



ALOHA STATE MUSIC FESTIVAL

MARCH 2026

1050 Queen St Suite 100
Honolulu, HI 96814

(808) 470-8988
alohamusic.org

PARTNERS





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Aloha State Music Festival stands as a beacon for celebrating Hawaii’s rich school music programs, set to launch its inaugural event in 2026. As a newly established nonprofit organization, the festival is dedicated to showcasing the talents of Hawaii’s young musicians through a variety of all-state ensembles, including concert bands, orchestras, choirs, and a premier ukulele ensemble. The festival not only highlights the musical diversity and skill of Hawaii’s youth but also emphasizes the importance of music education in fostering creativity, collaboration, and cultural appreciation.

Scheduled to take place over 7-10 days on the beautiful island of Maui, the festival plans to rotate among the Hawaiian counties in subsequent years, providing a statewide platform for student musicians. By incorporating all-state chamber recitals and contemporary ensembles alongside traditional Hawaiian music performances, the festival aims to offer a comprehensive and enriching musical experience.

It promises to be a celebration of youth, music, and Hawaiian heritage, inspiring the next generation of musicians and contributing significantly to the preservation and growth of music education in the state.

“dedicated to showcasing the talents of Hawaii’s young musicians through a variety of all-state ensembles, including concert bands, orchestras, choirs, and a premier ukulele ensemble.”

MISSION

The **mission** of the Aloha State Music Festival is to enrich and elevate music education in Hawaii by showcasing the talents of the state’s best school musicians across diverse ensembles. The festival aims to celebrate Hawaii’s unique musical heritage, blending traditional Hawaiian music with a diverse range of genres, thereby fostering cultural appreciation and exchange. Through performance, education, and community engagement, the festival seeks to unite, inspire, and develop the musical skills of young artists, contributing significantly to the growth and vibrancy of Hawaii’s music education landscape.

“Through performance, education, and community engagement, the festival seeks to unite [and] inspire.”

VISION

“The festival aspires to be a hub of musical excellence and innovation, offering transformative experiences to students, educators, and the wider community.”

The **vision** of the Aloha State Music Festival is to become a leading cultural and educational event in Hawaii, renowned for showcasing exceptional young musical talent and fostering a deep appreciation for the state’s rich musical heritage. The festival aspires to be a hub of musical excellence and innovation, offering transformative experiences to students, educators, and the wider community. Ultimately, it seeks to unite diverse musical genres and cultures, creating a lasting legacy that enriches and inspires the future of music education in Hawaii.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors for the Aloha State Music Festival is a diverse and committed group of individuals who share a common passion for music education and cultural enrichment in Hawaii. This team is composed of music educators, cultural practitioners, community leaders, and professionals from various fields, all united by their dedication to fostering musical excellence among Hawaii’s youth. The board oversees the strategic direction and operational planning of the festival, ensuring its mission to celebrate school music programs through all-state ensembles is successfully realized.

Chair, Ku’ulei Arceo

*Band Director
Hilo High School*

Vice-Chair, Gerald Carrell

*Band Director
West Hawaii County Band*

Secretary, Dr. Rickey Bauda

*Director of Bands
Cal Poly Pomona*

Treasurer, Dustin Kotaki

*Assistant Director of Finance
Four Seasons Resorts*

Director, Thomas Bingham

*Retired Dean
School of Travel Industry Management, UH Manoa*



Ku’ulei Arceo stands as a beacon of dedication and excellence in Hawaii’s music education community, currently serving as the esteemed Chair of the Board of Directors for the Aloha State Music Festival. With a rich background as the band director at Hilo High School, Ku’ulei brings to the board an unrivaled passion for nurturing young musicians and a deep commitment to promoting music education across the state. Her leadership at Hilo High School has been characterized by innovative programming, a commitment to excellence, and the fostering of a supportive and enriching environment for her students to thrive musically and academically.

