

Investing in Smile Makers for Healthy Smiles.



MISSION: To Improve Oral Health in Hawaii

Highlights:



Mission: Improve Oral Health in Hawaii

In addition to providing grants for deserving nonprofit organizations, the HDS Foundation continued to advance its own initiatives to improve oral health care in Hawaii, focusing on the needs of keiki and kupuna through its signature programs: **Dentist by One, Seal Away Decay, Kupuna Smiles, and Smile Makers.**



\$2 million in Grants to 11 Nonprofit Organizations

The HDS Foundation gave over \$2 million in grants to 11 nonprofit organizations throughout the state to support programs that promote oral health education, prevent oral disease, promote workforce development, and increase access to dental care for underserved populations.



\$12,000 in Smile Fund Grants

The HDS Foundation gave four nonprofit organizations a total of \$12,000 in Smile Fund grants. The Smile Fund is intended to support small-scale projects that take an innovative and collaborative approach to promote oral health. Requests are accepted at any time during the year for grants of less than \$5,000.



Distributed More Than 35,000 SmileKits

The HDS Foundation donated over 35,000 SmileKits, consisting of a toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss, to 66 organizations conducting oral health education in the community.



Dentist by One Distributed 4,540 Dentist By One Packets

As a part of our effort to promote oral health amongst our youngest keiki, the HDS Foundation donated 4,540 Dentist By One packets to hospitals statewide. The packets include an infant toothbrush and information for new parents upon discharge from the hospital. The packets also encourage parents to take their baby to a dentist by their first birthday.



Seal Away Decay

Provided Dental Screenings for over 2,000 Second and Third Graders

In partnership with Hawaii Keiki, the Seal Away Decay program provided no-cost dental screenings to 2,141 elementary school students at 89 different schools on Oahu, Maui, Kauai, Molokai, and Hawaii Island. Of those who were screened, 65% received sealants.



Kupuna Smiles

Trained over 265 Nurses on Oral Hygiene Care for Senior Citizens

Through the Kupuna Smiles program, the HDS Foundation facilitated hands-on oral health training led by dental hygienists for 265 nurses and caregivers at long-term care facilities on Oahu and Kauai. Caregivers learned how to use oral health tools to make brushing easier, about the connection between oral health and whole-body health, and more.



Smile Makers

Created New Workforce Development Program, "Smile Makers"

Smile Makers is a workforce development program developed to encourage Hawaii residents to pursue oral health careers. In doing so, we aim to strengthen our dental workforce and increase access to oral health care in Hawaii. As a part of Smile Makers, the HDS Foundation has distributed educational materials about dental careers to schools and dental offices across the state. We also connect educators with oral health career speakers, fund workforce training and events, and more.



Awarded \$122,000 in Student Scholarships

Eight dental students and 14 dental hygiene students received HDS scholarships for the 2025-2026 school year. Since the scholarship program was established in 2018, the HDS Foundation has distributed 86 scholarships totaling \$550,000 to Hawaii students as a part of our effort to strengthen Hawaii's dental workforce.



Actively Involved in the Hawaii Oral Health Coalition

The HDS Foundation team has been actively involved in the Hawaii Oral Health Coalition, a statewide coalition of oral health stakeholders who work collaboratively to improve oral health in Hawaii.



Grant Highlights:

Aloha Medical Mission - \$200,000

Aloha Medical Mission provides free dental services for uninsured individuals at their Honolulu clinic. They also provided free restorative services for women reentering society after incarceration or survivors of domestic violence through their Welcome Smiles program.

American Heart Association - \$199,066

The HDS Foundation continues to support "A Lifetime of Healthy Smiles Starts with Healthy Hearts," a partnership with the American Heart Association to involve oral health clinicians in the prevention and early detection of heart disease. Dental office staff received training in hypertension awareness and learned how to properly screen and monitor the blood pressure of their patients. Initially established for dental clinics on Oahu, the program successfully expanded its reach to Kauai over the past year.

Dental Lifeline Network - \$20,000

Dental Lifeline Network (DLN) provides no-cost comprehensive dental care to Hawaii's elderly, disabled, veteran, and/or medically fragile adults via a team of volunteer dentists and laboratories. This grant enables DLN to continue to offer dental treatment to individuals who could not afford to see a dentist elsewhere.

