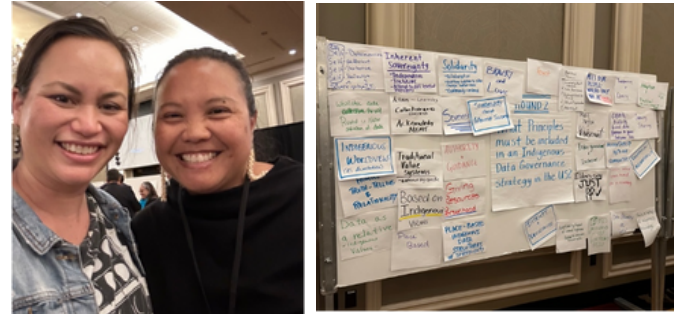
Hundreds Gather for the First U.S. Indigenous Data Sovereignty & Indigenous Data Governance Summit by Sharde Freitas

CEC supports the development and capacity building of our treasured CEC Hui members who provide time, mana'o and lived experience to Ola HAWAII's pilot grant applications. We appreciate the community lens they provide and attention to the relevance and research methodologies of projects.

The United States (U.S.) Indigenous Data Sovereignty Network convened its first U.S. Indigenous Data Sovereignty & Indigenous Data Governance Summit ("Summit") in Tuscon, Arizona, in early April. Native Americans from various tribes, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and Maori were in attendance. This 2-day summit was full of sessions all on Indigenous Data Sovereignty (IDSov) and Indigenous Data Governance (IDGov) across multiple tracts -- health and well-being, environment and resilience, institutional contexts, and native governance contexts. The purpose of this Summit was to: "develop guidance around appropriate data governance structures that support Indigenous Peoples' own IDSov initiatives."

While various policies, governmental treaties, and institutions impact Indigenous peoples' ability to achieve IDSov and IDGov, we have much to learn from each other as we navigate these waters. Hearing others' successes reminds us of what is possible and helps us find solutions to achieve IDSov and IDGov. This summit emphasized the importance of gatherings to learn from one another, share successes and struggles, and build pilina (connection and relationship). Our Māori cousins continue to lead with their articulation, innovation, and methods. Despite the complexities of working across institutions, many have presented nontraditional solutions. Continuing important conversations, asking questions, and providing alternative solutions are key. Institutions must also recognize their power, value relationships with Indigenous communities, and share power and resources.

Great progress has been made towards IDSov and IDGov across the world. The CARE and FAIR principle has been accepted in various settings and institutions, and continues to provide a critical foundation towards broader acceptance for IDSov and IDGov. The published literature around CARE and FAIR principles provides an additional learning of value, especially for decisionmakers and institutions that measure success based on published, peer-reviewed, journal articles.



Sharde Freitas and Dr. Rosie Alegado at the summit (left). During the opening mixer exercise, participants identified fundamental principles of U.S. Indigenous Data Sovereignty (right).



Mahalo nui to Ola HAWAII for supporting my attendance at the Summit. With gratitude for the learnings and experiences being part of the CEC, it was quite remarkable being in a big conference ballroom full of native peoples who are all understand the importance of IDSov and IDGov. My previous learning experiences with the CEC hui and teachings from JoAnn Tsark, which began during my time as an MPH student, have prepared me to continue building upon community-based participatory and data sovereignty principles at this Summit.

One of the keynote speakers, Kiriowhai Mikaere (Māori), introduced the term "coloniality," highlighting the ongoing settler colonial project in Indigenous nations and its impacts on communities (left).





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2024 AAC&U Conference Key Note Speaker Reflections by LeShay Keli'iholokai

LeShay Keli'iholokai, CEC Hui member, attended the 2024 AAC&U Conference on Diversity and Student Success in Philadelphia this March. The keynote presenter, Toby Jenkins, a scholar known for her work on cultural relevance and authenticity in education, delivered a compelling exploration of modern education's challenges and opportunities. LeShay shared insights from Jenkins' presentation, highlighting the emphasis on the importance of authenticity, identity and cultural relevance in fostering student success.

Jenkins urged educators to create inclusive curricula reflecting their students' diverse backgrounds, enhancing engagement and fostering a sense of belonging and self-worth. She highlighted the transformative power of integrating cultural elements, such as hip-hop, into educational practices. Jenkins demonstrated how hip-hop, with its creativity, resilience, and authenticity, connects with students and makes learning more impactful. Jenkins' insights are particularly relevant for Hawaiian students, whose culture emphasizes storytelling, community, and resilience. Educators can draw parallels between Jenkins' hip-hop framework and Hawaiian cultural practices, integrating Hawaiian language, traditions, and values into the curriculum to create a more inclusive and supportive environment. Incorporating traditional Hawaiian chants (oli), hula, and the values of aloha (love, compassion) and kuleana (responsibility) can make learning more relevant and engaging, honoring students' heritage and linking their cultural identity with academic success.

