

PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Helping social service agencies feed Oahu's Hungry

Businesswoman of the Year Finalist- NONPROFIT

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As executive director for the past five years, Kuulei Williams has worked to expand Aloha Harvest's outreach. She wrote a record number of grants in 2011 to help purchase two, 16-foot refrigerated trucks to transport donated food to the nonprofit's 152 social service agencies. The amount of food picked up and distributed to those in need has increased by 66 percent under her leadership, with more than 1.2 million pounds of food going to Oahu's hungry annually.



The biggest problem facing nonprofits in Hawaii and how our organization is addressing it:

I would say the struggle of obtaining financial support for the ongoing needs for general operations. Writing grants is a challenge because the work continues, the needs are the same (most of the time) and yet nonprofits must find ways to creatively write proposals to gain refunding. At Aloha Harvest, we are grateful for ongoing support by some who have funded our work for many years. We also continue to seek out other grant proposal opportunities and ways to diversify our funding.

What government's role should be in assisting nonprofit organizations:

I believe the relationship between both is vital and needed to accomplish the work in our state. Working with the agencies we deliver food to, the enormous amount of paperwork and reporting requirements with government funding seems to be a great obstacle. Finding a way to streamline and reduce this for nonprofits would assist them and free up more time to do their work.

Kuulei Williams
Executive Director- Aloha Harvest

How I expect our organization to change in the next five years:

The growth we've experienced these past three to four years already us brainstorming about the future of Aloha Harvest. Expected changes might be an addition of another truck or two, increased staff and even small storage to add some diversity in disbursing the pallets of food we receive.

One thing that most people don't know about me:

In my business world, most people don't know that I'm the music worship leader at our church.



My favorite indulgence: Treating myself to a manicure and pedicure.