

**CONTACT:** Kathryn Xian, Director of Development & Communications  
**PHONE:** 527-8009  
**E-MAIL:** [kaxian@lashaw.org](mailto:kaxian@lashaw.org)

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### LEGAL AID'S DEPUTY DIRECTOR, M. NALANI FUJIMORI, TO BE GIVEN THE C. FREDERICK SCHUTTE AWARD BY THE HAWAII STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

M. Nalani Fujimori has been selected by the Hawaii State Bar Association as the recipient of the C. Frederick Schutte Award. The Schutte Award recognizes service toward the legal profession and is awarded to an attorney for outstanding and meritorious service to the legal community and the profession.

Nalani is being recognized *"for outstanding and meritorious services to the legal community and to the profession through work in improving access to justice for Hawaii's people and raising awareness to the public about the need for equal access to justice for all."* She received the award at the HSBA Convention's luncheon on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2008.

On receiving the award, Nalani states, "I am honored to have received this award from the Hawai'i State Bar Association and even more honored by the members of the Access to Justice Hui who nominated me for this award. Access to Justice is critically important to the people of Hawai'i and is fundamental to what makes our country great. I am excited about the future work of the Access to Justice Commission and am proud to know that I played a role in helping the people of Hawai'i."



Nalani Fujimori

#### **ABOUT ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

Legal Aid is a member of the Access to Justice Hui, which recently released the first civil legal needs assessment in 14 years. The Hui's goal was to carry out a statewide assessment of the civil legal needs of low and moderate-income residents of Hawai'i and to develop a community wide action plan to increase equal access to justice in Hawai'i.

This report would not be complete, but for the efforts of the Supervisory Team, which included: **M. Nalani Fujimori**, Moya Gray, Justin Levinson, Dew Kaneshiro, Jo Kim, Calvin Pang, Wayne Tanna, and George Zweibel. Nalani was key in coordinating the work on the research, survey, community focus group and community wide action plan, and for her tireless contributions towards the drafting of the assessment.

Since the last U.S. Census Bureau's population survey in 2000, updated every 10 years, Legal Aid has served more than half of Hawaii's impoverished families and individuals. Hawaii's impoverished community comprises 18% of the state's population at 213,189.

**ABOUT NALANI**

Kamehameha Schools graduate Nalani Fujimori joined Legal Aid in 1999 as a staff attorney on Moloka`i. She managed Legal Aid's Maui County Offices from 2001 – 2004 and was appointed Deputy Director in Honolulu in 2004. Nalani received her law degree from New York University School of Law and graduated Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa from Macalester College, St.

Paul, Minnesota, with a degree in Sociology. Prior to joining Legal Aid, Nalani did death penalty appellate work through New York University's Death Penalty Fellowship Program, assisted in the filing of a class action law suit for the sexual harassment of women inmates, clerked for a firm specializing in non-profit housing development and clerked with the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation.

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Founded in 1950, Legal Aid is Hawaii's oldest and largest non-profit law firm, dedicated to assisting the low-to moderate-income community. Our mission is to achieve fairness and justice for Hawaii's people through quality representation, advocacy, community partnerships, education and outreach.