

BIOLOGICAL SUMMARY: Theresa Fernandez

Theresa Fernandez was born in Mō‘ili‘ili on O‘ahu. She spent most of her life living between O‘ahu, Maui, and Hawai‘i Island. She attended the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and Chaminade; her first job was as a Conservation Corps member working for Resource Management at Haleakalā National Park in 1984. After her initial stint with the park, she also worked as a field supervisor for Mauna Kahālāwai, formerly known as the West Maui Watershed Partnership. While living on Hawai‘i Island, she taught surf lessons, worked in construction, and practiced realty as a real estate broker agent. She once again joined the National Park Service at Haleakalā in 2022 as a Bilingual Educational Technician. She is responsible for creating, translating and interfacing with the communities with regards to Hawaiian culture and Hawaiian language. Her son, Liam Kamaha‘o Kalā‘aumaluikeaoakamakali‘i Kahoe-Morrison, works in wildlife management as a Biological Science Technician at Haleakalā National Park and her daughter, Leila Makana Ho‘oleiali‘i Morrison, works in vegetation management as a Biological Science Technician at Haleakalā National Park as well. Theresa is somewhat fluent in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i.



Theresa Fernandez being interviewed on the Halemau‘u trail on September 22, 2022.

INTERVIEW INDEX: Theresa Fernandez

00:00:00 – 00:13:26 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Birthplace, education, and ancestry

00:13:27 – 00:32:10 WORKING AT THE PARK

First time working in the park, fence crew, early jobs, and children

00:32:11– 00:53:59 PROGRAMS AND POSITIONS

Night sky program, Native Hawaiian cultural practices, covid-hire as a Bilingual Educational Technician

00:54:00 – 01:14:19 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Mo‘olelo, place names, educational outreach

01:14:20 – 01:43:02 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Final thoughts, future directions for the park, memories of people and places, and roles as a steward of Haleakalā

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Theresa Fernandez (TF)

September 22nd, 2022

Halemau‘u Trail, Haleakalā

By: Alana Kanahele (AK) and Micah Mizukami (MM)

[NOTE: Theresa’s son, Liam Kamaha‘o “Kama” Kahoe-Morrison (LK), is also present in the interview.]

AK: Thank you so much, all of you, for letting us come and visit your wahi pana. And I think maybe just to get started, we’d like to have you introduce yourself and talk about where we are and your connection to this place.

TF: My name is Theresa Fernandez. Early on in the park my nickname was Trish. I, gosh. . . . You want to know my connection to the park in this place, you said?

AK: Yes.

TF: So I started in the park as an 18 year old, and I worked several years thereafter. This place is pretty special to me. I can’t think of another place in my lifetime thus far that is as special as this place. Right here we are on Halemau‘u, on the trail that leads down into the crater, just before switchbacks. And on a great, beautiful day, this is a beautiful day, it’s a very different, beautiful kind of day, but you would be able to see Hanakauhi here in the distance and Mauna Hina and then you’re looking towards the Kaupō Gap. So this is one of the places that I spent a lot of time hiking up and down and up and down and, you know, just spending time working with everybody in the park in RM [resource management]. So that’s why I brought you folks here.

AK: Thank you. So the crater is right down there?

TF: Yes.

AK: And where are you from originally?

TF: Well, that’s a loaded question. I’ve lived on three of the major Hawaiian islands. I was born in Mō‘ili‘ili, but my father is from Maui, so I would say that most of my life has been spent here.

AK: Is your mother from Maui as well?

TF: My mother is actually from the Wai‘anae and Nānākuli, and Mākaha area, but this is my father’s mountain. So this is where he grew up, where his father grew up, his mother, his grandparents. And yes, so from both sides, both of my parents are part Hawaiian. And then we’ve got the hodgepodge of, you know, things like Portuguese, rumors of Native American heritage, English, you know, just a little bit, thus the white hair.

AK: And on your father’s side, are they from this part of Maui?

TF: Yes. This is my father’s place, you know, one of his, I would say moku, pretty much basically, right? Because that encompasses Kula, Kokomo, and Makawao. My father is from here. He was born and raised.

AK: And did he ever work at the park? I know your family seems to have deep connections here.

TF: No, my father was very independent and a rebel, and the park wasn’t actually one of those things that you chose career-wise in his day. He was a hunter, he was a fisherman, and he was a farmer. He was, you know, he was a lot of things. He did a lot of sports and whatnot, and the park really wasn’t in his future. He ended up becoming a welder and a metal fabricator. And then thereafter, just, you know, built boats and fished.

AK: And your grandfather on your father’s side, did you know him or did you grow up with him?

TF: You know, I knew of him and I knew that he was from the Kokomo area where our family was from. What I know about him was he was actually the first one in our family to go to university. So he did go to the mainland. He was a police officer. For sports like my father, he was a pugilist, traveled quite a bit to the Philippines to box. And yeah, it was just really neat to find out more about him. But I did not have the privilege. His life ended early in a car accident. But yeah, he was like my dad, very active and very independent.

AK: Can you talk a little bit about your mother’s side of the family?

TF: You know, I knew my mother’s side of the family. My mother, not so much. I was born when my mother was 18 years old. So she was a child having a child. But my cousins, they’re all on that side Nānākuli, Wai‘anae and Mākaha. And, you know, it’s something about the roots there. I always said that I would be covered by land, sea and air if ever I got in trouble because I have a cousin that’s on the SWAT team. I have a cousin that was a captain in the Coast Guard, you know, and so on and so forth. You know, lifeguards, things like that. Very active, outdoors people. Very wonderful. A portion of that family is actually longtime, relocated to Alaska, and they love it there. They’re raising their children and their grandchildren. They love to fish and they decided to open up a

restaurant again. So I do know of them. I've spent a lot of time as a child visiting, growing up, spending camping summers on Mākaha Beach. Wouldn't you?

AK: You've gone from a very dry area to a very wet area.

TF: Yeah.

AK: And what were your parents' names again?

TF: My dad's name is Gordon and they call him Pōpoki and my mother's name is Rachel.

AK: And I know we have one of your kids here.

TF: Yes.

AK: I don't know if you want to introduce yourself or you'd like to?

TF: So this is my, my youngest and, his full name, which is always a subject of astonishment is Liam Kamaha'o Kalā'aumaluikeaoakamakali'i Kahoe-Morrison and when we sat with his hānai grandmother Margaret Schattauer at the time, we laughingly said, you know, Social Security is just going to hate us. We're never going to fit your whole name on your driver's license either! But, you know, he's my only son and his name came to me in a day vision. I have a daughter, too, and a portion of her name is ancestral.

AK: And we'll get to you. Can you talk about where you grew up with schools you attended?

TF: Yeah. Um, gosh, well I call it Honolulu, right. I started at Lincoln Elementary. My cousins went to Roosevelt and Stevenson, so we'd walk up from my house on Thurston. I'd meet them at their house and we'd walk through the field to get everybody to school. My father decided that we were going to move, so we ended up from there in Kailua, actually, no, 'Āina Haina first. So, I lived at the bottom of Kuli'ou'ou. And there I used to fish for flounder and crab and swim in the freshwater pools that used to come or build right there near the highway before you cross the road. Then after that, we moved to Kailua and I went to Kainalu and I went to Kailua Intermediate. And at that point, my dad was very tired of being on O'ahu. And so we moved back home. And then I ended up at Makawao School, Maui High, and was apparently quite a handful. So was given the option to go to Seabury or Saint Anthony. And I chose what I thought was the lesser of two evils and went to Catholic school.

(Laughter)

AK: And how many siblings, how many of you are there?

TF: Well, I'm the oldest of five, but I'm actually an only child from a first marriage. So I have a sister slightly younger than me that I've not met. I have two brothers. One of my brothers actually lives in the Makawao area. My other brother lives in Kēōkea and then

we have a baby sister who left here. She's 16 years my junior and she currently lives in Utah with her four children.

