



Piha me ka Hau'oli

Full of Happiness

HAWAI'I MEALS ON WHEELS NEWSLETTER

FALL 2026

"Meals are an *anchor* for the day.
Mom knows she needs to get up.
She's curious about the food,
and she says hi to the volunteers.
She loves the fish, fruit, and juice!"
– Ashley



Spend a little time with **Emilia**, 76, and chances are you'll hear a story.

"She's very chatty," her daughter **Ashley**, 36, says with a laugh. Emilia, has a gift for breaking the ice and making people comfortable. Growing up, Ashley often found herself listening as her mom connected with those around her.

Emilia has been taking care of the people around her for most of her life. The eldest of eight children, she lost her father at 15 and stepped in to care for her younger siblings.



Emilia (left in white) with her daughter Ashley in the stroller with fellow Holiday Inn Express Waikiki laundry attendants.

She later immigrated from the Philippines and raised three children as a single mother. On O'ahu, she worked physically demanding jobs as a hotel laundry attendant. After raising her children, she was able to return to school to become a CNA.

That independence made what happened in 2021 especially difficult.

A tumor developed on Emilia's optic nerve, and even after its removal, she permanently lost vision in her eye. Driving was no longer safe, limiting her ability to attend church or run errands on her own.

"It drastically changed the trajectory of my mom's life," Ashley shares. "Her world became much smaller."

Preparing meals also became difficult. At the recommendation of her partner **Jessica**, Ashley reached out to Hawai'i Meals on Wheels.

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HAWAII MEALS ON WHEELS



Delivering meals since 2012, dedicated volunteer Jean Matsuda delivers a hot meal to Emilia every Tuesday.

Today, regular meal deliveries help Emilia continue to live independently in her own apartment. As her mobility and memory have changed, Ashley says meal deliveries have become increasingly important.

"Sometimes she forgets to eat or doesn't have an appetite," Ashley says. "Hot meal deliveries create a routine and signal that it's mealtime."

There have been encouraging changes too. Emilia's blood sugar and cholesterol levels have improved, and she has even been able to reduce the number of medications she takes daily.

For Ashley, the meals provide reassurance. As the only one of her siblings still living on O'ahu, she has become the person close by to help "Ma" navigate appointments, groceries, health needs, and the countless details that come with aging.

"To have that consistent person checking in, it's a huge relief for me. Guarantee, she has a hot meal. Guarantee, there's a checkpoint," Ashley shares.

Ashley acknowledges that she has something many caregivers do not: a strong circle of support. Her partner Jessica works in social services and also helps care for older family members, so she understands the challenges firsthand. Emilia's sisters are part of that circle too. Aunty Fanny steps in when Ashley needs time away, while Aunty Marina makes comforting Filipino dishes when Emilia is craving the familiar foods she loves.

Hawai'i Meals on Wheels is privileged to be part of their circle of care.

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"I want to be the healthiest person I can be, so I can continue to caregive. I'm realizing it's okay to take breaks. I even went on a vacation in May!" Ashley shares.



Ashley dreams of someday having a home where her mom can live with her. For now, Emilia still has enough independence to live in a place of her own, and Ashley wants to protect that for as long as possible.

It's a fitting chapter for a woman who spent so much of her life caring for her siblings, raising her children, and serving others. Now, Ashley is helping care for her, and Hawai'i Meals on Wheels is making sure she **doesn't have to do it alone**.

"I'm so grateful for Hawai'i Meals on Wheels. You take care of my mom and so many kūpuna. I also feel seen as a caregiver," Ashley shares.

Your generosity makes this care possible. Thank you for being part of Emilia and Ashley's circle of support!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



*Deliver meals and aloha
in your neighborhood!*



*Call our volunteer team at
(808) 988-6747
or visit hmow.org.*



*Volunteers Chelcy and David share
why delivering meals mean
so much to them.*



SKIP THE COOKING ON THANKSGIVING DAY AND DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2026, 9 A.M. - NOON

DRIVE THRU-PICK UP AT HAWAII OKINAWA CENTER (WAIPIO)

You're invited to participate in our **7th Annual Thanksgiving Meal Drive-Thru Fundraiser!** Our delicious meal packs include a ready-to-eat turkey dinner with all the fixings. Just pop them in the microwave to reheat. **Be the first to order your feast before we're sold out!**

As part of this year's fall benefit, generous supporters, including **First Hawaiian Bank, Par Hawaii,** and the **Pettus Foundation,** have offered to match every gift you give by Thanksgiving up to \$60,000! That means every \$1 you give will be matched to become \$2.

Together we can raise \$120,000 to help more kūpuna! **Can we count on your support for homebound kūpuna?**

Visit hmow.org/thanksgiving or mail the enclosed donation order form. **Orders must be received by Friday, November 20, and matching gift forms must be postmarked the day before Thanksgiving, November 26.**

Thanksgiving Meal Pack

10–12 lbs Whole Cooked Turkey
4 lbs Real Mashed Potatoes
4 lbs Poultry Gravy
3 lbs Stuffing
1 lb Cranberry Relish
12 Sweet Dinner Rolls
Napoleon's Bakery
Pumpkin Pie



**Each meal pack feeds 8 and
includes a surprise gift bag!**

**Place your order
online and double
your impact today!**



Mahalo to Our Matching Challenge Sponsors!


