MA‘O ORGANIC FARMS-GROWING FOOD, GROWING YOUTH

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Abstract

MA'O Organic Farms – Growing Food, Growing Youth is a study of the aspirations and experiences of youth from the Wai'anae Coast of O'ahu. The youth, many who are Native Hawaiian and first generation college students, are participants in the farm's Youth Leadership Training program. The program is an indigenous, place-based program where in addition to working at the farm, the youth attend Leeward Community College to earn their Associate in Arts degree. This study used a participatory approach with semi-structured interviews of over 40 youth, program staff, and college instructors. The primary research questions were: 1) what are the central aspects of the program and how does this reflect Native Hawaiian values and practices? 2) how are youth experiencing the program? and, 3) what are the effects on participating youth?

The results of this study indicate that youth identify strongly with Hawaiian values and practices of place and caring for the land, specifically *aloha 'aina* and *malama 'aina*. Youth develop a strong sense of place and commitment to their community, as well as a sense of responsibility to the future generation and their roles as leaders in creating a sustainable future for their community and for Hawai'i. The youth also develop critical life skills from the farm – a strong work ethic, team work, and learning how to become leaders and managers.

In describing their experiences with education, youth identified managing a number of challenges including negotiating highly negative stereotypes about Hawaiians and youth from Wai'anae; a public school experience largely characterized by low expectations; and learning the realities of entering college, often academically unprepared. Yet, these youth persist, often with the support of a significant person in their family, strong peer support from other interns, as well as guidance and inspiration from older peer mentors and program staff.

These findings support the research on educational disparities for Native Hawaiians. These youth have not been served well by Hawai'i's public school system where schools, particularly those

with large percentages of Native Hawaiians, are of poor quality. The importance of valuing the culture, particularly, Hawaiian values and the connection to land and ancestry is highlighted in this study.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

As one of the instructors in MAʻO Farms' partnership with Leeward Community College, I often thought about how I became involved with MAʻO Farms. I recall the first time I met MAʻO students. As a first year instructor, I had already heard some very negative stereotypes about "kids from Waiʻanae;" and as a former education researcher in Hawaiʻi, I was very familiar with the negative statistics about Hawaiian youth, particularly those from the Waiʻanae and Nānākuli areas. One day some of these students were in my classroom. They wore t-shirts that read "No panic, Go organic," and as the semester progressed, I saw no evidence of the stereotypes. In fact, the students possessed a wisdom and spirit far greater than their ages. Intrigued, I began to get to know the staff at the farm and eventually became one of the "MAʻO instructors."

Since my first encounter with these students, I have met the staff and founders of MAʻO and interacted with many more students. We have had successes, smiles, lots of laughter, and some disappointments. Because of my involvement with MAʻO Farms, I have grown tremendously as a teacher and a person. As I embarked on this dissertation, I have discovered that my study of MAʻO Organic Farms and their students is much more than a rite of passage or an academic exercise. The big questions are "What are the important parts of the program? What is the impact on its youth participants?" The answers to these questions inform all who care about and work on a daily basis to support youth and their dreams. Importantly, this study focuses on the experiences of youth who, by all traditional indicators, will not make it - whether by entering and completing higher education or by breaking a cycle of poverty and marginalization. Yet some do; why? As program staff, educators, and researchers, how are we helping? How are we not?

This research study looks at such efforts through a case study of MAʻO Farms' Youth Leadership Training Program (YLT). The Farm is located in Waiʻanae, Oʻahu, a rural community with one of the

island's largest percentages of Native Hawaiians. In the next section, a context of Waiʻanae and MAʻO Farms is presented.

About Waiʻanae

Located on the island of Oʻahu, the Waiʻanae moku[1] (ancient Hawaiian land division) includes 9 ahupuaʻa (land section from mountain to ocean) extending from Kaʻena Point at the north to Pili o Kahe Ridge at the south of Nānākuli. As displayed in Figure 1, the ahupuaʻa are: Keawaʻ Ula, Kahanahāiki, Mākua, Ohikilolo, Keaʻau, Mākaha, Waiʻanae, Lualualei and Nānākuli.

Figure 1. Ahupuaʻa of Waianae

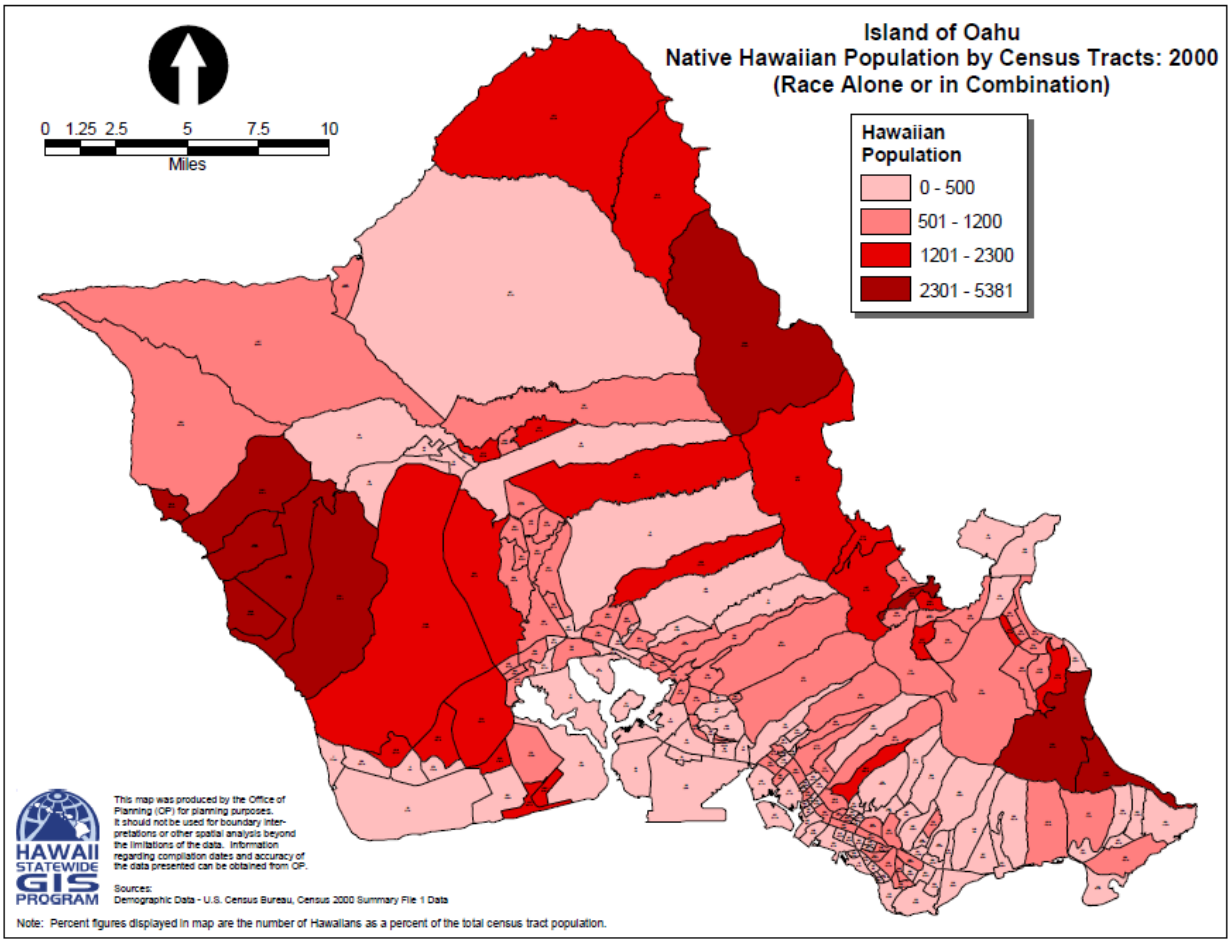


Source: City and County of Honolulu, Board of Water Supply. http://www.boardofwatersupply.com/cssweb/display.cfm?sid=1408/

[1] A glossary of Hawaiian terms used in this study can be found on page 199.

As of 2000, Wai‘anae’s population was 30,832, and 19.1 percent of its residents considered themselves Hawaiian and 51.2 percent part Hawaiian. As displayed in Figure 2 below, the greatest concentrations of Hawaiians reside in the rural areas of O‘ahu, including the West Side (Wai‘anae).

Figure 2. Native Hawaiian Population, O‘ahu



Source: State of Hawai‘i, Office of Planning, Hawai‘i Statewide GIS Program.

Compared to other communities, Wai‘anae disproportionally reflects conditions of poverty. Twenty-three percent of families receive welfare and approximately 50 percent receive food stamp assistance, as compared to the state average of 5 and 13 percent, respectively[2]. Median household

[2] University of Hawai'i, Center on Family. (2003). Wai‘anae Area Community Profile. Retrieved on July 29, 2014 from http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/cof_data/profiles/communityProfiles.aspx

income is $55,683 while the state median is $66,420. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced lunch in public schools in Nānākuli and Waiʻanae is approximately twice that of the state (80 percent in Nānākuli and 77 percent in Waianae compared to the state total of 38 percent).[3] The community is also young, with more households headed by a single parent and larger household sizes with a median age of 29 years old, compared to state median of 36; 52 percent of families with children under age 18, compared to state average of 45 percent; 63 percent of families headed by a married couple compared to state median of 75 percent; and average household size of 3.8 compared to the state average of 2.9. [1]

Roughly a quarter of the area's 9th graders drop out of high school (26 and 20 percent at Waiʻanae High and Nānākuli High and Intermediate).[4] The percentage of youth aged 16-19 who are not in school or working is 18.7, more than double the state average of 8.6 percent. Fewer residents in Waiʻanae possess high school diplomas (78 percent compared to the state average of 85 percent) and even fewer hold bachelor's degrees (9 percent compared to the state average of 26 percent). [5]

Despite all this, Waiʻanae is described as

> "a community that has struggled to maintain its culture, identity, values, and sense of place. It is this struggle that has given rise to Waiʻanae's relentless spirit to meet these challenges head on and to rally grass roots support in determining and shaping its own future." (Waiʻanae Ecological Characterization project, Hawai'i CZM, 2012).

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[3] State of Hawai'i, Department of Education, 2012 Superintendent's 23rd Annual Report, Retrieved on July 29, 2014 from http://arch.k12.hi.us/state%5Csuperintendent_report/sar2012.html

[4] State of Hawai'i, Department of Education, School Status and Improvement Report: Waiʻanae High School, SY 2012-13. Retrieved on July 29, 2014 http://arch.k12.hi.us/school/ssir/2013/leeward.html
State of Hawai'i, Department of Education, School Status and Improvement Report: Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, SY 2012-13. Retrieved on July 29, 2014 from http://arch.k12.hi.us/school/ssir/2013/leeward.html

[5] University of Hawai'i, Center on Family. (2003). Waiʻanae Area Community Profile. Retrieved on July 29, 2014 from http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/cof_data/profiles/communityProfiles.aspx

While Waiʻanae's problems may seem overwhelming, its ability to organize as a community is described as unmatched on the island. "It's not that we want to scream 'Poor Waiʻanae!'" says Nani ʻO Waiʻanae director Katy Kok. "We have a great pride in this lower income area." The longevity of projects like the Cultural Learning Center at Kaʻala, Hoa ʻAina ʻO Mākaha, and the Waiʻanae Coast Community Health Center are testaments to that pride. So are projects like Na Wai ʻO Waiʻanae, Nani ʻO Waiʻanae, Malama Mākua, the Rotary and Lion's clubs, the ahupuaʻa councils, and others too numerous to list (Teresa Dawson, 2000, as cited in Hawaiʻi CZM, 2012).

About Kauhale 'O Waiʻanae

Among these many groups is the Kauhale Youth Education and Entrepreneurship Initiative (Kauhale ʻO Waiʻanae). Kauhale is a community re-development initiative created to empower Waiʻanae youth through project-based work and educational experiences and to create a network of social enterprises within the community. *Kauhale* means extended family or community living; the initiative represents a collaboration between MAʻO Organic Farms, Makaha Studios, the Natural Resource Management Academy at Waiʻanae High School, and Searider Productions Academy at Waiʻanae High School. These *eduprises*, as they are called, combine culturally relevant enterprises that provide youth with academic and entrepreneurial skills delivered with a social justice approach to addressing the community's needs (Foley, et al., 2012).

Social enterprise is a collective term for a range of organizations that do business for a social purpose. Such enterprises adopt one of a variety of different legal formats but have in common the principles of pursuing business-led solutions to achieve social aims and the reinvestment of surplus for community benefit. Their objectives focus on socially desired, non-financial goals; their outcomes are the non-financial measures of implied demand for and supply of services (Haugh, 2006).

Kauhale shares similar characteristics with other social enterprises in that there is a strong focus on innovation and social change, and its key stakeholders are its members and community. Social

enterprises are characterized by low dependence on external actors. Although they may receive grant money, they are not managed by funding agencies. Their interest is in meeting a social need in a sustainable way to alleviate social problems. Types of social innovation include building local capacity to solve local problems, reconfiguring products, resources and management practices to better fit local conditions, and contributing to building a movement and giving voice to marginalized groups (Vurro and Perrini, 2006). According to a recent grant application, Kauhale describes itself as:

> We are structured as a social-enterprise, a non-profit that is designed to generate revenue. This model allows us to access two revenue streams, a) revenue from grants, and b) revenue we generate ourselves. The social mission is carried out via the development of "edu-preneurial spaces" - seamless intersects between education and enterprise. In these edu-preneurial spaces, interns generate revenue for the enterprise while the [enterprise] supports development of their emotional, personal, professional and academic capacities. Through the edu-preneurial space, we all participate in our collective prosperity.
>
> Our social enterprise model creates a scenario where investment in and expansion of our enterprise means deeper investment in community resiliency. Tangible outcomes include: increased college opportunities for community youth; increased opportunities for these youth to receive meaningful, living-wage jobs, and a general rebranding of the community from a "marginal neighborhood" to a hub of indigenous innovation. (Kauhale, 2012)

Social enterprises have the potential to produce economic, social and environmental outcomes, particularly among what Haugh (2006) describes as *community enterprises* (a category of social enterprises). These organizations involve local people with local knowledge in the creation and management of sustainable enterprises that are accountable to their local community. Community enterprises are well suited to rural areas and indigenous communities. Many rural areas have lost their economic base as fisheries or farms, and other major employers have closed, resulting in emigration to urban areas. The result is high unemployment, few new business start-ups, and a decline in services and quality of life in the rural area. Indigenous local development strategies, as opposed to external top-

down efforts, are better suited to such situations so that the community itself takes the lead and responsibility for economic and social regeneration (Bryden and Munro, 2000; Herlau and Tetzschner, 1994, as cited in Haugh, 2006). As described in its website,

> Kauhale Youth Education and Entrepreneurship Initiative, or Kauhale, is a revolutionary school community partnership that reawakens our *kuleana* (responsibility) to transform our own debilitative cultural, social, economic and environmental condition by proactively assuming a *kauhale,* or village, approach to raise our children. Our intention is to re-establish a vibrant learning context and movement in which diverse cohorts of vulnerable youth and their families are engaged, supported and sustained through culturally relevant, project oriented and entrepreneurial pedagogy and practice. (Kauhale ʻO Waiʻanae, n.d.)

About MAʻO Organic Farms

MAʻO Organic Farms is located on 24 acres of agricultural land in Lualualei Valley, Waiʻanae, and is one of Oʻahu's largest independent organic farms. MAʻO was created in 2000 by the Community Re-Development Corporation (WCRC), a nonprofit organization with board members representing education, agriculture, health, energy, media and community development. The farm reflects the core strategic initiatives of the WCRC – namely, youth, sustainable economic development, agriculture, health, and Hawaiian culture. The community's two greatest assets are its youth and land.

MAʻO stands for *mala ʻai 'opio*, meaning ʻthe youth food gardenʼ or ʻgrowing youth,ʼ and reflects WCRC's emphasis on youth leadership, social enterprise and *aloha ʻaina*. With agricultural programs at Waiʻanae Intermediate, Waiʻanae High School and its Youth Leadership Training Program (YLT), MAʻO Farms works within the community of Waiʻanae to address critical needs of poverty, economic development, and sustainability, particularly the need for higher education and jobs that pay living wages.

The Youth Leadership Training Program (YLT) is a three-year program where youth from the Waiʻanae Coast intern at the farm. They are paid a monthly stipend and receive full tuition scholarship

to obtain Associate in Arts (AA) degrees at Leeward Community College. At work, interns learn and practice organic farming, Hawaiian cultural practices and the history of Waiʻanae, leadership and entrepreneurship. Interns manage the farm's daily operations, including distributing 35-45 types of produce to island chefs, local farmers markets and grocery outlets, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), a subscription based program. At college, in addition to the core requirements of an AA degree, interns complete an Academic Subject Certificate (ASC) in Community Food Security. Courses include organic agriculture, entrepreneurship, the sociology of food, and contemporary Hawaiian issues.

The YLT is the oldest (and largest) of MAʻO Farms' programs, and the focus of this research. My relationship to MAʻO is directly linked to my role as an instructor at Leeward Community College for one of the Community Food Security ASC required courses, sociology of food. As of this writing, I have been a participant of the program for seven cycles of interns (cohorts).

Each year, the farm accepts about 40 to 50 potential interns for a summer “ramp up” phase. During this six week phase, interns are oriented to the farm and to MAʻO’s program, philosophy, and values. They begin work under the tutelage of older interns (known as “step-up interns,” or SUIs) with guidance from program staff, and attend courses at Leeward CC Waiʻanae in Hawaiian culture and Life Skills. By August, a smaller number are selected for the program. During the next years, interns are provided increased leadership opportunities, continue to work a minimum of 15 hours a week at the farm, and attend classes at Leeward CC. Intern performance is measured by an overall farm GPA - a combination of work performance, leadership, responsibility, and academic performance. Interns can be (and have been) dismissed for inadequate performance. Those who meet expected performance are provided increased leadership and financial rewards.

Over the years, articulating the MAʻO program's theory of change has been an interactive and ongoing process. At the heart of MAʻO's philosophy is the need for sustainability and empowering youth as means to address environmental and social justice issues. As encouraged by my doctoral committee,

in 2010, I conducted a series of informal meetings with the founders and program staff to learn from them what MAʻO is and what success would look like. MAʻO was consistently described as “a social enterprise,” where the farm is a business with a social mission. Also expressed was that MAʻO has a strong foundation in Hawaiian culture and is a vehicle to address community needs. According to one respondent, MAʻO is a modern rendition of traditional Hawaiian practice where growing food is equated with identity: the symbiotic relationship between humans and the environment, the loss of which has resulted in the issues now facing the Waianae community (e.g., poverty, health, violence, addiction). By teaching youth how to participate in place based sustainable agricultural practices and to succeed in the Western academic world, MAʻO's vision is for youth to “thrive, not survive.”

MAʻO was also described as promoting youth leadership and entrepreneurship; seeking environmental, social, and economic justice; with an emphasis on sustainability and indigenous, culturally based traditions and practices in a modern 21st century context.

Visions of what success would look like included both broader and deeper impact. For example, program staff mentioned more capacity to develop sustainability and to reach more youth; expanding academic achievement to four year degrees and above; and including additional academic disciplines beyond agriculture. Several spoke of increasing success and retention of youth, and of documenting what the MAʻO model is and what works.

Using traditional cultural practices, the farm acts as a social enterprise to develop youth whose identities are grounded in land and community. Entrepreneurship and leadership skills are gained through production, operations, delivery and sales. Youth are viewed as assets. The challenges they face are seen as conditions of generational or systemic poverty. Interns learn about sustainability and social justice and are viewed as partners in creating positive change in their communities. As described in a recent grant application, MAʻO’s philosophy is that:

> Core to our programmatic narrative is that our "poverty" is recent and learned behavior. By providing youth opportunities to lead in a return to the values of their ancestors, we teach them that the poverty and dysfunction plaguing this community is recent and learned. Our mission draws from an ancestral saying: "if your hands are turned up in askance, your belly will be empty. If your hands are turned to the soil in work, your belly will always be full". This notion both affirms the sacredness of work, and highlights the ancient, undeniable symbiosis between the people and the land. Our social enterprise invests in that which never depreciates, and that which our ancestors invested in before us – the land and the people. (Kauhale, 2012)

The MAʻO theory of change seeks to bring about wider community change through developing youth leaders. Since 2000, out of 180 youth admitted to the program, about 40 interns, representing seven cohorts, have completed or are active in the program. These students are a mix of gender with the majority Native Hawaiian. The interns currently live in Waiʻanae, with the majority having graduated from one of the area's public high schools. They share similar socio-economic characteristics. At Waiʻanae High School, 63 percent of students receive free or reduced lunch, while at Nānākuli High and Intermediate, 68 percent do.[6] Most are the first in their families to attend college. And for many, the monthly stipend they receive ($500) makes them a major wage earner in their family.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

Home to the largest number of Native Hawaiians on Oʻahu, Waiʻanae epitomizes the devastating consequences of Western colonization. According to Watson (2008), "Waiʻanae's post-[Western] contact history is one of struggle and survival. No single district [in Hawaii] has undergone greater assault from foreigners than Waiʻanae. No people have suffered more as a result."

For scholars of Native Hawaiian education and well-being, the Waiʻanae district, or the West Side, reflects conditions of what Enos describes as "learned poverty." This poverty is not only reflected

[6] State of Hawai'i, Department of Education, School Status and Improvement Report: Waianae High School, SY 2010-11. Retrieved on July 26, 2012 from http://arch.k12.hi.us/school/ssir/2011/leeward.html
State of Hawai'i, Department of Education, School Status and Improvement Report: Nānākuli High and Intermediate School, SY 2010-11. Retrieved on July 26, 2012 from http://arch.k12.hi.us/school/ssir/2011/leeward.html

in modern day statistics of welfare dependence, unemployment, low rates of educational attainment, and accompanying social conditions of poor health, high rates of drug abuse and incarceration, but is also attributed to a community's disengagement with their culture (Enos, 2012). In this case, one of the signs is the state's lack of self-sufficiency as reflected by Hawaii's dependence on imported goods[7]. This is in sharp contrast to pre-contact Hawai'i where food was abundant, and the land and the health of the people thrived. Importantly, the culture thrived with an essential connection between identity, land, and ancestry practiced on a daily basis.

Few today would argue that Native Hawaiians live and must survive in a society whose dominant culture is markedly different from the traditions and values their ancestors practiced. And few would argue that Native Hawaiians, the indigenous people of Hawai'i, face significant barriers to not only surviving and thriving in this modern context, but doing so in a way that honors and respects their culture. In this study, Wai'anae youth represent on one hand a portrait of the typical at-risk youth. Approached from a deficits perspective, programs and efforts tend to be aimed at remediation or prevention where youth are viewed as the problem and the problem is what needs to be fixed. As described by youth development scholars Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003), "problem free is not fully prepared." Indeed, "a nonpregnant, nondropout, nongang-affiliated youth is not necessarily one who is prepared to live a satisfying, healthy, productive adult life" (Costello, et al, 2000). In contrast, a strengths-based approach views youth as assets and change agents. The call for a strengths-based approach is also consistent among Native Hawaiian scholars. Writes Meyer (2003), "contrary to a deficiency model is the 'proficient' philosophy that looks at the needs of students along with their

[7] Hawai'i's reliance on imported foods is estimated at 85-90 percent. See State of Hawai'i, Office of Planning, Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (2012), *Increased Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy.* Retrieved July 29, 2014 from http://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/spb/INCREASED_FOOD_SECURITY_AND_FOOD_SELF_SUFFICIENCY_STRATEGY.pdf

assets, interests, and potential; [they] do not turn a blind eye to [their] needs, they simply don't stop there."

MA'O represents a grass-roots community based organization grounded in indigenous culture that is using a strengths-based approach to affect positive, long-term change in the community. MA'O is more than an organic farm; it uses a social enterprise model to promote economic development, sustainability, and youth development and leadership. MA'O's YLT program develops youth as leaders through college and work at the farm.

This study asked: What are the central features of such a program? What is the influence of the Hawaiian culture? What are the effects on participating youth?

Organization of the Dissertation

To address these questions, this dissertation is organized in the following chapters:

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews the research on educational disparities in the United States, considers this in light of the history and experiences of Indigenous groups in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Native Hawaiians, and reviews the research and responses to such research findings from the Native Hawaiian community.

Chapter 3. Research Design and Methods

This chapter describes the participatory approach and purpose of the dissertation. It describes the major research methods used and the development of protocols, recruitment and sampling strategy, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of findings. It ends by introducing the participants of the study.

Chapters 4 to 7. Results

These chapters present the results of the study. They are organized sequentially (before, during, after) and thematically, using participant responses to illustrate the themes.

Chapter 4. Before MAʻO – Growing up in Waianae and High School describes youth experiences growing up in Waianae, their experiences in high school, and their reasons for college and joining MAʻO.

Chapter 5. At MAʻO – College and Farming presents youth responses and discussion on what their time during the YLT program was like. From their first year in college, to what working on a farm is like, to the second year where they were either eligible to become or became SUIs, their experiences are detailed here. Key processes such as farm practices, relationships, mentors, and opportunities MAʻO provided are also described.

Chapter 6. At MAʻO – Hawaiian Values and Practices describes youth and program staff responses and discussion on what aspects of MAʻO reflect Hawaiian culture. Cultural practices and Hawaiian values are discussed.

Chapter 7. After MAʻO – The Payoff reports on the changes that occurred, within themselves and their peers. This chapter concludes with a discussion on their aspirations and plans for the future and includes the perspective of MAʻO alumnae.

Chapter 8. Research Findings and Implications for Theory and Practice

This chapter provides a discussion of the results and major research findings. Theory is revisited and implications for theory, for practitioners, and future research are discussed.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter describes the research on educational disparities in the United States and discusses this in the context of Hawai'i. Perspectives from Indigenous groups in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and the Native Hawaiian community are then presented followed by a description of contemporary education models for Native Hawaiians.

Sociological explanations

Sociological research on education has traditionally focused on education as a social institution that contributes to stratification and inequality along with its accompanying role in social reproduction. A central area of investigation has been continued gaps in educational achievement among racial and ethnic minority groups despite numerous initiatives such as affirmative action, financial aid and scholarships, and large educational reform initiatives such as the federal "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) *Public Law* (P.L.) 107-110 initiative. Much of this research is based on indicators of achievement (e.g., admission to higher education, graduation, standardized test scores, grade point averages) among African Americans, Hispanic, Asian, and Caucasian groups, with African Americans and Hispanics lowest on all indicators compared to their Asian and Caucasian counterparts (Stevens, Armstrong, and Arum, 2008; Ward, 2006; Massey, Charles, Lundy and Fischer, 2003).

A number of theories exist to explain these differences. These include capital deficiency, oppositional culture, stereotype threat, peer influences, attachment theory, and critical theory (Massey, et al., 2003).

Capital deficiency

Capital deficiency theorists view disparities in education as the lack of various forms or combinations of capital among the marginalized groups. Simply put, the inability among groups to succeed is based on what they do not have as compared to the more successful group. This includes *financial* and *human capital*, *social capital, cultural capital*. Observations that children born to affluent

homes have greater access to resources (financial capital) such as good schools, tutors or other specialists, and computers whereas children born to poverty simply do not have similar resources and are mirrored in a long tradition of using socioeconomic status as a key predictor of educational achievement. Human capital refers to the ability of parents to provide and guide their children through the educational process. Forms such as intellectual stimulation (reading to their children), navigating the school system (involvement in how and what their children are learning) and in turn teaching their children to navigate the school system (teaching their children to question what and how). Children from economically disadvantaged homes are the opposite - because they do not possess these forms of capital (successful navigation and educational achievement) are unable to help their children with intellectual stimulation, have a role in their child's education, or teach them how to succeed. The idea of human capital is often measured by parent's highest educational level.

Social capital theory has largely been influenced by James Coleman and Pierre Bourdieu. Although forms of social capital vary, for purposes of this review, conceptually, social capital is viewed as “benefits and resources” people gain access to based on their membership within networks or institutions so that they can improve or maintain their position in society (from Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988, as cited in Massey et al., 2003). Thus, children who are connected to people who can help them are able to convert this form of capital into tangible benefits in their educational lives. For example, obtaining valuable work experience based on one's strength of network relationships can result in a summer internship that will increase one's capital and chances at advancement.

Another form of capital is cultural capital. Cultural capital here refers to forms of culture that children of working class families, and particularly minority groups do not possess. The public school system has traditionally been based on “middle class values” along with their norms and practices. Children from minority groups or lower socioeconomic classes - because they do not have these cultural traits - are therefore placed at a disadvantage (Massey, et al., 2003). Their inability to behave

accordingly decreases their chances at success and creates conditions of alienation from the dominant school culture.

Bourdieu describes cultural capital as "the general cultural background, knowledge, disposition, and skills that are passed from one generation to the next" (Bourdieu, 1977, as cited in MacLeod, 1995). Not only does the education system mirror the values of the middle and upper class, it also devalues the cultural capital of the lower classes. Bourdieu argued that this is a significant contributor to social stratification and the continuation of social reproduction and legitimization of social class hierarchies where schools contend that differences are based on merit. For children born into the "right" class, they learn the language and behavior of the dominant culture of the educational system and are rewarded. For children of poverty or working classes, their cultures are depreciated (MacLeod, 1995).

Oppositional culture

While the capital deficit theories are largely concentrated on what students do not have, oppositional culture theory attempts to understand the history and subsequent influences on minority groups and their experiences in their educational process. In 1978, anthropologist John Ogbu differentiated between voluntary and involuntary minority groups (Ogbu, 1978). Voluntary minorities, for example, are groups that willingly immigrated to the United States and thus voluntarily placed themselves as minorities (Asian Americans). Involuntary minorities are groups who are minority status against their will, for example due to slavery (African Americans), conquest (Mexican Americans), or colonization (Native American Indians, Native Hawaiians, Alaska Natives).

Where voluntary minorities view their cultural differences as "obstacles to overcome", involuntary minorities view their cultural differences as "symbols of resistance." Participation in dominant culture is a "betrayal" of group identity where defiance against the dominant culture connotes group solidarity (Massey, et al., 2003). This translates to viewing behaviors such as studying, using standard English or doing well in school as "acting white" - behaviors partially explained by

longstanding distrust of an educational system that purports that “any man can be president” versus real and continued discrimination. According to Ogbu, “involuntary minorities thus tend to develop a collective oppositional culture, a frame of reference that actively rejects mainstream behaviors to undermine academic achievement” (1978).

Studies testing Ogbu's oppositional culture have found support that an oppositional culture does exist along the lines of voluntary and involuntary minorities for some groups (Solomon, 1992; Suarez-Orozco, 1991, as cited in Massey, et al.). Other studies, though, have found that the mere existence of alienation, rejection or opposition of mainstream culture does not necessarily equate to low educational aspirations (Carter, 2003; O'Connor, 1997, Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey, 1998). For example, Carter (2006, 2003) found that Black students differentiated between “acting black” and “acting white.” While not all students held high academic aspirations, many did, and those who described themselves as successful did practice behaviors conducive to academic success (studying hard) described themselves as “bi-cultural.” These students seemed to have learned when and how to act accordingly. Carter found these youth utilized much more sophisticated decision-making and navigational practices in managing the conflicting demands of identity, group membership, and academia than was previously believed.

Critics of oppositional culture contend that this theory (without evidence) places children and members of minority groups as the source of the problem while ignoring critical root structural causes. The idea that [they] “shun work because whites work; shun marriage because white women marry; and speak Black English because whites speak Standard English...no evidence...indeed, there is ample empirical evidence that these characterizations are either misguided or incorrect” (Small and Newman, 2001).

Ainsworth-Darnell and Downey (1998) investigated the degree to which oppositional culture explained disparities among racial and ethnic groups using the National Educational Longitudinal Study

(NELS), a survey among a national sample of high school students. Measuring attitudes and values about school, the study found there were no differences in attitudes between black and white students, and in many cases, black students exhibited higher pro-educational attitudes than white students. The authors caution that research on educational disparities between race and minority groups cannot ignore material conditions. If they do not possess the skills, habits, and styles (culture) that are rewarded, it is unlikely they will possess these skills at the same level as whites until they enjoy comparable material conditions. “Rather than admonishing African Americans to take responsibility for improving their own conditions, therefore, the best way to reduce the gap in educational performance is to implement policies that reduce economic inequality and residential segregation.”

Stereotype threat, peer influence, and attachment theory

Developed by Claude Steele (1988), stereotype threat or vulnerability refers to underperformance due to a fear of living up to negative stereotypes. If one is stereotyped as “stupid” and the threat of conforming to the stereotype is high, rather than risking fulfilling the stereotype, one downplays the importance of school and puts less effort leading to dis-identification where academic success is not a measure of self-worth.

Peer influence theory focuses on the influence of peers on one's aspirations and achievement. Who your friends are matters, particularly in adolescence. Group norms and existing role models that provide the means by which to measure oneself against - in the classroom and in the student body - represent contextual peer effects. One's closer network of friends represents proximate peer effects. In general, students with friends who plan to attend college will also attend college, and vice versa. This has been found true regardless of socioeconomic status (Hallinan, 1983, as cited in Massey et.al, 2003), and peer encouragement has been found to be a stronger predictor of college attendance than parental or teacher encouragement (Sewell, Haller and Portes, 1969, as cited in Massey et.al, 2003).

Tinto's attachment theory (1993) looks at the degree of attachment an individual has with an educational institution. Students who drop out or leave do so because they are not socially or academically attached. This theory also identifies critical junctures of college life. The first juncture is adjustment to the social and academic environment of an institution or academia. Students who are underprepared academically or come from very different backgrounds from other students will have a very stressful time. The second is the fit between student interests - their beliefs, values, and behavior - with that of the institution and other students. Incongruence in any of these can lead to isolation; not having close relationships or connections to faculty or other students means a student has little attachment (social ties) and less to lose if they leave the institution (Massey et al., 2003). However, critics of attachment theory suggest that lack of integration, particularly among minority students, is not the fault of the student, but that of the culture of the institution. For example, Bergerson (2007) found that first generation college students viewed the type of socialization on campus as distracting, because for these students, the goal of college is strictly academics (as cited in Stevens, et al., 2008).

Critical theory

Sociological explanations have a tradition in critical theory when investigating causes of disparate educational opportunities and outcomes. Bowles and Gintis (1976) assert that educational institutions are by nature unequal (Massey et al., 2003). They were created by dominant social classes to serve their own interests. Resources then are not devoted to “the education of lower-class children, so that poor and working-class students end up going to lousy schools to receive a lousy education to prepare them for the lousy jobs they will hold as adults” (Willis, 1977). For members of racial and ethnic minority groups, their schools are generally of significantly lower quality. This includes racial bias, lack of credentialed and experienced teachers, poorer quality of instruction, low teacher expectations for minority children, limited resources, and less rigorous coursework (D'Amico, 2001 and Bempechat, 1998 as cited in Ward, 2006; Steele, 1997; Kozol, 1991). This leads to schools that do not prepare students for

college. Furthermore, segregation and poverty has resulted in neighborhoods where children are exposed to high levels of social disorder, violence, and concentrated poverty (Massey et al., 2003; Small and Newman, 2001).

The theories above have both strengths and weaknesses. It is likely that no single one of these theories can provide the greatest insight (Massey, et al., 2003). Although numerous studies and data have documented the gap between racial and ethnic groups in education and between social classes (whether in standardized tests, high school graduation, college admissions or graduation), few have deliberately acknowledged the context of what minority groups are really facing - that is, within an educational system that reflects the reality of social class inequality, how can racial and ethnic minorities successfully navigate and "succeed" in a system that was inherently created to keep them at the bottom?

