



**HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM**  
**A S S O C I A T I O N**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday, April 26, 2024

**[FOR PHOTOS, CLICK HERE](#)**

*Courtesy: Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association*

### **20<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CITIZEN-SCHOLARS AWARDS LUNCHEON RECOGNIZES THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST FROM HAWAI'I'S PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS**

*Top two student winners hail from Hilo High School and Campbell High School*

**HONOLULU** — Celebrating its milestone 20th year, the annual Citizen-Scholars Awards luncheon was held today at the Prince Waikiki. Since its inception in 2005, the event has honored 840 outstanding seniors from public schools across the state and presented scholarships nearing \$900,000. The prestigious awards program is a collaboration between the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association, Hawai'i Department of Education, and Honolulu Star-Advertiser.

"It brings me immense pride to recognize the 42 exceptional students selected as this year's Citizen-Scholars. These brilliant young minds represent the future of our community, and we are honored to support their academic journey," stated Mufi Hannemann, HLTA's president and CEO. "This program reaffirms our commitment to nurturing talent and fostering excellence in education, athletics, and civic engagement. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each of these student leaders and look forward to witnessing their remarkable contributions to Hawai'i and beyond."

The Citizen-Scholars Awards recognize exemplary high school students from Hawai'i's public school system. One top student is picked from each campus. Each Citizen-Scholar receives a \$1,000 scholarship to go toward his or her college endeavors; the top student from each of the four counties is awarded an additional \$2,500. Two top seniors, one male and one female representing the Class of 2024, will receive an additional \$5,000.

To commemorate the program's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Southwest Airlines donated roundtrip plane tickets to the honorees, which would allow them to travel during their freshman year of college to return home to Hawai'i or embark on an educational journey within the country.

These outstanding students were recognized within the following categories:

**Top two students (one male, one female):**

Bransen Hatakenaka, Hilo High School, Hawai'i Island ([attending University of Southern California](#))

Alanna Nicole Rillorta, Campbell High School, O'ahu ([attending Princeton University](#))

**Top county students (one from each county):**

Lehua Norris, Konawaena High School, Hawai'i Island ([attending Yale University](#))

Priscilla Matthews, Kaua'i High School, Kaua'i ([attending Pomona College](#))

Chelsey Konno, Maui High School, Maui ([attending Johns Hopkins University](#))

Kayuga "Kai" Jade Garcia de Guzman, Waialua High and Intermediate School, O'ahu ([attending University of Pennsylvania](#))

For a full list of all the scholarship recipients, [CLICK HERE](#).

*Photo captions:*

1. The 2024 Citizen-Scholars gathered for a group photo with emcees Howard Dashefsky and Brigitte Namata from KHON2, Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association President & CEO Mufi Hannemann, Hawai'i State Department of Education Superintendent Keith Hayashi, and Honolulu Star-Advertiser Director of Operations and Advertising Denise Ching.

*(The following students posed for photos with Hawai'i State Department of Education Superintendent Keith Hayashi, Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association President & CEO Mufi Hannemann, and Honolulu Star-Advertiser Director of Operations and Advertising Denise Ching)*

2. Priscilla Matthews from Kaua'i High School was the Kaua'i County winner.
3. Chelsey Konno from Maui High School was the selected winner for Maui County.
4. Lehua Norris from Konawaena High School won for Hawai'i Island County.
5. Kayuga "Kai" Jade Garcia de Guzman from Waialua High School received the County Award for O'ahu.
6. Bransen Hatakenaka from Hilo High School was the overall male winner.
7. Alanna Nicole Rillorta from Campbell High School won the award for top female student.

**About the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association**

Established in 1947, the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA) is the state's largest private organization representing hotels, condominiums, timeshares, other lodging entities, suppliers, and related firms and individuals with a connection to tourism. A 501(c)(6)

association with allied and hotel member organizations, HLTA is dedicated to supporting the tourism industry through education, advocacy, and philanthropy. For more information, visit HLTA's [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or website at [www.hawaiilodging.org](http://www.hawaiilodging.org).

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