



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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May 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

The graduation season has arrived, a time of celebration and reflection. The Pacific Buddhist Academy, the high school of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha tradition, conducted its Baccalaureate Service at Hawaii Betsuin on May 17 and the Commencement Ceremony at the Moanalua High School Performing Arts Center on May 19. This year marks the 18th graduation at PBA, and we are proud to announce that 13 students have successfully graduated from their Alma Mater, ready to embark on their next journey.

Mr. Joshua Hernandez Morse, the Head of School at PBA, asked me to come up with an appropriate Kanji phrase for the cover of the Baccalaureate/Commencement Program for their graduation. After careful contemplation, I chose the Kanji phrase "白色白光 (*Byaku-Shiki-Byak-Ko*)," which translates to "White Color, White Radiance." This phrase comes from the Amida Sutra, and here is a part of the sutra that includes the phrase I chose.

"Again, Sariputra, in the Land of Perfect Bliss there are many pools of seven kinds of jewels, full of water with the eight excellent qualities. ... There are lotus flowers, as large as chariot wheels, growing in the pools. Those of blue color emit blue radiance; those of yellow color emit yellow radiance; those of red color emit red radiance; and those of white color emit white radiance. They are exquisite, wonderful, fragrant and pure. Sariputra, the Land of Perfect Bliss is filled with such splendor and adornments."

In the rich tapestry of life, every flower and every life, no matter how different, adds to the beauty of the whole. Buddha-Dharma teaches us that the essence of life is interconnectedness. This truth of interconnectedness goes beyond race, religion, gender, and any other distinctions that may seem to divide us. This specific section in the Amida Sutra tells us that each flower shines with its unique color and contributes to the beauty of the whole. Its message of "you are beautiful just the way you are" affirms our individuality and, at the same time, encourages us to recognize and value the unique qualities that each person brings to the collective human experience. By embracing differences, we not only enrich our own lives but also contribute to a more harmonious and peaceful world.

I hope that the graduating students will discover the beauty in every aspect of life and strive to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels accepted, valued, and empowered to contribute their unique skills and experiences. Congratulations and Best Wishes to the Class of 2024!

Namo Amida Butsu

Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani



Calligraphy of
"Byaku-Shiki-Byak-Ko" written
by Mrs. Minako Kamuro

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF JODO SHINSHU HONGWANJI-HA BISHOP SHOYU OGINO FOR 2024 PBA BACCALAUREATE

Congratulations, class of 2024 graduates!

Graduation marks the end of one of many chapters in one's lifetime, while at the same time it is also the starting point as you embark on a new goal. As you look back on your days at the Pacific Buddhist Academy, cherishing the many fond memories such as classes, Artist Showcases, Sports Festival, field trips, and unforgettable encounters with your friends, you are about to leave the nest of PBA.

Please remember that you have come this far and have such bright futures ahead, thanks to the warm support and sincere guidance from your families, teachers, and the precious time you have spent with your friends.

In January, a massive earthquake hit the Noto Peninsula (Ishikawa Prefecture) in Japan, devastating a number of communities in the area. Many people lost their homes and were left with no choice but to evacuate. While extending my sincere sympathy and hoping for a speedy recovery, I would like to reaffirm our institutional support in the relief efforts of the affected regions. I would also like to express my deep respect to all, not only from across Japan but also from overseas, who have reached out in support of the quake-stricken area. Their kind reaction reaffirms how important it is to offer sympathy and support to someone in need of help.

On the other hand, cruel and outrageous warfare, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine and armed conflict between Israel and Hamas, have taken place one after another, victimizing many people and filling their lives with suffering and sorrow. Conflict arises when one party insists on their own legitimacy without recognizing other views. By acknowledging each other despite having different values, we are able to avoid forcing others to go through painful experiences and create a society in which everyone can live in peace and harmony.

Shinran Shonin also lived during an anxious age filled with war in which disasters and famines successively broke out. In such times, he lived among the most marginalized people and tried to free them from anxiety by telling them that they are the object of Amida Buddha's salvific working.

Here at PBA, you have encountered Buddhism and particularly Shinran Shonin's teaching, which allows you to be aware that no one can live alone, and that each one of us is interrelated and mutually supported. That way of living can be realized only when we try to feel others' sufferings and sorrows as our own.

