

KAUA'I PLANNING & ACTION ALLIANCE

"Bringing people together to create a better future for Kaua'i"

Date: July 2, 2004

Contact: Diane Zachary: 808.632.2005
dzachary@kauainetwork.org

Photo attached

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

The Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance (KPAA) announced the recipients of the 2004 Kaua'i Community Champion Awards on Tuesday, June 29 at KPAA's annual membership meeting at the Radisson Kaua'i Beach Resort. The annual award, now in its third year, was presented to the **Kauai Food Bank** and to the **American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) Regions 940 and 941**.

Program sponsors, Verizon Foundation and Kawaihoa Development, Inc., each donated \$500 respectively to award recipients. The Kauai Community Champions Awards honor exemplary achievement among non-profits organizations. Recipients were given a *kahili*, representing the excellence of their organization and their contribution to the community. In providing these awards, KPAA recognizes the staff and volunteers, their accomplishments, and the lessons they can share with other organizations and grass-roots groups.

Accepting the award for the Kauai Food Bank (KFB) was President Paul Douglas and Executive Director Judith Lenthall, and for the AYSO - Regions 940 and 941 were Sean Magoun and Kevin Gusman respectively. These two organizations were recognized for the important contributions they make toward building and strengthening community, increasing interaction and exchange between community agencies, residents and parents, and developing grassroots leaders.

"By recognizing the vital work of Kaua'i's community-based non-profits, we are supporting exceptional community efforts that address critical challenges on the island," says KPAA President and CEO Diane Zachary. The Community Champion

Award is an opportunity for recognizing organizations that *champion* a cause, demonstrate excellence and exemplify sustained commitment to their mission.

Both KFB and AYSO acknowledge that much of their success depends on the wealth of volunteer hours contributed by board members, individuals, parents and community agencies that all collaborate on shared goals.

The keys to success for KFB include a supportive and interactive Board of Directors; cultivating an appreciative, cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with collaborating agencies; relying on strategic partnerships in the community as a way to leverage resources; and empowering small farmers to succeed and grow their business.

AYSO's keys to success on Kaua'i include committed volunteers where everyone is a stakeholder in the success of the program; board members that strive to instruct and educate volunteers about the AYSO vision; empowering volunteers by providing specialized training and education; and embracing the importance of fun and play over the goal of winning.

Criteria were established by the KPAA Advisory Board for the Kaua'i Community Champion selection process. The board looked for an organization that:

- contributes to the strength of the community and our quality of life;
- demonstrates leadership in its field;
- has strong community support;
- has the active involvement of its board of directors and volunteers;
- embodies one or more of Kaua'i's community values as stated in the 2000 General Plan Update;
- has a reputation for excellence and accomplishment; and
- has proven organizational longevity and sustainability.

Previous awardees include Friends of Kamalani, Hui O Laka - Koke'e Natural History Museum, Waipa Foundation, Mokihana Festival and Kawaihau District Leadership Coalition.

KPAA operates under the non-profit umbrella of the Garden Island RC&D, Inc. It is a membership organization composed of non-profit and community-based groups that recognize the need for consensus-based planning and focused, measurable action on problems facing Kaua'i. Members have selected four areas for action over the next two years: drugs, public education, solid waste, and parks. KPAA is guided by a 13-member advisory board. For more information on KPAA, call 632-2005.

#####