PEOPLE



BOARD OF ARTISTIC ADVISORS

The Board of Artistic Advisors for the Aloha State Music Festival comprises a distinguished group of musicians, composers, music educators, and cultural experts, each bringing a wealth of experience and deep-rooted passion for music and Hawaiian culture. This advisory board plays a critical role in shaping the festival's artistic direction, ensuring that the programming reflects the rich diversity of Hawaii's musical heritage and contemporary trends. They provide invaluable insights on repertoire selection, educational content, and the integration of traditional Hawaiian music and dance, thereby enriching the festival experience for participants and audiences alike. Their collective expertise and vision not only guarantee the festival's artistic integrity but also foster an environment of learning and creativity that is in line with the festival's mission to celebrate and elevate school music programs across Hawaii.

Chair, Rickey Badua, DMA
Director of Bands
Cal Poly Pomona

Advisor, Paul Arceo
Bandmaster
Hawaii County Band



Rickey H. Badua is the Director of Bands and Instrumental Music at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA, where he conducts the Wind Ensemble. He teaches beginning and instrumental conducting and oversees all aspects of the instrumental music program. Dr. Badua is a native of Honolulu, Hawaii but upon high school graduation moved to Washington to earn his Bachelor of Music in Music Education degree from the University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA where he also received an honorary fellowship to complete his Master of Arts in Teaching and was a conducting student of Dr. Robert Taylor.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

The professional staff of the Aloha State Music Festival is a dynamic and dedicated team, each member bringing specialized expertise to ensure the success of the festival. At the helm is the Executive Director, BJ Yamamoto, whose visionary leadership and extensive background in music education and nonprofit management guide the festival's strategic direction and operations. Supporting him is a diverse team, including a Director of Programs, responsible for curating the festival's musical content and educational activities, ensuring a rich and varied experience for all participants.

Together, the professional staff works cohesively to create an environment that celebrates Hawaii's school music programs and supports the artistic growth of its participants. Their combined efforts in administration, programming, finance, marketing, and operations are pivotal to bringing the festival's vision to life, making the Aloha State Music Festival a landmark event in Hawaii's cultural calendar.

Executive Director, Bradford (BJ) Yamamoto, Jr.
Finance Manager, Vacant
Program Manager, Vacant
Education Coordinator, Vacant
Arts Administration Assistant, Ari Nakamura



BJ Yamamoto is the dynamic and visionary Executive Director of the Aloha State Music Festival. With a rich background in music education and a deep commitment to cultural preservation, BJ brings to the festival a blend of expertise in both the operational and artistic realms. Before stepping into his current role, he served as the Education Coordinator for the Honolulu Symphony and has extensive experience teaching music in Hawaii's schools, including Aina Haina Elementary and Kalani High School. His passion for music education is matched by his proficiency in technology and innovation, having founded several tech ventures.

FESTIVAL

MARCH 2026

The Aloha State Music Festival will be held at the Maui Arts and Cultural Center (MACC) for several strategic and cultural reasons. First and foremost, the MACC stands as a premier venue in Hawaii, known for its state-of-the-art facilities that perfectly accommodate the diverse needs of large-scale musical performances and events. Its array of performance spaces, from outdoor amphitheaters to intimate concert halls, offers an ideal setting for the festival's wide range of ensembles and musical genres, providing both performers and audiences with an exceptional auditory experience.

Moreover, the MACC's location on Maui enhances the festival's mission to celebrate and perpetuate Hawaiian culture. Maui's rich cultural heritage and stunning natural beauty make it a vibrant backdrop for a festival that seeks to fuse musical excellence with Hawaiian traditions. Hosting the festival at the MACC not only draws attention to Maui's significance in Hawaii's arts and culture scene but also encourages participation from across the islands, fostering a sense of unity and shared cultural identity among Hawaii's music educators and students.

Additionally, the choice of MACC as the festival venue reflects a commitment to accessibility and community engagement. Situated in a central location, the MACC is accessible to local residents and visitors alike, facilitating broader community involvement and attendance. By bringing the festival to the MACC, the Aloha State Music Festival leverages the center's reputation and resources to create a truly memorable and impactful event that celebrates the talent and diversity of Hawaii's young musicians, while also engaging and enriching the wider community.

