



NATIONAL PACIFIC ISLANDER EDUCATION NETWORK

"Uniting the resources of the village to strengthen families, the community and to promote educational excellence." 501.c.3 Nonprofit Organization



Krispy Kreme Fundraiser From March 15 until April 15!

Join us to raise funds for our scholarship, internship and operational programs
<https://www.groupraise.com/offer-campaigns/56824>



Island Grad Ceremony 2025: Honoring Achievement and Cultural Heritage

Island Grad is excited to host its annual Island Grad Ceremony on May 3, 2025—a meaningful event that celebrates the academic success of Pacific Islander graduates while honoring the deep cultural heritage of the NHP (Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander) community. This ceremony is more than a traditional graduation; it is a powerful tribute to resilience, identity, and achievement. Through storytelling, cultural performances, and community recognition, graduates are not only acknowledged for their academic accomplishments but also for their connection to their heritage. The event fosters a sense of pride and belonging, ensuring that each student feels valued and uplifted. Beyond celebrating individual success, Island Grad reinforces the strength and unity of the Pacific Islander community, emphasizing the importance of education as a collective achievement. This annual tradition serves as a reminder that graduates are carrying forward both their aspirations and the legacies of those who came before them. Join us as we honor the next generation of leaders at the Island Grad Ceremony 2025!



Pasifika Reef Leadership High School Conference: Empowering Future Leaders

In partnership with Island Grad and San Bernardino Valley College, the Pasifika Reef Leadership High School Conference embraces the theme: "Lean into Your Mana: Explore the Leader Within." This event is designed to empower students by helping them recognize and harness their MANA—their inner strength and spirit—as a foundation for leadership. With a focus on self-confidence, self-awareness, and personal growth, the conference encourages students to trust in their abilities and embrace the leader that already exists within them. This year, over 130 high school students from the Inland Empire and Barstow came together to participate in a transformative experience. The event provided a unique space where students, educators, and community leaders connected through workshops, storytelling, and mentorship. All centered on identity, resilience, and pathways to higher education. Through interactive sessions and cultural affirmations, students gained a deeper understanding of leadership grounded in their ancestral strengths, equipping them with the tools to navigate their academic and personal journeys with purpose and pride.

Safe Schools Conference 2025: Protecting Our Students and Communities



The Safe Schools Conference 2025 returns to Anaheim, CA, from July 9-11, bringing together educators, law enforcement, counselors, safety directors, and community leaders to address the most pressing challenges in school safety. NPIEN is proud to be a partner in this critical event, which has been a leading platform for school safety solutions for the past 16 years. Over three days, attendees will engage in expert-led workshops and discussions on topics such as bullying and cyberbullying prevention, mental health support, crisis response, gang prevention, drug trends, and online safety. This conference offers a unique opportunity to collaborate with experts, gain valuable insights, and develop actionable strategies to create safer learning environments. If you're committed to making a difference in student safety and well-being, this event is not to be missed. Join us in Anaheim and be part of the movement to build stronger, more secure school communities.



Christina Diaz Scholars, Attendance, Educator, Counselor, and Community Awards 2025

NPIEN is also happy to continue its tradition of honoring students, educators, and community members who have made significant contributions to the Pacific Islander community. The Christina Diaz Scholars, Attendance, Educator, Counselor, and Community Awards 2025 recognize excellence in academics, leadership, and service. The Christina Diaz Student Scholar Awards celebrate Pacific Islander students in grades 6-12 who demonstrate academic achievement, leadership, and commitment to their communities. Named in memory of Christina Diaz, a longtime NPIEN supporter, this award honors students nominated by their teachers or counselors for maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA, improving in academics or attendance, participating in extracurricular activities, or showing leadership in school, church, or community organizations. Each honoree will get a medallion, plaque, and proclamations from their respective legislators, recognizing their outstanding efforts. Nominations will open soon via Google Form!



