

FY08 Akaku: Molokai Media Center Annual Narrative Report

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Introduction

In FY08, Akaku: Moloka'i Media Center (MMC) experienced a year of setting new goals. The Akaku: Moloka'i Media Center has added new technology and new classes including 4 new I-Mac computers, all loaded with the "cutting edge" editing program, Final Cut Pro (FCP) and new classes in the instruction of Final Cut Pro. Also, we have added new equipment and technology to maximize efficiency in the office and out in the field including a tricaster and switcher to enable two and three camera production shooting for County Council and Boards and Commissions meetings. MMC has been operating successfully on Molokai for 9+ years, thanks to the coordination and dedicated hard work of the Moloka'i staff, support from the Maui staff and the participation of the hard-working community producers on Molokai bringing the important issues of Molokai to the foreground.

FY08 was a challenging year because the OHA Grant was completed in FY07 which enabled Akaku to offer free instruction to the Moloka'i community forcing Akaku to bill for classes but at a reduced rate. With the closure of Moloka'i Ranch creating a serious unemployment problem, the residents of Moloka'i have endured a serious economic downturn making it difficult to pay for classes. In FY09, several grants have been planned to help alleviate financial obstacles to attending classes.

Grant Projects

In FY07, MMC completed a successful and ambitious grant partnership with OHA. FY08 was a year dedicated to improving every aspect of Akaku operations as well as redefining operation the policy & procedures of the operation. There were no grants written or received in this fiscal year.

General Operations

FY08 began as both challenging and exciting for Akaku Molokai due to major changes. In the beginning of FY08, we were operating with aging equipment and computers and Matt Yamashita, Director and the heart and soul of MMC for many years, left to pursue working full-time for his own private business. For awhile, only two employees were running the Akaku MMC operations with also the departure of Ikaika Jenks-Pua'a to pursue his college education full-time. The redistribution of Matt Yamashita's responsibilities forced remaining MMC staff to reconsider current operational structures and to rebalance priorities. A new staff member was added to the team, Molokai resident, Kekoa Cummings. Due to the implementation of new programs, procedures, equipment and computers, video production education training was temporarily put on hold to develop a new policy/procedure system with a new pricing structure. It was necessary to carefully research the exact amount Molokai residents could afford in terms of educational expenses. We then had to familiarize ourselves to new editing equipment, which included training sessions at the Maui office and simultaneously developed a new educational curriculum for community youth and adult video literacy classes. An improved equipment tracking and inventory system was also implemented.

Amidst all these exciting new challenges, MMC's ability to continue servicing our community through our persistent outreaching efforts to producing content rich programming has continued to reach new heights. With the loving support of some of Molokai's most prolific and awe inspiring *Kupuna* in

preserving Hawaiian culture, we have been operating under the premise that to look to our future, we must equally look to our past. This led to the production of many culturally rich video productions, which involved our Kupuna, including productions like "Kalaupapa Today". FY08 was also a year of very significant social and economic events on Moloka'i; Akaku MMC played a vital role in covering every critical meeting for all those who could not attend. Akaku MMC is the only vehicle for spreading critical information as it is presented in each meeting to the many who cannot attend such meetings due to work or family. Finally, another exciting outreach program was developed in partnership with The Molokai Dispatch, a weekly Molokai free press newspaper. Akaku now produces Molokai's first ever local news updates in a series called "The Molokai Minute".

Our facility faced another major challenge when MMC's "Facil" tracking program crashed. All information, producer info and equipment info was lost. Fortunately, we had a backup and although it took time to ensure the files were correct and to upgrade the Facil software, we then focused on the heavy activity in community events and projects in the community.

FY08 saw a major decrease in community editing hours due to the loss of our I-Book laptop computers. MMC's I-Books enabled our producers to take their projects home to edit at their convenience. The equipment was heavily used but could not run Final Cut Pro and not able to be fixed for a price that would justify the age. They have not been replaced to date and we are now encouraging community producers to upgrade their skills and use the facility equipment.

At the close of FY08, Josh Pastrana serves full-time as Facility Manager, Daniel Emhof, serves full-time as Education Director/Akaku Productions Coordinator, and Kekoa Cummings serves as part-time Akaku Productions team and Sports Media Coordinator.

Outreach Program

MMC's outreach program has been the main focus of FY08. Since FY07's Civic Engagement Initiative (CEI) grant project, MMC launched a new effort to produce a series of interviews collecting the wisdom and opinions of "Kupuna and Long-Time Residents of Molokai." MMC has continued the momentum of a project that has given a voice and presence to the knowledge and opinions of Moloka'i residents. On Moloka'i, training in video production is not the only way to provide a voice to the community and the community is especially in need of voice in these times of economic hardship. In many of these interviews, *kupuna* encourage the younger generations to become active in community issues and responsible for the stewardship of resources.

