

Ohana Happenings

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Makana Pono: Employee Giving Program

JESSICA SIMS, REGISTERED NURSE
TEAM ANELA

ORGANIZATION: HAWAII FOODBANK



As our state grapples with skyrocketing unemployment, organizations like the Hawaii Foodbank are working to ensure local ohana are able to keep food on their table. Jessica Sims, an Islands Hospice Registered Nurse, and her family were involved with their local food bank in Alaska and continued to stay engaged with the cause upon moving to Hawaii. As September's Makana Pono awardee, Jessica has selected the Hawaii Foodbank to receive her \$5,000 contribution, an organization that remains close to her heart and mind during this time of great need.

Jessica explained that her family's love language is food, which caused her to align with the mission of the Hawaii Foodbank. "I come from a family where we show that we love each other through food, like many of us do," she said. "The Foodbank shows its love to thousands of people! It allows grandparents and parents to continue to show their children and families that they are loved as well."

The work of the Hawaii Foodbank has been especially crucial recently in helping ohana impacted by COVID-19. With over 200 partner agencies across Oahu and Kauai, the Hawaii Foodbank is the state's leading hunger-relief organization. In addition to shelf-stable foods, the organization provides meats, produce and other grocery items to those who need them.

As an RN, Jessica also provides care to families and patients during challenging times. "My job is to do everything possible to help not only patients but families, to assist them through one of the most difficult times a family can go through," she explained. "I am there to listen, talk, advise or just hold their hands."

In October, Jessica will celebrate her two-year work anniversary with Islands Hospice. In addition to showing compassion and support to the foodbank, Jessica also holds animal causes near to her heart and supports wildlife conservation and the Humane Society.



New Tees!



Hospice Hero Town

EDMAR BARIT, CNA

Sometimes, all it takes is a simple joke to change the trajectory of someone's day. For Islands Hospice CNA, Edmar Barit, light-hearted interactions make his patient visits meaningful and memorable. "I make it a point to put a smile on my patient's face with my silly jokes and crazy antics," Edmar explained. "A simple thank you from my patient and their families after every visit is more than enough to make this job fulfilling."

Edmar came to Hawaii from the Philippines in 2007. He graduated from Waipahu High School and completed the CNA class at Healthcare School of Hawaii. Prior to joining Islands Hospice, Edmar worked for an agency, then at a nursing/skilled facility where he met several Islands Hospice employees.

Edmar developed an interest in hospice care after his late grandfather fell ill and used hospice services. Although it was an extremely difficult time for his family, Edmar was inspired to learn how to provide the same compassionate care for others that his grandfather received.

For nearly two and a half years, Edmar has been working out of the town office, sipping his coffee as he makes phone calls to patients, families, co-workers and to different facilities before hopping in his car. The rest of his shift is spent picking up supplies and providing care to our patients.

On his days off, Edmar enjoys cooking and experimenting with different recipes. His advice to his fellow coworkers is to remain optimistic, regardless of the day. "Some days are better than the others. Always remember that we are making a huge impact in our patients' and their families' lives."





Hospice Hero West Oahu

AMY BARROGA, RN

Amy Barroga's outstanding work and dedication to the Islands Hospice mission makes her our September West Oahu Hospice hero. Amy is a registered nurse for Team Anela, serving patients in Ewa Beach, Makakilo and Waipahu.

Amy's sister passed away at a fairly young age, and although Amy was off-island during her last days, she now takes comfort knowing that she is able to help others in similar situations.

Throughout her two and a half years with Islands Hospice, what she remembers most are the moments of strength and gratitude shown by the families of patients. She also sees tremendous growth from ohana and recalls a family who initially had a difficult time with their mother's disease progression. After speaking with the family members at the bedside and providing active listening and education, the family expressed their gratitude to Amy for all she did to support their loved one. "That truly meant a great deal," Amy remembered.

From collaborating with doctors and other members of the interdisciplinary team to making home visits with patients to evaluate their condition, Amy's provides support, education, symptom and pain management, active listening, and comfort according to patients' needs at the end of life. "To know that I am able to provide support in all ways possible, to build trust and share laughter and smiles, truly makes my heart happy," Amy explained.

She places great value on building relationships with patients, families, and caregivers. Additionally, she recognizes the importance of cultivating bonds with her fellow coworkers, calling her Islands Hospice colleagues her "work-family." She exclaimed, "No matter what, we are always there for one another in any way, shape, or form!"

Volunteer Spotlight: Karen Sumida

After both of her parents utilized hospice care, Karen Sumida became familiar with the support that a hospice team can provide to patients and families. Karen is now an outstanding volunteer at Islands Hospice, giving back to families like hers by providing companionship and a comforting presence for their loved ones.

