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concerns, and allowed me to become more understanding and avoid many conflicts throughout my high school career. —Caitlin Hooker, KHS senior, who asked the first question of the Dalai Lama: “If we lived in a world with no pain and destruction, would we still understand and promote peace? If so what are the reasons for promoting it?”

I don't know your (Hawaiian) language — ua ua ua — but we can exchange smiles ... our eyes show sincerity. —Dalai Lama, in a meeting with native Hawaiian leaders, East-West Center, April 15

“Philosophy for Children also re-energizes teachers,” says Amber Makaiau, Ph.D., who is affiliated with the university and teaches ethnic studies at KHS. “You’re no longer a wrote animal.”

Gone are the days when teachers lectured, assigned reading and threw pop quizzes.

The “community of enquiry” used in p4c has spread beyond ethnic studies, and is now used in everything from English to psychology. And teachers, says Makaiau, have formed their own inter-departmental committees of enquiry.

Based on feedback from UH research, teacher reports, student responses and community comments, tweaks have been made to p4c since 2004, the philosophy department working in collaboration with the Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center at UH-Manoa and Cal State University-Sacramento.

While there are not currently direct ties between the UH philosophy department and the College of Education, some teachers-to-be drift over — that’s how Miller and Makaiau got involved. “But we’d

love it if p4c became a graduation requirement,” says Miller.

He says several schools are interested in adapting the program (but funds and resources are short), and Kuhio Elementary is working with UH to implement p4c there. And Marc Tolentino, who taught at Kailua and is now teaching English at Mililani High, is leading a professional development group for interested teachers.

I was in English class and we all sat in a circle. My thoughts on this were that it was a very weird and awkward way of teaching kids. But I was very interested



His Holiness wearing a mahi'ole at Bishop Museum. Nathalie Walker photos nwalker@midweek.com

and began to like it. It was a brand new way of learning in English class. We weren't just reading a book and doing reading/writing assignments. We would discuss topics and problems in society/the world and voice our opinions. We use these things called “community balls,” which is a ball of yarn that the class makes by introducing themselves, thus this is made by the community. We use this ball to throw to people and whoever has the ball may speak an opinion or answer the question or topic. This made learning for me very good because it got people to be interactive and involved in class instead of just the usual sitting and reading. — Jeremiah Kaahanui-Frankovic, KHS

senior, third student to ask the Dalai Lama a question: “In our school, we value learning through confusion. So we would like to know, when you get confused, what thinkers or external sources do you turn to to find clarity?”

I am a Buddhist, but I am not attached to Buddhism. If you are too attached to your race, your country, your religion, it is hard to see the good in others. — Dalai Lama, Kailua High School, April 16

During my visit to Manoa, I asked about the common assumption that kids today have shortened attention spans because of games and technology.

That, says Jackson, is “a fallacy ... It’s a self-fulfilling prophecy. What happens then is, schools design curriculums in 10-minute segments ... These kids are capable of deep and extended thought.”

They are also capable, he says, of “spontaneous eloquence.”

“It’s so cool when kids have a breakthrough moment,” says Makaiau. “I’ll never forget the day a freshman exclaimed, ‘I’m a philosopher!’”

For the past two years I’ve come to find that the way we learn here, is the most productive way to learn for me. I know that this is a fact because the teachers let us speak and let us find the way to figure out our answers to our confusion. Which gives us the mindset of accomplishment, and that we can accomplish things on our own. We are independent, and can survive by ourselves. When I go out into the world I see it differently. I see it as something I can overcome, or something I can work to overcome, and to show peace while doing it. —Marcus Malepeai, KHS sophomore who asked the second question of the Dalai Lama: “In this time of political unrest, leaders around the world promote many things. However, many haven’t taken action to fulfill their promises. Can words be taken seriously?”

Happiness results entirely in its own causes — it depends on your own actions — physical, mental, psychological. To take the wrong course and expect a good result is foolish. —Dalai Lama, Stan Sheriff Center, April 14

“A happy future is possible,” the Dalai

Lama told Kailua students. “But you must make preparations now ... Time is always moving, the future is yet to come. You can shape it. But merely waiting for the future is wrong. You must make every effort to make a happy future. You are the generation who has responsibility for the future. My time is now almost ending. Your time is just beginning.”

“Kailua High School students are known as philosophers,” Miller said at the assembly, and urged others to “join our enquiry.”

To see KHS students’ complete responses, go to midweek.com. You will be impressed.



Genesis Of The Dalai Lama’s Oahu Visit

The Dalai Lama’s visit to Honolulu this month has its roots in Vancouver, B.C. Victor Chan, longtime friend of the Dalai Lama and co-author of two books with him, was hosting a peace conference in 2009.

“My original intent was to have Pam Omidyar on the panel with him,” says Victor, founder of the Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education. “So we got Pierre instead.” That’s Omidyar above.

The two men hit it off immediately.

So when the Omidyars pledged to give \$50 million over five years to charitable causes, they enlisted the Hawaii Community Foundation, a remarkable matchmaking organization for would-be donors and nonprofits. From that came Pillars for Peace, which hosted the visit with HCF.

One of the goals of the Dalai Lama’s visit was to familiarize him with the Hawaiian concept of “aloha.” It also fit well with his emphasis on preserving native cultures and languages.

“We have a great appreciation of all the benefits of aloha from our host culture,” says Kelvin Taketa, president/CEO of HCF. “And there’s something about living on an island — we all understand we rely on one another. And we do a remarkable job, with many ethnic groups living in relative peace. We’re proud of that, but it’s a fragile thing too, something we have to work on with ‘purposeful action.’”

The Dalai Lama is the first of several world peace leaders Pillars for Peace and HCF hope to bring to Hawaii in coming years. Suggestion: Next time, how about Aung San Suu Kyi? —D.C.