As you move forward, you will encounter many happy, sad, as well as difficult events and in dealing with them, you may be driven to become selfish as being overwhelmed with fear or hatred. When you are in such a situation, the Buddhist teaching can serve as a guide.

I hope you continue following the Buddhist path, placing your palms together as you express your feeling of gratitude and share in the joy and sadness of others without putting yourself first. As you each cultivate a bright future with your own energized motivation, I close by once again extending my congratulations to you.

May 17, 2024

Governor General OGINO Shoyu
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR 2024 PBA BACCALAUREATE



Congratulatory message to the Pacific Buddhist Academy Class of 2024 on behalf of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Bishop Toshiyuki Umitani, Head of School Josh Morse, ministers, teachers, parents and most importantly, the graduating class of 2024, good evening. It is my privilege to offer congratulations on behalf of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to you, the Pacific Buddhist Academy Class of 2024. We, the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, consider ourselves to be a parent or a partner organization to the Pacific Buddhist Academy. We are proud and happy that you chose the Pacific Buddhist Academy.

Today I would like to share with you a quote which is credited to Mr. Nainoa Thompson, one of the original navigators aboard the sailing vessel Hōkūle‘a (Star of Gladness). You may have learned about the sailing vessel Hōkūle‘a, first built and launched in the 1970s (way before you were born) as a way to preserve the voyaging heritage of the Polynesian people and help to restore their cultural identity.

Mr. Nainoa Thompson learned the ancient way of navigating (also called wayfaring) the open ocean using the waves, currents, wind and stars. Hōkūle‘a has sailed throughout the Pacific and recently completed a round-the-world voyage. Imagine sailing thousands of miles across the open ocean without modern instruments. This is an incredible feat.

Mr. Thompson, in speaking about the art of wayfaring has said, **“You only know where you are when you navigate by memorizing where you have come from.”** Imagine that you are in the middle of the Pacific Ocean: “You only know where you are when you navigate by memorizing where you have come from.”

I am using this phrase as a metaphor that can apply to any of us here today. But especially for you, graduates, as you navigate your way through life. The person that you are today is a result of everything that has happened to you and around you. It includes the skills, knowledge and values that you have gained through your hard work, nurtured by your parents and your school community. And, it includes the qualities of diligence, patience, dana (selfless giving), compassion and gratitude that you have developed. All of these are “where you have come from.”

We know that the journey of life doesn’t always go exactly the way that we plan. Plans change. You will have your own challenges. The saying goes, “Life is a bumpy road.”

If, at sometime in the future, you are disoriented or unsure of your path, then remember Mr. Nainoa Thompson’s words, **“You only know where you are when you navigate by memorizing where you have come from,”** because “where you have come from” is a wonderful place.

Aloha and Best Wishes,
Namo Amida Butsu.

Dr. Warren Tamamoto
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii



Pacific Buddhist Academy Class of 2024

2025-2029 HONGWANJI THEME AND SLOGAN

The New Five-Year Theme and Slogans from 2025 to 2029

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| 2025: | Nurturing Nembutsu: Cultivating Awareness |
| 2026: | Nurturing Nembutsu: Sharing Gratitude |
| 2027: | Nurturing Nembutsu: Living Aloha |
| 2028: | Nurturing Nembutsu: Embracing Everyone |
| 2029: | Nurturing Nembutsu: Expanding Community |

The founder of our tradition Jodo Shinshu Buddhism, Shinran Shonin emphatically taught that the Nembutsu, the name of Amida Buddha, verbalized as “Namo Amida Butsu” is an expression of gratitude, a manifestation of the attainment of the entrusting heart or shinjin, which is the decisive cause for our birth in Amida’s Pure Land. Moreover, according to Shinran Shonin as quoted in the *Tannisho*, only the Nembutsu is true, real and sincere, because the Nembutsu is the timeless, boundless reality that is beyond the confines of deluded thinking in the realm of samsaric existence.

The Nembutsu, vocalized in response to the Buddha’s inner voice, makes us aware of who or what we truly are as foolish, deluded human beings, utterly incapable of awakening to our true selves as enlightened beings through our own self effort. The Nembutsu is our way of expressing and sharing gratitude for Amida’s benevolence in offering us a way to transcend the pain and suffering of all sentient beings. Amida Buddha’s compassion is all-embracing, meaning everyone, regardless of racial, social, and cultural differences, is included; not one sentient being suffering in the world of delusion is ever excluded.