AK: Yeah. So where do you live now?

TF: I am renting in Kula because I'm just back from the Big Island, having lived there for over 15 years.

AK: What did you do there?

TF: Oh, gosh. I think when you're on the Big Island, you have to do lots of things, everything from construction to teaching surf lessons to... I've had a real estate brokers license for over 20 years. It allowed me to support my family, put my kids through private school. You know, you do what you have to do. Oh, yeah.

AK: And were you ever with the national parks on the Big Island?

TF: On the Big Island, no. But before I left here, I actually was the field supervisor for what is now known as Mauna Kahālāwai. So it was called the West Maui Watershed Partnership before. So I did some of that and always been pretty outdoors and involved. So nothing on the Big Island, unfortunately.

AK: Can you recall your first time visiting Haleakalā? Some of your first memories coming up here.

TF: Well, as a child, we always came up. My uncle worked for Maui Land and Pine. So it kind of abutted Haleakalā, you know, and boundaries weren't really that certain at that time, you know? Are you on Maui Land and Pine land? Are you in Haleakalā Ranch or Haleakalā Park? Because the perimeter fence had not been established yet. And being that my family grew up here, there were really no boundaries. You know, it was pretty wide open. So, I grew up coming up here hunting for pheasants and pigs and goats and gathering maile. So, you know, it was and still is my backyard.

AK: Was the maile for medicinal or recreational or hālau?

TF: Yeah, you know hālau was a little bit later for me it [maile] was usually for some special occasion, you know, a wedding, you know, a funeral, a birthday, a party, something. Maile was always reserved for something special, not just casual.

AK: So did you and all your siblings hunt here?

TF: You know, I, I think my brother did, Gordon Jr for a bit, but for the most part, it was just me and him. And we had a gap between us. So I would just go with dad and uncle and cousins and do that sort of thing.

AK: Coming up here, up to the summit or around Kīpahulu?

- TF: Kind of along the summit. I mean, we'd come up here for kicks, for a sunrise or something and freeze our butts and go, "Yeah, we did that once." That was okay, and then come up with the cousins as we got older. But for the most part, recreational hunting.
- AK: And, where did your parents---I know you said your dad kind of grew up here and is from this area. When did your mom come over to Maui?
- TF: My dad met my mother on O'ahu, and that's pretty much where she was. She didn't really like Maui so much. Yeah, I don't know. I don't know what it was that probably maybe a little disconnect from her family. But it was always my dad's thing to be back here because it's his life, you know?
- AK: And so when you started it, you said you started working at the park for the first time when you were about 18?
- TF: Yeah. Was my first job. I worked, I was a Conservation Corps member and I worked for RM and it was a unified RM. So it was very interesting, you worked where you were needed. So you would work with the birds, you'd work on the fence, you'd build the awful wall at the visitor center, you know, you'd check the traps. At that point in the park's history, firearms were allowed in the park, so we did a lot of dispatching of ungulates and things like that.
- AK: Is RM, resource management?
- TF: Yes.
- AK: Yes. And what did that entail or what was kind of in resource management at that time?
- TF: Well, you had you know, right now you have wildlife and you have veg and you have. . . . what else do you have?
- LK: Cultural resources, trail. . .
- TF: Cultural resource, cultural resources, trail. Yup. All all of those were under one roof.
- AK: And so you were ever on the fence crew?
- TF: Primarily. Primarily, my job was on fence crew and dispatching ungulates.
- AK: Was that being dropped off by helicopter?
- TF: You know, that's like the dream, but that's not the reality. I think we had a lot more heli[copter] time than this RM has now. But, you know, there were days with weather where you'd have to hike out or you'd have to stay the weekend and wait until Monday.

So it could be five days in the mountain, it could be seven days in the mountain. It could be whatever it had to be. The people in the park became my family. You know, there are people that I hold dear even to this very day. A lot of them have passed on. A lot of them have retired. And they look at me, you know, they're like, well, why are you still working? Well, the short answer is I've taken the road less traveled. So, yeah, mostly that. So there were days where you could get dropped off or you had to hike in under full pack, fifty pounds. You know, you'd store water if it was really remote. But you just went along with it. You know, it's just it's just working in the resources, you know, expect the unexpected and be okay with it. Under your breath.

AK: So that was seasonal?

TF: The fencing crew. It just depends what your position was. And so there were some people that were seasonal and then some that was their job all year round. And I think you have spent some time with some people that that was their career. You know, until it was done. It was their job, yeah.

AK: Which areas did you work on?

TF: Well, a lot of my job was brushing. And that was before you had any real. . . . you know, I talk to Hank now, and he goes, "Oh, you know, we got this pounder now and you just put it on there and it goes brrrrr." You know, it does this, I roll my eyes and say, "Oh, don't even tell me that." So, I did a lot of brushing across this Ko'olau gap. We did most of the brushing. I don't know if we did all of it, it's all just kind of a blur. Up on the top of Hanakauhi going towards Hana that way, we did a lot of the brushing work with the Kīpahulu gang, did most of the front country fence lines even up through Science City and South Slope. Um, gosh, I don't know. It's just one continuous fence, right? And you went where you were called and you never really thought about it because you were with people who you wanted to be with. And the labor was, you know, just what you did.

AK: Can you talk about some of the people that you met or some of the staff at the time that you worked with?

TF: Yeah. You know, like I said, I really miss them. And a lot of them are not here anymore. I got to work with the Gagne's. So, Betsy and Wayne just love them thoroughly. They're just, you know, everybody in the park is a character and they bring something to this place. I worked with most of the guys in maintenance. Gosh, and I'm afraid I'm going to leave somebody out, you know? But top of mind is Eddie Grasa. I worked with the mules and we had horses still in the park. David Wallace. Gosh, so many, so many. I mean, you would have to give me a checklist and I' go, "Oh, yeah, oh, yeah, oh, yeah."
(Art Medeiros, Lloyd Loope, Ted Rodrigues, Karen Carol, Adele, Audrey, Perry, Eddie Pu, William "Smitty" Robert Smith (Caives), Freddy, Yvonne Ching, Patrick Ouye, Pat Morishige, Jessie, Randy Bartlett, Mike Acain, Duane Rosa, Steve Hodges, Scott Spears, Tex Teixeira, Candy, Mike Ing, Paul Higashino)

AK: You mentioned Hank. Is that Hanky Eharis?

TF: Yeah. I worked with Hank and Terry Lind and Dino Brown. So great, amazing people to work with from Kīpahulu. Really, really enjoyed that. I worked under two superintendents in the park who were really hands on, so I really enjoyed that: Don Reeser and Hugo Huntsinger. Ron was amazing.

AK: Ron Nagata?

TF: Ron Nagata, he is amazing. I consider him a visionary for the park. I consider him one of the stakeholders as far as investing, lifework and planning and all of that. I did work with Cathleen. She's Bailey now, so we did a lot of really great things together and fun. Ross Hart, gosh, I'm telling you, I know. I'm leaving some of them out.

AK: I just spoke with Chris Alexander. He said he ran into you recently.

TF: Yeah, Chris and Eric they were on the crew. We had some others. But, you know, I mean, I was friends with the helicopter pilot. You know, I used to babysit his kids.

AK: Tom Hauptman, right?

TF: You know, and after we would do things together. You know, he had this little mini plane that he would race over in Las Vegas or wherever he was flying to, and we would go play in his airplane.

AK: Right. We've heard some exciting stories that involved Tom.

TF: Yeah, it's great. Yeah. Wonderful person. We couldn't do what we did without him.

(Interview interrupted by hikers passing by and asking for questions about the trail. Interview resumes.)

AK: Were there many community members that you would also work with?

