



Annual Report

2025



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of AccesSurf,

My second year at AccesSurf has simply flown by... Time certainly does fly when you are having fun and goes by even faster when you are having fun working with a tremendous group of individuals serving the best community in the world.

Our mission—“empowering people with disabilities through access to the ocean and a supportive community,” continues to be the true north that drives our passionate and growing organization.

Every event, every volunteer, and every participant remains a reminder to me of why AccesSurf is so special and why the work we do matters so deeply.

2025 served up additional growth coupled with preparation for major change. Thanks to the tremendous generosity of our donors and supporters, our budget has never been healthier and in a better place, teeing us up for well-articulated, high-quality programs and more in the coming year. We commenced our search for a new Executive Director in the 4th quarter, ending a successful search with a newly named Executive Director, Zoë Lewis who we could not be more thrilled to welcome in the coming year. This change created the opportunity for our former Executive Director, Cara Short, to continue her amazing journey with AccesSurf as our Chief

Growth Officer, focused on continued partnerships and funding relationships as we grow into our next chapter.

To the best Board of Directors, who lead with heart like none other and bring so very much creativity and savvy to the table... Your dedication, leadership, and unwavering support are more than inspiring, they are game changing. I am honored to assist in leading our efforts. To our brilliant community, the best is yet to come and we are so grateful for you. The best is yet to come.

With gratitude and aloha,

Thomas Foti
President, Board of Directors
AccesSurf



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aloha,

2025 was a remarkable year for AccesSurf, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served as Executive Director throughout another year of growth, impact, and connection.

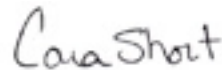
Serving as AccesSurf's Executive Director for the past 12 years has been one of the greatest honors of my life. Together, we have expanded opportunities, strengthened our impact, and helped ensure that more people can experience the healing power of the ocean and adaptive recreation.

This year also marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter. In 2026, I will transition from the role of Executive Director to Chief Growth Officer, focusing on advancing AccesSurf's long-term sustainability, partnerships, and future growth. I am energized by what lies ahead and confident that this evolution will help position our organization for even greater impact in the years to come.

None of our accomplishments would have been possible without the unwavering support of our participants, families, volunteers, donors, partners, staff, and community champions. Your belief in our mission has fueled every success and made these past 12 years deeply meaningful.

Mahalo for your trust, your generosity, and your commitment to creating a more inclusive world. I look forward to continuing this journey with you as we build an even brighter future for AccesSurf.

With deepest appreciation,



Cara Short
Executive Director
AccesSurf



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

Since 2006, AccesSurf has believed that the ocean should be accessible to everyone. What began as a small group of passionate volunteers creating opportunities for people with disabilities has grown into one of Hawai'i's leading organizations advancing accessibility, inclusion, and adaptive ocean recreation. Nearly 20 years later, that same spirit continues to inspire thousands of participants, volunteers, and supporters to come together and share the healing power of the ocean.



Our Mission

AccessSurf creates opportunities for people with disabilities to experience adaptive ocean sports in a safe, supportive, and empowering environment. Through free programs, education, advocacy, and community partnerships, we work to remove barriers and create a more accessible Hawai'i where everyone can experience the physical, emotional, and social benefits of the ocean.

Our Programs

Throughout the year, AccessSurf offers a variety of adaptive recreation opportunities, including Monthly Day at the Beach, Wounded Warrior Day at the Beach, adaptive swim and outrigger canoe programs, surf clinics, and annual flat water events. We are also proud to host the Hawai'i Adaptive Surfing Championships, welcoming elite adaptive athletes from around the world while showcasing Hawai'i as a global leader in adaptive surfing.

As our organization continues to grow, so does our commitment to expanding access through volunteer training, leadership development, community partnerships, and neighbor island programming, ensuring that more individuals have the opportunity to participate regardless of where they live.

Our Community

At the heart of AccessSurf is a community built on compassion, respect, and aloha. Every participant, volunteer, family member, partner, and supporter plays an important role in creating an environment where people feel welcomed, valued, and empowered. Together, we are demonstrating that when barriers are removed and opportunities are created, everyone has the chance to discover new possibilities, build meaningful connections, and thrive both in and out of the water.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, AccesSurf achieved several significant milestones that strengthened the organization's long-term sustainability and expanded its impact across Hawai'i. Alongside our well-established core programs, we launched a number of notable initiatives, partnerships, and special events that enhanced participant experiences, increased community engagement, and created new opportunities for growth and innovation.



