

**LAHAINA RESTORATION FOUNDATION
SCHOLARSHIP RENEWAL ESSAY**

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An important challenge facing West Maui, in the preservation of culture and history, continues to be local families being forced to move away due to the high cost of land and housing. ***Part of the solution to preserving the culture is preserving the people.***

Opening some land for carefully planned developments would allow families to remain in West Maui, and those that have left, an opportunity to move back. Much of the land development, from Kapalua to Olowalu, has been for wealthy mainland speculation and second or third homes. This type of growth drives up land values and rents, thus making it unaffordable for countless local citizens. A balance between affordable housing and the preservation of open spaces while *reintroducing traditional diversified Hawaiian agricultural practices*, on fallow sugar and pineapple fields, is imperative.

Clean up and preservation of West Maui's beaches and coral reefs continues to be a challenge. I was made keenly aware of this throughout my high school Senior Project. Specifically, how everyday litter is harming different species in our ocean and on our reefs. The ancient Hawaiians greatly respected the ocean and understood it was "the sustainer of life".

Along with ocean preservation is the condition of our infrastructure. The West Maui sewage treatment system is being taxed by new development along North Beach.

The system and injection wells may be responsible for recent algae blooms which can also kill the coral reefs. We need to look at ways to upgrade the treatment system.

Our local visitor industry should be encouraged to do more to perpetuate and preserve the culture and history for visitors and kama'aina alike. Good examples of these efforts are found at the Kaanapali Beach Hotel with their educational programs promoting the Hawaiian culture, and the revitalization of the old beach trail along the coastline as an informational walking tour.

Additionally, a sizable museum, on par with the quality of the Baldwin House, and in conjunction with the excavation, preservation and restoration of Moku'ula Island and the Ponds of Mokuhinia, would be yet another avenue to interpret our community's past, to include Lahaina having been the Royal Capital of the Hawaiian Kingdom. In addition to complimenting existing historical buildings and sites, such a facility would attract and educate many visitors and island-wide residents and students using historical artifacts, music, dance, exhibits, cultural demonstrations, etc. similar to the Bishop Museum on Oahu.

Finally, I feel there should be even more emphasis on teaching school students the historical importance of Lahaina. Also, that community service be **required** as part of school curriculum. The theory being that by the time the students get to high school, community service is expected and then becomes a natural progression for other types of service, thus, creating a greater probability for a generation of thinkers, problem solvers, and producers.

By safeguarding the cultural heritage of our community and educating the public as to its economic value, I believe that the future of West Maui is bright and full of opportunity.