

# Proclamation

Mental health is essential to a person's emotional and physical well-being and quality of life. By treating mental illnesses properly and ensuring that individuals receive the best possible care, everyone benefits, including Hawai'i families and communities.

Depression is one of the most common forms of mental illness. By 2020, the World Health Organization projects that depression will be the second-leading cause of disability worldwide, regardless of race, age or gender. Furthermore, physical conditions such as coronary heart disease and insomnia are shown to be more prevalent among individuals who suffer from depression and other forms of mental illness.

Many people who suffer from mental illness resist treatment because they believe it is not serious, can be treated themselves or that it is a personal weakness rather than a serious medical condition. Fortunately, several stakeholders, including Mental Health Kōkua, Mental Health America of Hawai'i and the state Department of Health's Adult Mental Health and Child and Adolescent Mental Health divisions, are working together to decrease the stigma of mental illness and increase public awareness.

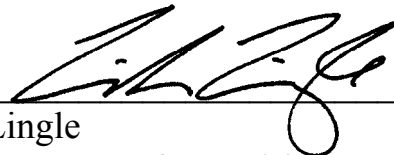
Mental Health America is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year in 2009. Having served the local community for more than 66 years, Mental Health of Hawai'i has an established reputation as an advocate for mental health which works to improve the care, treatment and participation of those with mental illnesses. Projects include The Invisible Children's Project, which partners Mental Health of America Hawai'i with service providers to help identify families in which a parent has a mental illness; The Trauma of War, a community task force dedicated to offering support to returning soldiers and their families; and Teen Suicide Prevention, where educational materials are developed for faith-based groups, Sunday school classes and congregations detailing how to identify and intervene in teen depression. In addition, this May, Mental Health of America Hawai'i will hold its fourth annual Mental Health Mahalo Awards Luncheon.

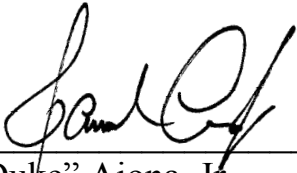
**THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR.,** Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim the month of **May 2009**, as

## **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

in Hawai'i, and encourage our citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, and schools to participate in statewide efforts to improve services for members of our 'ohana who suffer from mental illnesses.

**DONE** at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this fourth day of May 2009.

  
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Linda Lingle  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

  
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James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.  
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i