



## **PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES**

***Please note: Presenters are listed in alphabetical order by presenter last name. Only those presenters whose information was received by July 24, 2017 are included in this document.***

### **Paul Arinaga**

#### ***Scaling-up Production & Profits with Cooperatives & Food Hubs***

Paul Arinaga is General Manager of the Friends with Farms Agricultural Cooperative ([www.friendswithfarms.com](http://www.friendswithfarms.com)). Friends with Farms is a cooperative of farmers who share resources to provide wholesome food grown with principles of Aloha 'Āina for the people of Hawai'i. Paul joined Friends with Farms in 2016 after helping the cooperative to win a \$250,000 USDA grant. Prior to joining Friends with Farms, Paul was managing director of a marketing communications agency in Brussels, Belgium. He also worked for over 15 years in marketing, product and project management for Microsoft, Philips Electronics and a number of start-up companies. Paul is a passionate advocate for farmers who also likes to get his hands "dirty". He is currently a student in the Ag School program of GoFarm Hawai'i.

### **Brenda Asuncion**

#### ***Loko I'a: Restoration to Food Production***

Brenda was raised in Waipi'o, ('Ewa, O'ahu). She began volunteering for Paepae o He'eia (POH) at He'eia fishpond during holiday breaks from Occidental College, where she received her B.A. in Biology with a Marine Biology emphasis. She joined the POH staff as a part-time Ka 'Ai Kamaha'o internship coordinator while pursuing her M.S. degree in Marine Science from Hawai'i Pacific University. Brenda worked as a policy specialist with the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary where she assisted with management plan development and community-based projects. She joined Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo (KUA) in September 2013 and her primary kuleana is to coordinate opportunities for loko i'a practitioners to network and increase restoration efforts.

### **Jay Bost**

#### ***Growing New Farmers and New Markets: Farmer Training and Farm to School***

Jay is Farm Coach at GoFarm Hawaii's Windward Oahu program and works with GoFarm Hawaii programs around the State to further develop their programs. He studied agroecology at

Prescott College and Interdisciplinary Ecology at the University of Florida. His career in agriculture and ethnobotany have taken him to New Mexico, North Carolina, St. Croix (USVI), Mexico, and Belize, where he has both worked and taught at numerous production, seed, and educational farms. Jay originally came to Hawaii to study at CTAHR, but jumped at the chance to combine his passions for food production, applied research, and teaching with GoFarm Hawaii. Besides helping train new farmers, Jay is an active amateur breeder and seedsman, working with the Hawaii Seed Growers Network and other variety trial networks. He is also involved with projects such as FarmLink Hawaii and the Waimanalo Co-op, working to directly link small growers and consumers.

### **Luisa Castro**

#### ***Scaling-up Production & Profits with Cooperatives & Food Hubs***

Luisa F. Castro is the new statewide Agricultural Food Safety Program Manager with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture. With over 20 years working in agriculture, water quality, rural development and adult education in Hawaii, Luisa brings her knowledge and skills to this new unit at the HDOA to develop and implement an Agriculture Food Safety Program to ensure Hawaii's farmers, ranchers, produce distributors and wholesalers are in compliance with the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act.

### **David Gagner**

#### ***Grow Me the Money***

Dave has been extensively involved in natural resources, conservation policy, and implementation since graduating from Bowling Green State University in 1992 with a BA in Political Science focused on Environmental Policy. Dave began his career working on ethanol and oxygenated fuels issues while consulting and representing clients on the state, federal, corporate, and non-profit levels. He worked for the National Association of Conservation Districts from 1999 through 2001 as Director of Government Affairs with a specific focus on the 2002 Farm Bill and developing the association's grassroots system. Dave worked for Ducks Unlimited as their lead Agriculture representative from 2001-2003 where he was one of the primary authors/partners leading the conservation communities efforts on passage of the largest conservation title of all time. Following his time at DU he went to serve as Chief of Staff at the Natural Resources Conservation Service from 2003-2006. He was a member of the management/leadership team responsible for a staff of nearly 12,500 employees, and a \$4 billion budget. He served in a variety of roles within the Department including the Department of Agriculture's Representative on critical issues such as wetlands, wildlife, drought, Klamath Basin, biofuels, climate change, and preparation for the next Farm Bill's conservation title. Dave is currently the Senior Director of Government Relations at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. He is particularly focused on private/agricultural/working lands conservation for the Foundation. Dave and his wife, Sharon, live in Northern Virginia with their children. Prior to college, Dave was in the U.S. Army serving in the 4th Infantry Division. He enjoys hunting, fishing, and training for triathlons.

