

# Uluwehi Halāu Hula O Kapukui

## *Community Story*

Some students from the hālau offer their mana'o (thoughts and reflections) about their connection to hula, culture, and community:

There is no better place to learn about the spirit of aloha than in a hālau of hula. When I finally became synchronized with the hālau it opened my mind to a whole new experience. When I finally had a hula routine down, I found myself in a trance like state where there was not a care in the world. My mind and body was calm and going with the flow of the hālau and I simply felt at peace. Over the course of my first four years of hula I learned so much of the Hawaiian culture, history, and what hula means for other people. I always found with other hula members, whether they are from my hālau or another hālau, they always seem to be such friendly and easy going people. I wanted to be a part of that friendly crowd, to have that ability to make other people feel welcome and at ease.

**Gabe Sutherland**

I believe that learning hula goes beyond the hula steps/motions. It includes valuing others, respecting our differences and acknowledging the similarities of various cultures.

**Annette Gearhart**

I feel that aloha is the value that has always been the life blood in my family. I may be a haole raised in Portland, but the love and loyalty that our family shares is a value that I believe came from my parents' time in Hawai'i. I honor and cherish those values and I want to deepen them by developing a closer and more personal connection to Hawai'i, its customs, and hula.

**David Scheer**

The values that hula has instilled in me is what stays with me all the time, like finding balance between patience and perseverance.

**Kassie Ngirarois**



When I started learning hula it was mainly because it was something fun that my Mom had me doing every week however over time the reason I am still learning hula has changed. Now I am learning hula because of the culture and how much I have been able to connect with it over the past 11-12 years that I have spent with the hālau.

## Grace

I wanted to learn hula to understand the expression of Hawaiian culture and stories through hula. Hula is a type of dance that touches my heart; it's another way of expressing myself as an individual and as an islander. I understand my culture and... to understand, is to help me see things through different perspectives - it's my way of growing. I apply what I learn in my daily life as it applies, or to my family, my friends; and I carry it with me in meeting new people or seeing new things.

## Zizi Salii

My heart is in Hawai'i and I long to be there. I miss everything about it... my 'ohana and childhood friends... the sound and smell of the ocean, watching the sun set over the water, the foods, the culture, the lifestyle, the mentality and aloha spirit, the warm rain, and sunshine... EVERYTHING; and I am sad that my kids will not have the same experiences I had being fortunate to grow up in Hawai'i. I learn hula because it helps me maintain my connection to Hawai'i and it is one way I can perpetuate the Hawaiian culture and share it with my kids.

## Kanani Paraso

Hula has not only taught me actual hula but it's taught me that it's okay to make mistakes, to not give up, to have fun with everything I do and have aloha spirit. I apply this knowledge in everything I do everyday and I plan to continue to do so. I want to teach others what I've learned over the years. I also hope to teach others the culture I've learned as well.

## McKenzie Ramarui

I do hula to learn the old ways of expression and telling stories. I started doing hula because I wanted to learn more about my culture and heritage; hula is so beautiful and I was drawn to study it.

## Janelle Garrison