



# Background

In 2002, a group of people concerned with the future of Kaua'i and its people sought to establish a grass roots project that would serve as a tool to equip individuals with the wherewithal to lead healthy lives for themselves and their respective spheres of influence. Through the help of a small grant, the Waipa challenge ropes course was built with the intention of serving the community. Under the business name Kauai Team Challenge, Inc. and in partnership with the Waipa Foundation, groups of people began to utilize the Waipa challenge ropes course to increase effective social skills, invest in self-growth and build productive teams. Today, the corporation continues to provide team building services and outdoor education based on the experiential learning cycle. Personalized trainings are tailored to each group's needs and goals. KTC provides services for youth and adult groups, corporate and small businesses, eco-tourists, and our local community. The Kauai Team Waipa Challenge Course is made up of low ropes and high ropes activities focused on building team building and self esteem skills. Our hope is that our clients not only learn about their own strengths and challenges to make a difference in their lives but also learn about the Hawaiian culture through a fun and challenging experience.

The location of the challenge ropes course at Waipa has fostered a growing partnership between The Waipa Foundation and Kauai Team Challenge Inc. The Waipa Foundation has a mission statement "to restore the ahupua'a (watershed) of Waipa as a community center and learning center for culturally-based land and resource

stewardship, and the preservation, perpetuation and practice of our Hawaiian culture. Waipa is an intact ahupua‘a under the ownership of the Kamehameha Schools and the management of the Waipa Foundation and the Hawaiian Farmers of Hanalei. It is the perfect venue to explore our natural world in the context of the ahupua‘a and the Hawaiian style of resource management encompassing the land and resources from the mountains to the sea.” This has translated to the opportunity for mentors and mentees to spend time learning traditional Hawaiian practices naturally in helping in a taro patch or touring the land with a kupuna (elder). KTC has been blessed by continuing to serving the community through this partnership.

Since our inception, Kauai Team Challenge has grown significantly as a company. Our services, scope of work and message has expanded our capacity to becoming an established leadership training resource unique to Hawai‘i’s culture. KTC currently does business under Kupu A‘e, figuratively meaning “to grow towards enlightenment.” This new name offers KTC the opportunity of an expansion of services while remaining true to the company’s original focus.

## Our Mission

Our mission at Kupu A‘e is to nurture the positive growth of individuals, groups, and community towards enlightenment. Our many services aim to foster healthy communities through program models utilizing experiential education, leadership development, adventure-based therapy, cultural awareness, strategic visioning, team-building skills, and personal consulting.

# Mason Chock

President, Kaua'i Team Challenge, Inc. DBA Kupu A'e

Former Executive Director, Leadership Kaua'i, Mason Chock is a Kamehameha schools and University of Hawai'i Manoa, school of business graduate. He has worked in education and public service for 17 years. Mason has coordinated and moderated numerous trainings by facilitating strategic planning processes and customized leadership training. He is the President of Kaua'i Team Challenge Inc. an outdoor experiential education program, specializing in outdoor, adventure based therapy, team building and self-awareness. Through partnership with The Waipa Foundation, KTC administers programs such as, the Kukui Malamalama, Mentoring Children of Kaua'i Program, Waipa Adventure Expeditions, the East Family Ohana Club, and The Fatherhood Program which Mason has been responsible for creating and implementing. A trainer of The Leadership Challenge, a personal coach, counselor, and keynote speaker, Mason delivers customized leadership corporate trainings covering topics such as creating a positive work culture, coaching young people for success, conflict resolution, safety certifications, goal setting strategies, building a value based company, and building your teams capacity.

Mason continues to assist with the facilitation and progress of Leadership Kaua'i's annual classes. As a moderator of Leadership Kaua'i training sessions, Mason connects local and national speakers and initiatives to Kaua'i's culture and needs. Through the administration of Leadership Kaua'i's annual classes, community initiatives and needs are addressed by bridging resources and creating positive collaborations. Utilizing interactive team building activities and The Leadership Challenge ©, Mason bridges contrasting communication skills and perspectives to create a shared vision for the direction of Leadership Kaua'i and the collective community.

