

Kaiser commemorates Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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MEDIA RELEASE



More than 500 Kaiser Permanente Hawaii physicians and staff members volunteered their time today working on community projects on Oahu, Maui and the Big Island in commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

The volunteer effort was led by the Hawaii Permanente Medical Group, which was formed in 1960 to provide care to all Kaiser Permanente members in Hawaii.

"Kaiser Permanente Hawaii is honored to join President Obama and the rest of the nation in declaring Martin Luther King Jr. Day a time to give back to our local communities through volunteerism and service," said Geoffrey Sewell, MD, president and executive medical director of the Hawaii Permanente Medical Group.

"It's up to all of us to create healthier and more vibrant communities together. As Dr. King once said, 'the time is always right to do the right thing,'" he added.

Eight years ago, in honor and recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his advancement of civil and human rights, Kaiser Permanente established an annual day of service that takes place on Martin Luther King Day.

This approach to celebrating Dr. King's life has enabled thousands of Kaiser Permanente employees and physicians to provide valuable services to our communities and to further advance the Kaiser Permanente legacy that parallels Dr. King's value.

Rather than taking a holiday on that day, Kaiser Permanente employees and physicians take part in a "day on" of volunteering dedicated to the memory of Dr. King.

On Oahu, Kaiser Permanente physicians and staff members volunteered at Wilson Elementary School's sustainable gardens preparing the soil for plantings, and engaging in campus maintenance and beautification activities, which included gardening, repainting walkways and replacing screens in the cafeteria.

In partnership with Hawaii Island School Garden Network (HISGN), Kaiser Permanente volunteers on the Big Island worked in sustainable gardens at Waimea Middle and Kahakai Elementary Schools in Kailua-Kona weeding, pruning and planting crops.

HISGN helps Big Island schools increase consumption of locally grown foods through sustainable food production.

On the Hilo side, Kaiser Permanente volunteers performed similar work at Waiakea High School weeding, clearing brush and cleaning the campus.

Kaiser Permanente physicians and staff on Maui contributed their time sprucing up areas of the Ka Hale A Ke Ola homeless resource center in Wailuku.

Physicians and staff also provided free medical care as part of their day of service. Polynesian Voyaging Society crewmembers received their pre-voyage physicals at Kaiser Permanente's Mapunapuna Clinic.

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