

A Brighter Hawaii

We can find a solution for sustainability in Hawaii. Clarence T.C. Ching, a man who worked with different businesses, politicians, and local community groups, would agree. We can work together to strive for a better Hawaii by making our islands more sustainable.

As problems arise in Hawaii and the economy continues to worsen, we should stop looking to others to solve our problems. We need to find solutions that are here in our own back yard - Hawaiian solutions that will work best for Hawaii. It appears that everything Hawaii needs lies right under our noses: the sun, the wind, the ocean, and our volcanoes. These rich sources can be transformed into solar, wind, tidal, and geothermal energy.

My dream is for every school in Hawaii to have enough solar panels to power at least one building on campus. The Clarence T. C. Ching Foundation, with its business partnerships in industry, could arrange deals with solar companies to plan for, provide, and install solar equipment at affordable prices in every public and private school. The benefits to these companies would be threefold. First, they would be able to sell more units without increasing their fixed and operating costs. Secondly, they would generate goodwill within the community. Lastly, the schools would be a living advertisement of the benefits of solar energy to potential customers across the islands.

The T. C. Ching Foundation could work with state and federal organizations to provide subsidies in the same way that households are eligible for tax credits. Excess electricity could also be fed back into the grid to earn NEM credits. Who knows? The

excess electricity might be used to charge teachers' electric cars during the school day! Savings on electric bills would allow more money to be spent for educational purposes.

Possibly the most valuable outcome would be students experiencing environmental stewardship firsthand. This may inspire the future stewards of our community to follow Mr. Ching's example and develop innovative, groundbreaking ideas to make Hawaii a better place to live.

Someday, I hope that all of Hawaii's schools will be powered solely by solar, wind, geothermal, or hydro power. In times like these, it is of utmost importance to utilize our natural resources to work towards a cleaner, greener, and brighter Hawaii.