The state of sociological theory on higher education has been criticized as "incoherent" and although the link between higher education and associated outcomes are well established, sociological studies are lacking in how college is actually experienced, in particular by minority group members (Stevens, et al., 2008). A promising body of work that can address this gap lies in longitudinal studies using survey and interview methods (Massey, et. al, 2003) and ethnographic studies.

Application to Native Hawaiians and the public education system in Hawai'i

The status of educational achievement among Native Hawaiians has been consistently documented as far below that of all other racial and ethnic groups in Hawai'i. Although Native Hawaiian students represent the largest ethnic group in Hawaii's public schools (26 percent), they are overrepresented in dropout rates, score lowest on standardized tests in reading and math, and are underrepresented in college admissions and graduates.

Nationally, the percentage of students enrolled in private schools is approximately 10 percent (Day and Jamieson, 2003). In Hawai'i, approximately 20 percent of families enroll their children in

private schools, making Hawai‘i one of the top five states with the highest percentage of children attending private schools. In Honolulu, an estimated 50 percent of public school teachers enroll their own children in private schools (Day and Jamieson, 2003; Watanabe, 2001; Doyle, 1995).

Most Native Hawaiian children attend public schools (85 percent). Schools with the largest numbers of Native Hawaiians tend to be rural and geographically isolated – such as Wai‘anae, Nānākuli, and Waimanālo on O‘ahu. These schools are characterized by high percentages of students who are economically disadvantaged and by poor quality instruction, as evidenced by both their status in corrective action under NCLB and in chronic teacher shortages (Kana‘iaupuni and Ishibashi, 2003b).

However, these dismal conditions did not always describe the indigenous people of Hawai‘i. At the time of Western contact in 1778, the approximately 300,000 *Kānaka Maoli* (native peoples) had been living self-sufficiently in the Hawaiian islands for 15,000 years. Education of children was the shared responsibility of immediate family and extended kin. Specialists - *kūpuna* - were highly revered, and accumulated knowledge was passed through oral traditions. The combination of disease and vast social change left drastic and painful consequences to the Native Hawaiians. By 1850, less than 100 years after Western contact, just 80,000 Native Hawaiians remained – a 75 percent loss in total population. The forced overthrow of the monarchy, change in land tenure, a new government, a new economy, a new religion, and establishment of a new public school system created a Hawai‘i where the indigenous people became the bottom class of a new class system; and, given the type of schooling they were forced into, they also did not have the tools to survive in the new Hawai‘i (Meyer, 2003; Kawakami, 1999; Benham and Heck, 1998).

Schools for Native Hawaiians were designed to assimilate children to the American way. The missionaries' purpose and view of the Hawaiian people and the way they lived created long-lasting and devastatingly harmful stereotypes. With “paternalistic superiority,” missionaries compared the “unreasoning and conscienceless Hawaiian” to “the half reasoning elephant or dog,” asserting that “they

lack economy, the gift of order and frugality...they are like children, needing wise parents or guardians" (Meyer 2003, p26). Today, stereotypes of the lazy, stupid and violent Hawaiian continue to exist (Kanaʻiaupuni and Ishibashi, 2003a; Holt, 1995).

Over time, generations of Native Hawaiians began to lose their language and knowledge of their culture. Conditions of poverty and marked realities of negative indicators on too many fronts (education, health, and the criminal justice system) has led to an "intergenerational cycle of marginalization in which Hawaiians are trapped" (Kanaʻiaupuni and Ishibashi, 2003b). And "the involuntary minority's comparative reference then is the dominant group and is surrounded by its measure of success leading to resentment as they perceive themselves as victims of institutionalized discrimination by the dominant group and its institutions and that this condition is permanent" (from Brown, 1993, as cited in Benham and Heck, 1998, p7).

Discussion

Elements of critical theory, stereotype threat, oppositional culture and cultural capital all apply to the education of Native Hawaiians. Critical theory applies in that the schools that Native Hawaiians attend are chronically of poor quality and that public schools in Hawaiʻi have traditionally served the working class groups of the State with separate private schools for the elite and children of missionaries. Writes Benham and Heck (1998), two types of schools were created: common and select. Common Hawaiians attended the common school, whose goal was not on academics, but to indoctrinate and assimilate Native Hawaiians to Christian values. The select, or private schools, prepared future leaders among children of the elite.

In "Educating Hawaiian Children: how the learning environment matters", Kanaʻiaupuni and Ishibashi (2003a) discuss research findings on negative stereotypes of Polynesian youth. Results from Chesney-Lind and Koo (2001) found that peers see Hawaiians and Samoans as doing poorly in school and doing very little to achieve. Additionally, youth report differential treatment by their teachers - a

teaching body with few Polynesian teachers. Benham and Heck (1998) in their analysis of educational policy in Hawai‘i found that resentment, alienation, and apathy among Hawaiians is a result of being aware of their status and social immobility compared to other groups (oppositional culture). MacLeod's (1995) use of cultural capital in *Ain't No Making It* challenged the idea of public schools given the objective reality of social immobility for working class kids from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. Even among kids who had the right aspirations to achieve through “hard work” (cultural capital), inevitably they did not achieve social mobility. According to Bourdieu, not only does the education system mirror the values of the middle and upper class, it also devalues the cultural capital of the lower classes. For children born into the “right” class, they learn the language and behavior of the dominant culture of the educational system and are rewarded. For children of poverty or working classes, their cultures are depreciated (MacLeod, 1995). For Native Hawaiian children, a key purpose of Hawai‘i's first public school system was to assimilate the indigenous population. In doing so, “school” denied and devalued all that was Native Hawaiian.

Given this context, it is not surprising that the experiences Native Hawaiian children have with school is problematic. A prevalent stream of thought throughout the explanations for this is a focus on the failure of the children to assimilate to the dominant culture. However, a review of the literature from both the Native Hawaiian community and other Indigenous groups in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand offer an alternate interpretation. In the next sections, perspectives from these groups are presented.

Indigenous Perspectives

Native Hawaiians are not alone in their experiences with a history of colonization, its resulting consequence of becoming a marginalized people in their own land, and recent efforts to reform the education system are occurring with other Indigenous groups. Among these groups are notably the American Indians and Alaska Natives, the Aboriginal Indians in Canada (First Nations), and the Maori of

New Zealand – all of who are active in reclaiming and revitalizing their educational systems. For these groups, the silencing of Native voices and the framing of "poor achievement" as an Indigenous problem are (and were) major reasons for reclaiming the education of their youth. The next section describes the consequences of Western education, the problem with the "Indigenous problem" and various efforts in reclaiming education.

Silencing Indigenous Voices

> For many indigenous peoples the major agency for imposing this positional superiority over knowledge, language and culture was colonial education [missionary or religious schooling followed by public and secular schooling]… Numerous accounts across nations now attest to the critical role played by schools in assimilating colonized peoples, and in the systematic, frequently brutal, forms of denial of indigenous languages, knowledge and cultures. (Smith, 1999, p64).

Current Western education systems are rooted in their original intents to assimilate and colonize indigenous people. It teaches using a monocultural perspective that reflects the dominate group and ignores and devalues the culture of other groups. Writes First Nation scholar Marie Battiste,

> Aboriginal peoples have been subject to a combination of unquestionably powerful but profoundly debilitating forces of assimilation and colonization. Through various systems of boarding schools and educational institutions, the Aboriginal world views and the people who held them were attacked…Aboriginal children were subjected to persistent violence, powerlessness, exploitation, and cultural imperialism, only to become impoverished and devastated in the cognitive and physical aftermath of schooling. In short, the educational tragedy has been to Aboriginal world views, knowledge, language, cultures, and the creation of widespread social and psychological upheaval in Aboriginal communities (Battiste, 1998).

Schools for American Indians, both historically and today, in which education is delivered by and through a Western model are characterized by high failure rates, poor community relationships, prohibition or non-use of Native languages, and devalue Native culture (Hampton, 1995). There is

persistent low achievement on virtually all measures of standardized tests and graduation rates for American Indian and Alaska Natives compared to all other ethnic groups (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2003 in Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005).

In Canada, the government has "sought not to educate, but to assimilate First Nation children under an ideology that they presumed had superior knowledge" (Henderson, 1995 in Battiste, 1998). Once one language, one culture, one way of knowing is established as not just only way, but the norm - the language and culture of all other peoples are denied. Battiste terms this as cognitive imperialism and explains the resulting disconnect of Aboriginal people and other cultural minorities to education as they collectively become the "other." Among American Indians and Alaska Natives, the research generally recognizes that "students of color and students from low-income backgrounds consistently and persistently perform lower than their peers according to traditional measures of school achievement because their home culture is at odds with the culture and expectations of schools" thus the achievement gap. Additionally, "most studies found that American Indian students were forced to assimilate into the dominant mainstream culture, experienced cultural discontinuity, suffered from low self-esteem and performed poorly in academe" (Belgrade, et al., 2002 in Castagno and Brayboy, 2008). For six generations, Alaska Natives have experienced such negativity with a consequence of "extensive marginalization of their knowledge systems and continuing erosion of their cultural integrity" (Barnharst and Kawagley, 2005). When schools and the curriculum ignore American Indians or present content that is culturally irrelevant, students are "robbed" of their cultural pride and identities. (Skinner, 1999 in Castagno and Brayboy, 2008). Indigenous youth are also exposed to racism in their education. It is "pervasive and consistent" in their school experiences. This is experienced through paternalistic treatment, low expectations, stereotypes and assumptions, and biased curriculum. Another form of racism is the portrayal of Native students as not only having problems, but numerous problems and portrayals of success as that of whiteness or the dominant group.

In *A Quiet Crisis: Federal funding and unmet needs in Indian Country,* the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights stated,

> As a group, Native American students are not afforded educational opportunities equal to other American students. They routinely face deteriorating school facilities, underpaid teachers, weak curricula, discriminatory treatment, and outdated learning tools. In addition, the cultural histories and practices of Native students are rarely incorporated in the learning environment. As a result, the achievement gaps persist with Native American students scoring lower than any other racial/ethnic group in basic levels of reading, math, and history. Native American students are also less likely to graduate from high school and more likely to drop out in earlier grades. (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2003, page xi in Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005).

Framing Indigenous People as the Problem

Maori scholars such as Bishop and Smith note that theoretical explanations of Maori non-participation are reflections of "continued patterns of domination and cultural superiority." Mainstream theory continues to place the problem with the learners themselves by continuing to use cultural deficiency explanations, citing issues of not being prepared by their parents, lack of parental involvement, lack of resources, and lack of aspiration as the issues. Thus, solutions are consistently devoted toward changing the students (and their culture) while ignoring the inherent power imbalances within the education system (Bishop, 2003; Smith, 1999).

Writes Smith,

> the Maori were to blame for not accepting the terms of their colonization. In time, social policies – for example, in health and education – were also viewed as remedies for the 'indigenous problem.' By the 1960s this approach had been theorized repeatedly around notions of cultural deprivation or cultural deficit which laid the blame for indigenous poverty and marginalization even more securely on the people themselves. The belief in the 'indigenous problem' is still present in the Western psyche (Smith, 1999, p91-92).

This is well illustrated by research in schools. In *Te Kotahitatanga: Kaupapa Maori in Mainstream Classrooms* (2008), the researchers conducted interviews among four groups (students, parents, teachers, and principals) to identify what main influences affect educational achievement. A consistent finding was the teacher-student relationship as a major factor in student achievement. However, while not all teachers did so, the teachers were the only group that identified deficits from the home, socioeconomic background, and the attitudes and behavior of students as limitations. Some noted deficits as impossible barriers or viewed the situation fatalistically – as deep barriers they could do nothing about.

In an analysis of research conducted on Aboriginal retention and dropout in Canada, reasons why students who dropped out as told by their schools contained a long list (42 factors). These factors included problems with the students (academic performance, motivation), problems with teachers, problems with parents, problems with guidance, problems with transportation to school. Although there were a few factors about problems with the school, much of the list points to problems with the student reflecting a deficits perspective. On the other hand, characteristics associated with students who did graduate tended to describe positive school characteristics such as community involvement and leadership.

Scholars of American Indian and Alaska Native education note that a pressing reason to reclaim the current education system is because the current system focused the "problem" on Indigenous people rather than the schools or educators. (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008). Writes Hampton,

> I believe it is clear that white educational systems and procedures are not competent to educate Indian peoples. This is not simply an inability to admit failure. I believe that Indian children struggle against a pathological complex endemic to North American society. The pathology is made up of the largely unconscious processes of: 1) a perverse ignorance of the facts of racism and oppression; 2) delusions of superiority, motivated by fear of inadequacy; 3) a vicious spiral of self-justifying action, as the blame is shifted to the victims who must be 'helped,' that is,

controlled for their own good; and 4) denial that the oppressor profits from the oppression materially (Hampton, p. 34, 1995).

Reclaiming Education

In response, each of these groups is seeking to change the education system through a number of ways whether at the policy level, research, school by school, or through curriculum and pedagogy. Their unifying call is to value and revitalize indigenous culture, language, and ways of knowing, often as part of larger goals for self-determination and sovereignty.

Among American Indians, culturally responsible schooling[8] has emerged as been advocated and implemented for the past 40 years. In the 1960s and 1970s, tribal communities advocated for educational change and greater control over the education of indigenous youth. Federal reports such as the Meriam Report, Indian Education: A National Tragedy, and Indian Nations at Risk have been issued noting the need for more teachers and curriculum that reflects the tribal cultures and languages "if Native Americans were to succeed academically as students and play a meaningful role as citizens." (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008). The 1998 Executive Order on American Indian and Alaskan Native Education recognized the "special, historic responsibility for the education of American Indian and Alaskan Native students" via the goals of self-determination and preservation of tribal cultures and languages, specifically recognizing the "unique educational needs of [the] children, including the need to preserve, revitalize, and use native languages and cultural traditions." (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008).

Culturally responsive schooling (CRS) can be defined as schooling that is designed and practiced in ways that more closely match the cultures students bring with them from home. This includes children from Indigenous cultures as well as all "minoritized" youth. In short, such schooling is something that makes sense to students who are not part of or assimilated into the dominant group.

[8] Castagno and Brayboy use the term culturally responsive schooling as opposed to culturally responsive education as their review of the literature on Indian education found that schooling was the term most widely used.

Such schooling requires culturally competent teachers, knowledge of not only Indigenous epistemology but the awareness of the diversity of such epistemologies among the many tribal groups. CRS also takes into account learning styles and cultural differences that traditional education settings do not consider. A challenge for CRS is helping students learn in a culturally responsive way through their own language, traditions and worldview, yet at the same time preparing students to succeed in the realities the dominant culture, a culture whose worldview is at odds with the Indigenous worldview. For example, Indigenous culture is relational and holistic valuing relations not only among themselves and their tribes but also with nature and spirits. The purpose of education is to help children locate their role in their society so that they can contribute. The responsibility for education is not held by specialists but by all members of the community. Shared values are generosity, cooperation, connectedness, and spirituality.

In *Towards a Redefinition of Indian Education,* Hampton (1995) locates commonalities, or standards as a step toward creating a theory of Indian education. Based on in depth interviews with American Indian college students and graduates, Hampton metaphorically uses six directions to organize the findings: east (precontact), west (conquest and invasion), north (continued conquest but with seeds of rebirth), south (flowering of culture and education); and spirit (heaven, the center of all) and earth (Mother Earth, sustainer and source of rebirth). Data were coded into the following categories: place, identity, spiritual, culture, affiliation, education, freedom, and service. Hampton's analysis is then locating these categories into a set of standards that reflect American Indian culture, tradition, values, and practice. For example, the first standard is spirituality in that respect for spiritual relationships that exist among all things. Here education's central prayer is "Help me for my people's sake." This orientation defines the individual as part of the group – individual strength is the strength of the group. The second standard is that education is service – its purpose is not individual achievement or status obtainment, but to serve the people. Addressing American Indian identity (the past, present, and future) means to know that the term 'Indian' as used by Columbus really should be tribal. Acknowledging

multiplicity and diversity of tribes and the importance of local control for community based education is a standard. Culture – ways of thought, learning, teaching, and communicating – are different but as valid as others. Indian education also maintains continuity with tradition, its history and is relentless in its fight for the well-being, education, and future of their children. Despite conquest and oppression and being dubbed as a "vanishing race" – the standard of vitality represents that underneath suffering is strength. Indian education also recognizes the conflict between Western education and its practice of cultural genocide toward the Native child – substituting non-Native for Native knowledge, values, and identity. Education is not a culturally neutral site. The importance of place, land, and territory is recognized. It is not a means of isolation or segregation but involvement. The need for education as transformation is the final standard. Here, Hampton does not mean transformation of just education systems but rather, transforming the relationship between non-Native and Native, the need to understand another and heal.

In *Themes and Lessons in Non-Western Education,* Reagan identifies broad themes of commonality. First, the distinction between formal schooling and education is often viewed as the same in Western systems in that completion of school with a degree equates to education. The emphasis on certification and degrees is far less emphasized in non-Western cultures. Rather, competence and being able to function in society is more important. Second, non-Western education tends to be more community-based and communal to a great extent. The responsibility for children and their education is a shared responsibility of all. The function of education was to prepare participants to function economically and for the good of the community, based on individual aptitude and not for example, for the needs of employers. The role of the family holds much greater importance as well. Final decisions were placed within the family as opposed to the greater society. The role of language holds far greater importance as well. Many non-Western education systems relied on oral traditions thus how language

skills were taught and used held great importance. Finally, the goal of education is in the development of a "good person." (Reagan, 2000).

In describing Alaska Native knowledge systems, as well as common features of Indigenous knowledge systems in communities around the world, Barnhardt and Kawagley (2005) describe the need to both understand Indigenous knowledge and how it fits within Western society and formal education. The authors note earlier literature by non-Indigenous researchers that emphasized getting Native people to acquire the Western scientific worldview and the scarcity of literature by Indigenous researchers on getting non-Indigenous people to understand Native worldviews. There is even fewer research or literature on the importance of how people from both "divergent systems" can coexist. They argue that "Native people may need to understand Western society, but not at the expense of what they already know and the way they have come to know it. Non-Native people, too, need to recognize the coexistence of multiple worldviews and knowledge systems, and find ways to understand and relate to the world in its multiple dimensions and varied perspectives (p9)."

In Alaska, communities representing 16 distinct knowledge and language systems have developed standards for culturally responsive schools and guidelines for respecting cultural knowledge. Educators, schools, and communities are integrating these standards into their curriculum. Indigenous education contains elements of culturally responsive pedagogy (contextual learning), the use of cultural traditions or practices to teach content (e.g., ethnomathematics for example uses star navigation to teach math; Native science and sense-making), language, and cross-generational learning (elders), place based education (Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005).

In Canada, the Aboriginal people through a Red Paper Policy in 1969, argued for the right to Indian education. The purpose of Indian education was defined as "salvaging Aboriginal languages, cultures, and the transmitting [of] those cultures with their unique understanding of North American ecology and their distinctive worldviews" (Battiste, 1995). The First Nations have taken control of some

schools and have moved from “colonial domination and assimilation” to education models that are “culturally, linguistically, and philosophically” relevant. The purpose of education is not simply to receive credentials but to strengthen and revitalize First Nations languages and cultures by building upon their ancestral knowledge through the teachings of their elders. The end result is to strengthen cultural identity. In this, education becomes a practice of liberation when “the works and lives of the few are regularly discussed in the [curriculum] within their own contexts.” There continues to be a need for education that enriches, is based on cultural ways of knowing, and where diversity is an asset. Cultural traditions become a source of learning that rebuilds and heals. Fragmented curriculum that does not reflect the Aboriginal student denies and produces a distorted identity.

“What we do know is that, whatever it means, an equal education for all women of all groups, as for the men of unprivileged groups, cannot be the same as the education that has been developed in a culture that is based on our exclusion” (Minnick, 1990 in Battiste, 1998).

Native Hawaiian Perspectives

Similar to the Indigenous perspectives on educational disparities, Native Hawaiian leaders, scholars, and educators recognize the role of colonization and the importance of moving away from deficit theories. Writes Meyer (2003):

> Given its colonization and its history of oppression, it is only logical that models emerge that disregard indigenous educational philosophies and practices. One such model sees Native Hawaiians as part of the problem and as something broken in need of fixing. The label for such a model is “deficient” and has been the underlying philosophy of most Hawaiian educational programs until this day.
>
> Contrary to a deficiency model is the “proficient: philosophy that looks at the needs of students along with their assets, interests and potential.” [they] do not turn a blind eye to the potential academic and social needs of students; they simply don't stop there. (Meyer, 2003, p86 -87)

This perspective does not view the poor academic performance of Native Hawaiians as an "indigenous problem" but rather places the condition as a result of colonization, oppression, and assimilation by the dominant culture. It sees the role of the Western public education system in maintaining the dominant culture and devaluing that of the indigenous culture. By continuing to approach the "problem" in this lens, education continues to colonize.

A consistent response among the Native Hawaiian community is to move from this deficits "at-risk" approach to a strengths based approach that values the culture of the students. Instead of viewing their culture as a problem, culture is recognized and valued as an asset. Inherent in this approach is that culture restores identity - an identity and culture nearly lost (Kana'iaupuni, 2005, Meyer, 2003). This sentiment was echoed in 1994:

> Despite the consequence of over 100 years of non-indigenous influence, the Native Hawaiian people are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territory, and their cultural identity in accordance with their own spiritual and traditional beliefs, customs, practices, language and social institutions. (Native Hawaiian Education Act of 1994, reauthorized 2002)

For Hawaiians, and many indigenous groups, cultural identity is deeply connected to place. Place is central to a person's genealogy and ties to others. Spiritually, one's genealogy establishes ancestry to the natural world, connections to places (a valley, a mountain, the ocean) and people. Land was never a commodity, but a collective asset and responsibility. The common word for land is '*aina*, which means that which feeds, and implies a reciprocal and intimate relationship, much like a family member. Thus, one's connection to place is a central aspect of Native Hawaiian identity. Writes Meyer:

> What we know matters, who we are matters, how we know makes a difference in the who we become. Our philosophy of knowledge then lays a foundation for our identity and essence as a cultural people. (Meyer, 2003, p191)

The purpose of education, or knowledge, for Hawaiians was a) important and b) functional. Knowledge was transmitted from one generation to the next through oral, not written, communication. Their survival and history depended on educating their youth. Families held the primary responsibility for teaching their children but there was also a shared responsibility by extended kin, so that each child would share in the survival and thriving of their people. The role of the *kūpuna* as advisors and keepers of specialized knowledge was highly revered.

> The belief that meaning was tied to learning was not something hidden or subtle for Hawaiians. It is the core of why we do things - it must have a function for information to become knowledge and knowledge to become understanding. For Hawaiians, knowledge for knowledge's sake was a waste of time. Everything, absolutely everything, had function. (Meyer, 2003)

Learning did not take place in a classroom nor was knowledge spilt into discrete subjects. Mastery of skills was learned by observation, listening, and practice with an emphasis on demonstrating mastery in real life settings. Underlying these practices were core values of love and concern for others (*aloha*), devotion to family and community (‘*ohana*), love of the land (*aloha ‘aina*), balance, harmony and living correctly (*malama pono*), service, joint effort, and unity (*kokua, laulima, lokahi*). Youth were expected to be responsible and work hard (*kuleana, pa‘ahana*). Effective instruction for Hawaiian youth is therefore experience-based and takes place in authentic environments. Core components of programs for Native Hawaiians make connections to Hawaiian values, identity and place (Kawakami, 2004, 1999).

Core aspects of Hawaiian ways of knowing are also identified by Meyer (2003). These are: spirituality, ‘*aina*, senses, relationships, utility, words, and the body and mind connection. The following table describes these elements in greater detail.

Table 1. Core aspects of Hawaiian Ways of Knowing

Spirituality	Knowledge is grounded in the natural environment and ancestry - ‘*aina* and the *kūpuna*
Physical place	‘*Aina* is *that which feeds* - place is sustenance, knowledge and inspiration. *Malama* ‘*aina* - nature is our teacher
Senses	Use and value of senses as knowledge
Relationships	Knowledge of self through interrelationships
Utility	Knowledge is practical and to be passed on. Being useful is to contribute, to participate, to add
Words	Spoken word is more than communication. The art of oration or exchange of wit was a highly revered skill. Words hold multiple meanings, reflecting tolerance for ambiguity and diverse meanings, depending on context and sound
Body and Mind	Mind and emotion are not separate. *Na*‘*auao* (enlightenment, wisdom) is cognition and feeling

Meyer's interviews with cultural leaders (*kūpuna*) on aspects of Hawaiian knowledge and ways of knowing revealed five critical themes. These were: role of place, history and genealogy; the belief that culture restores culture; the tension and realities of a dual education; experience, practice and repetition are fundamental; and the role and importance of morality (*pono*) (Meyer, 2003).

Native Hawaiian education today

Efforts to restore Native Hawaiian cultural identity and its way of education have taken various forms. Since 1836, Kamehameha Schools is the state's only private school for Hawaiian children with an emphasis on college preparation and culturally-based curriculum. Kamehameha has taken a lead role in promoting culturally-based education in the community and in working with the public school system to provide better educational opportunities. The first Hawaiian language immersion school was established by ʻAha Punana Leo in 1984. A degree in Hawaiian Studies has been established at the University of Hawaiʻi. Numerous public charter schools and community-based projects designed specifically for Native Hawaiian children have been created, offering various types of language immersion and land-based curricula.

These various initiatives to can be seen on a continuum of least to most change models (Kawakami, 2004). While this array of diverse options for children can be viewed as positive, a main question continues to be, “How can the integrity of Hawaiian cultural practices be preserved within an educational context that is grounded in different views of the world?” Programs can be analyzed by key areas, or criteria, that align core Hawaiian values to educational practices:

Table 2. Least to most change models

‘Ohana	Identity	The program supports learners’ development of Hawaiian identity using social interactions that reflect Hawaiian values (e.g., includes families).
Aloha ‘Aina	Sense of Place	The program develops learners’ sense of place through experiences located in the physical environment and focuses on the past and present in that place.
Aloha Malama pono	Ways of Knowing	The program includes Hawaiian ways of knowing through instructional activities that create culturally significant interactions.
‘Olelo Hawai‘i	Language	The program perpetuates Hawaiian language and cultural content.
Kokua, laulima, lokahi	Service to Hawaiian Communities	The program provides service and support to the community beyond the school.
Kuleana Pa‘ahana	Competencies	The program assesses learners’ strengths and competencies in performance-based, authentic tasks.

(Kawakami, 1999, pages 27-28)

Native Hawaiian education is more often experienced as community-based projects that are culturally driven (Hawai‘i Island Council Report to the Native Hawaiian Education Council, August 1997 p4 in Meyer 2003).

In a review of community based projects, the Hawai‘i Island Council found that such projects are:

> “often grassroots, filled a need in the community, and started from people who lived in the area. The core curriculum is based on Hawaiian understanding of land, ocean, moon, place,

> language and on proper protocol. Small in nature and scope but specific to local knowledge and lore. Land or ocean based, they believe in the direct learning of their students. Each program held rich cultural resources that helped develop both content and process of offerings. [And] based on foundation of relationship, spirituality, morality, meaning and continuity" (as cited in Meyer, 2003)

Status of Research on Indigenous Education

Research on indigenous education can be grouped into three broad themes: (1) documentation and articulation of Indigenous knowledge; (2) documenting epistemologies and learning processes; and (3) developing and assessing efforts at integrating Indigenous knowledge systems with Western systems (Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005). These efforts can be organized by alternative systems that are entirely based on Indigenous knowledge systems, public school efforts to teach Native culture, tribally based schools, and language- and culture-based education (Smith, 2005).

Research on the effects of indigenous models of education has found positive results. Most studies found that there is a positive association in self-esteem, identity, pride in their culture and language, engagement in school and within their communities. Improvements on academic performance, attendance, and lower dropout rates have also been noted (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008).

In describing what Indigenous education looks like, case study research has yielded rich and in depth findings. Successful cases tended to be "grass roots" where local communities play key roles in program development, including funding and documentation. Curriculum and pedagogy reflect and connect to the lives of students – contextualizing and localizing knowledge and learning. Formal learning and informal learning are both used to engage the students while also teaching reading, math, and science. The common theme was congruency between school and the language and culture of the community.

In summarizing the status of research, Smith describes such research as a purposeful departure from deficit views and awareness of the history and consequences of colonization. Importantly, such

research reflects the focus of their communities. It is not the traditional focus of research on education whose primary purpose is that of underachievement. Rather, the intent is to inform the self-determination goals of Indigenous communities through a different educational system. Rich ethnographic accounts of Indigenous education are needed to document innovative solutions, identify challenges of creating new approaches based on different ways of knowing, and the interface of such education in the 21st century.

To date, the research on Native Hawaiian education has largely focused on articulating what Hawaiian education looks like and how it is practiced (Kawakami, 2004 and 1999) with positive outcomes for youth, particularly in Hawaiian core values of identity, language, knowledge of culture and community responsibility (Ledward and Takayama, 2009; Tibbets, Kahakalau, and Johnson, 2007; Borofsky, 2010; Kana'iaupuni and Ledward, 2013). There is a growing body of research on the significance of land and place-based or '*aina*-based learning or pedagogy of place (Trinidad, 2011; Ledward, 2013). Other studies have focused on standardized test outcomes. The research on Kamehameha's Early Education Program (KEEP) used standardized reading achievement tests and found positive results for program participants (Tharp, et al., 2007). Takayama (2008) found that Native Hawaiian charter school students do not significantly differ from their non-Hawaiian peers in test scores.

There continues to be value in adding to the knowledge base on what Hawaiian education looks like, how it is produced and experienced, its outcomes and in particular among different age groups and settings. Research on Native Hawaiian education has traditionally focused on primary education (K-12) with few studies at the college level. A search for studies on Native Hawaiians and college yielded two studies. Hagedorn, Moon, and Tibbetts (2006) compared college completion rates among graduates of Kamehameha Schools and those who did not but received financial support from Kamehameha. They found that high school grade point average, socioeconomic status, financial aid and family support were critical factors for completion. The Pacific Policy Resource Center identified individual academic

performance and attitudes toward college, opportunities for academic engagement, and social and family support as factors that contribute to retention (Jensen, 2011).

Much of the research considers place at one site - whether in a public school or at a community based project (i.e., Kaʻala Farms). There is also a need to explicitly address the "duality of two educational systems" - one of the primary findings identified by Meyer. Meyer is clear that it is not one system over the other - rather the contemporary reality of formal American education and how Hawaiian ways of knowledge that were excluded that has created two polar systems. The issue is that the current educational system excludes cultural priorities and forms of expression. Writes Meyer:

> Can Hawaiian identity thrive in non-Hawaiian educational settings? Fact is two different systems exist. How to fight for a Hawaiian identity in a larger structure that is set up to assimilate the Hawaiian?...Do we recreate what has damaged our identity and only partially worked for us in the past or do we carve an entirely new structure based on a more empowering and appropriate philosophy of how we produce, exchange and value knowledge? I assumed we could learn all things in the current educational structure. This is clearly not the case. (Meyer, 2003).

In addition to the realities of a dual system, Native Hawaiian education as defined by the Native Hawaiian Education Council (below) must also prepare students for the 21st century.

> Native Hawaiian education is education that supports, strengthens, and develops the language, family, culture, community orientation, and aloha that makes a Hawaiian - Hawaiian; at the same time it provides the Hawaiian people with the knowledge and skills necessary stand in a position of strength in the present international world. (Native Hawaiian Education Council, 1997, as cited in Meyer 2003, p190)

Again, writes Meyer: “To succeed in modern Hawaiʻi is to understand multiple systems, to practice in multiple arenas, to excel in multiple cultures” (Meyer 2003, p191).

Chapter 3. Research Design and Methods

This study was designed to capture what is happening within the program and the impact on its youth participants and how, so that all who care about and work on a daily basis to support young people and their dreams can help further the goals and aspirations of these youth. Importantly, this study focused on the experiences of youth who, by all traditional indicators, will not make it - whether in higher education or breaking a cycle of poverty and marginalization. Yet some do; why? As program staff, educators, and researchers, how are we helping? How are we not?

Approach to the study

This study of MA'O Farms' Youth Leadership Program (YLT) reflects a qualitative, ethnographic (emphasis here on interpreting and applying findings from a cultural perspective), using a participatory approach. This research design is based on an indigenous research approach as described by the writings of Bishop, 2008, Kana'iaupuni, 2005, Meyer, 2003, Bishop and Glynn, 2003, and Smith, 1999), Hawaiian and Maori scholars. It was designed to be strengths-based, values Hawaiian ways of knowing, emphasizes native voice, seeks to be of service, and to act as an agent of change and social justice (Bishop 2008; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008; Kincheloe and Steinberg, 2008; Batisse, 2008; Kana'iaupuni, 2005; Meyer, 2003).

As described by Kana'iaupuni (2005), there is a "compelling need for research about Native Hawaiians based on strengths, rather than deficits, and from a Native Hawaiian worldview." Critical strengths-based research is research that brings with it the idea of creating social change where "subjects of research" are instead actors within multi-layered contexts with multiple strengths (individual, family and community) to overcome difficulties. Research is not research for research's sake. It is to make a difference in the lives of people. This is a mirror of what is knowledge - seeking knowledge (through research) is not for knowledge's sake, it is how this knowledge will be of use or

service. The purpose of research is to be of service or benefit, and research subjects are no longer "subjects," but active partners.

The purpose of this study was to advance the Native Hawaiian education movement by identifying what cultural practices, values and traditions are being used, how they exist in a modern context, and what it is the youth experience at the farm and in college.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed:

1. What are the central aspects of MAʻO's Youth Leadership Training program?
2. How are the youth experiencing this?
3. What are the effects on participating youth?

Research Methods

The following describes the major research methods used and the participatory approach that was used throughout developing protocols, identifying and recruiting participants, data collection and analyses, and interpretation of findings.

Storytelling as narrative - semi structured, in-depth interviews

The primary method that was used was semi-structured, in-depth individual and small group interviews with youth, individual program staff and instructors involved with MAʻO. The use of interviews has a long tradition in qualitative research and this study followed this tradition, but in a way that 1) sought to develop a collaborative relationship between researcher and participants, and 2) created a setting or context in which participant accounts, experiences, and interpretation (narratives) can be best understood. This form of interviewing has been referred to as conversation, narrative, storytelling, and talk story (Fermantez, 2012; Chase, 2005; Kahakalau, 2004; Bishop and Glynn, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Therefore, interview guides were developed to encourage personal narratives and family stories (Patton, 2002, p115); and to allow for "retrospective meaning making, the shaping or ordering of past experience" so that there is an understanding of "one's own and others' actions, of organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole, and of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time" (Chase, 2005, p. 656). Traditional narrative inquiry asks participants to tell their stories either through interview questions and/or conversational dialogue, whether individually or in a group situation, with members who have shared a similar experience.

Interview guides were developed for youth, the program staff and instructors and approved by the Committee on Human Studies (CHS) (see Appendix A). The guides for the youth interviews included an information sheet to collect basic background information such as year born, residence, ethnic background, high school graduated from, highest degree earned, and whether or not they are the first person in their families to attend college. Data on how long they have been with the program and their title at the farm was also collected. The interview guides contained four major lines of inquiry: their experiences with MAʻO, college, the community, and the future. Specific questions included why they joined the program, what they think they got out of the program, their aspirations and experiences with college, reflections on their high school experiences, and their thoughts about the community. Questions about what MAʻO is trying to accomplish through the program, with the community and the food movements, as well as Hawaiian practices and values were also included. A copy of the interview guide can be found at Appendix B.

