



For Immediate Release

May 12, 2015

HELPING HANDS HAWAII LAUNCHES 16th ANNUAL SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

Ready to Learn Program Gives Low-Income and Homeless Students School Supplies to Kick Off 2015-2016 School Year

HONOLULU—Helping Hands Hawaii (HHH) launches its 16th annual Ready to Learn (R2L) program, which provides low-income and homeless children with basic school supplies to start the 2015-2016 school year. HHH's main fundraising drive for school supply and monetary donations is from now through the end of July. Contributions are used to assemble and distribute a basic school supply kit for school-aged children before their first day of school.

Items such as crayons, scissors, glue, folder paper, composition books, spiral notebooks, pencils/pens, erasers, rulers, calculators, portfolios, 2" three-ring binders and backpacks are used to create two different educational kits for students in grades K-5 and grades 6-12. Each kit costs approximately \$10 to assemble. In 2014, R2L supplied kits to 4,516 children during the main back-to-school period and more than 3,000 additional children throughout the year.

HHH is accepting contributions from the public through a variety of channels. All donations are tax deductible, and donors should check with their tax advisors for tax advice.

Online: Visit www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org and click on the PayPal link from June 1 to July 31, 2015 to make an online contribution that will be earmarked for the Ready to Learn program.

Mail: Checks made out to "Helping Hands Hawaii" can be mailed to Helping Hands Hawaii at 2100 N. Nimitz Hwy., Honolulu, HI 96819. Write "Ready to Learn" in the memo section and your donation will be directed to the program.

In-Person: Cash, check and school supply donations are accepted at the main office of Helping Hands Hawaii located at 2100 N. Nimitz Hwy., Honolulu, HI 96819 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays.

HHH encourages community members and organizations to get involved with the R2L program by coordinating fundraising efforts within their own personal or professional networks. A list of Ready to Learn Collection Points is available at www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org and will be

updated as more community partners sign on to support the R2L program. Anyone interested in hosting a school supply drive should contact James Li, SNAP community outreach and volunteer coordination program manager, at 440-3812 or jamesli@helpinghandshawaii.org for more information.

To apply to the R2L program, students must be recommended by a case manager from a participating referral organization. These organizations identify students who need assistance through their individual intake procedures. Many partner agencies in the community provide referrals, such as Catholic Charities Hawaii, The Salvation Army, Child & Family Service, Parents & Children Together, Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center, Hawaii Department of Health, Hawaii Department of Human Services and other well-established social service providers.

“Ready to Learn contributes to the continuum of educational support for this at-risk population,” said HHH president and CEO Jan M. Harada. “By partnering with other organizations across Hawaii, we collectively work to fill a very specific need in the community and help children not only survive their educational experiences but thrive in their learning and future growth.”

About Ready 2 Learn

R2L was founded in 1999 in partnership with the late U.S. Senator Daniel and Maggie Inouye. Its purpose is to ensure that low-income and homeless students throughout Hawaii have basic school supplies for their education. In 2005, HHH assumed statewide administration of this initiative and has continued to perpetuate the Inouyes' vision. Together with our community partners, HHH assists more than 8,000 students each year. For more information about the R2L program, contact James Li at 440-3812.

About Helping Hands Hawaii

Helping Hands Hawaii (HHH) was founded in 1974 and connects individuals, families and organizations with essential human and material resources. Through our variety of programs, we provide a full continuum of care and help people overcome obstacles, like homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse and language access. Our strong partnerships with local social service providers and innovative approaches strengthen our community by helping people to help themselves. To learn more about HHH, its programs or services, please visit www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org.

#