



SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



2024

Our Values Aim to INSPIRE

A Message from our CEO...

"To all those in recovery, to our hardworking staff, and dedicated partners and supporters, thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we are creating a brighter and healthier future."

Dr. Hannah
Preston-Pita



As we celebrate September as Recovery Month, I am deeply inspired by the incredible individuals who have embraced their recovery journey. At the Big Island Substance Abuse Council, we have the privilege of witnessing your strength and resilience every day. You are the heart of our mission, and your courage continues to affirm the importance of the work we do together.

In the past few months, BISAC has celebrated significant milestones. We proudly marked our 60th anniversary of providing essential services to the community. This milestone speaks to decades of dedicated work, and we look forward to another 60 years of transforming lives through recovery and hope. We also recently hosted our 10th annual Summer Jam, a celebration of the strength and unity of our community. This event not only highlighted the resilience of those in recovery but also served as a hub for essential services provided by our partnering agencies. Together, we stood in support of our mission and the well-being of our community.

One of my personal highlights has been the Runway to Resilience fashion show. Designing for this event, which featured individuals in recovery, was one of my most rewarding experiences. Watching participants confidently take to the runway was a powerful reminder of the transformation recovery can bring, not just in physical appearance, but in spirit and self-worth.

"As we celebrate our 60th anniversary, a milestone that stands as a testament to our collective dedication and hard work, it is with mixed emotions that I announce the farewell of a remarkable and devoted manager. We honor and bid a fond aloha to Miriama Laulu, whose journey with the Big Island Substance Abuse Council (BISAC) has been nothing short of extraordinary. Miriama has been an integral part of our team, contributing not only her leadership but her heart and passion for our mission. While we are sad to see her go, we are incredibly proud as she embarks on her next chapter to pursue further education at the end of this month. Her impact on BISAC and the individuals we serve will be felt for years to come.

Miriama joined us as a Po'okela Vocational Program Coordinator, driven by a deep-seated passion and unwavering commitment to helping our community's most vulnerable. Her tireless efforts, innovative approach, and keen sense of kuleana became evident, propelling her through the ranks to become our trusted Director of Operations. In this role, she really grew as a manager, leading with respect, aloha, and an unyielding dedication to our BISAC 'ohana.



**CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF BISAC
WAS LARGELY MADE POSSIBLE
WITH MIRIAMA'S CAN-DO
ATTITUDE AND HEROIC WORK
ETHIC. WHILE WE WILL DEEPLY
MISS HER PRESENCE AND
GUIDANCE, WE ARE ALSO
INCREDIBLY PROUD AND HAPPY
FOR HER AS SHE EMBARKS ON A
NEW JOURNEY TO GROW AND
BECOME THE BEST VERSION OUR
LĀHUI NEEDS HER TO BE. WE WILL
ALWAYS SUPPORT HER AND LOOK
FORWARD TO SEEING THE
INCREDIBLE THINGS SHE WILL
UNDOUBTEDLY DO IN THE FUTURE.**

Since her arrival, Miriama's determination and passion have been pivotal to our success. She has been a cornerstone of our organizational growth and a beacon of hope and support for our clients. She has consistently treated everyone with dignity and empathy, embodying the true essence of who we are.

Reflecting on her profound impact, we recognize that our organization will be different without her. Her leadership, vision, and relentless pursuit of excellence have shaped BISAC in countless ways. Because of her, we are better off, stronger, and more equipped to continue our mission of supporting those who need us most.

Miriama, mahalo nui loa from the bottom of our hearts for always giving BISAC more than BISAC could ever give you. Your legacy here will continue to inspire us and drive our mission forward. We are eternally grateful for your service and wish you all the success and happiness. You will forever have a home in our hearts.

With deepest gratitude and warmest aloha,
The BISAC Ohana





Hosted by the Hawai'i Island Fentanyl Task Force. This annual gathering has been considered the premier opioid and fentanyl awareness event since 2022.

This year's summit featured inspiring speakers with lived experience, educational presentations, group exercises, and networking opportunities with real-life heroes who are working to prevent drug overdoses.

The testimonies we heard were profoundly moving and have undoubtedly changed lives, reinvigorating our collective call to action.