A few times a month, Karen visits with patients at our care homes, usually sitting with them and lending a friendly ear. She also helps our patients have fun and active days by helping them make their way to the common room for activities.

Karen works part-time at Olivet Baptist preschool and is an active volunteer with Queens Medical Center Oncology unit, Kuakini Medical Center, Kahala Nui Nursing Home, food pantries, and various churches.

"I enjoy spending time with the patients, cheering them up, talking story, giving them companionship," Karen explained. "I get so much out of hearing each patient's stories and their life experiences."



MAUI CORNER



CARMELIT PATROCINIO

Certified Nurse Aide

Get to know our Maui Team

How long have you worked at Islands Hospice?

I've worked at Islands Hospice for two years and two months.

What do you do at Islands Hospice?

My role at Islands hospice is to care for our patients and tend to their personal needs. I also report our patients' current conditions.

Describe a typical workday.

Every day includes home/personal care for each patient, care facility visits and assisting patients with daily living activities. My goal is to make sure every patient is properly cared for and cherished at the end of each day.

What is your favorite part about working at Islands Hospice?

My favorite part about working at Islands Hospice is taking care of the patients. Our supportive and awesome team also plays a big role in why I love working at Islands Hospice. Everyone is willing to lend a helping hand whenever it's needed. Thank you so much to everyone who has helped me.

Do you have any special memories from your time working here?

I have fond memories of taking care of patients who live on their own. I enjoy spending time and talking with them, so they don't feel alone. I want to bring them joy, even if it's only with a visit. When these patients pass away, it saddens me to walk past their homes as I remember them. I ensure that every patient I care for feels appreciated, and understands that they each have a special place in my heart.

What is your background?

I grew up in the Philippines. My parents were already in Hawaii, but my sister and I didn't move until I was fourteen years old. I went to Maui High School and had many part-time jobs as a student. I have always worked hard from a young age. Now, I am married and have two children. I worked in the kitchen at Hale Makua for ten years and then went back to school to get my CNA certificate.

Is there anything about your background that inspired you to work at Islands Hospice/in hospice care?

Before I worked at Islands Hospice I worked at Hale Makua as a CNA. That role helped to provide a passion and foundation in caring for elderly patients.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I like to spend time alone by walking around my neighborhood. It is my favorite stress reliever. I also volunteer by helping to clean Christ the King Church on the weekends. I am also involved with Christ the King's cancer ministry as well as Relay for Life.

Is there anything else you want to share with your fellow colleagues?

First of all, thank you to everyone. I really appreciate each and every one of you who have helped me along this journey. I know we have a very difficult job, and I admire how we all work as one big team where nobody is left behind. I am so thankful to be a part of such a fun and great team. Thank you for this opportunity to share my experience.



ASK THE EXPERT



MALIA GOMES, RN

Director of Clinical Services,
Maui

How to Cultivate Calm in the Chaos

At work and in our personal lives, there are numerous stressors that can send our nervous system into overdrive — intense meetings, kids, relationships, financial obligations, just to name a few. We all know the feeling of days that just don't seem to go as planned. One spilled cup of coffee in the morning, the anticipation of a difficult meeting, and other worries can snowball into what seems like a day of chaos.

With so many hectic days and things that come at us that are beyond our control, it may surprise you to learn that the most common source of stress is ourselves. Our own internal self-worry and fear of the unknown is usually the root of our physical and emotional symptoms of stress.

While working with patients or behind the scenes, it's important that we are able to stay calm and collected during moments of chaos, so we can better see the bigger picture, hone in on what needs to be done, and give our patients and families the support they need during their difficult time. When we're calm, we are better able to recognize issues and respond appropriately.

As a former ICU, ER, and urgent care nurse, I became familiar with fast-paced environments and learned how to cope during chaotic situations. I often apply the lessons and experiences I've gained from dealing with stressful situations to my work at Islands Hospice.

Here are a few tricks and tips I have for cultivating calm amidst chaos:

1. Start your morning on the right foot. Develop a calm and peaceful morning routine that allows you to take a moment to get yourself in the right frame of mind before your day begins.
2. Respond rather than react. A reaction is often instinctual, hasty and sometimes tense or aggressive. A response is more thought out and involves exploring options or outcomes. By responding instead of reacting you can de-escalate tense or stressful situations.
3. Be present in the moment. When things feel disorderly, take time to connect with others around you and offer undivided attention.
4. Show empathy and compassion towards others. When you show empathy and compassion, it helps others with responding in ways that offer solutions to difficult situations.

Stress means different things to different people, and everyone may have their own tricks for coping with life's challenges. By staying cool when life throws wrenches in our days, we are better able to improve patient care, take care of ourselves, and provide support to each other.