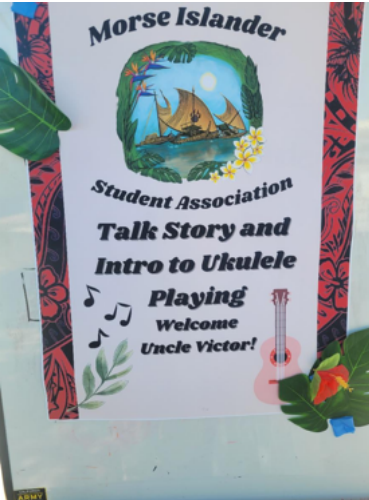
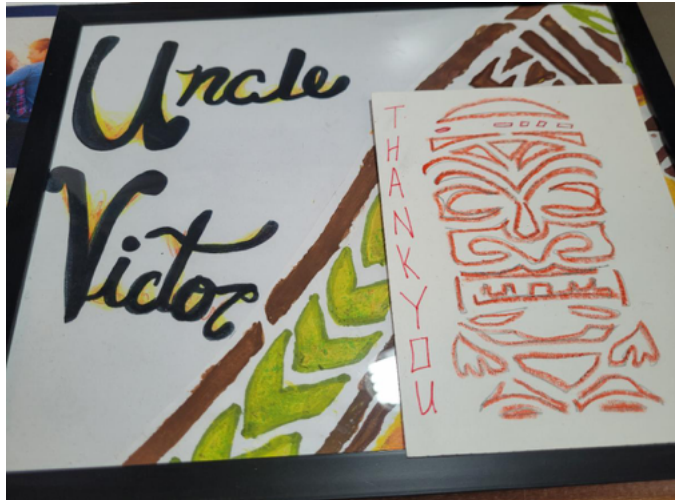
Information about Immigration from Asian Americans Advancing Justice and the California Department of Education

Refer to this website for more information on your rights and protections under the US Constitution: ajsocial.org/immigration

Schools are safe havens <https://www.cde.ca.gov/eq/in/safehavens.asp>
Keep Ice out of Schools <https://stopaaphate.org/keep-ice-out-of-schools/>

From the Los Angeles County Office of Education <https://www.lacoe.edu/services/student-support/immigrant-relations>

Red Card/Immigration Preparation Tool Kit If ICE visits you <https://ajsocial.org/immigration/#toolkit>



Falanai Ala Mentoring Program Visits Morse High School!

We were pleased to be part of the Morse High School, San Diego Unified School District, People of Pasifika Conference on March 21st. We taught the ukelele to over 100 students and discussed education as a profession. To date, we have visited Long Beach Poly High School (8 students), Lakewood High School (60), Orange Coast College (60), USC (50), Hayward High School (12), Morse High School (100) = 390 students, 6 schools. Mahalo Morse High School, the Morse Islander Student Association and Nani Schott! Our 24th Annual NPIEN Conference will be held at Morse High School in October 2025.



Ohana Night on April 1st! Next Lesona Ukelele Class on April 18th!

Celebrate Earth Day, Arbor Day, Administrative Professionals, & National Volunteer Month with us!
Tuesday, April 1st 6:30 PM PST
Ohana Hawaiian BBQ – 5316 Clark Ave, Lakewood, CA
Bring your ukelele & play along!
Enjoy Oholicious food & great company!
LIVE on Twitch, YouTube, Facebook & LinkedIn!
Watch here – [twitch.tv/ukulele_dad](https://www.twitch.tv/ukulele_dad) (https://www.twitch.tv/ukulele_dad)
Let's celebrate together—see you there!

Ukelele musicians participated in the Lesona Ukelele Class at Ohana Hawaiian BBQ on Tuesday, March 18, including Lei, Wilma, Albert, Alex, Carrie, Kiki, and Dr. T. We learned and played Coconut, Brown Eyed Girl, and Itsy Bitsy Spider. Special guest Board Member Dr. Tino Andres was in attendance for the evening. The next Lesona Ukelele Class will be on April 15 at 6:00 P.M.