Interview guides for program staff contained questions organized by what MAʻO is trying to accomplish and how, Hawaiian practices and values used and emphasized, and their perceptions of who the youth are and what happens to the youth during the program. Interview guides for instructors contained questions about what MAʻO is trying to accomplish, the role of courses the students are required to take as part of the Academic Subject Certificate in Community Food Security, their

perceptions of the students, and descriptions of their classes. A copy of the interview guides can be found at Appendix C and D.

Observations

During the data collection period (June 2013 to July 2014), I had the opportunity to visit the farm on multiple occasions. I attended the 2013 YLT orientation for new interns and their families, a management meeting with all managers and the SUIs[9], and check-out, an end of day process in which the day's work is discussed. These visits were opportunities to observe the youth and managers interact as well as to understand the context in which the interns work. Observations were recorded through field notes.

The Co-Research Team

Involving the participants was a central strategy used for this study. During the study design process, in collaboration with the program, a research team was created to guide and assist with the study. The team included the Director of Social Enterprise, the Educational Resource Specialist, and a Farm Manager and former YLT intern. These key informants reviewed data collection instruments and offered their insights as how to best proceed with recruitment.

Recruitment and Sampling Strategy

In 2000, MA'O Organic Farms began its Youth Leadership Training Program (YLT). Since then, an estimated 180 interns have been admitted to the program representing seven cohorts (as of 2012). This study attempted to include participants from the program's seven cohorts representing two distinct groups: those currently enrolled in the program and former interns, those who either completed or were no longer part of the program.

With the help of the Educational Resource Specialist, active interns representing Cohorts 6 and 7 were informed of the study. Interns were given the option of a one-on-one interview or a group

[9] Step-Up Interns - youth leaders in their second year of the program with greater responsibility.

interview. Interviews were scheduled and held at the Leeward Community College Wai‘anae campus or at a location convenient for the interns, for example, the Starbucks in Wai‘anae Mall.

Contacting former interns was a greater challenge. Two methods were used to recruit former interns. One was literally finding them at Wai‘anae Mall. A few were located and recruited by finding them visiting the faculty and staff at the Wai‘anae campus, or at Starbuck’s or Jamba Juice in Wai‘anae Mall. The second method was based on the recommendation from the Farm Manager – find them on Facebook. Over the next months, I sent friend requests to former YLT interns that were my former students. As it became apparent that locating and scheduling interviews was a very time consuming process, the decision to develop a survey was made.

The Facebook Survey

Based on the first round of data collection from Cohort 6, a 63 item survey was developed and approved by the Committee on Human Subjects (CHS) (see Appendix A). In addition to general background characteristics about the participant and their primary reason for joining MA‘O, the survey contained a series of questions organized around six areas of inquiry. These were: a) perceptions of their time at MA‘O; b) changes in their knowledge of the food system, Hawaiian culture and practices, and understanding of the issues facing the community; c) MA‘O’s mission and vision for Hawai‘i and the community; d) their college experience; e) why they are no longer part of the program; and f) what they are currently doing. The survey used a 10-point Likert scale to indicate level of agreement with statements related to these areas of inquiry. Open-ended questions were also asked, for example, “What would you say to someone like you who has just finished high school and is thinking of college and joining the YLT? Would you recommend the YLT? Why or why not?” A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix F.

The Hawaiian Values Questionnaire

To supplement the interviews with youth, a Hawaiians Value questionnaire was developed and approved by the Committee on Human Studies (see Appendix A) to better understand specific Hawaiian values that are considered core values that underlie Hawaiian ways of knowing. According to Meyer (2003), learning did not take place in a classroom nor was knowledge spilt into discrete subjects. Mastery of skills was learned by observation, listening, and practice with an emphasis on demonstrating mastery in real life settings. Underlying these practices were core values of love and concern for others (*aloha*), devotion to family and community (‘*ohana*), love of the land (*aloha ‘aina*), balance, harmony and living correctly (*malama pono*), service, joint effort, and unity (*kokua, laulima, lokahi*). Youth were expected to be responsible and work hard (*kuleana, pa’ahana*). Effective instruction for Hawaiian youth is therefore experience-based and takes place in authentic environments. Core components of programs for Native Hawaiians make connections to Hawaiian values, identity and place (Kawakami, 2004, 1999).

Interns in their last semester of the program were asked to complete this questionnaire. Youth were provided a background sheet on eight Hawaiian words (or values). The background sheet defined the words based on Meyer’s description of core values (2003).

For each word, the youth were asked:

1. *What does this word mean to you?*
2. *How is this word demonstrated at the farm?*
3. *How do you live this world outside of the farm?*

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix F.

Data Collection

Data collection began in June 2013 and continued into July 2014. Each participant was informed of the purpose of the project, how the data would be treated, and was presented with a consent form to participate and to allow for audio recording of the interview (see Appendix G). On average, each interview was an hour in duration. All interviews with youth participants were recorded using QuickTime player and transcribed. Select interviews with instructors, program staff, and farm managers were transcribed. To ensure confidentiality, participants were given the option to provide an alias should there be an need to use a name in reporting research findings.

The transcriptions, the notes taken during interviews, the open-ended results from the survey and questionnaire, and field notes from the observations represented the bulk of the data used for the analysis.

Data Analysis

The primary method of data analysis was narrative analysis. Narrative analysis has been used in similar qualitative studies where storytelling as narrative is the primary method (Fermantez, 2012; Chase, 2005; Bishop and Glenn, 2003; Meyer 2003). In such analysis, text from all sources (interviews, observations, survey results, and the questionnaire) were analyzed to identify key themes noting similarities and unique differences whether between groups (program staff, instructors, interns) or within groups (e.g., length of time in program among interns [cohorts]).

In this study, the youth were asked to share stories about their families, community, cultural identity, and experiences with MA‘O. Focal points included the value and attitudes about self, work and responsibility to family and community, experiences and perspectives on the educational system, and future aspirations for self and their ideas about social change. From these stories, the text was analyzed using the following guidelines:

First, “narrative research is interested in the *how’s* and *what’s* of storytelling, inquiry is based on extensive interviews about specific aspects of people's lives ... how they make sense of personal experience in relation to culturally and historic specific discourses, how they draw on, resist, and/or transform those discourses as they narrate their selves, experiences, and realities.” (Chase, 2005, p. 659). This type of inquiry focuses on the stories that individuals tell, their experiences or accounts of a series of events or actions that are chronologically connected.

Second, data were initially analyzed looking for words, actions and phrases line-by-line and gradually moving to higher levels of themes and synthesis. This strategy involves a process of “restorying” in which the data are analyzed for key elements and reorganized within a chronological sequence (past, present, future) where the researcher provides a causal link between ideas. Thus, data analysis both describes the story and the themes that emerge (Creswell, 2006).

Themes were developed that followed the sequence or trajectory of their stories. These themes became the organizers for the presentation of results (Chapters 4 to 7). The chronological sequence used is Before MAʻO – Growing up in Waiʻanae, At MAʻO – College and Farming and Hawaiian Practices and Values, and After MAʻO – the Payoff.

Using a participatory process, routine meetings were held with members of the co-research team. During these meetings, main themes that were emerging from the data were discussed. Any questions or areas needing clarification were also addressed. Additionally, key findings and supporting data were presented to all program staff for reflection and interpretation. Taken together, the study’s research findings were finalized.

Introducing the Participants

In 2000, MAʻO Organic Farms began its Youth Leadership Training Program (YLT). Between 2000 and 2012, an estimated 180 interns have been admitted to the program representing seven cohorts. According to program staff, of those admitted to the program, approximately 25 have completed the program (alumnae). A large number of interns have withdrawn from the program before completion – approximately 150. Reasons for not completing the program range. This includes: work reasons (not liking farming, the work hours, the immediate need to earn more, finding another path through college; academic reasons (preferring farming over college, lack of motivation, lack of academic preparation); as well as being released for any combination of work or school related reasons (being late to work, not performing well at work, not maintaining a 2.0 GPA). As of 2013, the number of interns who are active in the program was 35, representing Cohorts 5 to 7.

For this study, a total of 26 of the 35 interns that were active in the program were interviewed. The average length of time in the program was between 1.5 and 2 years. Thus, this sample represents youth who were near completion of the YLT program.

As displayed below in Table 3, the participants represent a mix of gender (52 percent male, 48 percent female) and are between the ages of 20 to 24. Of the 26, nearly all the participants are of Hawaiian ancestry with 2 reporting being Hawaiian (8 percent) and 22 (84 percent) reporting being Hawaiian and a mix of other ethnicities and 2 reporting other ethnicities (8 percent). Most also grew up in either Waiʻanae or Nānākuli (77 percent) with others growing up in other Oʻahu neighborhoods (23 percent).

Table 3. Characteristics of YLT Participants

#	Gender	Year Born	Ethnicity (-ies)	Grew up in
1	Female	1992	Hawaiian	Nānākuli
2	Male	1992	Hawaiian, Portuguese, Puerto Rican	Waiʻanae
3	Female	1992	Hawaiian	Waiʻanae
4	Female	1993	Austrian, Irish, Czech, Native American Indian, Scottish	Mainland/Waiʻanae
5	Female	1993	Hawaiian, Chinese, Spanish, Filipino, German, Portuguese, Tahitian	Ewa Beach
6	Male	1991	Hawaiian, Chinese, Caucasian, Irish	Mainland/Makakilo
7	Female	1993	Hawaiian, Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Caucasian	Waiʻanae
8	Male	1993	Hawaiian, Portuguese, Filipino, Spanish	Waiʻanae
9	Female	1993	Portuguese, Mexican, German, Hawaiian, Chinese, Irish, Cherokee, Tahitian	Nānākuli
10	Male	1992	Norwegian, Filipino, Puerto Rican, Hawaiian	Makaha
11	Female	1993	Hawaiian, Puerto Rican, Filipino, Japanese	Waiʻanae
12	Male	1992	Hawaiian, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Filipino	Nānākuli
13	Male	1993	Hawaiian, Filipino, Spanish, Polish, Portuguese	Waiʻanae
14	Female	1992	Hawaiian, Chinese	Nānākuli
15	Male	1992	Lebanese, Irish, Spanish, Filipino, Chinese	Waiʻanae
16	Male	1994	Hawaiian, Samoan, Tahitian, Chinese	Nānākuli
17	Male	1994	Hawaiian, Caucasian	Waimanalo
18	Male	1993	Hawaiian, Italian, Russian, French	Oʻahu
19	Male	1994	Hawaiian, Filipino, German, Italian	Waiʻanae
20	Female	1994	Hawaiian, Chinese, Puerto Rican, Filipino, Portuguese, Canadian	Oʻahu
21	Male	1994	Mexican, Hawaiian, Chinese	Nānākuli
22	Male	1994	Hawaiian	Waiʻanae
23	Female	1994	Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, African American, Native American	Waiʻanae
24	Male	1994	Hawaiian, Filipino, Portuguese, Chinese	Nānākuli
25	Female	1991	Hawaiian, Japanese	Waiʻanae
26	Female	1992	Hawaiian, Chinese, English, Irish, Dutch, German	Kapalama

As displayed below in Table 4, the majority of the youth graduated from either Waiʻanae High School (50 percent) or Nānākuli Intermediate and High (35 percent), with 15 percent graduating from other schools. Most are currently pursuing their Associate in Arts degree at Leeward Community College (81 percent) or their Bachelor degrees (15 percent) with some identifying current or future interests in a range of majors including teaching, social work, engineering, business, or Hawaiian studies. Many are the first in their families to attend college as well (16, or 62 percent).

Table 4. Educational Characteristics of YLT Participants

#	High School	Currently pursuing	First to attend college
1	Nānākuli	BA - UH West - Sustainable Food Systems	No
2	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts - Engineering	No
3	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts - Teacher Ed	Yes
4	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts - Marine Biology	Yes
5	Nānākuli	AA Liberal Arts	Yes
6	Home Schooled	AA Liberal Arts	No
7	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts	Yes
8	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts	No
9	Nānākuli	Clinical Medical Assistant	No
10	Waiʻanae	AA - Digital Media	Yes
11	Waiʻanae	BA - UH West - Accounting	Yes
12	Nānākuli	AA Liberal Arts	Yes
13	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts	Yes
14	Kapolei	BA - UHM - Social Work	Yes
15	Waiʻanae	BA - UHM - Political Science	No
16	Nānākuli	AA Liberal Arts	Yes
17	Nānākuli	AA Liberal Arts	Yes
18	Nānākuli	AA Liberal Arts - Botany	Yes
19	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts	No
20	Campbell	AA Liberal Arts	Yes

#	High School	Currently pursuing	First to attend college
21	Nānākuli	AA Liberal Arts	Yes
22	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts - Teacher Ed	No
23	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts - UH Hilo	No
24	Nānākuli	AA Liberal Arts - Physical Ed	Yes
25	Waiʻanae	AA Liberal Arts - Business	Yes
26	Kamehameha	AA Liberal Arts - Performing Arts, Hawaiian Studies	No

For the most part, youth participants represent Cohort 6 (50 percent) and Cohort 7 (46 percent). As displayed below in Table 5, nearly all were active in the program at the time they were interviewed. More than half of the participants included SUIs – interns that were a part of the Step-Up Internship program with increased responsibility (58 percent). The typical length of the YLT program is two and a half years. At the time they were interviewed, the youth had either been with the program for at least a year and a half to two years.

Table 5. Program Characteristics of YLT Participants

#	Cohort	Program Status	Title	Total time with MAʻO (years)	Total time with MAʻO (months)
1	5	Completed	SUI	3	1
2	6	Active	SUI	2	1
3	6	Active	SUI	2	3
4	6	Active	INTERN	2	2
5	6	Active	SUI	2	-
6	6	Active	SUI	2	-
7	6	Active	SUI	2	-
8	6	Active	SUI	2	-
9	6	Withdrew	SUI	1	6
10	6	Active	INTERN	1	-
11	6	Active	SUI	2	6
12	6	Active	SUI	2	1
13	6	Active	SUI	2	1

#	Cohort	Program Status	Title	Total time with MAʻO (years)	Total time with MAʻO (months)
14	6	Active	INTERN	1	4
15	7	Active	SUI	1	-
16	7	Active	SUI	1	6
17	7	Active	SUI	1	6
18	7	Active	INTERN	1	6
19	7	Active	INTERN	1	6
20	7	Active	INTERN	1	6
21	7	Active	INTERN	1	6
22	7	Active	SUI	1	6
23	7	Active	INTERN	1	6
24	7	Active	INTERN	1	6
25	7	Active	INTERN	1	6
26	7	Active	INTERN	1	6

In addition to active program participants, a total of 8 former participants were interviewed or surveyed. As displayed below in Table 6, these youth are a mix of gender (62 percent female, 38 percent male) and are between the ages of 21 to 26. All of the youth are of Hawaiian ancestry with one reporting Hawaiian ancestry only and the remainder (75 percent) a mix of Hawaiian and other ethnicities. All grew up in either Waiʻanae (25 percent) or Nānākuli (75 percent).

Table 6. Characteristics of Alumnae or Former YLT Participants

#	Gender	Year Born	Ethnicity (-ies)	Grew up in
1	Male	1988	Hawaiian, Chinese, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Samoan	Waiʻanae
2	Female	1990	Hawaiian, Japanese, Portuguese, Mexican	Waiʻanae
3	Female	1990	Hawaiian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese	Nānākuli
4	Female	1990	Hawaiian	Nānākuli
5	Male	1991	Hawaiian, Portuguese	Nānākuli
6	Male	1991	Hawaiian, Portuguese	Nānākuli

#	Gender	Year Born	Ethnicity (-ies)	Grew up in
7	Female	--	Hawaiian	Nānākuli
8	Female	1993	Hawaiian, Filipino, Chinese, Spanish	Nānākuli

As shown below in Table 7, former program participants graduated from one of the area's public high schools (50 percent from Waiʻanae High School, 50 percent from Nānākuli Intermediate and High School. Most have their Associate in Arts degree (75 percent) and are currently pursuing a Bachelor's degree at either University of Hawaiʻi Mānoa (UHM) or University of Hawaiʻi West Oʻahu (UH West), 62 percent. A few have as their highest degree their high school diploma and are currently working (25 percent). Half of the participants are the first in their families to attend college (50 percent).

Table 7. Educational Characteristics of Alumnae or Former YLT Participants

#	High School	Highest Degree	Currently pursuing	First to attend college
1	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	UHM	No
2	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	BA - UHM - Religion/History	No
3	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	UH West - Psychology/Agroecology	Yes
4	Nānākuli	Associates in Arts	UH West - Political Science/Social Work	Yes
5	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	UHM, UH West - Sociology and Hawaiian Studies	Yes
6	Nānākuli	Associates in Arts	--	Yes
7	Nānākuli	High School	Three jobs	No
8	Nānākuli	High School	Working	No

As shown below in Table 8, former participants represent a range of cohorts, from Cohort 2 to Cohort 6. Most have completed the program as interns (62 percent). A few held titles as a co-manager at the farm or were part of the HYLT (38 percent), a program offered to a few to help them begin their bachelor degree programs. Time at MAʻO ranged from a little over a year to six years.

Table 8. Program Characteristics of Alumnae or Former YLT Participants

#	Cohort	Program Status	Title	Total time with MAʻO (years)	Total time with MAʻO (months)
1	2	Completed	INTERN	3	3
2	3	Completed	INTERN	3	-
3	3	Completed	HYLT	5	-
4	3	Completed	HYLT	6	-
5	4	Completed	Farm Co-Manager	5	-
6	4	Completed	INTERN	3	1
7	5	Withdrew	INTERN	-	-
8	6	Withdrew	INTERN	1	3

In addition to active and former program participants, the current farm manager and co-managers were also interviewed. These are former interns who completed the YLT and were offered full time positions to manage. As displayed below in Tables 9 to11, the farm managers are all female (100 percent), are between the ages of 23 to 25, are all of Hawaiian ancestry (100 percent) and grew up in Waiʻanae (100 percent). In addition to graduating from Waiʻanae High School, most have their Associate's Degree and are pursuing their Bachelor's degree (100 percent), either in Sustainability or Teacher Education. One manager has completed a Bachelor's degree in Hawaiian Studies. Two of the four managers are the first in their families to attend college (50 percent). These managers represent Cohorts 2 to 4 with total time with MAʻO ranging from 3 to 6 years.

Table 9. Characteristics of Farm Managers

#	Gender	Year Born	Ethnicity (-ies)	Grew up in
1	Female	1989	Filipino, Puerto Rican, Hawaiian, Chinese, German, Native American, African American	Waiʻanae
2	Female	1990	Hawaiian	Waiʻanae
3	Female	1990	Hawaiian, Japanese	Waiʻanae
4	Female	1991	Hawaiian, Portuguese, Caucasian, Chinese	Waiʻanae

Table 10. Educational Characteristics of Farm Managers

#	High School	Highest Degree	Currently pursuing	First to attend college
1	Waiʻanae	BA - UHM - Hawaiian Studies	--	Yes
2	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	UHM - Teacher Education	No
3	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	BA - UH West - Sustainable Food Systems	Yes
4	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	BA - UH West - Sustainable Food Systems	No

Table 11. Program Characteristics of Farm Managers

#	Cohort	Program Status	Title	Total time with MAʻO (years)	Total time with MAʻO (months)
1	2	Completed	Farm Manager	6	6
2	3	Completed	Farm Co-Manager	3	-
3	4	Completed	Farm Co-Manager	5	2
4	4	Completed	Farm Co-Manager	4	-

In addition to the youth, four instructors from Leeward Community College and three program staff were interviewed. The instructors teach one of the required courses for MAʻO students that are part of the Academic Subject Certificate in Community Food Security. They have been involved with the program between one to six years and have a wide range of teaching experience - from three to 20 years. Two have a significant amount of experience teaching in either the Pacific Islands or on the Waiʻanae Coast, with one a resident of Waiʻanae. Another instructor is of Hawaiian ancestry.

The program staff interviewed are Educational Resources Specialists for the program. They work in close contact with the youth from recruitment, the summer ramp-up program and throughout their time at MAʻO. They have been with the program between one to three years. Both are either of Hawaiian or Pacific Island ancestry.

On average, each interview was an hour in length. Very few were under one hour and often the interviews were between an hour and a half to two hours. No interviews were terminated. Youth participants were offered the option to schedule an individual interview or a group interview. For the most part, the selection of individual or group was influenced by time and availability. With the assistance of the co-research team, those who chose a group option were asked ahead of time the members of the group. The groups ranged from two, three, and four. The largest group consisted of five participants.

In all cases, each interview opened with an introduction and purpose of the study and asked for their consent to participate and to audio record. All participants were given the option of an "alternate" name should there be a need to reference their narrative. All participants were asked to indicate if they would like copies of the consent form and/or a copy of the final report.

Overall the participants represent both youth and program staff and instructor perspectives and experiences, with the majority of the participants representing active youth participants. A total of 45 participated in this study. Of this, 26 or 58 percent represent active youth participants largely from Cohorts 6 and 7. The youth participants reflect and represent youth who are from the Waiʻanae Coast, attended and graduated from one of the area's public schools, predominantly of Hawaiian and other ethnic ancestry, are a mix of gender, are young adults currently pursuing higher education, and are near completion of the YLT program.

Eight former interns and four farm managers who were interns also participated comprising about nearly a third of those interviewed (27 percent). Similar to the active youth participants, these youth share similar characteristics. They are largely born and raised in Waiʻanae, graduated from one of the area's public schools, and are a mix of Hawaiian and other ethnicities.

The program staff and instructors account for about 15 percent of all participants. They represent a more diverse group. Of the 7 interviewed, just one of the participants is born and raised in

Waianae. Another two currently reside in the community. Most are not of Hawaiian ancestry. Their relationship with these youth and the program range from 2 to 10 years (from the time of the program's beginning).

Taken together, the bulk of this study's participants represent Waiʻanae youth in their last stages of the YLT program. In the following chapters, their narratives and their stories are presented in a time sequence. Chapter 4 is entitled *Before MA'O* reflecting their high school experiences, their reasons for joining MA'O and for attending college. Chapter 5 is entitled *At MA'O – College and Farming* details their initial first semesters at the farm and at college. Chapter 6 is entitled *At MA'O – Hawaiian Values and Practices* describes to what extent and how culture is practiced and what youth gain. Chapter 7 is entitled *After MA'O* where youth discuss what they've gained and learned and describe their future aspirations.

Chapter 4. Before MA‘O

The youth were asked a series of questions about their experiences “before MA‘O.” These experiences are organized around three major domains: their experiences growing up in Wai‘anae; their experiences in high school; and their reasons for college and for joining MA‘O. In each section, major themes are described along with accompanying quotes from the youth or program staff. Each section ends with a summary of the major themes.

Growing up on the West Side

In general, growing up in Wai‘anae was a very positive experience. Themes of family and close relationships were common mentions.

> Everyone gets along with each other. It’s different from town. Wai‘anae…we all call each other uncle and auntie. In town it’s like Hi but I don’t know you. It’s always about family. Everyone knows each other.

> People like my family was always close with each other. We always had gatherings. On holidays we would come together and have dinner. Share presents. The whole family. Like, maybe like 35, 40 people. All the kids. My grandma would cook. Yeah, good memories. Besides getting lickins. But family wise always good and spend time with each other. Wai‘anae is a lot of nice people, honestly. Family, nice people, beaches here, clean water.

Sharing also extends beyond family, as described by one youth participant.

> There are a few gems out there, random people that do kind things for strangers. You want this? A hobo gave me a snickers before. I was like where’d you get this? He pointed over there. It was still wrapped, just melted. It was a nice gesture though.

Stereotypes

When asked about stereotypes or the statistics about Wai‘anae and Nānākuli, youth were highly descriptive of what the stereotypes are. These stereotypes were very negative with descriptors of lazy, uneducated, violence and drugs.

> A lot of negatives. *Pilau* mouth[10] – the guy who's always talking. We do drugs. We're dressed from Jersey Shore – gotta look the part. Everybody's gotta drive a Nissan hardbody or a color coded Honda Civic. The typical Nānākuli boy is pretty much the negatives that everyone portrays – like anytime there's a negative – "that boy's probably from Waiʻanae." Like anything can be a Waiʻanae boy. I never wanted to be the guy who always started fights, has to be the center of attention. When I look at my friends – that's how they were. Troublemakers. No college. But they all got kids! No job, no schooling, but kids.
>
> It's kind of weird cause I have so much pride from where I'm from its like when people talk bad about Nānākuli, I'm just like really? Really. But it's like I understand where the statistics come from because if all of my friends in 11th grade went to class it would have made a dramatic difference in our senior year. In 7th grade we had almost 1000 students and at our graduation we had just 200. It was like everybody went to different schools, they dropped out, some girls got pregnant, some boys just stopped coming to school or they kept getting expelled so they just quit.

In discussing the stereotypes, many agreed that there is some truth to the stereotypes. The reasons for why these stereotypes exist included broken families, drug abuse, and lack of love for many youth in Waiʻanae. The result is that kids grow up to believe that the stereotypes are either true or unavoidable.

> Waiʻanae has the stereotypes. So of course a lot of these kids are going to be defensive. We're lazy, kids are lazy. We're not educated. We always want to pick a fight. We do drugs; we're all hopeless, like every bad thing in the world. They [the kids] believe it. They absolutely believe it, especially if it's that's all they're around. What I find is that these kids from Waiʻanae, they just want to be loved. They all just want to be loved. They want to know what love really is.
>
> People stereotype us but half of it is kind of true. Like there's a lot of drug abuse that goes on so a bunch of kids are in foster care or living with their grandparents and they

[10] Hawaiian slang - dirty mouth.

act out. I have family like that and my cousins just have that chip on their shoulder like since 10 years ago but it just holds them back. One of my cousins he got into Kamehameha but once his family started falling apart he made it his mission in life to get kicked out of Kamehameha. Just because he was angry with his parents for not being there. He had a lot of support from his grandparents but when they don't have their actual biological parents I think it really damages them. And they take it out with their own education ... they take it out on themselves.

Wai'anae has one mindset. The mindset is this is all we can be and all we are going to be. We can't go any further than this. They don't think about trying to show the younger generation something.

According to the youth, these stereotypes create feelings of defensiveness. One student described the "Wai'anae thug" and fighting in the schools as a response to the negativity. That is, if one can "beat" someone else, they are "better."

It's hard because you don't want to believe it yourself and I don't want to believe that there's all these negative things going on but at the same time it is happening. It's just people are portraying it like over the top. It's like yes we have problems, but for some reason people just like to hone in on Wai'anae. That extreme stereotypical mindset is coming from outside.

One time Kamu at checkout said when you see Wai'anae thugs wearing gold chains and stuff, they're just one poor person trying to say to the other poor person that they're not poor. I think that's what it is – it's one person trying to make another worse than they are especially that's why there's a lot of conflict. You always see fights at WHS you know a stabbing one time or a couple of times and see these horrible things among students and it's because they're trying to convince themselves that they're not THAT.

So the classic avenue of school is not working for them?

Right. So even more they have to defend themselves – against their school, against their classmates, against everybody else against the outside.

Effects on Self

Youth were asked how they managed or responded to these stereotypes. Particularly as they have avoided becoming a statistic by being in college. For some, the statistics and stereotypes motivated them to be the opposite – to succeed, to be different – and this seemed to largely be internally driven.

> Nānākuli was being shunned and smoed down or whatever you want to call it and the statistics suck. And I just wanted to be that one out of the whole school like I'm going to college. I had a few positive teachers that made me want to go to college and stuff but a positive environment at school? I wouldn't say so.

> I don't want to be told you're acting like your parents; you're going to be your parents. So I went to school and I proved everyone wrong and I can be sassy and say that. I proved them all wrong. It's not hard. It's hard with all you got to deal with but think about what you want to show everyone. I want to be of course a social worker but even go further than that. I want to be an actor, a singer that's what I want to do.

Youth were asked whether or not they introduce themselves as "from Waiʻanae" when outside of the community. For the most part, youth reported that they will identify themselves as being "from Waiʻanae," but only if directly asked. For example, for one intern it is to avoid having to deal with reactions from others.

> I don't go around and say "Hi, I'm from Waiʻanae" or "Hi, I'm from the West Side." Just so people don't get it in their head like honestly people do back up when they hear that you're from Waiʻanae. They're like "Oh sorry" and "I'm like never mind, it's okay, it's not like that."

For another, delaying introducing oneself from Waiʻanae is done so that other people would get to know her first.

> I don't push it out there because you do get stereotypes. So when I meet someone, I interact with them first and then later on where you from and I tell them I'm from Waiʻanae and they're speechless. I'm like "why are you speechless?" and then there like "Oh cause you talk proper." Then I say "Oh that's cause I'm White." I'm just joking with

them but they're like "Seriously you talk proper…" then I say "Oh what you like brah? For me to talk moke?"

I lived in Waiʻanae my whole life but it doesn't mean like I'm going to talk like a tita. I have respect for myself and I know how to turn it off and on. Sometimes I'll just randomly bust out my moke action but for the most part I can switch it back. They're like I didn't know you would be in school – like you would be like surfing or something.

Others are fine with or are proud to be from Waiʻanae.

I'm not going to deny that I'm from Waiʻanae. If someone asked me I'm going to say I'm from Waiʻanae. I'm not going to be disgraced …I'm fine that I grew up here or I guess I'm okay with it.

I don't really don't say, but if they ask I'll tell them. I'm proud of where I'm from; it's where I've been living all my life.

One student purposefully introduces himself from somewhere else.

If they ask where you're from, I kind of say I'm from somewhere else. I don't care. Like just show them I'm not stupid. I'm not going to kill you. I'm not a drug addict. I'm actually smarter than you.

Some identified the need to defend their community – because Waiʻanae is where their families live. In their responses, they described a sense of injustice noting that Waiʻanae is overly criticized by outsiders.

Waiʻanae is no different from other places. We got our ups and we got our downs. We got our bads and our goods. Our coaches would tell us, we could win 1000 games and people would forget about it but if we lost one game everybody would always remember who we lost to and how much we lost by. Same thing with our community. We can always do these good things within our community but if we do one thing oh you know somebody crashed because they were drunk, then its Waiʻanae of course.

Every time I say where I'm from –I'm proud of where I'm from – but then I feel like I always got to defend myself cause people they look at me different. You feel like you

> got to give them one attitude back cause your family lives there too so you're going to defend where you're from – you feel like you're not only defending your community but your family cause they try to look at you differently. But when you react like that you kind of showing them the stereotype that but yeah it's hard to let people put you down like that. It's irritating.

Some view "being from Waiʻanae" as an opportunity.

> When people find out I work in Waiʻanae, they're like what? Why? I love the realness of Waiʻanae and that people have so much pride. I love to talk about Waiʻanae.

> You're from Waiʻanae? I tell them I'm from MAʻO, and they're more impressed. I'm really proud to live in Waiʻanae. People put us down so much, and I proved them all wrong.

Summary

This section described how youth experience growing up in Waiʻanae, their descriptions of popular stereotypes about Waiʻanae, and how they have dealt with these stereotypes. Themes that emerged include a) their views of growing up in Waiʻanae are centered on family and close relationships, b) stereotypes about Waiʻanae and particularly the youth are largely negative, c) the youth interviewed acknowledge some of the truths behind these stereotypes and can trace the attitudes or conflicts that occur to broken families, drug abuse, and lack of love, and d) these youth have found different strategies of dealing with the effect of these stereotypes. This includes motivation to succeed or "not be the stereotype," purposeful avoidance of introducing themselves as "from Waiʻanae," being proud of being from Waiʻanae, having a need to defend Waiʻanae, and purposefully using the opportunity to discuss what is good about Waiʻanae and introducing MAʻO.

High School

Nearly all of the youth who are part of MA'O graduated from one of the two public high schools on the West Side, Wai'anae High School (WHS) or Nānākuli Intermediate and High School (Nānākuli High). Many attended area public schools their entire lives. When asked "What was high school like?" the youth described their high schools in vivid detail. Beyond identifying math as their least favorite subject, three major themes emerged from the interviews. One was that there are minimal expectations and requirements to pass or graduate high school. A second theme centered on their classroom experiences, specifically the relationship between the high school students and the teachers, notably teachers "from the mainland." The third theme was their advice or thoughts on how best to teach Wai'anae kids.

The Bare Minimum

High school was described by many as a place where they did not learn and a place where very little effort was required to pass courses and graduate. For some, this included earning A's.

> I didn't learn anything. I went to class and had a heartbeat and had an A.
>
> I'd rather have gone from middle school to LCC. I swear. I'm so serious. I feel like I'm learning everything I was supposed to learn in high school over here.
>
> Nānākuli High. I looked at math as being my struggling subject because it is. My instructor, as long as the work was turned in, and like tests I was able to cheat my way through high school pretty much.
>
> I've seen some pretty bad crowds and those crowds they kind of do pass high school but its cause the teachers are literally on them like just do this and you will pass. Just do this one thing. The school is helping them to pass not really teaching them anything. Another easy way out. They [students] don't really care. I guess they're not forced to. I think it just has to do with family. What's happening at home, like if there are drugs, or family problems. It has to do with the kind of people who like to fight a lot, cause trouble. Those are the types that have a hard time passing or don't pass at all.

They also described situations where teachers are under pressure to pass students.

> I remember our teachers used to complain that when the students don't pass like get an F the parents literally come to school and blame the teacher. They're like trying to bribe the teacher – telling them give my student a D so he can pass or find a way so they can pass. The teachers do it just to shut them up. WHS – they pass people for like nothing. They just want you out basically. My friend graduated high school and he barely knew pre-algebra. He couldn't even do his multiplications. I'm like don't you need credit for math? And he [uses mock voice] well I just did three years of the same thing. Like aren't there standards? But then they just can't fail you because then the kids are going to go home and be like whatever I don't need college. I don't need education. My uncle is doing it. They all have these excuses.

Mainland Teachers

A consistent mention when discussing their high school experiences was "mainland teachers." Often, different approaches and misunderstandings were attributed to having teachers from the mainland, or not from here.

One student described not understanding the approach that one of her teachers had used. The question of "why are you here?" and the use of taking one's desk to sit outside of the classroom did not make sense to the student, perhaps a misunderstanding possibly attributed to the teacher "being from the mainland," according to this student.

> We have so much mainland teachers because they're like trying to fix our school but I mean I understand where most of them are coming from, I just don't think they have our background and it would have made a big difference cause most of them are like, "Well if you don't want to be in this class, then why are you here?"
>
> I think those teachers were testing me and I only see it now. But when I was 16, I was like oh you're telling me I don't have to be in school, so I'm going to literally take it as I don't have to be in your class and I can go somewhere else. Like instead of that, how

about saying “if you don’t want to be here, maybe you should find something that you do like to do” and try to push by yourself in that direction. Instead of you don’t have to be here or just take your desk outside. How does that help me? How does that help you? It doesn’t make sense.

Respect and Power. New York City versus Wai‘anae.

The following excerpts represent two stories as shared and told by two graduates of Wai‘anae High School. The stories not only involve mainland teachers, but describe what can happen when different approaches conflict (e.g., inner city versus country or outsiders/mainland versus local), wise guys and respect, and the pervasive negative effects of the stereotypes and its reproduction (i.e., “if we can’t beat it, be it”).