All-State Chamber Recital

The All-State Chamber Recital at the Aloha State Music Festival represents a prestigious showcase, highlighting the exceptional talent and musicianship of Hawaii's young performers within the intimate and collaborative sphere of chamber music. This event features an array of ensembles, including string quartets, woodwind quintets, brass ensembles, and percussion groups, selected through a rigorous nomination and audition process from music educators across the state. Designed to emphasize the art of musical conversation and the finesse required in chamber settings, the recital not only provides these young musicians with a platform to exhibit their mastery of classical and contemporary works but also fosters their skills in ensemble playing, interpretation, and mutual respect through performance. By offering a unique blend of educational experiences, from specialized coaching to masterclasses with renowned musicians nurturing the next generation of Hawaii's musical talent.

All-State Contemporary Ensemble

The All-State Contemporary Ensemble is a groundbreaking component of the Aloha State Music Festival, designed to spotlight the diverse talents of Hawaii's young musicians within the vibrant realms of popular music genres. This ensemble traverses a broad musical landscape, embracing pop, rock, indie, alternative, electronic dance music (EDM), and Hawaiian contemporary music, reflecting the dynamic nature of today's music scene. Participants are selected for their ability to blend traditional musicianship with contemporary styles, focusing on collaboration, creativity, and innovation in music production and performance. Through workshops, masterclasses with industry professionals, and a culminating public performance, the ensemble offers a unique educational and artistic experience that challenges traditional boundaries and celebrates the evolving identities of music and culture in Hawaii.



All-State Educator Ensembles

The All-State Educator Ensembles program is a unique facet of the Aloha State Music Festival, specifically designed to highlight and celebrate the talents of music educators from across Hawaii. This program brings together teachers in a collaborative performance setting, allowing them to step into the roles of performers and showcase their own musical expertise. Through this initiative, educators not only demonstrate their musicianship but also reinforce the importance of lifelong learning and passion for music, serving as inspiring role models for their students. The ensemble offers a diverse repertoire, ranging from classical to contemporary pieces, fostering a sense of community and shared artistic pursuit among Hawaii's music educators.

All-State Honor Bands

The All-State Middle School and High School Honor Bands are cornerstone events of the Aloha State Music Festival, designed to celebrate the exceptional musical talents of Hawaii's younger generations. These ensembles bring together the most outstanding middle and high school band musicians from across the state, selected through a competitive audition process that emphasizes musicality, technique, and ensemble skills. Under the direction of esteemed conductors, these young musicians engage in intensive rehearsals that culminate in a showcase performance, offering them a platform to demonstrate their prowess and dedication to music. The Honor Bands not only provide a transformative experience for the participants, fostering their growth as musicians and collaborators, but also serve as a vibrant testament to the strength and vibrancy of school band programs throughout Hawaii.

Media / Recording Arts Experience

The Media/Recording Arts Program, an integral component of the Aloha State Music Festival, offers an innovative platform for students interested in the technical and creative aspects of music production and recording. This program aims to bridge the gap between musical performance and the behind-the-scenes artistry of sound engineering, mixing, and multimedia production. Participants receive hands-on training from industry professionals, engaging in workshops that cover everything from live sound recording to studio production techniques, as well as video production and editing. By providing access to state-of-the-art equipment and software, the program empowers students to create professional-quality recordings and media projects, fostering a new generation of tech-savvy musicians and audio engineers.

Composer Commissions

The Composer Commission Program is a distinctive initiative of the Aloha State Music Festival, aimed at fostering new works by emerging and established composers with a connection to Hawaii. This program champions the creation of original compositions that reflect the diverse cultural and musical heritage of the islands, encouraging innovation and exploration in music. Composers are selected through a meticulous process and are given the opportunity to work closely with the festival's ensembles, tailoring their compositions to showcase the talents of young musicians and the unique sounds of Hawaii. The premiere of these commissioned works at the festival not only enriches the repertoire of participating ensembles but also contributes to the vibrant tapestry of contemporary Hawaiian music, ensuring its growth and sustainability for future generations.



Island Exhibition Ensemble

The Island Exhibition Ensemble is a hallmark of the Aloha State Music Festival, specially featuring one of the premier school music programs from the host island each year. This ensemble spotlights the exceptional talent and dedication of students within a distinguished local school, showcasing their achievements on a grand stage. Selected for their exemplary performance and contribution to their island's music culture, these students embody the highest standards of musical excellence. Through their participation, the Island Exhibition Ensemble not only celebrates the rich musical heritage of the host island but also inspires pride and unity among its community, highlighting the vibrant educational and cultural landscape that nurtures such talented young musicians.

