



Can a Scholarship Truly Transform a Life?

Jennifer Wong-Ala is studying global environmental sciences at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and has traveled the world. Just two years ago, Jennifer worked a minimum wage job and had no financial means to go to college. She had studied hard to be on Kailua High School's honor roll, and to one day become a doctor. Realizing her potential, Jennifer's high school counselor encouraged her to enroll in Kapi'olani Community College (KCC) with the help of a King William Charles Lunalilo Scholarship.

Supported by a unique team of counselors, teachers, and financial aid advisors, Jennifer completed her first year at KCC, and knew she needed more. She continued at UH, with amazing opportunities that led her to Costa Rica, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. to present research on marine bacterium and stream ecology.

Today, Jennifer is a friendly face around KCC, giving back as a peer mentor, and eager to help the growing number of students accepted into the King William Charles Lunalilo Scholars Project (Lunalilo Scholars). Well on her way to a new career path, Jennifer's journey is far from over, but her new life has begun.

What is the Lunalilo Scholars Project?

The Lunalilo Scholars Project is more than a financial aid scholarship. It is a transformative opportunity for promising individuals who are financially at-risk. They gain the means and personalized support to start a new life during their first year of college at KCC. Many start the program with little more than a strong desire to work hard and get ahead. Some are near the brink of homelessness, or stuck in low paying jobs without possibilities of career advancement. Once admitted to the program, Lunalilo Scholars gain confidence, peer support, and skills. They begin to see hope, and realize they can take steps to break the poverty cycle, find their purpose, and give back to their community.

The Lunalilo Scholars Project started in 2012 with 22 students. It has since graduated three cohorts, doubled in size, and transformed dozens of lives. Today, 50 plus students are enrolled with a growing waiting list.

Why is it growing so rapidly?

By design, the Lunalilo Scholars Project fills an unmet gap in education here in Hawai'i -- to uniquely serve and support students who demonstrate academic potential, but lack the family and financial support to attend college. One of the Project's goals is to teach Lunalilo Scholars to thrive independently. Project staff identifies individual student needs and assigns them a counselor who guides them, academically and emotionally, throughout the first year. Scholars must take a course load of 9 credits, achieve high grades, and apply for college grants and scholarships to help them achieve greater financial independence. Their success outcomes are impressive -- on par or better than average students. The Project staff assists students so they overcome obstacles and are part of a strong peer cohort.



At the 2014 KCC Scholarship dinner for scholars and their donors.

Measures of Success

Studies have shown first-time community college students have a lower level of persistence and completion rates, especially those who enter college from underserved and low-income communities. Not so with Lunalilo Scholars, whose positive outcomes are capturing the attention of college and island communities:

- **90.5% of Lunalilo Scholars have successfully completed their first year at KCC, compared to 77% of first-year students not in the Lunalilo Project.**
- **68.5% of Scholars on average continue to a second year of college, compared to 53% of first-year students not in the program.**

The Lunalilo Scholars Project offers a unique blend of social services, peer support, and academic reinforcement skills to help students achieve their first-year goals:

- Summer Bridge Program
- College Success Course
- Peer Mentor Program
- Technological support
- Academic tutoring
- Access to faculty and staff
- Placement test preparation
- Career and personality assessments
- Advising and counseling services
- Assistance with tuition, fees, books and supplies
- Assistance with scholarship applications and FAFSA forms

Building on Student Success

The Lunalilo Project's diverse programs and strong peer support equip Scholars with the necessary skills and confidence to thrive in the collegiate world, become resourceful, and gain financial literacy to effectively fund their future education to better themselves and their communities. Scholars who complete their first year and remain at KCC receive continued academic advising and personal counseling support.

Donors with Vision

The Lunalilo Scholars Project was launched at Kapi'olani Community College in 2012 with a generous donation from the Kaneta Foundation. Guided by the belief that providing hope to those in need can transform lives, Marian and Lester Kaneta formed the Kaneta Foundation in 1999, providing scholarships and program grants to support Hawai'i's needy.

"In our history of donating to outstanding causes, the Lunalilo Scholars Project has proven very successful and extremely rewarding. Meeting the students when they enter the program, following them through the year, and witnessing their amazing life transformations is powerful. To sustain this important program and help more deserving students establish a strong foothold on their careers, we need more like-minded partners to join us in creating a better future for Hawai'i through education." - Lester and Marian Kaneta



Transform a Life Today

More promising students can benefit greatly from your generous donation. Every gift transforms a student's life!

Support one student for one year: \$6,000
Program costs for 25 students per year: \$150,000

To learn more about the Lunalilo Scholars Project or to make a gift, please contact Linh Hoang Poe, director of development for Kapi'olani Community College.

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www.uhfoundation.org/giving-opportunities/lunalilo-scholars

The University of Hawai'i Foundation, a nonprofit organization, raises private funds to support the University of Hawai'i System. The mission of the University of Hawai'i Foundation is to unite donors' passions with the University of Hawai'i's aspirations by raising philanthropic support and managing private investments to benefit UH, the people of Hawai'i and our future generations.