

LĀNA'I TODAY

THE WORK OF HEROES

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Isalina Rendon and Alex Phelps were selected by their co-workers at Lānaʻi Community Hospital to each receive a complimentary, all-inclusive Heroes Relaxation Retreat package at Sensei Lānaʻi, A Four Seasons Resort, a gift from Pūlama Lānaʻi. The wellness retreat package honors and thanks hospital workers serving on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic at each hospital throughout the state. Photograph courtesy of Ron Gingerich

The work of heroes

By Nelinia Cabiles

Alex Phelps and Isalina Rendon are modest heroes. They're the kind of people who look you in the eyes, their gaze clear and direct, when they speak. Both insist, in separate interviews, that they are unremarkable, they are just doing their jobs. But it is because they did their work and continue to do it so remarkably well that their co-workers at Lāna‘i Community Hospital, voted Phelps, a registered nurse, and Rendon, a housekeeper, as their hospital heroes, those braving the front lines of the Coronavirus pandemic whose cases, at the time this publication went to print, were up to 17.7 million worldwide, of which there were 682,178 deaths.

Though there are differing opinions of the qualities of a hero, the definition of heroism is one that brooks no dissent. Heroism involves an altruistic act or acts and an element of personal risk or sacrifice.

It is this risk that casts Phelps and Rendon as heroes, despite their protests that they are not. The hallmarks of a hero are courage and empathy and circumstance. Against the backdrop of a pandemic, amidst the unrelenting global death toll, and coupled with evidence that we have not yet turned the corner, as cases continue to surge in countries all over the world, one could well argue that Phelps' and Rendon's respective line of work – the care for and treatment of the sick, and the diligent cleaning of those spaces in which such care is given – is the very definition of heroism. The coronavirus pandemic is the circumstance in this hero's journey, and Phelps and Rendon and others in the medical field, who find the courage every day to do their work, at great personal risk, are heroes.

To honor and thank hospital heroes, Pūlama Lāna‘i is gifting each hospital throughout the state a select number of all-inclusive Heroes Relaxation Retreat packages, based on the hospital's bed count, to award to employees of their choosing. Phelps and Rendon, and one guest each, are among the honorees gifted with a luxurious, two-night stay at Sensei Lāna‘i, a Four Seasons Resort. As was reported in the July edition of *Lāna‘i Today*, the complimentary package includes roundtrip airfare from Honolulu to Lāna‘i on luxury charter service Lāna‘i Air, and a fully personalized wellness experience that centers around each individual's well-being journey through Sensei's signature paths of move, nourish, rest. Each guest receives a \$600 daily wellness credit toward the Sensei Experience Menu to enjoy the benefits of a curated well-being experience and a \$200 dining credit to enjoy fresh, Lāna‘i-grown fare at Sensei by Nobu, Kō‘ele Garden Bar or in-room dining. The package also includes a rotating collection of daily, complimentary small-group activities, such as fitness, yoga, and meditation classes, as well as a dedicated Sensei guide for one-on-one instruction in nutrition, exercise physiology, fitness and lifestyle practices, private spa hale treatments, and access to island activities, as part of the Sensei Experience menu.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime amazing experience. The staff was incredible. They made us feel so special," Phelps says of his stay, his eyes soft with wonder. "I felt like I was living the vision [of Sensei]. I forgot that we were a mile away from town. I forgot I was on Lāna‘i, It was such a generous gift from Pūlama, and I am so grateful. I could never have afforded this. I could never have had this experience. After I went home, it meant even more to me that I was selected by my co-workers. I am so thankful. I've been trying to come up with a way to say thank you."

Isalina Rendon, who has been in LCH's environmental services department since 2006, in housekeeping, had not yet gone on her weekend stay at Sensei Lāna‘i with her husband at the time of the interview. She is in a similar state of disbelief and feels overwhelming gratitude to her co-workers, and Pūlama Lāna‘i: "I didn't expect this. We're all just doing our jobs. With COVID-19, there are more rules and regulations, we take extra precautions, but it's the same work." Rendon cleans all departments, long-term care area, the emergency room, all labs.

She says the pandemic has made her more patient and flexible. "Our staff is limited. If someone gets sick, we cover that shift. It's my job, so I just try my best to maintain the cleanliness and safety for everyone."

As with everyone on the planet, the pandemic has changed every aspect of Phelps' and Rendon's lives. "We're all getting used to doing things virtually. This is the way it's going to be. So we adapt," says Phelps', who has been with LCH for six years of his 30-year career as a nurse. Rendon and Phelps attribute Lāna‘i's compliance to the respect residents have for one another.

"We need to stay vigilant." "I'm very proud to be in this community," says Phelps. "We are where we are today because we followed the guidelines. Our hospital put in safety and screening measures early to protect our community. But we can't let our guards down. We need to keep up the good work and wear our face masks and wash our hands. Otherwise, all our hard work will be for nothing. We need to stay vigilant."

"We took precautions seriously, like social distancing and handwashing and wearing facemasks. Because there's too much at stake. We understand that we need to make sacrifices for the good and safety of our community," says Rendon, stressing the importance of personal responsibility, which, in the age of a pandemic, is heroic in its own right.



