NOURISH 'ohana

My Cause My Cleats

Marcus Mariota reveals his passion beyond the game by wearing his heart on his feet for Hawaii's hungry keiki p. 4

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CONNECT WITH US!
One year later, there is still light

Over the course of the last year, even as our communities here in Hawaii were devastated by immense hardship and loss, there was light.

Before the pandemic, every community in Hawaii was home to people facing hunger. But since March 2020, thousands more have struggled to put food on the table – many for the first time. Today, nearly 230,000 Hawaii residents – including more than 81,000 keiki – will likely experience hunger in 2021 due in part to the pandemic. The need among our most vulnerable communities is deepening, and Hawaii Foodbank is and will continue to reach the members of our ‘ohana who need it the most.

While COVID-19 has proven to be an enduring crisis that is unprecedented in our lifetimes, what’s also been demonstrated is the collective empathy and generosity of people in our community. April is National Volunteer Month, and our volunteers remind us that – while the need continues to be tremendous – so, too, is the light. I asked Kirsten Yale, our volunteer coordinator, to share some perspective on our volunteers’ incredible efforts since the start of the pandemic.

“During the pandemic, volunteers have been crucial to carrying out our mission. When the need for food assistance increased drastically around this time last year, we had hundreds of new and returning volunteers step up to help us provide food to thousands of households,” says Kirsten. “We saw many volunteers multiple times a week at the large-scale Pop-up Food Distributions during the summer, and we still have many of those same volunteers helping out regularly at the warehouse or ‘Ohana Produce Plus. Collectively, they’ve worked 42,370 hours of volunteer service since the start of the pandemic. Their dedication and willingness to serve the community are inspiring.”

Incredible – and inspiring, indeed. With deep gratitude, I thank our volunteers for carrying our mission, and I thank you for joining us in the fight to end hunger. Hawaii needs the light of people like you more than ever.

Mahalo nui for your trust and support,
Hawaii Foodbank welcomes Amy Miller Marvin
New president and CEO brings wealth of experience

We are excited to announce Amy Miller Marvin as Hawaii Foodbank’s new president and CEO. She brings to the position more than two decades of experience specializing in operations, financial management and fund development.

Marvin most recently served as senior vice president and chief operating officer of Bishop Museum, where she was responsible for the day-to-day management and finances of the public museum. While there, she led the Museum in the development and implementation of a successful three-year strategic business plan, increased stakeholder engagement and impact, and stabilized the Museum’s financial operations.

“I am extremely proud of what I achieved at Bishop Museum and look forward to bringing my experience and skill set to Hawaii Foodbank,” said Marvin. “Consistent access to quality, nutritious food is a fundamental human right. I am deeply committed to being a part of the solution and helping make a meaningful, positive impact in the lives of people in Hawaii.”

Hawaii Foodbank Board Chair David Herndon said, “Amy is a natural fit for the position. Her extensive leadership experience in nonprofit operations, financial management, fundraising and strategic planning, as well as her thorough understanding of Hawaii and its unique challenges, will serve the organization well.”

Prior to 2016, Marvin served as the vice president for institutional advancement at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, where she helped foster an innovative partnership between the Academy and Drexel University. Before that, she was the vice president of institutional advancement at Bishop Museum, where she spearheaded the Museum’s Hawaiian Hall restoration. She also worked as the development and volunteer program coordinator at The Dolphin Institute & Kewalo Basin Marine Mammal Lab.

Marvin graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University with a bachelor’s degree in environmental science and public policy. She also earned her master’s degree in psychology from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

Added Marvin, “While the toll of COVID-19 on our community has been devastating, the work of Hawaii Foodbank and its network of donors and partner organizations during this critical time has been nothing short of inspirational. Hawaii Foodbank is playing a significant role in creating positive change toward a healthier and more resilient Hawaii, and I am truly honored and grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this incredibly important organization.”

‘Ele‘ele Elementary School
‘Ele‘ele Elementary School hosted a food drive to help give back. In just two weeks, the students collected nearly 2,400 food items – enough to provide food for more than 1,300 meals. This food drive accounts for the largest donation to Hawaii Foodbank Kaua‘i since the start of the new year.

Motiv8 Foundation
Motiv8 Foundation Director Ed Nishioka stopped by the O‘ahu warehouse in Mapunapuna to present a $4,000 check to Hawaii Foodbank. The gift was part of Marcus Mariota’s My Cause My Cleats auction. The donation included the winning bid along with a personal match from Marcus to double the impact.
Rain pours down, community outpours support
Disaster preparedness key to quick flooding response across the islands

When disaster strikes, Hawaii Foodbank is on the ground and ready to provide food assistance and emergency supplies. Our extensive network of food partner agencies makes us uniquely prepared to respond in the event of a disaster.