The name of the Buddha, expressed in Namo Amida Butsu, in sincere gratitude is the spiritual nurturing that awakens us to the universality of our suffering and limitations in samsaric existence. This nurturing, in response to the Buddha’s call, brings us to place the teaching of the Buddha at the center of our thoughts and fosters a desire to live in peace, harmony, tolerance, and genuine caring, embracing everyone of our fellow travelers not only in the Pure Land way but also in the community we are living in

with its many differences in the ways to spiritual fulfillment and awakening, very much like living the Aloha spirit that has always been a part of our Hawaiian culture.

Every moment of our lives is within the nurturing call of Amida Buddha. In contemplating Amida Buddha through the recitation of the Nembutsu, we are enabled to break through the boundaries of our thoughts and words and open our minds to experience our true nature and reality as is.

Namo Amida Butsu.

Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani
Bishop

Rev. Sol Kalu
Office of Buddhist Education

**The Theme and Slogans were created by representatives from the following organizations/committees: Commission on Buddhist Education, Buddhist Study Center Program Committee, Ministerial Training Committee, State Ministers Association, and the Headquarters.*

MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Rev. Joshin Kamuro, an Associate Minister of the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin, will be relieved from his current assignment and will be transferred to the Mililani Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister as of August 1, 2024.

Rev. Blayne Nakasone Sakata, an Associate Minister of the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin and the Chaplain of the Pacific Buddhist Academy, will be relieved from his current assignments and will be transferred to the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Associate Minister as of August 1, 2024. He will also oversee the Hamakua Temples (Honohina-Papaalooa, Honomu, and Papaikou Hongwanji Missions) with Rimban Kazunori Takahashi.

Rev. Barbara Brennan, a Kaikyoshi-ho (Minister's Aide) assigned to the Kailua Hongwanji Mission (DBA Windward Buddhist Temple), will resign from the active ministry at the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii as of July 31, 2024. Rev. Barbara has been serving Hawaii Kyodan as a Kaikyoshi-ho Minister since November 2022.

Rev. David Fujimoto, currently serving at Moiliili Hongwanji Mission as its Resident Minister and overseeing Ewa Hongwanji Mission as its Oversee Minister, will be assigned as the School Chaplain at the Pacific Buddhist Academy as of August 1, 2024.

INTRODUCING OUR COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR



Aloha, *HQ Update* readership! I am Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii's Communications Coordinator, a new position created through a resolution approved at the 2023 Legislative Assembly. As currently configured, the position is a half-time, salaried position and my regular workdays are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Previously, I contracted with HHMH to maintain the hongwanjihawaii.com website, which I rebuilt in 2016 in collaboration with Pieper Toyama. Maintaining this

website as well as the Buddhist Study Center (BSC) website is now part of the Communications Coordinator job. I also work with Reverend Baba, the Executive Assistant to the Bishop, in managing Facebook pages and YouTube channels for HHMH and BSC as well as the HHMH Instagram account. Duties are evolving for the new position, but so far, they have also included writing and editing, setting up online registration forms and payment, assisting with hybrid meetings and events, updating statewide calendars, video editing, and advising Hongwanji temples and organizations on issues related to websites and domain names.

Ever since a high school English project in which I helped make an auto-advancing slide show about realism in literature (think carousels, not PowerPoint 😊), I have been drawn to projects that put text, images, and other media together to communicate. Since that time, I majored in English/Creative Writing, worked in software documentation, taught myself HTML to create websites, produced a short documentary, and climbed the learning curve for producing “hybrid” events (in person and online).

My move to Headquarters was a short one — just down the corridor. Since the fall of 2021, I served in interim staff roles at Hawaii Betsuin to help bridge a series of staff transitions. I remain a Hawaii Betsuin board member and volunteer, including as part of the Sunday Service hybrid team. My wife Penny and I and our daughter Koki have been part of Hawaii Betsuin since 2011, when we moved to Honolulu from Seattle just before Koki started at Pacific Buddhist Academy.

A half-time Communications Coordinator cannot fulfill everyone’s wish list. I do invite you to reach out, however, for thoughts, assistance, and advice in the communications arena. The more I know of your needs and challenges, the more I and our Social Media Team (an HHMH “special committee” facilitated by Rev. Kerry Kiyohara) can help. My email address is datcheson@honpahi.org or you can leave a message for me by calling HHMH at (808) 522-9200. Looking forward to working with you!