First Hawaiian Bank


PETTUS
FOUNDATION



Par Hawaii



MĀLAMA OUR KŪPUNA

A THANKSGIVING DAY BENEFIT FOR HAWAI'I MEALS ON WHEELS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2026

2026 SPONSORSHIP AND DONATION FORM

Contact Information

Organization/Individual _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip code _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Sponsorship commitments and meal pack orders must be received before Nov 20

Quantity (Please specify number desired)

Tax Deductable Portion

Platinum Sponsor	_____ @ \$10,000 = _____	\$8,625
Gold Sponsor	_____ @ \$7,500 = _____	\$6,675
Silver Sponsor	_____ @ \$5,000 = _____	\$4,450
Bronze Sponsor	_____ @ \$2,500 = _____	\$2,225
8-person Meal Pack	_____ @ \$250/ea = _____	\$25.00/meal pack

TOTAL _____

I do not want a Thanksgiving Meal Pack but would like to make a gift:

- ☐ \$50.00 Feed one person for ONE week!
- ☐ \$100.00 Feed a couple for ONE week!
- ☐ \$200.00 Feed one person for TWO weeks!
- ☐ \$ _____

Payment Method (Please check one)

- ☐ **Check:** Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____. Please make checks payable to:
Hawai'i Meals on Wheels and mail to: P.O. Box 236099, Honolulu, HI 96823-3520
- ☐ **Credit Card:** You can make purchases or donate securely online at hmow.org/thanksgiving or list your information below.

Name on card _____ Zip code _____

Card number _____ Expiration date _____ CCV _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Hawai'i Meals on Wheels is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. All financial contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent under the law. Acknowledgment letters will document the amount that is tax deductible.



MĀLAMA OUR KŪPUNA

A THANKSGIVING DAY BENEFIT FOR HAWAI'I MEALS ON WHEELS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2026

2026 SPONSORSHIP LEVELS AND BENEFITS

Recognition and Benefits	Bronze \$2,500	Silver \$5,000	Gold \$7,500	Platinum \$10,000+
Opportunity to share company branded items to fundraiser participants on the event day				X
Year-round display of logo or name on event website	Name	Logo (Medium)	Logo	Logo with link to website
Logo or name prominently displayed in Hawai'i Meals on Wheels' eNews, before and after event	Name	Logo (Medium)	Logo	Logo with link to website
Pre-event and post-event acknowledgment on social media	X	X	X	Recognition with logo as top sponsor
Logo or name in a mahalo ad in Honolulu Star-Advertiser post-event	Name	Logo (Medium)	Logo (Large)	Logo (Large)
A Thanksgiving Meal Pack 10 -12 lbs Whole Turkey 4 lbs Real Mashed Potatoes 4 lbs Poultry Gravy 3 lbs Stuffing 1 lb Cranberry Relish 12 Sweet Dinner Rolls Pumpkin Pie	One (1) A Catered Experience Thanksgiving Meal Pack	Two (2) A Catered Experience Thanksgiving Meal Packs	Three (3) A Catered Experience Thanksgiving Meal Packs	Five (5) A Catered Experience Thanksgiving Meal Packs
Each meal pack serves approx. 8 people. For questions, please contact Evelyn Fonseca at (808) 784-2761 or efonseca@hmow.org .				

A note of friendship from Michelle Cordero-Lee

Aloha!

At Hawai'i Meals on Wheels, we know that caring for a loved one takes love and time. As a caregiver myself, I also know personally the balancing act that comes with wanting to be there for someone you love while managing the responsibilities of everyday life. Having others you can count on makes a meaningful difference.

Emilia and Ashley's story reminds us that when we support a kūpuna, we also support the family members who love and care for them. Your generosity makes possible nourishment, connection and peace of mind for families across O'ahu.



Michelle Cordero-Lee
CEO, Hawai'i Meals on Wheels



Join us in making a difference!

- Join the Gold Plate Club by making a monthly donation! \$50 will help provide one week of meals to a homebound kūpuna.
- Become a volunteer on a holiday or deliver meals whenever your schedule allows.
- Participate in our annual Matching Challenge fundraiser! See Pages 4 and 5.



Celebrating Ferne's 101st Birthday

As part of our new **Mele Meals Program**, the **Hawai'i Meals on Wheels Band**, whose members are meal delivery drivers and musicians, stopped by Ferne's home a few weeks ago to help celebrate her 101st birthday along with her friends.

Mele Meals brings uplifting musical performances to homebound kūpuna and residents of senior housing. What began as a small idea to bring a little musical joy beyond meal delivery, quickly turned into something unforgettable.

Photo from left: Delivery drivers and musicians, **Kyle Shodai , Mike Lundy, Jon Porlas** with client **Ferne**.



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Double Your Impact

**Generous donors have offered to match every
gift friends like you give – up to \$60,000!**

Return the enclosed gift form or scan the QR code.

