

Growing up in West Maui has made me realize how important our history and culture are to me now and in the future as I begin my college journey. There are a multitude of ancient Hawai'ian historical sites as well as sites that represent the cultures that came to West Maui during the days of pineapple and sugar cane. I feel it is important to preserve and perpetuate the history and culture of West Maui in order to cherish our past, teach those among us where we have come from, and leave our legacy to the future generations of Maui.

To begin with, the history of West Maui is all around us. One only has to drive down Front Street to see our historical sites and the many cultures that have made Lahaina and West Maui the community it is today. Starting at 505 Front Street there is Moku'ula, the home of King Kamehameha III. It is important that the area is restored so that the ancient Hawai'ian people are forever represented on such sacred land. My school, King Kamehameha III Elementary School sits on an ancient Hawai'ian burial ground. All of us grew up knowing that those before us looked after us daily. Next are the Baldwin Missionary Home, The Pioneer Inn, and the Wo Hing Temple, reminders of the hard working people who came to Maui looking for a better way of life. Further down the road is the Lahaina Jodo Mission, where Japanese people came to worship. Driving up Lahainaluna Road, there is the historic Pioneer Mill smoke stack, the only part of the mill left standing. This represents the hard work of many cultures such as the Filipino people who put their blood and sweat into the growing and producing of sugar cane. Finally, at the top of Lahainaluna Road, sits Lahainaluna High School. It represents all of our community, past, present and future. I'm proud to attend a school that has been in Lahaina for over one hundred seventy-five years. My grandpa, dad, brother Mychael and countless relatives have attended Lahainaluna. Much of my past is connected to Lahainaluna.

All of us who live in West Maui are tied to our community because of our history. We must help preserve it in order to remember those who came before us to make this a better place to live. I feel it is important to share the knowledge of the past with younger generations in order to keep our way of life alive. All of us in this community know one another and this history keeps us all tied together.

In the end, we must preserve and perpetuate our history and culture for the future generations of West Maui. Lahaina has been a great place for me to grow up because I feel safe and secure with those in the community who know me and look after me. We must leave our legacy intact so that our children have that same sense of community and belonging.