

*The mission of the 'Ukulele Guild of Hawaii's "Ukes for Kids" program is to provide 'ukulele at no cost to Hawaii's underprivileged keiki and to support Hawaii-based organizations that serve Hawaii's keiki through the 'ukulele.*



The "Ukes for Kids" (UFK) project originates from the Ukulele Hall of Fame. In 2004, Norman Takeya attended the Santa Cruz ukulele festival and learned of the program. Upon returning home, he immediately took steps to develop a similar organization here in Hawaii, with the support of the 'Ukulele Guild of Hawaii and permission from the Ukulele Club of Santa Cruz and the Ukulele Hall of Fame.

The program's first large project occurred in that same year, with the help of the Big Brothers Big Sisters foundation. Needy children received both 'ukulele and lessons from Roy Sakuma and Kimo Hussey.

In 2005, UFK donated 'ukulele to Hale Kipa, a non-profit organization that serves troubled teenage girls. Terry Browne offered his team and taught them to play. The Department of Education also teamed up with UFK to provide 'ukulele to Lunalilo Elementary School as part of an incentive program for at-risk students. Students were given the opportunity to learn to play and the 'ukulele and keep the instrument—as long as they kept their grades up.

The first ever benefit concert for the sake of UFK was held by KoAloha 'Ukulele Company, who graciously coordinated the entire event, and donated \$2000.00 to the project. The Fourth Annual 'Ukulele Guild of Hawaii Exhibition saw a UFK benefit raffle, with 'ukulele donated by Kamaka, KoAloha, G-string and Kala Music. This marked the first time the "Big Three" in 'ukulele making had ever come together to support the program.

Kamaka Ukulele celebrated their 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a concert to benefit the Ukes for Kids program. The Ukulele Guild is grateful for the donation and will put it to good use.

Bradda Sam, known as a local television personality, also gives free lessons to underprivileged children and works to obtain grants so that they can buy 'ukulele of their own. UFK has provided 20 ukulele for his students.

Ozzie Kotani, slack key wizard, donates his time at the Boys and Girls Club of Papakolea and requested ukulele for them. UFK donated 20 'ukulele to this program. Casey Kamaka and Norman Takeya were on hand to present the ukulele.

UGH President Jason Young delivered the ukuleles to Hickam Elementary School, with a student body consisting mostly of military dependants, is making an effort to instill an appreciation of the Hawaiian culture in its students. They plan to introduce Hawaiian music to the children via the 'ukulele. UFK gave 20 'ukulele to support their cause.

Wailua Elementary School teacher Tina Matsuo received 24 ukulele for her elementary school class. She plans to incorporate the ukulele into her curriculum. Most of her students have never held a ukulele.

Palolo Elementary School received the first installment of 30 ukulele to start a grade wide ukulele program. Next year the UGH will provide an additional 30 ukulele to fulfill it's commitment.

Maui Police department received 10 ukulele to provide to underprivileged kids thru recommendations from the community. Chris Kamaka represented the UGH in the presentation of the ukulele.

Puuhale Elementary School received 40 ukulele and will start an after school program for their kids. Executive Director Mike Chock presented the ukulele.

The Boys and Girls Club of Kailua will receive 30 ukulele for their program. They will be offering lessons to area keiki.

Our Molokai Branch of Ukes for Kids, headed by UGH director Dan Ryerson gave out 160 ukulele. They also had a free concert to help publicize and raise money for the program.

The Molokai Group of UFK supporters organized a one day ukulele camp for the keiki of Molokai and taught them how to play the instruments that were given to them. The parents were also treated to a concert by the keiki and the teachers in the afternoon.

On Oahu a planning committee has been organized to also put on a ukulele camp for the keiki.

The requests continue to come in and we are addressing them as soon as we get them. Please continue to support the Ukes for Kids Program.

