

SCHOOLS

Fun getting dirty



PHOTOS SPECIAL TO WEST HAWAII TODAY

Connor Yamamoto, a kindergartner, digs in the garden with his trowel during the recent family and student garden day at Hualalai Academy.

HUALALAI ACADEMY HOLDS GARDEN DAY

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Hualalai Academy recently held its first semi-monthly family and school garden day. The day is part of the school's theme for the year, "Our Ocean, Our Earth, Our Island."

"Working on the land and exposing children to real work is an important part of our mission in experiential education. Also this year, Hualalai Academy was designated a 'School of the Future' by the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools and the Hawaii Community Foundation for our commitment to collaborative, project based learning. Working in the school garden supports all of these ideals," said Kate Mulligan, head of school.

Parents, children and teachers came together to donate their time and muscle to work and improve the garden learning environment on the school campus.

"Our Garden Day is always a fantastic opportunity for the Hualalai ohana to come together, participate in a healthy activity, show our school pride and help the environment," said Shani Dutton, garden program coordinator.

Besides enjoying the fresh produce grown in the garden, the children are thrilled and motivated to physically work and get their hands dirty, Dutton said.

Erin Durkin, second grade, shared her experiences with gardening and garden work day: "It was really fun and it was really good exercise. I like planting stuff and I also like eating vegetables and fruit from the garden, that's the best part."



LEFT: Second-grader Mia McGrath empties a wheelbarrow during the family and school garden day at Hualalai Academy.

ABOVE RIGHT: Sixth-grader Cameran Yamamoto and a friend shovel dirt during the work day.

BELOW RIGHT: Erin Durkin, left, and her mother, Allyson, shovel dirt into a wheelbarrow for placement in the school's garden.