David Acheson

TRIPLE CELEBRATION

Room Reservations at Ala Moana Hotel

The Triple Celebration Steering Committee has reserved a room block at the Ala Moana Hotel. The advantage of our room block is no resort fees, complimentary high-speed internet / Wi-Fi, & use of the fitness center. Currently only 30 of the 85 rooms have been reserved. Please make your reservation before August 6, 2024. If you would like to have a “staycation,” the room block is available 3 days before and 3 days after the celebration.



Kona Tower	\$194.00 plus tax
Waikiki Tower	\$224.00 plus tax
No resort fees	



Online:

If you would like to reserve online, use this link: <https://book.passkey.com/e/50708991>

Reservation by phone:

Local call 808-955-4811

Toll free 800-367-6025

Be sure to mention Honpa Hongwanji Triple Celebration.

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL CONCERNS

Dana Matching Grant Program

To encourage the practice of Dana and to amplify the power of giving, the Committee on Social Concerns has established the “Dana Matching Grant” program to enable temples and organizations affiliated with the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii the ability to double the impact of their charitable giving in the community.

Dana is the Buddhist teaching of *selfless giving* and encourages us to care for others without expecting anything in return. Offering financial support to nonprofit organizations and programs aligned with Buddhist values promotes a temple-based culture of compassion and service that seeks to alleviate suffering in our world. We encourage all temples and affiliated organizations to share our Buddhist values by actively supporting nonprofit organizations and programs serving your community.

The Dana Matching Grant will match your temple or affiliated organization’s donation amount—dollar-for-dollar up to \$1500 per grant—to double the impact of your Dana in the greater community.

Example: Jr. YBA wants to support a local nonprofit focused on alleviating hunger in the greater community. Jr. YBA plans a fundraiser, applies for the Dana Matching Grant program in advance, achieves fund-raising goals, receives the Dana Matching Grant and, thus, is able to double the impact of their Dana.

Grant Information

1. Any temple or organization affiliated with the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii may request any number of matching grants totaling \$1,500.00 per calendar year.
2. To apply, submit a letter indicating the following:
 - Name and address of non-profit organization or program being supported and for what purpose.
 - Amount your temple or organization plans to donate.
 - Amount being requested in matching funds.
 - Temple/Organization President, Resident Minister or Advisor must sign letter.
 - Letter should be addressed to:
Committee on Social Concerns
Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
1727 Pali Highway
Honolulu, HI 96813
Attn: Rev. Blayne Higa, Chair

Or Email to: bhiga@honpahi.org

3. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis as they are received.
4. If approved, a check will be remitted to your temple/organization to be included with your donation.
5. A copy of your donation letter to the nonprofit organization or program must be sent to the Committee on Social Concerns.

BSC SUMMER SESSION

Save The Dates

Summer Session – August 5-9, 2024

6-8pm - Held In-person and via Zoom

The 50th Annual Buddhist Study Center Summer Session features Rev. Dr. Kenji Akahoshi in an interactive learning opportunity on:

“Shifting From ‘Please’ to ‘Thank You’ – A Path to Awakening”
A contemporary interpretation of Shin Buddhism

For all those seeking solutions to common concerns, Shin has provided a path for ordinary people for 800 years. Relevant to newcomer and experienced travelers on the Buddhist path.

Each session will be an interactive workshop that leads to an experience of the benefits of Shin Buddhism. This is a practical guide of how being a Shin Buddhist in the 21st century can resolve many issues.

Come learn how to bring joy into the flow of ordinary life. For more information and registration, visit: <https://bschawaii.org/summer-session/> or contact the Buddhist Study Center.

PROPAGATION PROGRAM GRANT

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii “Propagation Program Grant Committee” would like to announce to all of you that “Propagation Program Grant” is available to all of you for “New and wonderful ideas for propagating Nembutsu teachings into our community.” Would you like to share your wonderful and creative Dharma projects with all of our community? If so, take action right away! We all are looking forward to seeing your innovative ideas!

The committee reviews all grants applications, which meet the following criteria:

1. New, innovative, creative ideas or activities focusing on Buddhist Education and the propagation of the Dharma.
2. Each project may be funded only once within 5 years.
3. The maximum amount of the grant must not exceed \$10,000.00
4. The project would have statewide implications/potential.

For more information regarding this program or to apply, please check with your resident minister or HQ.