Ninth grade, Pre-Algebra

In the following excerpt, the student recounts her ninth grade pre-algebra class. Within the story, themes of living up to the stereotype, conflict and miscommunication, and a comparison to New York City and Wai‘anae are made.

> It’s sad but you know the typical stereotypes of Wai‘anae? That was the Wai‘anae HS classroom. I mean everyone. From the drugs to the teen pregnancies, to the wise kids who won’t listen to the teachers, to the white teachers in the classrooms who don’t understand the students that are here. Teachers who are fresh from New York who come down here to teach in WHS. They come down thinking it’s going to be the same – just like New York. Same kind of kids. It’s not. It’s different here - its country, not city. They have that method they’ve built up to teach whether more stern or aggressive without being physically aggressive. I have a teacher who was from New York – that’s who I’m thinking of. He wasn’t here for half the year, so we had substitutes coming in and out every week and none of us learned anything. I barely passed that class. It was math Pre-Algebra, in ninth grade. When he came back to the classroom he acted as if he was there the entire year and that we should know what we were doing. “You’ve been doing this for half a year…why don’t you understand this? Go figure it out. Go get the textbook.” And you know students need more help than that.

He treated them like kids from just like just like the movies! It really was. He didn't understand. Teachers from New York and stuff…they come down and they have that aggressiveness towards the students. The students here - "Oh shut up. Shut up. Shut up or I'm gonna punch you. Shut up NOW or I'm punching you!" And they punch. Two of the guys in my classroom tried to punch Mr. Smith. They both walked up to him.

Why were they angry?

Because he basically called them stupid. In front of everybody.

Respect and Power - If we can't beat these stereotypes, then just be 'em…

In the next excerpt, the student retells incidences of high school in an effort to analyze and trace the causes and patterns of classroom experiences characterized by conflict. This includes the pervasiveness of the stereotypes, responding to and inevitably becoming the stereotype, the need and meaning of respect, struggling with "outsiders" who seek to change them, and resulting oppositional behavior among students.

It's like the problems from our community are spilling into our school. Wai'anae High School is a dome – it waters the problem. It's spilling over into our dome – our bowl. You don't want to say "you did this bad that's why your student is like this" or "this student is bad." It's back and forth. It could be the parents. It could be the kids. They're just like I don't care, I like go do this, I don't like do this. It's such a cliché to go back to this stereotype thing but at the same time a lot of it has to do with the students grew up in this atmosphere that they're never going to be anything and after a while they're just like I don't want do anything then if I'm not even going to…

Where are they getting this message?

It's everywhere. It's in their own home – mostly, actually. After a while, people are like if we can't beat these stereotypes, then just be 'em. That's why a lot of the families fall into it and the student are like okay. Some of it is even the teachers at WHS. The funniest thing is the teachers from the mainland. The only problem with them is that they're not equipped to teach our kind of students. I'm not saying that our students are

these special group of people but they – we learn and grew up in this unique way that people have a hard time to grasp and I'm not going to blame it on "we're all hands on" – cause not all of us are hands on – some of us actually like to sit in a classroom and learn about things. But I think the most important thing for students at WHS is respect. It's this respect thing. A lot of the boys I see – I gotta get respect from these people. Everything's respect. Even though you see that they don't respect adults, the students already have this "oh they're from the mainland" so the students mindset is that they think we're stupid or they're going to treat us this way and they go into the classroom like that and some of the teachers go into the classroom like that. So you have these power struggles between student and teacher.

And it's funny because what they do to us, we do to them. As soon as they step into a classroom, it's 'oh they from the mainland, they don't know us." It was my geometry teacher and it was his first year. He was a really good man. He didn't – he was very fair. He did what he had to do and he gave grades out like he was supposed to because it was what they deserved and the kids just tore him apart. They ruined his classroom; they would hide remotes for his projector.

In certain cases, its years of struggling with people who are already there to judge us. Some teachers come to teach us and some come to force us to change. They want to just in any possible way even if it's bad they just want us to change. They want us to learn their way – because their way is going to change all the stereotypes. It's like that Mom who goes to other people's kids and say oh that's wrong, that's not how you are supposed to act.

How to Teach Waiʻanae Kids

The graduates of Waiʻanae and Nānākuli described how learning and teaching could be improved. While some suggested different teaching strategies (such as hands on outdoor learning); most strongly believed that teachers needed to do two things. First is the need to have a relationship with the students. Second is a real need to balance caring for students and discipline.

> I think there's no relationship there. Some teachers make an effort to know the student. My biology teacher, she's from Waiʻanae. She has relationships with students. Some are like do your work that kind of thing. But I struggle with some local teachers. They come and they have relationships with students it's too much of a relationship! Some local teachers are easy on them they begin to baby them because they feel sorry for them. I've seen it as soon as they know the teacher feels sorry for them – they'll use it to their advantage and that's how they get through school. You either see teachers feeling sorry for them or teachers who don't give a shit about them. That's the problem you don't see the in between like I understand where you're coming from, but to graduate you gotta do what you gotta do. Its nuts.
>
> Don't have pity, but have understanding. Don't be mean but show them discipline, not punishment. The teachers now…either no one likes them because their mean or everyone loves them because they're easy. Neither is helping. They need to find that balance. It's definitely missing that middle ground. Waiʻanae kids are going to soak up on the people they can kiss ass and get by and they're going to be scared of teachers who actually want to teach them something. Like you didn't do your homework? Don't be its okay, next time. Tell them I'm going to give you a zero but I'm going to help you with it.

One student shared an example of how her education at Nānākuli did pay off. While in high school, the discipline and teaching strategies used by her English teacher were not appreciated; however, the result was that the student discovered that she did learn how to write.

> I was kind of afraid of college because my English teacher in high school; I had her for three years. I'm not going to say her name but she was like the craziest teacher out there. Throughout the English classes since I've had her it was always you have to take really good notes, you have to pay attention, you need to do this do this…college is not going to be like high school. And then I went to college and I was like Wow this is so chill. I'm not rushing I don't have to take notes I can use my phone in class. I can use my computer in class – SHE'S A LIAR! I got so mad.

> And then I had my writing class and I was so thankful I had her because people did not know how to write one paragraph and I got so angry because I am a perfection in my writing now and people didn't know how to write one sentence to a paragraph and I was like WHAT? Like why – what? I couldn't catch the concept. They were people like from Mililani, Kamehameha and you're downing my education system? Like look in the mirror!

Summary

This section described the high school experiences of the youth and graduates of Waiʻanae and Nānākuli high schools. They view their high school experiences as extremely easy, describing incidences of kids passing as long as they did the bare minimum and consequently viewing their education as poor or not having learned much. The interaction between their teachers and the students was also discussed, particularly the interaction between mainland teachers and Waiʻanae students. These interactions were described as conflicts or power struggles and were characterized by different approaches and a lack of understanding of the students by their teachers. The power of the negative effects of stereotypes again emerged as a major theme. The youth also had ideas on how to improve the education at the high schools. Building a relationship with students was identified as important. There is also a need to balance the need to care for students versus discipline.

Why College and Why MA'O?

In this section, responses to what helped make college a goal and why the youth joined MA'O are described. Questions posed to the youth were – "*did you plan on going to college?*" and *"what motivated you to apply to MA'O?"*

College Bound

Nearly all the youth that were interviewed reporting being college bound. For some, this was a goal since they were very young or more commonly "always." For some, motivation came later, perhaps going to college because of friends. As described below by one of the program staff, despite their varying levels motivation and reasons for college, there is someone in their lives that helped place and continue to emphasize that they would go to college.

> Youth come at varying levels of interest, motivation, academic skill and capacity. Most are economically challenged – most are on welfare. A good number are also part of the foster care system. Most are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, born and raised here and the first in their families to attend college. They may be a little rough on the edges but they generally have families who love them and support them. There's at least one significant person in their life that loves them and believes in them. People in Wai'anae love their families and their kids. – Angela, Educational Resource Specialist

> Yes, because my Mom them always had my ears pulled toward college. You gotta go college, you have no choice.

> I think most of my motivation came from my parents and that's what kept me on track. My parents instilled it in me since elementary. You have to go to college. You have to go to college.

> I knew I wanted to go. My parents always pushed me. They're very prideful in succeeding – they don't like to do anything half assed – they don't like to start anything and quit it so "don't even think you're going to quit school and be mediocre" kind of set the bar high – sounds like a bunch of overachievers yeah?

For some, the "you're going to college" also came with instructions to do something, anything. College is a normal part of life.

> My Dad's parents the Japanese side their mindset was college or we don't know you. My Dad was more the pusher to go to college. They encouraged us to go. But just do something. Don't just sit at home. Especially my home.

> Both my parents pushed me – they said I could do whatever I wanted to do but college needed to be in my plans. They didn't care what I went to college for, as long as I did.

> My mom, my dad, my grandma. Finish high school, go to college, get a good job. That's it.

In addition to family supporting them to go to college, some had specific careers they identified at an early age.

> My grandpa used to tell me you're going to go to college and do this. Then it just came natural for my parents "oh my daughter's going to go to college." I didn't really know if I wanted to go or not but they kept announcing it. Then it was my goal since 7th grade because of self-motivation – I wanted to be a nurse or a vet. I knew I had to go to college to be something.

> YES. Since I was four. I knew I wanted to be a marine biologist. I told my mother – she didn't know what I meant but she was like Okay Dear, that's awesome! After Mom figured out what I was talking about she told me well that's a lot of school and I was like okay so how much school because I'm like five or six years old and she said oh like 8 or 9 more years… Mom and Dad both helped me.

> I was always pushed as a child to be a doctor. So okay, I gotta be a doctor. My grandparents. They had health issues so it was me and my brother who took care of them. So they were like you're so good with helping us make sure we take our pills our insulin so you should be a doctor. Okay that sounds easy. I was seven.

Some also identified longer term purposes of attending college. For example, one student spoke about the ability to take care of a family of their own.

> A lot of my family went to college. If I never like do something I wouldn't do it. But I know the benefits in the long run and I gotta do it for myself. For my future family. You know if you want to support your family in the future you're going to finish school. My mom and dad, they work hard. They continued and my mom stayed in school. If you ever slack off and if you have kids one day, that's how they're going to be – they're not going to finish. You're just going to be depending on your parents your whole life. You gotta do what you gotta do.

For some, without a significant person "pushing" them, college may not have happened.

> My Daddy and who I call my Mom. She made me go the right way instead of dropping out of high school. Just go straight to college.

> I got pushed a lot. I mean my grandma is a substitute teacher – if it wasn't for my grandma pushing me I wouldn't have did as good in high school.

For a few, the choice or desire to go to college had nothing to with others. This was either an independent decision with support or in one case, without any support.

> Since always. I don't know it was always a thought for me. I didn't get it from anybody, I'm a self-thinker. Average wasn't good enough for me. It's an internal thing. College is my choice. My mom them they're not very big figures in pushing me to go to school but it's like whatever I choose they'll be behind me.

> My Mom disagreed. She wanted me to get a job after high school. She still says I shouldn't go to college, I should get a job. And my Dad…he just came back a couple of months ago so he doesn't really know anything. He went to jail when I was in sixth grade.

Why MA‘O?

Responses to *“What motivated you to apply to MA‘O?”* often included the program’s primary draw – paying for college, the opportunity to go to college. There are also a number of other factors that drew youth to the program. These include a) not having anything else to do after high school, b) their original plans fell through, c) friends were also going or already had friends at MA‘O, d) an interest in food and farming, and, e) the need for work and the appeal of working close to home.

An Opportunity

The opportunity to go to college because MA‘O would pay their tuition was a common, and often the first or primary reason for joining the program.

> I was fresh out of high school and my friend said it was cool, it pays for your school – and that was my biggest like red flag. I was like why not? I don’t plan on being a farmer, but they’re paying for school.
>
> I think that’s the biggest hook for most people – paying for school.
>
> Angela spoke. She was pregnant and she was telling us about how good it is and I just figured that they would pay for my college and that’s the only reason. And I liked working outside too.

For some, without MA‘O, they would not have been able to pay for college.

> After going to UH for a year, my financial aid wasn’t cutting it cause I was dorming so my tuition was too much so I was just going to drop out of UH and see what else was out there so Miki was like let’s go – you’re going to go to MA‘O.
>
> School and money. I didn’t qualify for financial aid. I didn’t want to be like my brothers and sisters. They all don’t go to work or school, or do anything.
>
> I think without MA‘O I would not have been able to get it this quickly I might have gotten it but it would have taken a while longer cause it would have one class at a time and its saving up too – I would have to wait and save up for the class. I applied for financial aid when I first got out of high school but I did not qualify because of how

> much money my parents make. So if I didn't get into MAʻO I wouldn't have been able to get my education.

In addition to getting college paid for, some had no other plans.

> My Mom signed me up because they pay for your college. She asked me if I wanted to join MAʻO because I had nothing better to do with my life and so I just agreed.

> It was kind of I never had nothing better to do too. I didn't even know what MAʻO was when I applied. My teacher just told us to apply. Then I got the phone call from Angela. My English teacher was telling everyone about it. I think a couple of MAʻO people came. I had this scholarship to go to a building and construction academy at HCC. I wasn't really into building and construction so I went to MAʻO instead.

> I wanted to go to college but I had no chance of getting money so my only source of going to college was MAʻO. I didn't know how to sign up for FAFSA or look for scholarship so that was my ticket to college.

Many students had goals or plans for four-year colleges, either in Hawaiʻi or on the Mainland. Either because they could not afford it or they did not apply for financial aid or scholarships in time, their original plans fell through. Thus, MAʻO became "Plan B."

> I missed out on a lot of scholarship opportunities and I was in the bracket where my parents made more money so I couldn't get FAFSA but at the same time they didn't make that much money to be sending me to some fancy college, so then MAʻO was like my Plan B. Without MAʻO I'm pretty sure they would have found a way for me to go to school. Take out loans or something. Something they didn't want to do but I'm sure they would do it. I would have probably worked part time just to get by like all the rest of my friends who aren't in the program. Probably something that doesn't require a lot of skill, working as a cashier or at some kind of apparel store. Retail. Thank you MAʻO for sending me to college!

> I was thinking of UH Mānoa and playing football but I had messed up the application so my second option was Leeward. During high school, my teacher, she always told me to apply for MAʻO so I did as a backup and then I ended up over there.

> I wanted to go to a school on the mainland but it was too expensive for me. Like $40,000 a year.
>
> I wanted to go to Oregon – too expensive though.
>
> I wanted to go to UH but it was too expensive.
>
> UH Hilo. Something came up and I had to be here.

Many also joined the program because they had friends or relationships with people who were either going or already at MA‘O.

> After listening to Kamu one time talk – I just decided to join. I think also because I had my friends they were going to be with me. We were all in AG at high school. We all decided to go to MA‘O. Plus I was lazy toward the end of my senior year. So I didn’t really want to apply for anywhere else. I’ll just go to community college because MA‘O was just going to help me go to LCC.
>
> I did it because we had people to go with. I was scared of school that’s why. I didn’t think I could and then my cousin and Giselle are going to go with me so, oh I have some courage with school.
>
> From class when I first started LCC, we took Hawaiian together – I was wondering why she [Alyssa] was always coming to class dirty so I asked her where she worked. Oh MA‘O Farms. So we started talking about it. Then I went and tried it out and I loved it. I loved the farm. I liked the work.

In addition to the college opportunity, some found food and farming appealing.

> My mom instilled in us this expectation to go to school and then Kamu came to our school and I was interested cause I wanted to do culinary so a farm…that’s why I joined. Learning about agriculture, food, and health – for my family.
>
> MA‘O is basically a Plan B. If I could get into a good college and get money to go MA‘O was a backup. And my grandfather was a farmer he had eight children and he fed all of them from planting his own trees and selling to markets.

> My Mom heard of MA‘O and I was like let’s do it. It helps that its organic too – my family’s been organic for a long time.

For some, the need for work was a major reason for joining MA‘O, particularly since they could stay in Wai‘anae.

> A lot of them took the school opportunity because it came with the job but the job was the biggest incentive. When ramp up started, the ones who really needed the money – 2-3 weeks into the program they were gone. The college opportunity wasn’t the big incentive - just the job itself. A lot of them came from families who are like “you need to get a job.” Oh MA‘O is hiring and it’s even cooler because I can tell everybody I’m going to school because my school is being paid for. A lot of us just did it because we all need work. Trying to find a job outside of Wai‘anae is very difficult for us without a degree, only a high school education. Trying to find work within your community – all you got is fast food and more fast food. A lot of us do commute out of here on the bus. All the work is in town. Out of the Wai‘anae district.

Regardless of what the motivation was for coming to MA‘O, some of the youth noted that a strength or positive aspect of the program is that it is open to all. MA‘O is viewed as opportunity. It is a place where if one works hard, opportunities are there. The greatest opportunity is college for these youth.

> For me, when I look at the program – it creates a space – an opportunity to take that step for yourself. A lot of kids in the community who do struggle with schooling, just trying to get through school and to even attend college…what MA‘O does, it’s an opportunity. You work hard – as long as you’re working hard they’ll pay for your education but the same effort you put into your work is the same effort they got to see you put into your education.
>
> It’s a place of opportunity – a way out. If people are struggling and want to go to college it’s a way for them to accomplish what they want. They bring in youth and allow them to go to college and teach them the meaning of hard work.

> The majority of them spilled into MA‘O not on accident but as a last resort. Kind of forced, and sometimes in that first year, it’ll happen…magic. Some won’t want to do any of it and MA‘O, they try and continue to push them to be there to pursue something. At first I thought it was just a program to keep kids out of trouble – just like every other program on this coast – keep them out of the streets. I think that’s part of MA‘O’s goals but at the same time to give them an opportunity to choose for themselves what they want to do. They don’t have to stay in Wai‘anae their whole life if they don’t want to. If they do want to stay in Wai‘anae – how can they help Wai‘anae by still living there and not being another face in the crowd? They send kids to school and I think that’s the biggest concern for them not only getting them off the streets and helping them learn about their future but giving them – handing them a ticket to an education which a lot of students don’t ever think about.
>
> I think it’s good to keep encouraging the guys who know what they want to do and where they are going; but at the same time, if the kids who have been in jail or don’t get any exposure, they’re likely to just stay where they are. But if they see something else and even if they don’t make it through, at least in the back of their mind, there is something else out there. And to know that there’s someone from Wai‘anae who does want to go somewhere has some little influence at least. So maybe it’s the cream of the crop with the cream of the crap. We have it at the farm. Some surprise me. Joe’s a good example – he seems so unmotivated. Like brah. But at the same time he has a really good mind – really smart.

Summary

Reasons for going to college included “always knowing” from a young age, someone who strongly and consistently reinforced the idea of college, being independently motivated and perhaps even despite lack of support. Reasons for joining MA‘O primarily centered on the program paying for their college tuition. Many of the youth also either had no plans; their original plans fell through, or had faced obstacles with paying for college. Some joined because of friends or had an interest in food and farming. Getting work, especially work in Wai‘anae, was also a reason.

Regardless of their degree of motivation and purpose, the youth see MA‘O as an opportunity for themselves and for the youth of Wai‘anae. They view the program as an exchange – an opportunity for college for their hard work.

Chapter 5. At MA'O – College and Working at the Farm

This chapter presents youth responses and discussion on what their time during the YLT program was like. From their first year in college, to what working on a farm is like, to the second year where they were either eligible to become or became SUIs, their experiences are detailed here. Key processes such as farm practices, relationships, mentors, and opportunities MA'O provided are also described.

Year One – High School to College

The transition from high school to college was generally challenging for the students. In looking back to their first year in college, common challenges included not being ready for college – academically and in terms of maturity; the difference between their teachers in high school and the more distant instructors in college; and different learning and teaching styles.

Most of the youth interviewed reported "not being ready for college." This took the form of not being prepared for the degree of freedom that college offered, not understanding that passing a course meant submitting assignments on time (or at all), or in general, assuming that college would be just like high school.

> All the teachers were like its way harder than high school but it's kind of the same. Just more lenient. Like nobody's on you to do stuff and that's were some people slack off. I learned a very important lesson at school which is to turn things in on time.

> I wasn't really ready; I wasn't really expecting what was coming. It was different and kind of difficult. When I was in high school I was in special ed., so they never really gave me homework so I never worried about it. When they did give homework I did it in class because it was kind of easy. So when I went home I didn't worry about it. When I went to college – there was homework! And hard homework. I'd go home and I would forget about it then I'd come to class and I was like what, we had homework? I still have the habit of forgetting what homework is due but I'm getting used to having to do homework. Now I know when I come to class, homework is due then, not the next day.

> I failed English. I was just irresponsible. There were five projects and I did three thinking I was going to pass. So I'm like going to skip the last two…and I failed.

Some students discussed not having the skills to succeed in college. They spoke about succeeding in high school, but then discovered they did not have the skills to do well in college.

> It was horrible. I wasn't used to working [for my grades]. In high school it was so easy. Especially going from the Mainland to Hawai'i's education system I was like a straight A student when I came here and everyone thought I was a genius. But when you go to California you're a half-wit. It was easy and at the same time you're not working in high school. I withdrew from one class and passed the rest and just the fact of getting Cs – I wasn't used to getting bad grades like that.

> I didn't have the note taking skills so I did bad and I didn't read the book when I was supposed to – all the little things. It's more the little things that will kill you in college. In high school, if you had a pulse, you passed.

> College is … I feel like I wasn't prepared. High school was really simple. College and work, it was kind of overwhelming. Half the time I didn't know what to do and I didn't want to ask.

Some admitted to taking advantage of the freedom college offered and did not go to class.

> I got used to the college life. I don't have to go to class. So, let's go over here. Instead of going to class we would go bowling, or to Chuck E. Cheese's because we like to climb in the Jungle Gym and play. We would go bowling then we would go to Chuck E. Cheese's and we'd go out to eat – you know we finally had money, we were working so we'd go shopping. We were living the life. And then it was time for our grades and I think it was Angela who was really disappointed with us. So I was like guys we gotta really study now do something to flip this or get kicked out.

> I think…I was lazy. I went to school. Sometimes...instead of going to school we went to the mall together.

> Yeah there's no one to arrest you. In high school I would be too afraid to skip out because they call your house or something. So, a little bit of freedom and oh my God, I took an inch and I strangled myself!

Good and Bad Teachers

Another transition was the difference between high school or "local" teachers to their instructors in college. Compared to high school, college instructors seemed distant or uncaring. These students expressed a need or preference to have a relationship with their instructors.

> College was really different especially coming from Wai'anae. Most of the local teachers there they're going to get to know you and form a relationship with you. College is different. I'm guessing it's because they have so many students and so many different classes it's hard to get to know that one student. It was kind of junk because I did want them to know me and I wanted to know them. But I knew it was mostly business… so keep it business.

> It was difficult at first. I think adjusting to the fact that before I had a support group of teachers. The teachers cared. WHS teachers care they really do – most of the time. They all had a deep like loving caring feeling towards their students – all of them. They just always constantly making sure we had our work done. Making sure we knew what was going on. Checking and making sure we were okay at home. Versus going to college the teachers are like come to class or not, I don't care; it's your grade. They're the kind of teacher who comes to class and ends class and that's it. We're lucky if they can put a name to our face. Some of them are too serious. Robots. Very distant.

Another student also expressed a preference for a "local-type" instructor and described a favorite instructor at Leeward Community College. This instructor at Leeward Community College was someone who was a "real good teacher" because this instructor made sure that the students understood what was required and was available to help. The student described the class as a lot of work and that he learned.

> There are always the good and bad teachers but I like the real local kine teacher for some reason because it's almost like it's your Auntie or Uncle teaching you. I don't think I had a real crappy teacher. They all did pretty good. One of favorite teachers was an English teacher. He's a real good teacher like he put a lot of work out there for us especially since it was ENG 100. I learned a lot from his class, a lot more than from high school. He was one of my favorite classes. He gave you a lot of work but he also kind of made sure we understood what we had to do and was always there to help and gave us a lot of work but he explained it as to where the work was easy. So…I learned how to cite my sources!

For one student, the discussion of their college experiences included a class where the student felt judged or stereotyped by the instructor. The student described anger, a sense of unfairness, and having to work hard to prove himself.

> I'm the only young man and there are all aunties in the class. I want to be a teacher. He [the teacher] kind of gives up on me. I thought I was going to give up – every time I see that guy I wanted to punch him in the face. But things got better. He knew where I was from and so it seemed like he was, "I see this guy he's not going to do any better" – like I'm some kind of loser that lives on this side. He always gave me bad grades. Honest to God I felt like my presentation was better than some of the aunties who teach for a living – they're substitute teachers. These people – they emailed me for help and they asked me for advice. And I see the grades and what they're getting. This guy – I swear he just don't like me. But towards the end, my work, I guess I was turning in my work and it was of quality and I guess he [understood] that this guy is not like everyone else. I showed effort. So he was being cool with me and talking to me. But from the very beginning I thought this guy, he never care about me so I had to prove myself.

Interaction in the Classroom

In addition to positive or caring relationships with instructors, many students described a preference for interactive classrooms. Interaction was described as using more varied activities, enthusiastic instructors, and the opportunity to work with and get to know other students.

I like more hands on. Some teachers they base off the board but I'm kind of used to that. It's the real monotone teachers like I had this teacher she was "this" all the time [speaks in an exaggerated flat voice] and she would not smile. She would tell us to study and it was really boring. I started doing other things in class and I fell asleep a couple of times. Other than that, since I've been at Leeward, I've enjoyed my teachers. Just don't be monotone and don't smile. Like okay now we're going to…like aren't you supposed to be interested? My Speech 151 teacher – she was like so enthusiastic and so into her job – okay if she can do it, I can do it. And I did it, I passed the class. It was awesome.

My college experience was awesome! It was more fun, more interesting. I learned more than in high school and you realize you learned all this in high school but for some reason it feels like I didn't. The class size, I think it's a good size because you do get a lot of one on one with teachers. You get to know more and they work with you better. The smaller the class I guess you can focus on your students. I like a lot of hands on. I had a couple of teachers who were like so boring. And I failed one class – she was like okay read the chapter and you come to class and we'd go over the chapter and I was like I just read it – why am I here? We didn't really do a lot of any like activities to remember the material. Like how your class had a lot of skits. Like going up to the board and doing maybe games and stuff.

Your class with killer Miss. I like the interaction with people and it was fun. My other instructor was Wyatt and even he was fun and funny. Sometimes he just pulls some jokes out – it was funny. And his class is chill, relax. I was walking into his ENG 100 class and I was scared because it was ENG 100. But it was fun. The teachers I took were all funny.

For one student who had attended a four-year college, classes were very large and allowed for limited variety in learning.

It was way too big. I felt like I was drowning. I never felt intimidated but maybe it was my fault for taking those kinds of classes but that's what was offered. These huge lecture halls. Never group work, no presentations. Everything was like 15 page papers. It

> wasn't like I didn't like those things, I like working by myself too but there wasn't any people interaction and I've learned that that's the kind of learner I am.

On Lectures

Students also described what they did not like in classrooms. Too much talking by the instructor (i.e., lecture), or instructors who they did not understand, or instructors who do not appear to be teaching were common mentions.

> There's scolding classes that just talk all the time – lecture.

> Some teachers they just gave me a hard time. Sometimes they explain it in ways I really need to think about – like why would you explain it like that? So I would take like two minutes to think about it. I would just look them in the eyes like I don't understand. What they're trying to explain like when they're teaching us – it's just sometimes hard to get from their perspective. Because if I don't understand something I'll try to think about it, like my ears are off when I'm thinking, and the teacher is still going and then wait, oh she's still talking.

> Some teachers are good. Some I question how they became teachers. One of my teachers, she – I forgot her name – she sucks. Like if they give it straight from the book. I think it was because she wasn't really clear when she was teaching; read this section, explain what you read. That was it.

One student described a course that was predominantly a lecture course. In this course, lectures were described as stories and the instructor's enthusiasm made this course a favorite for this student.

> One of my favorite teachers was Sakashita. He's fun because he's really enthusiastic. You can tell he loves his subject. It's strictly lecture based but he just loves it. He explains everything in really interesting ways, like he always tells a story with it. Even if it's just lecture based, it can still be engaging. As long as there's that passion and enthusiasm.

Within the mix of the "good and the bad," overall, the students were grateful and appreciative to be in college. College was a welcome departure from high school and as described by one student, knowledge is sexy.

> High school was like holy crap. College just made sense. I like it a lot better. High school was all about whose doing what, whose wearing what, what's the new trend. In college, it doesn't matter what you look like show me your grade and I'll tell you who you are. People in college don't care about how you look and how you dress. They don't care about that. It's how you are in class. Knowledge is being thrown at you – it's what you obtain. People find intelligence a lot sexier. Knowledge is sexy.

Some students specifically appreciated the community college experience. In their discussion, the students mentioned a community atmosphere, relationships with instructors, and for one student, the acknowledgment and value placed on Hawaiian history and culture.

> I love Leeward. I think that why I didn't go to school was because I was scared to make mistakes. I have a hard time comprehending what I read so if a teacher would tell me to read out loud or write an answer on the board I would be uncomfortable so I didn't like school. Over here it's okay to make mistakes and I think we're kind of like a lot of trial and error people. I think it's cool that we're surrounded by a lot of people who are coming back to school, like older people. I really like it. They're learning just as I'm learning. I like how we can talk story with our teachers. We're able to build relationships here. I like the community atmosphere. It's smaller. It's easier to get to know each other. Teachers know who you are and you know them.

> In my first semester [at a four-year college], I would talk about a lot of Hawaiian things and he, my English teacher, would tell me I couldn't write about it because these are not valid things you are speaking of. I'm like what are you talking about…he said I needed to talk about things that are more substantial. I was thinking about the kings and queens – the overthrow of the monarchy and he said you can't talk about these things [ENG 100] – this is not college level subjects. I was like oh fine. I was hurt. Now when I go to school

[at Leeward CC], the classes I'm taking, the teachers … that's exactly what we're talking about. About the history of Hawai'i.

MA'O Courses – the Academic Subject Certificate in Community Food Security

As part of the program, all students are required to take five courses that make up an Academic Subject Certificate in Community Food Security. These courses are:

- HWST 107 Hawai'i: Center of the Pacific
- AG 112 Introduction to Organic Agriculture
- MGT 135 Agriculture Entrepreneurship
- SOC 151 Introduction to Sociology of Food
- HWST 291 Contemporary Hawaiian Issues

The youth and instructors of the certificate courses were interviewed about the certificate program. Both were asked about the purpose and relevance of the courses and what the students got out of these courses.

Overall, the instructors described the purpose of the courses as general introductory courses. They acknowledge that most of the students may not necessarily become future farmers.

> The YLT is an opportunity for college and to develop personal and leadership skills. It broadens their worldview and they begin questioning. It's an entry into college – the AA. The ASC in Food Security is not a career path. I've seen no one yet go into agriculture. Some have gone into Hawaiian Studies or Education. It's a MA'O requirement. It does no harm. They'll get general life skills – be able to plant something in their own yard, know something about marketing. They are 19 years old – they probably don't know what they want. It keeps them out of trouble and moving forward.

> The purpose is not to make entrepreneurs. In theory, it's to develop new farmers – one of MA'Os expectations. But it's an introduction to general basic business practices. It's a challenge to teach entrepreneurship to students who don't necessarily want to start their own business. Typically the students in an entrepreneurial class are people who have a business idea and need to develop it. So entrepreneurship can be a mindset, a desire to teach you how to get a job or to create your own job or create jobs for others. It's a trip for them the idea of creating your own source of income.

One student identified the connection or relevance between the courses to what MA‘O does.

> MA‘O chose these classes really well. I mean agriculture, business, food problems and problems in Hawai‘i in general – that’s everything that MA‘O is trying to create awareness about.

Some found relevance in the course, and understood the requirement to take the courses, but did not feel that they needed them.

> Like with management I learned because it planted a seed in my mind like maybe I want to make a business. Ag was my least favorite one. Brah I do this at MA‘O why do I need to take some class? I guess it was good for them to teach us more but it was a boring class for me. Your class just made me see the importance of what we’re putting into our mouth. Just being aware that some things aren’t fully labeled and how serious a problem our health issues are becoming. I guess its fine. But I would hope they wouldn’t add any more classes.

Some students did not see the relevance of “having” to take what they call “MA‘O classes.” They specifically mention that they are not going to be farmers, so these required classes are “a waste of time.”

> I did pretty crappy in the MA‘O courses. I felt that one was complete favoritism. I’m not going to lie. It felt like the knowledge given in that class there was no structure. Honestly I think MA‘O just made these classes because they saw it as knowledge that would be knowledge that would be necessary for people who want to go into farming or the agricultural field. The problem with that is that not everyone wants to go into farming or the agricultural field. As much as I love my job and what I do I'm not necessarily going to make a career out of it. I’m going to make a career out of something I enjoy doing – something that I want. But the real gist of it a lot of them looked at the classes like why am I going to need it? I’m only using MA‘O for a resource.

> I don’t like the whole overall idea of it cause why am I going to need this cause am I going to be a farmer all my life? Where does this fit in – half of the courses I hated the other half I really liked. I don’t care about business that was really boring. It was a really

> repetitive class and he wasn't even a good teacher – like everything we talked about the whole semester was everything he went over the first three weeks. I guess he just went deeper into it – it was super boring. And the agriculture class, not planning on being a farmer and I don't care what's in the soil – not interesting. Like sorry. I like the sociology classes because it's like things I can apply to my life. Things that are interesting, things that are actually happening, like current. Everybody eats food so it should be something you're concerned about. The other stuff was like a waste of time. I just didn't find it interesting. Maybe if you're going into business you'd like the class.

Others discussed the classroom environment when the class is comprised of only MA'O students. Students describe "being very comfortable" with another. For some, this level of comfort was negative, describing their peers as "rowdy and disrespectful." The perception that the course was somehow not as important as others because "it's a MA'O class" was also mentioned.

> I really really hated MA'O classes because it was a real hard environment to learn in cause we're so comfortable with each other – I heard every MA'O teacher complain because the kids are so comfortable and they'd get really rowdy and disrespectful cause they were acting like cliques and bullies towards the teachers.

> The MA'O classes. The good stuff is that we know everyone in the class – good to be comfortable. But then it's a bad thing because you're too comfortable. MA'O kids are like oh it's just a MA'O class, whatever. I love them as people but they're just trying to get by. They're not really trying to learn. In our class right now it's hard. It's Hawaiian Studies 291 and writing intensive. You're required to read like 50 pages of something every night before class and its reading and writing intensive. And she's all irritated with them cause did you read?

One student shared his advice for MA'O instructors.

> Be stricter and keep the whip strong. Just got to spark their interests. Use all kinds of different stuff – there's immense diversity here.

Program staff and MA‘O instructors were asked to describe the students. Overall, diversity was a major theme that emerged. The youth vary by motivation, purpose, and academic ability.

