

**ROTARY CLUB OF HONOLULU
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES
12 APRIL 2022
PRESIDING: PRESIDENT GWEN YAMAMOTO-LAU**

CALL TO ORDER

The Johnny Carson theme song was played to announce it was time to begin.

President Gwen called the meeting to order at noon, welcomed everyone for attending, and gave thanks to the participants of the day.

Inspiration by Nancy Pace:

David Casstevens of the *Dallas Morning News* tells us a story about Frank Szymanski, a center for the Notre Dame football team, who in the 1940s had been called as a witness in a civil suit in South Bend.

“Are you on the Notre Dame football team this year?” the judge asked.

Szymanski replied, “Yes, your Honor.”

The judge asked, “What position?”

“Center, your honor,” came the response.

“How good a center?” asked the Judge.

Szymanski squirmed in his seat, then said firmly, “I am the best center Notre Dame ever had.”

Coach Frank Leahy, who was in courtroom, was surprised by the answer of the usually modest, unassuming Szymanski. When the proceedings were over, the coach took Szymanski aside and asked why he made such a statement.

Szymanski blushed and said, “I hated to do it, Coach, but, after all, I was under oath.”

Nancy: So, just to let you know – Is it the Truth?

After **Nancy’s** fun inspiration to which we all had a good chuckle, President Gwen introduced this scribe as “our super multi-tasker [**Lee LaBrash**]” to lead our club in the *Pledge of Allegiance*. This multi-tasker felt she was an annoying “double pledger” having tech issues where both iPad and laptop picked up her voice. I am double apologetic for that debacle! Thank you everyone for hanging in there while I learn the ropes on Tech.

Pres. Elect Lyla Berg led us graceful as ever in singing, *America the Beautiful*. This was followed by **President Gwen** introducing the day's visitors: **Hideo Yamanaka** (RC Kyoto), Lisa Tamashiro (Adult Friends for Youth), Erphalyn (AFY participant), Lorenn Walker and Lisa Jensen (Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice), and Clif Purkiser (to be inducted next week).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Jessica Lani Rich** requests volunteers for Inspiration and Pledge and if members are available to let her know in the day's Chat. She further gave thanks to those who have been volunteering and helping. If you are interested in being called on to assist with Inspiration and/or Pledge, please contact **Jessica!**
- **Rick Tabor** had two announcements:
 - **RCOH Paul Harris Events**
 - Monday, May 9 at 4:45 pm-6:00 pm, *Mysteries of Hawaii's Haunted Crime Walking Tour*. \$30.00 for the tour. No limit.
 - Tuesday, May 10 at 10:00 am until 12:00 or 1:00 pm, *Overview of the Howard Hughes Ward Village Master Plan*. Free, brown bag lunch will be provided. No limit.
 - Wednesday, May 11 from 2:00 pm-3:30 pm, *Tour of Shangri-La Museum of Islamic Art*. Free. Group plans to meet after tour at Kahala Market in Foodland for Happy Hour. Tour is limited to 16. Everyone will meet at the Triangle Park and carpool – using only four preregistered cars.
 - Thursday, May 12 from 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm, *Tour of the new Bank of Hawaii Kahala Branch*. Hosted refreshments. Limited to 15.
 - Friday, May 13 from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm, *Honolulu Museum of Art Tour & Lunch*. Lunch is hosted. Limit 20.
 - **DisCon 2022 – Young Leaders Celebration**
 - Friday, May 20, from 4:30 pm- 7:00 pm. Register before April 20th.
 - All Rotarians are invited to join. It will run into the start of DisCon. Volunteers are needed. About 200 people are expected to attend.
 - Come meet fellow members from different Rotary, Rotaract and Interact clubs of Hawaii, while enjoying food and refreshments on the beautiful lawn at Lanikuhonua at Ko'Olina.
 - Register before April 20th. Contact **Brian Dunkel** or **Rick Tabor** for information on Volunteering!
- **Peg Jackson** announced two weeding sessions for *Centennial Park*.
 - Wednesday, April 20 (yes, Wednesday this time, not Friday) from 4:00 pm-6:00 pm with a small social after.
 - Saturday, April 30 from 8:00 am -10:00 am.
 - Contact **Peg** at Peg@PegJackson.com to sign up!
- **Pres. Gwen** announced *Earth Day Waikiki Clean up Event* on Saturday, April 23, from 8:30 am- 10:00 am. Please sign up with **Peg Jackson**.