TF: Well, you know, I did a lot of work with other agencies. So Terry Quisenberry, who was one of the heads of the Nature Conservancy, I did a lot of work with him and his crew. Later, I would come to do work with the Nature Conservancy in a different position as well. But, you know, it was much more collaborative with a lot less paperwork back then. I'm not saying it's not necessary, but it was like you know, what are your needs? Let's go ahead and look at our needs and stack them up and see how we can share, especially human resources, labor and stuff. Because, you know, we're all stakeholders on this mountain, right? When you're on this mountain and you're part of Haleakalā National Park, you have a great kuleana because we are connected by one single stone to nine moku. That's a huge responsibility, and that's not something that we can do by ourselves, nor should we ever. So fostering the relationships between state, federal, county and other agencies is really, really important for conservation on the mountain.

AK: The work that you started doing here when you said you were about 18 or so, um, were volunteers a part of that, or was that mainly kind of park staff?

TF: You know, I remember some people in the park as volunteers. I know we have more defined, more well defined volunteers in parks today. But you know, I think we had more staff then, I think we did. And I don't remember ever really having to deal with as much because there was so much less... you know, like doing research on air pollution in the crater and then they'd come and want to be in our cabin because our cabin had, you know had this, that or the other. You know, after a long day.

AK: And how long did you work at the park at that point?

TF: About three years. Yeah.

AK: Was that kind of in the same. . .

TF: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Same capacity, actually. What had happened is the year after that I became one of the leads, so I would take interns in the field to go ahead and build fences, to brush fences, to do whatever. And it's kind of a silly remembrance, but Raina Kaholoa'a was actually one of my interns.

AK: Oh, really?

TF: Yeah.

AK: Oh, cool. When was this around?

TF: Yeah, 1984 and then after that.

AK: And the fencing project, that kind of that was around that time?

TF: Yes. Yes.

AK: So when you started, I know you mentioned the areas that you do fence were they kind of just starting with the fencing or had they?

TF: I guess, you know, we were actually creating the way for the fence crews to come in. Being part of the fence crew, some of the fence crews we had to contract came in from Montana. You know, we made friends with them. Yeah, you know, without the brushing, there is no fence. So I would say that the most challenging that I've heard between HAVO and us and maybe other agencies would concur is that this was the hardest park to fence. Because there are so many ups and downs and deep valleys and ridges. And there were some days you thought you would never be able to do it. Physically, I think having spoken with Chris Alexander, he says, you know, your body can only build so much fence. You know, you can only climb these, you know, 45 plus degree things, you know, elevations with a full pack. And, you know, some days on the flatland, you know, you

couldn't on the flatland, you'd have to roll it out or you could call the helicopter. And we had a method to do that. But there are days where you had to get that fence up the mountain and down the mountain manually. You know, and I don't know how much, how much do those rolls/bales weigh now? Those rolls. It's got to be 100, 200 lbs? So, you know, two people and you got to get that laid out, and then there's safety, and then there's fence posts and barbed wire and so on.

AK: What is the process of brushing?

TF: Well, what happens is, the boundary lines are established and you have so much leeway on either side, but usually you get instruction as to which side you're supposed to build on, right? Brushing is. . . . If you see a shape and sound in the mist that is a goat, we are in trouble haha. So it's just it's like you sometimes you have to have a chainsaw. So I operated chainsaws, like sometimes all day. Sometimes you have to have a generator. So you've got to haul that generator along the line and fuel and camping and things like that. So without the brushing, there is no fence for the most part.

AK: What kind of considerations were taken into like where to brush?

TF: Well, the terrain speaks for itself. You know, I mean, it's easier to brush across, I mean, to prepare a fence line across a lava field than it is a full blown rain forest. And you get both extremes and then you get the in-betweens. I always found it sad when I would come upon some very mature native trees. I would always ask, is there any other way that we can? Because they take so long to grow. You know, and they are really the older ones, they're so precious, right? Even the young ones. But, you know, you can appreciate it, I mean.

AK: So was there any community concern with the fencing project?

TF: Yes, of course. Pick your island, you know, pick your battles, pick your day. You know, sustainability, infringing upon personal rights, so and so forth. The full gamut. In conservation, you're never going to make everybody happy. And sometimes you make good decisions, and I think sometimes you make bad decisions. But I think that the intent or the heart of it, which I'd like to think is actually good behind it.

AK: At what point did they stop allowing firearms?

TF: I want to say with Mike Ing, it would have been in the nineties, I think.

AK: So after you did your three years here, then where did you go?

TF: Oh, gosh. My father was impressing upon me how big the world was out there and how important it was to make money. We came from a very simple lifestyle, you know, very sustainable, not a lot of money. He wanted more for me because I spoke Japanese. You know, I'm really good with languages and things like that. And somehow, I guess he figured I was pretty smart. So, you know, it's like you got to go to college, you know,

you have to become a manager of a major hotel chain. You got to go ahead and speak Japanese, you know, make money. And quite frankly, I just think it was a bad steer for me. I didn't want all of those things. But I love my dad, so I wanted to make him happy.

AK: Where did you go to college?

TF: I went to UH Mānoa. You know, I actually was battling with it and I was trying to go to Utah to study aerospace engineering. And I just... it was it was kind of crazy. And you know, it was a battle. So I ended up coming back home and going to Mānoa and then finishing up with my teaching degree at Chaminade.

AK: Did you end up teaching?

TF: Yeah, I did for a little bit. I actually helped pioneer a team to open up a Montessori school in Kihei. Yeah, I did a little bit of teaching in public schools and then I got a grant from OHA [Office of Hawaiian Affairs] to start a business. And I thought, teaching or passion, getting back to it a little more so. So I ended up opening up a sports retail store under funding through the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

AK: Here on Maui?

TF: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AK: What was the name of that.

TF: It was called Pitch and Boots. It was a soccer store.

AK: And then I know along the way you had kids.

TF: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

AK: And your daughter you mentioned also works in the park as well?

TF: Yes. So I have one in wildlife and I have one in vegetation.

AK: And I think, maybe pivoting a little bit away from fencing and maybe talking more about your role in the park now?

TF: Sure it was kind of a surprise to me, but I'm always up for adventures and probably, you know, I can't describe it any other way than the road less traveled because I'm very interested in growing and learning and doing different things. So, my daughter brought to my attention that there was this bilingual educational technician position being offered in the park, and I don't think she thought I would take it very seriously, you know. And I thought, huh, how could it hurt? You know, all those years of education and my hānai grandparents were Mānaleo. So I grew up hearing it, you know, speaking a little bit of it,

using it in school, studying it at university, using it in hula, canoe paddling, so and so forth. So I thought I'd give it a try. And lo and behold, oh my gosh, I got the job.

AK: When was this?

TF: I started it in February, officially this year. So I moved everything back from the Big Island, the July before, little by little, you know, both of my children graduated from Hawai'i Preparatory Academy there. Both of them were one in college, one had graduated with the bachelors already, I thought, well, I guess I'll come back to Maui and hopefully I'll have some time with them, you know, that would be great. It was never an expectation or a push that this was where we'd all end up. I think it's kind of interesting, but maybe it's because it's the only national park on the island. Where else were we all going to go?

AK: And then I guess---I don't know if you'd like to speak about this or if you'd prefer to talk about how you kind of got started with the parks.

LK: Sure. Yeah. So I started with an internship, actually, through SCA (Student Conservation Association), I think, with the department I work with now, the Wildlife Management Program. That was a summer internship, I think it was my junior summer while I was in school. So I still had a year to go after that.

AK: High school or college?

LK: College. I guess the supervisors liked the work that I did, I don't know what they liked that. They said that they'd give me a call if anything came up once I graduated and then they got funding for these covid hires that I have now. And they called me. Okay. You should apply for this and see what happens. So.

AK: What's your title in the park?

LK: Biological science technician. Just field crew, pretty much, that's the fancy word, but I think we're like field grunts.

AK: Do you mainly work out in the field versus an office?

LK: Yeah, usually. I mean, the office work we do is data processing. Well, that sounds a bit more complicated, we just input all the data that we collect and sometimes run an analysis on it for the end of the year reports that are needed for Fish and Wildlife or something.

AK: What is an example of data that you collect?

