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Monday, June 20, 2005

## Nonprofit giving students supplies

**The goal is to help children get  
the proper tools to learn**

By Venus Lee

<mailto:vlee@starbulletin.com?subject=http://starbulletin.com/2005/06/20/>

Some students at Kaala Elementary School don't have loose-leaf paper and pens or pencils.

"If the students are busy thinking about not having the proper school supplies, they can't concentrate on or do their school work," said Kaala Principal Ted Fisher.

Ho'omaka Hou, a new program sponsored by the private, nonprofit group Alu Like Inc., has received more than \$500 in donations so far to provide school supplies for one-third of the Kaala Elementary School fifth-graders going to Wahiawa Middle School next year.

"Sponsored students will receive writing utensils, folder paper, binders, index dividers and a backpack from the Aiea Office Depot," said Keikilani Meyer, Alu Like's community literacy specialist. "Our goal is to find sponsors for all 81 students."

Ho'omaka Hou means "new beginning" and is an initiative designed to help one of the 24 public schools facing a possible state takeover because it failed to meet the standards set by the No Child Left Behind Act for the past two years.

### To help students

To sponsor a student, write a check payable to Alu Like Inc. with "Ho'omaka Hou" on the memo line and send it to 458 Keawe St., Honolulu 96813. Donations must be received by July 1.

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"Since approximately 80 percent of our students qualify to receive either free or reduced lunches, many of the parents struggle to provide their kids with the necessary school supplies," Fisher said.

He added that the program also helps the students' self-esteem because "they don't have to shamefully ask for supplies, and they get the feeling that someone cares about them and thinks they matter."

In the upcoming weeks, Meyer will be setting up a display in the Alu Like office, e-mailing notifications and soliciting donations from businesses in Wahiawa.

"For \$20, each donator will receive an adoption certificate and the satisfaction of helping a student further his or her education," Meyer said. "The public education system can't do it all by themselves. They need the community's support."

Meyer, who hopes this program could serve as an example for other schools to follow, said this is the first year Alu Like is sponsoring a program of this type, and hopes to continue and expand it in the future.

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