



# TIMELESS VALUES, LASTING CONNECTIONS, SHAPING FUTURES.

YMCA CAMP H.R. ERDMAN 1926 - 2026



## SMILES ARE BIGGER HERE...

YMCA Camp H.R. Erdman — at 100 years and counting — has provided opportunities for all ages to explore our 'āina from the mountains to the ocean, find new talents, try new activities and make lasting memories.

PHOTOS COURTESY YMCA



## Congratulations to the YMCA on Camp H.R. Erdman's 100th Anniversary!



Lisa Ontai  
VP of Mission Advancement | YMCA of Honolulu

UHA shows genuine care for our employees and our organization. They listen, respond promptly, and offer solutions that truly meet our needs.



# A Robust Past Sets Foundation For Camp Erdman's Future

Stories by **KYLE GALDEIRA** // Photos courtesy **YMCA**

No matter a person's background, it seems universally true to say that if one grew up on O'ahu, they have a Camp Erdman experience to reminisce about.

YMCA Camp H.R. Erdman is renowned for providing memorable experiences for local youth, and as the facility celebrates its 100th anniversary of serving the local community, the outdoor experiences, school events and summer camps shared surge to the top of memory banks.

"Camp Erdman is an island institution," says Andrew "Mish" Hood, Camp Erdman senior executive director. "I've been in camping for 25 years, and had the privilege to connect with communities through the camping mission across the U.S. Camp Erdman is something special that takes connection to its local community to a different level. Nowhere else in the country is a singular camp experience so pervasive through the community history."

Hood explains that the "magical camp experiences" are uniform among attendees as the same core values and lessons taught in the 1920s are also conveyed in the 2020s.

"We all see ourselves at Camp Erdman as temporary stewards of a historic mission," Hood says. "We have the privilege of serving the community through this vehicle at this moment, and for as long as that privilege lasts, we are blessed. It is my personal blessing to have the honor to stewarding this institution through its

100th year. It's the honor of my career to do so."

Camp Erdman's diverse offerings provide memorable experiences for the entire 'ohana. The team leans on its fundamentals (safety, affordability, quality) along with the key takeaways (wow factor, memories, magic) in all aspects of its offerings. An array of options exist, including the immersive experience of a summer resident camp for children, participating in a day camp or a full family camp, or a weekend getaway in Camp Erdman's rental units.

"Being in a position to see programming from a step back and not from the front lines, so to speak, allows me to adjust, add, or continually tweak programming to always ensure that kids get the most of their experience out of Camp Erdman," says Drew Markey, Camp Erdman summer camp senior director. "Getting to see kids come to camp, learn or experience something new and leave camp wanting to come back will never get old. Also, training and working with experienced and dedicated staff is something that is rewarding, and it's great to see staff from all over world leave their impact on Camp Erdman."

Don Anderson formerly served as CEO of YMCA of Honolulu and was involved in Camp Erdman's expansion and outdoor education growth in the 1970s.

"I have lots of experiences in my 85 years, but none is more rewarding



than those associated with YMCA camping," Anderson says. "Rewarding memories at the top for me have to do with facility development and watching people grow. I discovered early on that putting a young person in a youthful community, outdoors and away from their everyday environment was a wonderful way to help them develop their potential and character. They are in a new place, with different people and their image with all the definitions that people have hung on them are back in town.

"Without all that baggage they can be who they want, try new ways to relate to people and be who they choose to be. All this is assisted and encouraged by great young leaders that the campers tend to idolize. What an opportunity!"

Anderson remains involved through volunteer support of

SEE PAGE 10



# A Century of Opening Possibilities.

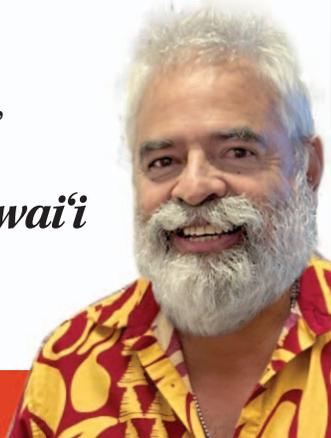
Congratulations to **YMCA Camp H.R. Erdman** on 100 years of inspiring generations across Hawai'i.

Your legacy of growth, connection, and outdoor adventure continues to open new horizons for keiki, families, and our community.

With aloha and admiration,

**Mario and Windows Hawai'i**

Mario Garcia  
General Manager



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*Happy 100th Birthday,  
YMCA Camp Erdman*



## Navigating Toward The Future

Connecting people to the land, educating and offering memorable and meaningful experiences remains at the core of Camp H.R. Erdman's approach throughout its 100-year history that features an array of diverse programs.

"We are so proud to be coming into our 100th year, and excited as we look forward to our next 100 years," says Andrew "Mish" Hood, Camp Erdman senior executive director. "As we look now toward the future, we imagine the opportunities to honor the past and our tradition, and maximize our impact in the future."