LK: Like, right now, it's 'ua'u season, the Hawaiian petrels. There are burrows all over the place. There's some on the switchbacks right below us and there's a bunch up there above us. Yeah, we do like occupancy surveys and see if they're using burrows, or if

they're inland. We can also tell fledging status and we check a portion of all the burrows in the park every two weeks during the beginning and the ending of the season and at least once a month to try to check everywhere else.

AK: And I know when we spoke, you also mentioned that you have done 'ua'u work?

TF: You know, I have done work in the past and we kind of chuckled a little bit about how some of the processes are still the same. Yeah, they're amazing. So I have done some work and we do collaborations between divisions. So as part of the Night Sky program and the 'ua'u night, you know, people that work in Wildlife Division will come up and then I will, as the bilingual, probably usually infuse Hawaiian culture as it relates to the bird, the sky and night sky and things like that.

AK: So can you talk a little bit more about the Night Sky program?

TF: Yeah, the night sky program is amazing. I mean, you know, Haleakalā is one of the darkest places in the world for the night sky. So right now we have a very, it's a very good, solid night sky program that deals with the stars and the planets and our exposure to them. And I think we're up to about five or six magnitude up here as far as actual clarity. So Laurel is the head of that. And in ours, we've gone to night sky training, you know, and pretty much really made that program solid scientifically. We are doing collaborations with the National Solar Observation Observatory. So the Daniel Inouye, we've been in there and we're going to do some cultural collabs with them as well as science. It's amazing you know, we teach people about how our lighting is really important and how we affect it. So, you know, when the night sky programs happen, everybody gets red cellophane or red bulbs. And we always advocate for them to speak to legislators and local politicians to make sure that our night skies stay dark so that we don't have grounding of our 'ua'u. And I think the next step in Night Sky is even more of a physical manifestation, is to make sure people are on trail. Part of my talk is if you are not on trail, you are on habitat for the plants and the animals and the insects and all the wildlife that you can or cannot see. And if an 'ua'u dies, you won't know, but we'll know. Because generations of them have been documented to the same burrows over the years. And it's sobering, but sometimes that's what a visitor needs to hear when they just have to get five feet closer to the sunset on a cliff. Right?

AK: And so the night sky program is set up mainly for children, for education. Do you reach out to public schools or. . .

TF: Yes. Right now it's for any visitors that actually want to come up. We do it at least once a month. I think we're trying to do it twice a month. I have had Kaiapuni schools come and bring their groups and I've had a few language snafus, you know, make versus i hala, so you never speak of a once living thing as make. I mean at the moment, but thereafter, have some respect and, you know, honor them with i hala.

AK: And are you involved with any other kind of educational components or working with community or the schools here?

TF: Yeah. Pretty huge. My plate's pretty full. I just finished working with a night sky photojournalist. So he came in from New York, Stan Honda. He did an artist in residence in 2018 in the park. So he came back and did an exhibit. And I did the cultural interpretation for his photographs at the Shafer International, the gallery at the MACC [Maui Arts and Cultural Center]. Yeah. And I assisted him with his night sky photography workshops up here at the park. I am starting to work with immersion schools, so we are developing an all Hawaiian website. As I told you, I just finished helping the teachers kind of structure their 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ha'awina into our website. So those who are teaching or learning in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i can have a lesson plan for the certain things in 'ōlelo so they don't have to translate. They can just fluidly speak it to their haumāna. And everybody is on the same page. So lots of outreach, the Limu Festival in Hāna. We're going to be doing Ho'omau, it's just growing, growing, growing, growing.

AK: Absolutely. A lot of projects are coming up.

TF: Yeah.

AK: I think we'll be talking a little bit about some of the different areas of the park and. We were kind of interested in how the park has changed over time. And I think it's really interesting from your point of view, having been here in the 1980s and then come back in 2022. The changes that you've noticed.

TF: Well, you know that old commercial that it's not your father's Oldsmobile kind of deal. Well, it's not your mother's park. And I think that the park had to change. There's so many factors that we either understand or don't understand as to why the park had to change. Some of the changes make me sad. Some of them make me very, very happy. And I have hope for the future that we, again, will become a more unified park and more collaborative. And it's just a personal thing, you know? It's like more caring about one another's needs. You know, each other, whether we take it to whatever level, that's just really up to the individual. I think the safety changes are good because I worked in the park at the time where OSHA was just starting to come into the park and it limited the way that we could do things. Now, maybe a lot of people would say we were reckless. I didn't lose anybody on my watch. So I'm very thankful about that. Yeah, it seems like the global priorities are kind of coming in, you know, and I don't I don't know. You know, Hawai'i is such a different animal. Some of those global priorities as far as conservation and parks, we don't fit. You know, so there has to be stuff that's a little more organic just to this park. And yet, you know, the other things I understand and having to be a part of it.

AK: Yeah. Do you think you could maybe talk about some of the native Hawaiian practices that occur at the park, either through the park or community members.

TF: Well, I think it's always been a struggle recognizing, not for lack of wanting to make it work, but lack of understanding. The park is employing much more Non-Native and non-

local, people who didn't weren't raised here who are coming in, you know, without having cultural backgrounds. So sometimes when somebody says that they want to come into a park for a cultural practice, there's a problem. They have to solve that. What does that mean? Because somebody may not understand it. People will come up to spread ashes of their loved ones. People will come up and use this place for religious purposes. You know, they believe and worship Māui and Pele, you know you take your pick of any of our mo'olelo or kapu, really. So there's a lot of that going on right now.

AK: Is there anything for Makahiki season going on right now?

TF: You know, that would come. . . . people are not coming up to do that so much up here because it's a wilderness area and there are restrictions as to what they can do and where. So if that was to be, I guess included again into the program in the park, that would have to be, you know, vetted and figured out, would probably be held at one of the visitor centers or something like that. Best place is Kīpahulu.

AK: Yeah. You know, we spoke a little bit with Nan Cabatbat. And she spoke a little bit about the 'awa ceremonies, have you ever attended any of those? And we spoke with Hōkūlani Holt as well.

TF: Yeah.

AK: Yeah. I've heard a bit about some of the other ceremonies. Oh yeah. I never attended it.

TF: Yeah, you know, I remember Kumu Hōkū from my university days. No, you know 'awa is not my deal, kind of like dirt and water. But I respect it. I just, you know, I like to watch it. I know that Kīpahulu is where most of the Makahiki stuff happens. I know that they have come back from Pu'u Kohala having done the 'awa ceremonies. That's not to say that that wouldn't become or be included again in the park, but as of recent, I haven't seen anything. And, you know, we're just coming out of a COVID season. So there's a lot of restarts and new beginnings.

AK: And we can also always pause if you want to stretch.

TF: No, no, I'm just adjusting my butt and my legs.

AK: I think kind of also going back to your position as a bilingual technician. Do you use 'Ōlelo often in the park or are there other staff members speaking 'Ōlelo?

TF: Yeah, it's very interesting because my position is a pioneering position in the park, a lot of pressure. I am the first in this position. It was just newly created. There are not very many people that speak 'Ōlelo Hawai'i in the park. My position is to get more people to understand a little and to speak it. It's challenging because language is only a section of culture and you cannot just teach language. You have to teach culture and you have to live culture and language to actually have something that's viable. So it is a challenge. So I think that, as I see it, what I'm trying to do is to reach out to the schools to nurture a

generation that are naturally speaking ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. It doesn’t matter what their ethnic background is, but they’ve embraced the culture as part of their lifestyle and they will be the ones that will turn Haleakalā into ‘Ōlelo speaking park.

AK: And do you know how your position came about or what sort of prompted this? I know you said this is the first of its kind and kind of coming out of COVID.

