

## **Bay Would Go!**

By Haidee Abe

As we continue to navigate the disruptions and challenges caused by the COVID pandemic, on behalf of the Bay Clinic Community Board of Directors, we would like to extend our gratitude to the hard-working employees at Bay Clinic. Your continued commitment to serve our community is truly commendable and humbling. We truly appreciate the hard work and ingenuity shown by our leadership and employees especially in the last few months. They have worked tirelessly to support our community.

So much has changed in a short period of time, and with this fourth wave of COVID, it seems like we are being tested once again. This is why now, more than ever, we must focus all of our energy on defeating this pandemic and the challenges associated with it. Nothing is more important than ensuring the health and safety of our patients, the community, and our workforce. And this time around, we are in a much better position to respond. We have a good supply of PPE and our clinics are primed with fever screening kiosks, UVC lights to inactivate airborne COVID pathogens, and sanitization protocols to reduce the spread from high touch areas. In addition, we have a COVID Clinic that already provided over 7000 shots in arms, with much of the patients coming from rural areas and the schools.

Bay Clinic had a recent Community Health Worker (CHW) kick-off event that included community partners like Kumukahi (aka HIHAF), Hui Mālama, Papa 'ola Lokahi, HOPE Services, and the Department of Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division. The goal of our CHW program is to serve those high needs or at-risk patients who lack a strong circle of support and as a result overutilize the emergency room or end up sicker because of their unmet health needs. Bay has developed the reputation of serving in areas that other health entities don't have the resources to serve.

During this unprecedented time, many people are looking to health care organizations, such as Bay Clinic, to provide the same exceptional and compassionate care that they expected prior to this pandemic. The Bay Board is encouraged to see our CEO, Dr. Kimo Alameda, utilize every resource and every team member throughout the organization to address this crisis head on, while continuing to care for all of our patients. We have full confidence that Bay Clinic, along with our health partners will rise above the challenges ahead, and sometime during the coming months, we will look at this difficult time in the "rearview mirror" with immense pride in how we individually and collectively, responded.

To our community partners, thank you for your continued support. Your commitment to our shared community is a powerful affirmation for the many dedicated Hawai'i Island providers, nurses, clinical and support staff, and volunteers. And to our fearless Bay Clinic employees, once again, thank you for your dedication and commitment. Bay has a slogan taken from the

Published Sunday, September 26, 2021

legendary surfer Eddie Aikau who would surf any wave, any place, at any time. It is fitting to say, "Bay too... Would Go!"

*Community First serves as a neutral forum for the community to come together and as a catalyst for solutions to improve health and lower medical costs on Hawaii Island.*