



**For Immediate Release**

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## **READY TO LEARN PROGRAM GIVES FREE SCHOOL SUPPLIES TO STUDENTS IN NEED**

HONOLULU—Helping Hands Hawaii (HHH) launches its annual Ready to Learn (RTL) program to give low-income and homeless students free school supplies. School supplies and monetary donations will be collected from June 1 to July 31, 2016 and distributed to students before the 2016-2017 school year.

HHH community partner American Savings Bank is collecting school supplies for RTL at all branches statewide from June 15 to July 22, 2016. The public is welcome to donate school supplies and make monetary gifts at any branch during its normal business hours. Donations made on neighbor islands will benefit students on the island.

School supply kits are given to the students in grades K-5 and 6-12 and cost approximately \$10 each to assemble. Kits are built from bulk-purchased and donated school supplies. The most requested school supplies are: 24-count crayons, composition books, 4 oz. glue, scissors, three-prong portfolios, one-subject spiral notebooks, college or wide-rule folder paper, black or blue ballpoint pens, rulers, calculators and backpacks.

During the 2015-2016 school year, the RTL campaign gave away 7,026 kits to students in need in support of their educational goals.

### **HOW STUDENTS CAN RECEIVE SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

To apply for the RTL program, students in grades K to 12 must be recommended by a case manager from a participating referral organization. The case managers identify students who need assistance through their regular intake procedures. Partner agencies include organizations like 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. Students and their parents are encouraged to reach out to these organizations if they require assistance. Deadline to apply for the program is Friday, June 17, 2016.

## HOW THE COMMUNITY CAN GET INVOLVED

Helping Hands Hawaii invites individual and corporate community partners to participate in the Ready to Learn program by organizing fundraising drives, volunteering or making a donation from June 1 to July 31, 2016.

Anyone interested in participating should visit [www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org](http://www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org) to download a RTL Community Partner Application. Complete the form and send it to [rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org](mailto:rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org). A RTL team member will contact the donor with additional information and assistance. A list of RTL Community Partners and donation drop-off locations will be listed on the HHH website as information becomes available.

Community members may also make monetary gifts to the RTL program through the following methods:

**Online:** Visit [www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org](http://www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org) and click on the PayPal link to make a donation. Contributions from June 1 to July 31, 2016 are automatically earmarked for the RTL program.

**Mail:** Checks made payable to “Helping Hands Hawaii” can be mailed to Ready to Learn Program, c/o Helping Hands Hawaii, 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 on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at Helping Hands Hawaii’s main office at 2100 N. Nimitz Hwy., Honolulu, HI 96819 and Hilo office at 305 Wailuku Dr, Unit #6A, Hilo, HI 96720.

“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 thrive in their learning and future growth.”

## About Ready to Learn

Ready to Learn 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 7,000 students each year. For more information about the RTL program, contact [rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org](mailto:rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org).

### **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](http://www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org).

### **About American Savings Bank**

Since 1925, ASB has served Hawai'i's businesses and communities by providing a full range of financial products and services including business and consumer banking, home loans, insurance, and investments. ASB is one of Hawai'i's leading financial institutions, with online and mobile banking services and branch locations statewide offering evening, weekend and holiday hours.

For seven consecutive years, ASB has been named one of Hawaii Business Magazine's "Best Places to Work" and was the winner of the large company category in 2015. For three consecutive years, ASB has been recognized as one of the "Best Banks to Work For" in the U.S. by American Banker Magazine. For more than 90 years, ASB has been helping build strong communities. Through its Seeds of Service program, ASB teammates have contributed more than 22,000 hours of volunteer service, and the bank has donated millions of dollars to Hawai'i schools, non-profits and community organizations.

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