TF: You know, I think Nan was instrumental. I did some work with her husband when he was with the park. Amazing man, another amazing person. And I think they were the pioneers of having Hawaiian culture in the park, you know, nurturing that sort of thing. And she actually mentored my supervisor, Bennadette Honeygirl Duman, who is part Hawaiian. I think there were only a handful of Hawaiians in the park. But, you know, we’ll take it. You know, it’s a starting point. And I think Honeygirl’s 12-year career in the park had kind of prompted her to create that.

AK: What kind of birds are those?

TF: Oh, those are Nēnē. So, I think, Honeygirl has worked long and hard. It’s been the desire for her for that to happen. I think other people in the park have had that long and longing on their heart. You know, we all want a living park because we’re not a dead people, culturally. You know, some parks, they’re speaking about their native peoples in the past because there’s no longer those people. But that’s not our case. So between the legislature, the goals of the park, you know, with inclusion and everything about more indigenous peoples and whatnot, I think it all culminated and eventually it gave birth to this..

AK: Are there still kind of daily---I know they used to do like “E Ala E” at sunrise, are there daily Hawaiian elements that the park still does?

TF: Yeah, so when I do sunrise, everybody does it. We do “E Ala E” in the morning. When I have an opportunity, I usually give people Hawaiian words or phrases. It’s part of our staff training. Once a week, I practice with staff who show up. We have a hui once a month where everybody has the opportunity to join (Kuaola Raymond and Kawai Crozier-Domingo started it). So today, when I’m done, I’ll probably tape a session of Hui ‘Ōlelo that will teach about the 30 phases of the Hawaiian moon on the moon calendar and then give somebody a song. So if you’re doing Night Sky or you’re meeting with third graders, you can teach them. I call it armchair hula and a song in Hawaiian about the phases of the moon. So it’s happening. Little by little. Bits. Bits, bits.

AK: Good. So what is a typical day for you here?

TF: I’m waiting for a typical day. Most of what I’m supposed to be doing is creating, translating and interfacing with the communities with regards to Hawaiian culture and Hawaiian language. I have done some translations of Hawaiian newspaper obituaries for cultural, and that was fun. You know, plants and human stories telling mo‘olelo at outreaches. Like I said, I’m waiting for a typical day.

- AK: And this is maybe a little bit off topic from this. But, you know, since we're feeling a lot of the elements right now. Yeah. Is there a specific name for this rain or for this wind that we're feeling?
- TF: Like, gosh, you know, there's probably over 120 names for the rain. And I think it all depends on direction. And right now, I'm not getting a sense that this is... and when you're on the edge of the crater, it's not a good place for you to decide where the rain is coming from. But the normal rain actually comes up the mountain from this area and it's usually called Ukiu, Ukiu rain?
- AK: Is that a soft or gentle rain or is that more. . .
- TF: This is actually pretty soft and gentle rain. But there are many, so I would say that the Ukiu actually contributes to it. There's so many rain names. I mean, that's probably going to be my next teaching for staff is the rains of Haleakalā.
- AK: And when you teach the staff, is it kind of just is it oral? Is it brochures that you make, is it Powerpoints? How do you teach staff?
- TF: Well, it's kind of both. I'm getting ready to launch a lesson for staff and visitors that's about Hawaiian dyes, kapa dying. So it'll be hands on activity. And then some of it's not lecture per se, but instructive. And then I will touch on language and, you know, history about it and things like that.
- AK: For the names of the rain, is that something that you learned from 'ohana or is that through study, through nūpepa etc.?
- TF: Uh, it's kind of a little bit of everything. So, you know, the mo'olelo precedes any of the scientific everythings that we know about our 'āina and even though they're larger in life, they still provide essential historical and pertinent information. Place names, rain names, genealogies, practices. So, you know, you gotta take it with a little bit of a grain of salt. You know, with Māui, you know, was he large enough to where he could span both slopes and break off the rays of the sun? Perhaps not. But you know, he may have been a pioneer for the Hawaiians that they blew up into larger than life. But there's still all this mo'olelo, very, very important.
- AK: Could you share with us some mo'olelo about the area that we're in or what we would be looking out at right now?
- TF: Oh, gosh. Kama, help me with this ridge. Timmy (Bailey) would have talked about it. Is it Kalapawili? I know. It's hard, there's so, so many.
- AK: And we're putting you on the spot.

TF: Yeah, it is kind of. It's kind of on the spot. I mean, we got so many words, I should remember it. But basically the story that I lean towards is more about Hina. So Hina, in one of her remembrances, in one of the mo'olelo's is known as Māui's mother, right? She's the reason why he felt the need to slow the sun down, to be the trickster. You know, and so and so forth. And when you look out this way past Hanakauhi, there's a little pu'u called Mauna Hina. You know, we talk about 'āhinahina, we have two 'āhinahina. One is actually a wormwood, it's an artemisia. It's more along the---it's a relative, I believe it's a relative of geranium. And then we have our silversword. And that's an 'āhinahina. And we talk about hinahina being grey or silver, but that's just the surface. So, Haleakalā is a shield volcano. It's Hina. It's very female. It's very nurturing. So right out here, you know, is Mauna Hina. I choose to think about that because Hina is also part of the word that we use for the moon, mahina, right? And so the mo'olelo goes that she had a husband who didn't care for her and she wanted to go to the moon. You know, that's another story of Hina. So I think, you know, that's a very light kind of all over the place for a mo'olelo but that's one of my favorites. So when you see a silversword, when you look at the artemisia, the Maui wormwood, you say the color gray or you say silver, that's just a very, I guess, a modern take on something that's very ancient that represents this land, that represents a place that represents a person who of three people are very important to this mountain.

AK: And the name Haleakalā, we've heard various accounts of that referring to the entire mountain, and also referring to only one of the peaks.

TF: So we have the Haleakalā peak, right? That's where the heiau is, I think, Manono is. That would be on the South Slope, right? It's a more modern version of the place. So I have been looking at it and looking at it for months. But I only get to touch on things very lightly for very long. So you can hear people say, Hele-a-ka-la the way of the sun. There's another one, I can't remember right now, but it's the the snaring of the sun, which is not Haleakalā, the house of the sun. So the name has come to this. But it has never always been this way and that's the evolution of language, right? So Hawaiians started off with, you know, the twelve letters of the alphabet, the 'okina becomes a consonant, right? The kahakō becomes another alphabet. But lexiconically, actually, it hasn't been identified as something yet. You know, it's either a stop or an elongation. So same thing with Haleakalā. I mean, some things are lost names, some are not practiced, some are homogenized for the use of what have you. So all the more reason why what you're asking me requires you to hold on to older information, the older stories. So when you tell the story to someone, you can start from the beginning, from what you know, from the 1800s, from the 1900s, and take them on that journey to where we are in the 21st century.

AK: Are there names that your 'ohana used? I know you described this as your father's mountain.

TF: Yeah.

