



# Annual Report

2024



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Message from the Board President
- 4 Message from the Executive Director
- 5 Our Mission & Vision
- 6 About AccesSurf
- 8 2024 Highlights
- 10 Financial Review
- 11 Testimonials
- 14 Our Team
- 16 Community Partners
- 18 Looking Ahead

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of AccessSurf,

Serving in my first year as President of the AccessSurf Board of Directors has been both a tremendous honor and a source of great pride. It has been inspiring to witness firsthand the incredible impact of our mission—empowering people with disabilities through access to the ocean and a supportive community. Every event, every volunteer, and every participant reminds me why AccessSurf is so special and why the work we do matters so deeply.

This past year has been one of growth and excitement for our organization. We have seen encouraging momentum in our budget, reflecting not only the generosity of our supporters but also the strength of our vision for the future. This growth enables us to expand our reach, improve our programs, and ensure that more individuals and families experience the freedom, joy, and healing that come from the ocean.

I also want to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation to my fellow members of the Board of Directors. Your dedication, leadership, and unwavering

support make all the difference. It is inspiring to serve alongside a team so deeply committed to advancing our mission and strengthening our community.

Looking ahead, I am excited for what we will accomplish together. With the continued passion of our board, volunteers, and supporters, I know the best is yet to come.

With gratitude and aloha,

**Thomas Foti**

President, Board of Directors  
AccessSurf



# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aloha,

As I reflect on 2024, I am filled with gratitude and pride for all that we have accomplished together at AccessSurf. This past year has been one of meaningful growth, new partnerships, and expanded opportunities to serve our community.

In addition to our on-going adaptive surf, swim and canoe programs we were honored to be part of a Metabolic Equivalency Test (METs) project called AccessMETS, strengthening our commitment to research and innovation in adaptive programming. We also expanded our reach by hosting our first program day on the Big Island in partnership with Avanos Medical, bringing the joy and empowerment of the ocean to more participants and families across Hawai'i.

We are also very excited to announce our partnership with the Kahākūkahi Foundation to provide community adaptive water sports programs on Maui. AccessSurf's official neighbor island expansion.

None of these milestones would have been possible without the dedication and heart of our incredible staff, volunteers, and donors. Your time, generosity, and

passion make it possible for AccessSurf to thrive and to continue creating inclusive spaces where everyone can experience the healing power of the ocean.

As we look ahead, I am excited to build upon the momentum of 2024 and continue expanding our programs, partnerships, and impact. Together, we are not only growing an organization—we are growing a movement of access, inclusion, and aloha.

With deepest appreciation,



**Cara Short**  
AccessSurf Executive Director



# OUR MISSION

AccessSurf provides life-changing accessible water programs for people with disabilities.

# OUR VISION

We are leaders in a global movement of adaptive water sports, creating 'An Ocean of Possibilities', where inclusion and accessibility are prioritized in every community.

# ABOUT ACCESSURF

For nearly 20 years, AccesSurf has been more than a surf program—it has been movement for inclusion, empowerment, and aloha in Hawai'i and beyond.