A historic highlight was the official launch of the **Maui partner program** in collaboration with **Kahākūkahi Ocean Academy**, marking an important step forward in AccesSurf's neighbor island outreach and creating new opportunities for adaptive ocean recreation on Maui.

AccesSurf partnered with **Carissa Moore** and **Moore Aloha** to host a two-day session with the five-time World Champion surfer, providing our HASC women's adaptive surfers with valuable insights on mental health, resilience, and navigating the pressures of competition.



A few media highlights from 2025 helped showcase AccesSurf's mission and programs to a broader audience. AccesSurf's **Wounded Warrior Day at the Beach** program was featured in the television series **Rescue: HI-Surf**, while Kolohe Kai highlighted AccesSurf in the music video for "**What Aloha Means**," bringing greater visibility to the spirit of inclusion, community, and aloha that defines our work.



AccesSurf continues to expand its reach and deepen its impact by collaborating with mission-aligned partners and leveraging shared resources.

AccesSurf recently established a partnership with **Jimmy Miller Memorial Foundation**, which has strengthened and enhanced our Wounded Warrior Day at the Beach program, providing greater support and creating an even more meaningful experience for participating service members and veterans.

Our longstanding partnership with **Rehab Hospital of the Pacific** has expanded our adaptive swim program from a quarterly clinic to a monthly offering, increasing access for our community.

To support continued growth and ensure organizational sustainability, AccesSurf expanded its staff team, increasing capacity to deliver programs, strengthen operations, and better serve participants and families. The organization also experienced substantial budget growth, reflecting increased community support, successful fundraising efforts, and greater investment in creating inclusive ocean experiences for people with disabilities throughout Hawai'i.



2025 HiGHLiGHTS

64

Programs /
Events

1,678

Participant
Experiences

478

Total
Participants

3,133

Volunteer
Experiences

1,506

Total Volunteers

PROGRAMS HOSTED



11

Day at the Beach
Programs



8

Maui training days
and DATB with KOA



7

Swim Programs



11

Wounded Warrior Day at
the Beach Programs



2

Canoe program days with
Honolulu Pearl Canoe Club



THE
HAWAII
ADAPTIVE SURFING
CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2025 Hawai'i Adaptive
Surfing Championships

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



Hawai'i Department of Health
Pilot Partnership



Waianae High School
Flat Water Day



HPU Student Partnership
Accessibility Map Project



Rehab Hospital of the Pacific
Adaptive Swim Clinics



Craig Hospital
Adaptive Surf Camp

FINANCIAL REVIEW

While total expenses have gradually risen each year, total revenue has consistently outpaced them, demonstrating steadily increasing revenue margins year over year.

