

## Your *Wahi Pana*: Past, Present, Future Hawai'i Essay Contest

Instructions for the student: tips and reminders for writing your essay, how it will be judged.

### Before you write...

- Think of a place - a beach, reef, forest, stream, marsh – someplace outside where there are native Hawaiian plants and animals, one you have shared with someone over the age of 50.
- What is your earliest memory of that place and who took you there? This is the person you will want to interview.
- Make notes about what you remember and write down questions in advance about your *wahi pana*, your cherished place, that you will want to ask when you interview your chosen elder. Be sure to ask them about their own earliest memories of that place.
- Plan a time when you can talk together, let your elder know you will be taking notes to record their knowledge, to write about what that place means to you both. Try to plan a time when you can visit the place again, together, so you can both see if it has changed since you were first taken there.
- Research traditional place names, species names and follow up on clues from your interview about any changes (including weather patterns) to your *wahi pana*.

### When you write...

- Create an original piece of writing that shows the reader an ecosystem or place in Hawai'i through your eyes and the eyes of the elder you interviewed. What native animals and plants were there in the past and are they still there today? Record as much detail about what they experienced in the past and what you have seen together in the present at your chosen *wahi pana*. Write as if, together, you are creating a record of that place for future generations, *because you are*.
- Include issues or problems that have changed what native species of birds, insects, plants, or fish that live there now. Can you still see the stars and hear the crickets there?
- After you have recorded the past and present of your *wahi pana*, speculate on its future and ways you and others can change its future. What needs to be done?
- When you believe your essay is almost done, share it with your elder to see if either of you want to add or make changes.
- Finish your essay well in advance so you can set it aside and read it again for a final review. Many great writers read their works aloud to themselves or ask someone to read it to them to listen for alterations that need to be made. Can a reader from anywhere in the world understand your essay? **REMEMBER: Your essay AND application are due Feb 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

### Check that you've met all the contest requirements:

- One essay per student only.
- Essays cannot exceed 1,500 words in length. As long as you tell your story in less than 1,500 words, there is no advantage to long essays or penalties for short ones.
- Essays will be judged by a panel of conservation experts and writers from across the state, some of whom are not fluent in Hawaiian. For this reason, essays submitted in Hawaiian are

welcome, but must be accompanied by an English translation. If chosen for publication the Hawaiian versions of an essay will precede its English translation.

- Traditional/historic Hawaiian place names convey important information about your *wahi pana* and should be used instead of modern names, especially nicknames such as those given for surfing or fishing sites. These can be included but are not sufficient to help readers today or in the future learn about the 'āina in your writing. Cross-check your place names with recognized sources such as *Place Names of Hawai'i* (Pukui, M.K.; Elbert, S.H. and Ester T. Mookini; UH Press Honolulu)
- Translate occasional Hawaiian words and phrases within your text to garner more readers to your story, to speak to a broader audience beyond our state.
- Points ARE awarded for your ability to research and use both Hawaiian and scientific species names, following standard naming conventions. Spell Hawaiian names of plants and animals correctly, using any *kahakō* and 'okina as spelled in accepted sources such as the Pukui/Elbert *Hawaiian Dictionary*, and capitalize these Hawaiian nouns only if they begin a sentence.
- **COMPLETE THE APPLICATION BELOW AND ATTACH/PASTE-IN YOUR ESSAY into the text box on the last page below.**
- **DROP YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION/ESSAY INTO THIS DROP-BOX:**  
<https://www.dropbox.com/request/SfphkRv1GgYNr2y55JUn> or hard copies (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font sized) may be mailed to the address below.

#### **Judging Criteria:**

##### **Essay Content (70 points)**

- ❖ Essay demonstrates accuracy and depth in recording the voice of the elder interviewed.
- ❖ Essay contains detailed observations, past and present, of native species, interactions, and environmental aspects of the site such as historic/anecdotal weather data.
- ❖ Essay shows that student researched native species (identification, ecosystem functions, issues affecting, occurrences) and traditional place names of their chosen *wahi pana*.
- ❖ Essay includes observations of changes, natural or human-caused to the site and its species.
- ❖ Student uses all the above to speculate on the future of those native species and the site.
- ❖ Student identifies actions she/he can personally take to affect the survival of native Hawaiian species, to change the future.

