



# NPIEN's 23rd Annual Education Conference

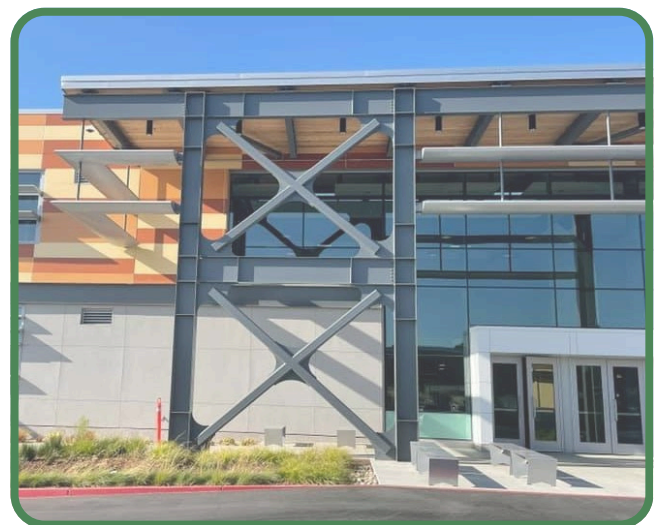
Hosted by the Northern California Chapter

*\*Aloha\*Alii\*Bula\*Fakaalofa lahi atu\*Hafa adai\*Iokwe\*la orana\*Kia orana\*Kia Ora\*Ko na Mauri\*Malo e lelei\*Mogethin\*Talofa*

**Saturday,  
October 26, 2024  
8:30am - 2:30pm**

**Hayward High  
STEAM Building  
1633 East Avenue, Hayward, CA**

Free parking at adjacent student lot, first come first serve.



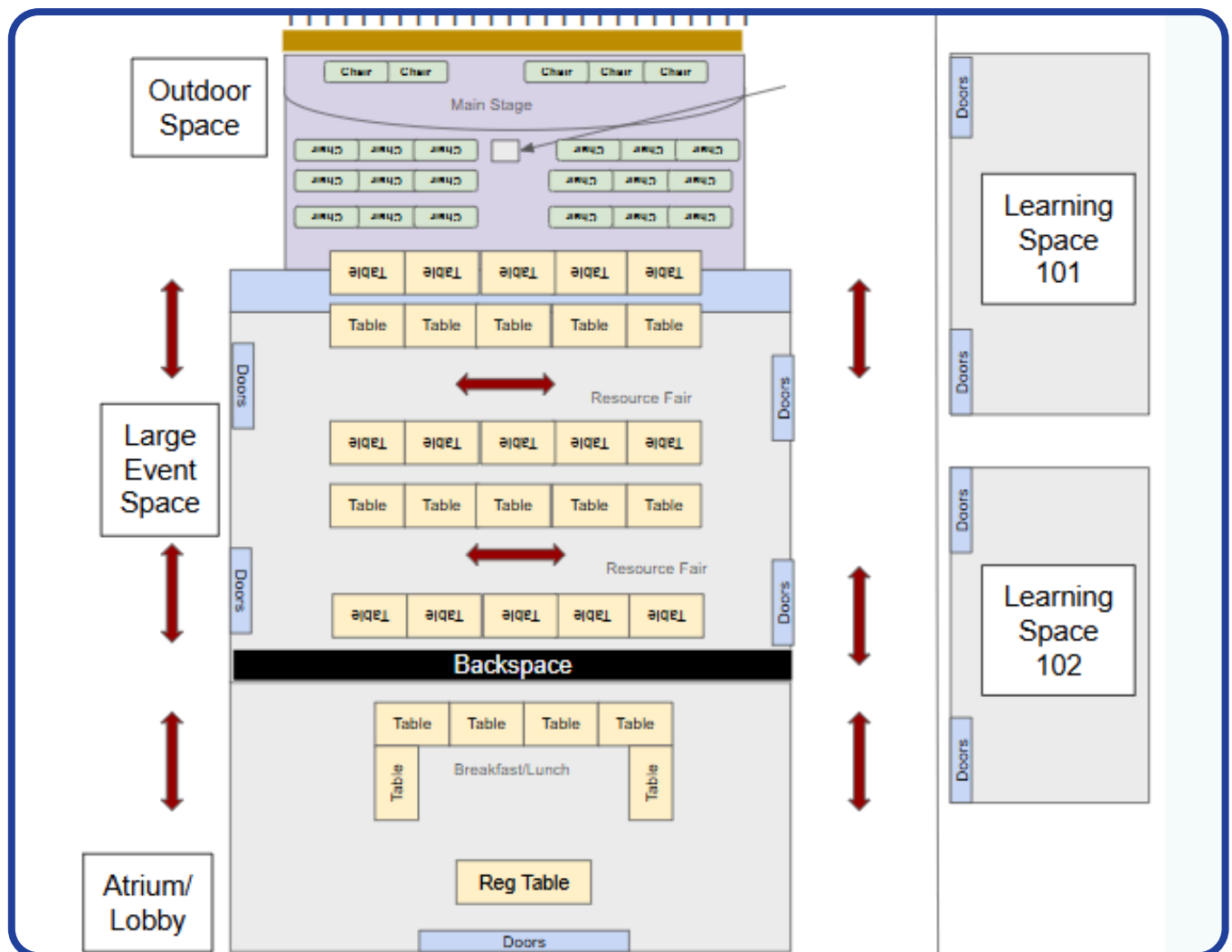
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Message from National Pacific Islander Education Network President:

*Aloha mai kākou and welcome to NPIEN's 23rd annual conference. I would first like to mahalo our event organizers. I am truly grateful for all the hours you have put into making this event possible. Today is a day for celebration. Not only are we celebrating our scholarship recipients but the unique opportunity of being in community with other Pasifika scholars. While awards are based on formalized education, I would like to remind us that 'a'ohē pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi. All knowledge is not taught in one school. We have also learned and grown from our culture and community. As you continue on in your education, I encourage you to bring your culture with you wherever you go to transform the world around you. Congratulations and remember to thank your 'ohana today. Mahalo, Kalani*

Dr. Kalani Heinz  
Assistant Professor of American Indian Studies  
California State University, Northridge



# PROGRAM

**8:30-9:30 am Registration, Breakfast, College, Career, & Resource Fair**

**Location: Large Event Space**

**9:30-10:00 am Welcome Ceremony**

**Location: Main Stage**

- Warm Welcome from Showtime AJ
- President, Board of Education, Hayward Unified School District, Peter Bufete
- Student Performance from Heritage High School

**10:00-10:30 am Keynote Panel**

**Empowering Pacific Islander Students: SFUSD Fa'asamoa Initiative**

Moderators: Meri Veavea & Verna Castro

Panelists: Dr. David Palaita and Ursula Siataga

**Location: Main Stage**

This panel will explore the transformative impact of the Fa'asamoa Initiative within the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), focusing on empowering Pacific Islander students through culturally relevant education. Panelists will discuss how the initiative integrates Samoan culture and values into the educational experience, enhancing student engagement, academic success, and community involvement.

**10:30-11:15 am Breakout Sessions 1**

**Ukulele Workshop with Inafa'maolek: Strumming for Harmony with Meritiana Veavea and Glenn Castro**

**Location: Main Stage**

Hafa adai (hello)! Join us for a special ukulele workshop inspired by Inafa'maolek—the CHamoru value of striving for harmony and connection. Rooted in the resilience and wisdom of our ancestors, this workshop will celebrate the healing power of music and community. In this hands-on session, you'll learn how to become familiar with your ukulele, the island strum technique, basic chords: C, F, and G, and much more! Led by Inafamaolek.us, a nonprofit honoring CHamoru traditions and nurturing community ties, this workshop is about more than music—it's about unity, celebration, and practicing the healing power of fa'maolek (repair, healing). Whether you're new to the ukulele or want to reconnect with your musical roots, we invite you to join us in this harmonious gathering. Let's create beauty through music and togetherness!





