



THE GARDEN ISLAND

Serving Kaua'i and Ni'ihau since 50 CE

MONDAY • AUGUST 4, 2008 • ONLINE: WWW.KAUAIWORLD.COM



A dream becomes reality

Community effort produces new charter school

Cynthia Matsuoka

SPECIAL TO THE GARDEN ISLAND

PUHI — Kawaikini, a new charter school, opened for students Tuesday on the East-side.

The kindergarten through grade 12 school will be the piece that links Punana Leo, a Hawaiian immersion preschool, to Kaua'i Community College.

"(The school) creates that immersion environment where everybody is together and speaking Hawaiian in the classrooms and on the playground," said interim Executive Director Kimo Perry.

The idea started with teachers who wanted to have a place where all students could be together as opposed to being on different campuses. The school sits on land leased from KCC, just behind Punana Leo.

For Alohilani Rogers, formerly a teacher with the Hawaiian immersion program at Kapa'a Middle and Kapa'a Elementary schools, it has been 10 years in the making.

She said she would see Punana Leo students learn to speak fluent Hawaiian, but if they were unable to attend the program at Kapa'a, they would exit and by the end of the following year they would have forgotten the language.

"Last year's Punana Leo's graduates are all here," Rogers said.

Following the immersion philosophy, the lower elementary grade students will build their foundation in the Hawaiian language in preparation for formal English training in the upper grade levels.

Rogers said it was a blessing to have started thinking about creating their special school early on.

There is a cap on the number of charter schools in Hawai'i. When three openings became available, they were ready, she said.

A core group of parents and educators came together about two years ago to explore options for a stronger educational model for Hawaiian language instruction.

Upon receiving a planning grant under the federal Department of Education's Charter Schools Program in 2006, a nonprofit parent organization called "Supporting the Language of Kaua'i, Inc." established an interim local school board.

Perry was selected as the interim executive director to lead the "long" charter school process.

"Punana Leo is a strong supporter," Perry

See School, A7



Contributed photo by Cynthia

Teacher Namomi McCriston helps Ka'i'ni Marshall and A Kalama enter their classroom on the first day of school Tuesday at Kawaikini. The new K-12 charter school provides the missing link for students studying the Hawaiian language immersion programs at Punana Leo preschool and Kaua'i Community College.

Kimo and Ka'iulani



Dennis Fujimoto/The Garden Island

Ka'iulani, a kumu hula from New York, and her husband, Kimo, offer a special presentation at the 2008 Heiva I Kaua'i Ia Orana Tahiti, yesterday at the Kapa'a Beach Park. Billed as "Kimo and Ka'iulani," the pair made an appearance at the Kaua'i Music Festival over the weekend and will be doing another performance from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, at the Kaua'i Museum. Ka'iulani said they met Tepairu Manea, heiva president, at Lydgate Park where Kimo was learning Tahitian drumming and considered it an honor to perform for the hundreds of people who attended the cultural event.

Obama says give Michigan Fla. delegates full vote

Stephen Ohlemacher
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Now that Barack Obama has clinched the Democratic nomination for president, he wants convention delegates from Florida and Michigan to have full voting rights at the party's national convention.

Obama sent a letter yesterday to the party's credentials committee, asking members to reinstate the delegates' voting rights when the committee meets at the start of the convention Aug. 25 in Denver.

The delegates were originally stripped because the two states violated party rules by holding primaries before Feb. 5.

The delegates from each state were given half-votes at a contentious party meeting in May, as part of a compromise designed to give two important states some role at the convention.

Obama's former Democratic rival, Hillary Rodham Clinton, had won both primaries, though Obama's name was not on the Michigan ballot and neither candidate campaigned in Florida.

"I believe party unity calls for the delegates from Florida and Michigan to be able to participate fully alongside the delegates from the other states and territories," Obama

McCain, Obama tied in poll

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON intensified attacks by publican John McCain, the character of his Democratic opponent has coincided with Barack Obama losing a 9-point age point advantage in a national poll, which showed the candidate running dead even over the weekend.

McCain, who has vowed to avoid the

See 1

said in the letter. Some of Clinton's supporters were outraged that delegates were not fully stated in May. They're angry that Obama claimed some of the delegates Clinton in Michigan.

Party leaders in Michigan had developed a plan to award Obama delegates though he wasn't on the ballot. Their plan served as a basis for the eventual compromise approved by the rules and bylaws committee.

See Delegate

Nets blamed for reef fish decline in islands

Dennis Fujimoto
THE GARDEN ISLAND

Community turns out to help children

a multi-disciplinary team