

He Mau 'Ohana Puka I Ke Ao

Families Emerging into the Light

*The Disparate Treatment of Native Hawaiians in the
Criminal Justice System*



Nalani Takushi, MSW, LSW
Lana Sue Ka'opua, PhD, MSW
Shalia Kamakele, MSW Intern
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'A'OHE HANA NUI KE 'ALU 'IA

NO TASK IS TOO BIG WHEN DONE TOGETHER BY ALL

COMMUNITY-BASED EFFORT

The Study

HCR 27: OHA to conduct collaborative study and government agencies to release information.

PURPOSE: Describe **disparate treatment** of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system and its **human impact**.

METHODS: Mixed-Methods, Community-Based Participatory approach

Our Contributors

RESEARCH PARTNERS

Justice Policy Institute (Amanda Petteruti), Georgetown Law School (Kristin Henning, JD), University of Hawai'i at Manoa (LS Ka'opua, PhD, James Spencer, PhD, Justin Levinson, JD, LLM, & Virginia Hench, JD, LLM, Margaret Ward, MA), OHA (Nalani Takushi, MSW)

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

Alu Like, Inc. (David Kamiyama), Community Alliance on Prisons (Kat Brady), QLCC (Dennis Kauahi), UH MBTSSW (Dean Noreen Mokuau, DSW), Kupuna Nalani Olds.

QUALITATIVE ARM: PARTICIPANTS

Na pa'ahao, na 'ohana, public officials, treatment providers, community advocates

Resilience, Cultural Resilience

Resilience promoted by:

- safe, healthy environment
- access to range of social resources essential to “bouncing back” from stressors
- Opportunity/capacity to connect, take leadership in social networks, organizations, & systems

Cultural Resilience is:

Capacity of a group to maintain and develop values, knowledge, and skills crucial to proactively engage challenges associated with cultural, historic, and other types of trauma





IN STORIES, WE 'PARENT' (RE-
PARENT) FOR RESILIENCY."

T. CROSS, MSW, SENECA NATION

E HOŌLOHE I NA MOŌOLELO

LISTEN TO THE STORIES

Resilience, Cultural Resilience, Hawaiian Indigeneity



"He ʻaʻaliʻi kū makani mai au, ʻaʻohe makani nāna e
kulaʻi."

"I am an ʻaʻaliʻi standing in the wind --a wind-resisting ʻaʻaliʻi--

-

no wind can push me over."

KUANA 'IKE:

A worldview perspective

Separation

Families are so devastated by incarceration. We need family-strengthening programs.

(Treatment Provider)

Anxiety & Family Visits

I remember them suffering when the visit ends and families leave...They want to go home, especially when children are involved....while they enjoy seeing their children, not all of them feel good about seeing them in prison.

When you sit down and talk to them, there is anxiety about children and families coming in. (Retired ACO)

Family Strain & Physical Separation

I lost my family. I had a relationship for 14 years, six kids. Because of the move to Oklahoma within the first two years, the relationship started to pull away. After that, we just break away—boom. If you separate families a lot of times they are separated forever. (former Pa'ahao, kane)

KUANA 'IKE: Resiliency in Adversity

My mother left me with her fiancé... I still remember having a doll and I was acting on the doll, in a sexual manner...one day she came back and caught him in the act. .. he left. But ever since that time, my mother was very abusive. I started acting out. My mother called my grandfather. He locked the door, beat and raped me...raped me. I got hapai with his baby. I had to press charges and my family wen disown me. That age til now I have no 'ohana, no childhood neighborhood.

I ran away from a youth shelter and raised myself on the streets. From the age of 13 years, I was already on the streets of Chinatown. I lived all over—parks, beaches. Sleeping all over, eating out of rubbish cans to survive, picking up cans for re-cycling. That's how I got into criminal activity. I didn't want to sell my body, so I was selling drugs to survive. So, you see I raised myself ...and I got this attitude that nobody is gonna take care of me, but me.

