



## We Need Our Friends in Office

As HSTA presidents, both past and present, we know how critical this year's election is. The Republicans need only four more senators to block the President's agenda. America needs Mazie Hirono in the Senate, not just to support the President but to support Senior Citizens. Mazie will support and vote to protect Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. She will continue her long history of supporting public education. We know her work with pre-schools on school campuses and chairing the Hawaii Policy Group of the National Commission on Teaching for America's Future, funding student loans as well as National Board Certification stipends. She is a strong supporter of Pell Grants which thousands of Hawaii's college students rely on, maybe even one of your grandchildren. She deserves and needs your vote.

Congresswoman Colleen Hanabusa must be reelected to continue her work to support Hawaii in Congress. She needs your vote to do that. She was a strong public education advocate in the State Senate. She supported VEBA and as a labor attorney she promoted collective bargaining rights of teachers. As a Congresswoman, she supports public education and the continued funding of national education programs. She supports the continuation of the Pell grants, the President's decision to stop the private sector abuse of student loans which keep many of your family members deep in debt. Her voting record demonstrates her strong support for our issues. She will protect Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. She will continue to support public education. She will continue to support the President. She, too, deserves and needs your vote.

Both Mazie and Colleen are endorsed by NEA and HSTA. We can help them by voting Hanabusa and Hirono on November 6, 2012.

- Odetta Fujimori, Jim Williams, Barbara Nagaue, Sharon Mahoe, June Motokawa, Karen Ginoza, Roger Takabayashi and Wil Okabe

### HSTA-R Dues Information

Effective as of September 1, 2012, the NEA-Retired annual dues will increase from \$25 to \$30. The NEA-Retired "one time" Lifetime payment also increased from \$200 to \$250.

HSTA-Retired state dues will remain at \$45. There will be NO HSTA-Retired dues increase. HSTA-Retired does not have Lifetime Membership.

As a result of the increase in the NEA-Retired dues, members who pay their NEA-Retired dues annually, and are NOT NEA-Retired Lifetime members, will pay \$5.00 more yearly. The increased monthly amount will be \$.42. Their dues (NEA-Retired and HSTA-Retired) deducted monthly from ERS will be increased from \$5.83 to \$6.25 per month (\$75 annually) starting in September, 2012.

All other HSTA-Retired members who are NEA-Retired Lifetime members will continue with their current deduction level of \$3.75.

### Messenger Membership

The latest HSTA-R Membership count as of August 31, 2012 is 5,189. There are about 7500 retired teachers. The count shows that 70% of retired teachers join our Association when they retire.

Below are the latest HSTA-R counts as of August 31.

Kauai:	302	Oahu:	3,698
Hawaii:	677	USA/Others:	17
Maui:	493		

HSTA-R has its own phone number at the HSTA building. Our personal number is 808-840-2258. When you hear a voice . . . Press 258. The voice will give you directions on how to leave a message. You can also call the HSTA number 808-833-2711. The voice that answers will ask you to dial an extension number. Press 258. Please leave a message if no one is available to answer your call. The phone is checked frequently. The system was down for a few weeks, and we do apologize for any inconvenience. The system is on 24 hours.

## President's Message

Following in the footsteps of an HSTA-Retired President who served for nine years is truly a daunting task. The institutional knowledge Justin Wong possesses is overwhelming in its complexity and all encompassing in its breadth; from political action to budget preparation, lobbying, and membership development. Our organization owes Justin a large thank you for being willing to lead HSTA-Retired for so many years.

HSTA-Retired is very involved in political action and the legislative process by working to elect people who will protect our retirement and health benefits. You may ask why HSTA-R works so hard in the legislative arena, but the answer is simple. All decisions that can affect pensions and benefits are political decisions. We want to be able to affect legislation and not simply be the victims of legislation.

There are several articles in this newsletter that highlight issues of interest to you. Please take the time to read the entire newsletter. Also, check the HSTA-R website for updates and information: [www.hsta-retired.org](http://www.hsta-retired.org)

Finally, for now, take care of yourselves. If you are a caregiver for an elderly relative, remember that your own health is of the utmost importance. You cannot help others if you need help yourself. If you are taking care of grandchildren or even great grandchildren, you undoubtedly know how important it is for you to be healthy.

Until next time, enjoy your retired life.

