

Media Contact
Jennifer Kuwahara, HaSTA Community Relations Chair & Past-president
hastapastpresident@gmail.com

Kalaheo High School Teacher to Represent Hawaii Science Teachers Association as Ambassador at National Conference

Honolulu, Hawaii (March 5, 2014) — Philip Gilsdorf, a Kalaheo High School teacher, is headed for Boston, MA the first week of April to attend the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) national conference on science education. He was named the Hawaii Science Teachers Association (HaSTA) Ambassador Program recipient at the annual HaSTA conference last September. Now in its second year, the Ambassador Program is sponsored by Hawaiian Electric Company and provides a stipend to a HaSTA member so s/he may have the opportunity to further their professional development as a science educator at the NSTA conference.

Gilsdorf stated "I am honored to have the opportunity to represent HaSTA at the 2014 NSTA Conference in Boston this coming year. As a young teacher (in my 3rd year), I am certain that I will gain incredible experience from interacting with the diverse group of teachers and presenters that will be in attendance. I look forward to bringing this experience back for my students and for the educators of Hawai'i."

Gilsdorf was lucky, too, as he wasn't the original HaSTA Ambassador selection. At the end of the conference, the selected recipient, Lori Fulton, approached the board members mentioning that her gut instinct and interactions with young teachers at the conference made her want one of them to have the opportunity. "While I am grateful for this and the prize would help financially...I talked with a young teacher who wanted so badly to go to NSTA and had never been...a classroom teacher should have this opportunity" Another name was drawn from the bag at the end of the conference with Lori's stipulation that it would be a classroom teacher who would receive it.

"The goal of the Ambassador Program is to reinvigorate and inspire a HaSTA member's science teaching interests," said Jenny Kuwahara, HaSTA past-president. "We're very happy that Hawaiian Electric was able to sponsor the program for the second year so we can continue to enhance science education in Hawaii. Our whole organization benefits from this partnership, as the Ambassador shares curriculum ideas and materials from the NSTA conference by conducting a session at the HaSTA fall conference." Mayim Bialik will be the keynote speaker at this year's conference (April 3-6, 2014) that will also feature other renowned science, education, policy, and industry experts presenting at hundreds of workshops and exhibits for PreK through college educators.

"As strong supporters of science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs which are foundational to success in any career, we believe the Ambassador program will give Hawaii science educators an edge in the classroom and lead to more engaged students," said Darcy Endo-Omoto, vice president of government & community affairs at Hawaiian Electric. Hawaiian Electric Company recently confirmed their sponsorship of the 3rd HaSTA Ambassador Program stipend. The recipient will be announced in September at HaSTA's annual conference at Iolani School in September 13, 2014.

If you are interested in learning more about HaSTA and the Ambassador Program, visit their website at www.hasta.wildapricot.org.

The Hawaii Science Teachers Association's mission is to stimulate and maintain interest in science; to stimulate, improve and coordinate science teaching at all levels of instruction in the schools of Hawaii and to engage in any and all activities of furtherance thereof; to promote the improvement of educational systems and processes in the schools in any manner to assist such stimulation and coordination of science teaching; to apprise the general public of possible means of improving science teaching within the schools; to do any and all acts and things which may increase, through education, the public knowledge of science since 1963.