> The youth are a real mixed bag. For some, it’s because Mom says you must go to college. Some are very motivated but have no money. Some are super smart and more prepared but can either be motivated or not. The majority though, the Leeward Coast education has failed them. They don’t have the basic math. Or cannot write in complete sentences or write an essay. There’s little to no science, especially the vocabulary. They think that if they show up and do nothing, they will pass.
>
> Those who success at MA‘O are rock stars. To do MA‘O, plus college, plus homework and to deal with the possible lack of academic preparedness – you have to be highly motivated. Their strengths are resiliency and their work ethic. I’d say maybe a quarter of the entering cohorts are rock stars. It seems to happen a year or a year and a half into the program – they seem to understand that there are opportunities for them. The rest are just getting by.
>
> There’s a group who’s into it maybe because there’s a family business and they have experience running a business so it’s cool and they get into it and they do an impressive job. There’s a middle, apathetic. Then there’s a group who could care less and they’ll tend to be disruptive and make jokes. They’ll pick businesses like a strip club or a bar.
>
> There are big differences between the students. On one end, a number worked diligently and really cared about doing the best they can do. Others really understood food security and appreciated being a part of MA‘O and having the opportunity to go to college. On the other end, they didn’t want to uphold their kuleana. One withdrew. Some still… “Do I really have to read? Do homework?” They are the same as other college students. Some are academically able and care. Some do the minimal. Some have the desire but needed better writing ability. Some are smart but lack motivation.
>
> Some of our youth are what I call “alphas” – very used to school and work and are here for the opportunity. Some want leadership roles but are “academically cruising.” Some just want to do something and have friends. They are smart but the maturity is not

there…kind of "where's the party?" Some are academically behind. They would soar if not for that piece.

Instructors were asked about changes they have made in their teaching as a result of teaching these specific courses and MAʻO students. Common modifications included increasing the diversity of their teaching methods.

> I've learned on the job! I can see by their body language and behavior. I set limits on the time of me talking – 30 minutes max. I do as many field trips as possible. We read, we talk and discuss and now we'll go see Uncle Joe and this is his interpretation of the concept. Real life examples as much as possible. Yes we mix it up and yes we can have fun; but we also need lecture, conversations and ideas. I try to make it as relevant as possible to their life. It's the best way to connect with them.

> Mix it up. Don't drone on. I use powerpoints, video, quizzes, skits, and even rap. We took at CTAR publication on disease and they made a rap on symptoms and solutions. I'm also lucky to have a living lab. We've gone to the Waiʻanae Store and have done a "Where's our food from?" exercise. I try to blend Hawaiian tradition and words with the content.

Instructors also mentioned finding a balance between "making exceptions" and having high expectations and standards. For the most part, there is a need to transition students from common practices they learned in high school that will not help them succeed in college.

> They aren't as motivated as I'd wish. It's a rude awakening. In high school, they can wait until the end and then ask for make-up. Sometimes you have to fail to succeed. I tell them "make-up is what women wear" and "extra credit is when you did everything."

> I used to make exceptions for late work – like a percentage off. I don't anymore, this is college. We need to break the idea that an F is normal. I give a lot of opportunities to success and pass.

> Your *kūpuna* were well versed in "Hawaiian" and "Western" ways. Excellence was for everyone. This is *pono*. You need both. There's no escaping it. It cannot all be "hands

> on." I don't think of them as poor kids from Waiʻanae. I have cousins and aunties who are the same as them. I feel that my expectations are higher when it comes to Hawaiian history and Hawaiians. I'm not going to hold your hand or let you give an excuse of "I'm from Waiʻanae."

Summary

The transition from high school to college was generally challenging for the students. In looking back to their first year in college, common challenges included not being ready for college – academically and in terms of maturity; the difference between their teachers in high school and the more distant instructors in college; and different learning and teaching styles.

In general, the students experienced the realities of learning what they were allowed to do in high school to pass, and for some, to do very well in high school, was not acceptable in college. Not doing assignments, not reading, and perhaps relying on possible extra credit or late submission of work, was a surprise. The freedom of being able to attend class, or not, was also a lesson learned for some.

The students also described the challenges of finding instructors and classes that they prefer. The preferred instructor is one that is perceived as caring about them, enthusiastic, and uses a variety of teaching methods. The students described preferring interactive classes where they are able to do and get to know and interact with the instructor and others.

The "MAʻO classes" that the students are required to take in Community Food Security were often perceived as a requirement that held no relevance for the students. Indeed, this component of the program is the least meaningful and participants demonstrated very little enthusiasm during this section of the interviews. While some saw the connection and purpose between the courses and the farm, most either did not, or did not care.

Their instructors describe the students as a highly diverse group. The students vary by motivation, purpose, and academic ability. Common experiences among the instructors include using a

variety of teaching methods, the need to transition students from high school expectations to college, and acknowledging that most of the students are not taking these courses as a career pathway, but as an entry into college.

Working on a Farm

Two hundred and fifty years ago, this island fed 750,000 people and they surfed, led a full life. The young people are our biggest asset to turn around our community. Together, with love, respect, and willingness to work – it is our *kuleana* to take it to the next level. High school is pau. The next phase is work, school, and family. You work hard, you will be rewarded. On the other hand, no. To the families, you will hear "Uncle Gary is an asshole."

– MAʻO Orientation, June 4, 2012, Gary Maunakea-Forth

The excerpt above was recorded during an orientation session for incoming interns and their families. The farm's co-founder and co-manager, Gary Maunakea-Forth, or Uncle Gary, addressed the audience. As illustrated below, the theme hard work has been one of the most dominant descriptions of how the interns describe their experience at the farm.

> They teach you the value of hard work and less pay! You bust ass. Like digging the trenches. Certain jobs they challenge you to do it in a certain time. Like go grab a bin of fennel from the back fields. We need it in five minutes. So you gotta go harvest the bin of fennel and bring it back in. It's at the end of the farm all the way in the back – the farthest from the shed. About half a mile.
>
> There was a field of kale and practically had all the interns working that field pulling these weeds that were huge and in a swamp. There are frogs everywhere and all the seeds getting on you and you're getting all itchy. And it's hot. Did I mention that it's hot?
>
> They are trying to break you – make you a better person. Break you from your laziness. Make you grow up.

Expectations and Discipline

At the farm, there are high expectations and structure. For most of the interns, this is their first work experience. Teaching work ethic, being on time, coming to work, working with others, and

balancing their responsibilities in school are all taught. As part of the process, the farm uses a standards violation system where interns can be released from the program.

> If they're right after high school, coming right after high school, for most of them, it's probably their first job. There's a lot of learning about work ethic. We're teaching them to get up on time, teaching them to be there on time, teaching them to not swear, teaching them to listen to people your same age, listen to people who are way older than you, you know, just, all these. And you know, teamwork, you know...all those things that you need to do to just be able to work. They go to college, and they start to learn more about time management and procrastination, they try not to procrastinate. So, like teaching them it's about the degree, not the pain that you're having right now. So teaching them to kind of look at the forest and not the trees approach. It takes a constant push. We tell them straightforward what to do. We have a standards violation system, so what shouldn't be done. I think this program is a whip whip love program. It's tough love.
>
> If you didn't do it good you would get strikes and you could get released. If you get three in a semester you could get kicked out. You couldn't miss days. It felt like you could get fired and that there was a lot more on our shoulders. So everyone was soaking up the knowledge faster and be quicker.

Another intern described how immediate discipline can occur on the farm.

> For some reason MA'O will find out about anything, about anybody. It's trippy…you could tell only one or two people but as soon as you do… especially Uncle Gary and them. They all know already. It's like spies. They know everything.
>
> Then they'll talk to you or Cheryse will talk to you. If it's like a one-time thing then they'll just say 'oh it's okay' but if you constantly do it and keep taking advantage, then they're going to have to crack the whip this is no joke, if you don't want to be here then don't be here.

Another practice the farm employs is a rehiring process. When interns are released, there is an option to be rehired. To be rehired, the intern must go through a fairly intense process.

> In the first year, our major challenge is maintaining a GPA of 2.0. They are not academically ready. In high school, it was just show up and give me anything. Our challenge is balancing giving them time or releasing them. Youth can be released for absences, academic performance, or work performance.
>
> Everyone has an opportunity to be rehired. *Ho*ʻ*oku*ʻ*u* – to release to a higher power – is a practice for those who have been released and want to come back. We gather the elders (their older peers) and they meet. It's very transformative and powerful. The released intern has to address "this is my understanding of why I was released," "this is what I am or have done to come back," and "this is what I will do." The elders (their peers) will either say "you're all bullshit" or "sounds like a great plan." They meet and discuss until there is a conclusion.

Pau Hana – the Check Out

When asked about what they learned at the farm, the check-in and check-out process was mentioned as the major vehicle where the program staff communicated with the interns. Each day of work begins with a check-in and ends with a check-out. They were described as announcements before work and an end of day a debriefing where each work group shares with the larger group. Then the farm managers share, then program staff, and Uncle Gary. The purpose is to share "the good and bad…so we can improve for the next day" or so that "everyone gets on the same page, becoming one."

As people share, life lessons in the form of stories from Uncle Gary (Co-manager), or quotes from Angela (Educational Resources Specialist) or Cheryse (Farm Manager) were described. While some admitted to sometimes not paying close attention, many indicated that these words or lessons made an impact on them.

> When you're working there, things Uncle Gary and them say is like whatevers but in due time you think about it and "wow he's actually really kind of correct." And like you gotta grow up some time. Like when he gives his speeches. About working hard and I guess growing up. I think I'm pretty knowledgeable but I think it's also because of Uncle Gary and Cheryse them. Just like giving their stories every day. In our check outs and check

ins. Sometimes they give inspirational stories. Like sometimes I don't pick up but when I do, I think - hard.

I know people have said things and it made me think but it's mainly when they share quotes and I'm kind of a quotes kind of person so I like it when quotes can apply to my life. Like if you fail to prepare then you prepare to fail. Just little things that'll make you think, oh aha…yeah.

The stories and lessons have involved messages about working together as a team.

They talk to us at check out – they try to give us life lessons. Like Uncle Gary with his stories. There are a lot of lazy people on the farm and he sees it. But he doesn't want to call them out so he'll try to tell a story. He'll focus it on that one person but he'll try to tell everybody so everyone can get that idea. A lot of people don't pay attention or listen even. They're dazing off or thinking about what they're going to do when they get home. Like he'll talk to you about rugby and compare something. He was talking about a team where they were losing but at the end somehow they together as a team they were able to score – everybody got to do their part for us to work.

If they have any announcements they make them in the morning. But sometimes people feel free to give out speeches and analogies. Metaphors about life. Sometimes it gets kind of irritating cause we just want to get back to work do what we gotta do but sometimes you have those days where you listen and you want to learn. All these analogies …he [Uncle Gary] compares a lot to rugby. Like team work. I think that's Uncle Gary's thing – he's real big on rugby.

Lessons learned from Uncle Gary's stories also included aiming higher and working hard to become "marketable" young people.

Uncle Gary talked about aiming higher. Nobody here plays a song and gets a bunch of money like Jack Johnson. But we should all stop shooting low. There's nothing wrong with being a teacher or wanting to help people but shoot for something more than just what you see. There's more out there than just Waiʻanae and that's what a lot fail to see. Hope. That's there something more.

> Because we're young – young farmers, young kids, they're just trying to teach us hard work and to make ourselves presentable to other colleges. Uncle Gary's words are "marketable." If you can work and go to school and get good grades and at work you portray "head down, ass up." Like if you're weeding and you're standing straight up, you're not doing your job. So heads down, ass up.

Other memorable stories or quotes involved one of the Farm Managers.

> She's more spiritual, with quotes and stuff. Like the one that really sticks is "Excellence is its own reward." She talks about things like you got to be yourself, love yourself, self-empowerment.

SUI – The Step-Up Internship Program

The farm has a SUI program – a Step-Up Intern program. These are interns that are typically in their second year of the program and have demonstrated leadership on the farm and with school. The farm hires a select number of SUIs who will be paid more and work longer hours. With more pay comes more responsibility. They are responsible for teaching and leading younger cohorts on the farm. They are expected to represent MA'O and the program's mission and values. They become "middle managers" between the farm managers and the interns.

For those that do participate in the SUI program, this aspect of MA'O was described and spoken of as a very deep and meaningful experience. Indeed, being a SUI has been described as one of the greater opportunities for youth to mature, learn, and grow as leaders.

As described below, they are excited to grow into this new role, have a sense of pride on being selected, and want to be good teachers and good leaders.

> When new interns come in, you see the older interns say, "Oh, that's not what we were all about," and they have this sense of pride of not being dumb because they have been in college, and not being lazy because they have been working. The majority of the time

I don't have to even say anything. It's them, because they realize as if there's a light bulb that says, “I'm going to be teaching somebody something!” It's like coaching. When I was a student and I wasn’t understanding some of the things my coach talked about, but now that I'm coaching, I see so much more that I couldn’t see. That’s what happens to the older interns because now they’re the ones who have to teach. And a lot of them don't want to teach the wrong thing. They want to be a good person; they want to be a good leader. They want that person to succeed. And they know that's going to help the farm. We just had SUI interviews, and that’s what they said. Three people, they just finished their first year, and they said, “I want to learn, I don't want to teach something wrong, I want to be a leader.”

It also changed my maturity level because I’m one to work independently – I don’t necessarily like teaching people and taking time out to go through things but once I was in the program and I became SUI that really changed. Because I had to take a step back and realize that there was a SUI there to help me. So I’m like, this is what I put them through. You feel good because people are asking you and they want to learn it from you – just feeling better about yourself cause you’re knowledgeable you’re somebody that interns can come to and ask questions.

The SUI program was also described as an act of initiative because the interns know that the position is valued and is associated with leadership and responsibility, something only the best achieve.

I think that everybody has their opportunity going through the program and the managers and the staff if they see it that glimmer in you they try to bring it out in you but they're waiting for us to see it in ourselves so I think most of the true leaders are the SUIs because they step up to the plate.

When you sign up for SUI it’s basically like if you are willing to lead. You see who the leaders are. You see who ends up for SUI. I guess like everyone’s a leader in their own way. Like some will get it before others. That’s how you become SUI because you get it before others. They take initiative. You don’t got to tell them what to do.

Uncle Gary’s going to be expecting more from you. Harvesting, washing, planting and you have to be good at every aspect and if you’re not on top of your game then you’re

> going to be one other intern. You have to be able to learn on your feet. I have that Polynesian pride I want to be stronger, faster. That's just how I think, I have that competitiveness.
>
> You can show initiative but they only choose the best of the best.

For those who were SUIs, they described learning a great deal. This included how to manage and work with others, something they had no experience with before. As leaders, their jobs included helping others and making sure their interns understood.

> It was a challenge. I liked it. I never thought I would take on a leadership role because I was never social. I learned how to manage a group. There's always the awkward moment like the first weeks. I don't know them. Once we get to know them it's easier to teach and it flowed. I just need time. Everybody respected me even though I'm like the smallest person. Everybody listened to me even though I cracked jokes and stuff but when I asked them to do stuff, they did it.
>
> So if you want to be a leader you have to take people under your wing, be willing to teach them, not just tell them 'copy me, follow my lead, don't ask questions, just watch.' Like a leader would clarify all these things. You just take time out. Help someone else – try to be a leader.

Additionally, SUIs are responsible for helping younger interns understand MA'O's mission.

> In the SUI position you have to lead a group of students where you have to teach them. You have try and figure out how to work with all of them in one group. I had the quiet one, the one that's not sure what they want to do and you have to tie into what MAO is doing to all five of them – I had seven. So I'm learning how to work with all these kids at one time and work with their personalities and make them connect to what we are doing.

And as SUIs, they understood that they are role models to the younger interns, and leadership is not only through words, but by action as well.

> I always was a leader but it helped fine-tune my leadership skills, like how to communicate to a group what the task is; how to motivate them to listen and follow through. Leadership is not only doing things right but doing the right things. If you're harvesting, you're not just harvesting, you're teaching and modeling for everybody. Being able to pass what you know onto other people so that they can gain some of your skill.
>
> We try to be a role model.

Some described being SUI as taking initiative and doing more than just put in hours.

> It's called initiative. We stay after to make sure the job gets done. We come in on days off to volunteer. I think that's where that leadership piece comes in. You want to take care of the problem before a problem can even happen. Like that's kind of what sustainability is I guess – seems like they would look at things system wide. It's taught everyday –through action - and we get trainings. I don't know how many trainings we've had on irrigation. It's through reward too. The SUI is a perfect example – we get more pay and more hours but you have to come early and stay late.

Being SUI was also perceived as having a say in farm operations and having real responsibility on the farm.

> I think that's the good thing about Uncle Gary. He actually listens. Like if Kelsey tells him there's a problem, he's going to change it. Some times he's stuck in his ways but like if it's not going to work, we tell him it's not going to work Uncle Gary. We have a say in almost everything. We work so closely with both the staff and the interns – we're like the middle man who can say what is working what should be implemented.
>
> There's more responsibility with the SUI. We get taught more things – we're kind of like a middleman between the managers and the interns. The co-managers can't do everything. Can't teach the interns everything so they teach the SUIs and from the SUIs we branch off and show the interns what we learned. It's our job to teach them everything and that they know. We got to watch. Got to check up on them. You can't

> just tell them oh go do this and let them do it – you have to keep checking in on them – how they are doing.

Summary

This section described how youth experience work at the farm. Major themes of hard work, high expectations, discipline and structure with love emerged. Significant program processes such as check-out and the SUI program were described. These processes were aspects of the program where the youth reported strong descriptors of learning. What they learned include life lessons of excellence, team work, managing and leading others, initiative and responsibility. These reflect what Meyer (2003) describes as core values that underlie how Native Hawaiians (prior to Western education) educated their youth – through observation, listening, and practice with an emphasis on demonstrating mastery. These core values are love and concern for others (*aloha*), devotion to family and community (‘*ohana*), love of the land (*aloha ‘aina*), balance, harmony and living correctly (*malama pono*), service, joint effort, and unity (*kokua, laulima, lokahi*), responsibility and hard work (*kuleana, pa’ahana*).

Relationships

This section describes how youth experience a significant aspect of their time with MA‘O – the relationships that are created. This is with each other – friends and support from each other; role models or mentors they identify at the farm; and opportunities and connections to people outside of the farm or Wai‘anae.

Friends and Support

> *I do have a family that supports me, but some people in this program, they're living off of their stipends, their whole family is living off of their stipends. A lot of them were you know are foster families and a lot of them dealt with, you know, like big losses in their families. No parents or no mom, no dad. What do you do with the students who want this positive change, this opportunity, but they go home and it's not the home that they want to believe in, or they wanted? I hope that's where the close relationships that they have with each other as a cohort and the co-managers come in.*

As described above, some of the youth do come from troubled homes where support, whether financial or emotional, is limited. A major source of support for them becomes the relationships they build within their cohort, with other colleagues, and also staff.

During the interviews, friends and support at MA‘O emerged as a key theme of how many of the youth experienced the program. For many, their identity and their friends are within MA‘O.

> All my friends … are at MA‘O.

> I love my cohort. I love them as people.

MA‘O has become a major source of support for some. This can come in the form of everyday support such as homework or with large events such as a death in one’s family.

> I like the people you’re surrounded with. At MA‘O you’re going to work and you’re going to school with each other, so you’re familiar with everybody and nobody’s a stranger. Just a bunch of cool people, so I stuck with it. They would help you with anything, that’s

how MAO is. If I needed someone to edit my paper or help me with homework, even outside of work, if I need someone to help me with my car – everyone's always willing to help each other. You just build so many friendships and relationships at MA'O.

I loved everybody. Friends forever. We still hang out, we still have classes even though I'm not at the farm anymore. Then Kimo…he's just all about Hawaiianess. We both have family problems too so that's why we connect. Ku'u – she's so firm – she tells it like how it is. That's why I love her. Cheryse – when she came the day my dad passed she said she looked up to me. I was like what? She said – you have so much responsibilities, you're going through this, you're working, how can you do all of that? I just do. It has to be done anyway. Dani – she's just Dani that's why. She's awesome. They're all awesome – everyone at the farm.

Negative associations from friends for being a farmer are also replaced by supportive friends and colleagues.

Support from mostly your peers and your co-workers, the people surrounding you. Because it's hard if your friends down you cause you're a farmer. They're doing like normal teenager jobs like working at the mall. Like your Filipino, you should be farming – it's in your blood. I can't believe you farm like your grandma does. You make your ancestors ashamed. My friends are mostly Filipino and they act really high class.

This level of support extends beyond the youth to program staff, even Uncle Gary is viewed as someone who genuinely cares for them.

The good thing about Uncle Gary is he actually asks you about school. If you ever need help he's pretty helpful. He always wants to know about your classes like he actually wants to know how you are doing. Not only asking about farm life but school life as well.

The friendships helped some find reasons to stay with the program and grow.

I guess I found a place where I could do something, like make change. At first, my initial reason was oh they pay for school – oh I'm on that. Then it grew into something more. I met good friends. I met Red, Tony them, Fletch and eventually my reasons for being

there grew – I wanted to make a change in my community how people view my community.

Mentors

When asked specifically about mentors or role models, several identified a significant person who influenced them. These mentors were other young people, often one of the managers, who reflected the knowledge, work ethic, and exceptional farming or leadership abilities.

> Some co-managers that impacted me would be Kiabo, Parker, Cheryse and Ku‘u. Like Ku‘u, she’s always pressuring, not badly but pushing you to see how much faster you can go or how much more you can think for yourself rather than her telling you the answer. She’ll ask you even though she knows the answer she’ll like dummy down to see if you know what the answer is. Parker – he’s just always a smiling face. He’s a quick worker too. They all have excellent skills on the farm. So it’s like a motivator to try to aim for work ethics like them – how they work so hard. They all have personalities that are loving, yet they can be the enforcer, correct you when you’re wrong. They really portray that balance of being a friend and that authority figure.
>
> In Cheryse and Parker, I see exceptional leadership. They have their faults but I love that they manage to keep themselves on track and their work ethic – to be able to go through so much and deal with all that and still yet be on top of your game I view that as exceptional. Because their faults did not dictate who they were. It just made them better. When I first started I could see it in Cheryse. She was just gung ho. Like farming – this girl knows everything. You ask her and she’ll show you and tell you. She’ll farm circles. And Parker … He’s my role model.

Some also described specific knowledge they obtained from a mentor.

> Working outside Fletch would talk to me. And I’d ask him questions and he would answer. It gave me something to think about. Fletch is a major contribution to what I know about MA‘O and how the food system works.
>
> When it comes to the numbers side the shed side when you gotta pack and deal with numbers that’s when Cheryse taught me that. She taught me how to cut salad, I never

> knew how to cut salad. She taught me the meaning of patience. Sometimes we like rush but if you're patient you get a better reward at the end. Cheryse was my mentor.

The influence of older youth leading and inspiring younger leaders was well illustrated through interviews with four interns representing two cohorts (C6 and C7). It begins with two interns from C6, Steve and Red describing their mentor, one of the farm managers, Parker. Parker is described as being great because of his ability to do exceptional work and create a positive work environment while at the same time dealing with personal problems.

> He's just great like he'll have the worse days ever and he will still come into work and do exceptional work. Like you've never seen someone come to work so tired and yet harvest eight buckets of salad in an hour! He's tired and probably having the worse day ever but you would not know. Like Parker is, he has that drive. Things bother him but he never lets it affect him or everyone around him. Parker is facing real life problems and he still manages to create a space where people want to be around him even when he's frustrated. I saw that. And I want that. I need to have that. I need to figure that out. - Steve

> I like his speed. I want to be where he is because he's the faster worker and I want to be as fast as him. It's like we're packing and we're all friends but he'll never talk stories with anyone – he'll just work. He's friendly but he just puts work first. When Parker says to work faster – he's working like three times faster than anybody. That's why everyone tries to keep up with him. – Red

During interviews with C7, two interns, Juan and Isaiah, identified their mentor as Red, the intern from C6. Red was described as cool and for going through difficult personal issues but not letting it affect his work.

> Red. Cool guy. Makes you want to become a SUI to be just like him. He's a good worker too. Chill. He doesn't argue all the time. He doesn't yell. What you see is what you get. He's not different because he's SUI. He's cool. Just chill. He was my first SUI. - Juan

> Inspiration? I think it would be Red. He was my second SUI. I knew his brother from high school and we were super close so I knew that he was going through tough times but at work you didn't see anything was wrong. – Isaiah

Connections and Opportunities through MA'O

In describing their experiences with the program, the opportunities that MA'O provides were mentioned. These are opportunities to connect with members of the culinary industry, educators, and importantly, the First Lady, Michelle Obama.

> MA'O has so many strong connections with other groups. Like me, I wanted to be an electrical engineer and MAO has connections with HECO. Like another foot in the door. Especially with culinary, a lot of people come in and they want to do culinary. Uncle Gary is really good friends with Ed [local restaurant owner], so many connections.

> There are a lot of conferences we do. I just went to an education conference with Auntie Kukui, Leilana, and Malia. We sat at the Kroc center and we listened to our Secretary and Chief of the whole DOE and I got to talk to the principal of Wai'anae High School.

> I met the first lady.

These opportunities to meet people outside of Wai'anae include visitors from Hawai'i, from the U.S. mainland, and from around the world. These visitors come to visit the farm and are often of indigenous cultures or Hawaiian practitioners. The interactions the interns have with their visitors help them understand that the work they are doing is important.

> There are a lot of people who come to the farm who are prominent Hawaiian members and they come all the time but everyone's so caught up but me and Sheila are like we want to hear everything you have to say but others are so tired after work. I don't think they're really listening to like the little tidbits of information that they're giving in regard to the relationship with the land. MA'O exposes us to a lot of awesome people. Like Auntie Manu. Oh, we have so much people. Like they'll come to plan something with MA'O and they'll have meetings and so they'll come to check out. People from OHA,

> Kamehameha, friends that Kamu made through college who are doing something, friends of Auntie Kukui and Uncle Gary. Even indigenous people from Alaska.
>
> Exposure. A lot of exposure. I would never talk to people who were from different countries – we had people from the Philippines, New Zealand, Tahiti, and Texas. We have a bunch of guests and they always tell us how great our work is but then recently the past two months we had a big visit from the this education consortium …the thing with Cheryse where people come from all around like all indigenous people minorities from all over the world and they came with their accents and they all spoke in different languages at our check in and it was really cool. There were some people from Africa, some people from a Native American reserve. It was kind of cool. It was like a Disney movie, people were singing, performing like their cultural thing at the farm like 200 people came and they worked with us. I didn't really get to talk to them but they talked during our check out and for once I listened to what people were saying and you're right I *am* making a difference in my community. Even Auntie Manu tells us that they are proud of us.

Summary

The relationships the youth form and the support they receive from each other and members of the farm are very meaningful. The bonds formed help the youth stay with the program and the older interns and farm managers are mentors and role models. These mentors are identified as great people because of their exceptional knowledge and leadership skills, as well as their ability to deal positively with their own private lives while still maintaining strong work ethic and performance. The mentors and staff of the farm are viewed as people who genuinely care for them. The youth described many opportunities the farm provides. These include connections to people outside of Waiʻanae including the culinary industry and the First Lady; as well as connections to prominent members of the Hawaiian community. Youth described a sense of importance to in their work when visitors from around the world come to visit the farm.

Chapter 6. At MAʻO – Hawaiian Values and Practices

A central argument within the literature on indigenous education is that culture is a critical aspect of educating indigenous youth. To date, nearly all of the research on Hawaiian educational programs has focused on children in primary education (K-12) and typically in a single setting such as school or a community project. MAʻO is unique. The participants are young adults, ages 19 to 24. While the majority of the youth are Native Hawaiian, being Native Hawaiian is not a requirement. MAʻO is both nonprofit and for profit, a social enterprise that seeks a "triple bottom line" –environmental justice, social justice, and profit.

Data collection for this research question involved two phases: interviews with youth and program staff and a questionnaire specific to the values identified as being core to Hawaiian education (Kawakami, 2004, 1999). This chapter presents the results organized by: a) how the youth experience the cultural component of the program and b) what values the youth identify with.

How do youth experience the cultural component of the program?

Youth and program staff were asked about their opinions and experiences with the cultural component of MAʻO. Specifically, the interviews used the following prompt and questions:

> Waiʻanae has one of the highest numbers of Native Hawaiians and I understand that at the farm, they do teach and practice Hawaiian culture and practices. Can you tell me about this? What do you think happens to the youth when they learn and practice the Hawaiian culture?

Responses to this line of inquiry fell into two categories. For some, the program is perceived to be very much a Hawaiian program. For others, the Hawaiian culture is either missing or practiced at a light level.

This is who you are and where you live.

For those who felt that the program is very much a Hawaiian based program, they made deep connections between people and land. This connection between people and land was also linked to genealogy, the ancestors. The culture and these connections are not based on blood, but for all who live and work on the land.

> I consider it Native Hawaiian. I mean, it's not only Hawaiian. It's open to everyone. But the practices and the vision of it are very indigenous. We try to hire more of those who have Native Hawaiian. We want to support the ones who live here and that they know and learn about the place. Yes, it's a Native Hawaiian program.
>
> They incorporate a lot of Hawaiian values into it – so you get more into depth of finding your culture and the importance of soil. MA'O really pushes the importance of soil not only literally what the soil is, but as our home – our ancestors *Ke Papa* – our land.
>
> For us, we live in Hawai'i so the one culture they think is good to connect with is Hawaiian culture. It does go good with working with the land because the Hawaiian perspective was always about the '*aina* and the land.
>
> It's who we are as Hawaiians even non-Hawaiians because if you live here you should know some aspect of the culture. And Ag culture has to do with the land – the biggest thing to do with the Hawaiian culture because that's our family, that's our ancestors – where we come from.
>
> It doesn't matter if you're Hawaiian or not. Our culture is not about blood. To *hanai* – it's an art – to care for people like they are their own. It takes a lot of love and aloha. We do not discriminate because you are from a different place. To perpetuate life – this is correct. *Pono*. Don't have to be Hawaiian to practice Hawaiian culture.

One intern observed that the opportunity is available, but it is not required or pushed. Therefore, "getting deeper" into the culture is optional.

> I feel like it's not too heavy into the culture. It's like the opportunity is always there to learn more about Hawaiian culture. But it's only for the ones that take the opportunity like it's usually the older cohorts that offer it and some people are like sure we'll come and they'll hop into their cars and go. We've gone to other farms and worked. Cleared a stream. Worked a *lo'i*.

Another also noted the opportunity and option, but felt that MA'O was embracing other cultures and points of view as well.

> Definitely there are Hawaiian aspects a lot of how we interact and what we do is based on our culture but there's also space for other aspects. We're instilling all these Hawaiian cultural practices but still allowing space for your voice to be heard and other aspects to be shared. It's not just one way – but our way. For those of us who really want to learn our culture and be more firm in our culture, MA'O presents it. They're always open to change and other ways, but the practices are still there.

Responses to how the culture is practiced largely centered on chants, or *olis*.

> We practice the chants. Every morning we gotta chant *E hō mai*.[11] That's asking your ancestors and drawing energy from all the elements before you start your day. When guests come we sing the *mahalo* song. Just to thank them. They started putting more Hawaiian language into the work place. Hawaiian phrases. You gotta tell the receiver and they got to say it in Hawaiian.

Others described the cultural aspect of MA'O as light, saying that the practice of chanting is something done but not understood. Many of the interns do not know or understand the words that are used, or the purpose of chanting.

> We do protocol - chanting and *olis*. One is for welcoming and the other is thank you – like I hear a lot of *mahalos*[12] repeated. But I don't think I understand those kinds of things. Like I'm a Native Hawaiian but I'm also like Asian and other stuff, so I don't really feel like Hawaiian dominant in me. Some people are moved to be Hawaiian and Kānaka.

[11] See Appendix H.
[12] See Appendix H.

> But I'm like I don't understand what you're saying! But let's just do it because we sound really good together! Like we know what we're doing – we don't even know what we're saying! Sometimes they use Hawaiian language or terminology - like *aloha 'aina* and *malama 'aina* - and like half the farm isn't Hawaiian or doesn't speak the language, so I don't really understand.
>
> Before MAʻO, I did a lot of Hawaiian stuff like in high school with the Liliuokalani Children's Center. So I understand protocol and more *olis*. I think Auntie Kukui tries her best to teach us *olis* when she can. There's like nobody else who teaches us protocol or new chants. Some of us know the chants. But some don't know half the chants. When we check in we do *E hō mai*. That chant is asking for knowledge, a chant to start off your day. But when we have guests, we need to welcome them in by chanting them in. And no one knows these chants. It would be good if we actually learned why we do it.

Some shared that the purpose of the chanting seemed to be something done for visitors. As described by one respondent, *"it's for visitors."*

> I don't think it's as strong as they claim it to be. I don't think it's as strong as they want it to be. I think sometimes the only times we do protocol things is when we have visitors. That's when Auntie Kukui shows up at our check out to have us *oli*. Other than that, *E hō mai* is about as cultural as we get.
>
> I feel like it's not genuine. Like we just do it, just to go through the motions to impress our visitors.
>
> We joined for the culture – land, culture, people. It's like it was a tree and the leaves fell off. When we have visitors, there would be a tour and then protocol.

There was discussion about why the cultural component was not as strong as it could be or as envisioned or desired. A major theme that emerged in this discussion was the duality or tensions among operating a business and time and resources. Lack of staff, time, and already balancing doing a lot were mentioned.

> Not very rooted in Hawaiian practice. There's *E hō mai* and check outs. We don't have the staff capacity. Values are very subtly demonstrated through every day modeling. For example, open communication and at check in and check out, we try to show that we love and care for them. That we expect wonderful things, to work hard, to pick up trash. The intention is there to build on *aloha 'aina* and living *pono* – any of the founders and staff believe in this. But we live in a dual system. To give the circle – *E hō mai* – the time it deserves, to practice correctly – while also being a business with youth labor and youth leaders with minimal program staff and the need for funding is challenging.

> MA'O is like an evolving target. They are doing too many things: community development and politics, agribusiness, education, social services. It is not traditional. Yes there's agriculture but plus Hawaiian values. The emphasis tends to shift over time so a lot of trial and error.

> It feels like they're trying to do everything at once – I think they have to guide us a little bit like I know were trying to implement the importance of school, the importance of your culture, the importance of being an organic farm. It's kind of a lot to take in when you just graduated. You're like yes I'm free and then you got to learn all of these things.

One intern observed that despite the influence of modern realities, the program is rooted in the values of the Hawaiian culture, particularly in how leadership is viewed and developed.

> We're like a cultural program but it's not our base. Our base is growing leaders – more of the modernizing – but it's still like we keep values. So that's how we keep our Hawaiian culture plus too when you have beliefs and faith it makes it easier to work cause you have something to believe in – to lean on internally. You can have external factors but then you might want to have [an] internal factor that can keep you going. Ku'u them said like with our *E hō mai* in the morning that's like kind of a way for us to leave whatever is going on outside of those gates of MA'O and be able go into work with a mindset of I came to work. So pretty much *E hō mai* is a leaving of all problems where it's at. Like putting it on hold cause you're not ending the problem but you're pushing it aside and working past it.

> They always say *malama ʻaina* so take care of the land and the land will take of us. It can show leadership too if that's a value in yourself – *malama ʻaina* – if you see trash, you'll pick it up. Not because you want to get recognized or somebody's watching but because that's something important to you that you believe in and you're doing it right. What is right? It's not doing it right it's doing what is right. I guess that shows leadership too.

Summary

Overall, there were two points of view as to "how Hawaiian" the program is. For some, MAʻO is very much a Hawaiian program and the culture and values are experienced in a very deep way. Connections and relationships between what is done at the farm, their values and practices are directly tied to Hawaiian values of place and love. For others, the cultural component of MAʻO was not well understood and seemed to largely center on the practice of chanting. Some interns mentioned that they and others did not understand the meaning or purpose of the chants. Opportunities to learn or "get deeper" into the culture are available but optional or outside of work hours. Some discussed the realities of operating a business. Time and staff are limited. Adding to this is the challenge of practicing or maintaining Hawaiian values in a modern or capitalistic economy.

