



**WAIANAE COAST  
COMPREHENSIVE  
HEALTH CENTER**  
SERVING WEST O'AHU SINCE 1972

## **WCCHC Board of Directors Elections Are Now Open**

Voting for the WCCHC Board of Directors is now underway. Corporate Members are encouraged to participate and help guide the future of healthcare on the Wai'anae Coast.

**The Election Ballots need to be returned in the self-addressed stamped envelope by 4:30pm on Friday April 17th.**

Your vote is an important part of how we ensure our leadership reflects the needs, voices, and priorities of our community. This year's election includes a strong group of candidates committed to service, advocacy, and the continued growth of WCCHC.

Scroll down to learn more about each candidate and cast your vote.

### **INFORMATION ON 2026 BOARD ELECTION NOMINEES**

#### **MERRIE KIM AIPOALANI**

Merrie Kim Aipoalani was born and raised on the Waianae Coast and is a lifelong resident. She has served on the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center Board for many years and has held President and President-Elect positions. Merrie is running for re-election to the Board for a 3-year term. In addition to serving on the the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center Board, Merrie has also served as a member of the Making Dreams Come True – Valley of Rainbows Board and the Nanakuli High School Alumni Association. Merrie has extensive employment experience in the legislative arena and served for 3 years as legislative aide for Councilmember Patsy T. Mink; 11 years as legislative analyst for former Councilmember John DeSoto; and 6 years as Chief of Staff/Office Manager for State Representative Michael Kahikina. She has also worked as a substitute teacher at Nanakuli High School and as Educational Support Officer/Supervisor for Na Hulu Mamo Ohana Way at the school. She is currently employed with the Department of Human Services.

#### **GENEVIEVE (LEI) AKEN**

Genevieve "Lei" Aken was born and raised on the Wai'anae Coast and has dedicated her life to serving and uplifting her community through education, youth development, and community leadership. She has been an educator at Wai'anae High School for over 30 years and currently serves as the school's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Coordinator, supporting programs that prepare students for college, careers, and meaningful contributions to their community. Lei is the Co-Founder and Program Director of the Ho'omāhua Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides 'āina-based learning, service opportunities, and internship experiences that connect youth to culture, community, and future career pathways. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and both a Master's and Doctorate in Education from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and is a National Board-Certified Teacher. Lei is seeking re-election to the Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center Board to continue advocating for the health, well-being, and future of the Wai'anae Coast community she proudly calls home. Mahalo, Lei



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### **VIRGINIA "GINGER" FUATA**

Ginger Fuata had served as the Strategic Initiative Liaison - O'ahu wide for Lili'uokalani Trust located on O'ahu Island, Hawaii, from 1996 until 2025. Ginger is a member on NACHC's (National Association of Community Health Centers) Executive Committee and Board of Directors. She also serves on the Agriculture Worker Health committee, Rural Health committee, Island and Indigenous Health Task Force (Chair), as well as being on the Consumer/Board Member committee (Chair), with previous membership on the Board of Directors (Health Center Board Member Rep), Subcommittee on Healthy Aging, Membership committee, Consumer/Board Member committee, and Health Center Excellence and Training committee. Ginger received the 2024 Aaron L. Brown Memorial Public Service Award given by NACHC recognizing her outstanding achievements and contributions to the health center mission and to community-based health care overall as well as the NACHC Hall of Fame Award in 2020 for her advocacy work. Currently, she serves on the Tribal Advisory Council for the Government Accountability Office on the federal level, as a Native Hawaiian representative. Ginger also serves as Chairperson of Board of Directors of Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and is a member of the Finance committee, Audit committee, CEO Compensation committee, Quality Assurance/Corporate Compliance committee, Bylaws committee, Nominations committee, Fund Development/Advocacy/Education Workforce committee, Investment committee, Chuck Wothke Scholarship committee, IHI Imi Loa: Integrated Health committee and Aloha/Strategic Planning committee. Ginger is also a Board Director (Secretary) of 'Elepaio Social Services and Co-Founder/Board Member of the Waianae High School and Community Foundation, and Consumer Board member of HPCA - Hawai'i Primary Care Pay for Performance committee, as well as the Advisory Committee Board Representative for AHARO - Accountable Healthcare Alliance of Rural O'ahu.

### **DEROY LAVATAI**

I'm DeRoy Lavatai, a lifelong resident and dedicated consumer of the Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center. I am 22 years old and possess a deep-rooted passion for community service and contributing to my home community. My professional experience includes serving as the Parent Community Networking Coordinator (PCNC) for Wai'anae High School for three years. I currently hold the position of Community Homeless Concerns Liaison (CHCL) for the Nanakuli-Waianae Complex area, which includes Makaha Elementary, Wai'anae High School, Wai'anae Elementary, Leihoku Elementary, and Maili Elementary. Since being nominated to the Board of Directors in 2023, I have actively contributed to the Quality/Compliance Committee and the Nomination Committee. As of 2026, I have been appointed to the Island and Indigenous Health Task Force, underscoring my commitment to addressing the healthcare needs of the community.

### **AIRLEEN LUCERO**

I respectfully submit my name for nomination to serve on the Board supporting Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, the largest Native Hawaiian community health center providing holistic, culturally grounded care. Its mission to be a healing center offering accessible, affordable medical, mental health, and traditional healing services with aloha - and a learning center that trains community members for health careers - has deeply shaped my life. I served two terms on the Board of Directors, including Secretary, President, and Vice President and two years after leaving the Board, I returned to the Health Center with skills learned at Med-QUEST to set up policies and procedures in 1995, with Momi Sognonini to help our people apply for Med-QUEST within Waianae and served for 22 years an employee. As a Community Health Worker trained there, I am a product of its commitment to empowering our community members. Currently, I continue my healthcare career with Hawaii Pacific Health, the past eight years as a Community Health Worker. I seek to return to the Board to serve with integrity, respect, and cultural awareness - listening carefully to the voices of our community, especially those who may not always be heard. With God's guidance, I remain committed to strengthening this healing center for future generations.