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**Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Local Non-Profit Celebrates Opening of Financial Opportunity Center in Keaukaha

HILO, HI - Local non-profit, Hawaiian Community Assets (HCA) celebrated the opening of their new office, located at 1315 Kalaniana'ole Avenue in Keaukaha, on Saturday morning.



Joined by partners, clients, funders and the local community, the celebration highlighted HCA's commitment to serving Hawaii Island families with financial education and housing counseling. The event offered a true family atmosphere for all who were in attendance with food, refreshments, and live music by Keaukaha musicians.

"When you come to Hawaiian Community Assets, it feels like Ohana," shared James Bird, an HCA client who prevented foreclosure through organization's homeowner program (pictured right with his wife Ruth, and HCA Executive Director, Jeff Gilbreath). "This new office makes me feels like I'm coming home."

The office was announced as the first rural Financial Opportunity Center west of the Mississippi River. The



Center, in partnership with local providers, will offer career and small business training, financial education and counseling, and access to public benefits, free tax preparation, loans, and grants.



“The vision of this Center is to be a community gathering place where our families can share and learn from one another,” said HCA Island Manager, Kelly Lincoln (pictured left with Mr. Gilbreath). “We want to mahalo the County of Hawaii, Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, ‘Aha Pūnanaleo, and Rural Local Initiative Support Corporation for their support in making the Financial Opportunity Center a reality.”

According to Lincoln, HCA plans to serve 450 local families through the Center in the next year.

The Center has open office space available to service providers for rent. Organizations interested in renting space or for more information about HCA programs, contact Ms. Lincoln at 808.934.0801.

HCA is a nonprofit HUD-approved housing counseling agency with a mission to build the capacity of low- and moderate-income communities to achieve and sustain economic self-sufficiency. The organization support permanent housing, place-based financial education, and asset building programs to achieve its mission.

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