

# SPEAK Together

## Community Building in Action

Community access television connects members of our community—whether they are program producers, cast, crew or guest participants; volunteers; partners and supporters; or the viewing public—and it facilitates community building in all of its various forms. Many producers over the years have created a variety of programs that serve different needs, purposes and communities.

For example, a sense of shared circumstances can bring people together and provide critical support. That is the impetus behind one show on 'Ōlelo which has been airing since March 2003. "The biggest benefit to our community has been the camaraderie," says Shirley Sypert, executive producer and host of *Post Polio & Me*. Sypert, a teacher and former Broadway entertainer, lives with post polio syndrome, a debilitating disease that can occur in people who have had polio. "Helping others and giving back are part of a purpose that starts at home and then permeates into our community."

themselves should know that medications can adversely affect them."

Leigh-Wai Doo, attorney and former Honolulu City Council member who lives with post polio syndrome, says, "Multiple guests on the show tell their story, and it helps the families of people who have had polio understand post polio's impact. It's valuable to recognize that post polio may hasten what they might otherwise think is the normal aging process."

In addition to building awareness and understanding, many other programs on 'Ōlelo help people maintain a sense of community in other ways. Some shows focus on inspiring a sense of kinship and collective pride in one's culture and identity. Producer Molesi Sagapolutele has been creating shows for 'Ōlelo's channels since the late 1980s. He produces four shows about the Samoan community in Hawai'i. The programs highlight Samoan cultural activities, including singing, dancing and church services.

"The people of the Samoan community here *really* love to watch the shows every week," says Sagapolutele. "They call if I repeat a show—they want a new show each week. I usually bring in some of the news from Samoa to maintain knowledge of the culture, and I show the way we preach the Lord. It's helped our young people see what the way of life is for our community."

Sagapolutele's example inspires others in the Samoan community. Pulefano Galea'i, artistic director for the Polynesian Cultural Center, who has been a regular guest on Sagapolutele's shows from the beginning, says, "Molesi's show, *Samoa Mo Samoa*, has had an especially great impact because it's one of the few shows where Samoans can hear their own language. I think it provides a good service for our people." Galea'i, himself, with the help of 'Ōlelo's Kahuku CMC, has begun work on a show that will feature Polynesian culture.

Sypert and Sagapolutele are just two of the many producers who have contributed original, locally produced programming

## Getting Started As A Video Producer

'Ōlelo Community Television staff provides individuals and organizations with training to help them quickly and effectively get their noncommercial messages on the air.

### Video training classes

People who are interested in creating and sharing messages using 'Ōlelo facilities need to become certified through training. They can take a class or two at their nearest neighborhood Community Media Center (CMC), where they'll learn how to operate a video camera, edit a program and put it on the air. (See pages 12-13 for the six CMC locations on O'ahu or visit [www.olelo.org](http://www.olelo.org).) Once they become certified to use the equipment, 'Ōlelo helps guide them through the entire production process.

### Getting programs on the air

Whether video producers use 'Ōlelo resources or their own equipment to create their message, or if they have permission to air existing programs that they want to share with the community, they may submit the programs to 'Ōlelo for airing. 'Ōlelo gives producers the airdates, which they can publicize. 'Ōlelo also lists the airdates on a programming schedule. 'Ōlelo operates six cable channels: 49, 52, 53, 54, 55 and 56. (See page 13 for descriptions of the types of programs aired on these channels or visit [www.olelo.org](http://www.olelo.org).)

since 'Ōlelo's inception—some producing shows for nearly 20 years.

Community building takes many forms, and by providing services and resources to a wide range of producers for a variety of shows, 'Ōlelo Community Television continues to facilitate this important endeavor.



Community members practice video editing on iMac computers at one of 'Ōlelo's Community Media Centers.

As a program for post polio patients and those who care for them, *Post Polio & Me* builds community by increasing understanding of the disease. "This information is extremely beneficial because physicians are not trained about post polio, and this raises awareness for patients and physicians," says Dorothyann Lindes, MD, a family practitioner who is Shirley's physician and a past guest on the show. "Physicians have to be aware of patients' needs, and patients