

Hina Mauka E-News



January 15, 2009

Must-See TV: Addiction & Recovery

The award-winning HBO series *Addiction* is getting an encore presentation on Olelo Community Television this month. All 14 episodes will be shown on Channel 49 over a two week span, Tuesdays through Fridays, beginning Jan. 20 and concluding Jan. 30. Each program starts at 5 PM, except for the first segment, which will air at 4:30 PM.

In addition, Olelo is now offering the locally-produced *Recovery* series online through their web site link, *OleloNet on Demand*. The monthly half-hour program is hosted by Andy Anderson, Hina Mauka Director of Community Relations, and covers a wide range of topics related to addiction.

One of the more recent shows dealt with adolescents and underage drinking. That two-part panel discussion, along with other programs, can be downloaded for free as video or audio files. Regular TV viewers can watch new *Recovery* segments each month on Channel 52, Thursday nights at 10:30 PM.

More information about the HBO series is available at www.hbo.com/addiction. Local

viewers can check broadcast dates and times at www.olelo.org (listed under "HBO Addiction" in the program schedule).

To find out more about Hina Mauka's *Recovery* television program, please call Andy Anderson at 447-5227.

Also Showing on VHI and A&E...

For a different perspective on addictions and treatment, you can check out cable TV reality shows such as *Celebrity Rehab With Dr. Drew* on VHI, which recently concluded its second season and can be seen in reruns. The new spin-off series, *Sober House*, is now airing Thursday nights on VHI and shows what happens when recovering celebs leave the safe confines of rehab to have their new-found sobriety tested in the real world.

On Monday nights, you can tune to the A&E channel to watch *Intervention*. That reality series follows addicts in denial as family and friends try to get them into treatment. As in life, some don't make it. But most do accept help, making this show addictive viewing.

NEWS FLASH: PLEASE ATTEND THE RALLY FOR HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AT THE STATE CAPITOL ROTUNDA, MONDAY, JAN 26 AT 10 AM - NOON. DETAILS ON PAGE 4...

ALUMNI PROFILE: MARIE L.

From Six-Packs to Packing Heat (Legally)

Marie L., a Hina Mauka “graduate,” returned on Dec. 16 to speak at the Tuesday night alumni meeting. As she entered the Kaneohe treatment center, she looked around and laughed, “I always come back to the scene of the crime!” The irony is she now works as an armed guard.

When Marie speaks, it’s hard not to smile because of her outgoing personality. Yet she’s tough too -- which explains how she got her job as a sentry guard. Contracted by the Navy to do “force protection,” she carries a weapon, but can’t divulge too many details because her work involves government security.

However, when it comes to personal experiences, Marie is totally open because she believes “sharing” is what recovery is all about. Even though she has been sober for over four years now, Marie still tears up when she recounts her spiritual awakening while in rehab: she had a vivid dream in which a favorite relative visited her and made her feel that everything was going to be all right. “Getting into treatment was the best thing that ever happened to me,” Marie says.



“I’m here to let people know that this program can work for anyone who wants it.”

***- Marie L., Hina Mauka
“Class of 2005” graduate***

But it didn’t come easily. She admits that her first 12-Step group meeting felt “weird and trippy.” It was 17 days before she stood up to speak at an AA meeting. “I conceded that I was not only an alcoholic, but an addict too. After that, I understood my purpose for being there,” she said.

Like many alcoholics, Marie’s parents were heavy drinkers who had frequent parties. “Go get your aunty a beer,” they would tell her. At age 13 she decided to get herself one instead. She pretended to be getting rid of empty beer cans, and drank a six-pack of Primo on her own. “I puked my guts out,” she recalls with a chuckle.

Drinking transformed her. She was small and petite, but got a reputation for being a tita who didn’t like being messed with. Yet Marie was popular at Leilehua High School. When asked if she was the “life of the party” type back then, she laughs: “I created the parties!”

At age 17, Marie met her future husband at a bar where she was drinking illegally. Both of them developed drinking and drug problems. They had two children together and moved to the mainland, before getting a divorce. Marie returned to Hawaii, and continued drinking heavily. The tipping point came when a close friend of hers committed suicide, followed by the death of her godfather. She drank so much that she says “I lost my marbles.” Marie detoxed for a week at Castle Medical Center, where it was suggested she enter Hina Mauka for inpatient treatment.