Hawaiian Values

Youth were specifically asked "what they got out of MAʻO*" and this included values that are emphasized or taught at* MAʻO*. When reviewing their responses, as well as how youth described their experiences in general with* MAʻO*, two values consistently emerged. These are within the Hawaiian values of ʻohana (devotion to family and community) and place-based values (ʻaina, malama ʻaina, and aloha ʻaina).*

‘Ohana – devotion to family and community

MA‘O was often described as a family, a place of safety and support. It is also a place where others are working to make Wai‘anae a better place.

At MA‘O, the negative stereotypes that affect the youth are replaced by potential and opportunity.

> I’m pretty sure everyone uses the same term – family – a home away from home. A place where you can relate to others in your community because of the stereotypes we gotta go through you really see the real potential in our community – the people. MA‘O really brings out the people who maybe thought they couldn’t be because MA‘O provides a lot of opportunity and allows everyone to pursue what they want and not give up.

MA‘O is also a place to let go of personal issues and be with people who are similar. This similarity includes others who are from the same place and facing similar struggles, as well as others who want to see a positive change in Wai‘anae. This sense of MA‘O as an *‘ohana* is also related to a sense of responsibility to each other.

> I always say MA‘O is my *pu‘uhonua* – my place of safety. When nothing else makes sense, I can go to work and even though I may dread it sometimes, the hours suck and the day sucks terribly, nonetheless I am away from the everyday norm. I’m in a place where I can be with people who understand what I’m going through and people who think likeminded. We’re trying to create better communities. Creating family morals for those who don’t really have … creating better community.
>
> You’re in the fields all day and of course at the end of the day you’re dirty from head to toe but when you get into it, there’s a whole other chunk to it. There’s a sense of responsibility to one another. You see yourself becoming a family with these people who are just like you but at the same time totally different. I guess that relationship comes from being from Wai‘anae and meeting that person who’s struggling with the

same thing you are, the same kind of issues or problems and you just click all of a sudden with all these people.

Place-based values

'Aina – that which feeds, place is sustenance, knowledge, and inspiration.

Malama 'aina - nature is our teacher

Aloha 'aina – to care for and to love the land.

The youth described a direct connection between their ancestors and what they do at the farm. The connection between farming the land to their ancestry, respect for their *kūpuna's* knowledge, to their love of the land and a sense of responsibility to the land was something very important to them and frequently expressed.

> For Wai'anae we have the highest rate of Hawaiian ethnicity – we all want to try and keep what our ancestors once did. We don't want to just live the western way or something like that – we gotta remember how this land was started and how everything was bought up in because our *kūpuna* took care of our land and now it's our turn. And MA'O is opening our eyes to see that. We got to do something.

> Even though we're not farming the way they [our ancestors] used to, we're still farming. We're still putting our hands in the soil and creating and growing food and putting our hard work into it. I forget who told me this but it was something about like *walking with our ancestors*. Like when we're really deep into doing it, how they used to. Like if we do things the way they did it, like cultural wise, we're walking with our ancestors. But then since we modernized it, *our ancestors are walking with us*. Like we're still doing it but then we're changing it, like we keep them with us but we're doing it a different way.

> That's how hard our ancestors worked. And that's what we need to do. Being our generation and doing the work we did, you would get a lot of understanding – it's awesome. Nowadays kids don't get to do this - it's what our ancestors did. A lot of knowledge. It shows you who you are and it shows you…sometimes I feel like I'm working *with* my ancestors when I'm in the field. Like he's standing next to me and aiding me while I'm working…I feel lucky.

> People do aquaphonics now but that's not really *malama 'aina* because you're just putting things in water – there's no soil or land.
>
> I guess I kind of already learned it but it's to *love the land* – that's what I got of it. Waiʻanae has all this beauty but its only beauty if you try and maintain it. If you don't take care of it it'll just go away.

The Hawaiian sense of connection to land, to place was well illustrated by one intern. Although not Hawaiian, this intern identified being physically connected to Waiʻanae.

> I am proud to be from Waiʻanae. I know it sounds weird – a white girl proud to be from Waiʻanae but I am because even though I'm not born here, this is all I know. I went back to Washington to visit my grandma and I was so lost. I felt no connection to anything there. Here, I know the ocean, I know the sand, I know the streets, I know the mountains. I feel physically connected. I kind of relate it to the Native American in me. Because Native Americans have a similar view that's how I relate it.

As described in detail by a farm manager, youth are exposed to their culture in high school and so they hear about Hawaiian values. But it isn't until by action, experience, and living the values on the farm, that the real meanings of these values become connected.

> I always had this passion of learning my Hawaiian culture and my Hawaiian side, so that's why I went into the Hawaiian Studies program in high school. I already knew, from like high school and at a young age, - like it's almost like said too much - take care of the land and the land will take care of you. When I got to the farm and started to farm, and to see the product come out of the land and to see how happy people were to eat the food and to see the relationships that was building with people, that's when I realized that *aloha 'aina* was way more. It's more than just a relationship between me and the land. It's a relationship between food, people, community, acts of love, how you take care of each other, how take care of yourself.
>
> You learn *kuleana*, which is to learn responsibility. You learn *'ohana* values, working together as if you're a family and making sure that everyone is at this equal place with each other and this understanding, so you know things can move on and move forward.

This vision has evolved. It's not just Uncle Gary or Kukui or Kamu, but it's like the elders are giving the younger ones a part of the vision now, which is a total *ʻohana* value. Values of *aloha ʻaina*, respecting the land, loving the land, and not only just respecting the land or loving the land, it's like actually being in touch with the land. It means eating the food that we grow and cooking the food that we grow and understanding how it tastes and understanding the health of the soil so *aloha malama ʻaina* is probably one of the key values that we hold at MAʻO. Especially growing organic, we have to understand the land we grow the food on. So *aloha ʻaina* and *malama ʻaina*, we want to have these as top values that MAʻO has to offer and to share with people.

Hawaiian Values

In addition to interviews, interns in their last semester of the program were asked to complete a questionnaire. Youth were provided a background sheet on eight Hawaiian words (or values). The background sheet defined the words based on Meyer's description of core values (2003).

For each word, the youth were asked:

1. *What does this word mean to you?*
2. *How is this word demonstrated at the farm?*
3. *How do you live this world outside of the farm?*

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix F.

The following section describes how the youth responded organized by each value.

Aloha – love and concern for others

Youth consistently identified themes of love, unity, friendship, family and respect in their description of aloha and how it is demonstrated on the farm. Love of land also was mentioned in a few cases.

> Aloha to me is defined by the love shared between others in a total population and in a community.
> This word means love, a love that is unconditional.
> Love, respect, family.

> The people there show that they love and care about not only the people they work with, but the people we provide for as well.
> This word is demonstrated on the farm by the unity us workers have for the land and each other.
> This word is demonstrated on the farm by the comradery and friendships made.
> There are some instances like when one needs help there is often someone there to help.
> We're one family.
> With our hard work we put in.
> I feel an immense amount of aloha for my cohort because we have felt the same things at the farm and went through the same experiences.

> Outside of the farm I show love and kindness to not only the people I meet but the land as well.

Live aloha, live with love and respect toward others.

'Ohana – devotion to family and community

In describing *'ohana*, the word not only means family but a strong sense of reciprocity to one's family, as described by statements of "no one gets left behind." The farm is viewed as a place that creates family and for many; their families are identified as the most important part of their lives.

> 'Ohana simply means family to me, disregarding if they are genetically related to me or not.
> To me this word means family, family means no one gets left behind.
> No one gets left behind.
>
> This is demonstrated at the farm because everyone is seen as a family member.
> I feel connected to the people there, and view them as another family. There are happy times and arguments like any family.
>
> Outside the farm my family is everything to me.
> This means everything to me and this is automatic outside the farm.
> Everyone is like family to me.
> Everything I do is for them.

'Aina, Aloha 'aina, and Malama 'aina

> *'Aina* – that which feeds, place is sustenance, knowledge, and inspiration.
> *Malama 'aina* - nature is our teacher
> *Aloha 'aina* – to care for and to love the land.

In their definition of values relating to land, a relationship with the land emerged as a consistent theme. *'Aina* is not a thing. It is viewed as a person and a connection between place and genealogy. It is to be respected, loved, to be cared for, to be given to.

> *'Aina* means land.
> Place to live.
> Land which feeds.
>
> *Malama 'aina* is to care for the land more like a person than a thing.
> Take care of the land.
> To love and care for the land.
> Respect the land.

To show *aloha 'aina* is to show love for your land. Caring for it and giving it back what is taken from it.
I love the land.
A deep sense of love and devotion to the land, a genealogical connection to place.

Youth made direct connections between the values of *'aina*, *malama 'aina*, and *aloha 'aina* to what they do at the farm. The farm and their work provide sustenance, organic and sustainable farm practices reflect these values, and there is respect and love for the farm. Again, a reciprocal relationship with *'aina* was mentioned.

This word is demonstrated on the farm because we use it to provide for the community, the people and the land are one.
We work on land.
We grow and live off the farm land.
Using the resources of the farm and recycling it in our practices.

When we take from the land we give back by weeding, putting more nutrients into the soil, and picking up after ourselves.
We take care of the farm.
Our organic practices and attempts at sustainable agriculture.

On the farm we put our hard work and sweat to take care and cultivate the land. In return we get the nutrients grown from it.
We grow veggies and fruits on the land. We love and respect it.
As farmers, we care for the land because in return it takes care of us.
We treat the farm with love.

These values are reflected in their lives outside of the farm. This takes the form of taking care of one's home, picking up trash, growing their own gardens, and educating others.

Outside of the farm I take care of my property.
I am very environmentally aware of my surroundings.
We love the land…no littering!

Outside of the farm I show *aloha 'aina* by picking up trash around me if I see any. I also grow my own vegetables as well and put nutrients back into the ground.
As a person, you respect your land like you respect your elders. Always taking watering and nurturing it, as it did for you when you were young.
Picking up trash.
Always at home in my garden.

Outside the farm I recycle, pick up trash when I can, and grow what I can from the land that we have.
I keep trash in my pocket.
I don't litter and I pick up trash.
Educate whoever I can about what I know about my land.

Malama pono, or pono - balance, harmony and living correctly

In describing *pono*, living in harmony, in balance, and being righteous were common descriptors. At the farm, the most common demonstration of this is having good relationships with each other. Outside of the farm, balancing school and work and making wise choices were mentioned.

Malama pono means to live correct and in harmony with everyone else.
Balance and righteousness.
Righteousness.
To be good.
Just, balance, harmony, rightness.

On the farm we try to practice healthy relationships with each other. The less grudges and fights at work, the more productive we become as a unit and a team.
The way we treat each other.
We all work together peacefully.

Outside of the farm I try my best to do what's right and that is to get and education so that I can provide for my community.
Balancing the education aspect and labor.
I stay conscious of all the choices that I make have to be right and efficient.
I strive for *pono* in my life, to speak nicely, to be balanced and just in my actions.

Kokua, laulima, and lokahi - service, joint effort, and unity

The youth commonly described working together as one in this section. On the farm, this takes the form of team work, one unit or family, and listening to others. As described by one intern, they would not be able to get the job done without working together. Off the farm, some practice this in community service or with their family and friends.

Lokahi, laulima, and kokua refers to working together as one.
Working together.
To listen.

Unity.
Help; many hands, cooperation; unity.

On the farm we use this on a daily basis. Team work is vital to the farm because without it, it would be hard to finish jobs.
We are one family, one unit and work together.
We have to work together to get the job done.
Listen to the SUI and managers.

Outside of the farm I demonstrate this through community service and helping others.
I find teamwork in everyday life with my family. We work as a team to help each other daily and are there to support each other.
I listen to friends and family.
Me, my family and friends are one strong unit.

Kuleana – responsibility, hard work

Kuleana was frequently defined as responsibility and hard work. At the farm, this takes the form of doing their best so, doing what needs to be done, taking care of their tools, and having a sense of responsibility for their customers. Outside of the farm, the youth described having *kuleana* to school, work, their families, and to themselves.

Kuleana is responsibility.
This means to be responsible and work hard.

I have a *kuleana* to wake up early every morning and perform to the best of my ability on the farm to ensure the job gets done.
Everyone has their own job.
Our work and jobs and tasks needed to be done.
Kuleana our things, like tools.
We have a responsibility to ourselves and our customers.

Respect other people's well-being.
Outside of the farm I have the responsibility to attend school and do well.
School, work, family.
My *kuleana* is to my family and myself.

Summary

Meyer (2003) identified core values that underlie traditional Hawaiian educational practices. These values included: love and concern for others (*aloha*), devotion to family and community (‘*ohana*),

love of the land (*aloha ʻaina*), balance, harmony and living correctly (*malama pono*), service, joint effort, and unity (*kokua, laulima, lokahi*). Youth were expected to be responsible and work hard (*kuleana*). Additionally, Hawaiian knowledge is strongly rooted in the role of place, history and genealogy.

In their discussion of what values they learned from their time at MAʻO and description of Hawaiian values, there are direct connections to what they do at the farm to Hawaiian core values. The strongest connections involve place-based values of *ʻaina*, *malama ʻaina*, and *aloha ʻaina* with many describing a deep connection between the farm and their ancestors. Their love for others (*aloha*) and devotion to their families (*ʻohana*), as well as viewing MAʻO as an *ʻohana* was also evident. Youth understand that their job (their *kuleana*) is work, school, and family. Comparatively, values of *kokua, laulima, lokahi* and *malama pono* were not as obvious but were described as working with each other to get the job done and trying to make wise choices and to live in balance.

Discussion

From the data presented above, there appear to be a spectrum of experiences in this section on Hawaiian values and practices. Based on the results of the questionnaire, when given specific prompts and definitions, youth are able to provide a personal interpretation of core Hawaiian values and are able to describe how these values are practiced at the farm and in their own lives. The strongest connections tend to be with place-based values with some making very deep connections between practices at the farm and to their personal lives.

Based on the interview results, the use and purpose of cultural practices and their effects on youth ranged. Some, particularly those who have been with the farm for many years (well past the youth leadership program) or who entered the program with prior experiences in culturally-based programs tended to describe the program as Hawaiian and could clearly articulate what they did on the farm (whether chanting or the act of farming) to specific Hawaiian values. For these youth, their identity and connection to being Hawaiian is very strong. There are some youth who do not have either a

background or interest in the culture. Some describe this as optional and view it as added or extra work outside of their hours of work.

Some possible explanations of the variation in this section include the realities of being a social enterprise with multiple goals and limited resources.

Chapter 7. After MA‘O – The Payoff

In looking back, the youth – many of whom are in the second and final year of the program – reflect on the changes that occurred, within themselves and their peers. Changes they have observed in themselves include a stronger work ethic, increased self-confidence, improved ability to work with others, and a stronger sense of purpose. They also reported an increased sense of responsibility to others, to the young people in their community, a strong sense of caring for Wai‘anae, and a sense of food justice and the need to create a sustainable Hawai‘i. This chapter concludes with a discussion about their aspirations and plans for the future and includes the perspective of MA‘O alumnae.

Changes in Self

The changes the youth have observed in themselves, and in observations of others, include a sense of accomplishment for making it this far and developing a strong work ethic, greater confidence in themselves, self-discovery, the ability to work with others, and a sense of purpose in their lives.

Hard work and a Sense of Accomplishment

The hard work and challenges they experienced at the farm has paid off for many. Youth reported a strong work ethic, and a sense of pride and accomplishment.

> It’s all paid off. Pride and confidence.

> Red’s really grown. He’s become a greater young man – I see the drive in him now, the aspiration. I notice he’s changed a lot even his work ethics – when we started we were good but now he’s great at it. You see Red running around the farm. Like everybody would jog or walk but Red is running. Like okay I’ll be back…! And Red’s gone – he’s running. That passion is there. Getting up at five, catching the bus but we stuck it out. It’s all paid off.

> That’s the hardest work I ever done in my life and I enjoyed it very much. I got basically if I can do that, I can do anything. Nowadays it’s hard to see any of the kids doing that – working in the field – they're mostly in places like this [Barnes and Noble]. It’s hard work – labor work and for females – Wow.

As described by one intern, hard work and having a strong work ethic is transferrable to life. Additionally, this intern observed the differences between youth entering the program and older cohorts.

> Every time I'm doing something hard I think it's going to get better, it's going to get easier. It's teaching you hard work and work ethic and if you want a good life then you're going to have to work hard for it. And it'll all pay off at the end basically. I think they're trying to prepare us for what's ahead like they constantly impress on us the value of education and education comes with hard work. You can see the development between cohorts. Like Richard, he's from C3 and now he works at the farm. Sometimes I ask him bro you weren't this bad like these guys? He's like oh you guys were the same. We're good now but like look at them now, man they need improvement. They're lazy, immature, rowdy, immature again and lazy. Slacking.

Confidence

Several described increased confidence in themselves during their time at MA'O. These youth reported being very shy or unsure of themselves. They are no longer the quietest person and have learned to speak for themselves.

> What they did to me…I was really quiet and wasn't really sure of myself. And like now I'm one of the loudest ones there. Made me feel confident in myself, like I can do things in life. I think that's what they're trying to do – make you confident, to be a leader, to do anything you want to do.
>
> When I was in high school I was such a quiet person would never say anything but being in MA'O you have to speak up for yourself. Being quiet is only going to get you so far. For me it started when I had to talk to Michelle Obama. That's when I really had to talk. I had to do like five interviews on TV – I had to open up.
>
> I'm a lot stronger than I was before. Emotionally and psychologically. The way I present myself now, I was very timid even more than I am now. I wouldn't talk to anybody. I was very very anti-social. And MA'O … they throw you out and you have to speak. I mean

> you HAVE to speak because everybody is waiting for you. . Like if there are guests there, they'll [the program staff] choose people to speak. And you have to speak! And then there's when we do our checkout. Somebody has to facilitate the check out. So it starts like "This is check out this is where we come together we talk about our day and what we did just kind of come to an even ground and chat to each other." And you have to do that. Miki's like "Girl you gotta speak up, nobody can hear you." She was my first SUI. I'm very quiet and she's very outspoken. She voices herself well, I don't. I would be confused about something and not want to ask so I would be quietly trying to figure something out and I'd get yelled at. Then I figured I should just ask.

Self-discovery

Several of the interns reported having moments of self-discovery. For one intern, this was in the form of realizing that there is much to discover and learn.

> It was like the majority of my mind wasn't really searching too much but I feel like they motivated me to search for information, awaken myself. I explain it like I came into consciousness. I didn't even feel like I had any aspirations when I was younger. It just opened my eyes to Wow there's so much to learn, so much I can do.

For others, self-discovery took the form of learning about their personalities and making healthier changes.

> A lot of self-discovery – a lot of life lessons here and there. I was pretty outgoing so I could have an easy conversation with somebody but no one would ever know who I am really. I learned to let go – to be vulnerable – to be real. Instead of worrying about the little things such as what people might think.

> Maybe taking things too seriously before but now I take things more lightly. Before I used to like kill myself like when people corrected me I would take it so hard on myself. Like why am I not doing this right? Now I realize its life – bad things will happen and as long as you correct yourself – it's a good lesson. I hated getting things wrong. I was a perfectionist. When we started work, they were always on you and just knowing you didn't know everything…I was like argh. Nowadays I know what to do and if I do it wrong

> I'll say sorry and admit it and it'll be over. I won't do it again. I learn from my mistakes better.

Working with Others - Team Work

Learning how to work with other people was a very common theme, or life lesson. They learned to work with people they did not like or did not know, as well as how to lead or manage others.

> One thing I learned about myself from high school and MA'O is that you're never going to like who you work with, so either you make friends with them or get along with them but you still gotta do your job. That's a life lesson I learned. A lot of stuff – I think the whole job is like life lessons.

> You're going to be a harder worker. Your maturity level will change. You'll know how to work in different environments and under pressure dealing with other people. Learning how to work with others is a big thing. A lot of people know how to work by themselves but when you throw in people who you don't like or one that you cannot stand at all but are forced to work with you need to put your differences aside.

> I felt that the program helped me out. I wasn't really good with working with people I don't know. This past summer I had to work with a whole group of people that I don't know and I had to teach them the way the farm works and stuff. Now I know that I can work with people and teach them things and I learned how other people teach like I watched how others taught, I learned different ways of teaching.

As described by one intern, an early experience with working with others helped her make it as a farmer and to remain in the program. The level of support and from so many was unexpected and became a life lesson on the value of team work.

> Farming was probably one of the most challenging things I've ever done. On the first day of work I was outside crew and I hated it because I had to dig a hole. Do you know how hard digging a hole out of coral is? Like really hard especially if there's a giant rock on your spot and people are thinking you're just taking your time but it took like seven people to come dig my hole. The rock was like this big and they were like why can't you

> do it? I don't know. They were like break the rock. I was trying and I was like, I can't do this. I was like I'm going to quit. I don't need this, I don't need college. Screw this! And it was actually Duchess who said "You can do it." I was like I don't even know you, why are you talking to me? "No really, you can do it. Don't give up. Here I'll help you." Then like Parker ended up helping, Anita came. And Kiabu came. I was like Wow, all these people are helping me. I never had that kind of help before. I was like wow, people really want me to dig this hole.

For another, learning how to become a leader and accepting a leadership role was very significant given the negative stereotypes of youth from Waiʻanae.

> Working at MAʻO taught me a lot about accepting that I do have this knowledge and accepting that I am good at what I do and accepting that I'm a leader. And I think that's what culturally a lot of us don't do: accept what our good points are, because we have other people telling us that we're no good and we don't even believe in ourselves. So it brings a lot of hope and faith for kids from Waiʻanae, from Nānākuli, to believe in themselves and actually do what they want to do and not what everyone thinks they should do.

Having a long-term purpose

In their descriptions of MAʻO and in particular about friends or other graduates of their high schools, a consistent theme that emerged was that these youth have and understand the importance of having a long-term purpose and vision.

> It wasn't easy. There were times where I went home and I was like Mom! I quit. I can't do this anymore it's not what I want to do but it's what I need to do for myself. So I can get through school. I just realized it's like a chapter – you got to go through it and it'll be over and you'll start another chapter. I'll be done in another semester. So I'm proud I'm still here.

> I think it's hard no matter what you do. School is hard. Any job is hard. I don't care if it's McDonalds. It's going to be hard. But if you expect and hope for good things – success at the end, you're going to make it through.

One intern described in detail the difference between those with and those without a plan, and described the hard work at the farm and going to school as an investment into her future.

> I think that's why people quit MA'O because internally they're just not there. I think people don't go to college because I don't think they have a vision of where they want to end up or have a vision of a path they want to take. They're just kind of living day by day. Or half of them are like wage slaves like its hard living off of $500-600 and going to school and working. We're having delayed gratification or like we're investing into the future – the future us. Some people can't make that sacrifice so they'd rather work whatever jobs, have two jobs and make more than $500-600 than go to school and have to live off of that amount. I would say don't get distracted by the problems of the world. That means don't get caught up in petty talk, don't get caught up in what you think is fun. Make sure you prioritize before you do stuff. Just like make a plan. Plan your day, prepare yourself. Do work first – you can always have fun later.

A sense of purpose is illustrated by a change in priorities and motivation as compared to high school.

> In high school you don't always know what you want. You don't know the value of school. It wasn't until you found out what you want to do in life, why you want to go to school that it became important. You want to stay up late studying. You want to get good grades.

> I realized that just the fact of being in college gave me a sense of pride. Things I used to see as top priorities are now leisure. My future and my goals are my top priority - to take care of my family. I think MA'O really presented me with that time to really look at this. I didn't want two years to go by and look back and say I've done absolutely nothing. I've gone nowhere, stayed at home and played video games.

Many described other youth in their community as only living for today and consequently "doing nothing." Again, the youth demonstrated their ability to think long term and also connected the value of learning hard work and responsibility to having a better future.

> They're just living for today. Party today, go work. What they are doing might not even make enough and they'll have to look ahead, but it'll come later.
>
> MA'O is a big help for communities like this because they need to learn hard work and responsibility and you learn it at the farm. All my friends, literally I don't have friends anymore, all my friends are with MA'O now. All my friends from before, they graduated high school, they did a couple of jobs and now they sit at home with their parents and they don't do nothing.
>
> The younger kids - they are something else. I think it's getting worse every year. They just live, the teens nowadays, they live for today, not for tomorrow, and the day after that. They don't care what's going to happen tomorrow and after that or next year they just worry about what going to happen today, what's going to happen in the next hour. Today is the only day they care about. Anyone can give up on anything… it's easy to give up! But the ones who really want it will stick with it and not quit until everything is finished and complete. I tell everybody college is like you're investing in your life and just hope that when all is over and done, you'll be happy later and know that it was all worth it. If they did know, our graduation rates would be so much higher and kids would be in college.

Summary

Overall, "it has all paid off" was the theme of this section. There is a deep sense of accomplishment for making it this far. They describe themselves as persons with a strong work ethic and self-confidence. Their time in the program included moments of self-discovery where they did make adjustments. They are able to work with others. These youth have a sense of purpose in their lives, often describing the immediate experiences of work and school as investments into their futures.

Responsibility to Others

In their discussion of their experiences and what happened to themselves and others, the youth described an increased sense of responsibility to others by learning how to give, a deep sense of responsibility to the young people in their community, a strong sense of caring for Waiʻanae, and a sense of food justice and need to create a sustainable Hawaiʻi.

Giving to Each Other

Youth discussed learning to care for and being responsible to their peers and co-workers. For some, the act of giving because others needed help was not something they came to the farm with, much less realized. They described learning how to be there for others and helping not only in the work they do at the farm, but also outside of the farm.

> A reality check, that's what I got. When I first met the older interns like Kimo, Anita, Alyssa and Malia, I was still in high school and Amy asked me if I wanted to go hiking. We ended up going. We got in the truck and we're driving and the truck dies and we have to push the truck back down this hill and we had to go up a really steep hill and I didn't realize that I wasn't helping. I was standing in one spot angry because I was like man, this is not my day. I think it was Alyssa or Kimo – what, you not going to help? And I never realized I was just standing there. Then when we went to the farm, I was in Alyssa's group and she was like oh you know I really hated you because my first impression of you was you didn't do nothing, you didn't help us. Alyssa was my SUI. And she was telling me that story and I was like not even in the mood to help because of my personal business. And if I realized that you guys needed help when I should have realized it because you guys were struggling and I didn't know Anita didn't know how to drive and she was the driver while they were pushing. Alyssa was like when you first came here we thought you weren't going to make it. But yeah, you really proved us wrong because you made it.
>
> I got a lot. I learned a lot. I think the main thing is being giving because I was always the person that was almost like stuck up and got everything I wanted. But when I got to

MA'O, I learned how to give. Like I got your dinner and the bill come out to $80-90; but that's something you do nicely for your friends – people you work with. You form relationships and bonds with everybody. I came in with Amy and she was like my best friend from high school. Then I got new best friends. You see these people every day, you work with them every day.

For one intern, this act of giving to others involved opening her home in three cases to other interns who needed help.

It's like being that friend, being that support. I can lend a helping hand to anyone who needs it; even open my house to others.

How many people did you let live with you?

Three. Alma, Katie, and Desha. Alma from April to July. Katie July to Dec. Desha from February. Alma is my best friend since high school. Katie I got to knew her from summer ramp up. Desha, actually we weren't even that close. I knew Angel and Angel told me she needed a ride to school because they both would catch the bus. So I ended up being both of their rides. And then she got into problems with her Mom and then she told me oh I might have to live with you and I was like okay. I think because I already established myself as a place to go – I have a bunk bed.

It's not because you have a mansion?

No no no. I have an average house nothing that fantastic [*and nine people at the house?*] yeah, but I have a decent sized room.

For the Youth of Waiʻanae

In reflecting on what MAʻO is trying to do and their part in this vision, the interns identified changing the negative stereotypes as one of the program's goals for the community. They described their part as spreading what they've learned to others and being an example, a leader or role models, to other youth in the community.

> A change in stereotypes. A change in the youth both in the way they eat and the way they think and I think they want us to be like the good kind of cancer. Like you know, got GMO and all that, they want us to spread out what we learn and our morals that we obtain on the farm – love, respect, willingness to work. They want us to pass what we get as we work on the farm to our family and friends. So in a way it's a cancer because it's spreading but it's a good one.

> I've humbled a lot. That's what everyone says I used to be a bully when I first started. Everyone says I did because they say I'm a more humble guy but I don't remember being that bad. I was just another person in Waiʻanae not really worried about what other people were doing but now it's more I'm a leader where I gotta help others as well as myself strive in this community. If I help someone else that person will go ahead and help two more people and those two more people will help other people. It just keeps going on and on. With one person helping another person more are going to help.

> We went to the intermediate school and talked to intermediate kids who missed like 25 days of school. Talked to them about staying in school. I guess we went to represent MAʻO. They asked MAʻO and we went. There were community clubs and churches there too. 70 families came out. They invited 350 families [whose kids missed at least 25 days] to find out why they're not coming to school that's why they invited the family. More than half missed more than 40 days. It was kind of cool. We just talked to the kids.

One intern drew an analogy between the act of weeding and what happens to the interns. Essentially, the youth are a garden and over the weeding process, seeds are sown and these seeds are spread throughout the community through the youth.

> The secret is in the name. MA‘O. MA‘O is actually an acronym, which stands for *mala ‘ai ‘opio* which means garden of youth. And in a garden what do you do to your crops? You take out all the bad leaves and you let the crop grow. I think that’s the secret – the youth – just like a garden – a garden of youth. What’s funny is the thing that people hate the most which is weeding is the secret to MA‘O. Because what happens is there’s this weeding process that happens with the interns. As the not as capable ones get weeded out, then the ones that are a little bit more capable in this moment – they stick through it, they make it through and then what happens is those guys go into the community and then drop their seeds – to their friends, their families, the community.

Additionally, this intern offered what he felt MA‘O is doing for the youth of Wai‘anae. Teaching kids that they can be something was identified as a very important aspect of the program.

> You know about the butterfly effect? I think it’s an old Chinese proverb where the flap of a butterfly’s wings cause a typhoon to happen across the world. It’s a metaphor for all that we do – it has a small ripple effect so every choice you make has a ripple effect BUT it’s also the choices we don’t make. It’s not just action, its inaction. Because when we don’t do something about a problem, then that leaves room for someone else to come and do it and they may not do it in a way that’s fitting for you or your community. So if there’s anybody who’s questioning or wondering, at least MA‘O is doing something. Teaching the kids how to be something. So I think that’s really important. Or it should be.

For Wai‘anae

Youth discussed developing a strong connection to their community and with it a sense of deep caring for Wai‘anae. They view their responsibility to their community to help the community to be better and stronger, and helping the community become healthier and more sustainable is an important part of this vision.

> We’re always talked about community but most of us we didn’t really care about our Wai‘anae community until we joined MA‘O.
>
> To help. Help the community to be stronger. Come back and help make it stronger.
>
> Change Wai‘anae for its future, take all the seedlings and make sure it grows properly – us – the youth are the future of the community.
>
> Being rooted – I mean really rooted into my community. You go to high school and you graduate from here but you still feel either you don’t want to be from here or this sense of I’m proud of being from here but inside I’m kind of not – and so I think being up at MA‘O you really get rooted because the people who are up there are really proud of being from Wai‘anae – like full force. They are so community based and so culturally based. Now, I know Wai‘anae is where I want to be at even if there are other job offerings.

However, many described a lack of support for what they are doing from the community. In their descriptions, the youth reported that most people in Wai‘anae do not know or understand what MA‘O is trying to do for the youth and community.

> Their vision is to grow not only organic vegetables but grow leaders in the community. I guess they're starting with Wai‘anae then branching out and making it better from the inside out. I know our main focus is on the Wai‘anae Coast because there are a lot of people who are interested in our program but we’re trying to take care of ourselves first before we try to take care of anybody else. I think I love Wai‘anae. I just don’t love the people of Wai‘anae and their attitudes. Because we’re trying to make a difference and it’s kind of sad that our community doesn’t back us up. I don’t think they're really

> interested. I think they're like oh that's good you guys are going to college. But they don't understand that it's the whole food thing like the whole program's mission isn't just to send us to school and to farm. It's like trying to make our community a better place, trying to sustain ourselves education wise and with food.
>
> I do not think MA'O is reaching their mission. Their mission is to take the youth of Wai'anae, to build the community and to spread the word about organic vegetables and take those kids to college and making them successful, not wealthy, but successful in education, but they're only doing half of that. You don't really have the Wai'anae community backing you up. If you were to ask a random person on the street and ask them do you know about MA'O Organic Farm, they'll be like what are you talking about?

According to one youth, there continues to be a negative connotation with farming as a cheap labor.

> The perspective of farming, still, even to this day, even though I know what it can be and what it is for me, is it's a bunch of 50 to 70 year old Filipino workers or foreign workers getting less than minimum wage, working in the hot sun, working for long hours of the day, and not getting any respect. And I think we have to break that.

That people outside of their community know and support them more than their own community was mentioned and somewhat frustrating for the youth.

> We have Uncle Ed and Jack Johnson – a lot of support from people out of here but not from the community.
>
> People in Wai'anae don't know much about MA'O except that high school kids can go there to work and get an education. Versus people outside of Wai'anae who know a lot more – what the program is trying to do and the bigger picture. I wish people in Wai'anae made the connection. MA'O should do more to help the community, more pride because we have the program. They don't go to the farm or buy the product. It's okay that interns bring home the produce but I think we need much more.

Many youth expressed a desire to do more for Wai'anae, especially in getting their produce to the community. The challenge of selling healthy but expensive food to a poor community was

mentioned. While they understood that the farm is a business, finding another way to get their food to their community was important to the youth.

> I feel like we're not giving to the community like we should. Yes, we are trying to promote healthy food even though it's expensive. But living in the community of Waiʻanae, nobody can afford it. So what do you do? Do you say it's healthy for you – eat it, buy it. Even at an expensive price because it's going to help you in the long run? There should be a community farm. Everyone that works at MAʻO is stressing MAʻO to do this to do this; but it's not MAʻO who's supposed to live out that dream or carry out that role. They're only one.

> I get that most of the things we sell are expensive and most of the people we're selling to don't live in Waiʻanae. Like past Hawaiʻi Kai and Kailua – that's the bulk of our customers. When I go to the Waiʻanae Farmer's Market, I get that we're trying to make money, it's a business but why can't we just give it away? Like I worked the Waiʻanae parade and you could see the little kids looking at us. I gave away carrots. I gave away turnips. The parents are like okay let's go and I asked the girl do you like carrots? She was yeah, carrots…! I gave her carrots. People are so caught up with the business. I want to get to a place where I can just grow it – create my own farm and give it to people to eat.

One of the farm managers described improvements over the years. In addition to greater support from local markets in the community, creative ways for people to use their food stamps (EBT) have been implemented at the farmer's market. This did make a difference in that many did purchase MAʻO produce.

> I can say that within the past five years or so, since I've been working at MAʻO, the support on the Waiʻanae side has gotten bigger. We are at two more supermarkets. At the Waiʻanae farmer's market, there's a program where people with EBT can exchange their EBT points for coins and they get double their money. And they buy fruits and vegetables with it so. I can't remember the correct numbers but it almost seems that

> the sales of fruits and vegetables at Waiʻanae farmer's market, it almost doubled or tripled by from last year, just because of this EBT program, just because they had the opportunity to. I'm pretty sure some of them, they want to live and eat healthier, but they're restricted by money or the programs that support them to buy those things.

Food Justice and Sustainability

One of the strongest themes that emerged with the conversations about what they got from the program was a deep understanding of the food system and its relationship to sustainability for Hawaiʻi. One of the key themes surrounding sustainability is independence.

