



## THE COUNTY OF KAUA'I

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### News Release

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### **Tehinnah Aiona wins Crime Stoppers Kaua'i contest**

KAPA'A – Crime Stoppers Kaua'i recently awarded Tehinnah Aiona, a Kapa'a High School senior, with a \$100 check for a poster she created to help crack down on crime. She entered the contest, along with approximately two dozen other entrants from Kapa'a High School, in an effort to encourage fellow classmates to participate in Crime Stoppers Kaua'i. Her artwork will now serve as a poster for the program in an effort to help combat criminal activity, especially any that afflicts school campuses.

"I was shocked to win the award," said Aiona. "I'm happy to make a statement for all of us kids who are unsure of what to do in a difficult situation. Crime Stoppers is a safe place for us to report crimes and be able to do the right thing."

Students can report any suspicious activity, including smoking or vaping on campus, or threats made to students via social media, by calling the Crime Stoppers Kaua'i number. Callers need not fear that their names will be discovered, as the program facilitates special avenues to ensure that any report remains completely anonymous.

"I want to thank everyone who participated in the contest and all of the organizations that are helping to spread awareness about the Crime Stoppers' student program, including Kaua'i Complex Area Superintendent Bill Arakaki and the Department of Education," said Investigative Services Bureau Capt. Paul Applegate. "We look forward to a continued partnership in order to



encourage more keiki to report crimes that they see at school without having to worry that they will face any kind of retaliation.”

Crime Stoppers Kaua‘i is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit which amped up its efforts in 2018 by incorporating and forming a board of directors so that more community members could feel comfortable reporting criminal activity by maintaining anonymity.

“The program initially formed many years ago because residents often feel reluctant to come forward with information related to crime for a number of reasons, particularly on a small island where everybody knows one another,” Applegate said. “It’s easy to call the Crime Stoppers’ number and do the right thing without having to file an official report through the Kaua‘i Police Department and worry about anyone finding out who you are.”

By getting more keiki involved, more crime can be curtailed, including on school campuses. And in order to continue to raise awareness, Crime Stoppers Kaua‘i plans to reach out to other high schools and middle schools around the island to initiate contests of their own.

“Kaua‘i students can gain a better understanding of criminal justice, including the role that students can play in public safety on Kaua‘i,” said Crime Stoppers Kaua‘i Board President Ron Wiley. “The goal of our program is to give Kaua‘i students an opportunity to directly engage with local law enforcement and other Kaua‘i partners while becoming educated and empowered to serve as crime prevention role models in their schools on Kaua‘i.”

Crime Stoppers Kaua‘i is made possible through an ongoing partnership between citizens, the media, Kaua‘i Chamber of Commerce, Visitor Aloha Society of Kaua‘i, the Department of Education and KPD in order to battle crime and make the community safe for kupuna, keiki, and all ‘ohana on Kaua‘i.

When calling Crime Stoppers, the police coordinator will ask for the following information: type of illegal activity, location of activity, date and time of incident, and description of suspect and/or suspect’s vehicle. Calls are kept anonymous and callers are given a tracking tip number for future identification purposes.

The caller is then advised to call back to check the status of the tip that was given. If the information received from the caller was valid and an arrest was made, the caller could receive a reward of up to \$1,000.

Anyone with information on criminal activity who wishes to remain anonymous are urged to call Crime Stoppers Kaua'i at 246-8300.



**Photos courtesy KPD:**

Crime Stoppers winner: Tehinnah Aiona, winner of the Crime Stoppers Kaua'i contest.

Crime Stoppers winner with group: From left to right: Officer Morris Unutoa, Capt. Paul Applegate, Tehinnah Aiona, Kapa'a High School Principal Thomas John Cox and Crime Stoppers Kaua'i Board President Ron Wiley.

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