American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
Hawaii

HAWAI'I CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

April 2026



WELCOME AND BOARD RETREAT

As we enter April 2026, I wanted to thank all our AFSP Hawai'i supporters, volunteers, and followers for your patience and understanding. Our small but mighty Board has made great strides bringing Out of the Darkness Walks to our island communities, as you will see, and we continue to grow our capacity to do advocacy work and community presentations.

On February 21, we held our annual Board retreat. Mapping out the year and building our teams created excitement for work ahead. We welcomed 2 new Board members - Angela Martinez and Presley Hill - who will use their passion and creativity to boost our efforts. Special guest Tammy English, AFSP Director of Small Chapter Development, joined us to help support our chapter activities.

We look forward to meeting more of you at our events and seeing you volunteer with us.
Have a blessed and safe day, Dennis

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

On the last weekend of January, three of our Board members - Rachelle Chang, Sheri Taketa, and Janice Berry - attended the annual AFSP Chapter Leadership Conference in Denver, Colorado. Reflecting on their experience in Denver, they were deeply moved by the reminder that our AFSP Hawaii 'Ohana's mission is rooted in genuine human connection and shared vulnerability, gaining insights, learning practical strategies, and strengthening their commitment to prevention, knowing every seed of hope contributes to the quiet, life-saving "saves" we may never see.



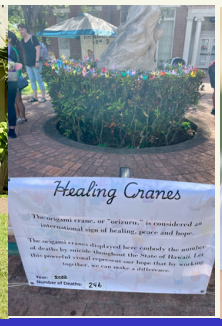


HAWAII CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

Angela Martinez
Cori Takesue
Dennis Hida, Board Chair
Janice Berry
Karen Ng
Nicolle Grimes
Presley Hill
Rachelle Chang
Sarah Gudmunson
Sheri Taketa
Ui Desiree Kiaha
Valerie Yamakawa

WALK SEASON - FALL 2025





OAHU

On September 13, 2025, our community gathered for the annual O'ahu Out of the Darkness Walk, an inspiring morning dedicated to raising awareness and hope for suicide prevention. More than 500 participants came together to honor loved ones, support one another, and spread the message that help and hope are always available. The event featured powerful speakers who courageously shared their personal stories of loss, survival, and resilience, reminding everyone that healing begins with connection and conversation. We were also honored to receive official proclamations from both the Mayor's Office and the Governor's Office, recognizing the importance of suicide prevention efforts across Hawai'i. Emceed by the ever-energetic Tiny Tadani, the morning was filled with moments of reflection, remembrance, and community spirit. Participants took part in meaningful activities such as the Memory Wall, the HOPE sign, the Unity Tree, and the Healing crane display, each symbolizing love, remembrance, and the collective commitment to saving lives. A variety of local organizations and community partners filled the Resource Tent, offering information, support, and ways to stay connected year-round. We are deeply grateful to the many sponsors and volunteers who made this event possible and to every walker who showed up to make a difference. Together, we continue to move Out of the Darkness — bringing light, understanding, and hope to our community.






MOLOKAI

On September 20th, 2025, at the Molokai Canoe Club a group of community volunteers hosted the 4th annual Walk for Suicide Prevention and Awareness. It was attended by almost 150 people which included children, youth, and adults. This event is a way for our community planning group to help Molokai community connect with support resources, a space to honor those they have lost, and especially for those who have a personal struggle with suicide or loved with personal struggles with suicide. Our bead honoring, rocks of hope, temporary tattoo and body paint with semicolon, walk with signs of aloha and awareness, blowing bubbles and throwing flowers in the ocean shares a message of hope and light for those who participated.



WALK SEASON - FALL 2025







"The vulnerability, bravery, and compassion that filled the Great Lawn was a powerful reminder of how vital community truly is..."