> Food is necessary for life. It all starts with food. If you eat crappy food, then you do start to feel crappy, and it shows in your work. If something happens to the food supply - things will become disorganized – it's a cycle, a structure, that's what MAʻO emphasizes. Like if one part fails then everything does. It's difficult to describe but if you were to actually do all the hard work (farm), then you truly appreciate what's in front of you. If you had everyone on the island try to make farmland after what has already been developed and has pesticides, it's impossible. You'll grow nothing. And that's what the world will be like if you don't take care of what land we have left. That Ewa project where they're trying to build houses – it's preposterous. You take that away [farmland] and you're really making Oʻahu dependent on the mainland. I don't know if there's a chance of Hawaiʻi becoming sustainable but if there is, they are killing it.

> When I first came to the program, I thought it was to reconnect in our Hawaiian culture and to farm obviously and to teach kids that we can be sustainable in this world where it's all about business and money and it doesn't have to be that way and in this program were going to learn how to live on our own and in this program we're going to get an education learn how to sustain ourselves so we don't need to rely on businesses – like McDonalds – sustainability.

Some mentioned making changes to their lifestyles. For example, not eating fast food and having a greater understanding of what is in their food and the relationship between working for food as opposed to "just eat eat eat."

> We go to Town Restaurant and we eat all these different foods we wouldn't have – we would just be eating lau lau and rice – now it's different foods. Even our perspectives have changed like on the food system. How things are grown. Our approach towards these big companies, like I used to eat at McDonalds a lot and now I don't at all.
>
> Most people don't usually know what they're eating. They just eat want they want, what tastes good. Some people just drink Monster everyday – do you know what that is? You can fuel your car with that.
>
> This is my second year not eating McDonald's. After Wyatt's class, we learned about fast foods and what it does to your body and I was like hell no, I'm not going to do this so I stopped eating McDonalds and all fast food. My Dad says that there are those Samoans who just eat eat eat and don't do nothing. But there are the other Samoans who eat then do stuff like walk around and pick up rocks, carry coconuts, make all kinds stuff, climb trees. If you don't do 'em, you're not going to eat - so you gotta do them.

Spreading the word, educating and telling others were consistent mentions. The interns feel a responsibility to share what they know about the food system in an effort to promote a healthy and sustainable future.

> I don't have to be a farmer to fix the food system. I can always be supportive of it and fight for it – label GMOs or stop using ag land for industrial development. I can still be part of that movement. It is good to know. Have that knowledge. This is why people who own farm land fight so hard for agricultural land, and their homes, because most people live on their farm land. You take that away and you take everything away – their livelihood, their food, everything they have. Now I can understand and I can connect with others when they talk about the food system.
>
> It's to educate and I would say to change the community. Like we're minions! Educate students who can educate other people like they're teaching us so we can go out and teach about farming, about sustainability, how to start your own garden or just knowing how to plant a tree or kale bed – anything – just teaching them that there is value on what we stand on a lot of people don't realize that – oh it's just a yard. But is it just a

> yard or can you do something to make it beneficial for all of us? Even when we're not at the market even in casual conversations we're always trying to get people interested in MA'O.

As summarized by one intern, there are relations and connections between what she does at the farm and what she learned in school to her understanding of the food system and why she needs to tell the world.

> We're here because we're growing food for the people of Wai'anae and Hawai'i. We're here because we're going to school and we're gaining skills. Like I'm standing at the sink for 8 hours washing vegetables not because I love to wash vegetables but because I know where this vegetable is going I know what this vegetable is doing I know where it's come from. I know that this is going to feed somebody and that's the most important thing that I think. That's what I learned from your class, that's what I learned through MA'O. I'll always attribute my understanding and knowledge of food security to MA'O, to you and this class. Before I didn't care about food. I didn't care about what I was eating. Until I realized that food is a connector. Food is why there's so many fights about food is because it touches every single person and that's why I need to be where I am and I need to be learning what they're teaching me cause I need to tell someone else. I need to tell the world. To make my health better and the health of my family. My children.

Some interns have become involved in community service and have begun a conversation about using their knowledge and skills to help others.

> Just recently, because it's the holidays, a whole bunch of them went and gave out food to the homeless people. MA'O interns went down to the harbor and passed out food and they were doing things like canned food drives and you know just supporting those kinds of programs. But you know, giving away food is not going to solve any of those problems. It's not fixing anything. We have to do things like help them make a garden. So I think there might be future events where we go to the homeless shelter and we do a workshop about making a garden.

Summary

In their discussion of their experiences and what happened to themselves and others, the youth described an increased sense of responsibility to others by learning how to give to their colleagues, a deep sense of responsibility to the young people in their community, a strong sense of caring for Waiʻanae, and a sense of food justice and need to create a sustainable Hawaiʻi.

Those who spoke about learning how to give described it as something one does for others without being asked or because of an expectation of gain; it is something one just does. The interns also spoke at length about their role as leaders and role models for other youth in the community. They have a strong sense of responsibility to continue MAʻOʻs vision for the youth by helping others, particularly young people. There was a great deal of disappointment when the youth spoke about the community's access to the food they grew and the level of support they received from their own community. While they understood that many in their community do not have the financial means to purchase healthy and that the farm is a business, many want to change this.

The depth of their awareness and knowledge of the food system and support for a sustainable Hawaiʻi was evident. This awareness has sparked changes or a greater awareness in their own eating patterns. Again, the youth expressed their roles as members of MAʻO to educate others and to advocate for a better system. Some have taken more active service roles by beginning to work with the homeless shelter in Waiʻanae.

Now what? Dreams and Aspirations

This section describes what the youth who are near the end of the program plan to do next from pursuing their education and specific majors to longer term dreams that have. Data from interviews and surveys of former interns, or alumnae, are described as well.

More College Please

As the youth near the end of the YLT program, "now what?" discussions revealed an overall theme of continuing their college education. For many, transitioning to a four-year degree and how they will pay for it is a concern.

> I have to figure out what to do or I'm going to be sitting jobless. A week or two…maybe a month. Student loans. Take a year off and work. I was going to take a year off and save enough money but that never works out. I worked my [other] job from my junior year in high school until two years after I graduated so almost four years. In those four years I told myself I'm going to save money, I'm going to go to college. Not even close.

> They're striving to get people to want to go to college and when you get out you have a plan. But at the same time it's kind of weird because for some people when as soon as leave MAʻO they don't know what to do. It's like they're stuck in MAʻO, like how can you not get out? They say there are no other jobs. They constantly ask you what do you want to do. You should have a plan. I think Malia, today she was talking about getting people to a counselor to talk about what they want to do. I think she's still working with people to get their four-year degree.

Some had specific majors or concentrations they intend to study.

> I just want to be a learner. I take these Hawaiian Studies classes and a lot of people take Hawaiian Studies because they want to teach. I do too but what I want to do is write plays about our history and our legends and problems in Hawaiʻi in the Hawaiian language. I just want to know everything.

> Political science. I want to do something with power and money. Like how is it possible that Monsanto can get away and do all this? Then you learn about government and I want to go into government because everything leads up to the power structure.

Dreams

Many shared ideas or dreams that involve specific projects or careers with the Wai‘anae community. This included building terrace farming in the mountains to mimic the ahapuu'a system or making documentaries about sustainability; returning to Wai‘anae High School to be an English Literature teacher and incorporating Hawaiian values and culture in her classroom; and a center for kids with performing arts and Hawaiian culture.

> That project I shared in your class, an *ahapuu'a* system – terrace farming in the mountains. I like that idea – it seems pretty cool. Just to tell the story of eating healthy. I did a documentary on Tony. I went in the early morning and filmed. That's what I really want to do – open up the awareness in my community through video because video is exciting and cool.

> One day I want to come back to WHS and teach. There's no one way but lots of good ways. Not only do I want to teach English Lit, I want to incorporate Hawaiian values and mindsets. I feel that the Hawaiian values hold so much karma and *mana* in them that students can really take from them no matter where you live. I think for my class especially with my personal point of reference I would do *pono* first because in this community you gotta know how to balance. If you're going to be a better community, it's about balancing everything and about knowing how to deal with all this stuff. And then eventually when you teach them this balance and what it means and how it will impact their lives, then you teach them the respect, the *lokahi* to care about someone else, how to do family '*ohana* because you're going to have to balance your family from your friends.

> I always wanted to have a center for kids in Wai‘anae and my dream was to buy out Cornet's and have an arts center. Kea was like you got to learn how to get it – that's why we need school. First, it was going to be a chill spot but then we wanted to make

> connections. If they become like a firefighter, have people who are firefighters and are from Wai‘anae come and talk to the kids. A place where you can learn how to get your future together. Meet people who are doing things you want to do, which is something that MA‘O does sometimes. They’ve brought chefs and political activists and they say these people are from Wai‘anae and this is what they are doing now. So now we kind of want to do that too. You know, these are people from Wai‘anae and this is how they got to where they are now. And that’s another element we want to add too. We want it to be a cultural place too. It’s called Dream City.

As explained, the concept of Dream City is mirrored after MA‘O.

> So their thing was Uncle Gary is a farmer and Auntie Kukui is a cultural practitioner and they met at college so MA‘O eventually became everything that was birthed out of everything they are. So that’s what we want Dream City to be. Sheila has [the experience from] WHS and she loves Wai‘anae and the people there. She loves the students and she knows what they’re lacking in high school and we want Dream City to like 30 seconds away from the high school. We want it to be a place where they can come, where they can learn their future and I want to make it a good theatre cause there’s no theatre or arts. The closest is Kapolei. Another thing MA‘O taught us is that it’s not easy. Sheila would tell me about Dream City and she always thought some angel would give her a million dollars and through MA‘O and through college in general…not everyone gets chosen for extreme makeover…we have to work hard and we have to push for what we want in order to get want we want. In order to stop wanting!

Through interviews with alumnae, former interns of MA‘O, their time at MA‘O provided a number of skills and opportunities. For example, the work ethic they developed at the farm has translated into future jobs.

> Uncle Gary pushes. Here, here, and there. But it translated to other jobs. At my job after MA‘O, I advanced faster than others. In three months, I was promoted.
>
> Workmanship. We’re fast on our feet. We don’t panic. We use common sense and fix it. Like there’s a leak – fix it! Versus Oh my God, Oh my God! We have to fix our own mistakes. Very conscious now.

The opportunities MA‘O provided gave them a greater awareness of their community and food politics.

> We got so much experience. Travel. Visiting other farms and restaurants outside of Wai‘anae. Awareness of the community. Food politics. We attended board meetings and testified.

Through a survey of former interns, the alumnae who responded indicated that they would recommend the YLT program to others. In their explanations, common themes included an opportunity for college, finding oneself and becoming less shy or more responsible, making lifelong friends, and exposure to Hawaiian culture and community, as well as life skills that will be used in their future.

> It’s a good program for those are interested in cooking, teaching or simply taking care of the land and all who call Wai‘anae home. It’s also a program to help young people pursue a college education and learn how to be healthy food wise. More importantly it also helps people overcome shyness.

> It will help you find yourself, instead of finding your place in the world. I have learned that the YLT has taught me to be responsible for all my actions.

> It’s a good program that provides opportunities for students who cannot afford to go to college to pay for college. And you will make lifelong friends.

> Students should join the YLT to gain exposure to the world we live in from a community-based perspective. You'll learn to appreciate the unique qualities of Hawaiian culture and agriculture. There are a multitude of skills that you will gain from this program that can be applied to everyday life as well as to your journey to your career. If you are rooted to culture and community, this is a perfect start to learn where that can take you.

Summary

Many of the youth indicated wanting to continue their college education yet some were not quite sure how to either pay for college or had a specific plan after the program ends. Several shared long term dreams of working or creating projects in their community that addressed the needs of the

community's youth and sustainability, dreams that did not exist prior to joining MA'O. Former interns, or alumnae, reported that the skills and work ethic they learned from MA'O has translated into their current jobs. The alumnae support the program describing it as an opportunity for college, to learn life skills, to make lifelong friends, and to become rooted in the culture and community of Wai'anae.

Chapter 8. Research Findings and Implications for Theory and Practice

Research Findings

This study was designed to answer three research questions: what are the central aspects of MA'O Organic Farm's Youth Leadership Program; how are youth experiencing the program; and what are the effects on participating youth. Using narrative inquiry, the results of this study yielded rich insights into the backgrounds of these young adults, their experiences with the farm and college, and what they have learned as a result of their experiences. Their stories also provided a portrait of educational and programmatic practices that were the most influential to their development. By analyzing the results sequentially (before, during, after) and thematically (observing common patterns and differing points of view), several findings have emerged.

First, managing the largely negative stereotypes about where they are from is a significant part of growing up in Wai'anae. The stereotypes of the uneducated, violent, drug user, pregnant drop-out are connected to dysfunctional homes and a dysfunctional school system. In describing the ones that become the stereotype, families and homes were characterized by drug use, missing parents, and low educational achievement and expectations. The area's high schools are characterized by extremely low expectations, high dropout rates and conflict and miscommunication between students and teachers, largely as a result of being viewed as a problem to be fixed, and often from an outsider. The result is a self-fulfilling prophecy in which some decide "if you can't beat the stereotypes, just be them."

In this study of youth from the Wai'anae area, managing stereotype threat is highly relevant. Whether or not the negative stereotypes became part of their identity or were rejected, as described by Cooley's looking glass self (Cooley, 1902), was in part dependent on the presence of at least one significant person in their lives. For these youth, two major agents of socialization – family and school – serve as messengers of low expectations and negativity.

For the MA‘O interns that did “beat the stereotypes” by going to college, it was largely because there was at least one significant person in their lives that constantly encouraged them to do so, to be more. While having college was a goal, most were unprepared to either be admitted to the college of their choice or were unable to afford college. Joining MA‘O to pay for college was a primary incentive, and often the only reason. Therefore MA'O represents an important option for Wai‘anae youth who otherwise would not be in college.

Like many college students, much of their first year of college was dealing with the realities of transitioning from high school. This included understanding that assignments and due dates are real, experiencing greater freedom and finding classes and instructors that matched their learning styles. In addition to this, many of these students are not academically prepared to be in college. Many do not place into college level courses and spend at least one semester in developmental courses in English and Math. For some, basic academic skills of writing and math are major issues throughout their academic career. This highlights the importance of strengthening the public schools in their community, the reality of development or remedial education, and support services for participants. While MA'O has a very open access admissions policy, the reality is that some youth will have a much more challenging time and begs the question of efficient use of resources.

In the realities of the classroom, a real challenge in teaching is that the MA‘O students are a highly diverse group. The youth vary greatly by motivation and ability with some highly motivated and with a purpose for being in college and others still exploring whether or not the homework and reading “is real.” Some are highly motivated, genuinely care about the subject, yet lack the academic ability to succeed. Some are “smart” but lack motivation. Some are in the middle, and don’t care. Some, despite obstacles of academic ability, consistently work hard. Teaching practices that have a positive influence on the youth include diverse teaching methods, high expectations, building relationships between the

instructor and students, and building relationships between students, and making connections between content and the work they do at the farm.

While attending college is a major part of their lives and primary purpose for joining the program, what happens at the farm and its influence on the youth is a significant part of their development. What the farm is trying to teach them has been described as:

- Hard work…you bust ass
- They're trying to break you – make you a better person
- Whip, whip, love…tough love
- It's like spies…they know everything…if they have to crack the whip, it's no joke
- Life lessons…Uncle Gary with his stories
- Heads down, ass up
- Excellence is its own reward

The lessons of hard work and high expectations are within a context of supportive staff and a strong peer culture. The farm is a place where the youth leave behind the worries and "drama" of what may be happening in their homes and lives. They come to work at sunrise and open the day with a practice of chanting *E hō mai* – a practice described as "leaving all the problems where it's at, putting it on hold cause you're not ending the problem but you're pushing it aside and working past it." As the youth work in their teams (weeding, harvesting, washing, packing), the day ends with "check out" – a time where each team debriefs and lessons learned are emphasized. Here, stories from Uncle Gary or words of wisdom from farm managers and youth leaders are shared.

Youth development and leadership is developed through a mentoring process from the staff and the older interns. Older interns, the SUIs (step-up interns), and in particular the farm managers who began as interns themselves, are significant influences and role models. A signature piece of the program is its SUI program – the step-up internship program where interns in their second year apply for greater leadership roles which include longer hours and greater pay and additional responsibility, specifically being responsible for leading and teaching the next group of interns. The SUI program is one

of the most meaningful aspects of the program. Youth who participated in the SUI program reported developing increased confidence, pride, and leadership skills.

In addition to hard work and life lessons, one of the most unique and influential aspects of the program is the connection between Hawaiian values and practices to their identity and responsibility to their community. The connection between the work they do at the farm and why they do it is directly related to place-based values of *ʻaina*, *malama ʻaina*, and *aloha ʻaina*. For those who made this connection, it holds very deep and meaningful significance. They described the work they do as farmers as a direct reflection of their ancestors and the knowledge and wisdom their *kūpuna* had practiced in caring for the land. Today, they have this responsibility and this *kuleana* includes taking care of themselves, their families, each other, and their community. One of the deepest senses of responsibility the youth have developed is a strong sense of wanting to do something for the future of the youth of Waiʻanae and a sustainable Hawaiʻi. Indeed, the level of commitment and passion for this was evident in their description of these issues and their desire to either major in or work in a field to address them.

However, there were different choices the youth make as to the extent to which they pursue or identify with the Hawaiian culture. Notably, those who have been on the farm for many years or have participated in cultural programs prior to joining MAʻO seem to have a deep sense of the culture and their identity as a Hawaiian. For example, describing "being Hawaiian" as not about how much blood one has but a way of life and evidenced by how one lives or articulating the connections between what they do at the farm to what their ancestors did and how they are currently continuing this work but in a modern context. These youth tended to participate in cultural activities outside of work and pursue courses or majors in Hawaiian studies. Yet others were not as interested. For example, describing identity as based on blood, "I don't feel like Hawaiian [is] dominant in me. Some people are moved to be Hawaiian and Kānaka" and noting that it is optional, "I feel like it's not too heavy into the culture. It's

like the opportunity is always there to learn more about Hawaiian culture. But it's only for the ones that take the opportunity."

As described above, critical or key aspects of the program involve best practices in youth development – supportive staff, an environment free of negative stereotypes, opportunities for growth and leadership, a strong youth and peer culture and mentors that are "one of them" – and instruction that addresses diverse learning styles and abilities. The program is rooted in community and culture where values and practices of *aloha 'aina* are present. Yet, the realities of open access and the realities of operating a farm means that time to do it all is limited and the changes that the youth are going through can be "a lot to take in." For some, particularly those who "make it" through the many challenges of getting up at 4am, working in the hot sun, dealing with academic barriers and real due dates, and also assume leadership positions at the farm, and also manage incoming personal, family and financial issues, and also "get into their culture" – the results are impressive. These individuals are leaders, possess real life skills, do graduate and seek higher education, are highly connected to their culture, and are extremely committed to their community and a sustainable Hawaii.

Of the 180 youth admitted to the program between 2000 and 2012, many do not complete the program. As of this study, approximately 40 have both completed the program and earned their Associates degree. According to program staff and the youth interviewed, reasons typically involve one or more factors. This includes being released for poor work or academic performance, deciding early on that farming was not for them, lack of purpose or motivation to continue school and/or work, the realities of needing to make more than $500 a month or finding another way to pay for college.

Of those that do complete the program and obtain their Associate degrees, very few have completed a four year degree program. Some are currently enrolled. Although nearly all of the study participants indicated that they want to continue their education, many do not have solid admission or a way of paying for more college.

Revisiting Theory on Educational Disparities and Indigenous Perspectives

As described in Chapter 2, elements of traditional sociological explanations of educational disparities apply to the status of Native Hawaiian education and as found in this study, these elements once again resurfaced. These "deficits perspectives" which largely focus on what marginalized or minority students do not have and view the students and their families as the problem were evident in how these youth participants experienced their schools and a source of conflict between students and what they perceive as outside teachers coming to fix them. Additionally, critical theory which contends that educational institutions are inherently unequal well describes the education students have received.

While the deficits perspectives adequately explain the problems or challenges the students have and continue to face, it is the indigenous strengths-based perspectives that best explain what the youth gained from their experiences at the program. There were certain essential elements of indigenous and Native Hawaiian approaches to education that appears to hold particular significance in explaining the growth and gains captured in this study.

First, the recognition that the "problems" of these youth are conditions of colonization and oppression with educational systems whose purpose was to colonize, silence, and devalue. As described by both indigenous and Native Hawaiian scholars, views on poor educational indicators among native children are dominated by ideas of cultural deficiency – framing the problem an indigenous problem - the inability to successfully assimilate into the dominant culture and effectively denying native voice, culture, and identity (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008; Bishop, 2003; Kana'iapuni, 2005; Meyer, 2003; Smith, 1999). In contrast, an indigenous approach goes beyond what students may lack using a strengths-based approach that values their culture and identity. This approach has been called culturally based education or culturally responsive schooling. In this context, an essential concept is that "culture

restores identity" (Kana'iapuni, 2005, Meyer, 2003) by acknowledging and placing value on culture and Hawaiian ways of knowing.

Knowledge systems are rooted in the purpose of education and reflect the indigenous worldview and values. For example, in American Indian education systems, the purpose of education serves two purposes: to serve and contribute to the community and help children become competent individuals. Education is "for my people's sake." The purpose of education is not for individual achievement, credential or status but to serve others and to contribute to the good of the community (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008; Reagan, 2000, Hampton, 1995). Similarly, the purpose of education from a Native Hawaiian context is that knowledge is functional and serves a purpose (Meyer, 2003). Thus, indigenous education emphasizes a set of cultural values that fit the purpose of education. These include generosity, cooperation, connectedness, and spirituality (Castagno and Brayboy, 2008) and love and concern for others (*aloha*), devotion to family and community (*'ohana*), love of the land (*aloha 'aina*), balance, harmony and living correctly (*malama pono*), service, joint effort, and unity (*kokua, laulima, lokahi*), responsibility and hard work (*kuleana, pa'ahana*).

Recognizing "what we know matters" is a critical component of an indigenous approach. Indigenous educators emphasize that ways of thinking, learning, teaching, and communicating differ but are just as valid. While "native people may need to understand Western society, but not at the expense of what they already know and the way they have come to know it" (Barnhardt and Kawagley, 2005). Similarly, Meyer writes "what we know matters, who we are matters, how we know makes a difference" (2003).

Most notably at the farm, "what we know matters, who we are matters, how we know makes a difference" is a practice done daily. This is not done in a classroom. There is no powerpoint or lecture. Rather, the beginning of the day starts with a circle at 7am with the sun just rising. All present, the

youngest interns to their SUI leads, to the older farm managers, and Uncle Gary join hands and offer a chant.

E hō mai (i) ka ʻike mai luna mai ē
ʻO nā mea huna noʻeau o nā mele ē
E hō mai, e hō mai, e hō mai ē (a)

Give forth knowledge from above
Every little bit of wisdom contained in song
Give forth, give forth, oh give forth

- Edith Kanakaole

This daily practice represents unity and creates an environment where the daily struggles are left outside. As the day progresses, each team led by their SUI, performs the tasks needed for the day. "Ass up heads down" is a saying symbolizing the need for hard work. Teaching how to weed, how to harvest, how to cut lettuce are done by doing and demonstration. At the end of the work day (noon), all gather once more for the daily practice of check out. Here, youth report and work is discussed - often with messages from Uncle Gary and the farm managers emphasizing the importance of hard work and who they are and can be ("marketable young people"). The act of farming is the primary way in which youth connect to the land and therefore to their ancestry and create a new community with each other for a common practical goal – as well described by the phrase "no kale, no farm."

More Theory: Socialization or rather Resocialization

While this study began using theories on educational disparities and indigenous perspectives, what was discovered to be as equally relevant is the applicability of Goffman's theories on socialization, or resocialization (1961, 1959). As their stories unfolded, it was clear that what was happening to the youth involved a series of important transitions that reflect what MA'O is trying to do as well as a sequence of transitions the youth must overcome to complete college and the program.

There is a set of essential processes, or transitions, that create a new narrative for Wai‘anae youth – new messages on who they are and can be; the practice of hard work and tough love; the creation of a new group or peer identity ; reconnecting what they are doing at the farm to their identities as Hawaiians; the practice of representing the farm and the community (a new front stage); and connecting youth to a broader social network and their role as leaders or change agents in their community. These transitions create an alternate narrative – a different self, or identify, forged through a new sense of who they are and vision for their future.

To illustrate this, the following critical transitions are analyzed. The analysis is presented in a sequence for purposes of this paper but it should be noted that not all these transitions are necessarily linear. These critical transitions are: 1) the need for something different [college]; 2) learning how to work; 3) learning how to navigate college and balancing the work; 4) creation of a new group identity; 5) locating their identities as Hawaiians; 6) making the connection between what MA'O is doing, what they are doing, and their role in this; and 7) creating a new identity as leaders and change agents.

1. *Need to do something different - acceptance that what they and others from Wai‘anae have traditionally done is not going to work.*

Time and time again, the participants spoke about their desire to not be the stereotype – to not to be that Wai‘anae thug or that pregnant girl on welfare. They view college as the key means to break the stereotype. For some college also represents a key means to be independent observing their own families as examples of what happens if “you slack off and if you have kids, you’re not going to finish, you’re just going to be depending on your parents your whole life.”

2. *Learning how to work.*

Question: What is MA'O trying to do?

Answer: Break you.

Follow up: Break you of what?

Answer: Your laziness.

For many of these youth, working at the farm is their first job. Learning to be on time, to get up before the sun rises, what it means to work hard, to work with others, and to be part of a social enterprise are realities they must learn. This is supported by a supportive staff and environment but done using "tough love" with real sanctions. One of the most common phrases mentioned during the interviews was "Ass up, head down." What this represents is the expectation and norm of hard work at the farm. If your ass isn't up it means that you aren't working hard. Descriptions of what it is like to clear fields, to dig and move rocks, and often with the challenges of working in teams with the pressure of time represent the successful transition to youth with a strong work ethic.

3. Learning how to manage college [and work] – navigating reality and challenges

One of the most pivotal transitions is the first semester and first year of college. For most of the youth, this entailed understanding the realities of set expectations (e.g., real deadlines, no make-up or extensions) and for many, managing the reality that they are unprepared academically for college. This period can be from one semester, one academic year to throughout their entire academic journey. Mixed emotions and responses were seen throughout the data collected. As described by the youth, their instructors, and program staff, this is one of the greatest challenges the youth (and the program) face. At this point, most of the youth are firmly committed to changing their lives and futures through college, yet, the reality for many is that they must find a way to deal with being academically unprepared and also the real challenges placed on them to make more money beyond what the farm's monthly stipend can provide, not to mention the balance between sleep, work, attending class, and studying.

This is likely the most complicated and chaotic time for the youth. Although the program has placed specific practices to track students (e.g., grade checks, calculating farm and academic GPAs) with

purposeful interventions (e.g., candid talks, probation, termination, rehire)…this part of the youth's transition remains one of the most complicated and chaotic moments of their transition.

4. Creation of a new group identity

At some time – for some it was early in their entry into the program and for some a little bit later – but for all interviewed, a major piece was reframing what peer group they belonged to. Put simply, all the youth interviewed who were very close to completing the program have already talked about a switch or change to what group they belonged to and did so with pride.

The distinction between what other youth from Waiʻanae do (work at minimum wage retail jobs, live at home with no plan) compared to what they are starting to see as their future by being part of MA'O is significant. While some describe being "made fun of" for being farmers by their high school friends, it does not take long for many to view themselves as part of a new family. Often this family involves the entire farm (Uncle Gary, Auntie Kukui, program staff and other farm managers and leaders) but most importantly they identify themselves as part of their cohort. The youth spend significant time with another at work and at school and for some, hanging out with another after, offering their homes to anyone who needs a place to stay and attending community events is not uncommon. There were thick descriptions of love, family, and support for each other.

5. Being Hawaiian

Whether or not MA'O is a Hawaiian program was the most contested area of this study. On one end of the spectrum, some did not understand why certain cultural practices (specifically chanting) needed to happen and one participant felt that this was done for visitors. On the other end, the connection between farming and specifically what MA'O represents as not only an organic farm but its views on sustainability and love of land (*aloha ʻaina*) was well understood and apparent.

Youth vary on how they process and understand this aspect of the program. Some view it as optional and something that is a last priority between work and school. Some exhibited deep insight and

wisdom. It was clear though that the longer one was part of the program, the stronger their understanding and therefore their identity as Hawaiian and also what this means in the context of the farm was.

6. *"I work for MA'O Organic Farms and I'm from Wai'anae" – Representing MA'O - farmer's markets, GIVE Day, Foodland, Town Restaurant, and Michelle Obama*

Learning the program's narrative is a pivotal part of youth associating themselves with a new identity. While the program purposefully rewards those who learn the narrative (the program's front stage), the data indicate that there is a lot of back and forth within the youth's understanding of the presentation of MA'O. For example, one of the greater rewards is to be accepted as a SUI. Over time, select interns and typically SUIs are often selected to represent the farm and the program in the news and to meet and lead in events such as meeting the First Lady, Michelle Obama, with the press present.

While "being Hawaiian" is not a stated part of being one of the program's leaders, nearly all who are chosen to represent the farm on these occasions are very connected to their culture and are very articulate in describing the connection between the work and their ancestry. At this juncture, the youth have successfully passed previous obstacles and are recognized as leaders. As representatives of MA'O, their presentation of MA'O and their presentation of who they are begin to interlace. This begins with working at farmer's markets and the GIVE community volunteer days where they represent their produce and the farm to audiences outside of Wai'anae. It is strengthened by attending events and broadening their social network through the restaurants and chefs that support MA'O. Representing the farm and meeting visitors that come from other countries and of course meeting the First Lady are significant sources of pride and represent their transition to viewing themselves as part of the program's mission and narrative.

7. I can make a difference and I will – leaders and change agents for Wai'anae

As the youth mature and manage the many challenges they face on the way, those who "make it" to the end demonstrate exceptional maturity and leadership. The emphasis they place on what is now important and how they see themselves as part of this change becomes evident. This was seen in their views about the food system, the connection between Hawaiian values of land and contemporary social justice issues, what is happening in their own community and their clear dedication to make a difference. These youth see a clear connection between their education and what they are doing as members of MA'O to making a change and not just for their survival but for the good of their community and Hawaii.

Implications for Theory

In the sections above, theories on educational disparities and indigenous perspectives and resocialization and presentation of self were discussed. While the traditional deficit-based explanations of educational disparities for marginalized groups explain the quality of education the youth received, the important of indigenous perspectives, particularly viewing youth as assets and valuing their cultures, is highlighted in the research findings.

In reviewing what is happening to the youth and why as part of their time with MA'O, Goffman's work on resocialization – learning new behaviors, norms, and values - is particularly relevant. In identifying critical transitions for youth, the first transition of accepting that doing what others in their community have traditionally done and identifying college as the way to break the stereotype is a critical first for voluntary resocialization to occur (the *Before MA'O* piece of the narrative). What happens at the farm – learning how to work, managing school and work, forging a new group identity (early stages of the *During MA'O* piece of the narrative) are at the same time core processes and critical transitions in creating a new identity and narrative and future for the youth. "Breaking them of their laziness" using tough love and real sanctions are important and early signals to the youth on what is expected. Learning

what college means and what and how to balance both work and college while at the same time creating a strong youth culture in which the sheer amount of time the youth spend together helps to create a new group identity that is a distinct difference from what is normal and expected of Wai‘anae youth.

For those chosen for leadership and the longer youth are in the program, grounding their identity as leaders, as role models to others, as Hawaiians and farmers now recreates a new purpose as they begin to anticipate what their future and roles as change agents can be. Being forced to represent the farm in highly public venues and to a generalized other who views them and the work that they do as valuable and important serve to further distance the youth from narrow stereotypes and expectations that is very prevalent in their community. As their stories approach the *After MA'O* portion of their program, high aspirations are evident. Yet it is now with a sense of purpose and views of themselves as future leaders and agents of change that is significantly different from when they entered the program. Whether as future teachers, farmers, or engineers, the sense of pride of being from Wai‘anae and how they will make a difference for Wai‘anae emerged in a new presentation of themselves.

The literature on educational disparities is an important part of understanding who these youth are and what and why they come into the program and into college less than prepared and the influence of stereotyps. Indigenous perspectives help in providing an alternate way of viewing the youth and how reinforcing culture can help to restore identity away from contemporary negative stereotypes to valuing who they and their ancestors are. Goffman’s work on resocialization and presentation of self helps to identify and explain how youth experience this program and what trajectory or critical transitions are needed to accomplish what this program seeks to do – create youth who “thrive, not survive.”

Implications for Practice

For educators, the implications of this study and the aspects of indigenous and Native Hawaiian education that were identified as having the most relevance to what the youth experienced and gained are many.

The challenges they have faced and for many continue to face are real and should be considered in developing curriculum and instruction and programs that seek to help youth from "places like Waiʻanae." Their prior experiences with school have established a very low set of expectations and depending on other factors such as family and peers, the major message the youth have received is that they are and will be that stereotype. How these youth chose to not be the stereotype and dared to hope for and do more, in this case pursue a college education, was largely due to at least one significant person in their lives who kept them in school and believed in them and a real opportunity to pay for school through a program like MAʻO.

While the youth are from the same community, there is tremendous diversity in their academic ability and purpose for being in college and the program. In describing their better experiences with college, instructors who developed a relationship with them, were funny, and also provided diverse opportunities to learn were important. The strongest learning came from making connections between what they have heard in the classroom to actually doing and seeing the "words come alive" at the farm. The farm was often described as a safe place where they are surrounded by people who care about them and are literally asking them to dream about a future. While many reported experiencing challenges or setbacks in college or work, their overall recommendation is "tough love" – maintaining high standards and expectations.

For programs like MA'O, this study highlights the importance of strengthening the before, during, and after experiences for youth. By identifying core aspects of the program that have the most influence on the youth and the series of critical transitions that help to create positive change for youth,

the following are areas that appear to warrant attention. Expect a variety of motivations for going to college and that their sole reason for participating in the program is to pay for college. Expect that many will not be academically prepared and also lack maturity. Expect that for many this will be there first job. What they do have in common is the idea or goal not to become the Wai‘anae stereotype and believe that college is the way to make this happen.

Expect that their first year in the program involves numerous challenges (learning how to work, how to meet college expectations, and balancing these demands). This first year is where most interns will leave the program. MA'O is largely an open access program. While this is important for this community and this study indicates that those who stay in the program grow significantly and become leaders, balancing very limited resources needed to support the youth (i.e., one educational specialist) with the realities of operating a business has implications.

For example, expect tensions between the social mission and the sheer reality of being a business (i.e., being a social enterprise). This manifests in perceptions among staff and partners (e.g., instructors) of “doing too much” and not being able to do all that the program would like to see happen. Work is a priority – “no kale, no farm” also means no program and no college. Between farming and college, there is not much time or resources left - for example, learning about Hawaiian cultural practices. Expect that for the youth, this could be “a lot to take in” and somewhat overwhelming and chaotic.

Yet this study found that those who successfully make it through do benefit, grow and mature and exhibit exceptional insight, leadership, and dedication to their community. For this group, their aspirations and dreams have been re-created into a strong new narrative and vision as who they can be and how they will finish college and make a difference. However, they do not have a transition plan for After MA'O – few have solid majors or a way to pay for a Bachelor’s degree.