- **Pres. Gwen** also announced that **Tom** is recruiting volunteers for the *Beer Fest* on June 25 at the *Bishop Museum*. 25 volunteers are needed. Please contact **Tom Coyne** to sign up.
- **Reese Liggett** is calling for volunteers for the Rotary Village, Camp Erdman on Thursday, April 21 from 8:00 am – 2:00 pm. Lunch will be included. Please contact **Reese** to sign up for some cleaning, power washing, and other “sprucing up” of things by email to wliggett@twc.com.

Breakout Rooms: **Pres. Gwen** compared the childhood of kids in the 70’s to today’s kids who receive trophies just for participating. The topic of the day for discussion was on what advice we could share with parents of today’s youth for both a supporting environment and to help build the grit in their children to help survive what life will throw at them.

Everyone returned from the Breakout Rooms to the song *Hero* by Mariah Carrey. A heartfelt and touching piece to lead us into our Speaker Conversation led by **Lyla Berg**. **Pres. Gwen** felt “the song was appropriate for the two non-profits we will be hearing from who are Heroes to many of our youth in making a significant impact in their lives”. [Tears folks, tears]

Pres. Elect Lyla Berg introduced us to “a team of people working with young Heroes in Kalihi”. Both organizations were recipients of our mini grants and **Lyla** had a “sit down” conversation with them asking thought provoking questions. If members had questions, they were asked to place them in the chat to be integrated into the conversation.

Lyla introduced grant recipient *Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice*. Lorenn Walker is the Director and if you’d like to know more about her and what else she has done, please visit her website and bio at <http://lorennwalker.com/biography/>. It is impressive!

They began to help juveniles in the justice system and this has developed and become a cooperative approach giving a voice. This project was the “Brainstorm” of Jensen who saw that the children there needed more to do. It is a service project where they work with the youth to learn leadership skills. They meet at an old church in Kalihi and the donations received from Rotary and others are going to help renovate the church where they meet.

Lyla reminded everyone that a couple weeks back, Lisa attended one of our meetings and accepted the check for *Hawaii Friends*.

She then introduced Lisa Tamashiro, Director of Operations and Special Programs at *Adult Friends for Youth (AFY)*, and Erphalyn who is a former student of *Adult Friends for Youth*. Lisa with her cheery disposition introduced us to the *Adult Friends for Youth* program. This is their 36th year of operations! She, herself, has been with AFY for about 12 years. She did her practicum and she says she “just never left.”

The *AFY* Mission Statement is: Redirecting lives to stop violence in order to strengthen family and community safety, while promoting healthy well-being for all youth so that they can reach their full potential.

AFY partnered with *Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice*. *AFY's* primary goal is to work within groups, knowing that high-risk youth, the peers are influential and impactful at this time in their lives. So, rather than taking the youth from the circle and then back into the community, they work with the entire group to try and move them into a positive direction so the youth can hold themselves accountable. The Program is voluntary. They work with schools from Kaimuki out to the Waianae side. Lisa then turned the spotlight to Erphalyn who was a student in the program for her insights.

Erphalyn, with her amazing smile, shared what the program has done for her. She has been with *AFY* since sixth grade. She became involved due to a fight between some Samoan girls and her sister. Her sister brought her in because she didn't want Erphalyn to have the same experience. Lisa and others helped her group stay on track at school. Though Erphalyn was one of the youngest in the group, the others looked up to her. She is the first generation in her family to attend college. She received a scholarship through *AFI* with Lunalilo and is currently attending KCC. She joined the Army National Guard when she was 17 and has been in for 2 years now.

Erphalyn further shared the *AFY* helped her and her friends by providing resources and introducing them to people who helped them to understand their potential and worth. **Lyla** thanked her for being who she is and for speaking so articulately, and then stated that many of us in the meeting have children who are grown, with children who are away from us, so we are not always as close to the youth in Hawaii as we could be.

