

The “Best Trip Ever” — Kaho‘olawe 2014

Twelve adventurous LCPCS students, along with three of their dedicated teachers, recently traveled to the island of Kaho‘olawe on a very special kind of field trip.

In high school, science and social studies have been integrated as part of a conversion to project-based learning. This quarter, students needed to address Driving Questions that covered standards in both of those disciplines. In World History class, the question was “How have world events affected the natural environments of Hawai‘i?” And in Participation-in-Democracy class, it was “How can we support efforts to conserve, protect, or restore native environments of Hawai‘i?” Long story short: answering these questions led students to volunteer as part of the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) ecological restoration project.



Alize Asato and Ms. Brewer build “running beds” during a recent trip to Kaho‘olawe.

restoration efforts can’t be put directly into the ground.

During their 4-day stay, the students and teachers cleared and chipped invasive kiawe trees; provided water and space for previously-

The native ecosystem on Kaho‘olawe was badly damaged by grazing before the island’s use as a bombing range starting in WWII. Its current condition provided the perfect opportunity for students to consider the science behind ecosystem destruction and restoration in the context of the human activities that cause them. The island is estimated to have lost about 15 feet of soil due to wind and water erosion, and the soils that remain are so depleted that vegetation planted during restoration

planted native vegetation; created substrate for future plantings by combining native soils and potting soils; filled “running beds” with that mixture; and planted a variety of native, and even endangered, species. Breakfast was at 6 am and the work day was over between 3 and 4 pm. At that point, fortunately, students were able to swim in a beautiful protected bay, a welcome relief after the hot, dry and dusty working conditions.

Despite the hard work, the students unanimously declared it the best field trip ever, says LCPCS science teacher Franny Brewer. They want to go back, and in fact, despite the hard work (and lack of cell phone connection!), said they’d want to stay another week, easily. Unfortunately, KIRC is running out of money and there is a very real chance that the project will be shutting down this coming spring. “Some of our students have started talking about trying to raise awareness and encouraging our representatives to provide funding for the project in the state budget,” says Ms. Brewer, who added, laughing, “which would certainly earn them a Participation-in-Democracy credit!”



Top: Students gather soil to create a planting substrate. Below: End of a long day in the hot sun. Recognize the acronym in this photo?

Students are still working hard to raise funds to pay for the trip. If you would like to help out, they are accepting donations via www.GoFundMe.org/lcpcs or at the front office.

Calendar

- Tuesday, December 16 – Boys' basketball home game against HPA
- Wednesday, December 17, 7:30 to 7:55 – Save First! Deposit Day
- Wednesday, December 17, 3:00 to 4:00 pm — CSI meeting, admin conference room
- December 18 and 19 – NO SCHOOL, Teacher work days
- December 22 through January 9 – Winter Break!
- December 22 – Boys' basketball home game against Konawaena
- December 23, 5:30 pm – Governing Board meeting, bandroom

Paki's Kūkākūkā —

Hopefully you've all heard about the wonderful Color Run recently held on our beautiful campus. Nearly two hundred students, faculty, staff, and community members came together to plan, prepare, and enjoy the event. These opportunities help to bring us together, and only happen through the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. Although many people played a critical part in making the Color Run happen, two people really led the effort and overcame the obstacles and challenges. They are Niki Hubbard and Melissa Schad, both parents of students at our school. I thank them and their families for starting a new tradition at Laupāhoehoe and look forward to future Color Runs!



A small selection of photos from the My School Color Fun Run, held at LCPCS on December 6.



Seasider Spotlight



Todd Otake on the recent school trip to Kaho'olawe

Mr. Todd Otake has been teaching at Laupāhoehoe for 11 years. He currently teaches ukulele, agriculture, and a fishing class. "I really like having the opportunity to see kids improve their confidence through music," he says. "I have seen some students practically change who they are. Some kids who could barely talk in class are now singing solo without fear."

"Todd brings an array of skills and experience to our school that compliment his passion," says Director Nahale-a. "I appreciate his efforts to revitalize long standing traditions that remind us of our rich history and that we are still, and always will be, the home of the Seasiders."

Mr. Otake was one of three volunteers to accompany 12 high school students on a recent trip to Kaho'olawe. "The best part about Kaho'olawe was being detached from society," he says. "There were no cell phones, no internet, no distractions. I felt connected to the land, the ocean, and the people around me. Sometimes having so many things going on around us makes us forget to recognize

what is important to us."

In his free time, Mr. Otake likes to play music, and fish, and spends a lot of time on his family's kalo farm, pulling weeds and planting. "Working with plants is very therapeutic. They are great listeners, and never talk back to you. The more you love and care for them, the more they will return that love through feeding you." Mahalo, Mr. Otake, for your many years of service to the Laupāhoehoe community.