Guest Exhibition Ensemble

The Guest Exhibition Ensemble at the Aloha State Music Festival represents an exciting cross-cultural exchange, featuring outstanding school ensembles from across the other 49 states in the U.S. or from international locales. This initiative broadens the festival's scope, introducing Hawaii's audience and participants to diverse musical traditions and performance standards beyond their shores. By inviting these distinguished ensembles to perform, the festival fosters global musical dialogue, encourages educational exchanges, and deepens mutual appreciation for the universal language of music. The presence of these guest ensembles underscores the festival's commitment to diversity and inclusivity, making it a truly global celebration of youth music education and performance excellence.

All-State 'Ukulele Ensemble

The All-State Ukulele Ensemble, a hallmark of the Aloha State Music Festival, represents an innovative venture into showcasing the talents of Hawaii's youth in the realm of ukulele performance. This ensemble gathers the most skilled young ukulele musicians from across the state, providing them with a unique platform to demonstrate their mastery and passion for an instrument that holds a special place in Hawaiian culture and music. Under the guidance of esteemed clinician Bryan Tolentino, the ensemble is poised to offer performances that blend traditional Hawaiian music with contemporary compositions, illustrating the versatility and depth of the ukulele.

The ensemble's inception is rooted in the desire to elevate the ukulele beyond its traditional scope, highlighting its potential in diverse musical genres and settings. Through rigorous selection processes, the festival brings together students who not only exhibit exceptional technical proficiency but also a deep understanding of musicality and ensemble collaboration. This focus ensures that the All-State Ukulele Ensemble is a testament to the highest standards of musical excellence, showcasing intricate arrangements and innovative playing techniques that challenge and expand the conventional perceptions of ukulele music.

Beyond performance, the ensemble serves as an educational catalyst, offering its members unparalleled opportunities for growth and learning. Participants engage in intensive rehearsals, workshops, and masterclasses that delve into advanced concepts of musicianship, arrangement, and performance practice, all tailored specifically to the ukulele. This educational journey culminates in a series of performances at the festival, where the ensemble not only entertains but educates audiences about the ukulele's rich heritage and its evolving role in the music world. Through the All-State Ukulele Ensemble, the Aloha State Music Festival celebrates the enduring legacy of Hawaii's beloved instrument, fostering a new generation of ukulele virtuosos and enthusiasts.



Bryan Tolentino, Inagural Director/Clinician

'Ukulele player, **Bryan Tolentino** has been known, for the past forty plus years, as an accompanist who performed and continues to perform, locally and abroad with some of Hawaii's most well known and accomplished Hawaiian music artists.

Bryan's recorded on over sixty plus CD's for other artists as well as compilations adding his unique "fairy dusting", as he calls it. He says, "You must feel Hawaiian Music," evident in his award winning recordings featured on Na Hoku Hanohano and Grammy nominated CD's which have also garnered many awards. He blends all that he's learned, as an accompanist, into his own unique sound.

Bryan has performed and recorded with notable Hawaiian entertainers such as: Raiatea Helm, Jake Shimabukuro, Herb Ohta, Jr., Aunty Genoa Keawe, Pomaika'i Keawe, Karen Keawehawai'i, Ku'uipo Kumukahi, Hoku Zuttermeister, Marlene Sai, Melveen Leed, Jerry Santos and Olomana, O'Brian Eselu, Nathan Aweau, Frank Hewett, Byron Yasui, Benny Chong, Sonny Lim, Jeff Peterson, Wailau Ryder, Kalei Gamiao, 'Elua Kane, Owana Salazar, Weldon Kekauoha, Natalie Ai, 'Iolani Kamau'u, Napua Greig, Kuana Torres Kahele, Aaron Sala, Keao Costa, Blaine Kamalani Kia, NUE - Na 'Ukulele 'Ekolu - Bryan, Kama Hopkins and Halehaku Seabury, The Side Order Band - with Del Beazley, Chris Kamaka and Asa Young, and more!

