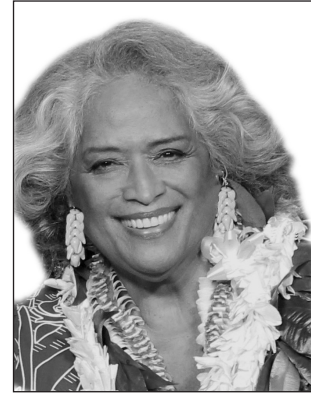


Honoring

PUALANI KANAKA'OLE KANAHELE

Distinguished Alumna



Dr. Pualani Kanaka'ole-Kanahele is known and respected throughout the world as one of the foremost experts on Hawaiian culture and the arts. Pua was born into the world of Hawaiian dance and chant, the daughter of the esteemed Edith and Luka Kanaka'ole.

Along with sister Nalani, Pua has nobly carried on her family legacy, having served as Kumu Hula for Halau 'O Kekuhi from 1979 to 2011. Halau 'O Kekuhi, founded by her mother in 1953, is known for perpetuating traditional Hawaiian dance and chant. For 24 years, Pua also served as President of the Edith Kanaka'ole Foundation, a family nonprofit organization dedicated to Hawaiian cultural education.

Adding tirelessly to her family's legacy, Pua served the University of Hawai'i and Hawai'i Community College for 40 years until her retirement in 2013. During her tenure, Pua served in various capacities, including lecturer, instructor, assistant professor, director of Hawaiian Traditional Knowledge Research, and chair of the Humanities.

Pua's resume includes volumes of credits reflecting her accomplishments as a dancer, director, author, chanter, educator, kumu hula, administrator, and cultural consultant. Some might not know, however, of her contributions in the role of mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, photographer, pilot, adventurer, voyager, thinker, activist, creator and believer in things Hawai'i.

This Hilo High School class of 1955 graduate has shared her expertise with such notable organizations as PBS, the Smithsonian Institution, the Mellon Foundation, the National Park Service, Department of Education, and Kamehameha Schools, amongst dozens of other prestigious institutions of learning.

Pua has been bestowed awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, and State Council on Hawaiian Heritage. She has received the Governor's Award for Distinguished Achievements in the Arts, multiple Na' Ho'ku' Hanohano Awards, National Governors Award for Distinguished Community Leadership, Ke Kukui Malamalama Award from Native Hawaiian Education, Excellence in Teaching Regents Award from the University of Hawai'i, the Pacific Business Gladys Brandt Award, and awards for excellence from the Hawaii Publishers Association, amongst others.