Over the years, Hawaii Foodbank has built a strong reputation for disaster preparedness and relief. When Hurricane Iniki devastated Kaua‘i in 1992, our organization responded immediately by sending 1.5 million pounds of food to relief sites across the island. Our contributions to the Iniki relief efforts garnered statewide recognition — establishing Hawaii Foodbank as an important disaster response organization.

Since then, we’ve endured multiple natural disasters, a government shutdown and, currently, a global health crisis. All of these experiences have taught us valuable lessons on preparedness, resilience and, ultimately, recovery.

In March, these lessons were once again put to the test as our communities across Hawaii were drenched by torrential storms and flash floods. Our teams on O‘ahu and Kaua‘i immediately began responding to relief efforts to ensure communities had the food they needed. With the help of countless volunteers, organizations and food partner agencies — residents in Hale‘iwa, Hanalei and other impacted communities didn’t have to go long without food and supplies. We are humbled and inspired by how quickly everyone rallied together to support one another.

As we learned from the epic 2018 storm that caused an estimated $125 million in damages on Kaua‘i — full recovery can take years. Even after the storms have passed, we know that there is still much work to do. Through it all, Hawaii Foodbank will be here to provide immediate relief as well as prepare for the long-term recovery ahead.

Kūpuna Valentine Drive-Through provides kūpuna with festive treats and more

As COVID-19 began to spread across Hawaii last year, our kūpuna experienced disproportionately greater adverse effects from the pandemic than many other populations. These effects included higher risk factors, disruptions to their daily routines, limited access to care, difficulty in adapting to new technologies and concerns surrounding extended isolation.

To help, Melanie Okamoto, senior activities coordinator for the County of Kaua‘i Department of Parks and Recreation, connected with Hawaii Foodbank Kaua‘i to create the Kūpuna Valentine Drive-Through — a week-long event to provide nonperishable food bags and other necessities to kūpuna during the holiday.

“We look forward to one day soon reuniting with our senior clientele,” says Melanie. “The Kūpuna Valentine Drive-Through was our way of showing our kūpuna we are thinking of them during this time”.

The Kūpuna Valentine Drive-Through was held each day at various neighborhood center locations. Sites included Hanapēpē, Kapa’a, Kōloa, Kilauea, Kekaha and Līhu‘e Neighborhood Centers. In total, Hawaii Foodbank Kaua‘i distributed nearly 2,800 pounds of food to 275 kūpuna. The Valentine packages included various canned goods, bottled water, coffee, toothbrushes, dish soap and more.

As each kupuna drove up to receive their food packages, you could feel them smiling with gratitude — even behind their masks. That combined with the wonderful job Melanie and her staff did decorating for each location, the atmosphere was festive from top to bottom — so much so that you could even feel the love in the air.

Love is in the air ... and the drive-through

by Kim Bartenstein, Director of Mission and Quality Assurance

by Tisha Ruiz, Kaua‘i Grants and Communications Coordinator
When it comes to athletes from Hawaii, Marcus Mariota's accolades are second to none. The Honolulu-born quarterback has been wowing crowds with his athleticism for decades, and it was clear from an early age that he was something special.

Marcus attended Saint Louis School and was a two-sport all-star in football and track. In his senior year, he led the Crusaders to a state title while being named the Interscholastic League of Honolulu’s Offensive Player of the Year.

Marcus went on to play football for the University of Oregon, where he would be rocket-strapped to a whole new level of stardom. After redshirting his first year, he became the first freshman quarterback to start a season opener for the Ducks in more than 20 seasons. With a 12-1 record, his freshman campaign earned him Pac-12 All-Conference first-team honors as well as the Pac-12 Freshman Offensive Player of the Year award. The following season, he led the Ducks to 11 wins and was once again named Pac-12 All-Conference first-team.

In his junior year, Marcus achieved many more firsts. After leading the nation in touchdowns, passing efficiency and total offense, he was awarded the prestigious Heisman trophy award — recognizing him as the most outstanding college football player of the year. Marcus became the first Oregon Duck, the first Polynesian and the first Hawaii-born athlete to achieve this honor. By the time he finished his career at Oregon, he had become the most decorated player in school history.

Marcus entered the 2015 NFL Draft and was selected with the second overall pick. Since then, continued on page 6
Marcus Mariota spotlighted Hawaii Foodbank during the Raiders’ week 13 matchup against the Jets. It was part of the NFL’s My Cause My Cleats campaign. The green and yellow floral custom design features Hawaii Foodbank’s logo and was created by Oregon sports artist Justin Tigner.

**About the artist:** Justin Tigner is a sports artist and high school art teacher out of Camas, Wash. His art captures the best of Oregon Duck sports and players, as well as favorite legends in other athletics. Justin’s paintings have helped raise funds for a variety of nonprofit organizations, including the Motiv8 Foundation and Hawaii Foodbank, as well as generated scholarship money for student athletes at the University of Oregon. For more, visit tignersportsart.com.
he has played a number of successful seasons with the Tennessee Titans and, currently, the Las Vegas Raiders.