Professional Development

Professional development at the Aloha State Music Festival plays a critical role in advancing the skills and knowledge of music educators across Hawaii. Recognizing the ever-evolving landscape of music education, the festival offers a range of professional development courses tailored specifically for educators, covering topics from innovative teaching methodologies to integrating technology in music instruction. These sessions are led by esteemed clinicians and educators who are also involved with the festival's all-state ensembles and auxiliary programs, ensuring that the content is both relevant and directly applicable to the teachers' daily work. By participating in these courses, educators have the unique opportunity to learn from leading figures in music education, exchange ideas with peers, and discover new strategies to enhance their teaching practices.

One of the significant benefits of engaging in professional development at the festival is the opportunity for educators to earn Department of Education (DOE) Professional Development Credit. This recognition underscores the value and relevance of the festival's offerings, contributing to teachers' professional growth and career advancement. By aligning the professional development sessions with DOE standards and requirements, the festival ensures that educators are not only gaining valuable insights and skills but are also recognized for their commitment to continuous learning and excellence in music education.

The importance of professional development within the context of the Aloha State Music Festival cannot be overstated. It provides a platform for educators to stay at the forefront of music education trends, fosters a community of practice among music teachers, and ultimately enriches the learning experiences of students. Through these professional development opportunities, the festival contributes to the elevation of music education standards across Hawaii, supports the professional journey of individual educators, and reinforces the festival's commitment to nurturing a vibrant, well-informed, and dynamic music education community.

Course Outline

Experience 1 – Rehearsal Observation (1 Hour)

Educators will observe the clinician rehearsing the all-state ensemble, linking the techniques they see to music standards. Based on their experience, educators will write a reflection.

Experience 2 – Masterclass Observation (1 Hour)

Educators will observe the clinician working with selected students in a masterclass setting. Educators will write a reflection based on their observational experience.

Experience 3 – Hands-on Clinic (1 Hour)

Educators will participate in a hands-on clinic. Educators will write a reflection based on their experience.

Experience 4 – Roundtable Discussion (1 Hour)

Moderated by the course coordinator, the clinician will lead a discussion on one or more topics. Educators will write a reflection based on their experience.

Experience 5 – Concert Observation (1 Hour)

As music is a performance art form, it is important to observe the final product—the performance. Educators will write a reflection based on all their previous observations.

Experience 6 – Networking Event (1 Hour)

Collaboration and camaraderie amongst educators are essential. The networking event allows educators to exchange ideas while interacting with the clinician informally and organically.

Electronic PDF Portfolio (Self Directed)

Educators will enter their reflections and other information into a website, producing a PDF portfolio that can be used for the portfolio requirement and will become an invaluable future resource for their teaching practice.