Implications for Future Research

Much of the research and theory to date has been about Native Hawaiian education in the K-12 setting, and often, within the context of charter schools in Hawai‘i. There is a need to extend the research to look at other settings as well. In particular, in the high schools with a high concentration of Native Hawaiians, higher education, and other settings and groups who are not Native Hawaiian.

Kawakami (1999) used a least change to most change model in describing Native Hawaiian education. The model uses an array of identity development, sense of place, ways of knowing, use of language, service, and assessment through authentic tasks to gauge degree of change. In that study, Kawakami questioned what degree these cultural practices could be maintained in a context based in a different worldview. A study on this particularly in the context of some of Hawai‘i’s high schools with large numbers of Native Hawaiians could be very insightful. For example, what is happening in places such as Wai‘anae High School and Nānākuli Intermediate and High? Are these traditional Western schools that are trying to add on Hawaiian education? What are the results? The challenges?

There is an overwhelming need to identify and describe what and how effective instruction for Native Hawaiians or youth from Wai‘anae looks like in higher education. In this case, the community college with the highest number of Native Hawaiians is Leeward Community College. How can institutions of higher education adapt or modify curriculum and pedagogy? In addition to farming, what other opportunities exist that would create highly authentic learning environments?

The Native Hawaiian model of education can be viewed as not only effective for Native Hawaiian youth but also for other groups as well, particularly groups who have not been well served by traditional Western education systems. What characteristics of place-based or culturally-based education could be applied in other settings?

Conclusion

From being part of MA'O, youth have gained a great deal from the program. Changes they have seen in themselves and in their peers include increased confidence, a purpose and understanding that they are investing in their futures through college and work, a strong work ethic, learning how to work with others, and leadership skills. The majority of youth, nearly all who are Native Hawaiian and from Wai'anae, reported connecting their work on the farm to Hawaiian values of *malama 'aina*, and *aloha 'aina*. The youth have developed a strong sense of responsibility to the youth in Wai'anae and a commitment and passion for a sustainable Hawai'i.

What are conditions that supported these gains and what are its implications for practitioners? Youth need high expectations in a safe and supportive environment. It is also important to build relationships with the youth and to facilitate peer support. Acknowledging and valuing their culture and where they come from seem to also be an important aspect of working well with youth from Wai'anae. As part of this, using diverse instructional practices and making curriculum relevant and authentic are effective.

Paying attention to the critical transitions the youth make to not only make it but to become leaders and see themselves with purpose and as agents of change is also if not more important. Programs should expect tension and chaos and a variety of mixed motivation, maturity and ability. Yet if the youth can make these transitions, the payoff appears to be powerful.

When these conditions are in place, this study indicates that youth can thrive. They learn, they develop important skills and importantly, begin to see themselves as becoming someone other than the stereotype. They not only see college as an end, but as a means to something else. They begin to dream and not only for themselves, but as persons who can make a difference in their community.

However, there are real challenges these youth face. They have not been served well by their schools and many deal with very limited financial resources. For many, they are entering college

academically unprepared and many are responsible for financially supporting their families as well. To succeed, a great deal of internal motivation or agency is needed to meet these challenges. Changing the social conditions of their environment, their schools, and for some, their families (many of these conditions are highly correlated with poverty) is no small task. Yet, their vision of who they can be and the dream of finishing college exists. The challenge for practitioners is this - what can we do to help <u>all</u> Wai‘anae youth begin, find, and fulfill their dreams?

This study ends with an excerpt from an interview with one of the program’s youth who with great insight provides the following analogy of what MA'O is trying to do and what can happen:

> The secret is in the name. MA‘O. MA‘O is actually an acronym, which stands for *mala ‘ai ‘opio* which means garden of youth. And in a garden what do you do to your crops? You take out all the bad leaves and you let the crop grow. I think that’s the secret – the youth – just like a garden – a garden of youth. What’s funny is the thing that what people hate the most, which is weeding, is the secret to MA‘O. Because what happens is there’s this weeding process that happens with the interns. As the not as capable ones get weeded out, then the ones that are a little bit more capable – in this moment – they stick through it, they make it through and then what happens is those guys go into the community and then drop their seeds – to their friends, their families, the community.
>
> You know about the butterfly effect? I think it’s an old Chinese proverb where the flap of a butterfly’s wings cause a typhoon to happen across the world. It’s a metaphor for all that we do – it has a small ripple effect so every choice you make has a ripple effect BUT it’s also the choices we don’t make. It’s not just action, its inaction. Because when we don’t do something about a problem, then that leaves room for someone else to come and do it and they may not do it in a way that’s fitting for you or your community. So if there’s anybody who’s questioning or wondering, at least MA‘O is doing something. Teaching the kids how to be something. So I think that’s really important. Or it should be.

Office of Research Compliance
Human Studies Program

UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I® MĀNOA

January 18, 2013

TO: Eunice Leung Brekke
Principal Investigator
Sociology

FROM: Denise A. Lin-DeShetler, MPH, MA
Director

Re: CHS #20966- "MA'O Organic Farms - Growing Food and Youth"

This letter is your record of the Human Studies Program approval of this study as exempt.

On January 18, 2013, the University of Hawai'i (UH) Human Studies Program approved this study as exempt from federal regulations pertaining to the protection of human research participants. The authority for the exemption applicable to your study is documented in the Code of Federal Regulations at 45 CFR 46.101(b) (2).

Exempt studies are subject to the ethical principles articulated in The Belmont Report, found at http://www.hawaii.edu/irb/html/manual/appendices/A/belmont.html

Exempt studies do not require regular continuing review by the Human Studies Program. However, if you propose to modify your study, you must receive approval from the Human Studies Program prior to implementing any changes. You can submit your proposed changes via email at uhirb@hawaii.edu. (The subject line should read: Exempt Study Modification.) The Human Studies Program may review the exempt status at that time and request an application for approval as non-exempt research.

In order to protect the confidentiality of research participants, we encourage you to destroy private information which can be linked to the identities of individuals as soon as it is reasonable to do so. Signed consent forms, as applicable to your study, should be maintained for at least the duration of your project.

This approval does not expire. However, please notify the Human Studies Program when your study is complete. Upon notification, we will close our files pertaining to your study.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact the Human Studies Program at 956-5007 or uhirb@hawaii.edu. We wish you success in carrying out your research project.

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Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822
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An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

Human Studies Program <uhirb@hawaii.edu> (sent by jkowalsk@hawaii.edu)

10/2/13

Eunice Brekke,

The U.H. Human Studies Program has received your request for changes on your exempt project noted above. The proposed amendments will be added into your current project file. The proposed changes do not alter the exempt status of your project still in effect.

Thank you for keeping us informed about the progress of this study.

Sincerely,

Jacob Kowalski
Human Studies Program
UH Office of Research Compliance

APPENDIX B. Interview Guide – YLT Participants

Thank you for meeting with me. You are part of a research study about MA‘O Farms that's being done. The purpose of the study is to document what MA‘O does and your experiences with MA‘O. All the interns are being asked to participate. What you share with me is completely confidential. Although I'll be taking a few notes and recording our interview, at no time will your name be used in the research report. Only you and I will know, no one at the farm or at Leeward CC will know. No one will have access to what you say but me and all notes and the recordings will be kept in a secure location either in a locked file cabinet or electronically with password protection.

When the interviews are done, I'll be basically looking at the notes and listening to the audio to locate common themes or interesting observations. It's possible that some things you say will be used in the report but you will not be identified. I will actually use a fictional name (an alias). What name would you like? RECORD

I have a copy of your consent to participate. [SHOW – obtain signature] Do you have any questions about any part of this or any questions at all? Would you like a copy of the form? [Yes / No]

Please just be honest in your responses, this is not a test. You can share anything - good and bad. It's also okay if you aren't sure how to answer something or if you aren't comfortable. Just let me know. If you want to ask me questions, that's fine too. I hope that this research study will help everyone involved better understand and reflect and share on what is happening with MA‘O. Your story is important and I want to thank you again for being part of this.

RECORD

Participant's Name: _____ Cohort ____
Alias: _____

Background:
Date of Birth: Month/Year _____
Born in _____
Grew up in _____
Number of years in Waiʻanae ___
Elementary School _____
Intermediate/Middle School _____
High School _____
Year Graduated _____
Highest degree: _____
College(s):

Currently pursuing (degree/major):

First person in family to attend higher ed (college)? __ Yes __No

Ethnicity (ies):

Household Composition (Number of persons in home): ____

Have you participated in any cultural programs such as Hawaiian Studies at Waiʻanae High School, the MAʻO program at Waiʻanae High School, or other programs such as Kaʻala Farms? [If yes, when and length of participation]

Number of years/months involved with MAʻO ____years ___ months

Title at farm:

If SUI, how long as a SUI?

If Co-Manager, how long as a co-manager?

Date
Time Begin ___ Time End___Duration____
Place Interviewed

There are four big areas I'd like to talk with you – MA'O and college, this community, and the future.

Let's start with MA'O.
Did you always plan on attending college? Why or why not?
What motivated you to apply for MA'O?
In your opinion, what is MA'O trying to accomplish through the YLT?
The YLT stands for Youth Leadership Program. Tell me more about the L. What is a youth leader? How have you grown as a leader because of MA'O?
Do you think you have changed since you started? In what ways?
What are some of the biggest things you learned as an intern? [content, skills, values, aspirations]
Thinking back…was there an experience or even something that was said to you that really made a big impression on you? For example, about your role in the YLT, as part of MA'O, responsibility to family, colleagues, the community?
What are you most proud of since joining MA'O? Eh….the least proud of?

College
Tell me about college. Is it what you expected? What are the good things? The not so good?
Are your classes easy? Hard?
What do you like or don't like about the ASC in CFS classes?
Do you plan on going to a four-year college? [Major] Did you always?
What is your dream? Did you always have this dream?
What are some of the bigger challenges with school? How do you manage?

And now, let's talk about this community.
What was it like growing up here?
What are some of the good things? Not so good things? [How did you manage the not so good things?]
Are you proud of being from Wai'anae?

Wai'anae has one of the highest numbers of Native Hawaiians and I understand that at the farm, they do teach and practice Hawaiian culture and practices. Can you tell me about this? What do you think happens to the youth when they learn and practice the Hawaiian culture?

What do you think needs to be done to make things better for the community? How do you see your role in making this change? [as part of MA'O, in the future]

Let's talk about the future…

Looking back, what would you say to yourself or anyone thinking about joining MA'O and going to college? What good things can or will happen? What are the bumps or challenges they need to look out for? What kind of support will they need?

What advice would you give to say other programs in places who may be trying to do some of the same things MA‘O is doing with youth?

Thinking about the opportunities and experiences MA‘O provided, if you didn't join MA‘O - what ?

Finally, we talked a lot about MA‘O and the youth of this community…are there other bigger picture changes that MA‘O is trying to achieve? Food system? Education system?

Any other thoughts? Questions? Is it okay if I contact you if I need to follow up on anything?

THANK YOU

APPENDIX C. Interview Guide – Program Staff

RECORD
Participant's Name: _____ Title: _____
Alias: _____

Date
Time Begin ___ Time End___Duration____
Place

Background:
Place born
Grew up in
Number of years/months involved with MA'O

Thank you so much for making time to spend with me. As you know, I'm doing this research with a great deal of support from everyone at MA'O! The overall purpose of the study is to help learn more about culturally based programs like MA'O and their impact on youth. There are two broad research questions guiding the study: 1) What aspects of the Youth Leadership Training (YLT) program reflect Hawaiian values and practices? and 2) How are youth experiencing the program?

The research methods include interviews with the youth and the program staff. I may come back to you to clarify or explore something but for today, I would like your permission to audiotape only for the purposes of transcription so I can best analyze the data. In reporting or sharing, I will not use your name. No one will have access to the transcripts but me and they will be kept in a secure location with all physical copies in a locked file cabinet and all electronic files password protected. In reporting, I may quote you though. If I do so, it will be using an alias – a fictional name. What name would you like? RECORD

Do you have any questions before we start?

Let's start with MA'O.
What motivated you to work with MA'O?
How would you describe MA'O?
What is MA'O trying to accomplish?
What is the YLT program trying to accomplish?
What is your role in this and how does your role contribute to this [achieving what MA'O/YLT is trying to do]?

What Hawaiian values and practices does MA'O teach/use?
Can you share an example?
What aspects of this [value or practice] reflect traditional Hawaiian ways of knowledge?
What is the purpose of [the value or practice]?
How have these practices been modified or adapted for the year 2012? (e.g., kale versus kalo)
How does this [value or practice] affect the youth?

What purpose does practicing Hawaiian cultural traditions and ways of knowing have in achieving what the program is trying to accomplish?

Can you describe the typical participant as they enter the program?
What happens to them over the next few years?
What do you think are key reasons for the changes you see among these youth? Can you provide some examples?
The program is called Youth Leadership Training. Can you describe what leadership means?
How is leadership accomplished? Can you provide some examples?

If you had to list a recipe, what is the YLT recipe? Major ingredients? Any critical active ingredients?

Any other thoughts? Questions? Is it okay if I contact you if I need to follow up on anything?

THANK YOU

APPENDIX D. Interview Guide - Instructors

RECORD

Participant's Name: _____ Title: _____
Alias: _____

Date
Time Begin ___ Time End___Duration____
Place

Background:
Number of years teaching
Number of years involved with MA‘O

As you may know, in addition to teaching, I am also a graduate student at UH. As part of the PhD program, I am completing a research study and of course, I chose MA‘O. The overall purpose of the study is to help learn more about culturally based programs like MA‘O and their impact on youth. There are two broad research questions guiding the study: 1) What aspects of the Youth Leadership Training (YLT) program reflect Hawaiian values and practices? and 2) How are youth experiencing the program?

The research methods include interviews with the youth, the program staff, and the instructors involved with the Academic Subject Certificate. I may come back to you to clarify or explore something but for today, I would like your permission to audiotape only for the purposes of transcription so I can best analyze the data. In reporting or sharing, I will not use your name. No one will have access to the transcripts but me and they will be kept in a secure location with all physical copies in a locked file cabinet and all electronic files password protected. In reporting, I may quote you though. If I do so, it will be using an alias – a fictional name. What name would you like? RECORD

Do you have any questions before we start?

Let's start with MA‘O.
What motivated you to work with MA‘O?
How would you describe MA‘O?
What is MA‘O trying to accomplish?
What is the YLT program trying to accomplish?
What do you think is the purpose of the academic side of the program is? And the certificate program?
What is your role in this and how does your role contribute to this [achieving what MA‘O/YLT is trying to do]?

Overall, what are your perceptions of MA‘O students?
Can you describe the “typical” MA‘O student?
What are their strengths? Challenges?
How do you manage these?
Can you share an example of success?
Can you share an example of a not so successful case?

In the classroom
Can you briefly describe the course goals and types of teaching methods you use?

What role does the Hawaiian culture play or influence how or what you teach? What role does place – Waianae – play or influence how or what you teach?

What types of support do you receive as an instructor for this program?

MA‘O Youth Leadership Training (YLT) Survey

My name is Eunice Leung Brekke. Some of you may know me as an instructor at Leeward Community College. I am also a graduate student at the University of Hawai’i, Department of Sociology. As part of my graduate studies, I conduct research, and in this case, this is research for a dissertation for a PhD degree in Sociology. The purpose of this research is to learn more about culturally based education programs like MA‘O Organic Farms. Participation in this study will involve the completion of an anonymous on-line (Internet) survey. I am asking you to participate in this project because you are a) at least 18 years old, b) a participant in MA‘O Organic Farms’ Youth Leadership Training program, and c) have important experiences and observations I would like to include in my research.

Questions: If you have any questions about this project, please contact me at via phone (808) 230-1948 or e-mail (leungeun@hawaii.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a voluntary research participant, in this project, you can contact the University of Hawai‘i, Committee on Human Studies, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by e-mail at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

Note: Submittal of the survey will be considered as your consent to participate in this study.

What cohort are you part of?

When did you join the YLT? (Month/Year)

When did you finish or leave the YLT? (Month/Year)

Total time with the YLT? __ years __ months

What was/were your titles at the farm?

- ☐ Intern
- ☐ SUI
- ☐ Co-manager
- ☐ Other

What was the main reason you joined the YLT?

- ○ To pay for school

- Wanted to farm
- Someone encouraged me to apply
- My friend(s) were part of the YLT
- Other

If you had NOT joined the YLT, what would most likely have happened?

- I would have gone to college full time (used financial aid, scholarships, loans, or family support to pay for school)
- I would have gotten a job to pay for school and gone to school part time
- I would have gotten a full time job or worked as much as possible
- I would have joined the military or armed forces
- Other

MA‘O was like home to me - like an 'ohana.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I felt that I was treated like someone of value and that I could be anyone I dreamed of becoming.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I had a mentor or someone on the farm who I looked up to and inspired me.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

If I needed help, I could talk to the program staff at MA‘O.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I made very close friends who helped me and will always be my friends.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I learned about vegetables and how to farm and can teach others.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I learned how to work hard.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

My food choices have changed - I know a lot about vegetables and eat healthier now.

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

There were opportunities to grow and develop as a leader.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I gained an awareness of the food system and knowledge of how our health is impacted by our food choices.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I feel that I have a greater understanding of the history and significance of Hawaiian culture and practices.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I understand the connection between what we did at the farm to malama 'aina.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I see my role as a youth leader for my peers and younger people in my community – I am a role model.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I feel that I have a greater vision of who I can be.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I have a greater understanding of the issues facing my community - including food, health, and sustainability.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

I have more connections to people and organizations outside of Wai'anae because of MAʻO.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

MAʻO is trying to show the community and others that the youth of Wai'anae are much more than a stereotype.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

MA‘O is working to make things better for the community by growing food and growing youth.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

MA‘O is part of a greater social movement to make Hawaii's food system sustainable.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

MA‘O is an organization that is very place or community based.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

MA‘O uses Hawaiian practices to ground the youth and staff to Wai'anae and its history.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

MA‘O is an important resource to youth because without MA‘O, college would be impossible because of the cost of school.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

MA‘O is an important resource to youth because MA‘O makes kids in high school think that college is possible and that they could do it.
What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your college experience, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement -
I always knew that I wanted to go to college.
Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your college experience, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement - I always knew what I wanted to do as a job or career.
Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - I was academically prepared for college (placed into college level 100 courses and/or could handle the work).
Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - I was highly motivated to do well in college.

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - I was mature and disciplined (attended classes, turned in assignments on time).

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - I enjoyed the courses I took.

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - I enjoyed my instructors and the way they taught.

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - Attending classes with other MA‘O students was helpful.

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - I understood the relevance of taking the certificate courses about Community Food Security (Intro to Ag, Management, Sociology/Geography, Hawaiian Studies).

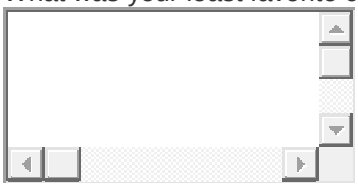
Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

Thinking about your time at Leeward Community College, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statement - I learned from the certificate courses.

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree

What was your favorite course or instructor? Why?

What was your least favorite course or instructor? Why?



Did you go to a four-year college?

If yes, where?

How would you describe your four-year college experience - on academic challenge?

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Easy and 10 = Extremely Difficult.

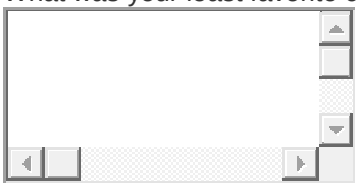
How would you describe your four-year college experience - on courses and instructors?

Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Dull and Boring and 10 = Exciting.

What was your favorite course or instructor? Why?



What was your least favorite course or instructor? Why?



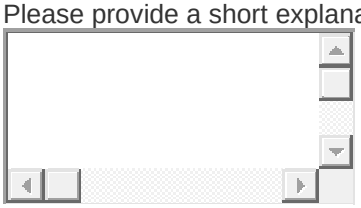
Which of the following best describes why you are no longer part of the YLT?

Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Got my AA degree and finished the program
- ☐ Didn't complete the AA degree and the program ended
- ☐ I left the program to pursue my major/interests either at Leeward CC or another college
- ☐ Was released because of academic performance
- ☐ Was released because of work performance
- ☐ Was released because of both school and work performance
- ☐ I needed to make more money
- ☐ I did not like farming

- [ ] I did not like school
- [ ] I decided to put school on hold and work full time
- [ ] I needed to focus on my family - my parents and/or siblings needed me
- [ ] I needed to focus on being a parent and/or raising a child
- [ ] Other

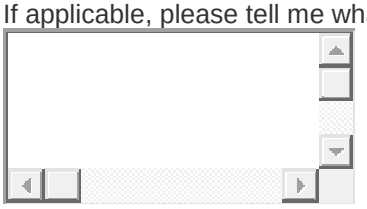
Please provide a short explanation of the reasons you selected.



What are you doing now?

- ( ) I'm in school.
- ( ) I'm working.
- ( ) Both.
- ( ) None of the above
- ( ) Other

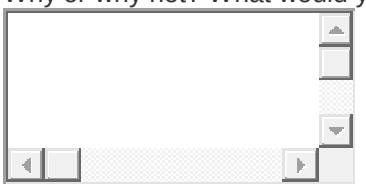
If applicable, please tell me what school you are at and what you are studying and where you work.



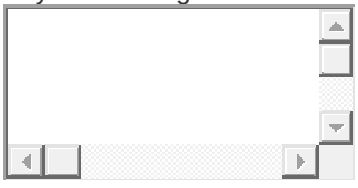
Would you recommend the YLT to others?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

Why or why not? What would you say to someone thinking about joining the YLT?



Any other thoughts or comments?



Where did you grow up?

- ( ) Nānākuli

- Waiʻanae
- Other

What elementary school did you attend?

- Leihoku Elementary
- Māili Elementary
- Mākaha Elementary
- Waiʻanae Elementary
- Nanaikapono Elementary
- Other

What middle or intermediate school did you attend?

- Nānākuli High and Intermediate
- Waiʻanae Intermediate
- Other

What high school did you attend?

- Waiʻanae High
- Nānākuli High and Inter
- Other

What is the highest degree that you have earned?

- High School diploma
- Associates degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Other

Are you the first person in your family to attend college?

- Yes
- No

Please check your ethnicity(-ies).

- American Indian
- Chinese
- Filipino
- German
- Hawaiian
- Japanese
- Korean

- [ ] Mexican
- [ ] Norwegian
- [ ] Portuguese
- [ ] Puerto Rican
- [ ] Samoan
- [ ] Ukrainian
- [ ] Irish
- [ ] Scottish
- [ ] Other

Before MA‘O, did you participate in any culturally based programs such as Kaala Farms, the AG program at Wai'anae High, a halau, or a language program or school?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No

If yes, please list.

I swear this is the LAST question!
Would you like to be contacted for an interview to further discuss your experiences and thoughts about the YLT?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No, thank you.

If yes, how can I contact you?

At some point - this report will be complete! Would you like a copy?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No thanks.

If yes, please tell me how I can get you a copy (e.g., email address).

Submit

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APPENDIX F. Hawaiian Values Questionnaire

Learning did not take place in a classroom nor was knowledge spilt into discrete subjects. Mastery of skills was learned by observation, listening, and practice with an emphasis on demonstrating mastery in real life settings. Underlying these practices were core values of love and concern for others (*aloha*), devotion to family and community (‘*ohana*), love of the land (*aloha ‘aina*), balance, harmony and living correctly (*malama pono*), service, joint effort, and unity (*kokua, laulima, lokahi*). Youth were expected to be responsible and work hard (*kuleana, pa’ahana*). Effective instruction for Hawaiian youth is therefore experience-based and takes place in authentic environments. Core components of programs for Native Hawaiians make connections to Hawaiian values, identity and place (Kawakami, 2004, 1999).

Core aspects of Hawaiian ways of knowing are also identified by Meyer (2003). These are: spirituality, *‘aina*, senses, relationships, utility, words, and the body and mind connection. The following table describes these elements in greater detail.

Spirituality	Knowledge is grounded in the natural environment and ancestry – *'aina* and the *kūpuna*
Physical place	*'Aina* is *that which feeds* - place is sustenance, knowledge and inspiration. *Malama 'aina* - nature is our teacher
Senses	Use and value of senses as knowledge
Relationships	Knowledge of self through interrelationships
Utility	Knowledge is practical and to be passed on. Being useful is to contribute, to participate, to add
Words	Spoken word is more than communication. The art of oration or exchange of wit was a highly revered skill. Words hold multiple meanings, reflecting tolerance for ambiguity and diverse meanings, depending on context and sound
Body and Mind	Mind and emotion are not separate. *Na'auao* (enlightenment, wisdom) is cognition and feeling

Meyer's interviews with cultural leaders (*kūpuna*) on aspects of Hawaiian knowledge and ways of knowing revealed five critical themes. These were: role of place, history and genealogy; the belief that culture restores culture; the tension and realities of a dual education; experience, practice and repetition are fundamental; and the role and importance of morality (*pono*) (Meyer, 2003).

Source: Meyer, Manulani (2003). *Ho'oulu: Our Time of Becoming, Hawaiian Epistemology and Early Writings.* Honolulu : 'Ai Pohaku Press.

For each of the following words, please tell me:

4. *What does this word mean to you?*
5. *How is this word demonstrated at the farm?*
6. *How do you live this world outside of the farm?*

---

a) Aloha
b) ‘Ohana
c) ‘Aina
d) Malama ‘aina
e) Aloha ‘aina
f) Malama pono or pono
g) Kokua, laulima, and lokahi
h) Kuleana

APPENDIX G. Consent to Participate

University of Hawai‘i

Consent to Participate in Research Project:

MA‘O ORGANIC FARMS - GROWING FOOD AND YOUTH

My name is Eunice Leung Brekke. I am graduate student at the University of Hawai‘i, Department of Sociology. As part of my graduate studies, I conduct research, and in this case, this is research for a dissertation for a PhD degree in Sociology. The purpose of this research is to learn more about culturally based education programs like MA‘O Organic Farms’ Youth Leadership Training program. I am asking you to participate in this project because you are part of MA‘O and have important experiences and observations I would like to include in my research.

Project Description - Activities and Time Commitment: If you participate, I will interview you in-person at a place that is convenient for you. The interview will last for about 30 to 60 minutes. I will record the interview using a digital audio-recorder. I am recording the interview so I can later type a transcript – a written record of what we talked about during the interview - and analyze the information from the interview. What you share with me is completely confidential. Although I'll be taking a few notes and recording our interview, at no time will your name be used in the research report. Only you and I will know, no one at the farm or at Leeward CC will know. No one will have access to what you say but me and all notes and the recordings will be kept in a secure location either in a locked file cabinet or electronically with password protection. Once the research project is complete, I will destroy all recordings. The recordings will only be used for this project and for no other purposes. If you are not comfortable with being recorded, that’s completely fine as well.

One example of the type of question I will ask is, “What does being part of MA’O mean to you?” If you would like to preview a copy of all of the questions that I will ask you, please let me know now and I will show you. Once I have completed all the interviews, I will conduct a preliminary analysis and gather small groups to discuss the findings.

Benefits and Risks: I believe there are no direct benefits to you in participating in my research project. However, the results of this project might help me and other researchers learn more about what culturally based education looks like and its impact on youth. I believe there is little or no risk to you in participating in my research. If, however, you are uncomfortable or stressed by answering any of the interview questions, you can skip the question, or take a break, or stop the interview, or withdraw from the research altogether.

Confidentiality and Privacy: During this research project, I will keep all data from the interviews in a secure location. Only I will have access to the data, although legally authorized agencies, including the University of Hawai'i Committee on Human Studies, have the right to review research records.

After I transcribe the interviews, I will erase the audio-recordings. When I report the results of my research project, and in my typed transcripts, I will not use your name or any other personally identifying information. Instead, I will use a pseudonym (fake name) for your name. If you would like a summary of the findings from my final report, please contact me at the number or email address listed near the end of this consent form and I will send it to you when it is ready.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this research project is voluntary. You can choose freely to participate or not to participate. In addition, at any point during this project, you can withdraw your permission without any penalty of loss of benefits.

Questions: If you have any questions about this project, please contact me at via phone (808) 230-1948 or e-mail (leungeun@hawaii.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a voluntary research participant, in this project, you can contact the University of Hawai'i, Committee on Human Studies, by phone at (808) 956-5007 or by e-mail at uhirb@hawaii.edu.

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign the following signature portion of this consent form.

Signature(s) for Consent:

I agree to participate in the research project entitled, ***MA'O ORGANIC FARMS - GROWING FOOD AND YOUTH.***

I agree to be audio recorded. ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

I would like a copy of this form, please send to the contact information below.

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

I understand that I can change my mind about participating in this project, at any time, by notifying the researcher.

Your Name (Print): _____

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact: _____

Appendix H. Chants: E hō mai and Oli Mahalo

E hō mai

E hō mai (i) ka ʻike mai luna mai ē
ʻO nā mea huna noʻeau o nā mele ē
E hō mai, e hō mai, e hō mai ē (a)

Give forth knowledge from above
Every little bit of wisdom contained in song
Give forth, give forth, oh give forth

- Edith Kanakaole

Oli Mahalo

ʻUhola ʻia ka makaloa lā
Pū ʻai i ke aloha ā
Kū kaʻi ʻia ka hā loa lā
Pāwehi mai nā lehua
Mai ka hoʻokuʻi a ka hālāwai lā
Mahalo e Nā Akua
Mahalo e nā kūpuna lā, ʻeā
Mahalo me ke aloha lā
Mahalo me ke aloha lā

The makaloa mat has been unfurled
In love, (food is/was shared) we share
The great breath has been exchanged
Honored and adorned is the Lehua
From zenith to horizon
Gratitude and thanks to our Akua
Gratitude and thanks to our beloved ancestors
Gratitude, admiration, thanks, and love
To all who are present, both seen and unseen

- Kēhau Camara

Source: Kamehameha Schools. Retrieved July 22, 2014 from http://apps.ksbe.edu/kscholars/oli

Appendix I. Survey Results, n=5

Questions 56-61:

Participant Characteristics

#	Gender	Year Born	Ethnicity (-ies)	Grew up in
1	Male	1988	Hawaiian, Chinese, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Samoan	Waiʻanae
2	Female	1990	Hawaiian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese	Nānākuli
3	Female	1990	Hawaiian	Nānākuli
4	Male	1991	Hawaiian, Portuguese	Nānākuli
5	Female	1993	Hawaiian, Filipino, Chinese, Spanish	Nānākuli

Educational Characteristics

#	High School	Highest Degree	Currently pursuing	First to attend college
1	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	UH Mānoa	No
2	Waiʻanae	Associates in Arts	UH West - Psychology/Agroecology	Yes
3	Nānākuli	Associates in Arts	UH West - Political Science/Social Work	Yes
4	Nānākuli	Associates in Arts	--	Yes
5	Nānākuli	High School	Working	No

Questions 1 to 5: Program Characteristics

#	Cohort	Program Status	Title	Total time with MAʻO (years)	Total time with MAʻO (months)
1	2	Completed	INTERN	3	3
2	3	Completed	HYLT	5	-
3	3	Completed	HYLT	6	-
4	4	Completed	INTERN	3	1
5	6	Withdrew	INTERN	1	3

What do you think? Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree.

Questions 8 to 11: About MA‘O - Practices

Question	Item	Average
8	MA‘O was like home to me - like an ‘ohana.	9.20
9	I felt that I was treated like someone of value and that I could be anyone I dreamed of becoming.	8.40
10	I had a mentor or someone on the farm who I looked up to and inspired me.	10.00
11	If I needed help, I could talk to the program staff at MA‘O.	7.60

Questions 12 to 23: What they gained

12	I made very close friends who helped me and will always be my friends.	10.00
13	I learned about vegetables and how to farm and can teach others.	9.60
14	I learned how to work hard.	9.40
15	My food choices have changed - I know a lot about vegetables and eat healthier now.	8.80
16	There were opportunities to grow and develop as a leader.	9.00
17	I gained an awareness of the food system and knowledge of how our health is impacted by our food choices.	9.80
18	I feel that I have a greater understanding of the history and significance of Hawaiian culture and practices.	9.00
19	I understand the connection between what we did at the farm to malama ‘aina.	9.60
20	I see my role as a youth leader for my peers and younger people in my community – I am a role model.	9.40
21	I feel that I have a greater vision of who I can be.	9.80
22	I have a greater understanding of the issues facing my community - including food, health, and sustainability.	10.00
23	I have more connections to people and organizations outside of Wai‘anae because of MA‘O.	9.40

Questions 24 to 30: What MA‘O is trying to do

24	MA‘O is trying to show the community and others that the youth of Wai‘anae are much more than a stereotype.	9.20
25	MA‘O is working to make things better for the community by	8.60

	growing food and growing youth.	
26	MA‘O is part of a greater social movement to make Hawaii's food system sustainable.	9.40
27	MA‘O is an organization that is very place or community based.	8.40
28	MA‘O uses Hawaiian practices to ground the youth and staff to Wai‘anae and its history.	8.00
29	MA‘O is an important resource to youth because without MA‘O, college would be impossible because of the cost of school.	7.60
30	MA‘O is an important resource to youth because MA‘O makes kids in high school think that college is possible and that they could do it.	8.40

Thinking about your college experience, please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement. Please choose from 1 to 10 where 1 = Do not agree at all and 10 = Strongly Agree.

Questions 31 to 40: College

Question	Item	Average
31	I always knew that I wanted to go to college.	10.00
32	I always knew what I wanted to do as a job or career.	7.40
33	I was academically prepared for college (placed into college level 100 courses and/or could handle the work).	6.80
34	I was highly motivated to do well in college.	9.00
35	I was mature and disciplined (attended classes, turned in assignments on time).	6.60
36	I enjoyed the courses I took.	8.60
37	I enjoyed my instructors and the way they taught.	9.60
38	Attending classes with other MA‘O students was helpful.	8.40
39	I understood the relevance of taking the certificate courses about Community Food Security (Intro to Ag, Management, Sociology/Geography, Hawaiian Studies).	9.60
40	I learned from the certificate courses.	9.80

Glossary

ʻAina - That which feeds.

Ahupuaʻa - Land section from mountain to ocean.

Aloha - love and concern for others.

Aloha ʻaina - Love of the land.

E hō mai - Let it come, let it flow. Request for knowledge.

Hanai - Practice of taking one in, adopt. To care for others like they are your own.

Hoʻokuʻu - to release to a higher power.

Kānaka Maoli - Native peoples.

Kauhale - Extended family or community living. Village approach to raising children.

Ke Papa - Ancestors, land.

Kokua, laulima, lokahi - Service, joint effort, and unity.

Kuleana - Responsibility.

Kuleana, paʻahana - To be responsible and work hard.

Kūpuna – Elder. Ancestors. Specialists in various bodies of knowledge. Advisors and keepers of specialized knowledge.

Loʻi - Taro terraces where taro is grown.

Mala ʻai ʻopio - The youth food garden or growing food, growing youth.

Malama ʻaina - Nature is our teacher

Malama pono - Balance, harmony and living correctly.

Mana - Supernatural force, power.

Moke - Slang. Describes one who speaks pidgin, surfs, plays ukulele.

Moku - Ancient Hawaiian land division.

Naʻauao - Enlightenment, wisdom.

Ohana - devotion to family and community.

Oli - Chant.

Pau hana - Slang. Finished work.

Pilau - Slang. Dirty mouth.

Pono - the role and importance of morality.

Pu‘uhonua – Place of refuge, safety.

Tita - Slang. Female, strong, aggressive.

References

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