Funding Sources

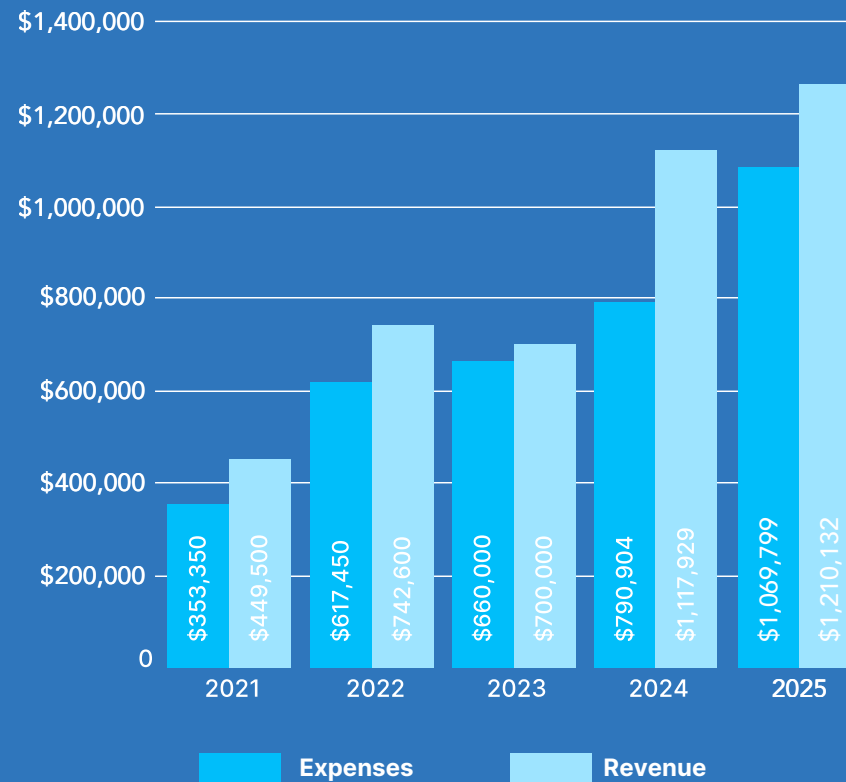
34% Grants

24% Events and Sponsorships

19% Individual

12% Corporate

1% Other



OUR VOLUNTEERS

AccesSurf's volunteers are the heart of our mission, making it possible for so many to experience the freedom, confidence, and joy of adaptive sports and recreation. Their dedication, compassion, and willingness to give their time to create welcoming and inclusive experiences for every participant and family we serve.

Whether assisting at events, providing one-on-one support in the water, or helping behind the scenes, our volunteers bring AccesSurf's values to life each day. We are deeply grateful for their commitment and the countless ways they help expand access, build community, and create lasting impact across Hawai'i.

"The water has always been a huge part of my life, so volunteering with AccesSurf felt like the natural way to give back to something that means so much to me. But from my very first day, I realized it was about much more than just helping out—it's a real 'ohana built on pure inclusion. Every single session reminds me that volunteering goes both ways. Seeing the pure joy and freedom the ocean gives to the participants hits me just as powerfully as it does them.

It's an honor to be part of this local community, working together to break down barriers and make sure the ocean is a place where everyone belongs."

-AccesSurf volunteer Mark



TESTiMONiALS

"I cannot thank AccesSurf enough for all they do. Every event I leave feeling so empowered blessed and super grateful from pool days to where I work on range of motion to being more comfortable in the water to days at the beach where I caught my first wave such an beautiful feeling the staff and volunteers are so awesome with making you feel safe and secure in the water also making sure I have the most fun out there Yessah! Even canoe day!

I'm a stroke survivor and have right side paralysis. They make it so comfortable for me to enjoy myself helping and assisting me. I thank the staff volunteers and everyone at the AccesSurf 'ohana for all you do. You all are truly the best. You definitely feel the love and aloha at every event. AccesSurf is ALOHA! Thank you so much for having me a part of the 'ohana!

-AccesSurf participant, Michael Montayre



"I can honestly say that surfing is one of the best things I have ever done in my life. It made me feel alive again. Although I am a disabled veteran, that will not stop me from continuing to participate in every opportunity available to surf with my 'ohana. With AccesSurf, I always feel welcomed, supported, and genuinely cared for. I will never forget my very first day in the water—five times out, and we caught all five waves. What an unforgettable memory."

-AccesSurf Participant, Jose

AccesSurf has been an incredible support for Michael and his mom, Julie. Michael's love of the water is a legacy from his father who used to be a lifeguard and was recruited for the Olympic swim team. Even as a toddler, Michael rarely got out of the water.

"To have AccesSurf help Michael experience the ocean is a real gift."

-Parent of AccesSurf Participant, Michael Nishida



"My name is Nevaeh Green and I just turned 8 years old last month. I was born at Kapiolani Medical Center and live in Waianae.

AccesSurf is a fun place where I can have access to surfing and swimming that makes me feel safe."

-AccesSurf Participant, Nevaeh Green

"We feel very thankful to the AccesSurf 'ohana for providing opportunities for Nevaeh to be able to ride the waves. It took her a year to be comfortable riding on the surfboard and I'm glad that they let her go at her own pace. I can tell she loves AccesSurf days and that she looks forward to surfing."

-Parents of AccesSurf Participant, Nevaeh

HAWAI'i ADAPTIVE SURFING CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Hawai'i Adaptive Surfing Championships (HASC) began in 2007 when Duke's OceanFest opened its doors to include a single adaptive expression session. What started as one heat with just a handful of athletes representing multiple adaptive surfing disciplines has evolved into one of the world's premier adaptive surfing competitions.