MAUI

The 2025 Maui Out of the Darkness Walk took place on October 18, 2025. Leading her first Walk, Chair Sarah Gudmunson reflected that it was "an experience that filled me with deep gratitude and humility. What stood out most to me was witnessing the courage of so many individuals who showed up—not just to walk, but to share their stories, honor their loved ones, and stand together in hope and healing. The vulnerability, bravery, and compassion that filled the Great Lawn were a powerful reminder of how vital community truly is when it comes to mental health." The atmosphere was one of connection, remembrance, and love. Maui's mayor, Richard Bissen, recognized AFSP and presented a proclamation emphasizing the real and ongoing need for events like these to continue—events that bring awareness, support, and hope to our island. Expressing her gratitude, Sarah says "I was deeply moved by the sense of unity and the willingness of people to come together to support one another. Overall, the 2025 Out of the Darkness Walk reminded me why this mission is so important. It wasn't just an event—it was a day of hope, remembrance, and unity. I am deeply thankful to everyone who shared their heart, volunteered their time, and showed up for one another."

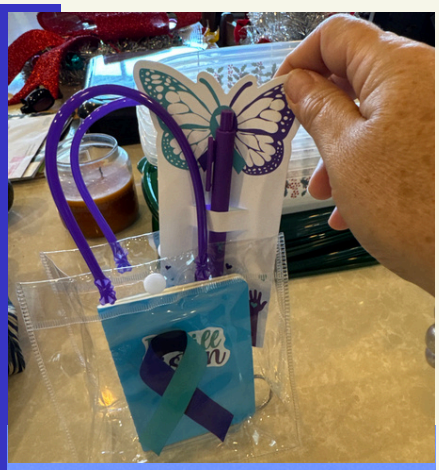
INTERNATIONAL SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS DAY - NOV 2025





The AFSP Hawai'i Chapter hosted its International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day event on November 22, 2025, bringing together approximately 25 survivors for a meaningful day of connection and healing. Attendees participated in thoughtful activities designed to foster reflection, support, and understanding. The gathering created a safe space for open dialogue, allowing survivors to share their experiences and connect with others who truly understand their journey.

Event Chair Nicolle Grimes said "it was inspiring to see the strength and compassion within the group. Those who attended expressed that the event was both worthwhile and impactful. We are hopeful that even more survivors will join us this coming November as we continue to build a supportive and healing community."





VOLUNTEERS

CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS

On December 13, 2025, volunteers and supporters gathered at the Scouting America Aloha Council for a festive evening of gratitude, connection, and reflection. The holiday-themed decorations, shared meal, and time to connect gave everyone a chance to relax beyond the many events throughout the year. The program included fun games that brought out plenty of smiles, laughter, and friendly competition. It was also a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the impact of our volunteers—from community walks and education programs to outreach efforts that bring hope and awareness across Hawai'i.

We honored the purpose that brings us together: supporting those who struggle, remembering those we've lost, and continuing the work of suicide prevention. The evening served as a powerful reminder that every conversation, every event, and every volunteer hour truly matters. Most of all, the gathering was an opportunity to say mahalo. The compassion, time, and energy our volunteers give make an immeasurable difference. Thank you to everyone who joined us for this special evening and for the countless ways you continue to support suicide prevention throughout the year.









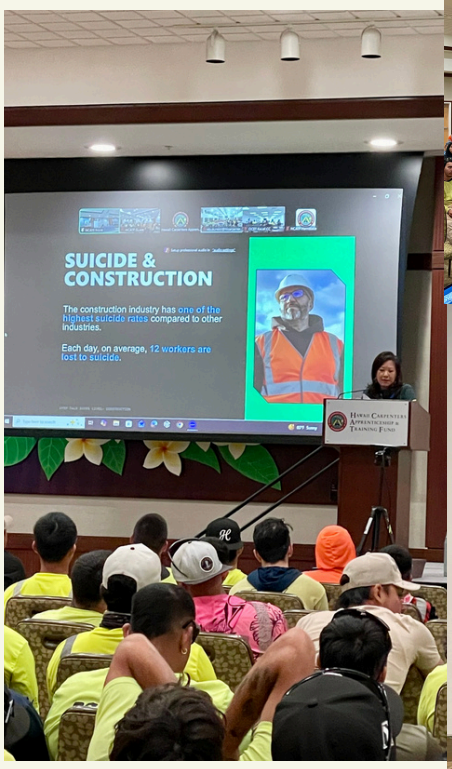




OUTREACH

EDUCATION

We continue to expand our program reach by offering free community presentations. Led by Education Chair, Sheri Taketa, presenters include Janice Berry, Karen Ng, Dennis Hida, and Angela Martinez. Contact sheritaketa56@gmail.com to schedule a presentation.