*Vaughn Tokashiki*

## Reflections about the NEA-R 2012 Leadership Development & Organizing Conference Tuesday, March 27-Friday, March 30, 2012 at Bally's Hotel, Las Vegas, NV

I was most impressed with the "NEA-Retired: Experienced Advocates for Public Education" Conference. Compared to the NEA RA's that I've attended previously, this conference was low-keyed, more personal, and pertinent to our retiree issues.

Although I enjoyed Congresswoman Dina Titus' (D-NV) opening address, it was NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen's speech that was one of the highlights of the conference. Being a dynamic keynoter and guitarist, she outlined the Conservative Republican's outlandish agenda that undermines the poor and middle class America and collective bargaining. Her power point slides were insightful, showing the trend of all Republican presidential candidates to cut taxes on the rich and corporations while raising the taxes on the poor. Contrarily, President Obama's track record has been consistent. He has continued to put education first, save educator jobs, take the middle man bankers out of the loan process for educators, and not support any plan against the middle class.

There were a variety of interesting workshops, and I chose several under the track, "Retirement Security Issues." The presenters shared data from across the nation and highlighted "hot spot" states which have experienced pressure to diminish state pension funding, increase employee contributions, increase length of service required for vesting, increase the period to cultivate the final average for new hires/non-vested, decrease, restrict or eliminate COLA, reduce the multiplier in the benefit formula for new hires/all employees, and eliminate public employee positions on trustee boards, either elected or appointed. Hawai'i was listed as one of those "hot spot" states!

Despite the more serious conference, the glamour of Las Vegas allowed our Hawai'i 5.0 group (Justin Wong, Vaughn Tokashiki, Beverly Gotelli, Jean Dobashi, and myself) to experience some of the ambiance of the luxurious mega hotels and their exquisite meals and enticing gambling sites!

I am grateful for the ability to attend this NEA-R conference, and I encourage others to attend future NEA-R events. It is important to remain informed about our retiree issues, not only for us, but also for actives! We retirees have the expertise, time, and passion to voice our concerns! Lily Eskelsen's fervent singing of "We Shall Overcome" indicated the important role for us retirees!! - *Jo-An Goss*



*Jean Dobashi, Jo-An Goss, Justin Wong, Beverly Gotelli and Vaughn Tokashiki.*

## District News From Around The State

### Oahu District

*Submitted by Joanne Ing*

Goals for the year are centered on Connection, Communication, and Community. To achieve these goals, we have formed the following committees: Membership, Communication, By-Laws, Community Outreach, Identifying Dress, Aloha/Hospitality, Elections, and Government Relations.

We have adopted a 2012-2013 budget that reflects our focused areas. We are in the process of assembling our newsletter which explains our goals for the year and announces our upcoming General Membership meeting on October 29, 2012.

We have met with the HSTA Leeward district executive board to gather input on ways we can better connect with active teachers in the hopes that these connections will benefit our future membership numbers.

### Hawaii District

*Submitted by Niyati Brown*

I am off to a running start with my new presidency. After a period of illness and taking care of my dad on the mainland I have settled into the work at hand. I am so delighted to be working with such an efficient Executive Board and District Council. They are strong women and men with lots of experience to offer a more recent retiree like me. Listed below are the activities I have been involved with so far.

- Democratic activities for Hawaii island
- Executive Board planning meeting
- Hilo Chapter Executive Board meeting for actives
- Retirement Issues Committee meeting on Oahu
- State Board of Directors meeting on Oahu
- Pre-retirement workshop planning
- Presidents training on Oahu
- Treasurers training on Oahu
- Activity communications with council, members, community

Thank you all who have helped me through these beginning times as president.

## HSTA-R CBR COMMITTEE REPORT HSTA-R BOD Meeting on August 24, 2012

At the April 27, 2012 HSTA-R Delegate Assembly, the CBR Committee proposed the approval of three proposed amendments to the Bylaws, the adoption of one proposed resolution and the adoption of two proposed new business items. The HSTA-R Board of Directors supported all proposals.

The first proposed amendment, 12-01, which would update the present Bylaws to comply with current legal requirements for non-profit corporations, was not brought up for a vote and was returned to the lawyer.

The second proposed amendment, 12-02, provided for a District vice president to attend the Board of Directors' meetings, without vote, if the District's president is unable to attend. This amendment was approved.

The third proposed amendment, 12-03, which limited the four at-large directors to no more than three consecutive two-year terms, was also approved.

The HSTA-R BOD at their August 24, 2012 meeting will vote on approval of amendment 12-02 and amendment 12-03. According to the Bylaws, the amendments adopted by the Delegate Assembly take effect upon approval by the HSTA-R BOD.

The proposed resolution, 12-01, which corrected a typographical error and deleted references to the HSTA Member Benefits Corporation, was adopted.

Proposed new business item, 12-01, rescinding a policy statement pertaining to the no longer existing HSTA Member Benefits Corporation, was adopted.

Proposed new business item, 12-02, COMMITTEE TO EVALUATE THE HSTA AND HSTA-R RELATIONSHIP, was adopted.

The Digest of Policy Statements and New Business Items Volume 6 2002-2012 is ready to be printed. It was updated with the adopted resolution 12-1 and 2 NBIs 12-02 and 12-03.

Our first CBR meeting is on September 22, 2012.

*- Sheila Black and Roberta Mangca*

## HSTA-R Molokai Community Club

On Tuesday, November 13, 2012, from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., at the Liliuokalani Trust Conference Room, HSTA-R Molokai Community Club will hold its General Membership meeting. Heather Greenwood will present a workshop entitled "Tutu's Quilt" that provides strategies to help in making decisions about who will receive your personal valuable when you are gone. This research based program was developed by the University of Minnesota Extension Service and adapted by the UH for Hawaii. The workbook which will be use will be provided free of charge to us due to a grant Mrs. Greenwood has received.

In the spring, we will have elections for all officers and one council representative. Please let us know if you are interested in being nominated.

*- Roberta Mangca*

## NEA-RETIRED: LIFETIME ADVOCATES FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

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The 2012 NEA-Retired Annual meeting and the NEA Representative Assembly were held in Washington, D.C. from June 26th to July 5th.

Your elected delegates were Vaughn Tokashiki, Jean Dobashi, Odetta Fujimori, Roger Takabayashi, Justin Wong and Yvonne (Linda) Tavares. Unfortunately, Odetta Fujimori was not able to attend the meetings and Susan Hagiwara replaced her.

The message was clear. Once again, NEA is faced with many challenges that threaten our profession, our organization, and our future. There are more than 300,000 NEA retired members who have continued to advocate for public education, defend state affiliates from collective bargaining rights being stripped away, and send powerful messages to preserve our Social Security and Medicare programs.

The NEA Representative Assembly voted to support President Obama as our choice in the 2012 Presidential election. President Obama supports public education, working families, and the labor movement. He has stood with educators, making public education the top priority in his budget proposals. To help your decision about which presidential candidate to support, visit [www.EdVotes.org/Election2012](http://www.EdVotes.org/Election2012).

All of us need to be Lifetime Advocates for public education. Imagine the power we would have! We have more work to do, and now more than ever, we need your help to shape the future. As retired members, you are the strongest advocates for the children of Hawaii who attend our public schools.

### Hawaii State Retired Teachers Association

1200 Ala Kapuna Street  
Honolulu, HI 96819  
Phone: 808-833-2711

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**Hawaii State Retired Teachers Association - Retired**

#### HSTA-RETIRED OFFICERS

President:	Vaughn Tokashiki
First V. President:	Linda Tavares
Second V. President:	Jeanne Fukuoka
Secretary:	Glenn Fernandez
Treasurer:	Beverly Gotelli

## COLA and YOU #40

Aloha and best to all for nice autumn holidays. Your COLA Fairness Committee (CFC) is awaiting completion of an ERS study analyzing cost effectiveness of a CFC proposal to modify the Post Retirement Allowance (PRA) for all new employees hired as of July 1, 2012. The study is on track to be completed by September 30.

The study's findings and recommendations should provide mana'o and guidance for legislative action to follow in 2013. Notwithstanding its findings, plus or minus, the study also has indirect, but very deep significance, lying in ERS finally showing serious interest and heeding our call for improving PRA. Hopefully it can spur further collaboration by HSTA-R and ERS. Finally, the study makes for a timely and seamless transition after many years moving the project from CFC to your Retirement Issues Committee (RIC). It effectively sunsets CFC and correctly enlists RIC as the vehicle to carry the project further to its goal: an equitable PRA. PRA's flaws and inherent waste of tax payer, employee contribution, and investment dollars needs improvement. The "ball" is in the right arena at the right time now, and we can do no less as a retiree organization to improve an otherwise wonderful retiree benefit. Mahalo.

- Y. "Joe" Tanaka, Chair  
HSTA-R CFC