##### **Clarity (10 points)**

Quotes from the interview are in the phrasing and words of the elder, but when necessary, defined and explained by the essayist so that a broad audience can understand the underlying knowledge.

##### **Structure (10 points)**

Essay is well organized and moves the reader through the text. The writing gives a complete message, and helps the reader understand the meaning of the place from the writer's standpoint. The reader could visit the site with a new understanding and appreciation.

##### **Writing Skill (10 points)**

The essay uses standardized grammar, spelling and capitalization, for both Hawaiian and English words. Accepted Hawaiian and English place names are used alongside place nicknames used by the elder.

### How the Contest Works:

1. Qualified essays and applications received on-line before or post-marked on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 are eligible. The essay text itself should only give the student name and island, no contact information – these are included on the application.
2. Winners will be notified April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, with official public announcements of winners on Earth Day, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.
3. Qualified essays will be 1,500 words or less in English or Hawaiian (if accompanied by an English translation).
4. Each essay will be reviewed to see which landscape category it generally falls into: Ocean/reef/coastal, Marsh/stream, Wet/windward forest, Dry/leeward forest
5. Essays will be judged by a team of resource and conservation experts from across the islands, working in government and non-profit agencies. Judges will be assigned essays that match their island and areas of expertise.
6. One first and one second-place essay will be chosen for each of the ecosystem categories for each of the state's four counties (Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui Nui, Hawai'i Island). A total of 16 first-place and 16 second-place essays will be published on the state's DLNR website, and through print journals.
7. First-place prizes for each island are one-day experiences chosen by each branch office of the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) and vary from island to island.
  - a. The student has the opportunity to travel to a remote site on their home island which is not usually open to the public, but where DOFAW and partners are working to conserve a *wahi pana*, one that is likely new to the student.
  - b. The student may be taken to these remote sites by car, helicopter, or boat, and should expect to do some hiking.
  - c. Each event will be held only once, after April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, but we intend to schedule these to accommodate all winners' calendars. Tentatively these are:  
Kaua'i – **fly into the Ku'ia or Hono o na pali Natural Area Reserves**  
O'ahu – **fly into the Ka'ala Natural Area Reserve in the Wai'anae mountains**  
Maui Nui - **fly into Hanawi or Nakula Natural Areas Reserves**  
Hawai'i Island – **fly into Pu'u o umi Natural Area Reserve**
8. Second-place winners and families (as well as first-place winners) will be invited to attend a guided hike in a conservation area not usually open to public visitation, on or after April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, followed by an awards luncheon near each site. Locations and dates to be announced.

For questions and information, please contact:

Wahi Pana Essay Contest Coordinator

Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Maui Nui Branch

685 Haleakala Highway

Kahului, HI 96732

[Jeff.w.bagshaw@hawaii.gov](mailto:Jeff.w.bagshaw@hawaii.gov)

(808)873-3986

**Your Wahi Pana: Past, Present, Future  
Hawai'i Essay Contest  
International Earth Day April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020  
Student Application**

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Hawai'i School/island: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Advisor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School or Teacher's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student's Parents(s)/Legal Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) Email or Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Permission to photograph student if essay wins and share? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, you and your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) give permission to Hawai'i DLNR/DOFAW, the Hawai'i DOE, the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools, and UH Press Journals to do the following: (1) use your name and biographical information (other than residence/ mailing address) and your essay in any lawful manner for non-commercial purposes and educational purposes associated with the contest; (collectively, the "Permitted Purposes"); (2) reproduce your essay, along with your name and biographical information (other than residence/ mailing address), in any format including but not limited to printed materials, digital and on-line formats such as the Internet, for the Permitted Purposes, (3) distribute your essay to third parties for the Permitted Purposes, (4) use a photograph of student if "yes" above is checked.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_(required)

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_(required)

