



## Friends of NELHA

A 501(c)3 non profit organization

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Aloha!

I'm writing in support of an important movement in our island, the Sustainable Hawaii Youth Leadership Initiative (SHYLI). I believe Hawaii's isolation and vulnerability is our greatest asset. It forces our island people to shift into a new era of sustainable and self-reliant living. Upon meeting SHYLI members, I'm encouraged to see our youth leaders grab the ball and run to the goal with a sense of urgency.

Since its start, SHYLI has made impressive progress -- beginning with the first youth delegate in 2010, speaking at APEC and then the pilot program at the West Hawaii Explorations Academy and now expanding to schools and organizations in the County of Hawaii. To help their growth, I've introduced them to potential partners and supporters.

I was especially impressed to meet Josue Cruz, the 23-year old co-founder of the Institute's demonstration project in Vieques, Puerto Rico. Hearing of how this has transformed his life was truly inspirational. Josue serves as the youth director of the Annual Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development. I'm excited that Hawaiian youth will have this opportunity to serve as SHYLI's youth delegates and learn with other island youth about how to become leaders of their islands.

For those of you who have expressed concern about our young people, our island and our collective future, this is key piece of a larger collective movement in Hawaii.

I hope you will join me to support this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Guy Toyama  
Executive Director  
Friends of NELHA