# PROGRAM

## **Plenary Panel Part 1: Diverse Trajectories in Higher Education**

Moderators: Patricia Springer

Panelists: Alexander Niuaotoa, Lou Sian, Salote Tenisi

**Location: Learning Space 101**

This panel examines the evolving higher education landscape, focusing on traditional and nontraditional paths like vocational training and certifications. Industry experts will share insights on challenges, opportunities, and the future of education and the workforce.

## **Samoan Solutions Workshop with Epi Aumavae**

**Location: Learning Space 102**

The Ta'iala Youth Exchange Program offers a two-week immersive experience for Samoan youth from the San Francisco Bay Area and Samoa, focusing on:

- Cultural connection and cross-cultural exposure
- Educational exchanges in environment, agriculture, arts, and government
- Understanding local government practices
- Community service and development

PASEFIKA BOSS UP is a summer program for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students in San Mateo County (grades 7-12) focused on entrepreneurship. Participants will learn business fundamentals through hands-on projects and meet Pasefika professionals. The Lumana'i Education Gift (L.E.G.) provides financial and in-kind support for Samoan students in the Bay Area to achieve their academic and artistic goals.

## **11:30 am-12:15 pm Breakout Sessions 2**


## **Plenary Panel Part 2: Diverse Trajectories in Higher Education**

Moderators: Tonga Victoria Afuha'amango

Panelists: Jeoh Lee, Lauleva Lua'iufi Aiono, Kaitlyn Richardson

**Location: Learning Space 101**

This panel examines the evolving higher education landscape, focusing on traditional and nontraditional paths like vocational training and certifications. Industry experts will share insights on challenges, opportunities, and the future of education and the workforce.





# PROGRAM

## Short Film “The Ocean is the School: Pacific Islanders Transforming Higher-Ed” through Stanford Journalism

**Location: Learning Space 102**

“The Ocean is the School: Pacific Islanders Transforming Higher-Ed” showcases Pacific Islanders revolutionizing higher education and advancing Critical Pacific Islands and Oceania Studies. Through personal stories, the film highlights underrepresented voices striving for inclusion. Award-winning poet Terisa Siagatonu performs poems inspired by these changemakers, including Dr. Rick Bonus, who chronicles his advocacy for Pacific Islander students; Dr. David Vika Palaita, who reflects on his journey in academia; student Wynntn Miner Kemedukl Hindenburg, who discusses the impact of the Compact of Free Association on his education; and Kehaulani Folau, a Ph.D. student pushing for representation across Oceania. Produced by Thomas A. Manglona II, Stanford M.A. Thesis 2021.

**12:00 pm Lunch served by Sikka Tikka Tacos**

**Location: Atrium**

**12:00-1:00 pm Lunch Time Events**

**Location: Main Stage**

- **The Ukulele Duo: Wendy Ukulele & Owen**

Wendy started playing ukulele in April 2020, learning strumming and chord melody. She takes online lessons from teachers like @4stringboy, @spicy.uke, and @plazi. Wendy now plays instrumental pop, focusing on harmonics for a music box effect. Follow her on Instagram: @wendy.ukulele.

Owen’s ukulele journey began when his daughter got one for her birthday in 2018. He’s learned from Cynthia Lin and other online teachers, but prefers playing live with fellow musicians. Owen helps with Cynthia’s “100 Days of Ukulele,” organizes online collaborations, and plays ukulele and bass with local groups like the San Jose Ukulele Club. Find him on YouTube at @OGukulele.

- **Performance by Jazmine Campbell, “How Far I’ll Go” from Disney’s Moana**  
11 years old, 6th grader attending Itliong-Vera Cruz Middle School, Union City

- **Dance Performance by Kumu Hula Association of Northern California**  
The Kumu Hula Association of Northern California, founded in 1978 by Ehulani Enoka Lum, is an organization dedicated to preserving Hawaiian culture. The Association hosts the May Day Festival and the Iā ‘Oe E Ka Lā Hula Competition, which celebrate Hawaiian traditions through dance, music, and crafts, attracting thousands each year.

