

WFWP Hawai'i Team Participation in the 'Aha Ho'oponopono

Donna Shaver
June 6, 2025
University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu Campus, Kapolei



Sponsored by UH West O'ahu Hawaiian and Indigenous Health and Healing, Kūlana o Kapolei, 'Upena Moananuiākea, and the UH Center for Indigenous Innovation and Health Excellence, the 'Aha Ho'oponopono: *A Time to Partner* gathering brought together community leaders, cultural practitioners, and social sector professionals to discuss the perpetuation of 'ike kupuna (ancestral knowledge) and the practice of ho'oponopono (healing and reconciliation) in our personal lives, families, and communities.



The Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) Hawai'i Chapter—represented by members Yoshie

Yamada, Yuriko Harding, Debbie Nanod, Elizabeth Lim, and Donna Shaver—volunteered to support the event, held June 5–6, 2025, at the University of Hawai‘i West O‘ahu in Kapolei. With hearts open to learning, our intention was to serve with sincerity, deepen our understanding of Native Hawaiian culture, and build meaningful relationships that can support our collective efforts for peace.



Thoughtful Cultural Contributions

As part of our contribution, the WFWP-HI team was entrusted with designing and creating 20 culturally respectful centerpieces for the event. Acknowledging that none of our members are of Native Hawaiian descent, we approached the task with deep care and humility. We held several Zoom planning sessions to ensure cultural appropriateness and sensitivity in both concept and execution.



We chose to craft **pūolo** (pronounced *poo-OH-loh*), meaning "bundle" in Hawaiian, using large Ti-leaves sourced locally. Each pūolo was filled with handmade and meaningful gifts:

- **Microwave bowl holders** sewn with Hawaiian-print fabric by Debbie Nanod



- **Japanese origami ornaments** created by WFWP member Mrs. Yoshiko Ikawa
- **Lavender pouches of pa‘akai (Hawaiian salt)** gifted by James Shaver (Donna’s brother-in-law), lovingly *lomi* (rubbed/massaged) with ‘alae (volcanic red clay)
- **Mochi crunch/Arare (Japanese crackers) and local taro cookies**
- An **acrylic magnet frame** designed by Yoshie Yamada featuring an inspirational quote from Holy Mother Han alongside one from Queen Lili‘uokalani



These unique bundles were arranged as table centerpieces and, at the close of the event, were distributed to one attendee at each table via a random draw.

Assembly With Aloha

On the morning of June 3, 2025, our team gathered at the Mānoa home of Elizabeth Lim’s friend, where we worked together to assemble the pūolo. Over 120 Ti-leaves were harvested, and Elizabeth thoughtfully organized workstations and provided assembly instructions. Donna and Yuriko prepared the *pa‘akai* pouches, while the rest of the team worked on constructing the bundles. The activity spanned the day, and everyone brought food and refreshments to share for lunch, making it not just a service project but a bonding experience rooted in love and cooperation.