Lyla then asked Lorenn (with *Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice*), what type of partnering they do with *Adult Friends for Youth (AFY)*. Lorenn shared that like, *AFY*, they are all over the island, not just in Kalihi, and their mission is similar to Lisa's – they are trying to generate more peace, manage conflict, and help people who get involved in the legal system, to find healing and desistance from wrongful behavior. They love *AFY* and help train them on solution-focused approaches to working in groups. Lorenn commented on how humans are social creatures, so within the public health realm they focus on how people work in groups together, making them a great fit with *AFY*.

Lyla then posed the question to our guest speakers: What are the difficulties youth have right now? We would love to help students do better in school, though school is the least part of their (the youth) attention. What is really going on out there on the streets?

Lisa T. replied that the youth are already on the low end of resources and opportunities prior to COVID, and the pandemic has pushed them back further. *AFY* does not have a set termination of services, once the student graduates, they assist them in the next step,

whether is it college, work, military, etc, *AFY* is still there, becoming their lifeline, and the resource for everything including navigating the legal system.

Lyla asked: How do you find the Youth? Or do they find you?

Lisa T. replied that majority referrals come from the schools. The admin identify the kids, boys or girls, who are constantly fighting. *AFY* will approach the group who sometimes run thinking *AFY* are police, while some stick around to find out who they are. *AFY* is becoming better known in the schools, but some locations are still new such as Waianae, Kaimuki and the Ewa side. With persistence in showing up in these locations *AFY* is gaining recognition and the students are noting that they really are there to help. Their initial point of service is outreach.

Lorenn replied that most of their work comes from other organizations. While a few individuals come to them, many referrals are from schools. *Hawaii Friends* works with the courts and prisons, and currently have a large program with the Federal Court. Pono Shim, who recently passed, was invited to name the program. He chose *Kapilipono*. (kapili meaning to build mend, fix and pono meaning goodness, uprightness morality). To read more about Pono Shim and the project of Restorative Justice, please click the link or copy and paste it in your browser:

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4069045

Lorenn stated that with this program they build relationships that are life long. Lorenn was able to help a woman who had been incarcerated for 20 years get her case into the *Innocence Project*. She was innocent. During this experience, they had built a relationship with this woman's daughter who lived in another state. The daughter contacted Lorenn to share with her that she had a baby and expressed her desire to speak with her mother. Lorenn was able to put the mother and daughter into contact with each other within 15 minutes. This was after having met and helped the mother 10 years earlier. Lorenn feels that what she does is not really work, but more of a lifestyle.

Lyla: One of our members was working in the family courts when the *Restorative Justice* movement started and the emphasis was on including victims of crime in getting justice from the kids who were the perpetrators – could you speak to that?

Lorenn: *Restorative Justice* is - the person who does the harm/has harmed someone, takes the responsibility and then wants to meet with the person who is injured. (They use the words 'injured' over 'victim' or 'offender' trying not to label people.) One of the first programs was for those injured who did not know the person who harmed them. 70% of those who go to the police never see anyone arrested. So *Restorative Justice* developed a process to help that group. One of the other processes is where the person who caused the harm meets with the person they injured and a discussion ensues on who was harmed and how, and what can be done to repair the damage. This is a very successful healing process, especially in serious crimes.

Lyla then turned to Erphalyn as a young voice: We have our well-meaning adults, like everyone in our club who wants to do good and help in some way. As a young person, what would be your advice for us as adults wanting to come in and help? What is it when the outreach people and you came together, what made you trust them?

Erphalyn: The trust was built over months. At first we didn't trust them because they were new faces and we were not comfortable to change. It is a matter of time and building the trust with the kids. Creating a bond takes a lot of time.

Lyla: What kind of activities did you have?

Erphalyn: We would have group sessions during one of the periods or after school where we would all come together and talk about things we may be dealing with. Many of us had situations going on at home, and this gave a safe place to share because all of us are going through something similar.

Lyla: Do either of the programs have outreach of youth with youth, or speaking at different schools? And, Erphalyn you are extraordinary and we have respect for what you are doing and have done.

Lorenn's program works with adults and they teach women in prison to be tutors for other women. At this time, they have two people on their board who had been in prison.

