

Loving Our Kupuna

I have a grandma who needs twenty-four hour care, and a great-grandma who is now in her nineties. Indeed, Hawaii's population of elderly is growing, and many now need assistance in various ways. My family and I understand the problems that come with aging. Many need better health care, help with cost of living expenses, and more day-to-day activities to occupy their time. Others definitely need much craved companionship. Many of our elderly have physical, health, and financial problems. Most families have to work, so they are sending their elderly members to nursing homes and day cares, where they often end up very depressed.

We can help our elderly by giving them more affordable housing. I would like to suggest to our Governor that he consider using public schools such as Liliuokalani Elementary School, forced to close because of low enrollment to be converted into studio apartments, called Senior Haven, for the elderly. If the state would entertain this proposal, civic clubs across the state could organize as a volunteer force to help with yard work, shopping, and minor repairs. Also, Schools could also adopt a "Senior Haven" and provide needed companionship. High school students have required service hours, and students can spend this time to make the elderly feel cared for and wanted, playing games, reading or helping them write letters, or running small errands. But, mostly showing them how much we appreciate them.

Clarence T. C. Ching really cared about his family, and he also cared about others. He was the fifth child out of eleven, and he was also very kind and generous to others. The Clarence T. C. Ching Foundation helped the elderly in Hawaii by awarding two million dollars to the Palolo Chinese Home Care to help care for Hawaii's aging seniors. This proves to me that Mr. Ching cared about our senior citizens, but one care home cannot handle the immense need; we all must search our hearts and souls to volunteer to help our Kupuna at the Senior Haven.

Clarence T. C. Ching inspires me to ask myself what I can do for others. I especially want to help our senior citizens because many cannot help themselves.