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Lanakila Meals on Wheels delivers Thanksgiving dinner to homebound seniors

*Marlena Willette
Reader Submitted*

On Thanksgiving Day, Lanakila Meals on Wheels and more!, Hawaii's largest and only island-wide meal delivery program, delivered 800 hot meals and more to homebound seniors. Despite the challenging economic times, an army of over 275 volunteers came together with the help of generous donations from the community to provide the seniors with a delicious Thanksgiving meal, along with all the trimmings.

For the first time, this year, the seniors also received "Kupuna Care Packages" including donated household items such as paper towels, soap and Kleenex to help provide some financial relief for the seniors, as well as Thanksgiving greetings made by elementary and high school students to brighten the holiday.

"Although faced with many challenges, such as the increase in food prices and a dramatic decrease in monetary donations, we were overwhelmed with the generosity and aloha from the community," said Brandon Mitsuda, Deputy Director of Lanakila Meals on Wheels. "We have been doing this every year for 16 years, and this Thanksgiving, we are especially grateful to everyone who helped us continue the tradition despite these tough economic times."

The diverse group of volunteers and donors that helped included HGEA, Rainbow Sales, Inc., Girl Scout Troop 615, Holy Family Catholic Academy, University of Hawaii School of Social Work, Hickam Federal Women's Program, American Savings Bank, Rising Phoenix Jaycees, The Biker's Association/Vietnam Veterans/SBU, Damien High School Leo Club, 21st Dental Company, Ka Hale Ho'ala Hou No Na Wahine, A women's transitional residential program, Kaimuki Dental Group, Hickam Federal Women's Program, HMA, Summerlin, Temple Emanu-el, Nanakuli and Koko Head Lion's Clubs, Matson Navigation, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, DISA-PAC, Honolulu Christian Church, Honolulu Church of Christ, Vietnam Veterans/SBU, Waialua High School.

The menu included 620 pounds of roast turkey and gravy, and all the trimmings including cranberry sauce, stuffing, garlic mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, pumpkin pie and juice.

While funding for Thanksgiving has been provided, monetary donations are still needed to provide meals to homebound seniors on Christmas Day, and throughout the year, and donations of household items for the seniors are still welcomed. A funding shortfall of \$30,000 remains to continue services for seniors currently in the program, including the special Christmas delivery.

To help, contact Lanakila Meals on Wheels and more! at 531-0555 or www.lanakilamow.org.