TALK SAVES LIVES CONSTRUCTION

Suicide impacts the construction industry at a notably high rate. AFSP's Talks Saves Lives: Construction was developed to bring vital mental health and suicide prevention conversations into the culture of construction jobsites. Since the beginning of the year, we've delivered 3 presentations and reached over 440 members of the Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship & Training Fund with additional dates planned.





TABLING

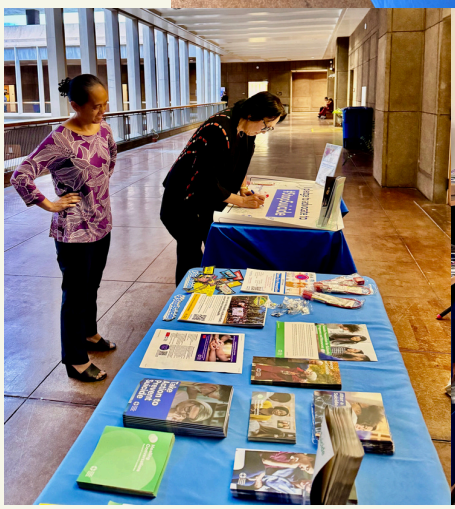
From the State Capitol to the coast of Waiʻanae, AFSP Hawaiʻi showed up in community—creating space for connection and sharing resources for mental health and suicide prevention.
2/17 Queer Day at The Capitol
3/25 Aloha ʻIa ʻO Waiʻanae at Waiʻanae Elementary School

CARING COMMUNITIES

Supporting loss survivors is a vital part of AFSP's mission. We delivered the newly launched Caring Communities presentation on March 5, 2026 to the Hawaii United Prevention Task Force. Helping loved ones understand what suicide loss survivors experience and how to create a supportive environment is essential to feeling seen and supported.

ADVOCACY







American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
ADVOCACY ACTION DAY

Advocacy Action Day on March 20, 2025 was a powerful success. As the only group tabling at the State Capitol before the shutdown, the team had a unique opportunity to connect directly with legislators and community members. Volunteers kept the table active throughout the day, leading to meaningful conversations and increased visibility for AFSP's mission.

Coming in April: Legislative Brunch

UPCOMING EVENTS

CELEBRATE VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK WITH A COFFEE HOUR!

TO CELEBRATE VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK, WE WANT TO SEND A BIG MAHALO FOR ALL YOU DO. OUR AFSP HAWAII BOARD MEMBERS WILL BE VISITING COFFEE SHOPS ACROSS THE ISLANDS AND WOULD LOVE TO TREAT YOU TO A DRINK. STOP BY TO CHAT ABOUT PROGRAMS, SHARE IDEAS, OR JUST SAY HELLO.

HOW IT WORKS:
- CHECK THE SCHEDULE BELOW FOR A TIME AND PLACE NEAR YOU.
- MEET A BOARD MEMBER—THEY'LL HAVE A SIGN AND AN AFSP SHIRT.
- ENJOY A DRINK ON US AS A SMALL THANK-YOU.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

Sun Apr 19	Mon Apr 20	Tues Apr 21	Weds Apr 22	Thurs Apr 23	Fri Apr 24	Sat Apr 25
Starbucks Kam Shopping Center 6-8AM dennis	Surf Camp Niu Valley 430-530PM Rachelle & Janice	Starbucks Kaka'ako (SALT) 530-630PM Angie	Coffee Bean&Tea Leaf (Ward) 11AM-1230PM Karen	Plantoem Café Kaimuki 1230-145PM Janice	Coffee Bean&Tea Leaf (Ward) 11AM-1230PM Karen	Starbucks Kapolei 10-11AM Sheri
Starbucks Aiea Shopping Center 9-11AM dennis	Starbuck's Windward City 6-8PM dennis	Starbucks Windward Mall 6-8PM dennis	Starbucks Waipio Okinawan Cultural Center 430-530PM		Starbucks Kailua (corner Kailua Rd/ Hahani St) 6-8PM dennis	Morning Brew Kailua 10-1130AM Nicolle
Surfer's Coffee Wahiawa 12-1PM Presley			Starbucks Kaneohe Bay Shopping Ctr 630-830PM dennis			Starbucks Waipahu Town Center 12-2PM dennis

