



# Legacy of Educating

Peer carrying on father's commitment to South Africa classrooms through Teachers Across Borders.

## LANGUAGE

Hawaiian language instructor **Keao NeSmith** (BA '95 Hilo, MA '02 Mānoa) was honored by the University of Waikato for his excellence in postgraduate studies within the School of Māori and Pacific Development.

A doctoral candidate in Applied Linguistics at the university in Hamilton, New Zealand, NeSmith received the Te Pua Wānanga ki te Ao Postgraduate Excellence Award.

His doctoral dissertation: "The Teaching and Learning of Hawaiian in Mainstream Educational Contexts – Time for Change?"

"In my research, I have observed that Hawaiian language teachers are primarily motivated by their love

for Hawaiian language and culture, but almost all have not been trained to teach additional languages," NeSmith said. "My thesis proposes teaching strategies based on effective methods that incorporate Hawaiian and local culture. This award is recognition of the potential and significance of the recommendations proposed in the thesis."

The 1984 graduate of Kamehameha Schools was born in Waimea, Kaua'i, and raised in Kekaha.



To make a donation to Teachers Across Borders — South Africa or for more information go to [tab-sa.org](http://tab-sa.org)

**Y**unus Peer (BE '80 Mānoa) remembers how his father, an Indian businessman, was constantly harassed and arrested by South African police for starting nursery schools in rural black villages during Apartheid.

"They felt he was advocating for the abolishment of Apartheid," recalls Peer, who now teaches world civilization at Punahou School.

It is his father's legacy of activism that inspired Peer to create Teachers Across Borders — South Africa. For the past 12 years he has taken teachers from Hawai'i to his native South Africa to help educators there improve instruction in math and science. Dozens of Hawai'i teachers have conducted workshops in four of South Africa's 11 provinces.

"It's my way of trying to continue what he did," says Peer, 54.

The project has impacted at least a million students, or learners, as they are called in South Africa, Peer said. TABSA also has helped set up computer labs in rural schools, but its main focus is training teachers.

For instance, to teach a unit on electricity, they've taught educators

to use cardboard boxes and a string of Christmas tree lights to demonstrate how to wire a four-room house, Peer says.

The nonprofit is working to reverse the effects of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 that excluded higher levels of math and science for blacks. When Apartheid ended in 1994, black students hungered to learn physics and chemistry, but few teachers were able to teach those subjects. Peer began his workshops, targeting rural schools, in 2001.

TABSA is completely grassroots. When Peer ends his day at Punahou he heads home to Waimānalo and begins making TABSA calls to South Africa, 12 hours ahead. He raises funds from civic clubs, churches, friends and family. Teachers pay their own airfare.

In 2011, TABSA trained 320 Eastern Cape math and science educators, impacting 60,000 students in rural schools.

"What's the point of knowing all this stuff," Peer says, "if you can't share it?"

— Shannon Tangonan

PHOTO: OLIVIER KONING

## LAW

**Douglas DeGrave** (AS '76 Honolulu), a founding partner of Poliquin & DeGrave LLP in Laguna Hills, Calif., has been chosen Orange County Trial Lawyer of the Year for 2011 by the American Board of Trial Advocates. DeGrave, 57, currently serves on the ABOTA national board of directors.



## BOOK ART

**Fredric Villamor** (BA '97 Mānoa) has illustrated an electronic book on UH volleyball legend Allen "The A-Bomb" Allen. The biography, written by Tanja Villamor, is titled *Allen Allen: A Warrior's Journey*.



## TRIBUTE

**Max Botticelli**, 71, an academic medicine pioneer on the faculty at JABSOM (1985-96), served since 1996 as CEO of University Health Alliance. Contributions to the Max G. Botticelli Memorial Fund can be made online at [www.uhfoundation.org/give](http://www.uhfoundation.org/give).