Alex Phelps



Isalina Rendon

Update from Councilmember Hokama

Mauī County has been able to provide support to our struggling residents, businesses and organizations during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. On Lāna‘i, the County has partnered with local independent farmers to purchase produce for distribution to residents facing hardship due to COVID. However, there is always a cost for these services and aid. The County cannot provide more than it can afford; simply put, we cannot give what we don't have. The challenges we are facing due to the pandemic will test the County's financial resiliency, thus it is more important than ever that our elected officials understand finances.

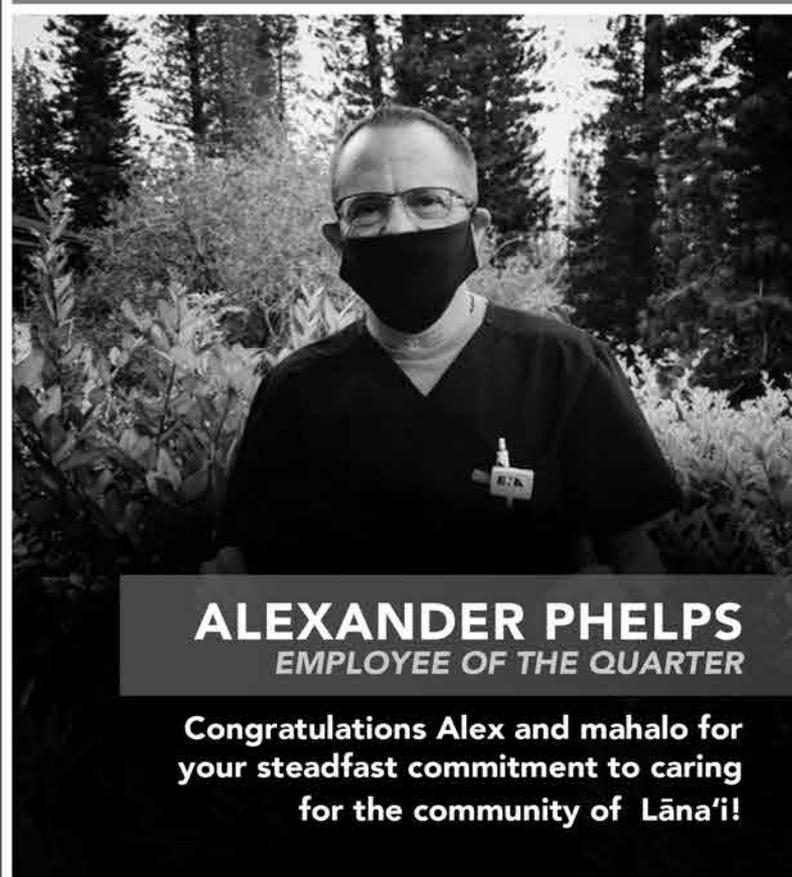
The near complete shutdown of the hospitality industry has highlighted tourism's importance as an economic driver. Real property taxes are the County's main source of revenue, and the bulk of that revenue comes from tourism-related property owners. In the previous fiscal year, nine of the top 10 principal real property taxpayers were classified as hotel or timeshare. Just these nine taxpayers accounted for over 13 per cent of the County's entire levy.

I do not oppose scaling back tourism, as we do need to diversify our economy and increase our food resiliency. However, if we are to cut back on tourism, what sector is willing to make up the difference? For the current fiscal year, which began July 1, 9.8 per cent of the County's tax revenue is estimated to come from the owner-occupied and agricultural classifications. Meanwhile, 50.1 per cent is anticipated to come from the short-term rental, time share, and hotel/resort classifications. Are we willing to ask our local homeowners and small farmers to shoulder an increased tax burden? If the goal is to maintain the same level of County services, we need our elected officials to understand and explain where the bill will fall. Will this added responsibility be placed on our local residents?

The cost of services received by most working-class taxpayers, particularly the owner-occupied classification, exceed the amount of taxes paid. Other property tax classifications subsidize the cost of services for these residents and all non-property tax paying residents. If we are intent on shifting our economy away from tourism, and thus shifting our tax base, our residents deserve to know where we are shifting to and how that affects who pays the bill.



MAHALO
to our health care heroes!



ALEXANDER PHELPS
EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Congratulations Alex and mahalo for your steadfast commitment to caring for the community of Lānaʻi!



2019 GRADUATING CLASS

PAID NURSE AIDE TRAINING PROGRAM
Start a new, stable career in healthcare today

Kula Hospital is currently accepting applications for its next paid Nurse Aide Training Program. Students are paid for the duration of the six-week, hands-on training at Kula Hospital. After successful completion of the program and final exam, students will earn a Nurse Aide certification and will be offered full-time employment at Kula Hospital or Lānaʻi Community Hospital as a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA).

career in healthcare and who may not have the time or financial means to take nurse aid training classes. The program starts **October 19, 2020** with limited spots available. Classes are just two days a week, allowing those with full-time jobs to continue working throughout the week. Don't wait, apply today! Submit your application by **September 1, 2020**.

No experience or degree required!

For more information, visit mauihealth.org/kulacna.

This is an amazing opportunity for anyone looking for a stable

Maui Memorial Medical Center
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Kula Hospital and Clinic
Lānaʻi Community Hospital



Lānaʻi Community Hospital
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