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK APRIL 19-25



SUPPORTING OUR HAWAIʻI COMMUNITIES AFTER THE FLOODING

Recent devastating flooding has impacted families and communities across the Hawaiian Islands. Times like these remind us how important it is to come together—to show care, extend support, and ensure that no one feels alone in the recovery process.
Our hearts are with all those affected.
Ways to Kōkua
If you're looking for ways to kōkua, please consider supporting trusted local organizations providing critical relief:

Hawaii Community Foundation
Aloha United Way
Hawaii Foodbank
Malama Map: Hawai'i Helping Hawai'i - if you are seeking help or want to help





Thank you for reading!



CONTACT US:
HAWAII@AFSP.ORG

FOLLOW US @AFSPHAWAII

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE
24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT



AFSP Hawaii

Paws For Prevention

HONOLULU Paws for Prevention Pet Walk+

Saturday,April11th, 2026 2pm-6pm

Momilani Community Center

715 Hoomoana Street Pearl City, HI 96782

Register today

- ★ Pet Walk
- ★ Craft Vendors
- ★ Pet Vendors
- ★ Dog andKeikiActivities
- ★ Food Vendors

- ★ Pet Contests:
  - -Best Costume
  - -Pet-Owner Look-alike
  - -Best Trick

afsp.org/Hawaii

Dogs must be leashed

please clean up after your dog

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

Hawaii

LIVINGWORKS safeTALK

Make a connection to safety and help

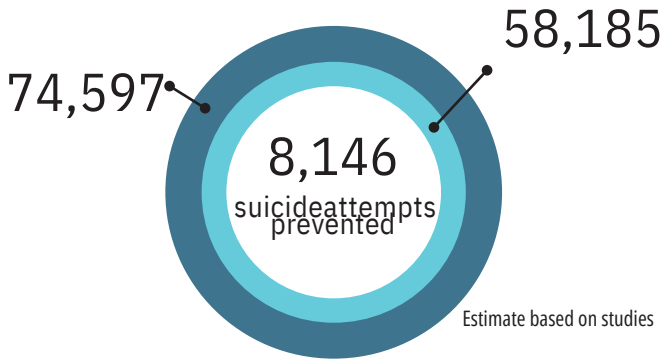
Play a role in suicide prevention

LivingWorks safeTALK helps you notice and respond to situations where thoughts of suicide may be present.

You will learn to:

- Understand how to reach out to someone with thoughts of suicide
- Help them KeepSafe by connecting them to further support
- Explore personal and community attitudes and talk openly about suicide

LivingWorks safeTALK's impact in 2022



LivingWorks safeTALK works

Studies show that participants gain confidence:

- ☑ Asking people about suicide directly
- ☑ Connecting them to life-saving resources
- ☑ Keeping them safe until those resources take over

Upcoming Training

Date: Tuesday, April 14, 9am-1pm
Location: 680 Iwilei Road Ste 700 (Dole Cannery Office Building) Please check in with receptionist! Parking available in Pomaikai Ballrooms (no validation)
Sponsored by: Project HI-AWARE2

Cost: No cost for registered participants
To inquire or register, please RSVP at https://forms.gle/u6qij6W146rMx3zn6

People making a difference with safeTALK

Coaches and Athletes
Military Personnel
Firefighters
Educators
Faith Community Members
Friends and Family
Counselors, Social Workers, Clinicians
Community Members
Volunteers
Medical Professionals
Construction Workers
Police, Correction Officers
EMTs and Paramedics
Service Industry
Students
Workplace

Learn more about LivingWorks safeTALK: www.livingworks.net/training/livingworks-safetalk

9EN4005-02 © 10/2024 LivingWorks Education



I'M HIKING FOR
SUICIDE PREVENTION
afsp.org/construction

Hawai'i Construction Hike for Hope

Engaging the construction industry on the importance of mental health and suicide prevention.

Saturday, May 2, 2026 ~ Honolulu

9:30 am Registration, 10am Hike

'Aiea Loop Trail, Lower Trailhead

99-1849 Aiea Heights Dr., 'Aiea, HI 96701

Pay or Come Join

https://supporting.afsp.org/HIConstruction

Hike for Hope

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention