

THE ISLAND SUN WEEKLY

5 Questions with Aloha Harvest's Ku'ulei Williams

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By ISW Staff

As Executive Director of Oahu-born Aloha Harvest, Ku'ulei Williams is a constant presence in her community. Williams and the hardworking folks at Aloha Harvest rescue and deliver quality food to social service agencies on Oahu, which feed the hungry and homeless. The local non-profit organization changes thousands of lives every day.



What do you love about your community?

KW: The people! We work with so many great people who are giving and generous, who are caring and want to help those in need. All of our food donors, agencies, financial supporters and many others who encourage us with their support, make it possible for us to be able to fulfill our mission of "Rescuing Food to Feed Hawaii's Hungry." We truly thank everyone who contributes to our success!

How did you become involved with Aloha Harvest?

KW: I first became involved with Aloha Harvest in 2004 as the Office Manager. I left for a short time to help my former boss with a new non-profit (but remained as a consultant to help train the staff), and in 2008, I was asked to come back to Aloha Harvest as Co-Executive Director. I then became the sole Executive Director at the end of 2009.

How much food did your organization rescue in 2013?

KW: We have really been growing these past 3-4 years and our total poundage for 2013 is 2,260,750! In 2013, we hit an all-time high record for poundage in September with a total of 293,555 lbs! Our 2013 total brings us to a total poundage rescued in the 14 years we've been serving the community to over 11.5 Million pounds. Our 2013 poundage total is an increase of 937,805 lbs over 2012.

What is your favorite part about your job?

KW: This job is a lot of work and so much going on all the time! But being involved in this organization does my heart good knowing we are making a difference to so many people every day of the week. Also, the fact that Aloha Harvest is environmentally and economically minded and our program prevents waste, recycles and meets the needs of literally thousands who are facing hunger daily. When I talk to people about the work we do at Aloha Harvest and see and hear their responses, I get re-energized each time!

Who/what inspires you?

KW: My family! They support what I do, jump in whenever I need help, provide great insight and are an invaluable sounding board for me. They encourage me to dream big! I am also inspired by other "Women in Business Leaders" – I learn so much from their experiences and how they've grown their companies.