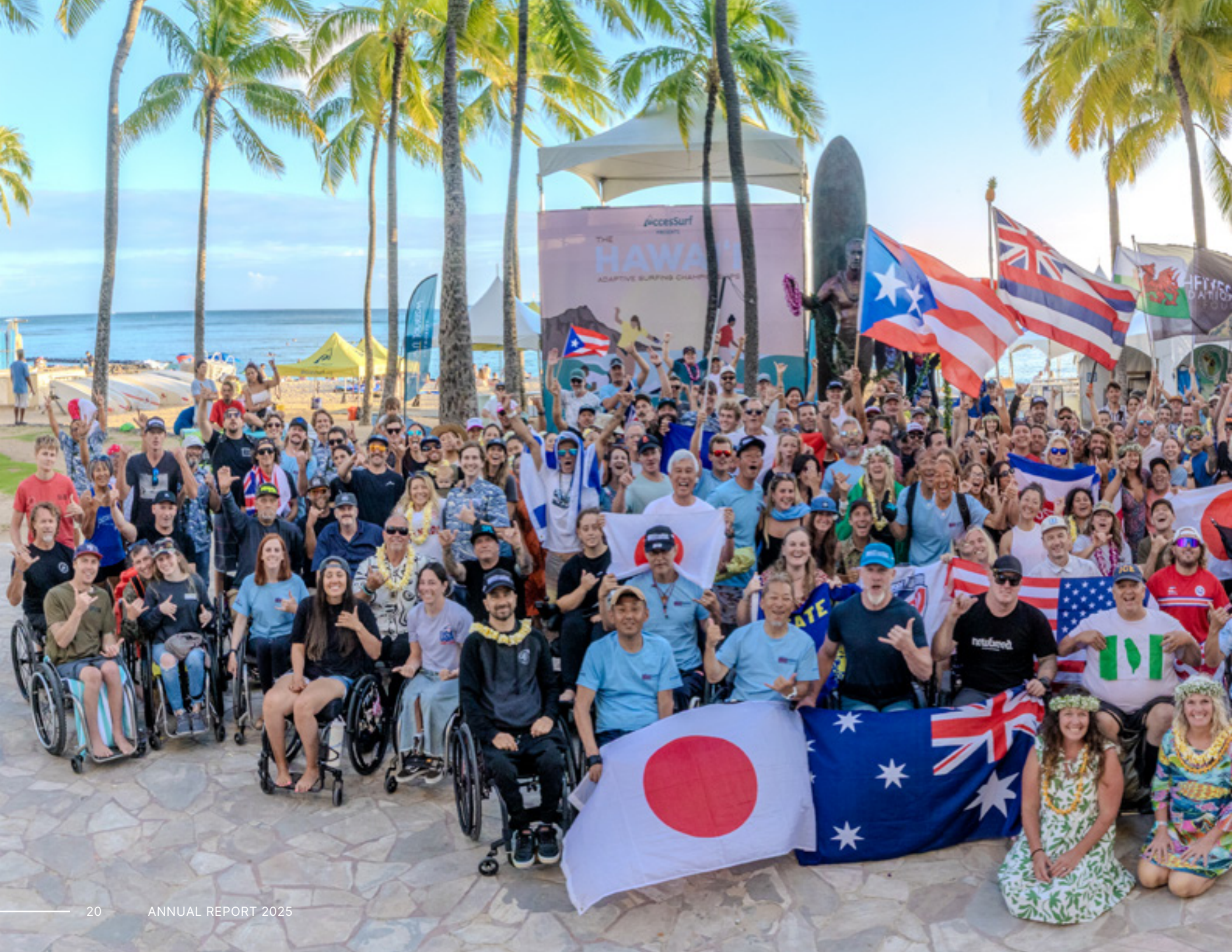
Through AccesSurf's unwavering commitment to expanding competitive opportunities, HASC continued to grow, culminating in its first standalone championship in 2019.

As adaptive surfing gained international recognition and the official Adaptive Surfing Professionals World Tour emerged, HASC became a cornerstone event on the global circuit.

