

Hō‘oia ‘Āina, Land Acknowledgement

Leeward Community College, with profound reflection, offers this Hō‘oia ‘Āina, Land Acknowledgement Statement, recognizing Hawai‘i as an indigenous space whose original people are today identified as Native Hawaiians.

Leeward Community College upholds the University of Hawai‘i’s commitment to the well-being of our indigenous communities. This Hō‘oia ‘Āina honors the relationship between kānaka ‘ōiwi and the land upon which the college sits.

With much aloha, this statement pays respect to the ‘āina ‘ōiwi of our Pu‘uloa campus and Wai‘anae Moku Education Center, both located on the mokupuni of O‘ahu, moku of ‘Ewa, ahupua‘a of Waiawa, as well as the moku of Wai‘anae and the ahupua‘a of Lualualei.

This Hō‘oia ‘Āina welcomes all who gather on these ancestral lands.

Supplemental Information

Glossary:

Ahupua‘a - sub-district of land

‘Āina ‘ōiwi - Native lands

Hō‘oia ‘Āina - Land Acknowledgment Statement

Kānaka ‘ōiwi - Native Hawaiians

Resources:

Kapi‘olani Community College

UH Hilo, Hanakahi Council Hō‘oia ‘Āina

UH Mānoa Land Acknowledgement Statement

UH West O‘ahu Hō‘oia ‘Āina

Article Land Acknowledgements are about better relations, not just checking a box
(IndigiNews)

What is the purpose of a Land Acknowledgment Statement?

It is an opportunity to recognize and honor the indigenous, ancestral space, reflect on the relationship between the land and its people, provide awareness of Hawai‘i’s history, and inspire hope for the future. This statement is usually read to open up events or ceremonies taking place on the lands on which the event takes place.

Land acknowledgements have been common practice among indigenous people for centuries, however over the past decade, Western governments and organizations have also begun to participate in this practice. Currently in the UH System, several institutions such as UH Mānoa, UH Hilo, UH West O‘ahu, and Kapi‘olani CC have adopted their own statements.

What was Leeward’s development process?

In Spring 2021, a subcommittee of the Nā ‘Ewa Council was created to develop a statement for Leeward Community College. Members included Momi Kamahele, U‘i Keli‘ikuli, Kalei Laimana, Tracie Losch, Annemarie Paikai, Kale‘a Silva, Leinani Yahiku (Student Representative), and Erin Thompson (Subcommittee Chair). Care was taken to research and reflect on the purpose, message, and sentiment of the statement. On April 9, the statement was presented to the full Nā ‘Ewa Council and a unanimous vote to endorse the statement was achieved. On May 13, the Council voted to accept the revised statement title as being Hō‘oia ‘Āina to align with the other UH campuses.

What are the next steps?

In April 2021, Nā ‘Ewa submitted the statement to Chancellor Carlos Penalosa for review and approval. In addition, Council representatives informed Faculty Senate and Campus Council Groups about the purpose and future use of the statement in their May 5 and May 7 meetings respectively. On May 13, the Council submitted an addendum to the Chancellor to change the title to Hō‘oia ‘Āina. It was approved in May 2021.

The statement will be officially launched at Fall 2021 convocation. A workshop to explain the origins, purpose, and use of the statement will be included in the convocation offerings.

As this Hō‘oia ‘Āina reflects the dynamic nature of pilina between land and people, the Nā ‘Ewa council has agreed to review and revise the statement as needed on an annual basis.

Questions?

Feel free to direct any questions to U‘i Keli‘ikuli (genai@hawaii.edu), Kale‘a Silva (jaydene@hawaii.edu), or Erin Thompson (enkt@hawaii.edu).