



**Agricultural
Leadership
Foundation of
Hawai'i**

99-193 Aiea Heights Dr., Ste. 300-A
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January 29, 2010

MEDIA RELEASE

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Class XII from the Agricultural Leadership Program Graduates

The Agriculture Leadership Foundation of Hawaii is proud to introduce our newest alumni, Class XII of the Agriculture Leadership Program! Last month the graduates, their families and friends, ALFH alumni and board members celebrated the culmination of the 18-month program. The participants have been meeting since July of 2008 and have completed eight in-state seminars and a two week trip to Washington DC and Oregon.

- **Luisa Castro**, Assistant Water Quality Coordinator, CTAHR, UH Hilo
- **Laurie Goodwin**, Hawaii Outreach Manager, Syngenta Seeds Inc
- **Marissa Harman**, Land Asset Manager, Kamehameha Schools
- **Kylie Matsuda**, Managing Director, Kahuku Farms
- **Mark Lopes**, Manager, Harvesting and Field Preparation Department, Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar
- **Thong-Teng Neo**, Manager, Green Point Nursery
- **Irene Plunkett-Mina**, Co-owner Kahanu Aina Sprouts
- **Michael Shimatsu**, Roast Master, Kauai Coffee Company
- **Ron Weidenbach**, Co-Owner, Hawaii Fish Company
- **Sabrina White**, Assistant Manager, Ponoholo Ranch, and
- **Randy Yokoyama**, Field Coordinator, Dow AgroSciences, LLC

The celebration occurred at the Kahua Ranch Paniolo Deck overlooking the Kohala Coast on the Island of Hawaii. The evening was accompanied by the beautiful music of George Kaahumoku and his violin-playing friend, Tony Selvage. An entertaining slide show presented by the class members rounded out the program that included presentations of certificates and short speeches by Monty Richards, Corky Bryan and Donna Ching. After a wonderful dinner consisting of chicken, beef and produce from the ranch, the class and their family's roasted marshmallows by a big warm bonfire. The Foundation is proud to launch this new class of leaders into our agriculture community. We know they will have an impact on moving Hawaii's agriculture sector towards a vibrant and sustainable future. The Foundation will be recruiting for Class XIII in the spring of 2010.

(MORE)



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During the 18 month program the class completed several workshops on group process, facilitation and planning. They spent three days at the State Capitol shadowing a legislator and met all four congressional delegates while in Washington DC. Site visits throughout the state focused on topics such as land and water, energy and labor, transportation and distribution, ag-tourism, value added and marketing. The sites with the most learning impact demonstrated the impact of innovation and passion on successful operations. Some of their favorite site visits included: Kona Queen Bee and Wailea Ag Group on Hawaii; Armstrong Produce on Oahu, Alii Kula Lavender and Maui Land and Pineapple on Maui and Haraguchi Taro Farm and Kaneshiro Livestock on Kauai. The standout site visits on the state trip to Oregon included The Food Innovation Center in Portland, Stalbush Farms and the dairy operation at Tillamook Cheese Company. Of course the relationships the class built among themselves, the ALFH alumni and the other presenters during the program are the most valuable take-away from the program.

The Foundation remains convinced this program is an important investment in our agriculture and rural communities. It develops capacity in the form of many trained and knowledgeable leaders who can see the value of working together to get things done. In times of great challenge they know who to turn to for solutions and many valuable partnerships have been launched and maintained by ALFH alumni.

The Agricultural Leadership Foundation of Hawai'i, a Hawai'i not-for-profit organization founded in 1982, was established to develop and support effective leaders in the agricultural industry, through a multi-disciplinary leadership-training program. The leadership training program was designed to expand the participant's access to beneficial resources, build confidence, enhance leadership skills, broaden the participant's perspective of statewide agriculture, understand common problems and to envision community based solutions. The Foundations goal is to develop leaders who are able to understand, articulate and build collaborative strategies to address Hawaii's agriculture issues and problems. For more information call (808) 947-2914 or visit www.agleaderhi.org.

PHOTOS ATTACHED; *Captions next page*

(MORE)



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PHOTO CAPTIONS:

CXII.Graduation.12.09 – 3-542

Monty Richards-a founder of the Foundation, gives marching orders to Marissa Harmon and Laurie Goodwin

CXII.Graduation.12.09 – 18-557

Neo Thong-Teng's family flew in from Taiwan for the celebration

CXII.Graduation.12.09 – 23-562

Randy Yokoyama receives his certificate from Donna Ching-Program Coordinator and Mel Matsuda-ALFH VP and alumnus

CXII.Graduation.12.09 – 26-565

Irene Plunkett receives her certificate from Donna Ching-Program Coordinator and Mel Matsuda-ALFH VP and alumnus

CXII.Graduation.12.09 – 33-572

Mel Matsuda, an alumnus from Class IX, exchanges a hug with his daughter Kylie Matsuda

CXII.Graduation.12.09 – 42-581

Group Photo of Class XII

Front row: Luisa Castro, Sabrina White, Laurie Goodwin, Marissa Harmon, Donna Ching-program Coordinator, Kylie Matsuda, Irene Plunkett, Neo Thong-Teng

Back Row: Mark Lopes, Randy Yokoyama, Mike Shimatsu and Ron Wiedenbach

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