In recovery, Marie says she has “learned to be patient and to have an open mind” -- two things that have helped her relationships with her children, and led to her new career. “I keep coming back to Hina Mauka and AA meetings because I know there are a lot of people who need help. Everyone needs help,” she noted with a warm smile.

FIRST PERSON: REUBEN CHONG, EX-CON

A Former Residential Counselor Tells His Inspiring Story

About 16 years ago I was strung out on crack cocaine, living on the streets on a piece of cardboard behind Murphy's Bar & Grill on Merchant Street between a trash dumpster and wall, and stealing everyday in order to support my habit. I remember passing out thinking about drugs and coming too thinking about drugs. The rest of my life pretty much was a haze of arrests, treatment programs, and broken promises. I thought I would either die on the streets or die in prison. And I was okay with that.

Unfortunately – no, fortunately -- my lifestyle caught up with me and after doing minor jail time, the State decided they had enough of my shenanigans and incarcerated me in Halawa Correctional Facility. It was a scary environment where I had absolutely nothing left in me but fear. I came to realize that I was not okay with dying on the streets or in prison.

This realization caused me to grab onto anything that would give me hope, and for me that was a sincere belief in God. It wasn't the first time though. I "found God" in prior jail stays, but left God there when I left jail. This time was different. I finally realized my greatest fear was not death. It was that nobody would cry or care because I was gone.



Once a prison convict, Reuben Chong is now the Mental Illness/ Substance Abuse Coordinator for Windward Oahu Community Mental Health Center.

In Halawa I learned how to be content with little. Then I was transferred to Waiawa Correctional Facility where I got to enter a treatment program called KASHBOX: Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, Honesty, Behaviors, Observation, and X -- the unknown factor. My spirituality grew deeper and stronger. I wanted to change.

After 18 months in treatment I began pursuing new goals. I utilized resources like DVR (Department of Vocational Rehabilitation) and got accepted into Leeward Community College's substance abuse treatment certificate program. I found that by being sober I was actually pretty good at this "schooling" and switched my focus from learning how to be a substance abuse counselor to a Liberal Arts Major because I wanted more than just a certificate. I started to believe in myself...

(Continued on next page)

REUBEN CHONG (Continued from previous page)

I did things I never dreamed of... I was elected Student Body President of Leeward Community College, then got elected to the Pearl City Neighborhood Board. I won a Presidential Scholarship to the University of Hawaii, and received a Masters Degree from the UH School of Social Work in 2006. That same year, Hina Mauka hired me as a full-time Residential Counselor. Over the next two years, I also taught a lot of the CBT classes and groups at the treatment center.

Today, I no longer work as a full-time counselor for Hina Mauka. You see, I got hired by the State of Hawaii (an entity that once kept me locked up for the safety of the community) to be a Mental Illness/Substance Abuse Program Coordinator for the Windward Oahu Community Mental Health Center. I love Hina Mauka so much that I took a new job that was just a few hundred yards away from the place that I still call home. I needed to have Hina Mauka in my sights for comfort. I continue to work there as a part-time counselor, teaching CBT to clients at night classes.

I share this with you not so much to "pat myself on the back," but to show what sobriety can do. Who would have thought 16 years ago that today through the support and encouragement of Hina Mauka I would go from chasing dreams to helping others attain their own dreams and goals in life.

At right, an Olelo Community Television technician (center) fits Andy Anderson with a microphone for his recent Recovery TV interview with Reuben Chong, who wrote the above "First Person" essay.

Each month, new Recovery segments can be seen on Olelo Channel 52, 10:30 PM, Thursday nights. You can also go to www.olelo.org and download some of the past episodes by clicking on the OleloNet On Demand link. On that page, click on "Community" and scroll down to the Recovery shows listed by topic.



NEWS FLASH * NEWS FLASH * NEWS FLASH * NEWS FLASH

“VOICE OF THE PEOPLE”

A Rally for Health & Human Services

Monday, Jan. 26, 10 AM - Noon, State Capitol Rotunda

Due to the State's financial shortfall, there are plans to cut many services. A new advocacy coalition called PHOCUSED (Protecting Hawaii's Ohana, Children, Under-served, Elderly and Disabled) will be holding a rally to increase awareness of the need to protect programs that serve our most vulnerable residents.

Please contact Andy Anderson at 447-5227 if you would like to participate in this important event. Make your voices heard!