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Aloha 'Ike bearing fruit

By Dennis Fujimoto - The Garden Island

Posted: Friday, Mar 03, 2006 - 04:07:29 pm HST

LIHU'E — Dave Kane of Trex Enterprises has lived in six states and one foreign country, but has never experienced anything like what transpired on Kaua'i last week, he said.

Kane, one of the speakers at the Aloha 'Ike program hosted by members of the Kauai Economic Development Board Education Committee, was referring to the grants that were presented to a dozen teachers from Kaua'i schools to help fund their individual extracurricular projects.

This was done at the firstever Aloha 'Ike awards program that saw a dozen awards totaling over \$40,000 being awarded to teachers involved in various projects at different schools on Kaua'i.

Kane said he was happy to see a program like Aloha 'Ike (literally meaning "love of knowledge") develop, because people always read about the youth accomplishments in sports and other community programs like the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, but rarely read anything about what students accomplish in the academic arena.

Aloha 'Ike takes the Team Tech program initiated by Kaua'i Mayor Bryan J. Baptiste one step further, Kane explained.

Under the Team Tech program, representatives of private community organizations teamed up with schools through an Adopt-a-School program, and in the span of several years, Kane said the accomplishments and achievements of these unique partnerships have been phenomenal.



Dennis Fujimoto / The Garden Island
Teacher award recipients, and some of the sponsoring representatives, get together for a photo following the Kauai Economic Development Board Education Committee Aloha 'Ike grant awards program, last week.

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American Idol is down to nine contestants. Kauaiworld users predicted Chris would go. Who's your favorite this week?

- Gina Glocksen
- Haley Scarnato
- Blake Lewis
- Jordin Sparks
- Lakisha Jones
- Chris Richardson
- Melinda Doolittle
- Phil Stacey
- Sanjaya Makikar

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"It was amazing to see what we could accomplish with no money," Kane said. "Can you imagine what we could do with a little money?"

That prompted the initial fund-raising effort with the help of U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, D-Hawaii. Kane said that initial effort resulted in about \$100,000 being raised, and Thursday's awards stemmed from that pool of funds administered by members of the KEDB Education Committee.

Of the dozen projects for which teachers were awarded grants, Kane broke down the areas of involvement as four being in the field of media and graphic arts, one in the agricultural field, three involving wildlife and ecology, three in the science and technological field, and one in peer mediation.

For the student-based, teacher-led project to qualify, the project teachers --- needed to be partnered representatives of community organizations, the project needed to be extracurricular, and professionally administered.

To help educators with these qualifications, Mia Ako of KEDB introduced Jerry Hill, a retired educator, who has been picked up by KEDB to serve as a liaison.

In addition to working with teachers who were awarded grants, Ako said Hill's job is also to work with applicants who were not awarded the grants so their respective projects could be tweaked to enable them to qualify for future funding.

Ako announced each of the teachers who were on hand to accept their awards, with their respective school principals as well as representatives from their partnering community organization.

Kane noted that, of these community partners, six were for-profit organizations, four were nonprofits, and two were government agencies.

Island School received two awards: one for their science-class project headed by James Massaro and partnering with engineers with Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative. The goal of this project is the purchase and installation of a 400-watt, wind-driven generator with batteries, inverter, and associated controls, to provide electricity for the lights in the school's science classroom.

Joan Shaw represented the school's second project, titled "Botball Challenge" that is designed to offer a "Botball Class Challenge" for middle- and high-school students that will lead to the 2006 Botball Competition on O'ahu.

The project is designed to give students an educational robotics experience, from designing, building, and programming autonomous robots to compete in a final class competition leading to the state competition.

Kevin Matsunaga and Leah Aiwohi of Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School also earned awards for their respective projects. Matsunaga's project, titled simply "Video Production," involves two parts. The first part involves students working with those from General Atomics to film the Children's Science Show in October, and involves 16 students ranging in age from 11 to 13.

The second will be the creation of public-service announcements discouraging young people from smoking and using drugs and alcohol.

Aiwohi's "Project EAST (Environmental And Spatial Technology)" involves students working in a variety of projects that range from Web-publishing and graphic design to dynamic animation and visualization, as well as video production.

Students at Kaua'i High School, under Judy Stambaugh's direction, will create "On Tour," a pilot facility for students and teachers to design, develop, distribute, and discuss real-world business issues related to health and wellness, arts and culture, and high-technology career and educational pathways among smaller learning communities at Kaua'i High School and other island schools.

Leighton Kabutan's students at Eleele School have already had a taste of



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success with tropical fish, as they were serving an almost constant line of buyers during the school's craft fair in 2005.

Kabutan was awarded a grant for his Project STAR 3, which will expand on their program of aquaponics and tropical fish.

Kula Elementary School Principal Lisa Mireles was presented an award for their "Save Our Seas" project involving the students' survey of coral-reef organisms and the impact of human activities on oceanic ecosystems.

Chuck Meek of Kapa'a Elementary School was recognized for his students' collaborative pilot project where students, teachers, and members of families will be working together with representatives of state and federal agencies as well as members of the Nawiliwili Watershed Council to cooperatively restore native plants and associated animal communities in the Hule'ia National Wildlife Refuge.

School Principal Dora Hong noted that, in many instances, those in the school's special-education department are invited to participate in other classes' projects. In this unique "Adopt-A-Wildlife Refuge" program, Meek, a special-education teacher, has taken the lead, and is inviting the other classes to join their program.

Kapa'a Middle School teachers were recognized for their "Coordinated School Health Peer Mediation Program," and Cinthy Kagawa of Waimea Canyon School was presented an award for "We've Got Something to Say."

Kagawa's project involves fifth-grade students in Penny Shimomura's class who, partnering with Ho'ike Kaua'i Community Television professionals, will integrate Hawaii Content and Performance Standards in language arts, social studies, and technology, to create short digital movies about universal themes such as conflict, change, and interdependence.

Clyde Hashimoto, last year's Milken Teacher of the Year honoree, will partner with experts at Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., to plant a field of corn, led by third-grade students at Kalaheo School.

Holly Acoba of Kekaha School will use her award to install a weather station at the school, which will enable students to meet science standards by tracking and predicting local weather patterns.

The project will also enable the students to see their school weather information being aired on NBC's News 8 Weather Channel (KHNL channel 8) with Shari Shima.

Matilda "Mattie" Yoshioka, executive director of KEDB, announced, too, that, during a recent conversation with officials of Hawaiian Telcom, the leaders of that organization have already indicated their willingness to be part of this innovative program, and will be contributing \$25,000 towards the next round of awards.

Teachers have until May 1 to complete their applications for those distributions.

More information can be found at the KEDB Web site at www.kedb.com, or by calling 245-6692.

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