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I believe it is important to preserve our community and perpetuate a sense of 'Ohana and Aloha through West Maui's history, culture and traditions. The Ohana and Aloha is what ties our small community together and makes citizens want to never leave.

As the only school with an Alma Mater in Hawaiian and the oldest school west of the Rocky Mountains, Lahainaluna is an integral part of West Maui's past, present and future as it maintains key cultural values. I think one of the greatest culture experiences was during my freshman year at an assembly. Our assemblies are special to say the least. It's an atmosphere that is virtually indescribable and the feeling of togetherness and unity is incredible. During this particular assembly the senior class sang one of our school songs, O Kou Aloha, a gift from Kumu John K. Lake, and most of the students were in tears by the end. There was such a sense of pride and love that emanated from every person in the gym. A type of connection was created that transcended group ties, making our school one.

Moments like this one, families like that of the West Maui community, and the constant lessons that this islands Aloha spirit teaches brings an understanding to the significance of sustaining our unique history and culture.

On another note, I have been the editor-in-chief of the Ka Leo Luna Newspaper which has been in production since Lahainaluna High School was first established, since my sophomore year and the position has given me a very unique part in the school and community as a whole. I know firsthand what goes into making our place in history memorable and the passionate effort that goes into documenting our cultural development as generation after generation makes the transition to adulthood. A continual attempt must be made to keep this part of history sacred even with the economy reaching a recession and resources dwindling.

The Keiki of Hawai'i is also an extremely important reason to keep our culture alive. West Maui's youth deserve the opportunity to be a central component of the islands. They need the courage and the

understanding to know that they can be the difference in their community. The citizens of West Maui are so supportive and the next generation deserves that support. I want my brother, who is currently five-years-old, to have the same pride for his community that I have. I want him to appreciate the people in his community and the distinct culture that they represent. Retaining the precious past and customs of the Hawaiian Islands, and especially the matchless sense of unity that is represented by the West Maui people, for the next 100 generations should be the goal of all our citizens. There is nothing quite like our society, our melting pot, our Ohana; it needs to be preserved so that all may marvel at its existence.