- **Raffle Give Away!**



# PROGRAM

**1:00-2:30 pm Awards Ceremony**

**Location: Main Stage**

- Student Performance from Hayward High School
  
  - **Educator and Community Award**
    - Sala Auelua Counselor Award: Ursula Siataga, Counselor. San Francisco Unified School District
    - Seva Ma'ae Educator Award: Glenn Castro, San Francisco USD Student Advisor, Harvey Milk Civil Rights Elementary School, San Francisco Unified School District
    - Dr. Alofa Tanuvasa Community Award: Sophia Perez, UC Berkeley's Pacific Islander Initiative and Critical Pacific Island Studies Collective
    - Dr. Alofa Tanuvasa Community Award: Heritage High School, Polynesian Culture Club
    - Dr. Alofa Tanuvasa Community Award: Meritiana Veavea, Project Coordinator for PIVOT(Pacific Islander Outreach Transformation, Vice President, Inafa'maolek.us
    - Dr. Alofa Tanuvasa Community Award Carolyn Aflague Arroyo Associate Director of Admission, Communication, and Outreach, School of Education, University of San Francisco
    - Dr. Alofa Tanuvasa Community Award: Craig Santos Perez, Author, Professor at the University of Hawai'i, Manoa
    - Dr. Alofa Tanuvasa Community Award: Essence of Mana
  
  - **Christina Diaz Scholars Awards**
    - Akiera Aipoalani (12) Heritage High School, Liberty UHSD
    - Elijah Segal (12, 2024-2025) Hayward High School, Hayward Unified School District
    - Johnny Jameson (11, 2024-2025) Balboa High School, San Francisco USD
    - Ananylah Hafoka (06) Will Rogers Middle School, Lawndale ESD (Elementary School District)
    - Apalila Levi (1st Year) San Diego State University
    - Caren Dingoasen (12, 2024-2025) Morse High School, San Diego USD
    - Ethan Concepcion (Senior) San Diego State University
    - Evangelina Kaho (06) Will Rogers Middle School, Lawndale ESD (Elementary School District)
    - Isabel Tupe (12) Cajon High School, San Bernardino City
    - Jai Garg (11) West Windsor - Plainsboro High School North
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# PROGRAM

- Kaleolani Ilac (12) Pioneer Valley High School, Santa Maria
  - Kasey Marie Hammons (12) Odyssey STEM Academy, Paramount USD
  - Kelsie Wong (10) Trabuco Hills High School, Saddleback Valley USD
  - Mercy Tulifau (12) Lakewood HS, Long Beach Unified School District (USD)
  - Micah Grey (12) St. Pius X - St. Matthias Academy
  - Natalie Erin Tacto (12) Sweetwater High School, Sweetwater Union High School District (UHSD)
  - Sela Haukinima (06) Will Rogers Middle School, Lawndale ESD (Elementary School District)
  - Ta'iuta Uiagalelei (Graduate) Concordia University, Irvine
  - Terina Faleono (12) Jordan High School, Long Beach USD
- **NCC-NPIEN Chapter Awards**
    - Christina Narayan NCC-NPIEN Chapter Awards
    - Roy Tongilava NCC-NPIEN Chapter Awards

## **Closing Remarks & Raffle Give Away**

### **Special Thanks to:**

Thank you to all our sponsors for contributing to our event. A big shoutout to the organizations that joined us for the Career, College, and Resource Fair; your support means a lot to the community. We appreciate everyone who hosted and participated in our workshops, as well as our key panel speakers and amazing performers. Special thanks to the Northern California Chapter of NPIEN for organizing the 23rd annual conference, and to Alexander Niutoa and Hayward High School for hosting. We look forward to seeing you in San Diego, CA, on October 25, 2025, for NPIEN's 24th Annual Education Conference!