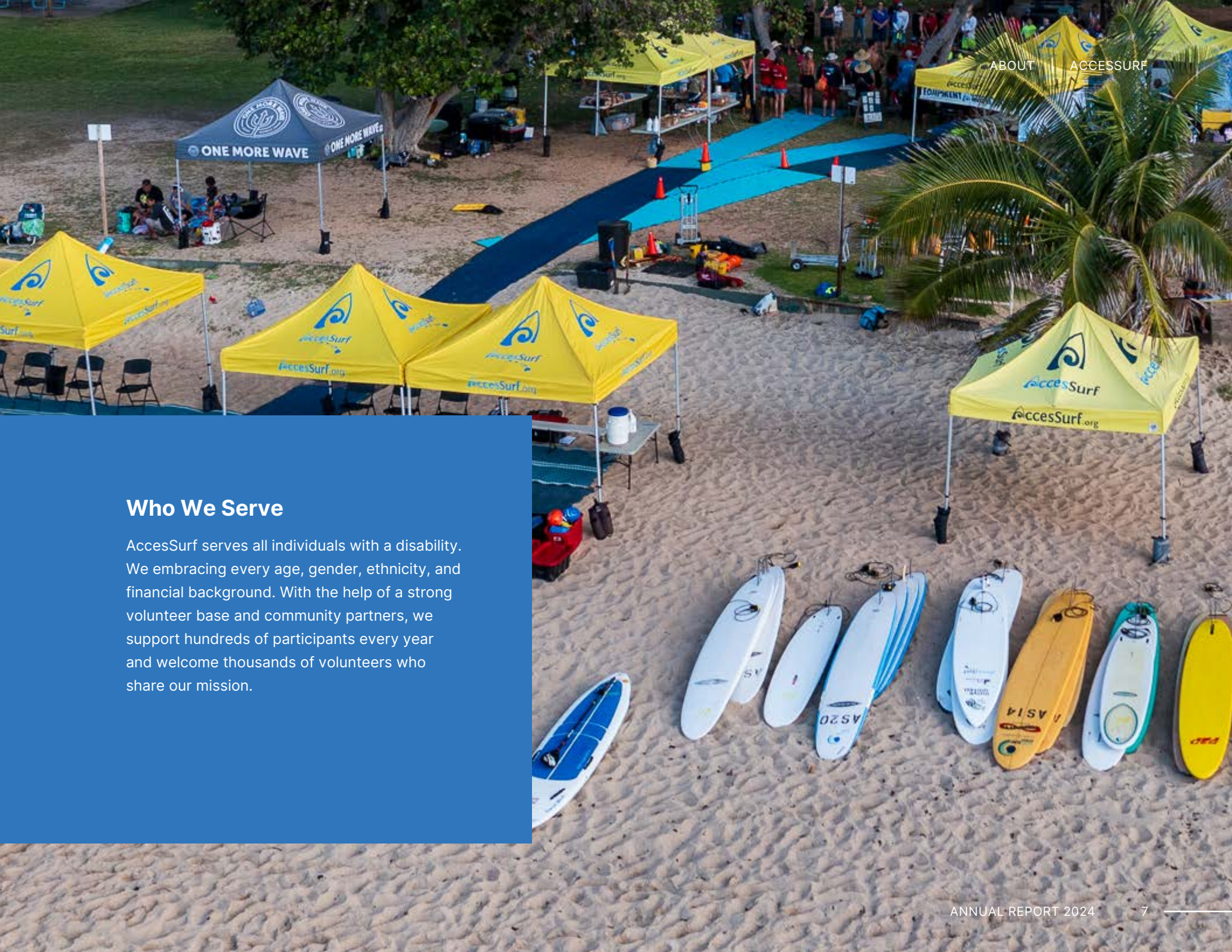
## Who We Are

AccesSurf is a Hawai'i-based nonprofit organization dedicated to creating an inclusive community for people with disabilities through adaptive ocean and water programs. Founded in 2006, we have spent nearly two decades breaking down physical and social barriers so that everyone can experience the freedom and healing power of the ocean.

## What We Do

Our programs include monthly Monthly Day at the Beach, Wounded Warrior Day at the Beach, and adaptive swim programs. We host specialized adaptive surf clinics, an outrigger canoe program, and an annual international adaptive surfing championships. We provide training and resources for volunteers and partner organizations, ensuring that the spirit of accessibility extends far beyond our own events. Each program is designed not just to give participants the chance to surf, swim, or paddle, but to build confidence, foster friendships, and create lasting connections within the community.





## Who We Serve

AccessSurf serves all individuals with a disability. We embracing every age, gender, ethnicity, and financial background. With the help of a strong volunteer base and community partners, we support hundreds of participants every year and welcome thousands of volunteers who share our mission.



## 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

This year, AccesSurf continued to break down barriers and build community through inclusive ocean access. With the dedication of our volunteers and supporters, we expanded programs that empower people of all abilities to experience the water, hosted record numbers of participants, and strengthened partnerships across Hawai'i.

2024 was a year of impact, growth, and connection, reminding us of the power of inclusion and aloha in everything we do.