# Need or Opportunity

The need to develop individuals that are grounded in their beliefs, committed to living their values effectively for themselves, and be of service to a positive future for all is more important than ever. The fast pace of technology, expansion of consumerism, growing cynicism, and lack of responsibility has led to a decline in our quality of life and the exploitation of our environment. Never has humanity faced the largest dysfunction and disconnect within the systems we have created. Today, we face the highest crime rate and more social ills than ever before. Our families have lost the ability to lead conscious, healthy lives and as humans we have lost touch with the value of our natural resources.

Where once, there were native people who thrived on universal values and respect for their surroundings, today many have forgotten their purpose and role in life's journey and the importance of service leadership. Through reconnecting to Hawaiian culture, values and practices and bridging it with today's most popular leadership ideals, Kupu A'e has created programs that inspire and motivate people to seek their true potential and purpose in life while committing to a life of learning and positive action.

# The Experiential Learning Model

We have taken the team-building model and adapted it for growing healthy people. Through the use of physically and mentally challenging elements, individuals learn how to better work together as a team with a common goal. Incorporating inherent problem solving skills, learning from each others' examples, and succeeding as part of

a team, the individual team members will gain useful tools to better **cooperate** with, **trust**, and **rely on** their classmates, coworkers, families, and neighbors.

The Challenge Course is that it is open to everyone of all ages. No prior experience or physical ability is necessary. The emotional and physical support from the team will provide each member with the skills needed to attain goals he or she never thought possible.

Experiential Education promotes positive behavioral concepts in such a way that participants recognize valuable insights and knowledge about themselves and how to handle problems as an individual and in a group. Through the sequence of events that are arranged by a progression of challenging to most challenging, participants are able to build their self-confidence and realize how important and valuable they as an individual are in helping the team-work through the obstacles.

Experiential Education and Adventure-Based Education have proven to be successful in training groups to become more effective. The Waipa challenge ropes course program cultivates life-applicable skills of cooperation, team-work, trust, communication, and leadership. This educational approach applies non-traditional classroom techniques, and addresses a variety of learning styles by teaching through "hands on" learning. Instead of being taught "how to do it," students learn by "doing it." After engaging in an activity, the group will be facilitated through a processing discussion to relate the activity to real life scenarios and establish relevant connection to what the participant or group might be facing. This approach is educational, rewarding, and real for the individual, group, and community.

Kupu A'e uses the challenge course and it's hands on curriculum to promote the following skills:

- Communication

- Physical Ability

- Problem-solving

- Self Awareness

- Self Confidence

- Trust

- Acceptance

- Inner Strength

- Cooperation

- Leadership

With the use of the Hawaiian Culture, its' ancient practices and value system, Kupu A'e is aligned to connect native Hawaiians and non-natives alike to the important practices of the past by combining the skills of experiential education and ancient Hawaiian value systems.

Our company has provided staff and mentors with training in traditional Hawaiian values from Kumus (teachers) affiliated with the Waipa Foundation and the Hawaiian community. It is through this Hawaiian value system that Kupu A'e program philosophies are built. The mainstay of these values includes the following:

- Lokahi (Unity):** The concept of lokahi is probably one of the most important ideas the ancient Hawaiians practiced and embodied. It means unity or connectedness and it also means embracing diversity. Realizing how we all are connected and that every thought or action we have within a community has a direct correlation with the successful outcome or demise of that community. The connectedness is

especially important for our youth to embrace for development of self-awareness, self-respect and sense of place.

•**Ohana (Family):** The importance of a support system that encompasses more than the immediate nuclear family, but includes the concept of hanai or extended family in turn, creating a sense of belonging.

•**Ho'opono (Alignment):** Striving to maintain alignment with all living things (person, place or thing) and practicing our skills with integrative awareness between these elements. Using Universal principles of compassion, positive attitude, kindness and integrity while letting go of those elements that does not serve us such as fear, anger, impatience, a traumatic experience and negativity optimizes this dynamic synergy.

•**Kulana (Attitude)/Ha'aha'a (Humility):** The mentee and mentor role model balance an open mind and heart with an aspiration for awakening their true essence. Attitudes of conscious living are based on the Indigenous Hawaiian ways of community connectedness and its unity of consciousness. It is a simplified process handed down through the generations of Hawaiian people and refined as each generation passes.