3rd Annual Hawaii Fentanyl & Addictions Summit



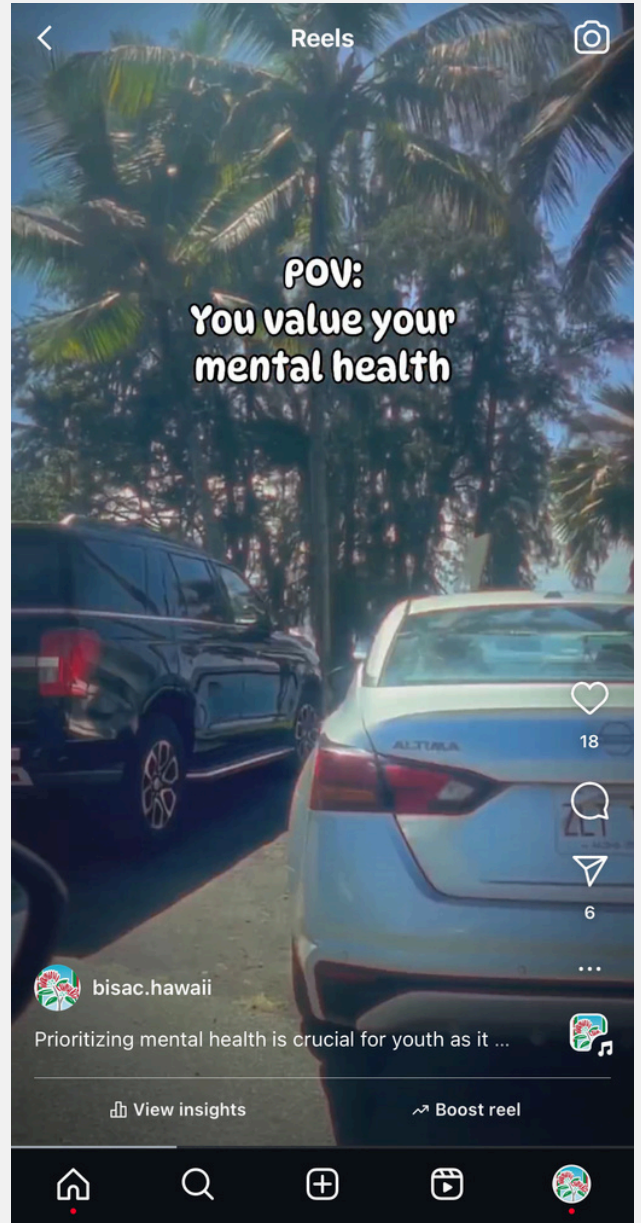
10TH ANNUAL Summer Jam

*A Day of Strength
& Celebration*



The Big Island Substance Abuse Council (BISAC) hosted its 10th Annual Summer Jam on July 27, 2024, at the Hilo Afook Chinen Civic Auditorium. The event featured fun activities, including a truck pull, Strongman and Strongwoman weightlifting contests, a craft & health fair, and delicious food from local vendors. It celebrated a decade of community support for recovery and wellness, bringing together families for a day of excitement and camaraderie.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Our Community Engagement Department empowers youth to navigate life's challenges and embrace a clean and sober lifestyle through confidential, client-centered services. Specialists serve seven different schools across the island, focusing on interventions that build pro-social behaviors and improve social outcomes. By using social media as a prevention tool, we engage the community and promote positive messages that support youth in making healthier choices.



fashion to resilience

a celebration of strength and style



The Big Island Substance Abuse Council (BISAC) hosted the "Runway to Resilience Fashion Show" on September 7, 2024, at the Historic Palace Theater in Hilo, celebrating 60 years of service in the fight against addiction. The event featured live music, a silent auction, and a headline fashion show, with models who were faces of recovery, showcasing the strength and resilience of those who have overcome addiction. These inspiring individuals took to the runway, demonstrating that recovery is possible and that hope can shine through even the most difficult challenges.



The Mission

To connect with others who seek excellence in sobriety and support each other healing, growth and leadership.

Through fostering a community dedicated to empowerment and mutual encouragement we cultivate a path towards sustained sobriety and a life of purpose, impact and leadership.

Let's Connect

Phone
808-319-8814

Social
@aces.hawaii

Email
aces@bisac.om

ACES

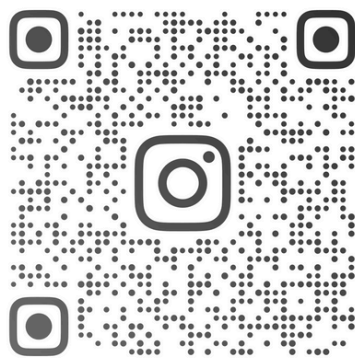
Always
Claim
Excellence
In
Sobriety

Mentorship

Upcoming Events

2nd Annual Walk to Prevent Addiction Overdose

September 28 9am - 11am
Liliuokalani Garden, Hilo



ACES.HAWAII

“ —
The opposite
of addiction
is not simply
sobriety.
It is
connection.

Johann Hari



Our ACES recovery group hosted a mechanical bullriding competition on 8/31.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT



Andrew's journey to sobriety has been one filled with setbacks, resiliency and triumph. Andrew first came to BISAC as part of being with Big Island Drug Court and was very resistant to change. Andrew was given a chance with BISAC in July of 2023. Still resistant to change, Andrew was discharged a few months later, Andrew found himself back where he started. BISAC gave Andrew another opportunity in November of 2023, Andrew entered BISAC's therapeutic living program differently. Andrew began to see BISAC's Therapeutic Living Program from a different perspective, opening himself to the process of BISAC and grabbed on with both hands, fully accepting the support, tools and knowledge from BISAC's team of counselors, therapist, coordinators and staff. Andrew began applying it to his life and his goals became one of finding peace and healing within himself and a purpose. Andrew noticed his attitude changed, his drive to want to successfully complete treatment became a priority. Having successfully graduated from BISAC's treatment program, he proved to himself change is possible. Andrew is now an employee at BISAC, and he continues to share his experience with others in the community, he leads by example and from his experiences he can show others that HOPE can blossom even in the darkest places.

Andrew Penn