In 2025, AccesSurf proudly welcomed 95 athletes from 19 countries to Waikīkī, where they competed across 18 men's and women's divisions, supported by more than 400 dedicated volunteers throughout an inspiring week of world-class competition, community, and inclusion.







SPECIAL THANKS

Mahalo to our dedicated photographers and videographers for capturing the priceless moments that tell the story of AccessSurf throughout the year.

Alfy Pamatigan

Ana Catarina

Ben Montuz

Cliff Schumacher

Corinna Wells

Elliot Miles

Erik Kabik

Giulia Panzetti

Jane Sanderson

Jason Smith

Jon Price

Josh McDade

Justin Stanford

Lianne Hirano

Maj "Tom" Denison, Paul J

Pablo, Ben, Saray (Maui)

Ramsey Faafili

Ranasha

Robyn Graham

Tiloi Alapa, Kaulele Hawai'i

Tommy Pierucki

OUR TEAM

Executive Board of Directors

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*Moana Surfrider & Sheraton Princess
Kaiulani Hotel, General Manager*

Vice President

Ted Jung
*Entrepreneur & Business
Development*

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Eric Welton
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Owner*

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*Southwest Airlines, Community
Outreach*

Keno Knieriem
Tree House Co-Working

Stephanie Nadolny
*The REHAB Hospital of the Pacific,
CEO*

Chris Cole-Marr
Jones & Wang LLP, Partner

Breana Grosz
*The Mall at Short Hills, General
Manager*

Jeff Marcello
*LIMELIGHT, Director of Food and
Beverage*

Trevor Abarzua
*Waikiki Business Improvement District,
CEO/President*

Joe Bolton
HEC, Strategic Solutions Manager

Shyla Fukushima
*First Hawaiian Bank, Senior Vice
President & Division Manager,
Consumer Products*



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Jon Price
Melissa Miller
Woodrow Bell
Lynette Cantere
Carter Parry
Devin Minardi

Mikey Provost
Corey Obungen
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Angie Atkins
Russell Kim
Ann Yoshida
Shaina Bachstein
Gabe Ruiz
Simone Schmid

Carmen Bell
Meggan Hoff
Jenn Lynch
Jon Price
Scott Davis
Dan Mitsuda



MAHALO TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR YOUR SUPPORT



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 Hawaiian Aroma Caffé
 Hawai'i Community Foundation- Maui Strong
 Hawai'i Employers Mutual Insurance Co
 Hawai'i Pacific University

Hawai'i State Federal Credit Union
 Hawaii Stevedores Inc./Pasha Hawaii
 Hawai'i Tourism Authority
 High Fives Foundation
 Indy Club
 Jim and Kris McMillan
 Jimmy Miller Foundation
 Katie Yoshioka
 Kevin Bernier
 Kyo-Ya Hospitality
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 Marilyn and Steve Katzman
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 The Albert Parvin Foundation
 The Gift Foundation Inc
 The Hyatt Regency
 The Wilhelm Group LLC
 Twin Fin Hotel
 VA Pacific Islands Health Care Systems
 Voyage Rental Cars LLC



LOOKING FORWARD

As AccesSurf celebrates its 20th year, the organization is embracing the future with an exciting and intentional leadership transition in 2026. Executive Director Cara Short will transition into the newly created role of Chief Growth Officer, allowing focus on expanding strategic partnerships, advancing advocacy efforts, and driving opportunities that further AccesSurf's mission beyond the beach.

The organization is excited to welcome Zoë Lewis as Executive Director. With her extensive background in nonprofit leadership, Zoë brings the experience, vision, and passion needed to guide AccesSurf into its next chapter. Her leadership will help deepen the organization's impact, expand access to adaptive ocean recreation throughout

Hawai'i, and further advance AccesSurf's mission of inclusion, accessibility, and empowerment both in and beyond the ocean.

AccesSurf will focus on strengthening internal systems and enhancing the sustainability of its existing programs, while continuing to benefit from the valuable contributions of the SkillBridge internship program. The organization will also pursue strategic partnerships, explore opportunities for program growth, and expand its advocacy efforts to serve as a leading voice for improved beach and ocean access across Hawai'i, helping ensure that more individuals of all abilities can experience the transformative power of the ocean.







www.accessurf.org

