



**For Immediate Release**

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## **HELPING HANDS HAWAII HOSTS ANNUAL SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE FOR STUDENTS IN NEED**

HONOLULU—Ready to Learn (RTL), a program at Helping Hands Hawaii (HHH), hosts its annual school supply drive for students in need from June 1 to July 31, 2017. Through this program, low-income and homeless students will receive free basic educational tools that aid in their scholastic development and contribute to a more prosperous future.

"Having school supplies on the first day of school, and throughout the year, not only prepares a student for learning in the classroom but also boosts a child's self-esteem and feeling of self-worth," said HHH President and CEO Jan M. Harada. "For some students, going to school is the one constant they have in their lives due to unstable situations at home. By linking the goodwill of our community with social service partners throughout the state, Ready to Learn contributes to a more positive educational experience, benefiting students in the future."

As the retail partner for this annual drive, American Savings Bank (ASB) branches across the state will serve as collection sites from June 14 to July 14. Donations on each island will remain on the island to benefit local students.

"While they may seem like common, everyday essentials to many, school supplies can make a major difference to a student," said Beth Whitehead, executive vice president and chief administrative officer at ASB. "We encourage the community to join us in donating school supplies and monetary donations to Ready to Learn, which will help to ensure that Hawaii's keiki are set for success."

RTL uses school supply donations as well as bulk-purchased supplies to prepare basic school supply kits for students of all grade levels. These kits contain some of the most common supplies found on the Department of Education's back-to-school lists. Each kit is valued at approximately \$10 each.

The school supplies in highest demand are: 1-subject spiral notebooks, 24-count crayons, 3-prong portfolios, 4-oz glue bottles, blunt children's scissors, ballpoint pens, calculators, composition books, erasers, folder paper, rulers and backpacks. The RTL program has raised more than \$12,000 in monetary contributions and collected enough school supplies to form 3,115 school supply kits (valued at approximately \$31,000), which benefited more than 6,000 students as of April 2017.

### **HOW STUDENTS CAN RECEIVE SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

To apply for the RTL program, students in grades K to 12 must be recommended by a case manager from a participating referral organization. Partner agencies include Catholic Charities Hawaii, The Salvation Army, Child & Family Service, Parents & Children Together, Liliuokalani Trust, Hawaii Department of Health, Hawaii Department of Human Services and other well-established social service providers. Students and their parents are encouraged to reach out to these organizations if they require assistance. The deadline to apply for the program is Friday, June 23, 2017.

### **HOW THE COMMUNITY CAN GET INVOLVED**

In addition to dropping off donations at the nearest American Savings Bank, individuals and corporate community partners can support the RTL program by organizing fundraising drives, volunteering to pack the school supply kits or making a donation from June 1 to July 31, 2017.

Individuals who would like to host a school supply drive or volunteer to help the RTL program should download and complete a [RTL Community Partner Application](#). Email the completed form to [rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org](mailto:rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org), and a RTL team member will contact individuals with additional information and assistance. Volunteer groups are welcome beginning in May. A list of RTL Community Partners and donation drop-off locations will be listed on our website as information becomes available.

Additionally, the public can donate to the RTL program using the following methods:

**Online:** Visit [www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org](http://www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org) and click on the PayPal link to make a gift. Contributions from June 1 to July 31, 2017 are automatically earmarked for the RTL program.

**Mail:** Checks made payable to "Helping Hands Hawaii" can be mailed to Ready to Learn Program, c/o Helping Hands Hawaii, 2100 N. Nimitz Hwy., Honolulu, HI 96819. Write "Ready to Learn" in the memo section.

**In-Person:** Cash, check and school supply donations are accepted on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at Helping Hands Hawaii's main office at 2100 N. Nimitz Hwy., Honolulu, HI 96819.

### **About Ready to Learn**

Ready to Learn was founded in 1999 in partnership with the late U.S. Senator Daniel and Maggie Inouye. Its purpose is to ensure that low-income and homeless students throughout Hawaii have basic school supplies for their education. In 2005, HHH assumed statewide administration of this initiative and has continued to perpetuate the Inouyes' vision. Together with our community partners, HHH assists students each year. For more information about the RTL program, contact [rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org](mailto:rtl@helpinghandshawaii.org).

### **About Helping Hands Hawaii**

Helping Hands Hawaii (HHH) was founded in 1974 and connects individuals, families and organizations with essential human and material resources. Through our variety of programs, we provide a full continuum of care and help people overcome obstacles, like homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse and language access. Our strong partnerships with local social service providers and innovative approaches strengthen our community by helping people to help themselves. To learn more about HHH, its programs or services, please visit [www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org](http://www.HelpingHandsHawaii.org).

### **About American Savings Bank**

American Savings Bank (ASB) has been serving Hawaii's businesses and communities since 1925 and currently provides a full range of financial products and services, including business and consumer banking, home loans, insurance and investments. ASB is one of Hawaii's leading financial institutions, with e-banking services and branch locations throughout the state offering evening, weekend and holiday hours. ASB provides Hawaii's consumers and businesses with more extended weekday and weekend hours than other similarly sized local banks, as well as convenient in-store branches. ASB was the first Hawaii bank to introduce remote-deposit capture with a mobile banking application.

ASB matches its exceptional customer experience with an employee experience that has garnered local and national awards. ASB has been recognized locally as one of the "Best Places to Work" by Hawaii Business Magazine for eight consecutive years and honored nationally as one of the "Best Banks to Work For" by American Banker Magazine. Fortune Magazine has recognized ASB as one of the 100 Best Workplaces for Women and 50 Best Workplaces for Diversity. For more than 90 years, ASB has been helping build strong communities. Through its Seeds of Service program, ASB teammates have contributed more than 29,000 hours of volunteer service, and ASB has donated millions of dollars to Hawaii's non-profits and community organizations.

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