President’s Message

“A servant leader uses their leadership goals to give back to the community. It is leadership in search of serving the interest of someone else.”

Those are the words of Kameko, who is in her first year of medical school at the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii. Kameko is also a Y Girl Power mentor, helping young girls to gain the confidence, skills and resiliency to thrive during middle school and beyond.

Building servant leadership has been a part of the history at the Atherton Y. In its future, servant leadership will have even stronger roots at the Atherton Y.

Back in April 2017, we completed the sale of our Atherton YMCA facility near the University of Hawaii at Manoa to the University of Hawaii Foundation, to be used for expanded student housing.

Through an office space we were granted located in the Student Services building at UH Manoa, the sale also enables the YMCA of Honolulu to continue our work in empowering youth to meet their goals. Atherton Y programs include leadership and community service experiences for college students, and mentoring programs that motivate youth and help college students prepare for successful careers.

Programs like these go well beyond the walls of the facilities that house them. At a young age, students learn the power they have to impact their community and their own lives. Most important, they learn that their personal participation matters.

Opening the door a little can make a big difference.

Mike Broderick

Michael Broderick
President & CEO
YMCA of Honolulu

Y College Camp Helps Students and Mentors Alike

When Mary was a sophomore in high school, she read with interest a bulletin about Y College Camp. She came from a family background where you enter the workforce after high school, rather than go to college. Today University of Hawaii student Mary is Atherton Y Student Board Co-President and now “playing it forward” as a Y College Camp mentor.

“Serving as a Y College Camp mentor helped me realize the impact that I can have on others,” Mary said. “College Camp helps to build a spirit of servant leadership by helping campers learn about who they are, and what they want to be.”

During the free week-long session at Atherton Y, high school students from underserved communities are motivated and encouraged to graduate and to pursue higher education. Over the past five years, College Camp has positively impacted 289 high school students, and 47 college student mentors. Of the participants who have graduated from high school, about 80% are now pursuing higher education. Keep in mind that none of these youth ever envisioned going to college.

Several of our first Y College Campers earned their college degrees this spring, graduating from the University of Hawaii, Chaminade University, Brandeis University, American University, Portland State University and Harvard University.

Mary, and other volunteer mentors who were college campers and are now attending college, have already completed mentoring this summer’s first cohort of new and eager Y College Campers. Two more co-horts of campers will follow this summer– and Mary and her team will be ready for them.

Mary sums it up best -- “Growing up, I knew I wanted to help people, I just didn’t know how. The Y gave me the tools to do that.”

Taking a Break to Serve Others

“There are a lot of things in this world that are bigger than myself that I should get involved in.”

“We are all capable of making a difference in this world, even if our actions seem very little.”

Those are the words of Y college students in our Alternative Seasonal Breaks, intensive week-long programs held during college school breaks that introduce students to diverse communities and social issues through community service projects. Students have traveled to underserved communities in Molokai, Hawaii Island and the Philippines.

This year, Atherton Y students traveled to Cebu, in recent years ranked as the Philippines’ province with the highest number of families living in poverty. Students joined with the Rotary Club of Honolulu, Cebu YMCA
Atherton Y Mentors Change Lives at All Ages

Atherton Y college student volunteers have expanded their mentoring skills beyond our College Camp program, reaching youth of all ages and backgrounds.

This past school year, twenty Y tutors headed to our Kuhio Elementary A+ afterschool programs to work with nearly 100 students to provide homework help, social activities and skills development.

Two of our Y Club Mid sites were buzzing with Girl Power for middle school girls mentored by Atherton Y students, who helped create a safe and open environment as part of an eight-week after school session. Mentors focused on developing positive self-image, awareness of social media, bullying, social pressures and its effects on health. One hundred percent of Girl Power Kalihi Y youth said the program helped them to understand why others feel the way they do. After the program, some of the girls noted:

“I don’t bully people anymore.”
“I became more confident.”
“I think more about life.”

This summer, five Y college mentors are working with 40 Kalihi Y Outreach teens to help them make positive life choices, and to aspire to obtain higher education.

And Atherton Y student volunteers and staff are already planning for our annual Y Leadership Camp taking place at the end of the summer for incoming freshman college students to build leadership and facilitation skills.

During the school year, Atherton Y college student volunteers also serve as mentors for Y Youth and Government program middle and high school students, helping to facilitate training sessions on government systems, bills and debates.

And the learning never stops. Halfway through their graduation requirements, Atherton Y college mentors are themselves mentored through the PacLeaders program. Specialized training by a mentor in the students’ field of career interest culminates in a capstone community service project.

and Hiroshima YMCA to improve Banlot Elementary School which serves 200 children.

Students helped build and restore three new classrooms, a small health clinic, a stage and courtyard area and volleyball court. While there, volunteers also taught the children the importance of dental hygiene, provided more than 100 free pairs of reading glasses to community members, and served a hot meal to 50 homeless children in Cebu City.

It was a school break that helped both the children and the Y volunteers.

“I always thought I would be too scared to live anywhere other than home,” reflected a Y student. “I learned that there is so much more out there to grasp and to learn. I learned new ways to work well with other people. And I learned to smile through everything because I have so much to be grateful for.”

“I can go beyond the limits if the less fortunate can.”
Reaching Out for Healthier Kids

Keiki from the I.H.S. Shelter and Kahuaiki Village were on their way to a healthier lifestyle – at the YMCA Healthy Kids Day at Camp Erdman.

Earlier this year, 30 families moved into Kahuaiki Village, an affordable, permanent housing community for former homeless families run by the Institute for Human Services (I.H.S.). Atherton Y Keiki Outreach Initiative students partnered with Pasha Hawaii and RIPEN (Reducing Intergenerational Poverty Elevating Neighborhoods) to help the kids from both housing projects enjoy a chartered bus and lunches on the way to a fun day of learning how to become healthy and fit in mind, spirit and body.

YMCA Healthy Kids Day is an annual event that features more than 30 community partners, highlighting the importance of physical activity, healthy lifestyle choices and active play through engaging and creative activities.

“Healthy Kids Day gave the kids and families a chance to relax, be active and to have fun away from the stresses of their daily lives,” said Amber, program coordinator at I.H.S.

Among the other favorite activities of the day were swimming, high ropes challenge, alpine tower climb, archery, giant swing, rock wall climbing and an obstacle course.

On a regular basis, Atherton Y student volunteers also provide tutoring and enrichment activities to homeless children living in I.H.S. shelters.

“It’s important for us to come out to I.H.S. because it helps the kids to have role models in their lives, to have that constant in their lives where we come in every week and show them we’re there for them,” said Atherton Y volunteer Marina.

“We as volunteers grow in our confidence and ability to lead activities to help the kids to become leaders themselves,” she said.

2018 Annual Campaign is For Our Community

More than 630 volunteers campaigned for the YMCA’s Annual Campaign, raising $1,144,973 to provide financial assistance for those who cannot afford a Y membership or program and funding for community impact programs.

Our volunteer campaigners are enthusiastic no matter their age.....from our 95-year-old Y Board member Augie Yee who shares his years of wisdom with current and new donors, to Mililani High School freshmen Joie and Krysta who lead other teens to campaign to share their stories through a special call night to help raise money so that other teens will have the same opportunities.

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of our longtime, as well as new supporters and donors, who are vital to changing the lives of all ages in our community.

See how the Y Annual Campaign helps transform lives: http://bit.ly/PL5-ASC