

NEWS PRESS RELEASE

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Hawaiian Organization Receives 2nd National Grant

Kane`ohe, HI - The Hula Preservation Society (HPS), a non-profit organization dedicated to honoring the senior-most hula masters in our community, was awarded **\$37,882** from a grant program of the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Park Service (NPS). HPS was one of 15 grant recipients of a pool of 101 applications to the NPS's Historic Preservation Fund Grants to Indian Tribes, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiian Organizations Program.

This national funding will enable HPS to continue its work in gathering the life stories of kupuna alive today through digital documentation to ensure a more grounded future for hula and for Hawai`i. The group of elders that HPS works with is unique in that they were raised by men and women who lived during the time of the recognized Hawaiian kingdom, spoke their mother tongue, and lived a Hawaiian life. As such, this group represents the last living link to an enormously significant time period for Hawaiians and for Hawai`i. Further, our kupuna's upbringing coupled with their lives in hula during a century of tremendous change offer incomparable insight into what it was like to be a Hawaiian practitioner in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

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HPS is the only organization completely focused on documenting the hula lives of these revered elders. HPS's documentation activities consist of one-on-one oral history sessions and public panel discussions featuring various groups of hula masters. Through both the interviews and public programs, our kupuna narrate history by sharing what they lived through and what and how they were taught. Their accounts augment and challenge our suppositions of language and history, and they offer unique and valuable perspectives on what they see happening today.

To date, HPS has worked with 20 kupuna from throughout the islands and HPS' Library has reached 500 hours of unique and irreplaceable footage of our beloved elders and their lives in hula. This grant will allow HPS to establish a dedicated backup and storage system for this ever-expanding Library of media-based cultural resources.

Along with National Park Service funding, 2004 support for HPS's core work has come from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Cooke Foundation Limited, the Hawai'i Council for the Humanities, the Kamehameha Schools, and private donations. In addition to these gracious funders, HPS is blessed to receive ongoing support from the Nadao & Mieko Yoshinaga Foundation, Specific Video, Net Enterprise Inc., and TEKnowledgeY Design. For more information and to view a prototype of HPS's online Hula Kahiko Research Library, visit www.hulapreservation.org.

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