

Introduction:
Hawai'i International Forgiveness Day
August 4, 2013



Hawai'i International Forgiveness Day will honor Queen Lili'uokalani as a Heroine of Forgiveness. The program, expected to draw 400 people, will be held in the Rotunda at the State Capitol in Honolulu, August 4 2013, from 2:00 pm. to 5:00 pm.

This event marks the 175th birthday of Hawaii's Queen, who stood with heart and courage for forgiveness in our Islands. Through a program of oli, prayer, poetry, music, hula, art, film and talkstory, we seek to understand the Queen, the choices she made...and their meaning in our lives today.

Beginning with the Queen as a key example, we seek to create a dialog of forgiveness, and encourage a daily personal practice of forgiveness -- not only on August 4, but in a continuing way, building aloha every day of the year.

Recognition of the Queen will be simple, respectful, and follow correct protocol. Acknowledged as a beloved leader of her people throughout her life, she understood the need for forgiveness, despite the great injustices which she and the people of the Hawaiian nation suffered. Queen Lili'uokalani worked tirelessly for justice in her homeland.

Discussions about reconciliation and forgiveness are, by nature, complex, multifaceted and full of potential. The spirit of aloha, when combined with conscious action and focused intention, makes anything possible -- not just for Hawaiians, but for all members of the greater community.

“A Lei for Peace”
honoring Queen Lili'uokalani as a
a Heroine of Forgiveness for Hawai'i

11th Annual
Hawai'i International Forgiveness Day

The community participation part of the program will focus on the lei -- as a symbol of the 'aina, of natural beauty, and unity.

To make a lei is both a symbol and a practical action. It creates beauty in the heart of the maker, in



those who behold it, and in those who receive and wear it.

Making a lei is a tradition of many Pacific cultures, and is closely associated with Hawaii in common understanding. It is associated with the Queen, who loved flowers so much. To make a lei takes some patience, study, effort and skill; the task brings one into connection with inner peace, and with the ʻāina. It is easy, but complex -- one may learn the basics in ten minutes, and also spend a lifetime learning the intricacies of the tradition.

Presenting a lei to someone is an expression of aloha, of compassion, gratitude and forgiveness.

So we will make lei for peace, to honor the Queen.

There will be personal lei -- which we will make to share with others. We will bring them to the Capitol, and we will also make them at the Capitol during Forgiveness Day. Teachers will be present, and materials for lei-making will be assembled for all to share. We present lei to friends, to those who need to experience forgiveness, and to our families.

There will also be a community lei -- many lei, linked together. We will begin making this big lei on August 4, and will create a community lei-making activity across the Islands for the following four weeks, so that we have ultimately have a lei long enough that many people can present the lei at ʻIolani Palace on the Queen's 175th birthday -- September 2, 2013 -- everyone holding a single lei in honor of Queen Liliʻuokalani.

With the correct words, action, song and poetry, this will send a pono message to the world.

The community process of creating such a lei will also send a significant message to the world. The people attending Forgiveness Day will begin a process, which continues.

There will be several lei-making education stations around O'ahu, staffed by volunteers from the many community groups that support the Forgiveness Project. Community lei-making will take place on Windward and Leeward sides, on North Shore, downtown, East and West Honolulu, including Na Mea Hawai'i (Native Books), at the Ward Warehouse.

The last link in the community lei offered at the Palace will be made by key people from the Hawaiian community, and by members of other diverse communities. A living lei.

This community lei will be offered to the Hawaii Peace Day celebration on September 21, to a major peace event in Beijing, on October 20, 2013, and possibly to other peacemaking and forgiveness events around the world.

A respected group of native Hawaiian teachers, leaders and artists, along with kama'aina students of the culture, is helping to ensure that this program honoring Queen Lili'uokalani is conducted correctly, with all pono words, actions and images. They include Poka Laeunui, Kauila Clark, Lynette Cruz, Meleanna Meyer, Maile Meyer, Aunty Fay of Communities in Schools, Ha'aheo Guanson of the Pacific Justice and Reconciliation Center, and Evern Williams of 'Olelo.