- AK: Are there names that they used that maybe you haven't seen or heard very frequently being used in the park?
- TF: Well, you know, you add that Portuguese twist to language and you come up with some very interesting variations. You know, you start off with, wait a minute, I grew up with kupa'oa. And now you get somebody coming and going, "No, no, no its kūpaoa." You know, and different plants and things like that. So, my father was not a great reference for proper language because his Portuguese accent and understanding was very very strong. You know, Pidgin Portuguese put it all together, right? So none of the historical stuff that I ever really learned from my parents that way. I learned it from people before me. I learned it from very old documents and things like that. I would skip class and go to the Hamilton Library and sit in the archives all day and just read Hawaiian newspapers, find something written by somebody.
- AK: And the trail that we're on now, trail, Halemau'u Trail, what does that mean?
- TF: So interestingly enough, the twist I heard on Halemau'u was that there was a rest spot or a grass hale where people would come, you know, going to and going from. I've heard, Helemau, to go quickly. You know, I've heard all other variations and at this point, if I can just get somebody to say, Halemau'u, I think it's a victory because that's what we're calling it now. So we have to choose our battles, hold on to our memories, hold on to the information that is the truth, and we can share it with others but we can't make people do things, right? We can't. You know, I always tell people who say, "Halema'u," I say, "You know what, sometimes I lose a vowel here and there too, but if you can just remember that mau'u means grass and just slow it down just a little bit, you'll find that lost vowel."
- AK: Yeah. And I know you talked about rains, are there names of winds that you're familiar with associated with Haleakalā?
- TF: Yeah. You know, along the lines of 'Ūkiukiu. You put me on the spot on that. No, I couldn't. You know, if I heard a song, I'd go, "Oh, yeah, that's that wind and that's where it came from." That's how I remember things in poetry and in song, and that's how most of my kids will ever hear it. I'll start singing and they'll be like "Oh, that song!" and I'll sing it to them. But yeah, music, poetry, old stories are my connection to be able to tell you. Right now, off the top of my head, nothing, I'm just enjoying the weather.
- AK: Are there any oli or mele that you practice before coming up here? Aside from "E Ala E".
- TF: Through the hula, I've learned probably the oldest oli komo, and you know it would make sense that it started on Kaua'i. So I brought that up here. And so when the conservation groups I work with: the Nature Conservancy, Friends of Halaekalā National Park, others, they'll come to me and they'll say, please, you know, we want to oli, we want to ask permission to get into the park. And so my response is what I would use from hula, you know, come, come, come in, come in from out of the cold, you know, warm yourself up, go ahead and feel unrestricted to speak your mind and to open your mouth,

you know? And so I do that. But I'm being prompted in a spiritual sense to create oli and mele for this park. And the other day I was at the Makawao Library, the Hamline University, together with the Maui Seabird Recovery and the Maui Forest Bird Recovery and they have this touch screen and you can hear all the voices of all the birds that we still have. And then you can look at Nakula and you can see the restoration. And for me, that's speaking to me. And so I know that the time is coming, that those oli and mele that are specifically for this park will be birthed. And I'm just waiting. You know, I can hear the pulse of it coming and I'll write those. And then that will be for here..

AK: Yeah. We spoke with Eric Anderson and told us that he had also written oli for the park that he shared with us.

TF: Yea, you know the students from Kamehameha Schools, they come and they're constantly developing their oli. It's good. Then there's old oli, there's oli mahalo but it all doesn't feel like it has the fingerprints of this park yet. So what I'm trying to do is to listen really well and to write those things that are from here or for here. So that's part of my, I guess it's not in my job description, it's the stuff in the invisible ink.

AK: And I think maybe going back a little bit to some of the educational, outreach and volunteer programs that you're working with, specifically for Native Hawaiian communities, maybe?

TF: What we are trying to do because we are dealing and working with the public schools and the general schools that do exist, whether they're public or private—the deficit is, we have not been able to connect with the immersion schools, with the Kaiapuni schools. They are not getting what they need to become a part of the park, to experience the park in education in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. So I think that was one of the main reasons why I was brought on. And you know, like I said, the creation of the Hawaiian language park website, the inclusion of Hawaiian language lessons about the park resources. The two [lessons] that we have right now, one is about Kūkulu i Ka Hale, so building a hale like an authentic hale. And that is based from one of our Kaiapuni teachers whose 'ohana is in Kīpahulu. And then the other one is the 'āhinahina. You know, how do you identify? How does it grow? Why does it grow here? What do you know about it? And that Kumu has actually written the first known modern mo'olelo about the 'āhinahina from a perspective of, "I'm an 'āhinahina, I'm all alone, everybody wants to use me, they want to take pictures, they want part of my pieces, they want to come and get my nectar from my flowers, I'm all alone." And then she switches it. And it becomes a revelation that says, you know, my friend came today, the yellow faced bee and he told me his story about his day. The moth came and said, thank you for, you know, the blossoms and things like that. Making it relational, the way it used to be and should be. So, you know, we are digging hallowed ground and making it vibrant and producing again from those very little steps. Right.

AK: Wow. What a wonderful perspective to teach about the 'āhinahina.

TF: Yes. They are amazing teachers.

- AK: Are those available publicly or are they only available in the park?
- TF: Well they will be available publicly. So by the time you're done with this, they'll be out there.
- AK: And I'm sorry, I can't remember if you mentioned but the website in Ōlelo Hawai'i, is that already up?
- TF: No, we just received the grant from the National Park Foundation, so my work lies ahead.
- AK: You're just at the beginning stages.
- TF: Yeah, I mean, not even two weeks. So, we have to wait for the new park fiscal year to go ahead and start.
- AK: Congratulations!
- TF: Thanks, so exciting.
- AK: And we don't want to keep you too long or anything but moving more towards sort of your reflections of your relationship with over time, kind of before you worked with the past, when you started from 18 to 21 years old and then now returning.
- TF: I had my hands in the resources more and now I have my hands more on the people, right? With the people. It's rough. It's a rough transition. Okay, I'll give you that, because you know, I love working with the resources, but I understand my limitations as an older person now in the park and also the importance of the work that I'm here to do. So I'm a little grumpy about it. But, you know, nobody wants me on their fence crew anymore. I don't know if I want to be on the fence crew anymore.
- AK: Outside of being a staff member, would you come to the park for cultural reasons or with your hālau or for gathering?
- TF: You know, I would love to. And I think at some point I'm going to reach a balance but right now I spend so much time in the park doing what I do, that I'm trying to find the balance so I can come and just enjoy. And that's probably the thing that I miss the most about doing what I do. I have the experience and the knowledge that I can share with somebody who doesn't know, because I've already done it. I've been, you know, in the thick of it and stuff. And so I think that's beneficial. But yeah, I miss the hiking, I miss the solitude, you know, and just hanging out, I've got to get there.
- AK: Are there any future directions you'd like to see for the park? I know especially having both your keiki work here now.

- TF: Yeah. I'm just looking forward to—and I don't know if it's possible—but I'm looking forward to a more unified park. One heart, one mind. You know, direction, but I know that that comes from higher places. So, yeah, I'd like that. I'd like to get there. I'd like, you know, I have visions of everybody in the park being able to speak a certain amount of 'Ōlelo Hawai'i just naturally, effortlessly. That'd be nice.
- AK: Are there any kind of projects right now that you're starting or kickstarting now that you're in this role at the Park?
- TF: Yeah. I am looking forward to more work with Kapahu. That is in Kīpahulu or connected to the Kīpahulu district of the park. I think it is or could potentially be the project that would bring life back to the park like a living cultural park. So yeah, that's probably the most exciting part of the work that has yet to be done.
- AK: What does that entail?
- TF: So the Kīpahulu Living Farm is part of the Kīpahulu district of Haleakalā National Park. When I went there first, as I told you, Kimo Cabatbat but showed it to me and it was all covered in grass. So it's had a few hundred years of use previously. The Lind family is part of that lineage that is part owner and partner with the national park. I'm just hoping for that relationship to strengthen and that part of the park to grow that we will have the lo'i you know, we're all in there with the mud, you know, and growing and, you know, cultivating different types of kalo again. Maybe having a wauke forest and cultivating that, you know, getting their sustainable fishing documentation approved, things like that. So they're seemingly so far away, but it's such an important part of the park that could teach us so much. Yeah, even with, you know, the biosphere. Kama, is that what we call it? The Upper Kīpahulu Valley?
- LK: I'm not sure exactly what area you're referring to? Like, the general area of Kīpahulu?
- TF: Yeah, that table, the upper part where all the birds and the plants are the native ones.
- LK: Oh, yeah. I guess that could apply.
- TF: The biosphere. You know, pretty special place that's documented even in newspapers from the 1920s. Yeah, it's my favorite bit. So the last bit of the obituary that I translated or transliterated was that this man was so loved that the fruitfulness of his marriage and his life was compared to the 'ōhāhā. Do you know what the hāhā is?
- AK: No, I don't.
- TF: So the hāhā or the 'ōhāhā is a member of our Hawaiian lobelia family. And if you look at it looks like a kahili because it's got so many blossoms all the way around. So when you look at a picture of maybe, gosh, probably one of the 'i'iwi or something like that, you see the 'i'iwi sipping nectar from the 'ōhāhā and he's got what seems to be like hundreds of flowers to choose from. So when I think of Kīpahulu and I think about how somebody

remembered this man in his life and that his fruitfulness was like the blossoms of the 'ōhāhā. I think we've got something there that we could teach, that we could learn, that we could nurture, that we could grow.