## 2024 EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

57

Programs / Events

1,422

Participant Experiences

544

Total Participants

3,310

Volunteer Experiences

1,506

Total Volunteers



11 Day at the Beach Programs



11 Wounded Warrior Programs



5 Swim Clinics



The 2024 Hawai'i Adaptive Surfing Championships



Maui Day at the Beach training with Kahakukahi Ocean Academy



Flat water Beach day with Waianae High School



Avanos Day at the Beach Experience on Big Island



Metabolic Equivalency Test (METs) project



Craig Hospital Surf Camp

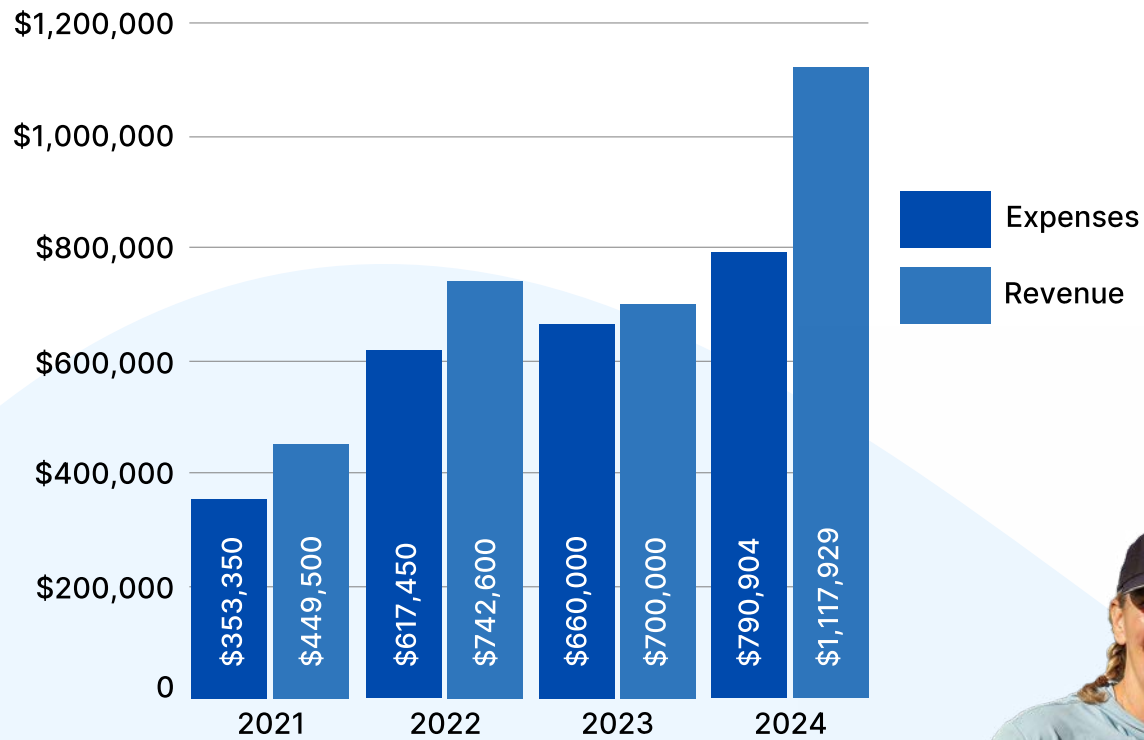


In addition to program growth, AccesSurf has established an office in the heart of Waikiki, providing a dedicated space for staff and volunteers.



# FINANCIAL REVIEW

While total expenses have gradually risen each year, total revenue has consistently outpaced them—demonstrating steadily increasing revenue margins year over year, with a significant jump in 2024.



## Funding Sources

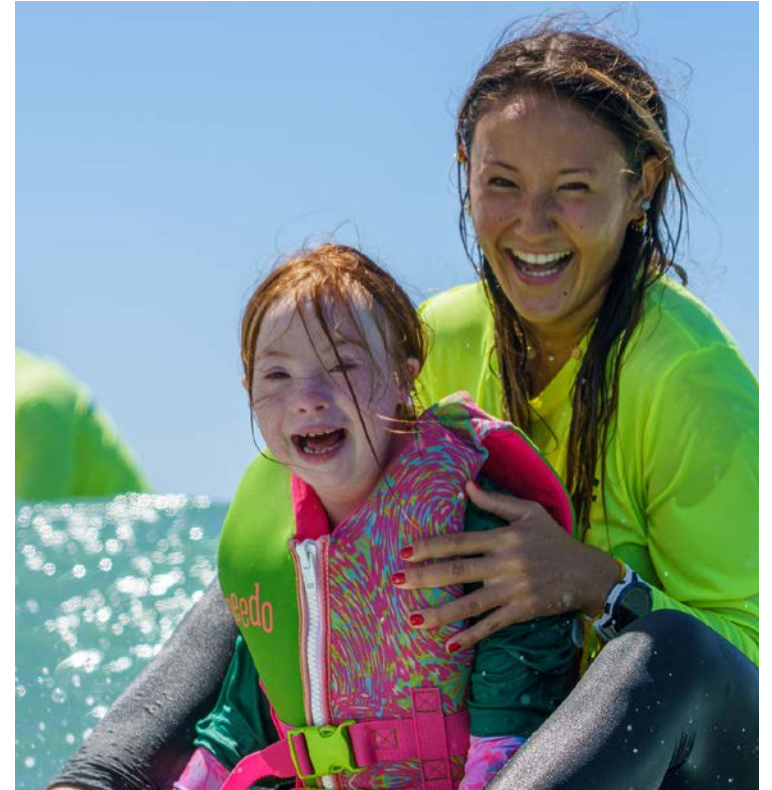
- 55% Grants
- 19% Events and Sponsorships
- 17% Individual
- 7% Corporate
- 2% Other



