



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION AWARDS \$104,491 TO 3 MAUI NONPROFIT YOUTH PROGRAMS

The Maui Strong Fund grants will provide relief to families with keiki affected by the Maui fires.

Kahului, MAUI — Today, the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) is announcing the award of \$104,491 to three nonprofit partners focused on providing assistance to Maui families with children who have been affected by the Maui fires in August, 2023: the Alexander Academy Performing Company, Maui Junior Golf Association, and Unda Kava 808. In total, the Maui Strong Fund has now distributed \$2.4 million in grants in the "Children and Family" sector.

The grants were made possible by donations to the Maui Strong Fund, which was created to support evolving needs, including food, grief counseling, rental support, and other services as identified by HCF partners doing critical work on Maui.

[Alexander Academy Performing Company](#), a well-known and well-respected dance studio in Upcountry Maui with 275 students from age three to adult, in March received a \$22,816 grant to support a program serving West Maui and Upcountry families with scholarships for classes, rehearsals, and performance fees for students and families affected by the fires. A small portion goes towards dance clothes and shoes for scholarship recipients, who report that the classes are bringing them joy and relief. The program also provides free tickets for those affected by the fires. The Alexander Academy previously received a Maui Strong Fund grant in November 2023, for \$16,510.

[Maui Junior Golf Association \(MJGA\)](#) received a \$25,000 grant in March to support its programs that help Maui youth by building camaraderie and enhancing youth golf skills so they may grow and compete. More than 30 percent of MJGA members are from West Maui and were affected by the Lahaina fires. To provide opportunities for normalcy, the organization uses funding to support scholarships for fire-affected families seeking to participate in the 2024 season, with key partners Lahaina Junior Golf and First Tee Hawai'i.

Unda Kava 808 received a \$56,675 grant in March to support the Maui Junior Voyagers Program, which provides Maui youth with an opportunity to connect with and deepen their understanding of traditional Native Hawaiian voyaging and wayfinding, celestial navigation, 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, Hawaiian cultural protocol, team building, service learning, and basic sailing skills. The program halted when the canoe, Holopuni, was lost to the fires. This funding will support replacement of lost equipment and some staffing to restart programming for 450 students across Maui.

Danelle Watson, Alexander Academy studio director, says, “At Alexander Academy of Performing Arts, we're committed to providing a haven for families impacted by the Maui fires, offering them a path to healing and connection through the transformative power of the arts. With the generous support of the Maui Strong Fund grant, we're able to extend our outreach efforts, providing 100-percent discounted classes to those affected, ensuring they have access to a positive outlet for expression and community engagement. Our upcoming production of Swan Lake at Seabury Hall's 'A'ali'ikūhonua Creative Arts Center on June 1-2 stands not only as a showcase of talent but also as a symbol of resilience and unity. By offering free show tickets to all four performances, we're able to further enrich the lives of these families, fostering a sense of appreciation and brightness amidst adversity.”

Jasper Yun, president of the Maui Junior Golf Association, says, “This incredible contribution will provide much-needed support to our junior golfers from Maui County and specifically Lahaina, who were impacted by the devastating wildfires of August 2023. Many of our young athletes faced significant losses, including loss of their homes and personal belongings. This grant will not only help our junior golfers recover, but also allow them to stay focused on their goals and dreams on the golf course.”

Jeff Balinbin, Unda Kava 808's education coordinator who runs the Maui Junior Voyagers Program, says, “The Maui Junior Voyagers Program gives kids the kinds of skills that help them graduate; it gives them a sense of self, a sense of place, teaches them about the 'āina. And, for those kids from Lahaina, or with family on the West Side, getting out and sailing has allowed them to reconnect with Lahaina in a positive way.”

As of April 5, 2024, HCF has awarded close to \$90 million from its Maui Strong Fund to more than 160 nonprofits and partners doing critical work on Maui. HCF has a unique role in disaster preparedness and response. The organization collaborates with partners, both inside and outside philanthropy, for a coordinated effort to secure maximum community impact. HCF has demonstrated its ability to raise funds quickly—and deploy grants effectively to partners that are at the heart of emergency response and recovery efforts.

For more information on the Alexander Academy Performing Company, please visit <https://www.alexanderacademy.info>.

For more information on Maui Junior Golf Association, please visit <https://mjga.net>.

For nonprofit organizations seeking funding from the Maui Strong Fund, please visit this section of HCF website for detailed instructions on how to apply for a MSF grant.
<https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/strengthening/maui-strong-fund/apply-for-a-grant>

For donations to the Maui Strong Fund at HCF, please visit <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/maui-strong>.

For questions or additional information on giving, please contact Donor Services at (808) 566-5560 or donorservices@hcf-hawaii.org.

*****VISUALS*****

For images of these Maui youth programs, please visit [this Dropbox folder](#). All photos are provided courtesy of respective grantees. Alexander Academy classroom photos should be credited to Maui Video and Marketing; Alexander Academy performance photos should be credited to Chelsea Fine; Maui Junior Golf Association photos should be credited to Jasper Yun and Mark Tuquero.

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About Hawai'i Community Foundation & Maui Strong Fund

The vision of the Hawai'i Community Foundation is to create an equitable and vibrant Hawai'i in which all our Island communities thrive. With our more-than-105-year history, our trusted expertise, and the generous support of donors, we are working to address the root causes of our state's most difficult challenges, including expanding access to affordable housing, conserving fresh water resources, and ensuring the healthy development of Hawai'i's young children. HCF works in communities across Hawai'i, with offices and staff located statewide. For more information about HCF, please visit hawaiicomunityfoundation.org and follow our social media channels on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

The Maui Strong Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation is providing financial resources to support the immediate and long-term recovery needs for the people and places affected by the Maui wildfires. HCF works in close collaboration with federal, state and county agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community members to get an understanding of the evolving priorities on the ground and deploys grants to address unmet needs. To ensure transparency, all grantees and award amounts from the Maui Strong Fund are updated regularly and can be found [here](#). The Maui Strong Fund is designed for the long haul, using a four-phase approach that includes recovery, stabilization, risk reduction, and resiliency building. Learn more about our four-phase approach [here](#).

About the Alexander Academy Performing Company

Alexander Academy expanded in September 2012 by establishing the 501(c)(3) nonprofit Alexander Academy Performing Company. The Company's mission is to provide accessible, high-quality dance instruction and performance opportunities to the Maui community. Through the art and discipline of dance, we empower students to embody the aloha spirit, identify their self-respect and compassion, and feel connection. Our values develop socially responsible citizens through connection between mind, body and community. To learn more, visit <https://www.alexanderacademy.info>.

About the Maui Junior Golf Association

MJGA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that introduces the game of golf and its traditions to the youth on Maui. MJGA develops life skills through fun, affordable and competitive programs that educate, motivate and inspire future golfers. Founded in 1960, MJGA's mission is to promote and foster the game of golf to juniors of all ages and skill levels, with no barriers to racial, ethnic, or financially disadvantaged. To learn more, visit <https://mjga.net>.

About Unda Kava 808

Unda Kava 808 runs the Maui Junior Voyagers youth sailing program that provides Maui youth with an opportunity to connect with and deepen their understanding of traditional Hawai'i voyaging and wayfinding, celestial navigation, 'olelo Hawai'i, Hawai'i cultural protocol, team building, service learning and basic sailing skills.