AK: Yeah. Beautiful metaphor.

TF: Yeah, I was touched and it wasn't even about me. I got to be a part of that. Yeah.

AK: Um, I'm not sure what the right word is, maybe its metaphors or connections that you know of between places on Haleakalā and maybe something more makai. You know, they say when the lehua blooms, the manō comes out.

TF: Right, so very interesting. I think we have to go back to the Kumulipo. So everything has a dual existence, right? So the thing that you learn about the limu, right? Is that there is, you know, a bird or a plant, you know, that's a guardian of a marine creature or a marine plant. I think we have to go back there. Go back to the source, right? It's so silly, because that's what it is, right? Kumu is the source. I just started, you know, unearthing re-unearthing all of those connections between things on top of Haleakalā and things at the coast. And gosh, I'm trying to think of an easy one, but....

AK: We're putting you on the spot again.

TF: Yeah, you know, I think the most pronounced one in our cultural brochure will be the connection between the wiliwili tree and then lauwiliwilinukunukuoioi which is the fish, right? So that's the easiest connection. When I talk to the kids about other connections, we talk about the kolea which comes to visit us, right? And that's in the 'ōlelo no'eau and the kōlea tree.

AK: I'm not familiar with the kōlea tree.

TF: Yeah. So we have a kōlea, we have a kōlea lau nui, a kōlea lau li'i And then we have the kōlea that comes to visit. So, you know, I'm not one to---it has to be like perfect timing for me to go and then boom it flows. For right now, all I can do is give you the example of that connection and where you can find the source of that or the sources so that you can go and explore.

AK: And what was---sorry, can you talk a little bit more about the connection between the wiliwili and the lauwiliwilinukunukuoioi? Even just the names.

TF: Well, it's usually a protectorate relationship, like a guardianship, like the one watches out for the other. The counterpart is usually a guardian or stewardship type deal. How that happens you know only the mo'olelo can tell you because they seem quite far apart, right?

AK: And I guess also just growing up around this mountain. Would you guys ever come up here to gather for lā'au lapa'au or was that ever something that you and your 'ohana did?

TF: You know, one of my grandfathers on my mother's side was a kahuna la'āu lapa'au. So in one of the books, he was cited as, you know, his cure for cancer because he had gone through it. And I've looked recently to try and visit that. And that's no longer in the book. It would have been like a good addition or something like that. And I thought, where did that go? Did it get revised over the years? And there was a gentleman who is one of the surviving brothers. I don't know if he's still around, but he's one of the owners of the Servco Corporation. Any he says to me he uses. "Oh, I remember your uncle. You know, he'd come and he'd say he's going to beat it, I'm going to beat it. And, what do you know, the bugger beat his cancer!" And so we have that propensity, that gift in our family, whether we exercise it or not. You know, I've done stuff like that for people over the years that I've learned to do. But as far as like most recent from my parents, that wasn't their thing. You know, their healing was in food. Right? Sustainability, you know, eating off of the land.

AK: What was your uncle's name?

TF: Oh, yeah. So his nickname was Indian, and he was actually a fire captain out of, I want to say, Waikīkī, downtown Honolulu. Kind of like that area. And he had gotten cancer, and he knew enough about native plants to actually create something to put him into remission. And last name was Perkins. So that's my Perkins family. They're Hawaiian. They're from Nāpō'opo'o and a lot of them are buried there in Kahikolu churchyard. But the grandfather of that time period was actually English and Native American from upstate New York.

AK: Oh wow.

TF: So that's why, well when you put us all in a room together, we all have white hair, and it all started when we turned 30ish. And yeah, goodness gracious they had like 13 children.

AK: Oh wow.

TF: Yeah. And he actually came from New York and was a locomotive engineer and built the first train on Maui. After leaving O'ahu. So he was at O'ahu Railroad, and then he got called over, and then he built the Queen Emma on this island? Yeah. Kind of crazy, huh? Small, small world.

AK: And then I guess for now for your position, how often do you get to go out into Kīpahulu or Kaupō?

TF: It's rare. I'm trying to sort it out to get it so that my schedule is just not so inundated. But, you know, it's the early days of my tenure, as it were. And so they're so anxious because they've waited so long to get somebody to do all the things that they wanted to have done. And now that covid's over, people are moving around and they you know, it's just it's organizational maybe right now for my schedule. Yeah.

AK: And I think we don't want to take too much of your time and I know the elements are coming in still.

MM: I have a few follow-up questions.

AK: Yeah, go ahead.

MM: I'm wondering if you have any highlights or stories from your time on the fence crew or even in these short, like six months that you've been working in this new position here that you could share?

TF: Wow. You know, the highlights of my past are very dangerous to other people. You know, I just have to tell you, we were fearless. We did things that people wouldn't do nowadays. And I don't even know how to describe it. I mean, we got it done. We got work done. You know, you'd go like that extra hour, like, no, no, no, we're done, we're done. And you're like, "No, I can see the end of it." You know, you go to every means to do stuff. You know, you'd be there for somebody in your crew, in your division, in your park, you know. It's like, I just remember Adele's retiring and everyone asking, did somebody get a pig? We got a pig. Okay. You know, get it, throw it on the helicopter. Get back. You know, next thing you know what I'm like looking at a pig, you know? My dad wouldn't teach me that. So I'm like, okay, if I string it up on the rafters and I separate the interstitial tissue from that. . . . You see all my anatomy courses coming into use! You know, we just did stuff. People needed it. We did it. Park was family. You know, everybody had a lot of respect for each other. So I can't speak about those parts because I wouldn't want to get anybody into trouble or dishonor them. Maybe that's not the way they saw it, which is very common.

AK: Do you remember some of the folks on your fence crew, their names?

TF: Yeah. So I worked with Eric and I worked with Chris and Pete Connolly. Like I said, I worked with Dino, I've worked with Hank, I've worked with Terry Lind. I met my first love in the park. You know, he's on the mainland now doing very, very well. I don't know. There's a lot of people. You know, I remember them all in and out of context. And sometimes I wonder what they're doing. And some have passed on. The thing that is most impressive to me in this position in the park is how much I remember the love that I have for this place and these people and how I want people to get it. Not just on this is my job, and this is what I do. You know, we get to be in a place where people don't get to be. You know, some people like my son and my daughter get to be in places that maybe only a handful of people will ever get to go in their lifetimes. They are the handful, you know, and they're doing groundbreaking work. But I just want people to get that, that there's a heart to this land and what we do. And when I see a child, no matter where they're from, you know, to me, they're all children. But a student that experiences so much joy with just an inkling of the resources. That makes it all worthwhile. And I think that's where I have to be from, you know? So. Yeah.

MM: Can you also talk about your language learning journey that you grew up around Hawaiian? You also spoke Japanese. Any other languages? How?

TF: How does that happen? (Laughs) Well, you know, when you're a kid in downtown Honolulu and you've got the fish market and you've got Chinatown and, you know, you're walking into the latter part of immigration. You know, your best friend in kindergarten, she speaks Chinese. She teaches you how to write Chinese, right? You know, your uncle marries somebody who is Japanese or your friends are Japanese and their parents still have old *furo*, you know and you go to *Obon* festivals, and you learn in college and you learn in high school because that's what Pidgin is, right? So we're all speaking like six or seven languages. And when you're with a family that their traditions are Japanese, then you pick up more language when you're with, you know, I mean, of course, you know, with the Portuguese you learn all that dirty words first straight. I don't know if that's the way with the other languages, it's like, "Oh, that's how you see that," you know? And hopefully it grows from there. So yeah that's how you end up doing that. My hānai grandparents were native speakers or Mānaleo. While I was at university, I had teachers that were Mānaleo, so one of my instructors was from Ka'ūpūlehu and one of my other instructors was from Ni'ihau. And I had the instructor of all instructors, he was from Waimea and he was rough. So I had Kauanoë Kimura, you know Larry. And so, you know, you have such a treasury of people to draw from, all you need to really do is open up your desire. Just open that door, be open to it, and people will just pour into it wherever you want to know. Right, just have a teachable spirit. Have just a hunger for learning. Yeah.

