



Lisa Wood, Veterinarian, Hawai'i Island
Lisa grew up on the Big Island of Hawai'i and graduated from Hawai'i Preparatory Academy. She received a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science from Colorado State University and a

DVM from Washington State University. Following graduation, Lisa moved back home and began work in Kamuela at Veterinary Associates, Inc. She has been involved in several community groups, including Hawaii Quarter Horse Association, Hawaii County 4-H and Hawai'i Cattlemen's Association. Most recently, she serves as the Vice President of the Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council, the state umbrella group.

"It is a privilege to participate in the Ag Leadership program. I hope to broaden my understanding of different agricultural commodities and to gain a better perspective of the many complex issues our industry faces."



Fung Yang, President, Small Kine Farm, O'ahu
Owner of O'ahu Community Recycling and Small Kine Farm, Yang has channeled his appreciation of clear blue waters and sunny skies into passion for

preserving the environment and entrepreneurial spirit to create an innovative, sustainable business model. Yang developed a way to repurpose local tree trimmings into valuable substrate for organic mushrooms. After being awarded the USDA Small Business Innovative Research Grant in 2009, he was able to turn his composting research into a certified organic mushroom farm.

"I am a believer of a business model with triple bottom line. People, planet and profit are all equally important to me."

The Agricultural Leadership Program

The Agricultural Leadership Program is for promising leaders from Hawai'i's agricultural, natural resource management, and rural community sectors. By combining strong leadership development content with exposure to organizations, agricultural operations and community networks, participants have an opportunity to understand the complex relationships that create challenges, which demand innovative thinking and collaborative decision making for leaders in this State. Through this Program, leaders will develop the knowledge, relationships, tools and skills that will enable them to be more successful in their work and all community endeavors. The training is designed for individuals who have already demonstrated a commitment to lead in their line of work or community activities.

During the 17 months in 2015 and 2016 Class XV will attend a series of seven seminars and a two-week national trip. Content areas integral to agriculture in Hawai'i will be imbedded in each seminar and participants will have an opportunity to design parts of the seminars to meet their specific interests. Leadership, conflict resolution and mediation as well as communication and facilitation skills will be taught by Peter Adler, Ph.D., Donna Ching Ph.D. and Pauline Sato, the Agricultural Leadership Program Director.

The Foundation is supported by annual contributions from the program alumni and board members. Additional financial support for Class XV participants has been provided by:

- **Ulupono Fund at the Hawai'i Community Foundation,**
- **Kamehameha Schools,**
- **Dupont Pioneer, and**
- **Hawaiian Earth Products**

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Agricultural Leadership Program

CLASS XV 2015-2016

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Meet Class XV



Joey Char, Land Asset Manager Kamehameha Schools, O`ahu
Joey Char is a Land Asset Manager with Kamehameha Schools, a private charitable educational trust endowed by the will of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop to improve the capability and well-being of Hawaiians

through education. Joey oversees a portfolio that includes Punalu`u Valley, a lush ahupua`a located in Windward Oahu consisting of 300 acres of diversified agriculture, 3,200 acres of conservation land, and 36 residential beach lots. He also manages 110 acres of diversified agriculture and 3,700 acres of conservation land in East Oahu from Hawai`i Kai to Mānoa. For more information on the Kamehameha Schools mission and its Land Assets Division, visit <http://www.ksbe.edu/land/index>

"In life there is no summit. Enjoy the climb."



Alex Connelly, Network Coordinator, Kua`āina Ulu `Auamo (KUA), O`ahu
KUA is a local non-profit, with a mission to support community-driven mālama `āina efforts across the islands. Alex serves as the E Alu Pū network coordinator, linking 31 grassroots organizations to together

increase their effectiveness in caring for their biocultural heritage. Alex is a dancer of Hālau Mōhala `Ilima and lives in Waipao with her partner, Rick Barboza and their two keiki.

"I am excited to learn from and collaborate with the cohort on ways to strengthen food security and contribute to `āina momona. In this, I believe the more connected we are to each other and our places, the better we can work together and the healthier our communities and food systems will be."



Megan Fox, Director of Operations, Mālama Kaua`i
Megan joined the Mālama Kaua`i team in 2013 and supports sustainable agriculture and education based programs including the Kaua`i School Garden Network, Village Harvest gleaning, Roots of Kaua`i Green

Careers Certificate, Island-wide Gardening Certificate, and helps to operate the headquarters - a 7-acre Community Farm. She has a B.S. in Management and Public Policy with a minor in Human Resources, is Secretary of the Kaua`i Master Gardener Program Advisory Board, and is passionate about aloha `āina and stewardship of natural resources.

"Being newer to Hawai`i than many of my peers, I'm very honored with the opportunity to participate in ALP, create connections, and absorb the mana`o of other voices who are passionate about agriculture across our islands."



Catherine Toth-Fox, Journalist, Freelance writer and Blogger, O`ahu
A 1992 Roosevelt High graduate, she earned her bachelor's degree in English from the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa and a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University. For about 10

years, she worked as a reporter at The Honolulu Advertiser and a college journalism instructor. Currently, she writes for local and national publications, serves as editor of the Hawai`i Farm Bureau's quarterly magazine, and helps at Mari's Gardens, a soil-less farm in Mililani with her husband and Ag Leader alumnus Kai Fox.

"Writers have a unique opportunity to engage a broad audience and share with them what's going on in our communities, and I feel particularly committed to affecting change with my writing, to influence ideas and to inspire people to action."