•**Kuleana (Responsibility):** The fostering of each youth participant to honor and respect the lineage associated with them. Each participant shares a responsibility to themselves, their family, their mentors and their community, to share the truth and authenticity of our soul's efforts to bring about positive outcomes.

•**Mālama (Caring):** The idea of caring for yourself, others and your surrounding is a value that is practiced in our mentor relations as well as capitalized through our community work projects. Hilina'i (trust) is built by those who offer the support and care to the youth in need.

•**Pono (High character or righteousness):** Through our positive relationships we attempt to develop upstanding and morally efficient people who are in balance with their identity and their potential.

It is the utilization of traditional Hawaiian values that creates an underlying sense of ease and belonging that not only native Hawaiians relate to, but extends out to people representing other ethnic groups. Our cultural awareness and cultural competency allows us a level of sensitivity to underrepresented groups within our community.

# Programs & Services

Kupu A'e Implements the following programs and services:

•**The Waipa Challenge Ropes Course**

The Challenge Course is made up of low ropes and high ropes initiatives focusing on creating change and building values through team building and self esteem events. Many participants experience life changing and breakthrough results.

•**Kukui Malamalama, The Mentoring Children of Kauai Program**

Since 2003 Kauai Team Challenge has served at risk children on the island of Kauai via a mentoring program. Our mentor program serves children who have a parent in prison. We have provided services to foster children and many children living with a care giver other than their parent. Many of these children are of mixed ethnicity and include Hawaiian and Samoan children. Some of these children may be experiencing social, psychological, emotional, educational difficulties as a direct

or indirect result of their parents' incarceration and lack of stability in their home life. Some of these children have had negative and confusing experiences with the police if they witnessed their parent's arrest. Our mentoring experience provides 1:1 and group mentoring experiences that build trust and self-esteem, model positive role models, and encourage team building skills. Our program is unique on the island that it incorporates adventure based therapy via a ropes challenge course with traditional Hawaiian cultural values. In partnership with The Waipa Foundation, Kauai Team Challenge has implemented a mentoring program which serves 25 at risk youth with one on one mentoring services. Recently the program has grown to include all youth at risk under the program name Kukui Malamalama.

#### **•Kauai Team Challenge Adventure Expedition**

Each summer, Kauai Team Challenge conducts 2 concurrent camps for youth interested in outdoor education and survival skills. Through an adventure-based therapy curriculum, youth are immersed in a one week, life-enriching experience which includes: hiking, camping, backcountry living and wilderness skills (campsite selection, packing a backpack, map and compass orienteering, and basic first aid), expedition behavior, Leave No Trace techniques, kayaking or canoeing, self-awareness, team building and Sense of Place activities.

#### **•Kupu A'e Corporate Training**

Kauai Team Challenge tailors trainings for large corporate groups, wishing to build morale, self and team building skills. Kauai Team Challenge will customize your professional training, travel to your site and create fun, and challenging initiatives for the business atmosphere.

# Waipā Education Tours

Kupu A'e will be reserving each Wednesday for our visitors. We would like to offer three educational tours for various interests and abilities. The following is a draft summary of the educational tours being proposed. Please note that this is a working draft and intended as a point of departure based on feedback from all partners involved.

•**A beginner's introductory** to the Hawaiian ahupua'a, which provides an overview of the Waipa Foundation, its mission and function as a sustainable community resource. Focusing on the Hawaiian ahupua'a and the ancient self-sustaining land system. This tour also talks about the concept of ola kino by introducing Hawaiian medicinal herbs and their uses through la'au lapa'au.

Visitors will also gain hands-on experience with native species, medicinal herbs and native Hawaiian cultural practices. The ahupua'a tour is a 2.5 hr. educational experience that includes an organic lunch prepared by our local chef, Nalani Kaneakua, with produce grown from Waipa. This tour will cost \$65 per person.

•**An intermediate educational tour** that includes pa'i ai, or poi making in the traditional Hawaiian style as well as an opportunity to visit and participate within the lo'i kalo farming process. Visitors will learn the historical, spiritual and cultural significance which the natural environment and agriculture play for native Hawaiians within the ahupua'a system as well as its 21st century application. The lo'i kalo tour is a 3 hr. educational experience that includes an organically grown lunch prepared by our local chef, Nalani Kaneakua, with produce exclusively from Waipa. This tour will cost \$75 per person.