There was good and bad things about [incarceration on] the mainland... people feel sad away from their families, from their 'aina... **The bad thing is that coming back here for the long-termers meant stagnant time—not making the time more productive.**

We done time with the women still in prison... have an emotional attachment. We hanai. This is especially important for someone like me who never had an 'ohana...So, we care [that] the budget cutbacks is really impacting people...old people, too..tutu kine walking with a cane even. (former Pa'ahao, wahine)

KUANA 'IKE: Marginalization-Resiliency

I never fit into school cause of bad experiences... I stopped going, started hanging out with my older brother and his friends. My older brother was using marijuana and cocaine. He told me, “try this.” I started smoking. I was 14 when I went to detention home. I was 17 years old when I had my daughter and the only way I knew how to support her was through crimes. At the age of 18, I went to jail. At the age of 21, I committed a crime that sentenced me to life. I did 25 years in prison. .. went up to the mainland for five years and I lost my family.

Hawaiians have such hardship in life. That’s how they end up in prison. Trying to take care of their families turning to drugs. I went up to the mainland for five years and I lost my family—wife and kids. You know the worse thing about it?! You no can let your family know you going.

Stagnant time, dead time, more time. They give us these requirements to do, but they don’t have the means for you to do your programs. They expect you to get a GED but no always get schooling in the prison...Scary to think about re-entry...no more nothing for go home to...

I tried my best to do the good and keep my mind straight, strong--- mentally and physically. If you start deteriorating mentally and physically, you are going to lose it. I have seen a lot of inmates lose it. Most of my friends died in prison. One went and hanged himself. I think I am the only one left in my group. (former Pa‘ahao, kane)

Marginalization-Resiliency-**Strengthening**

We need to start somewhere

A man came here. He was already in his 50's and he told me "I cannot read."

I said, "You cannot read? How did you catch the bus here?"

He said he could tell by the signs, the symbols. So, I had him come to my office and I asked him to read my grandson's Little Golden books. He couldn't do it. He threw the books on the floor.

"This is for babies", he said.

"Yeah," I said. "But that's where you need to start."

And he did! He came several times a week and read to me. And from there, he just kept learning. He went back to school, got his degrees. (Treatment Provider)

Resilience: Strengthening Family



Who is the “family”?

What is our kuleana?

**How do we parent for &
support resilience?**

When you talk ‘culture,’ you want to look at people and understand how they live so you can administer your mana‘o to them... teach them... feed them so they no choke, so that they are able to inu from what you teach and digest it. So, that they can stand up and be proud... because they have that foundation. (Treatment Provider)

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no wind can push me over."**

Learning & Healing: Cultural Processes

I don't know how to speak Hawaiian. I want to search my roots... Knowing 'who' you are, 'where' you come from is important, especially for individuals like myself who have lost their family...it's like a kind of healing to really imua. (Pa'ahao, wahine)

We want to have a reciprocal learning process with pa'ahao... working on things together through a relationship. Indigenous people have these processes. (Community Advocate)

Restorative Justice, Forgiveness: Programs

Traditionally, Hawaiians had the pu'uhonua--if you can reach the wall, you are forgiven. While you stay there, you learn to live a forgiven life. Today, we have lost that ability to bring someone back into the community. Programs like that are needed, forgiveness is needed too. (Correctional Official)

Na Moʻolelo

**"I am an ʻaʻaliʻi standing in the wind --a wind-resisting ʻaʻaliʻi--
no wind can push me over."**

- **Stories gathered** through interviews with former paʻahao, their family members, those working within the judicial, public safety, and treatment service systems, and community advocates and volunteers.
- **Resiliency themes and cultural strengths** emerge in stories of marginalization, (re) trauma, harsh economic realities, and family adversity.
- **Stories offer insights** on how culturally-based knowledge might be used to inform program interventions.



NEXT STEPS

- **Trauma of incarceration**
- **Lack of programs and services in prison to prepare a person for reentry**
- **Culturally inappropriate or unavailable reentry services**



Mahalo