

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AWARDS \$1 MILLION-PLUS GRANT TO HAWAII FOR ARTS FIRST HAWAII

The United States Department of Education has awarded a \$1 million-plus grant to ARTS FIRST Hawaii to fund an important arts education and research program known as the “ALA” Project. ALA, in Hawaiian, has different meanings. It can be interpreted as “path or road.” It also means “to awaken or renew.” With the Federal funding our State is receiving, we can awaken interest in the arts in students and set them upon the path of learning.

In making the announcement, U.S. Representative Neil Abercrombie said, “Hawaii has been chosen as a model for the nation and we should all be proud of this accomplishment. ALA, in Hawaiian, has different meanings. It can be interpreted as “path or road.” It also means “to awaken or renew.” With the Federal funding our State is receiving, we can awaken interest in the arts in students and set them upon the path of learning.”

The grant is for \$275,000 annually for four years. It is awarded to six partners--the Hawai'i Arts Alliance, Hawaii Department of Education, University of Hawaii College of Education, University of Hawaii College of Arts and Humanities, Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and Hawaii Association of Independent Schools. These organizations are legislatively mandated as part of the ARTS FIRST program to promote arts research and education in local schools.

Gail Mukaihata Hannemann, chair of the Hawai'i Arts Alliance board, elaborated that the “Arts and Literacy for All (ALA) Project is a whole school model designed to impact student learning and teaching practice through arts integration in the classroom. The project is based on professional development, mentoring with teaching artists, and collaborative curriculum planning. The ALA Project will lead teachers and students in Hawaii on the path to academic success in reading and writing, as well as awakening and renewing a commitment to learning through arts integration.”

The announcement of the funding was made at Kuhio Elementary School, one of the eight schools selected statewide to be honored October 21 at the “Celebrate the Arts!” event at the Hawaii Theatre produced by the Hawai'i Arts Alliance. Principal Evelyn Hao said that her school will be among those vying to participate in the ALA Project.

For more information on the ALA Project, contact the Hawai'i Arts Alliance at 533-8727.