



MEDIA CONTACT:
Jocelyn Collado or
Marichris Diga
Becker Communications, Inc.
(808) 533-4165

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OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS JEFFERSON AWARD
****Altruistic Individual to Represent Hawaii in Washington, D.C.***

HONOLULU – For their unselfish acts, giving spirits, and the impacts they have made in their communities, five outstanding individuals were awarded the prestigious 2010 Jefferson Award for Public Service on Friday, April 16, 2010. One honoree was also selected to represent Hawaii at the national Jefferson Awards ceremonies in Washington, D.C. in June.

Founded in 1972 by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Senator Robert Taft, Jr. and Sam Beard to encourage and honor individuals for their achievements and contributions through volunteerism and community service, the Jefferson Award has become the equivalent of the Nobel Prize for public and community service for more than thirty years.

Janis Loo was named as Hawaii's representative to the national ceremony in Washington, D.C. In 2002, Loo read The Honolulu Advertiser article about Hawaii's first anonymous kidney donor, who volunteered to give her kidney away to anyone on the transplant waiting list. Inspired by this person's act, Loo did the same and placed her name on the transplant list to donate her kidney. She and her family members are living examples of extreme public service, as they have touched the lives of so many by assisting with fundraisers, staffing weekend charity events, bringing food to families in need, and even washing dogs at the Hawaiian Humane Society. Rather than family vacations, Loo and her family go on volunteer vacations and travel to far off places, such as Africa and South America, to help build orphanages and water purification systems improving the lives of people they may never meet.

This year's other Jefferson Award recipients in Hawai'i are:

Recognizing the need for better medical care for the people in his hometown in the Philippines, **Benedicto Galindo**, and some of his former townmates, created the San Esteban Aloha Mission in March 2000. Through his medical missions, he has had a great impact on the improvement of

care for the local poor people – seeing almost 2,000 sick indigent patients and donating cash, medicine, food, clothing and school supplies to the poor.

Chaplain Bonnie Holcombe started the Total Life Recovery Program (TLRP), the only faith based treatment program in the State of Hawaii, from the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC). She not only donates 40 hours a week of her time for the TLRP, but is also an appointed volunteer for the State. Chaplain Holcombe is the voice for the TLRP women and their families, as well as the WCCC staff and their families.

Colleen Minami, a retired public health nurse, is a visionary leader and tireless dynamo of hands-on volunteer activism in community health and human services. She is the founder and administrator of Honolulu’s free clinic, Aloha Medical Mission, which has served thousands of homeless, immigrants, unemployed, uninsured and working poor. She is a long-time active board officer and committee chair for Aloha Medical Mission, and contributes time and energy equivalent to a full-time paid manager.

In 1999, **Irene Takeshita** developed a curriculum, *Diabetes & You*, to address the prevention and control of Type 2 diabetes because of the high prevalence of the disease in Hawaii. As a retired DOE elementary teacher, Takeshita brought many years of classroom experience to her curriculum development, creating interactive presentations that truly engages students and enhance learning. She has conducted numerous voluntary presentations across Hawaii, the Pacific and the nation. Based on the overwhelming support from those who have seen her presentation, hundreds of people have made lifestyle changes as a result of her efforts to spread a potentially life-saving message.

The Jefferson Awards is sponsored locally by The Honolulu Advertiser and Hawaii News Now.

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