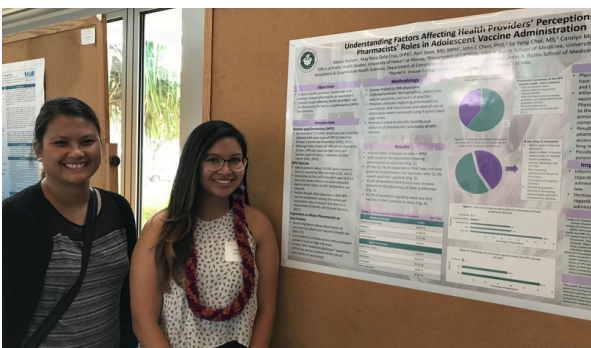
By recognizing students' unique strengths and experiences, advocating for equity, and fostering resilience and lifelong learning, educators can significantly impact student success. Jenkins' emphasis on holistic development and systemic change provides a roadmap for educators committed to making a meaningful difference. Reflecting on her presentation, it's clear that student success encompasses academic achievement and creating inclusive, supportive, and empowering environments that prepare students for successful, fulfilling lives. Integrating these principles with Hawaiian cultural practices can further enrich Hawaiian students' educational experience, ensuring their cultural identity is respected and celebrated.

Toby Jenkins (pictured)



(Left) In her book, *The Hip-Hop Mindset: Success Strategies for Educators and Other Professionals*, Jenkins explores hip-hop culture's broader influence, celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2023. She emphasizes hip-hop's role in imparting life lessons, inspiring individuals, and offering a sense of freedom. By incorporating students' cultural identities into the classroom, educators can bridge the gap between students' lived experiences and academic pursuits.

Ho'omaika'i Meliza Roman! Congratulations on Your Award Winning Paper



Dr. May Rose Dela Cruz with Meliza Roman next to her research poster at the 2018 UH-JABSOM Biosymposium (above). This project received the award. [Read here.](#)

Meliza Roman's award-winning paper, "Assessing Providers' Views of Increasing HPV Vaccination Uptake through the Utilization of Pharmacists," was published in last month's *Hawai'i Journal of Health & Social Welfare*. As an undergraduate Public Health student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in 2016, Meliza worked on Dr. May Rose Dela Cruz's RMATRIX-funded research. This grant sparked her interest in research, leading her to pursue and earn an MS in JABSOM's Quantitative Health and Clinical Research program and write her award-winning publication. Meliza continues to be part of the Ola HAWAII with UH JABSOM, working as a coordinator in the Biostatistic Core Facility. She is also a Pinerd, a work group of Filipino health researchers in Hawai'i. Dr. May Rose Dela Cruz is very proud of Meliza and is delighted to have her as a colleague in the Ola HAWAII Biostatistics Core.

Event Highlight: Training Early Stage Investigators

2024 Bootcamp Presentations Community Research



During the Ola HAWAII Bootcamp held from May 21 to May 23, 2024, featured speakers Dr. Shobha Srinivasan, Senior Advisor for Health Disparities in the Office of the Director, Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences (DCCPS), National Cancer Institute (NCI), and four Ola HAWAII-funded investigators, Dr. Cliff Bersamira, Kathleen Corpuz, Dr. Jane Chung-Do, and Dr. Simone Schmid (pictured left to right). Presenters shared their current projects and how they engage community members.

CEC Director, JoAnn Tsark, facilitated the discussion asking questions about community engagement and the factors that make programs successful, such as relationships, shared resources, shared power, and uplifting community voices. Attendees shared their insights about the challenges they faced, including the time required to build trust and community interactions with academic institutions. The Community Research Track presentations during the bootcamp was an important venue for CEC because of the valuable conversations that emerged. Our speakers provided concrete examples of how early-stage investigators navigate community relationships and address community concerns about health disparities research.

Ola HAWAII funded research project spotlight: Listen to Dr. Simone Schmid's interviews and news coverage on establishing METs for canoe paddling. [Read here](#) or listen to [Hawai'i Public Radio](#).



Upcoming Events: Stay Tuned!

Ola HAWAII YR 4 Pilot Abstracts

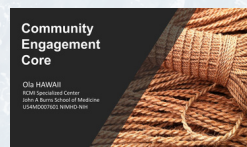
The call for abstracts for the Ola HAWAII Year 4 Pilot has been released, with submissions due by **September 12, 2024**. Please share this opportunity with early-stage and early-career investigators, post-doctoral fellows, medical residents, and subspecialty fellows. Our CEC Hui members will assist with the review process, so please be on the look out for an email from our Ola HAWAII staff. We will need your insights and expertise. Mahalo nui!

Stay tuned for upcoming activities. If you have any questions or need further information, feel free to email us.

List of presentations from the 2024 bootcamp:

- [Exploring NIH Funding Opportunities](#) with Dr. Shobha Srinivasan
- [Understanding Filipino Substance Use through Community and Service Provider Voices](#) with Dr. Cliff Bersamira
- [HIPHI & Ola HAWAII Community Engagement Core Partnership: Supporting Filipino Translation Research](#) with Kathleen Corpuz, MA, MPH
- [Advancing CBPR through the MALAMA Study: Lessons Learned](#) with Dr. Jane Chung-Do
- [Paddle for Science: A Community-Driven Idea and Community-Based Execution](#) with Dr. Simone Schmid

If you would like to listen to any of the presentations, please email Kathleen at kathleen@hiphi.org for the links to the audio.



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