Meet our outstanding University of Hawaii Master Gardeners!

Jayme Grzebik

Statewide Outstanding Service Award
Amy Christmas, Kaua‘i

Chosen for her consistent dedication and significant contribution to the community of Kaua‘i through her efforts in school garden activities. She excels as a volunteer and is a significant player in the Kaua‘i Master Gardener program, given that it is a very small volunteer base. We appreciate her volunteer time and recognize her involvement in school garden communities as a valuable role that the Statewide UH Master Gardener program strives to achieve in each program. On behalf of the Statewide Program, thank you for all you do Amy! When requesting nominations, below is the description that was presented and read at the 2012 Awards Ceremony.

Amy Christmas has been a certified Master Gardener for a couple of years and her volunteer service has focused on a preschool garden on Kaua‘i. Amy brings energy and enthusiasm in her garden activities and has innovative ideas to teach the children. Amy visits the preschool children each week and one year, Amy focused on the plant of the week such as coconut where she brings a coconut and the leaves and explains how to grow and use parts of the coconut plant. The next week she might bring a kukui nut and leaf and explain how the early Hawaiians used the kukui nut in their daily lives. The next year Amy focused on the creature of the week where she focused on the monarch butterfly one week, then the honey bees the next time, and the anole lizard the next. Amy Christmas brings a new energy to the preschool she visits and represents the Kauai Master Gardeners in a new way. The preschool children love her, the teachers love her. The preschool program coordinator asked Amy - "you’re coming back next year right?"

As most Master Gardeners would say, I wish all my Master Gardeners were as energetic and resourceful as Amy Christmas.
Statewide Outstanding Leadership Award
Kendal Lyon, East Hawai‘i

Chosen for her valuable contributions and leadership roles in the East Hawai‘i Master Gardener Program as well as her contribution to the Statewide goals and efforts to create a synergy among neighbor islands, particularly her contribution to the information compiled on UH MG Statewide website. The public as well as the Master Gardeners in our programs have benefited from the information that Kendal has tirelessly organized and compiled. On behalf of the Statewide Program, thank you Kendal! When requesting nominations, below is the description that was presented and read at the 2012 Awards Ceremony.

Kendal completed the Master Gardener class in 2009 and, in the past three years, she has made a significant mark on the Hawai‘i Island Master Gardener program. In 2009, she helped to write a set of office procedures to guide MGs on the Helpline. This set of office procedures has since been used as a model by other island programs. Kendal has offered classes on Helpline procedures and 75% of the MGs in the East Hawai‘i program have successfully completed the training. She continues to look for ways to involve fellow Master Gardeners in boosting the productivity and creativity of the Hawai‘i Island program. In 2011, Kendal invited fellow MGs to lead workshops, and thus far, there have been three highly successful events, two workshops for Master Gardeners only on diagnosis of pests and diseases, and a workshop open to the public on Square Foot Gardening. Three more workshops have been planned for the fall of 2012, one on herbs, one on container gardening, and one on tomatoes.

In 2010, Kendal wrote and published "The Master Gardener's Web Guide" to help home gardeners and Master Gardeners navigate the computer to find science based answers to their gardening questions. In 2011 and 2012, she worked tirelessly to develop and edit material for the Master Gardener web site. Some of the material that Kendal submitted for the East Hawai‘i site is now featured on the statewide site, most notably the 47 "Frequently Asked Questions" which provide photos, source material, and answers to many of the questions that come up most often on the Helpline. Kendal spent over 400 hours last year working on the web site, on program support, and in the demonstration garden at the Komohana extension complex. She has worked with fellow MGs to create a teaching space both for MGs and the public. In the spring of 2012, the East Hawai‘i MGs planted a garden for the Food Basket. In a three month period, over 200 pounds of eggplant, beans, tomatoes, chard, onions and mountain apples were donated to hungry families. Finally, Kendal worked with Brian Bushe of the ADSC to write and present 15 Pest Challenge questions to the Hawai‘i Island MGs. Master Gardeners were challenged to look at a photo, study the symptoms presented, and decide what disease or pest was presented, as well as to offer a solution.

Kendal pushes the envelope in every way, inspiring her fellow Master Gardeners to be involved at all levels, to "think and act smart" on the Helpline, and to share our knowledge with one another.
Statewide Outstanding Public Outreach
Celeste Makrevis, West Hawai‘i

This award recognizes Celeste Makrevis in her exceptional talent and dedication in working with the gardening public. Her extensive service hours and her capacity to reach a vast audience with the multitude of service activities are impressive. Her creative use of time is one that we see as a role model in serving the community through the Master Gardener program. On behalf of the Statewide Program, thank you Celeste! When requesting nominations, below is the description that was presented and read at the 2012 Awards Ceremony.

Celeste, a former MG on the mainland, hit the ground running when she enrolled in our program in 2011, putting her extensive gardening and public outreach experience to use immediately. It quickly became apparent that Celeste is confident and exceedingly competent in disseminating science-based information to the public in a friendly and cordial manner.

Celeste continues to add to a diverse portfolio of outreach and program management activities, all of her own accord and all exceptional in detail and quality of delivery. Celeste has contributed numerous extension outputs in a wide variety of formats, tremendously enhancing the quality and diversity of our outreach efforts in the process.

Extension Outputs since 2011:


Publications:

- Website publications: Updated, edited and posted on MG website for easy access to these popular outreach and Helpline handouts.
- 1. Home Remedies for Pest Control. 2. Sugar - Boric Acid Bait for Ant Control.
- Posters: Managing the Coffee Berry Borer in the Home Garden. Displayed regularly at public outreach events along with traps/lures for sale.
Website and Social Network Development and Management:

- Designed, manages and maintains West Hawaii MG website. Provides frequent updates for schedule of public outreach events and MG volunteer opportunities.
- Created, manages and maintains WHMG Facebook site with frequent posts chronicling the outreach activities of the program.

Helpline Database Management:

- Updated and modified the existing Access Database computer program for Helpline question and answer data input to improve functionality for the Helpline volunteers.

In addition to her litany of outreach accomplishments Celeste also is the Vice President and founding member of the WHMG Association, founding member of the Advisory Board, assists in the planning and implementation of the training program, assists in the screening of program applicants, attends all the training classes, and manages the list of prospective MG students for the next training program.

Celeste simply is an extension Master Gardener extraordinaire and someone I admire greatly.