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*"Still here, still raising
puppies, training
teams, and serving
our community."*

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Feels as if time passed faster this year than in years past. It was a time of healing, restoration, and transition. Happy holidays to all.

First, the hopeful news, we generated some real dollars through fee for services. We trained and placed Pika with Kahi Mohala and got paid through Sutter Health. Was nice to support a local institution while contracting with a major national player. Of course, Kahi is now part of Queens, but still we proved a concept and delivered on a promise. What is more, our friends at Harmony Chapter

No.4 Order of the Eastern Star, came through, again, raising another \$10,000 for our work, doubling their contribution, and pretty much covering the cost of providing a dog, Hoku, to a deserving young man, Jake.



As has always been Susan's and our tradition, we went back into schools with full force with continued support from our volunteers. Was nothing short of a poetic return to our roots, launching a Reading with Dogs program at Princess Ruth Ke'elikōlani Middle School, supporting some of our most underserved keiki; our Marshallese and Chuukese students among the almost 60% Pacific Islander population at this iconic downtown school. What is more, after 20 years of volunteerism and program offerings to the HIDEOE, we were paid for our services. Nothing but aloha for those kids, our volunteers, and the Princess Ruth leadership. Thank you, Joe and Kristen.

We had some other big wins this year, Frank finally got accepted for VA benefits after 3 duels with the windmill. Chris has struggled, but Colonial Dames stepped up and donated \$500 to sponsor his training and dog, Penny. Susan gave a talk at the annual Colonia Dames lunch Oct 27 to thank them for the generosity, And, Kieran has taken hat in hand for us and has lots of plans for an educational booth and possibly selling some of our SWAG.



Let's see what else? Puna was a great hit at Sacred Heart's production of Annie, 19 rehearsals and 9 shows! Standing ovation for Sacred Hearts for a great show and the \$250 donation. Here's to dogs on Broadway. And, quietly without an audience, Susan has been participating in 1:1 therapeutic sessions on Sundays at doctor's request to help a young boy work on his fear of dogs. There's more, but you get the flavor.

Now, for one of the hardest parts of being an Executive Director. The time has come for us to begin our goodbyes to Susan. For more than twenty years, she has served as our leader, our inspiration, our champion and for so many a personal hero. Hold on, she isn't gone yet, and she isn't leaving us to our own demise. She is, however, stepping down as Program Officer and beginning a 1-2 year process of training us to stand on our own and carry the legacy forward. She will likely join our Board and will be engaged in our strategic partnership with Aloha Independent Living of Hawai'i (AILH). More on that in the new year.

These will mean harder times than usual for us as I lead us through my first ADI accreditation and begin to wake to the reality of FI-DO with a lot less Susan. We are not saying farewell to her just yet. We will make sure everyone is invited to that celebration. Promise! And we are absolutely resolved to not say goodbye to all this work and to a bright future. But we are going to take a breath, take the leash and feel what it feels like to take the lead.

Finally, in the spirit of the season and to end on a smiling note, we celebrated with our volunteers, teams in training, and Board members at our Annual Holiday Romp, just before Christmas! This was a special get together because we also celebrated our "P" litter's 1st birthday and Angie's 14th. Angie is our oldest program dog and dog-mama, grandma, and great grandma! Many of our "P" pups are currently in training including Hoku! It was great to see and catch up with our "old school" volunteers and meet the new volunteers and teams! Of course, all a little bittersweet, as we noted this to be one of our last holiday get-togethers with Susan at the helm! Happy for Susan's next chapter as Grandma!

As always, blessing to all of you for unwavering support and a hopeful thank you in advance for your continued generosity in bringing Hawaii FI-DO forward, preserving Susan's legacy, and to a new and bright future for FI-DO and the wonders of the human-dog bond.

Thank you, all a million times, over.



Matt Lorin
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Lorin".