

The Wisdom of a Past Piggy Bank

“Aloha ‘oe, aloha ‘oe

E ke onaona noho i ka lipo

One fond embrace,

A ho ‘i a ‘e au

Until we meet again”

“Farewell to you, farewell to you

The charming one who dwells in the shaded

bowers

One fond embrace

‘Ere I depart

Until we meet again”

You hum the soft refrain of Queen Lili‘uokalani’s “Aloha ‘Oe” as you carefully place the remaining items from your bedroom into the brown cardboard box labeled FRAGILE. In this home, you were sheltered as your roots grew deep into the soil of your environment. You breathe in the distinct scent of cardboard boxes as you take one last glance around the house before you stand at the front door and quietly whisper, *a hui hou*, until we meet again. The high cost of living in Hawai‘i drives the *kama ‘āina*, residents, to seek refuge by moving to the mainland; whereas mainlanders eagerly repopulate Hawai‘i. Hence, 67,293 residents of Hawai‘i moved to the mainland in 2018, while 54,074 mainlanders quickly relocated themselves to our islands (Mak). Yet the household income of Hawai‘i can support local residents provided that we train them in financial literacy from a young age. Clarence T.C. Ching would have approved of the following plans to advocate for the residents of Hawai‘i — these include providing basic financial literacy courses for high school students, organizing a video contest for students to spread financial awareness, and designing an app that allows families to familiarize their children with the impact of spending.

Hawai‘i surpasses all other states in multigenerational households, blazing the trail for our nation where around 250,000 people live with extended families. In Hawai‘i’s mixing pot,

the majority of these households are Filipinos, Native Hawaiians, and Chinese, many of whom descended from immigrants (Gin). The Hawai'i Department of Education should organize financial literacy courses in the public and private schools for *nā haumāna*, students. Until financial classes are permanently established, a group of volunteers may undergo training to authorize them to teach semester-long classes. This basic education will cultivate our future generations and allow them to assist their families who are seeking financial guidance.

Although many people may claim that the following proposals are ineffective, and require resources that are currently unavailable due to the global pandemic. Some lack cognizance of others' living situations, causing them to believe that financial illiteracy is an issue of the past. The PISA Report on Financial Literacy reveals that China's students rank first globally due to their involvement with economics through short cartoons and simple comics, allowing them to understand finances at a young age. Hawai'i should follow China's lead by creating a video competition that promotes students to use their creativity to produce short films. These videos will provide *kama 'āina* with an opportunity to share knowledge and family experiences with financial challenges.

In Washington D.C., Angel Rich created an app that incorporates information about credit management, debt, and finances to inform others. The app, Credit Stacker, acts as the missing link for teenagers and young adults as it combines video games with financial education (Evans). The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa should encourage their students to design an app that pertains specifically to Hawai'i's financially illiterate residents. The prototype's features could include short stories about family struggles, a family mode for children to be conscious of their spending, and customized reminders. Even though an app is a simple solution, it will have a positive outcome in the community.

Many local families realize that some immigrants seem to have a better living situation after one generation compared to the residents who have resided here for multiple generations. The difference is financial literacy. People from third-world countries and Old Hawai'i struggle to grasp the concept of consumerism and credit. However, these multigenerational homes can only go so far and the cost of living is increasing, thus financial education is the deciding factor for many families. Hawai'i must prepare our *kama 'āina* for the future that looms ahead and keep our *'ohana*, family united as one.

The parents of Mr. Ching, Mr. Ching Koon Hook and Mrs. Kam Sing, sacrificed their life in China and immigrated to Hawai'i in hope of providing a "better life for their children." Many of the families in multigenerational homes today live in a similar situation to Mr. Ching and his family. The Clarence T.C. Ching Foundation is oriented to caring for families and individuals undergoing hardships who "demonstrate the capacity and desire to improve themselves." Mr. Ching would endorse my solutions because he experienced the same living conditions as these families, and would encourage financial literacy to prevent others from undergoing the same circumstances.

In the year 2070, our State of Hawai'i may only be populated by foreigners from the mainland and wealthy investors if we do not stop financial illiteracy. The three proposed solutions of incorporating personal finance classes into high school education, informing others through short films, and inventing an app to assist our community will protect our immigrant generations from relocation. Our Hawaiian ancestors fought for our land, our Filipino ancestors worked on the sugar plantations, and our Chinese ancestors labored on the rice plantations. Their hard work should not be forgotten, but instead, perpetuated through our *lahūi*, generations.

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