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# **SPECIAL EDITION**

## **HUD's Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities Programs**

### **How Supportive Housing Can Change Lives**

*Submitted by Cheryl Fukunga, Program Manager, Honolulu*

Hale Kuha`o is the Hawaiian name for the House of Independence. It is also the name of a HUD Section 811 property that provides persons with spinal cord injuries the ability to regain some of the independence that was lost due to their disability. This property is a great example of the housing provided by HUD's 811 program for supportive housing for persons with disabilities.

To really understand the profound impact this property has on the lives of its residents, you only need to spend some time with its residents. I recently had the privilege and pleasure of meeting Mr. Gordon Kekeikikoikaikaokalani Dela Cerna, known as Ikaika to his friends and family. Ikaika has been a resident of Hale Kuha`o from the day the project opened its doors in October 2000.

Prior to his spinal cord injury, Ikaika was a student at Brigham Young University in Laie on the Island of O`ahu. At BYU, he was able to express his exceptional personal style on the stage as a dancer at one of O`ahu's favorite tourist destinations – the Polynesian Cultural Center. Every April, Ikaika performed at the Merrie Monarch Festival, the world's premier hula competition, dancing with such hula halau (house of hula instruction) as Hui Ho`oulu Aloha and the Men of Waimapuna.

It takes an extraordinary amount of physical stamina and mental acuity to be able to perform in the men's hula competition.

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