**Brooke Hansen*****Ag Tourism: Diversifying Economic Opportunity***

Dr. Hansen is an anthropologist in the College of Agriculture at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. She has been engaged with food and agricultural tourism through experiential learning classes on Hawai'i Island since 1999. Currently her work is focused on studying the scope, potential, and impediments to expanding agritourism. She teaches courses on these subjects in addition to classes on cultural tourism, foodways, spice agribusiness, and women, farming, and food resiliency. Her other academic specialties include sustainability, indigenous studies, and integrative and alternative medicine.

**Chelsea Harder*****Aloha+ Challenge: A Cross-Sector Approach to Sustainability***

Chelsea Harder is Hawai'i Green Growth's Sustainability Dashboard Coordinator, and is leading the implementation of the Aloha+ Challenge Dashboard. Chelsea brings her background in engineering, community development, education and energy sector work to Hawai'i Green Growth. Chelsea is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Natural Resources & Leadership for Sustainability at the University of Vermont, holds a degree in Civil Engineering from University of Minnesota, and studied abroad in Advanced Environmental Measurements Techniques (AEMT) program at Chalmers University in Gothenburg, Sweden. Chelsea served in Kiribati as a Peace Corps volunteer where she implemented programs aimed at improving the health of the community and improving their resilience to climate change. She is a Senior Fellow through the Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) National cohort. Chelsea is from northern Minnesota and has lived in Hawai'i for nearly a decade.

**Kristen Harmon*****Water Diversion: Assessment of Optimal Water Flow for Sustainable Ecosystem Functions in Kawainui Marsh and Agricultural Activities in Waimanalo (Poster)***

I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i Mānoa, pursuing a M.S. degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Management with a specialization in Ecology Evolution and Conservation Biology. My research focuses on the conservation of endangered species, as well as restoration and management of native systems, in Hawai'i. I plan to transfer into the PhD program at the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa, within the next two years, and from there, become a steward for wildlife and their ecosystems by pursuing a career as a wildlife conservationist.

**Hannah Hubanks*****Towards a Hawai'i Soil Health Index: Water stable aggregates and carbon pools following change from conventional to conservation management (Poster)***

Hannah Hubanks is an environmental enthusiast with a background in Zoology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison pursuing a graduate degree in soil science at the University of

Hawaii-Manoa, with a focus on environmental health and sustainability. She enjoys running, hiking, ocean sports, and leading an Earth-friendly lifestyle.

**Kerry Kakazu**

***Vertical Farming's Role in Hawai'i Agriculture (Poster)***

I am the Owner/President of MetroGrow Hawaii, the first vertical farm in the state. Since 2014 we have been supplying gourmet leafy greens to restaurants and specialty food stores. Through continued research and development we hope that vertical farming will grow into a significant contributor of local food in Hawaii.

**Hi'ilei Kawelo**

***Loko I'a: Restoration to Food Production***

Hi'ilei is one of the founders of Paepae o He'eia and has been the Executive Director since 2007. Paepae o He'eia is a small non-profit organization that cares for He'eia Fishpond, an 88-acre, 800-year old traditional Hawaiian fishpond located on O'ahu's windward coast. Paepae o He'eia was founded in 2001 and has been actively restoring the fishpond for the past 16 years. Hi'ilei's passion is Hawai'i, its land and sea, its people, practices and traditions. Hi'ilei is a wahine lawai'a (fisherwoman) from Kahalu'u, O'ahu. Her family has been fishing the waters of Kane'ohu Bay continuously for the past 6 generations and their dependence on the Bay for sustenance heavily influences her desire to see fishponds restored and succeed as food producers.