MM: Is that what you're trying to bring to this current position you have?

TF: I think it's a perspective whether or not I'm going to be able to accomplish that. That just depends on each individual for themselves. You know, the things in this world, the high paying job, you know, you name it, you go through that, you know, 401k. Yeah, that's great but at the end of the day, there's still an empty spot. And everybody has to find out what that means. And it's not material. Yeah. So what? What fills that for you? Is it going to the quietest place in the world? Is it going to the darkest sky in the world? Is it hiking with your family or friends? Is it being in solitude? Is it being away from your job? Your cell phone? I don't know. Everybody has a different answer to that question, but it's not material. Yeah.

AK: Any last thought that you had that you'd like to share either in English or 'Ōlelo Hawai'i?

TF: Oh, gosh. Yeah, I don't know. I think I kind of pretty much gave it all to you. If you want me to craft something for you, to give you afterwards with my thoughts, once I processed, I could do that. And that's my whole thing is listening. Listening and learning here is about process. You're not going to get it all right up front. It's not going to say "Here I am!" You know, this is exactly how everything about this place and your experience, it's not a light switch. It's not a button. And that's how I teach about this place. That's how I write. That's how I do everything is I just need to sit with that for a bit. I think that the most the most wonderful comment I got recently from an adult was

when I did the Night Sky exhibit at the Schaeffer Gallery with Stan Honda, and he had a picture of the Milky Way and he had a silhouette of one of our 'a'ā formations, and it looked like a crab tried to reach out. It was black and it has like the pincher kind of thing. And I told the lady, I said, well, there's different names for the Milky Way, but the one that I like best is I'āleleikeaka. So it's the fish that's leaping or frolicking in the shadows. And I saw her two or three weeks later at one of the events. She says, you know, I remember absolutely nothing that night except that jumping fish that was playing in the night sky in the shadows. And it just tickled me pink. And I thought that wonder, that sense of wonder, right?

AK: Are you familiar with a lot of the constellations as you've been working with the Night Sky project? Is any of that recorded in a brochure or somewhere?

TF: Yes. But for me it's so new. It's so new that I think eventually we will. And my goal is to actually start to teach a Night Sky program, specifically based on Hawaiian culture and language. Yeah. So, I mean, I haven't even dipped my toe in the water. Just barely just got a splash from somebody else. So that's one of the goals. Either I or someone after me can go ahead and take that and run with it.

AK: And it sounds like you're really busy in the park, but are you part of any other kind of outside cultural organizations? I know you said hula hālau and paddling.

TF: You know, I used to be with the Na Ala Hele group before in their early years. Yeah, right now I'm just trying to find time. And we talk about balance in the park. But unless we make balance, it doesn't exist because we're so, I think, passionate, kind of just really, really invested in what we're doing that I think we forget that unless we invest in the other part of our lives, that we can't continue to sustain what we do with the resources. So yeah, I surf. When I'm up here. I'm like, oh, where can I go get some surf? You know, where can I go to pick some limu or go watch some fish. But yeah, we'll see. We'll see how it all kind of shakes out and a little more involvement civically. But I think I'm pretty involved, pretty invested.

AK: Are there any Hawaiian values specifically you really think about when you come into this park or come into this position with Haleakalā?

TF: Well, you know, we talk so much about Kuleana and, you know, it's individual and it's group. But the essence of what it means to mālama 'āina. I think that's really important, and I think we have to kind of go really deep to what that means. You know, and it's such a widely used phrase, you know, it's like, oh, you know, mālama 'āina series, you know, or whatever. But that whole idea of mālama and maluhia, you know, it's probably foundational to the park and what we do. Yeah.

AK: I'm sorry I'm going to put you on the spot again. How do you interpret mālama 'āina and maluhia?

TF: Well, you know one is to care for, to steward. And then the other one is to protect. You know we are all *kia'i mauna*. You know, we're not just stewards. We are guardians. We are sentinels. And what does that mean to you? You know one day, there was a car coming into Halemau'u and it was flying around the corner and there were like three *nēnē*, and, you know, without even thinking, I stepped in between the car and the *nēnē*. So at the visceral level, would you risk your life for the resources? Would you give a part of yourself for the resources? Like I said. It just really depends on you. You know, it's like after work, I thought about it and went, "Oh, my gosh," you know? You know, you love the *nēnē*, but do you love them to death? Well, apparently, viscerally, I love them to death. Potential death, anyway. And you know, it's not the first brush that I've had with death on this mountain. I don't regret any of it. You know, given the same circumstances, I'd do it again. Crazy, right? I tell you, it's just sad that that generation in the park was fearless. Some people would say stupid. But very invested.

AK: Thank you thank you.

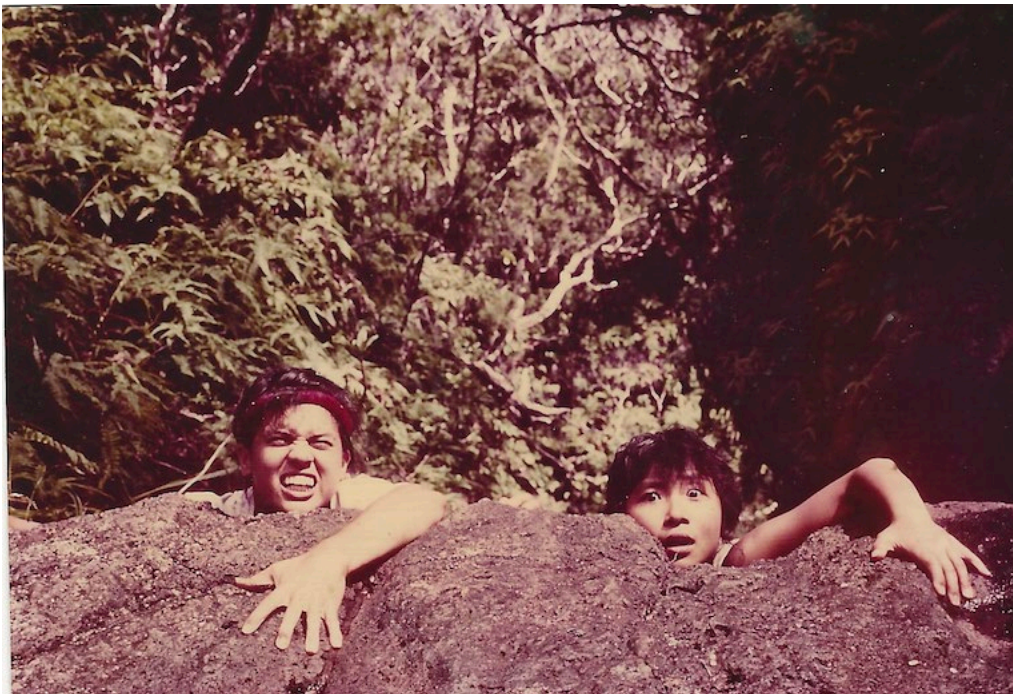
TF: Yeah. Okay. You're welcome. I love it. I'm shaking because my muscles are like, you've got your butt on some rocks and I don't like it.

AK: Oh, thank you.

TF: I hope that was helpful.



Cathleen (Natividad) Bailey and Theresa Fernandez at the hangar in Kahului
Photo courtesy of Theresa Fernandez



Cathleen (Natividad) Bailey and Theresa Fernandez in Manawainui
Photo courtesy of Theresa Fernandez