Taylor Kellerman, Operations Lead, Monsanto Hawaii, O`ahu
Born and raised in Kailua, O`ahu Taylor earned his degree in Tropical Agriculture from U.H. Hilo. His career began with pineapple at Del Monte Fresh Produce in Kunia, and then with Maui Pineapple

Company in Hali`imaile. He moved to Hawai`i's seed industry in 2007 with Monsanto, and currently works as the Operations Lead for the Kunia farm. His position includes management of all agronomic inputs, land and resource management, and facilities maintenance. He is very proud of working to ensure our farmland and neighboring areas are properly cared for.

"Agriculture is unique in the sense that the work of few impacts the lives of many. It is up to us to ensure that this impact is positive for both now and the future. The only way we can accomplish this is by working together."



Joao Kopytowski Filho, Research Scientist, DuPont Pioneer, Kaua`i
Joao was born and raised in Brazil and received his Ph.D. in Agronomy from Sao Paulo State University where he researched absorption of heavy metals in mushrooms. He also worked in various

areas of agriculture in the government and help to write organic mushroom certification standards in Brazil. Joao came to Hawai`i in 2007 to manage a mushroom farm. Currently, he is a scientist working on mapping, soil conservation plan, crop protection and phytosanitation.

"If we want agriculture to survive in Hawaii, let's collaborate cohesively, embrace technology and innovative concepts and at the same time be mindful of the lands of Hawai`i. I am eager to contribute and strengthen agriculture in Hawai`i!"



Brett Miller, Winemaker, Maui
Raised in a small farming community in Oregon, Brett received a BS in Biology and Chemistry from Linfield College. He has worked in multiple countries in all aspects of the wine industry, including: vineyard development, vineyard

management, winemaking and community relations. Brett has been Maui Wine's Winemaker since January of 2014 and enjoys the challenges and rewards of farming upcountry Maui. His goal is to work sustainably with the land to grow wines that express the unique characteristics of Maui.

"I am new to the agriculture community in Hawai`i, but am in awe of the potential that we have. I am excited to further develop my understanding and connection to Hawaii agriculture, and help it grow into the future."



David Penn, Wildlife Access and Acquisitions Coordinator, Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit, University of Hawai`i-Mānoa, O`ahu
David grew up in the Hudson River Valley, migrating to Hawai`i after working in construction, fuel extraction, and golf

course/ski area operations across the Rocky Mountains. In partnership with the State Division of Forestry and Wildlife, he promotes the value of wild game animals for food security and fosters cooperation among hunters, natural resource managers, and agricultural producers. David earned advanced degrees in geography and law and serves on the Honolulu Clean Water and Natural Lands Commission.

"Agriculture forms the backbone of our past and future island society, rooted in precise environmental observations that underlie native Hawaiian beliefs, values, and practices. The Agricultural Leadership Program provides unique opportunities to create synergy between traditional and contemporary production systems."



Steve Russo, Regulatory Education and Outreach Specialist, O`ahu
Having worked in tourism since 1996, Steve made the logical choice to come to Hawai`i in 2001. He attended the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Natural

Resource and Environmental Management. In 2009, Steve became an inspector with the department of Agriculture's Pesticide Program. Three years ago, he moved from the enforcement section to the education section of the program where he now focuses his efforts on educating farmers on safe pesticide use, minimizing environmental impacts while using pesticides, integrated pest management and related topics. Steve is an avid hiker, SCUBA diver, gardener and surfer and loves all things outdoors.

"The possibilities of the future shouldn't be controlled by the limitations of the past."



Kori Sakahashi, IPM Lead Agronomist, Syngenta, Kaua`i
Born and raised on Kaua`i, Kori received his BS in Biology from Brigham Young University – Hawai`i. In his current position at Syngenta he oversees the responsible management of pesticide applications. Kori is currently

volunteering as a Scoutmaster in Kāne`ohe, and enjoys teaching the troop outdoor skills and educating them about preserving Hawai`i's natural beauty. He hopes that his example of service and integrity will influence the youth that he works with.

"With Hawaii's diverse biospheres and agriculture, we have the capability to be the leaders for innovative agricultural techniques. We should never be content with the progress we've made, but continue to strive for improvements."



Jacob Tavares, Human and Labor Relations Specialist / Rancher, Maui
After receiving his BBA from Gonzaga University, Jacob brought his education back to Maui in an effort to re-invigorate the rural and agricultural communities of Hawai`i. Working for

Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company in a variety of roles, including planning for the company's long term success in agriculture, has served as a reminder of the many challenges Hawai`i agriculture faces. When he isn't on the plantation, Jacob spends his time working on his pastures, managing his cow calf operation in East Maui.

"The foundation of economics, supply and demand, gives hope and promise that sustainable agriculture in Hawaii is a model worth investing in. Through honest leadership and discourse, I believe that agriculture can help diversify and preserve the Hawaii we all love."



Carolyn Unser, SunEdison, O`ahu
Carolyn Unser currently works for SunEdison where she serves as the Community Outreach Coordinator in Hawai`i which includes grassroots community outreach, interaction at the local and state level, and collaborative

efforts with community leaders, residents, and project stakeholders. Her background includes a B.S from the University of Vermont in Plant and Soil Science and a M.S. from the University of Hawai`i in Natural Resource and Environmental Management with a focus on bioremediation using native Hawaiian wetland plants.

"This paradigm shift that acknowledges nature's intelligence and willingness to act on climate change requires a network of individuals working toward changing our negative habits. I'm hopeful to meet others interested in and already working towards solutions while enjoying the ride!"