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Makana Reilly

Director of Advancement and Communications, Hawaiian Community Assets



Makana Reilly supports statewide housing and economic self-sufficiency initiatives at Hawaiian Community Assets.

Since joining HCA in 2023, she has strengthened the organization’s visibility, expanded donor engagement and advanced major initiatives, including the “25 Years, \$25 Million” capital campaign.

She helped secure HCA’s acceptance into the NeighborWorks America network and supported the development and launch of Ua Hale Aela, a lease-with-option-to-purchase program with early participants already closing on homes.

Reilly represents HCA at national conferences and collaborates with partners across community, state and federal sectors.

“What sets her apart is her ability to bridge cultural grounding with high-level strategy, organizational development and business discipline,” Diane Paloma, president and CEO of Hawaii Dental Service, wrote in support of her nomination. “She consistently brings clarity, vision and heart into environments that require both courage and precision.”

What was your first paying job?

“My first paying job was as a lifeguard when I was a teenager. That could definitely be a part of why I’m so community minded, like being in a community space and being responsible for your fellow community members, and that continues to this day.”

What was a major turning point in your career?

“A major turning point in my career was when I realized it doesn’t matter where I do the work. It just matters that I continue to be committed to my community and operate within my values, and that that is something that can be replicated in multiple spaces; service looks different, but service is service to community.”

What advice do you have for young women starting in their careers?

“If I met someone who’s on a similar path to me, I would say ‘Don’t worry about what you think that normal looks like in your career or in a career trajectory, that normal for you is normal for you, and it’s what works for you.’”

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