

Kaua`i Planning & Action Alliance, Inc.

Bringing people together to create a better future for Kaua`i

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(TWO PHOTOS ATTACHED)

Kaua`i Community Champion Awards Presented at KPAA's Annual Membership Meeting

Lihue, Kaua`i, HI – 7/07/2006 Kaua`i Planning & Action Alliance (KPAA) honored three nonprofits as 2006 Kaua`i Community Champions at its Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, July 6th, held at the Kaua`i Community College. The annual award, now in its fourth year, was presented to the Pop Warner Football League, Child and Family Service, and National Tropical Botanical Garden.

Sponsored by King Auto Center, the award honors outstanding achievement by a non-profit organization that champions a cause and demonstrates a commitment toward improving and strengthening the community.

KPAA's annual meeting also included a panel of keynote speakers who discussed diversified agriculture and its future on Kaua`i. Hanalei taro farmer Chris Kobayashi discussed the problem of top soil erosion due to mono cropping. She urged better agricultural practices that include more cover crops and allowing land to lay fallow periodically.

Roy Oyama of the Kaua`i Farm Bureau and Roy Oyama Farms expressed the need to develop more farmers in the state, as the demand for our products exceeds our ability to provide an ongoing consistent supply. He indicated that 95% of the papaya in the state is imported and not locally grown, indicating a strong market for Kauai papaya.

Work is underway to get the papaya processing plant operational so that our papaya can be exported.

County of Kaua`i Office of Economic Development Director Beth Tokioka recognized that many Kaua`i farmers need to augment their farm income in order to create a livelihood. This may include producing value-added products or diversifying their income with tours of their farming operation. The County is assisting the agriculture industry with the Sunshine Markets, the new Kaua`i Made label, and getting the papaya plant operational.

While all agreed Kaua`i faces challenges in growing its diversified agriculture industry, they believe there are great opportunities in a world that is moving towards and is willing to pay for organic, natural foods and products.

KPAA is a non-profit organization that serves as a neutral convener, providing a forum to the community to develop and implement effective solutions to issues that matter to Kaua`i. For more information, contact KPAA at 632-2005 or kpaa@kauainetwork.org.

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