

# Big Isle trio awarded BELL Rhode Island scholarships | Hawaii247.com | Hawaii 24/7

## MEDIA RELEASE

The Kohala Center congratulates its three 2010 summer scholars — Megan Saks, Alyssa Evans, and Roya Sabri.

Saks and Evans will travel to Narragansett, R.I. to participate in the BELL (Brown Environmental Leadership Lab) Sustainable Development Program.

For the past several years, The Kohala Center has partnered with Brown University to send motivated Hawaii Island high school students to this prestigious environmental leadership program.

As Saks, a Kealakehe High School sophomore, tells it:

“Two years ago, my sister, Dominique Saks, participated in BELL. Upon returning, Dominique and Amber Datta, who also went, created a youth environmental leadership group called YEL (Youth Environmental Leaders). About 10 motivated and passionate teens, including myself, made up this group. With the support and mentorship of TREE Hawaii, we brainstormed environmental improvement ideas, re-fenced an area of forest susceptible to the appetites of sheep and the destruction caused by pigs, cleaned up hiking trails, fundraised, and attended a Hakalau Wildlife Refuge Open House.”

Saks said she is honored and excited to carry on the legacy.

Evans is a Hawaii Preparatory Academy junior. She said:

“The only clear thing is the fact that people, in general, are using resources unreasonably and that the problems and the solutions to the problems affect more things than we realize. This year I am taking an Environmental Science class and have learned a great deal about what sustainability actually means and how policy, leadership, science, business, and even culture are all interconnected when it comes to sustainable and non-sustainable practices.”

Roya Sabri will travel to the Cornell University campus in Ithaca, N.Y. to participate in the CATALYST Academy. Roya was first introduced to The Kohala Center last summer, through her participation in the Student Congress on Sustainability at HPA.

“There, I learned from businesses and individuals how to become more sustainable and was inspired to get involved in projects that are aimed at creating a sustainable future,” she said.

After the Congress, Roya helped to start a recycling club at Kealakehe High School, and she began volunteering her time as a ReefTeacher at Kahaluu Bay.

Along with partial support from university partners, donations from The Kohala Center’s Circle of Friends help to provide Hawaii Island youth with these opportunities to join environmental leadership programs at Brown University and summer engineering programs at Cornell University.

**Share or print this story:**