True Aloha of Hawai‘i

Hate is a virus, aloha is the cure. We all know what a virus is and how fast it can spread if not cured, and in return could possibly start a pandemic. Just like a virus, hate can spread like wildfire, it can affect everything in its path and won’t stop till there’s a cure, and the cure is kindness. There’s a lot of meaning behind just a few words and people could easily get affected in any type of way such as the word “haole”. This word “haole” is used now in a hateful and racist way towards white people in Hawai‘i just because they’re white and though I have not been a victim of being called one, I have witnessed others being called a “haole” and how much damage that one word can do. This term makes me feel frustrated about how people could discriminate white people just because they’re white but it also frustrates me about how this way of discrimination started. The way I see our world, everyone’s equal, it doesn’t matter your race or skin color or anything else, we all have our differences but in the end we’re all just human.

From a young age I have witnessed many incidents between Hawai‘i Island and O‘ahu where this term “haole” was used towards people. The meaning of this word “haole” is a foreigner and any race other than Hawaiian but the way it is commonly used now is in a hatred way to come at white people. For example, one day me and my family went out to eat at a restaurant where mostly locals would be at. We were waiting to be seated at a table and there was a white family in front of us. My uncles began to get impatient and started grumbling about the long wait, then they began to get mad at the white family in front of us. My uncles felt that if these haole people weren’t here, then they would be closer to the front of the waiting list and wouldn’t have to wait long so they started speaking louder and louder about this family to the point where they were telling this family they shouldn’t be here because they’re haole. Things escalated and I remember feeling as a little kid how mean and unfair this whole situation was, it
honestly made my blood boil. I remember thinking, "Why couldn't we just eat? Why did we have to argue?" I didn't like how my uncles were talking to them and I knew I wasn't gonna let history repeat itself with me.

As I got older, I began to comprehend this situation of racism and the term “haole” that connects to this problem. I saw many incidents where this term was used and as the years went by I began to take action and started with my family. One day, I went down to Waipio Valley with a few family members to help out in the lo'i (taro patch) and there was a white boy already there helping. I remember my cousin getting mad at the fact that a haole boy beat us there, but in my head I was just happy we had more help. As we came across this boy, my cousin then asked him why he was here, to which he responded, “To help out.” My cousin then went on to say how he should go back to California and stop trying to be Hawaiian. He didn't say anything back and went back to working and I remember feeling so bad and disgusted that my own blood would speak that way to another. I then pulled my cousin on the side and educated her on what she had said and then I asked her how she would feel if someone were to discriminate against her based on her skin color. We got to work and I went and apologized to this boy because I felt ashamed of my own family's behavior. I also thanked him for his hard work and helpfulness because we needed all the help we could get and he accepted my apology. Doing the right thing made me feel like I was on cloud nine and I knew I wanted to keep being kind to everyone and spreading the aloha.

In conclusion, you should never judge people by the color of their skin, you judge them by their actions and personality. There are many different races here in Hawai‘i and there have been for years and that's what makes Hawai‘i so beautiful. No matter our differences, we all work together because we are people of aloha and kūpono. Hawaiian isn't just a race, it's a
mindset and the type of character you are. Hawaiians are hard workers, always showing aloha, grateful for what they have, always doing what's right, people who take care of their land, people who care for their community, people of knowledge and so much more. We are not people who discriminate. We should all treat others how we want to be treated and if you want to be treated equally, then do so to others. Let's not let this virus of hate take over, and let's fight with aloha.