# TESTIMONIALS

*"It helps me build a lot of self confidence in my own abilities. Once you start surfing, there's no looking back."*

-AccesSurf participant Maddie



*"Without organizations like this my daughter would not have the opportunity to do the things that people without disabilities can do. We are just so, so grateful."*

-Mother of AccesSurf participant Nicolette Baker

# TESTIMONIALS

"I am Cristian Rodriguez. I am mostly nonverbal but thanks to my parents, they've equipped me with understanding English, Spanish and Sign language. I really do try. I always find a way to communicate with the world around me and the world seems to handle me with care and open arms.

*I am over the moon with excitement when my parents tell me I am ready to go surfing with the experts! This is an opportunity I wouldn't have otherwise. It was a scary experience the first time, but I quickly learned I was in perfect hands with all the awesome volunteers at AccesSurf. Everyone there makes my family truly feel like ohana! We are grateful for programs like AccesSurf.*

It has been a struggle for my parents to find activities for me to participate in because I have some limitations, but AccesSurf takes my limitations and run with it. I feel like I can do anything! Thanks for that!"

-AccesSurf participant Cristian Rodriguez





# OUR TEAM

## Staff

**Cara Short**

**Angie Atkins**

**Russell Kim**

**Ann Yoshida**

**Simone Schmid**

**Shaina Bachstein**

**Gabe Ruiz**

**Jon Price**

**Carmen Bell**

## Board Members

**Thomas Foti** – President

**Ted Jung** – Vice President

**Christina Klemme** – Treasurer

**Kainoa Penaroza** – Secretary

**Eddie Murai**

**Kelly Knox**

**Jonah Kogen**

**Keno Knieriem**

**Emily Kuraoka**

**Chris Cole**

**Breana Grosz**

**Jeff Marcello**

**Edmund Pang**

**Stephanie Nadolny**

**Eric Weltion**

## Leadership Committee

**Jim Russell (Chair)**

**Mark Marble**

**Woodrow Bell**

**Mikey Provost**

**Justin Stanford**

**Rich Julian**

**Buster Kawasaki**

**Tani Kalaukoa**

**Jon Price**

**Corey Obungen**

**Melissa Miller**

**Carrie Miller**

**Jeffrey Hepfer**

**Meggan Hoffman**

**Lynette Cantere**

**Mark Mateja**

**Dan Mitsuda**

**Sam Robinson**

**Carter Parry**

**Devin Minardi**







## MAHALO FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Accessurf is deeply grateful to the many financial and community organizations whose generosity and partnership have empowered us to expand our mission and impact.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS



Alan and Alison Voisard

Andrew and Leslie Cole-Brooks

Arrigalla Foundation

Association of Adaptive Surfing Professionals

Atherton Family Foundation

Bumper Productions LLC/Rescue HISurf

Cord Wright

Enterprise Holdings Foundation

Epic Games Inc.

Gloria Kosasa Gainsley Fund

Golden Gate Freight

Hawaiian Aroma Caffè

Hawaii Hotel Industry Foundation

Hawaii Pacific University

Holokai Catamaran Inc.

