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| DAVID Y. IGEGOVERNOR |  HAWAI‘I HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION |  |

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**Groundbreaking for Affordable Homes in Waianae**

WAIANAE – A blessing ceremony was held for the Pokai Bay Self-Help Housing Project Phase 1, an affordable subdivision of 70, 5,000 to 9,000 square-foot lots on a 13.6 acre parcel of vacant land in Waianae. It is the result of a public-private partnership between the State of Hawai‘i’s Hawai‘i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC), The City and County of Honolulu Department of Community Services, U.S.D.A. Rural Development and Self Help Housing Corporation of Hawaii (SHHCH).

Under the Self-Help Housing Program, low-income families will help each other build their own houses. SHHCH is developing the project as a 201 H project with special exemptions through the City and County of Honolulu, and with loans from the State’s HHFDC, Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Housing Assistance Council, and a grant from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the SHHCH is able to offer fee simple house and lot packages from $295,000.

These families, who would otherwise not have the opportunity to become homeowners, will build one and two story three, and four bedroom, two bath houses, all with solar water systems. Under the guidance of the SHHCH, the families will learn all the skills necessary to build the houses through the team self-help housing method. Self-help builders contribute 1700 hours of labor over a year and help each other build the house; thereby, earning their "sweat equity" and building a community together.

“Housing our ‘ohana remains one of the greatest challenges for Hawaii but together, we are moving forward – step by step, person by person, family by family. Through the dedicated partnership of both public and private organizations, affordable home ownership here in Pokai Bay has come to fruition”, said Governor David Ige.

Families received financing under the RD 502 Loan Program from the U.S.D.A. which subsidized interest rates. Under this program, interest rates ranged from 1.00 to 3.25 percent depending on income.

“As we speak, Rural Development programs under the U.S.D.A. are on the chopping block. Pokai Bay is an example of those funds directly helping families that would otherwise never have this opportunity”, said Claudia Shay, executive director of SHHCH.

Because the “sweat equity” served as the down payment, SHHCH could assist very low and low-income families who have limited savings. About 25% of the project participants have incomes below 50% of the area median income and in many cases, are paying less on their mortgage than what they would pay for rent.

The SHHCH, which initiated the Self-Help Housing Program 30 years ago, has since completed 656 homes on Oahu, Kauai, Maui and Molokai. Pokai Bay is the 53rd project for SHHCH.

Families interested in finding out more about the Self-Help Housing Program can call (808) 842-7111.

For more information, contact: Kent Miyasaki, Information Officer,

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