Throughout his career, the versatile quarterback has become known for his speed and evasiveness on the field. Off the field, however, Marcus does not shy away from interacting with others – especially when it comes to taking care of his home. His compassion extends wide, and, just as he displayed signs of athletic prowess at an early age, he also flashed an early affinity for giving back.

“My dream of playing in the NFL began at an early age in elementary school. At the same time, I also began dreaming of giving back someday and helping young kids,” writes Marcus on his website. “This is why it was important to me to start the Motiv8 Foundation.”

In 2015, he established the Motiv8 Foundation along with his parents Alana and Toa. The organization works to provide athletic, educational and economic opportunities to local keiki while also offering safety and support to Hawaii’s homeless populations.

“The goal and mission of Motiv8 is exactly what our name says – to motivate young people to dream big through education and athletics,” explains Marcus. “Playing in the NFL is a privilege and has responsibilities. We, as professional athletes, have a platform to help our youth for a better tomorrow.

The Motiv8 Foundation is a vehicle to give back and help others, and I have a lifetime commitment to that mission and helping as many young people as possible.”

Marcus works steadfastly towards this ideal, and he finds a variety of ways to reach youth and cultivate their nourishment each year. His commitment is unwavering – even when COVID-19 changed everything last year.

When news spread that schools back home were closing down in response to the pandemic, he immediately jumped in to help make sure students received the nutrition they need. Marcus and the Motiv8 Foundation worked with the community to provide thousands of grab-and-go meals at Kauluwela and Pālolo Elementary Schools. They also provided more than 5,000 meals at shelters in May and an additional 3,500 meals during the holidays.

Marcus reflects, “I’ve been very blessed to be put in a position to help, and I think that is a responsibility of mine.”

It’s a responsibility that goes deep. During the 2020 NFL season, Marcus decided to wear his heart on his feet by spotlighting Hawaii Foodbank through the NFL’s My Cause My Cleats initiative – bringing national attention to the 1 in 4 keiki in Hawaii struggling with hunger during the pandemic.

“I was very pleased to partner with Hawaii Foodbank this year with the My Cause My Cleats game shoes,” says Marcus. “The Foodbank is meeting the needs of families that have been hit hard by this pandemic. Many of our local families are suffering during these tough times and are worried about their next meal. The Foodbank is doing a great job to help these families and meet their needs, and that is why they have my support.”

After the season, Marcus took it one step further by hosting an online auction to gather additional support for Hawaii’s hungry keiki and families. The auction featured his game-worn cleats from the Raiders’ week 13 victory against the Jets. All money raised was donated directly to Hawaii Foodbank, and Marcus personally matched the winning bid – altogether providing food for more than 10,000 meals.

For years, Marcus has been wowing folks back home with a long list of accomplishments. State champion, All-Conference awardee, Offensive Player of the Year, Heisman Trophy winner, NFL starter – all accolades worth admiring. But to the people of Hawaii, there’s one title that is second to none when it comes to Marcus Mariota: a true torchbearer for Hawaii’s communities.
Our Volunteers at Work

Feed our fighters, nourish our ‘ohana

Despite being idled, UFC Gym Waikiki exercises their support for those in need during the pandemic

"We were all gearing up for our biggest turn of the year. You gotta think — the first quarter of the year is the most important time for anybody in the fitness industry. That sets the tone for the rest of the year. For our location, too, we were having fantastic months in January and February, and we were on track to kill it in March," describes Cari. "Then, everything changed."

On March 23, Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell announced a "stay-at-home, work-from-home" order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Two days later, the entire state of Hawaii shut down. Tourism shuttered. Businesses and schools were closed. And tens of thousands began to lose their jobs.

"You know, it was a lot of uncertainty at that time because no one really knew much about the virus. They said, 'Oh, it’ll be maybe two weeks, and we’ll evaluate and see how it goes.' Then two weeks turned into a month. Then two months. Three months ... "

Visit our Hunger Blog to read the full story along with other accounts from volunteers, donors, recipients and more. HAWAIIFOODBANK.ORG/BLOG

Young, willing and grateful

How Elijah Dacanay stepped in when others had to stay-at-home

When Gov. David Ige issued an emergency proclamation at the end of March 2020 — business closures, furloughs and tightened work schedules spread across Hawaii as residents were ordered to "stay at home" to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. While the orders allowed for essential public services like Hawaii Foodbank to continue operating, many nonprofits found themselves with sharply declining numbers of volunteers.