•**The advanced educational tour** is an in-depth look at the ahupua'a system, while visiting historical sites and current projects both oceanside and within the inner

valley of Waipa. A hike coupled with a reforestation planting project will cover a broad look at the importance of preserving our pristine watersheds while providing panoramic views of the Halelea district and Hanalei Bay. An organic lunch prepared by our local chef, Nalani Kaneakua, with produce grown from Waipa is included. This 3 hr. tour will cost \$75 per person.

We would like to set a minimum of 8 participants per visit and a maximum of 15 per group. Groups interested in visiting Waipa are encouraged to visit the Waipa Foundation website at [waipafoundation.org](http://waipafoundation.org) to get an overview of the foundation's mission and prepare them for an enriching experience. Additionally, a letter covering safety precautions and a liability waiver will need to be read and completed prior to visiting. Our hope is that visitors will leave Waipa with a renewed sense of themselves, others, our island culture, and a deeper respect for the environment.

#### **•Waipā Zipline Experience**

This family adventure tour offers bonding while having an exhilarating ride. The zipline experience also takes you through many of the other tour sites and lessons.

#### **•Waipā Camps/Retreats**

Kupu A'e offers customized camps focused on bonding, stewardship, and cultural education combining multiple services and experiences. We plan and assist in coordinating day camps to weeklong retreats.

# External Programs & Services

Kupu A'e currently provides program resources for many community organizations.

Here are some of our offsite programs and services:

- Big Brothers and Big Sister Middle School Program
- Kapaa Middle After school program, Holomua
- St. Catherine School Leadership Club
- County of Kaua'i high school training
- Leadership Kaua'i
- The Leadership Challenge Kauai, TLC and Leadership Mechanics partnership
- Life coaching
- Strategic planning
- Counseling
- Customized Leadership development training

## Our Clients

- Citizens Emergency Response Team
- Kauai Fire Department
- Kauai Police Department
- Pioneer Seed Company
- Inspirational Journal Magazine
- Na Lei Wili

- Waianae Comprehensive Health Services
- YWCA
- Island School
- Kauai Community College
- Leadership Kauai
- Adventures Cross Country
- Hawaii Pacific Academy
- Unlimited Construction
- Waipa Foundation
- Kauai Island Utility Company
- Kauai Marriott Beach Resort
- Surfing the Naions
- Moondance Adventures
- Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center
- Fatherhood Coalition
- County Anti Drug Office
- Kapaa Middle School
- Kapaa High School
- Hina Mauka Teen Care
- Puuwai Canoe Club
- Na Pua Noeau
- Kamehameha Scholars
- Kamehameha Association of Kauai
- Kamehameha Alumni Association of Kauai
- Hale Halawai
- Winner's Camp
- Kauai Community Correctional Center
- Girls Scout of America
- United Church of Christ
- Waimea Canyon School
- Waimea High School

- Hawaii Youth Conservation Corps
- Kukui Malamalama
- Maui Family and Youth Center
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Honolulu
- Kauai Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Holomua
- Ka Ulu Pono Career Awareness Program
- Kauai Pacific School
- Kula High
- Kilauea School
- Hanalei School
- Anahola Ancient Cultural Exchange
- Cheifess Kamakahahei Middle School
- Hawaii Island Community College
- Kanu I Ka Pono
- Kahili Adventist School
- Kauai Backcountry Adventures
- Kapaa Elementary
- East Kauai Family Summit
- Hawaii Baptist Academy
- Pihana Na Mamo
- Child and Family Services
- Alu Like
- Windward Community College
- Sheraton Kauai
- AGS Foundation
- P.A.T.C.H.
- K.I.D.S School
- Kokua Hawaii
- Yee Corp.
- Pihana Na Mamo

•YWCA

•HYSN

•Native Hawaiian Education, Communication and Technical Program

# Contact

PHONE: +1 (808) 651-7013

E-MAIL: [mason@kupuae.com](mailto:mason@kupuae.com)

WEB: <http://kupuae.com>