MMC will continue to have a wonderful relationship with *na kupuna*, who encourage and uplift the community, focusing especially on the younger generation. MMC has had the privilege of working with Moloka'i's renowned *kupuna* and community leaders such as Anakala Pilipo Solatorio, Anakala Keli'i Mawae, Anakala Moke Kim, Anakala Alapai Hanapi, Anakala Mervin Dudoit, Anakala Lawrence Aki, Anakala Walter Ritte, and Anake Ruth, Judy Caparita and Alulike Ke Ola Pono No Na Kupuna Senior Program. In support of their beloved Akaku, they organized a community petition on behalf of Akaku to support Bill SB1789, to ensure that changes for PEG access would be decided in the open, before the public, and under financially reasonable conditions for PEG access, and to create clear and minimal guidelines that protect the public's right to participate in deciding what kind of access organization and service we, the residents of Moloka'i and Maui county want. These community leaders have been directly involved in 18 submitted programs and have collaborated on much more.

In FY08, MMC held its first ever `Ohana Community Recognition Night. It was an event for Akaku MMC to deeply thank our community for their continued aloha and support. Joining us in our thanks were the staff from the Maui office. It was an event filled with music, community produced highlight videos, and food. The event acknowledged community leaders, producers, and youth who have contributed to community media and have made a profound impact on the Moloka'i Community. The event honored 10 individuals. Anake Judy and Ruth Caparita for most supportive and involved *kupuna* and the following eight received a Reflect Molokai Community Award: DeGray Vanderbilt for "Enduring Support"; James "Uncle Kili`i" Mawae for "Aloha Spirit"; Uncle Pilipo Solatorio for "Outstanding Voice"; Jersey Jo "Most Promising New Community Producer"; Kekoa Cummings "Most Recent Contributing Independent Producer", Hanohano Niehu and Kalani Ua Ritte for "Prolific Producers", and Matt Yamashita for "Community Contributor".

MMC's outreach program worked consistently with 6 Nonprofit Organizations throughout the year resulting in 12 programs produced by our Akaku Productions Department in cooperation with these Nonprofit Organizations. Organizations include: Napu`uwai, Hanai I Ka Ipu, Aka`ula School, Na Pua No`eau, Halawa Cooperative, and Alulike Ke Ola Pono No Na Kupuna Senior Program. These Nonprofits are the heart of Moloka'i social services.

Video Literacy & Media Training

Under the Civic Engagement Initiative (CEI) grant funded project of FY07, there were great successes in media training efforts. The grant project provided for free training and certification to all sectors of the community with a special focus on youth and Native Hawaiians. Even with the changeover of trainers (Emhof replaced Yamashita as lead trainer in February), training numbers reached all time highs. This grant funded project ended in FY07, presenting FY08 with a new

challenge. MMC carefully researched the Molokai community's ability to afford a fee for video training and certification. During this period, all video literacy classes were put on hold. There was much deliberation as to whether or not Molokai fees should be the same as Maui fees. MMC felt that Molokai's economic demographics and population numbers are totally different to that of Maui, and that the fees for video literacy classes and Akaku certification should reflect those differences in order to continue to enjoy community participation and support. We were worried that there would be no community television if the community could not afford to participate. MMC did support the idea of class fees, giving value to our training and the certification process, and attracting those serious about producing community content on Akaku channels. Through our research and coordinated dialogue with the Maui office, class fees were set at an affordable \$40.00 for the video production certification classes, and \$40.00 for the editing certification classes. For \$200.00, an entire youth group can have up to ten hours of video literacy classes.

At the end of FY08, Akaku MMC stands poised and ready to train community members (youth and adults) on a powerful industry grade editing program, FCP, and is extremely excited to see what the future holds in terms of quality community produced television. FCP classes are currently underway for FY09. Partnerships with schools and youth groups are currently being set up and implemented. All of the work completed for video literacy classes in FY08 has been "behind the scenes" work, and does not reflect in the numbers of community producers certified. FY08 was a year of investing in Moloka'i's video literacy future. The real results of the work done in FY08 will be reflected in the numbers of certified producers and the quality of community work in FY09 and the many promising years to follow.

Akaku Productions - (Dan)

The MMC Akaku Productions (AP) program continued to serve the Molokai community by taking on the documentation and broadcast of important local events and meetings. AP engaged in the production 52 videos in FY08 of which 50 have so far been submitted for broadcast.