Lisa J. responded to the question: "When I work with kids, I always have the sense of, 'I will teach you this and then you will share with your colleges and family'. At this time, person F is getting a lot of attention because he has five siblings." Currently, four of the teens she is working with are learning *The Forgiveness Process*, taught by Susan Ford. The work is truly transformational. To learn more look up Fred Luskin on YouTube. These youth have a huge impact on their siblings and other youth.

Lyla: We are going to be helping Lorenn's program with some renovations at the church to save them some money, and also our members love to do hammers & nails, and painting, and feel like we really are contributing! Are there any other ways that we can, comfortably for you folks, participate in the youth programs and connecting with youth realistically?

Lisa T.: We are always open to being creative and providing opportunities for our youth to engage with others. The population that we serve is very competent negatively, but in a pro social setting they can't utter words. It is providing those settings and consistent opportunities that they become comfortable with having conversations, normal conversations that don't speak about the crimes they are about to commit or the substance they are about to take. It is not set where we need tutors, and because of the vulnerable clientele we serve, we are very careful about who we allow into their lives. At the same time, it doesn't mean a closed door because we are always, definitely open to thinking

about ways on how we can expand their reach and their potential. That is a deeper conversation and we would love more resources and opportunities for them at all times.

Lyla made an impactful comment: It is givers gain! We benefit so much when people want to talk to us! Then she directed to Lorenn commenting that maybe when we are doing our work project at the church, perhaps some of the youth will be available to hang out with.

Lorenn feels this is possible. And as far as tutoring, Lorenn refers over to Lisa J. who shared that one church member had been a mentor and suggested that part of the church be turned into a Mentor Resource Center. This will be discussed further when she meets with Benji stating “we definitely need the input of caring, quality adults in the lives of the children I work with.” While Lorenn’s work is with children after entering the justice system, Lisa J.’s work is trying to keep them from entering the justice system. Lorenn chimed in with an impactful reminder that while they work with adults, it affects the children, because “every adult that goes to prison left behind, especially a woman, children. So by helping them, you help the children too.”

Lyla to Lorenn: You talked about *The Forgiveness Process* training – Is that specific to your organization(s) or can community sign up?

Lisa J.: When we first started talking about the idea of remodeling the church space, it was my wish because Mirkin was very instrumental in having Dr. Luskin come to Hawaii for the past 18 years or so to speak with all kinds of people to share that there is a process that results in such amazing, personal relief. So one of the ideas for that space, I would like to see there be a space for a *Forgiveness Center* where people can come and learn the *Forgiveness* skills and where many of us trained as facilitators trained in *The Forgiveness Process* can meet once a month to debrief. So this space will be a place where anybody can learn this incredibly profound and impactful process.

Lyla announced that our member, **Tracey Wiltgen**, from the *Mediation Center*, has been and will continue mediation workshops for our members and other Rotarians. So please keep us informed of what you are doing on your end.

Lisa T.: You tied in the piece of how to teach children resilience (from our Breakout room discussion), I think the younger generation don’t realize how much they can gain from volunteering, so if somehow we can instill that spirit, get creative in finding out how that really helps them too, this is something I’d like to explore more with you folks.

Lyla agrees and shared that we are a Rotary International Peacemaker Club and that there are 35,000 clubs and 1.4 million Rotarians around the world. Not just a pillar, but it is the vision of Rotary for a peaceful world. Perhaps we can somehow augment our own work with the peace training.

Lyla asked Erphalyn to share her thoughts on either organization or Rotary and where we can help. Her response was that the help we are providing and handing out the help to those in need of those services, that it is just a matter of time for the community grasping this and being willing to participate or cooperate with what is needed on their behalf. "It takes both sides."

If you would like to know more or would like to help either of these valuable programs, please check them out.

Hawai'i Friends for Restorative Justice: <http://hawaiifriends.org/>

Adult Friends for Youth: <https://www.afyhawaii.com/>

CLOSING

President Gwen announced that next Tuesday we will meet at the *Oahu Country Club*. Guest speaker will be Dr. Kim Holland, Research Professor at the *Shark Research Lab at the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology*. Members were asked to contact Martha immediately if they plan to attend.

Virtual Meeting Maestro **Brian Dunkel** played our *Hawaii Aloha* video in closing.

Photographer **Bob Sigall** took photos.

Pres. Gwen closed the meeting at 1:03 pm.

Humbly Submitted,
Lee LaBrash, Scribe