**Graydon Keala**

***Loko I'a: Restoration to Food Production***

Graydon "Buddy" Keala-Hawaiian Aquaculture Specialist and Owner/Operator of Loko I'a Consulting. He graduated from Kauai High School in 1973 and received a B.A in Aquaculture with certificates in Marine Sciences and Environmental Studies in 1983 from UH-Manoa. In 1976, he started training in aquaculture at the Oceanic Institute-Makapuu as a marine shrimp hatchery technician. He served as a member of the OHA-Native Hawaiian Historic Preservation Council for 8 years and received the Kulia I Ka Nuku Award from the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs as 2011 Outstanding Native Hawaiian for Hawaiian Fishpond work. Mr. Keala has educational experience including 4 years at-risk teacher/counselor for Kamehameha Schools-Ka Papa Honua O Keawanui, Molokai and 2 years Na Pua No'eau Summer Aquaculture program at the Oceanic Institute-Keahuolu Aquaculture Facility in Kona where he was the site manager. He is author of: Loko I'a A Manual on Hawaiian Fishpond Restoration and Management.

**Kevin Kelly*****Regional Food Hubs: Opening Large Markets to Small Farmers & Scaling-up Production & Profits with Cooperatives & Food Hubs***

A marine geologist by training, Mr. Kelly went on to received his MBA and for more than 15 years has served as an advisor as the University of Hawai'i's Vice-President of Research and Innovation. He has managed several large federal research awards from the National Science Foundation, Department of Homeland Security and NASA and has served on the boards of numerous community organizations including the Hawai'i Science & Technology Council and the Defend O'ahu Coalition. He was the Chairperson of the 2013 Clusters of Opportunity project, a community-driven, economic analysis of the North Shore region focused on integrating existing assets, including people, to generate new jobs and new economic opportunities that contribute to the growth and sustainability North Shore communities while protecting the environment and preserving the overall rural character and cultural significance of the region. He started the North Shore Economic Vitality Partnership non-profit in 2015.

**Daniela Kittinger*****Three Ways to Build a Food System for Hawai'i's Future***

Daniela Kittinger is the Supplemental Nutrition Access Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Coordinator for the Department of Health, where she works on building networks to support access to healthy, local food. As a lifelong health advocate, she has led large-scale initiatives on a broad array of social issues, including substance abuse prevention, food policy, and 'āina-based education. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Kinesiology and a Master's in Public Health from UH Mānoa.

**Natalie Kurashima*****Indigenous Ag and Climate Change***

Natalie Kurashima was born and raised in Waipi'o, O'ahu and currently lives in Kona on Hawai'i Island. She is the Integrated Resources Manager at Kamehameha Schools, focused on integrating natural and cultural resource management projects, and increasing community contributions in 'āina stewardship. Natalie received a B.S. in Conservation and Resource Studies from UC Berkeley, and a Masters and Ph.D. in Botany at UH Mānoa. Her research focuses on understanding the past, present, and future potential of indigenous Hawaiian agricultural systems to inform their restoration today.

**Noa Lincoln*****Breadfruit in Hawai'i: Past, Present, and Future***

Noa Lincoln is the Indigenous Crops and Cropping Systems research specialist at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He hails from Kealahou, Hawai'i. Noa has had intensive training in lā'au lapa'au, and worked in traditional agriculture around the Pacific Rim. He has received his degrees from Yale and Stanford Universities.

**Stephanie Mock*****Growing Agriculture with Technology***

Stephanie Mock, Conservation Specialist/Director of Field Operations for O'ahu Resource Conservation & Development Council, works with farmers by providing technical assistance, conservation planning, agricultural workshops and has provided technical assistance on over 8,000 acres throughout the islands. Stephanie's work has focused on how farmers/producers can enhance natural resource stewardship in Hawai'i while also remaining economically viable. She has been part of the effort led by O'ahu RC&D to bring conservation planning assistance to farmers in Hawai'i through a new, online conservation planning tool called "808 Planner".