AP has made great effort to produce a series of interviews collecting the wisdom and opinions of “*kupuna* and Long-Time Residents of Molokai” continues, giving a voice and presence to the knowledge and opinions of Molokai residents. In many of the interviews, *kupuna* encourage the younger generations to become active in community issues and responsible for the stewardship of resources. SP produced 9 programs under this premise for FY08.

The goal of providing media resources to Kalaupapa remains one of the initial focuses of AP. With the overwhelming success of “Kalaupapa Today 2007”, AP will continue to serve Kalaupapa residents, especially in the wake of historically significant events and changes underway. Now, more than ever, it is important to highlight the spiritual essence, aloha, and beauty that is Kalaupapa. It is imperative that all recognize that Kalaupapa’s future is as sacred as its past, and that this is in the forefront when decisions are to be made about which direction Kalaupapa will take when the last of the remaining patients are gone. The footage and interviews collected in FY08 will continue and “Kalaupapa Today 2008” will air in FY09.

It is Akaku’s hope that the video will become a vehicle for Kalaupapa residents to see and understand the valuable resource that community TV and media production hold for their community. Akaku staff will remain committed to continuing similar efforts in the future and re-establishing training opportunities if there is a positive response from the Kalaupapa community.

AP Molokai assisted the Maui AP to film the East Maui Hana Taro Festival. This was a great opportunity for Moloka'i and Maui AP to really develop a sense of camaraderie and teamwork.

AP has also has recently partnered with The Moloka'i Dispatch to produce Moloka'i's first local televised news broadcast ever, called the "Moloka'i Minute". Each segment reflects two weeks of Moloka'i's events and issues. The segments air on Akaku's popular "Maui Daily", as well as periodically on their own in the regular programming schedule.

Content Creation & Delivery

Akaku has tracked 98 productions submitted for broadcast via the MMC, a significant increase from last year. Of these productions, 52 came via Akaku MMC AP productions, 36 from community adult producers, 4 from community youth producers and 7 from our education program. In total, this represents well over 90 hours of programming or nearly 2 hours of new programming submitted per week.

The number and content of videos produced by our community resulted in 95 percent relating to Native Hawaiian issues and/or events, which provide additional evidence as to the impact, success and emphasis of serving our community. Per capita, Moloka'i supports the highest population of Native Hawaiians in the state. Our community has found media to be an important tool in the perpetuation of the Hawaiian culture, a way to educate, perpetuate and bring awareness of issues/events on our island as well as throughout the state to our rural community.

Conclusion & Future

Akaku Molokai staff has gained valuable insight and direction to where Akaku services and resources are most needed within the community in FY08. It has also been reaffirmed that working with the *kupuna* and youth groups via partnership programs is the place that we make the biggest impact.

When working with partnering agencies as well as individuals, Akaku will assist in finding ways to make services affordable to agencies/individuals with a limited budget through fundraisers or allowing payment through volunteer time by assisting in productions, events and administration. Moloka'i is facing hard economic times with the closing of the Moloka'i Ranch. With the reality of layoffs, gas prices over \$5.00 dollars a gallon and rising prices of living expenses, it is imperative that we continue working with the limited budgets of community organizations/individuals to continue the primary goal in securing community participation. Through MMC ingenuity in funding assistance, we are committed to exploring new and creative ways of continuing to offer discounted training opportunities.

MMC has learned that we truly serve all Molokai residents directly or indirectly by helping to create an active, civic-minded environment of participation and awareness. By teaching youth how to utilize media as a tool for expression, we have given many of them an exciting new interest, and for some an interest in a career in videography/television production. All students, youth and adults alike walk away with greater confidence in their ability to communicate and affect change. Indirectly, the programs that are produced and aired encourage community dialogue and inform residents about issues and concerns unique to Moloka'i.

Through the many challenges faced during FY08, our staff was reminded of the importance of being able to adapt and be flexible to changing circumstances and

needs both within the organization and within the community. The unforeseeable variables that affected the implementation of our programs challenged us to focus on our strengths and to be open to new opportunities in order to successfully achieve our objectives. In many ways, FY08 was a test of Moloka'i MMC's ability to weather obstacles and challenges. When reviewing the wide array of programs and the highly successful outcomes produced throughout the year, it became clear that MMC continues to set precedence in successfully fulfilling Akaku's mission of "empowering our community's voice through access to media."

With the future in mind, we are actively restructuring our Moloka'i operations to efficiently meet the needs of the community and the resources available to our organization.

The coming FY09 is expected to be a year of great expansion for MMC. It is not the quantity of productions that strengthen the community; it is the quality, strength, and message within the programs that are produced. New challenges are on the horizon for the staff of the Akaku: Molokai Media Center and we couldn't be happier to face the in the coming year, FY09.

Aloha Nui