

THE RESOURCE GUIDE TO OUR ISLAND

OAHU Inside Out

MAY+JUNE 2017

In Full Swing

50th State Fair marks the beginning of summer





Built with Aloha

Honolulu Habitat for Humanity offers constructive help.

by Kristen Nemoto Jay

The pristine beaches and optimal summer-like, year-round weather may be a couple of reasons why people from abroad gravitate towards living in Hawai'i, but it's definitely not the #1 factor. Locals

and visitors alike can agree that life on the islands is filled with the "aloha spirit" and no matter who you are or where you come from, your surrounding community will be behind you every step of the way.

The only downside about life here on the islands is that the price for paradise is expensive. And as Hawai'i tops out every year as the #1 most expensive state to live in the U.S., more and more families

are being ostracized from becoming homeowners.

Jim Murphy, Honolulu Habitat for Humanity's executive director, says it's one dream to want to live in Hawai'i but it's another to want to do so at an affordable price.

"[Honolulu Habitat for Humanity] is addressing what is arguably the greatest need here in Hawai'i and that is affordable

COURTESY, HONOLULU HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

housing,” Murphy says. Unlike other Habitat for Humanity organizations on the mainland, Hawai‘i’s major challenge in providing affordable housing — in general — is due to the lack of livable land space.

“With little land available,” Murphy says, “the astronomical pricing of land, condominiums, townhouses and single-family homes skyrocket to the hefty price tag of paying \$400-\$500 per square foot.

“It’s not at all feasible for our families here on O‘ahu,” he adds. “Our goal here at Habitat is to be able to provide a decent place to live for those who are in great need, and bring the community together while doing it.”

This is when the “aloha spirit” is especially recognized, says Murphy, as he recalls many Saturday mornings when neighbors would come over to help the Honolulu Habitat for Humanity crew while they would be working on a house, just because they heard the “hammering.”

“Prior to us building, we go out into the community to let them know that we’re building a home for one of their neighbors and that volunteers are welcome,” Murphy says. “But most of the volunteers learn by

word of mouth because it’s Auntie Darlene’s house so people come to help pitch in. Whether it be a church organization bringing lunches for everyone or a local business helping out on one of their work days, it’s just nice to see everyone come over to help.”

A great way for the public to help or learn more about Honolulu Habitat for Humanity is to attend its inaugural benefit fundraiser: “Build Aloha.” The event will be held on Saturday, June 10, from 6 to 8:30 p.m., at Kō Hana Rum in Kunia. There will be a private tour of the distillery, food stations from such acclaimed restaurants as The Pig and the Lady and the Fish House at Ko Olina, special Kō Hana Rum cocktails, live music

and a silent auction. All proceeds will benefit Honolulu Habitat for Humanity.

Murphy says the “Build Aloha” title for their

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fundraiser is a perfect name for the occasion since the Honolulu Habitat for Humanity strives to do more than just build houses.

“We hope to bring communities together,” Murphy says. “We have all the resources now to help more families, we’re just so grateful for the public’s support.”

*For more information about Build Aloha or Honolulu Habitat for Humanity, visit honoluluhabitat.org **