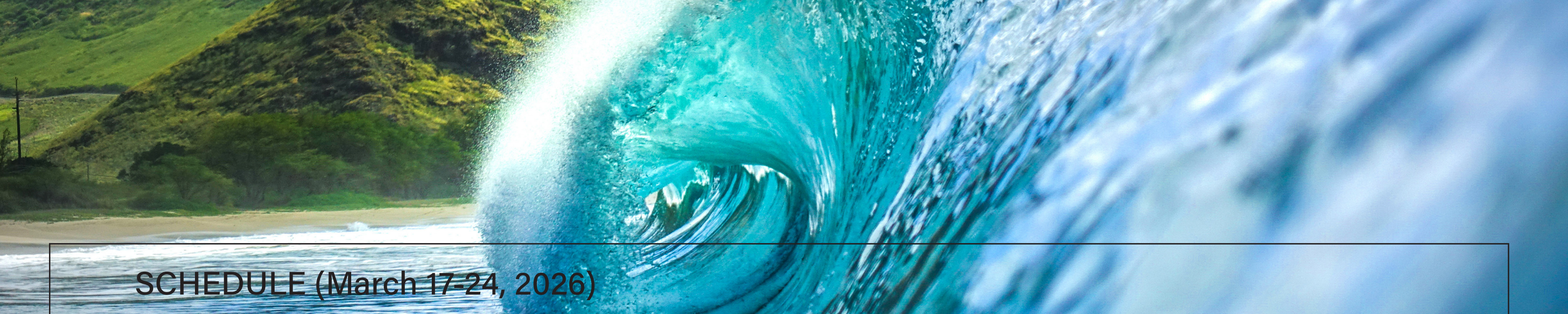
Elementary Education Concert Series

The Elementary Education Concert Series, part of the Aloha State Music Festival, offers a unique two-day musical extravaganza designed specifically for island elementary school students. This innovative series aims to enrich young minds through interactive and educational concerts, providing an engaging introduction to the world of music. On the first day, students are treated to a captivating performance by the All-State Ukulele Ensemble, showcasing the versatility and charm of Hawaii's beloved instrument in a program that blends traditional and contemporary pieces, encouraging audience participation and fostering a deeper appreciation for the ukulele's role in Hawaiian culture.

On the following day, the spotlight turns to the All-State High School Honor Band, which presents a dynamic repertoire ranging from classical to modern compositions. This performance not only demonstrates the technical prowess and musicality of Hawaii's talented high school musicians but also serves as an inspirational example of what young students can aspire to achieve in their own musical journeys. The concert is designed to be interactive, inviting students to engage with the music through clapping, singing along, and even conducting simple rhythmic patterns, making it a truly immersive experience.

Throughout the series, students are introduced to fundamental musical concepts, such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and dynamics, in a fun and accessible manner. Educators accompanying the students are provided with preparatory materials to integrate the concert experience into their classroom lessons, enhancing the educational impact. By exposing elementary students to high-quality live performances and actively involving them in the musical process, the Elementary Education Concert Series aims to ignite a lifelong passion for music, promote cultural literacy, and inspire the next generation of musicians and music lovers in Hawaii.





SCHEDULE (March 17-24, 2026)

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

At the Aloha State Music Festival, students will engage in a rigorous and immersive rehearsal schedule, designed to refine their musical skills and foster a deep sense of artistic collaboration. Under the guidance of distinguished clinicians and conductors, participants will navigate through intensive practice sessions that not only challenge their technical abilities but also enhance their interpretative insights and ensemble cohesion. Beyond rehearsals, students will partake in a variety of activities including masterclasses, workshops, and interactive sessions focused on a range of topics from performance anxiety management to the historical context of their repertoire. This comprehensive approach ensures that each student leaves the festival not only as a more skilled musician but also as a well-rounded artist, equipped with a broader understanding of the musical arts and a strengthened capacity for teamwork and leadership within an ensemble setting.

Afternoon Concert:
Educator Ensemble

Evening Concert:
Chamber Recital

Afternoon Concert:
Guest Exhibition Ensemble

Evening Concert:
Contemporary Ensemble

Afternoon Concert:
Island Exhibition Ensemble

Evening Concert:
'Ukulele Ensemble

The professional development sessions at the Aloha State Music Festival offer a multifaceted approach to music education, enriching the pedagogical skills of educators through a diverse array of learning opportunities. Educators can participate in masterclasses designed for students, gaining insights into advanced teaching methods and student engagement strategies directly from the experts. "Talk Story" discussions provide a unique, culturally rooted forum for educators to exchange ideas, share experiences, and discuss challenges and solutions in music education, fostering a sense of community and collaboration. Additionally, rehearsal and concert observations offer invaluable real-world learning experiences, allowing educators to analyze effective rehearsal techniques, ensemble management, and performance practices. These sessions are designed to inspire educators, broaden their instructional repertoire, and ultimately enhance the quality of music education provided to students across Hawaii.

