

HAWAII'S MVP: ARIES JACKSON



On February 15, our Associate Director, Aries Jackson, was featured on Hawai'i's MVP on KITV News (you can watch her story online at kitv.com/clip/12211194/hawaii-mvp-aries-jackson). Why is she Hawai'i's Most Valuable Player? Because of what each and every Common Grace mentor does with their child every week.

Over 150 mentors go out to meet with their child that they are specially paired with throughout the week. Auntie Aries meets with Maylani every Thursday after school. For an hour, they'll read and play together—and then Auntie Aries will listen to Maylani talk about her day at school, at home or anything that's on her mind. Perhaps Auntie will give gentle advice or lay down words of support and encouragement, but the most

important aspect is that Auntie Aries listens to her.

The idea behind Common Grace is simple: *a child that seeks attention needs attention*. Many of the children that Common Grace works with may experience homes of incarcerated parents, dysfunctional families, neglect, poverty and even homelessness. Just about all of them are lonely. And some children, like Maylani, come from immigrant families and experience an immense difference in culture, finding it difficult to succeed socially and academically, putting them at risk for failure.

A mentor is there to simply give an unexpected kindness to that child—like what Auntie Aries does for Maylani; like what all the mentors do for their children every single week. They provide stability and consistency in the chaotic environment the child may be surrounded by. It is the gesture that speaks in volumes, that someone in their lives truly cares for, loves and supports them. We thank you deeply for being kind to a lonely and hurting child in need.

Mentor training dates



Want to mentor? Attend a mandatory training on any of these days:

July 24, August 24, September 25

Contact Aries @ 283-4335 for more info

MAHALO TO: The logo for 'House of Photography' features the words 'HOUSE OF' in a small, blue, sans-serif font above the word 'Photography' in a large, stylized, blue script font. The word 'MAHALO TO:' is in a bold, blue, sans-serif font to the left of the logo.

Common Grace
Kindness 4 Kids

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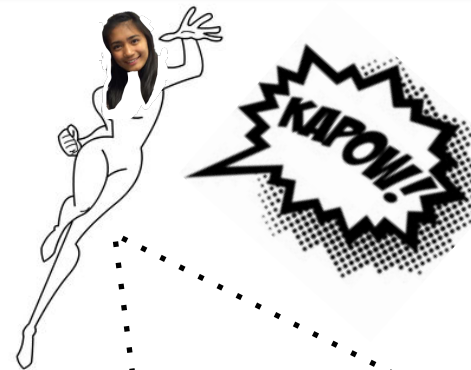
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Which superhero gets the Snickers bar? I'll tell you who—Sophia! Superman and Batman are myths. Sophia is real! Only Sophia and the 150 other mentors can put their arms around a kid like Jahna and literally rescue her in real life.



So here's to SuperSophia, one of many heroic



mentors...like Lyn...like Aries (read about them in this letter). And, simply and humbly, I ask you to PLEASE GIVE something to Common Grace. We need lots of help keeping these heroes on the job.

Grace to you,




Deeana and Aunt Lyn during mentoring in 2009 (left) Deeana and Aunt Lyn reunited in 2015 (right)

Aunt Lyn and Deeana have been friends for ten years now, but they started their special friendship through Common Grace. The two pictures above were both published along with articles in Hawaii Parent Magazine, one in 2009 and another in 2015 when they were reunited once again.

Aunt Lyn first started mentoring Deeana when she was in the fourth grade and stayed with her all the way until she graduated from Waimalu Elementary School in the sixth grade. Aunt Lyn saw Deeana grow from a shy little girl into a beautiful and confident young woman.

In 2015, while interviewing them for their second article, I happily observed the two. Bringing out a plastic photo album, Aunt Lyn carefully flipped through the pages until she found a picture of a grinning, chubby-cheeked Deeana, sitting on Santa's lap. They both smile as they look upon the picture, remembering making miniature houses constructed from graham crackers and gumdrops. As I see the two sitting together, hunched over a photo album filled with many happy memories, I longed that every child could have what they have. The friendship they have forged over the years is the kind that Common Grace strives for. Deeana also said she wouldn't mind becoming a mentor herself one day. In fact, students Deeana's age are already having opportunities to do so (like Sophia!).

We're working on a new project called YouthGrace, offered to juniors and seniors in high school for academic credit. In a 12-week session, the students learn how to mentor little kids. After the high school students are trained, little kids at a neighborhood elementary school are handpicked by teachers and counselors and paired with a high school mentor. At the end of the school year, they both attend each other's graduation. So far, YouthGrace is offered at Kaimuki High School and Trinity Christian School and in the following years we hope to offer YouthGrace to many more students. We are so excited!

FLOAT-A-CHILD