Hawaii Island Community Health Center - \$549,368

Hawaii Island Community Health Center (HICHC) will be opening a new dental clinic in Kailua-Kona to serve the west side of the Big Island. The new dental clinic will serve the adult population and increase its capacity to serve teenagers at their Kealahou dental clinic. Additionally, HICHC will contribute personnel and supplies to provide dental care to children in the Head Start and WIC programs on the east side of the island.

Kapiolani Community College, Dental Assisting Program - \$117,730

Kapiolani Community College will be expanding and enhancing its existing dental assisting program by offering a dental assisting course for local public high school students to explore dental assisting as a career, and a summer program for current dental assistants to learn new skills.

Molokai Community Health Center - \$348,906

Molokai Community Health Center (MCHC) provides dental services for the geographically isolated community of Molokai, with a focus on underserved individuals. MCHC recently completed the expansion of their dental clinic to address the urgent need for dentistry services on Molokai.

University of Hawaii Foundation - Hawaii Keiki - \$119,545

The Hawaii Keiki - HDS Sealant Program provides no-cost oral assessments and dental sealants to second- and third-grade students in high need public schools. Now in its sixth year, this program addresses the critical need for preventive care, helping Hawaii's keiki avoid painful dental issues through early intervention. The sealant program has expanded to charter schools and kindergarten screenings in the past year.

University of Hawaii Foundation - University of Hawaii Cancer Center - \$60,000

The University of Hawaii Cancer Center is launching a targeted campaign to educate underserved and rural communities on oral cancer risks. By combining localized community outreach with the distribution of specialized educational materials, the initiative aims to bridge the gap in cancer prevention and awareness.

Grant Highlights:

University of Hawaii - Loan Repayment Funds - \$250,000

The HDS Foundation is strengthening Hawaii's dental workforce by providing matching funds for state-administered Loan Repayment Programs. By alleviating educational debt, this initiative incentivizes dental professionals to practice locally and prioritizes the care of the state's most vulnerable, low-income populations.

University of Hawaii, Maui College - \$113,000

The University of Hawaii - Maui College is addressing the dental professional shortage by growing its dental hygiene capacity and resuming its dental assisting program. This school year, they welcomed four new students and two faculty members who live on the Big Island to join their dental hygiene program. The students participate in virtual classes and receive hands-on clinical training at Hawaii Island Community Health's dental clinics.

Waikiki Health - \$40,139

Waikiki Health works to provide accessible and affordable dental care to vulnerable populations. This grant will help Waikiki Health purchase advanced dental equipment essential to perform endodontic procedures, which will result in less discomfort and faster recovery for patients. The equipment will allow the clinic to see more patients at more affordable rates and will bolster the strength of the clinic's residency program.

Smile Fund:

Hawaii Children's Discovery Center - \$4,000

The Hawaii Children's Discovery Center received funding to enhance their Big Mouth Theater exhibit, an interactive exhibit that teaches children the importance of oral health in a fun and engaging way. The exhibit features hands-on activities, exhibit programming, and role-playing.

Hawaii Public Health Institute - \$2,750

The Hawaii Public Health Institute is dedicated to advancing public health statewide and specifically focuses on oral health through the work of its Hawaii Oral Health Coalition (HOHC). HOHC hosted a community health and wellness event with an emphasis on oral health for Maui residents. Through this event, the HOHC provided preventive dental services for over 50 community members.

Pali Momi Foundation & University of Hawaii Family Medicine Residency Program - \$400

The UH Family Medicine Residency Program has implemented specialized training for physician residents in preventive oral health care at Pali Momi Medical Center's primary care clinic. This initiative empowers residents to integrate oral health education and fluoride varnish applications into routine pediatric visits.

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center - \$4,876

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) has implemented a "Breathe Well. Smile Bright" campaign to reduce tobacco use and improve oral health among underserved Waianae Coast residents. They will provide culturally grounded education and oral health resources, while building lasting motivation to quit, preventing relapse, and maintaining healthy smiles.