



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

TED SAKAI
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 1, 2013

WARDEN NAMED FOR KULANI CORRECTIONAL FACILITY ON THE BIG ISLAND OF HAWAII

HONOLULU – The Department of Public Safety is pleased to announce the selection of Ruth Collier Forbes as warden of Kulani Correctional Facility, effective Dec. 1, 2013.

“Ruth has a broad knowledge of corrections and management. She is a valuable asset to the department and is committed to carrying out our mission,” said Public Safety Director Ted Sakai. “I am confident Kulani will benefit from her leadership and years of experience.”

Ruth has been with the Department of Public Safety since June 1995. She worked as an Adult Corrections Officer at the Women’s Community Correctional Center until 1998. From 1998 to 2000 she served as a Human Services Professional at the Hawaii Intake Service Center. From 2000 to 2006 she worked at the Hawaii Community Correctional Center (HCCC) as a Human Services Professional. In January 2006 she rose to the rank of Corrections Supervisor at HCCC.

As a Corrections Supervisor, she is responsible for inmate programming, classification and services at HCCC. Ruth is a key member of a team that implemented many innovative programs such as E Hoopili Hou (Supporting Keiki of Incarcerated Parents), Job Readiness, and Mentoring. She is also an active member of the Going Home Consortium, a group of public and private agencies that develop and implement programs in the community for offenders on the Big Island.

Ruth has a B.A. in sociology from the College of St. Benedict, Minnesota, and a masters in Criminal Justice Administration from Chaminade University.

As warden, Ruth will be instrumental in the re-opening of Kulani which is scheduled for July 1, 2014.

“Ruth will be jumping right in to her role as Warden,” said Deputy Director for Corrections Max Otani. “The priority in the next 6 months, as we prepare for the official

re-opening of Kulani, will be to hire all the staff, establish and test operational policies and procedures, and organize the purchase of equipment and supplies.”

The facility will also be getting new kitchen equipment and undergo other minor repairs. The electrical upgrades suggested in the Environmental Assessment are currently underway.

Kulani will staff 96 full-time positions and will accommodate approximately 200 low-risk inmates.

The reactivation of Kulani will help with the Abercrombie Administration’s goal to bring out-of-state prisoners back to Hawaii. This goal is consistent with Hawaii’s participation in the Justice Reinvestment Initiative which began over a year ago. The JRI strategy is a “data-driven” plan to reduce spending on corrections, reinvest savings generated in strategies that would reverse crime trends and eventually bring inmates housed in Arizona back to Hawaii.

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