Jim & Kris McMillan

Jonah Kogen

Jonathan Hathaway

Lucky and Marilyn Cole

Mark Matheson

Mary Kelly

Peter and Christine Naktanis

Ronald Kline

Route 99

Saturnia Family Foundation

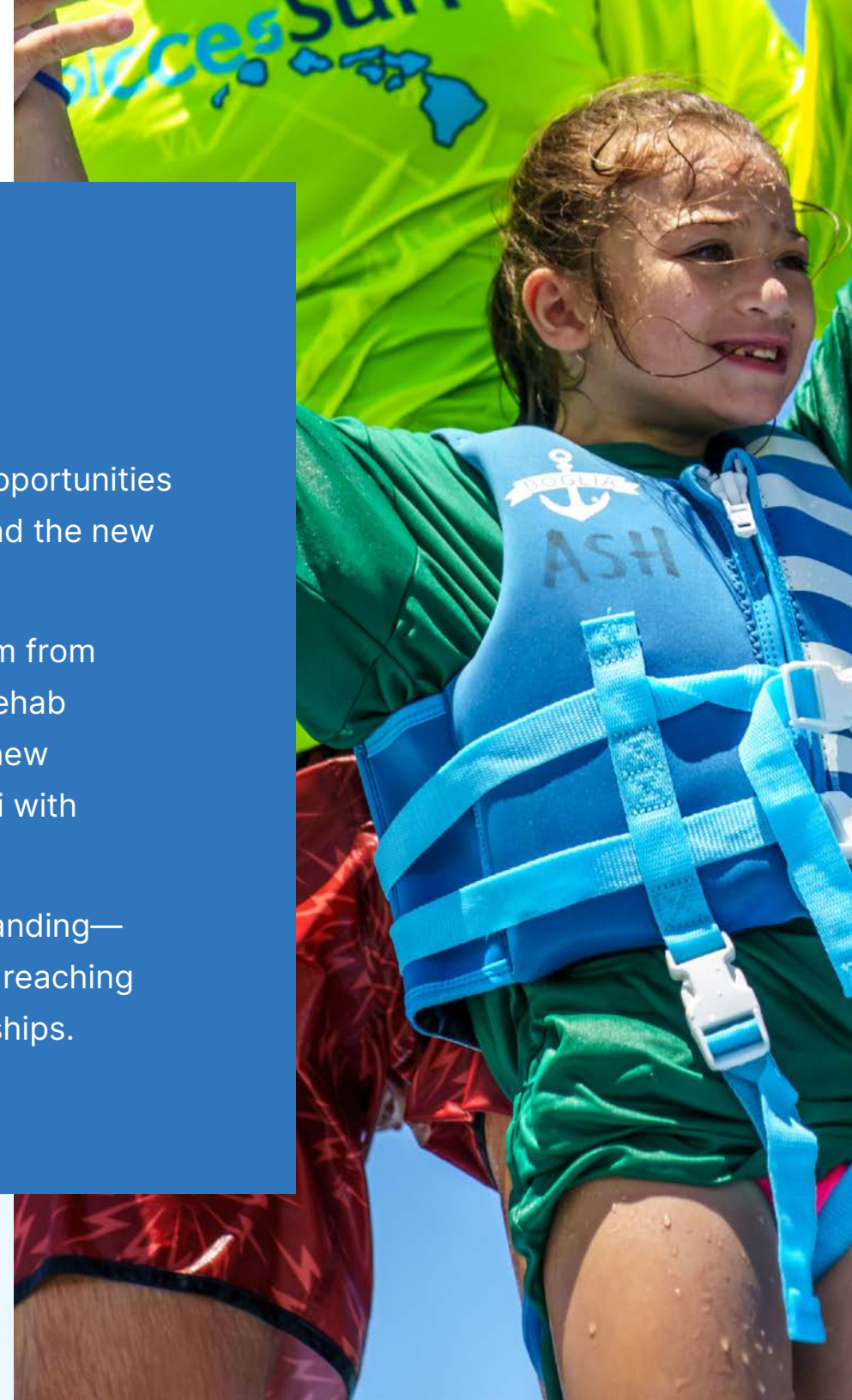
The Albert Parvin Foundation

## LOOKING AHEAD

AccessSurf continues to grow, creating more opportunities for our community. We are excited for 2025 and the new programming ahead.

Highlights include expanding our swim program from quarterly to monthly in partnership with The Rehab Hospital of the Pacific, as well as launching a new partnership Day at the Beach program on Maui with Kahākūkahi Ocean Academy.

Looking beyond 2025, our goal is to keep expanding—offering increased programming on O‘ahu and reaching more neighbor islands through strong partnerships.







[www.accessurf.org](http://www.accessurf.org)