SUNDAY

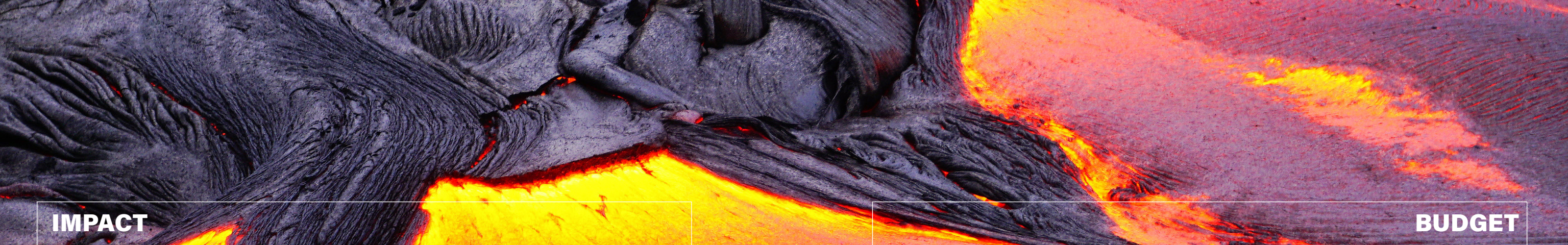
MONDAY

TUESDAY

Education Concert:
'Ukulele Ensemble

Education Concert:
Honor Bands

Evening Concert:
Honor Bands

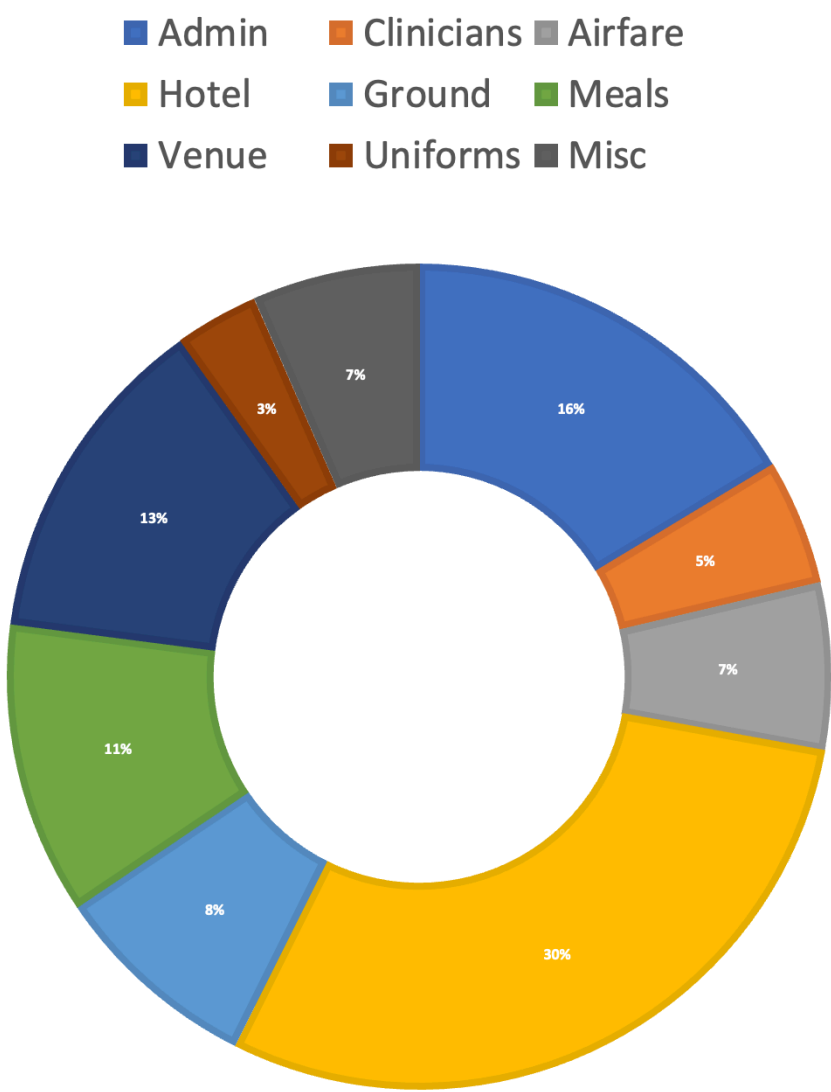


IMPACT

BUDGET

	Participants	Audience
All-State Chamber Recital	40	100
All-State Contemporary Ensemble	25	800
All-State Honor Bnad	200	800
All-State 'Ukulele Ensemble	50	800
All-State Educator Ensembles	100 (Educators)	800
Media / Recording Arts Experience	50	-
Composer Commissions	5 (Composers)	-
Island Exhibition Ensemble	75	200
Guest Exhibition Ensemble	75	200

\$3,000,000



ALOHA STATE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Separated by ocean, united through music.