



# haumana

News from the  
Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship & Training Fund

Kauai | Oahu | Molokai | Lanai | Maui | Kona | Hilo



Students from Mauka Lani Elementary School visit the Kapolei training center

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Oahu apprentices supporting our local preschools

# Message From The Director

As we start the year, we're excited for what is ahead. Our apprentices continue to find opportunities to learn on jobsites, in the classroom, and in our community. And we also continue to explore and grow partnerships with the community, state and counties, and schools, while ensuring a strong workforce.

This quarter we saw another cohort graduate from the Beyond Bars Initiative at Waiawa Correctional Facility. As well as many projects across the state that apprentices completed to better serve our community. These are all highlighted in this edition of Haumana.

The HCATF team was also busy at events like the Hilo Construction Career Days, visits to the Training Center, and other events to showcase the programs at HCATF and benefits of a career in the construction industry.

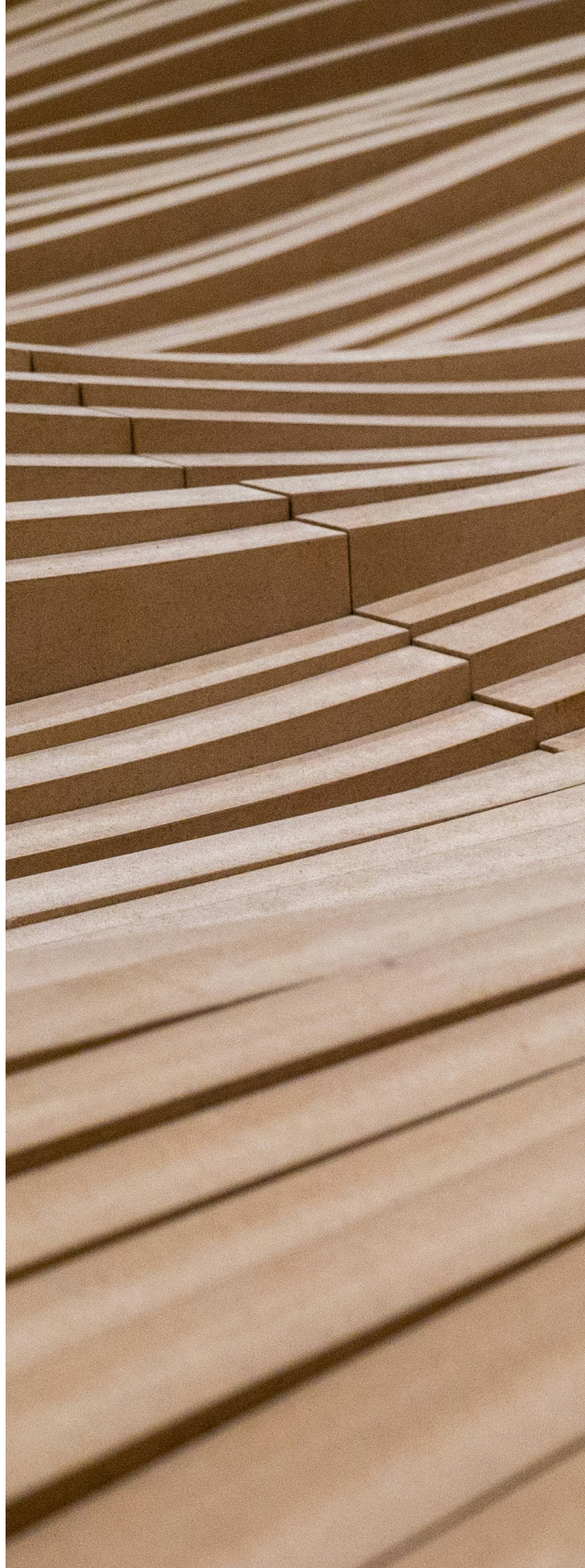
We are grateful for the hard work of all of our apprentices, our signatory contractors, and all of our community partners.



With Aloha,

**Edmund C. Aczon**

HCATF Executive Director





# Beyond Bars Program: Building Skills, Building Futures & Community Activities

The Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship & Training Fund's *Beyond Bars Initiative* continues to demonstrate the importance of second chances and the profound impact that skills training can have on individuals preparing to reenter the community.

In February 2026, the most recent cohort included 11 men at Waiawa Correctional Facility, marking another milestone for this successful program. Since launching in 2023, the program has graduated 54 individuals: 41 men at WCF and 13 women at the Women's Community Correctional Center.

The initiative provides a six-week, hands-on pre-apprenticeship carpentry program that mirrors HCATF's industry-standard curriculum. The program provides technical knowledge while creating a tangible pathway to employment, stability, and a renewed sense of purpose.

## A Success Story in the Making: Michael Cattaneo

Among the inspiring examples emerging from the *Beyond Bars Initiative* is Michael Cattaneo, a graduate of the very first Waiawa cohort. Today, Michael is a 70 percent carpenter apprentice, well on his way to achieving journey worker status, a milestone built on years of steady progress and commitment.

Michael's journey reflects what is possible when opportunity meets determination. Once seated in a classroom behind the walls of Waiawa, he now



contributes daily to Hawaii's construction industry. He is earning a living wage, can provide for his family, and has transformed his life for the better.

Michael is currently working for Nan, Inc. on the UH POST Building.

When HCATF chatted with Michael, he is proud of what he's been able to accomplish and said, "The view from the top of the mountain is better than down the valley ... **KEEP CLIMBING!**"



**We started the Beyond Bars program in 2024 at Waiawa Correctional Facility to provide pre-apprenticeship carpentry training to individuals interested in the trade and help break the cycle of reincarceration. This program has been incredibly successful in giving them a sense of purpose while providing a viable career pathway.**



Edmund Aczon, HCATF Executive Director

## A Partnership Strengthening Hawaii's Workforce

The success of the Beyond Bars Initiative is the result of strong collaboration between HCATF and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. These partnerships ensure access to quality instruction, academic credit, training materials, and a supportive environment where true learning and growth can occur.

"Our goal at DCR is to ensure that these men and women can be contributing members of the community upon release," said Roseanne Propato, DCR Corrections Education Program Manager. "This program and partnership with HCATF have allowed many of our formerly incarcerated inmates to not only contribute but earn a living wage and contribute to building our community."

As more graduates transition into apprenticeships and eventually into journey worker careers, they bring valuable skills to Hawaii's construction workforce. Their success strengthens not only their own futures but also the communities they return to.

## Looking Ahead

For graduates like Michael Cattaneo, the path started behind the walls, but it leads far beyond them.

To learn more about HCATF's *Beyond Bars Initiative*, visit [hincarpenterstraining.com/beyond-bars/](https://hincarpenterstraining.com/beyond-bars/)



# On Maui, Apprentices Build More Than Structures – They Build Community

Across the islands, the Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship & Training Fund (HCATF) continues to demonstrate how hands-on training can uplift both apprentices and the communities they serve. On Maui, that impact has been especially meaningful, with apprentices contributing their skills to youth-centered spaces and organizations committed to the well-being of local families.

## Supporting Maui Keiki Through the Boys & Girls Clubs

In partnership with **HawaiiUSA Federal Credit Union**, HCATF apprentices on Maui from recently completed a series of custom carpentry pieces for the **Boys & Girls Clubs of Maui (BGCM)**. Their work, which included custom-built panels, bookcases, and a podium, helped prepare the space for BGCM's exciting new **Student Operated Credit Union (SOCU)** branch, which officially opened on January 21.

SOCU gives Maui youth the opportunity to learn about financial wellness at an early age, empowering them with knowledge that will benefit them throughout their lives. For the apprentices, the project was an opportunity to refine precision finishing skills, strengthen teamwork, and see firsthand how their craftsmanship supports programs that nurture and inspire keiki in their own community.

Their work is helping to build a foundation for future generations to learn, grow and thrive.



## A Home Run for Central East Maui Little League

Another meaningful project brought HCATF apprentices together in service of an organization cherished by local families: the Central East Maui Little League. Maui apprentices donated their time and expertise to improve the league's concession stand at Maui War Memorial Stadium.

Their work was completed ahead of schedule, allowing the concession stand to reopen just in time for the league's Little League Opening Ceremony. The improvements will support volunteers, families, and keiki for years to come.

The concession stand will have a lasting impact on the league supporting families, volunteers, and most importantly, Maui keiki.





## Strengthening Skills While Strengthening Community

For HCATF apprentices, these Maui projects serve as real-world extensions of the training they receive every day. These contributions help apprentices build confidence and capabilities essential to their future careers, while giving back to their community.

Through partnerships with local organizations and a commitment to developing skilled tradespeople, HCATF continues to ensure that Maui's future is built not just with carpentry, but with heart.

To learn more about HCATF's work on Maui or if you know someone on Maui who would be a good apprentice carpenter, reach out to Errol Kusunoki at [ekusunoki@hicarpenterstraining.com](mailto:ekusunoki@hicarpenterstraining.com)



# Apprentices Complete Handcrafted Tables for Local Preschool



In March, HCATF and Rainbow Schools celebrated the completion and delivery of six custom-built tables for the preschoolers at Wahiawa and Mililani. Members of HCATF's team and Rainbow Schools gathered for a blessing and were greeted by the eager four-year-olds with a beautiful chant and song.

"On behalf of Rainbow Schools, I want to thank the Hawaii Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training Fund for collaborating with us," said Cindy Barley, Rainbow Schools Executive Director. "Community partners and engagement are vital to building strong community bonds. The tables created for our Mililani and Wahiawa schools are used beyond mealtimes, supporting various activities including curriculum-based projects."

Thirty apprentices worked on the project at HCATF's training center in Kapolei over a six week course.

“

**These tables are functional and create opportunities for children to participate in mealtime discussions and educational activities that enhance their skills.”**

”

Cindy Barley, Rainbow Schools Executive Director





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## Contact Us!

Do you know someone who would be a great fit as an apprentice? Visit [h Carpenterstraining.com/apply/](http://h Carpenterstraining.com/apply/) or contact a Training Coordinator to learn more about what it takes to join the trades.

### MAUI | LANAI | MOLOKAI

Errol Kusunoki  
(808) 223-9500  
ekusunoki@h Carpenterstraining.com

### OAHU

Harold Calventas  
(808) 807-3480  
hcalventas@h Carpenterstraining.com

### HILO | KONA

Mereane Hamatake  
(808) 859-3983  
mhamatake@h Carpenterstraining.com

### KAUAI

Darrell Seto  
(808) 859-2470  
dseto@h Carpenterstraining.com



HAWAII CARPENTERS  
APPRENTICESHIP &  
TRAINING FUND

1311 Houghtailing Street, Ste. 201 | Honolulu, HI 96817  
(808) 848-0794 | [hcatfhelpdesk@h Carpenterstraining.com](mailto:hcatfhelpdesk@h Carpenterstraining.com)  
[h Carpenterstraining.com](http://h Carpenterstraining.com)

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