Francine Blacksher featured in ACSA's Leadership Magazine

Francine Blacksher, Inland Empire Chapter NPIEN President, and Island Grad CEO, published the article below in the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Leadership Magazine in September/October 2024. This is the first time an article by a Pacific Islander has been featured in the magazine. Congratulations!

[Closing gaps with instructional coherence](#)



L.A. ISLAND RADIO and SCHOOL TALK STORY

<https://youtu.be/qmoao1eKz-A?si=APevj4WVgZKR41F> Watch Here

For School Talk Story it was great meeting with Ursula Ann Siataga of the San Francisco Unified School District, to discuss the Fa'a Samoa Initiative to support Pacific Islander student achievement and address chronic absenteeism. Thanks for joining us, fa'afetai lava. More information on this initiative is coming soon.

LA Island Radio is an NPIEN partner led by radio personality David Brown "Mylay." Listen to LA Island Radio at <https://www.laislandradio.com>

Ukelele_dad/School Talk Story with Dr. T is on Thursdays at 12:00 p.m. School Talk Story with Dr. T discusses NPIEN events and activities and features guests from the world of Education. Topics covered include the Cell Phone Policy in LAUSD, the upcoming Golf Tournament, and Immigration, emphasizing that schools are Safe Havens. Watch on Twitch https://www.twitch.tv/ukulele_dad at 12:00 p.m. It will also be streamed to Facebook, Twitter, Linked-in and YouTube.



Public Health Confirms Measles Case in Los Angeles County

On March 5th, 2025, a passenger arrived in Los Angeles International Airport from China Airlines flight CAL8/C18 who is recently diagnosed with measles. Individuals who have been exposed are at risk for developing measles; therefore, health departments have notified these individuals to monitor for symptoms, as the virus spreads through the air. As of March 6th of this year, there have been 222 measles cases in United States. In order to help prevent the risk for measles, it is important to stay up-to-date with vaccines such as the measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine.

Local Detection of Hantavirus

In 2025, 7 mice were reported to be infected with hantavirus. Infection of hantavirus in humans is rare; however, people should avoid contact with wild rodents as there is no cure for the virus. "Wet cleaning" methods should be used to clean spaces where wild rodents are suspected, as this reduces the risk for inhaling the hantavirus from the air. Symptoms of hantavirus include chills, headache, nausea, severe muscle aches, and difficulty breathing, and these typically develop 1 to 8 weeks from exposure. Immediate medical attention is needed if an individual believes they have been exposed.

We Can Do This!! COVID Vaccines, Measles, Avian Flu

Visit these two websites for additional information
<https://www.pacificislanderhealth.org/>

Announcements

- Happy Birthday to Felton Owens, Sefa Aina, and Victor Le'i Thompson!
- All new members and renewing members eligible for a scholarship from Grand Canyon University (GCU)! <https://www.npien.com/apply> Contact Jaylin Pedicord or Kara Kahler for information on GCU. 1-800-800-9776 ext. 2427522 jaylin.pedicord@gcu.edu kara.kahler@gcu.edu
- New Members: Sydney Trueblood, Lance Gibbs, Testo, Alejandra Celaya
- Please write to NPIEN Member Deepak Charan, #BW0425, C309, #42U P.O. Box 3535 Norco, CA 92860. He needs encouragement. Contact us for more details at npien@npien.com
- Bi-Monthly SoCal PI CRT Meeting We discussed creating an advocacy agenda, and NPIEN representatives discussed how to develop relationships with legislators plus education issues to advocate for: safe haven schools and school safety. Let us know if you'd like to join us on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. PST!
- The NPIEN Professional Mentoring Program has begun and NPIEN members have reached out to Pacific Islander K-12 educators and others through school site visits, and via phone, text and e-mail to provide support and share professional knowledge. We also are asking mentees to identify students interested in being future educators. Let us know if you are interested.

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