



HAWAI'I INTERNATIONAL FORGIVENESS DAY

MEDIA ADVISORY

August 1, 2009

Festival from 12 noon to 3 p.m; doors open at 11 a.m. for community exhibits.
Halau o Haumea, Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies,
UH Manoa, Honolulu, 2645 Dole Street 96822
Open to the public at no charge; free refreshments.

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**Free family festival --
Demonstrates the Practice of Forgiveness
Includes rare Hawaiian ceremony
Recognizes Heroes**

HONOLULU: JULY 21, 2009 - The Hawai'i Forgiveness Project

(<http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org>) presents the annual Hawai'i International Forgiveness Day on Saturday, August 1, 2009. Highlights include three well-known local teachers with simple, practical demonstrations of how to begin the process of forgiveness; performance of a rare Hawaiian ceremony called Manai Ai, which has not been performed for 100 years; original dance from IONA, live music from Na Hoku Award Winner Owana Salazar, and Heroes of Forgiveness Awards.

Location is Halau o Haumea, **Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, UH Manoa**, Honolulu. Free for the whole family; open to the public; free refreshments. Doors open at 11:00 am. for community exhibits, and the festival runs from 12:00

noon to 3:00 pm. 2645 Dole St., Honolulu HI 96822. Map and directions:
<http://bit.ly/8mphT>

This is the **7th Annual Forgiveness Day** in Hawai'i, celebrated in conjunction with a worldwide chain of festivals held in 80 cities, including Buenos Aires, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Lagos, San Francisco, and New York. The Honolulu event is one of the largest in the world, projected to attract 400 people.

This year's theme is the **Practice of Forgiveness**, presented by three well-known local teachers who each create a vivid experience for the participants. **Hawaiian leader Kawohiokalani** (Aunty Betty Jenkins from Waimea) begins with teaching a simple daily Hawaiian family ritual called **pule ohana**. **Rev. Sky St. John of Unity Church** presents an exercise to build character and make sound choices. **Gregory Pai**, a Buddhist meditation teacher, completes the experience with an awakening to the moment. These three 10-15 minute experiences activate the process of forgiveness, and motivate people to extend what they have learned into daily life.

“In previous years, we have sought to understand the nature of forgiveness and its importance in daily life, and tried to emulate people who have transformed their lives through forgiveness,” said Roger Epstein, spokesman for the Hawai'i Forgiveness Project. “This year we're offering three possible ways for anyone to actually begin forgiveness in your life, right now: through heart, character and spirit.”

The event also honors three **Heroes of Forgiveness** – people who have demonstrated the transformative power of forgiveness in their lives. They are:

- **Mitsuo Aoki**, founder of the Department of Religion at the University of Hawai'i and caregiver to many through the process of dying;
- **Gwen Ka'ilihewa**, whose son was murdered but who publicly forgave the killer;
- **Bryan Yamashita**, who forgave the murder of his wife, recognizing that forgiveness is the most sincere expression of his faith.
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They will share their experiences personally, and will be honored for their example.

As part of the Heroes presentation, a young Hawaiian leader, **Kauiha Clark**, will lead a **rare Hawaiian sacred ceremony** which has not been performed publicly for over 100 years. He explained, “The **Mana Ai** is like a sacrament, where we eat and share gifts from the Creator. First is Kalo (taro), second is 'Ulu (breadfruit), third is Paakai

(salt) and fourth is Wai (water). The food is served to everyone. This ceremony was done far before the missionaries ever came to Hawaii.” Kauila will also conduct the opening ‘oli and closing pule, traditional Hawaiian prayers composed for the occasion.

The artistic richness of Hawai’i, with its many accomplished artists and poets, will be recognized by the **Images of Forgiveness Award** and the **Poetry of Forgiveness Award**. These Awards are explained on the website; entries are free, and open to anyone at <http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/awards/>

IONA Contemporary Dance Theatre will recreate a moving scene from their recent critically-acclaimed production, **The Living Earth**. In Spirito Manifesto, a goddess gives herself up to the process of manifestation, of compassion over violence, and ultimately new life.

Reiki, an intuitive body/mind therapy from Japan, will be available to all participants, courtesy of local practitioner **Linda Friedman**. She has designed a five-minute “Touch of Forgiveness” reiki treatment.

Owana Mahealani-rose Salazar, winner of a Na Hoku Hanohano Award and co-winner of a Grammy Award, will share her slack-key music and some of her more unusual traditional Hawaiian songs.

Gerald Jampolsky and Diane Cirincione, respected authors and therapists who served as hosts the past six years, cannot attend this year. They send a short video greeting and invocation from Sausalito, CA to all their friends in Hawai’i, to be seen at the opening.

This event is made possible at no cost by the **Hawai’iniuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge** at the Kamakakuakalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, and was personally endorsed by **Dean Maenette Ah Nee-Benham**. The Forgiveness Project extends its sincere thanks to the Dean, to the School, its students and staff.

<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/hshk/>

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Additional Information:

Forgiveness Stories: Free copies of the Forgiveness Stories book will be available, which includes powerful stories from around the world. Last year's edition available now at <http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/stories/> The 2009 edition will be available online on July 30.

The Hawai'i Forgiveness Project is a non-profit, non-religious, multi-cultural group which helps the people of Hawai'i to weave forgiveness into the fabric of their day-to-day lives. Through a deeper understanding of traditional Hawaiian values, and an appreciation of the wisdom of all the peoples which make up modern Hawai'i, the group helps to build a more compassionate, resilient, non-violent and open future for our State, and for America. For more detail on the organization's mission, see <http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/mission/>

Gallery of Forgiveness Arts is a full-color illustrated book published by the Hawaii Forgiveness Project; it is available to view online, and to purchase, at <http://hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/awards/album/>

Awards: To get details about the Heroes, Images or Poetry Awards, and to enter, go to <http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/awards/>

A free poster: available now for download and distribution at <http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/print/poster.htm>

Event Summary, Calendar Listing:

Hawai'i International Forgiveness Day: a free family festival, Saturday August 1, Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, UH Manoa, Honolulu. 12 noon - 3 pm., doors open at 11 am. Theme: the Practice of Forgiveness with Hawaiian leader Kawohiokalani; Rev. Sky St. John on struggle and choice; Gregory Pai on awakening in the moment. Oli and rare Hawaiian mana ai ceremony by Kauila Clark. Dramatic dance by IONA, slack-key music by Owana Salazar. Heroes of Forgiveness, Arts Awards, Reiki touch massage, free refreshments. 2645 Dole St., Honolulu HI 96822. Details at <http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org>, or call 521-9222. Map and directions: <http://bit.ly/8mphT>

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Online Press Room: visit <http://www.hawaiiforgivenessproject.org/press/>