**John Morgan*****Ag Tourism: Diversifying Economic Opportunity***

Born and raised in Hawaii, John Morgan is a sixth generation Hawaii resident John graduated from Punahou High School in 1974 and went to both Oregon State University and the University of Hawaii, majoring in Economics, before working full time at Kualoa Ranch. He started his work career at Kualoa Ranch in 1971 as a part time laborer. He became manager of the family owned company in 1981, when the company employed 8 people. He started a diversified outdoor recreation operation at the ranch in 1985 and since then, Kualoa Ranch has grown to employ about 300 people. Its primary endeavors are cattle ranching, diversified agriculture, outdoor recreation, education and real estate.

John has been active in the community for many years, and is presently on the boards of the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau, the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, and the Oahu Cemetery. Some of his past board affiliations include the State Board of Land and Natural Resources, the Hawaii Trust for Public Land, the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, the Bishop Museum and the Hawaii Nature Center. Over the years, John and Kualoa Ranch have been the recipients of numerous awards, including: Kama`aina of the Year, Business Leader of the Year, Tourism Legacy Award, National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Environmental Stewardship Award, and more. John has been married to his wife Carri since 1981 and the couple has three children, living in New York, Hawaii and Auckland, New Zealand.

**Anna-Lisa Okoye*****Growing New Farmers and New Markets: Farmer Training and Farm to School***

Anna-Lisa Okoye is The Kohala Center's Chief Operating Officer. Founded in the year 2000, The Kohala Center is an independent, community-based center for research, conservation, and education. We turn research and ancestral knowledge into action, so that communities in Hawaii and around the world can thrive—ecologically, economically, culturally, and socially. Our main areas of focus are food, water, place, and people. As COO, Anna-Lisa is responsible for developing new initiatives, as well as the programmatic effectiveness and financial sustainability of The Kohala Center. She also sits on the Executive Committee of the Hawaii Farm to School Initiative, a public-private partnership between the Lt. Governor of Hawaii, the

Hawaii State Department of Education, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Hawaii State Procurement Office, and The Kohala Center. Prior to becoming COO, Anna-Lisa was a Rural Business Development Specialist with The Kohala Center. In this role, she was responsible for managing the Center's micro-loan programs, assisting with cooperative development, providing technical assistance services to rural businesses (including business planning, financial planning, record-keeping, and grant and loan application preparation), and working on various agricultural industry projects, including cottage food legislation and farm to school initiatives.

Anna-Lisa received a Juris Doctor degree from New York University School of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. She practiced law in New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. in the areas of corporate and public finance prior to relocating to Hawaii in 2013.

**Jason Okuhama**  
***Grow Me the Money***

Past 17 years as Managing Partner, Hawaii Lending Specialists LLC dba Commercial and Business Lending and formerly SVP with B&I Lending LLC. Loan origination, sales, marketing, underwriting and servicing; specializing in the USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Rural Development and U.S. Small Business Administration loan programs, commercial real estate and residential financing. Territory includes Hawaii, Southern and Western Pacific.

Formerly VP with Bank off America, Community Development Banking Group. Administered the U.S. Small Business Administration, USDA Rural Development and other government loan programs.

**Shannon Ramirez**  
***FarmCorps Hawaii, Poster Presentation***

Shannon Ramirez is the director for FarmCorps Hawaii, which is an AmeriCorps Initiative and a program of Friends of Kona Pacific Public Charter School, located on the Big Island. This program supports growing healthy food using AmeriCorps members placed at local schools and farms.

**Cynthia Reeves**  
***Value Added: Doing it Right from Harvest to Sale***

Dr. Cindy Reeves is the Maui County Administrator for the University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR). In this role, she oversees all facilities, research, Extension outreach and instruction on Maui, Molokai and Lanai. Prior to this position, Cindy was a National Program Leader for Nutrition, Health & Wellness with the USDA NIFA. She also served as the Director of Nutrition and Family Sciences in the Families, 4H and Nutrition unit of USDA CSREES (now NIFA). In addition to the University of Hawaii, Cindy has

held academic faculty positions at the University of Maryland, and the University of Otago in New Zealand. She earned her BS in Biology from the University of Nevada, Reno; her MPH degree in Nutrition from the University of Hawaii at Manoa; and her PhD in Nutrition from the University of California, Davis.