When news spread that Hawaii Foodbank was in need of healthy and able volunteers, Elijah Dacanay did not hesitate to raise his hand and step in. Knowing his work schedule was about to open up, Elijah signed up to volunteer one afternoon at Hawaii Foodbank’s warehouse. And he hasn’t looked back. Since that first volunteer shift, Elijah has volunteered his time in a variety of capacities — from sorting fresh produce and other food donations at the warehouse to distributing food at Pop-up Food Distributions to even holding a virtual food drive during last year’s Food Drive Day. Elijah describes his favorite part of volunteering as seeing the gratitude on people’s faces — both from food recipients as well as other volunteers. His favorite events have been the large-scale Pop-ups at Aloha Stadium, but he also enjoys volunteering at ‘Ohana Produce Plus distributions with Lighthouse Outreach Center and The Salvation Army.

Since he started volunteering with Hawaii Foodbank last year, Elijah has worked more than 125 hours.
Volunteering by the numbers
How a day of incredible numbers added up to one life-changing experience

Throughout the year, Hawaii Foodbank holds quarterly meetings for Alaka’i, its passionate group of young leaders. I always look forward to these meetings because it’s a chance to see everyone in-person, discuss mission opportunities, organize plans for upcoming events and talk story.

Of course, COVID-19 changed all of that. As the pandemic began to unfold, these meetings shifted to virtual, but they were still a valuable opportunity to hear directly from Hawaii Foodbank staff members and receive updates on how the pandemic continued to impact our community’s food needs. We learned about their newly established Pop-up Food Distributions – a series of mass drive-through food distributions designed to serve those impacted by the pandemic.

We may have been meeting virtually, but the staff’s raw emotions were palpable as they described each event. From working with the City and County of Honolulu and other organizations to secure funding, to managing their teams at the warehouse, all the way down to the personal accounts of gratitude from food recipients – each update revealed Hawaii Foodbank’s humble, tireless effort.

The hardworking staff described these Pop-ups as “life-changing,” and they highly recommended we take the opportunity to attend if our schedules allowed it. So, not long after, my friend Sheri and I signed up to volunteer at one of the large-scale Pop-ups at Aloha Stadium.

Starting shortly after 7 a.m., we worked together in the produce-packing section alongside about forty other volunteers. Similar to picking up food in a cafeteria, we formed a line with each of us holding a produce box that contained two to three reusable bags. We pushed our boxes across six-foot tables as volunteers filled our totes with fresh cabbage, papaya, pineapple, tomatoes and more.

Once our bags were full, we carried our boxes to a loading station where the food was organized for distribution, and then we went back to the start of the line and did it all over again. This happened continuously for more than an hour, and – boy – did we get a great arm and leg workout!

Once most of the bags were packed, we returned to the loading station to distribute the fresh produce to the vehicles in line. Each vehicle was assigned a green placard with a number delineating how many households were represented in that vehicle – letting volunteers know how many bags of produce to provide.

As we watched the cars go by, we realized each vehicle represented much more than the number displayed on its windshield. Within each vehicle, we saw people. We saw families. We saw friends. We saw faces.

When we placed the food in their vehicles, many people greeted us behind their masks with kind eyes and a warm “thank you.” Meanwhile, others timidly avoided eye contact out of humility. We knew that many of these families have never asked for help before, but they needed it now. The only thing we hoped for was that we made everyone feel as comfortable as possible by smiling behind our masks. We wanted them to know there was no shame in receiving food.

Eight hours and 11,000 steps later, we packed 200,000 pounds of food in 8,000 bags for 4,000 households – incredible numbers that added up to one unforgettable, life-changing experience. I left the Pop-up full of gratitude and a reinforced belief in Hawaii Foodbank’s mission. I am thankful for the opportunity to volunteer and am proud to be a small part of this beautiful organization.

Eight hours and 11,000 steps later, we packed 200,000 pounds of food in 8,000 bags for 4,000 households – incredible numbers that added up to one unforgettable, life-changing experience.
Upcoming Opportunities to Help Nourish Our ‘Ohana:

Hawaii Foodbank
2611 Kilihau St.
Honolulu, HI 96819
808-836-3600
HawaiiFoodbank.org

In this time of increased hunger, your community needs your help. Please join us on Food Drive Day by dropping off non-perishable food at one of our drive-through donation sites or making an online donation. To learn more, please visit HawaiiFoodbank.org/Food-Drive-Day.

Give by example.
Azzie Blancoflor
Student, Lemonade Stand Owner

FOOD DRIVE DAY  Saturday, Aug. 14

Looking for a stylish way to give back? How about trying on the official Hawaii Foodbank t-shirt? Order today, and your purchase goes directly towards our mission to end hunger in Hawaii. Wear by example and help inspire others to give by example.

OFFICIAL T-SHIRT  Now Available!

HAWAIIFOODBANK.ORG/TSHIRTS