**Joshua Silva**

***FSMA/GAP: The Alphabet Soup to Safe Produce for All Consumers***

Josh is a new edible crops Extension Agent with the University of Hawaii Cooperative Extension Service, Oahu County. His focus areas include integrated crop and pest management, soil fertility, and food safety, primarily servicing west Oahu farmers. Josh is a certified Produce Safety Alliance Trainer and is working towards becoming a Lead Trainer to further support local food safety needs and programs.

**Dave Stone**

***Value-Added/Doing It Right From Harvest to Sale***

Dave Stone, Ph.D., is the Director of the Oregon State University Food Innovation Center. Dr. Stone is an Associate Professor with the Department of Food Science and Technology with a background in toxicology, food safety and communication. Dr. Stone's Center is an urban agricultural station located in downtown Portland. Services include providing support to agriculture, food entrepreneurs and food processors. Dr. Stone. Dr. Stone has served on a National Academies Expert Panel, engaged with numerous community groups, industry stakeholders, NGOs and governmental agencies through his Extension Appointment.

**Ikaika Velez**

***Loko I'a: Restoration to Food Production***

Born and raised Kahaluu , grew up fishing Kaneohe bay. Spent 5 years 1993-1999 big island puna. Graduated Castle HS 2003. Married 2010, 2 daughters. Employed Kualoa Ranch 2007, Moli'i Loko Ia. Present responsibilities, Kia'i loko stewardship and oyster production.

**Pomai Weigert**

***Ag Tourism: Diversifying Economic Opportunity***

Business Strategist & Consultant. Pomai's Big Picture Thinking and Business Savvy have gained her clients and partnerships that include some of Hawaii's most popular and pioneering business leaders & local agencies. Her concepts have taken her around the globe, across the State and within each island network to diversify and model leadership skills, collaborative marketing & service methods, and competitive brand building to keep Hawaii relevant and viable in today's ever-changing socio-economic environments.

**Melanie Willich*****Growing New Farmers and New Markets: Farmer Training and Farm to School***

Melanie Willich, PhD, is The Kohala Center's Farmer Training Coordinator and Director of the Beginning Farmer Rancher Development Program on Hawaii Island. Melanie received a BSc in Agricultural Sciences and a MSc in Tropical and International Agriculture from Georg August University in Göttingen, Germany. She earned a PhD in Organic Plant Production and Agroecosystems Research in the Tropics from the University of Kassel in Witzenhausen, Germany. Melanie currently also holds a position as Soil & Field Crops Research Associate with the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management at UH Hilo.

**Kylie Wong*****FSMA/GAP: The Alphabet Soup to Safe Produce for All Consumers***

Kylie Wong is an Junior Extension Agent for Maui County Cooperative Extension. Her program focuses are edible crops sustainable agriculture and farm food safety, including Good Agricultural Practices and Food Safety Modernization Act education.

**Janel Yamamoto*****Growing New Farmers and New Markets: Farmer Training and Farm to School***

Director of GoFarm Hawaii and the Agribusiness Incubator Program. GoFarm Hawaii's mission is to enhance Hawaii's food security and economy by increasing the number of local agricultural producers by offering those with an interest in agriculture a combination of knowledge, experience, and support designed to assist them in becoming viable production growers, and accomplish this in a manner that encourages sustainability. The Agribusiness Incubator Program helps people who produce, use, or promote agriculture in Hawaii to start, grow, and improve their bottom line. The Program serves all islands with business planning, marketing, financial analysis, and other guidance designed to launch businesses and products, lower costs, and increase sales. Janel provides instruction and consulting to GoFarm Hawaii students and local farmers on a variety of business management topics.

**En Young*****Three Ways to Build a Food System for Hawai'i's Future***

En Young is the Executive Director of The Food Basket Inc, Hawai'i Island's Food Bank. Living in the collaborative community of Hawai'i County, The Food Basket is exploring new ways non-profits can contribute to growing the agricultural sector.