Hood recalls his team setting a target five years ago, to be in a place by 2026, where Camp Erdman operates "as vibrantly as we have ever served, in a facility that is ready to serve for the next 100 years. We have achieved that, and the facility has been restored to incredible condition, while we continue to battle the North Shore elements to keep it that way!"

The Ka'ena Point Master Plan features collaborative goals rooted in an integrated approach that connects land and sea, preserves ocean heritage, and promotes collaboration and stewardship. It explicitly calls for place-based approaches that blend scientific data, traditional knowledge and field experience.

In December 1975, when the state of Hawai'i purchased lands to create Ka'ena Point State Park, the plan noted that YMCA lands at Camp Erdman were not considered necessary for acquisition because they were already recreation areas compatible with desired uses for the region. Fast forward 50-plus years, and that compatibility still rings true. Camp Erdman is positioned to

be a front door for conservation-minded education and stewardship efforts that support the statewide movement to protect places like Ka'ena for generations to come.

"That core is now driving us forward as we look at the dryland forest ecosystem that surrounds us," Hood says. "This is precious, rare and endangered, and we steward, conserve and restore it. We have the programs, expertise, will and resources to put towards making a genuine difference in conservation and restoration, making sure that the opportunity to learn persists through generations to come."



"In that pursuit, we have created our own native species nursery. We engage youth, families and all participants in the removal of invasive species, and the planting of native species. We repaired water infrastructure and improved water collection to conserve water resources; are installing solar power to be more sustainable in our power use; have installed zero waste and composting goals in our food service program; and are working from every angle to conserve, restore, and along the way, educate. It is a 360-degree view of our impact on community, the individual and the environment."







## Celebrating 100 years of cherished memories and lifelong smiles.

Congratulations to the [YMCA of Honolulu's Camp H.R. Erdman](#) on 100 years of nurturing Hawaii's keiki to grow strong in body, mind, and spirit. Hawaii Dental Service celebrates the healthy smiles your work brings to communities across Oahu.

Since 1962, **Hawaii Dental Service (HDS)** has worked to improve oral health and preserve the healthy smiles of Hawaii families. Today, as Hawaii's leading dental benefits provider, HDS serves more than a million residents across Hawaii, Guam, and Saipan.



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# YMCA Camp H.R. Erdman Milestones



## 1903: YMCA FIRST CAMP

Camping became the cornerstone of YMCA programming in 1885 with the start of Camp Dudley in New York — America's first known continuously running summer camp program. The earliest recorded YMCA of Honolulu tent camping was in 1903 in Wahiawā with youth leaders and Y Boy Club members.



## 1932: YMCA CAMP H.R. ERDMAN

On Christmas morning in 1932, the YMCA received an extraordinary gift: Sisters Marion D. Erdman and Mary Dillingham Frear donated Camp Mokulē'ia to the Y in honor of Harold R. Erdman, Mrs. Erdman's 26-year-old son, who was killed in a polo accident.

A Punahou School and Princeton University graduate, Harold was fatally injured in August 1931 at Kapi'olani Field. Renamed Camp Harold R. Erdman so that "his spirit of contribution to the happiness of others carries on," the camp quickly grew from Army tents with dirt floors into a fully built YMCA camp with cabins, a dining hall and kitchen, activity buildings, a chapel and memorial features, supported by the Rotary Club and many local families. It was envisioned as a place not just for children, but for the whole 'ohana, including parents, children and grandparents.

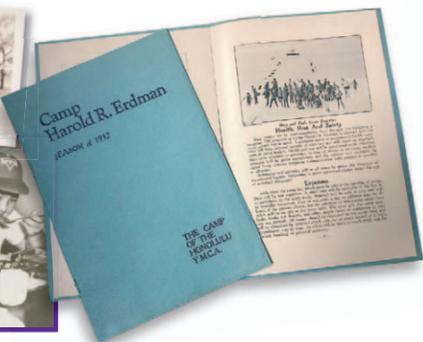


## 1926: YMCA CAMP MOKULĒ'IA

In January 1926, Walter F. Dillingham leased 10 acres of land for \$1 a year to the YMCA of Honolulu for youth camping. During that time, the YMCA site was called Camp Mokulē'ia. The 1920s camps were filled with outdoor activities and lots of opportunities to make new friends.



## CAMP LIFE THRIVES AT CAMP H.R. ERDMAN



## 1938: FROSH CAMP

Started in 1938 as an Atherton YMCA freshman orientation program at the University of Hawai'i, YMCA UH Frosh Camps were most popular from the early 1970s through the 1990s. Hundreds of freshmen spent their first days of college life at Camp Erdman, building friendships through outdoor adventures, silly games and skits that created lifelong memories.



## A PLACE OF SERVICE & PLACE OF HEALING

For generations, the Rotary Club, Y Service Club and many community organizations have provided thousands of volunteer hours and generous support to keep Camp Erdman structurally sound, welcoming and beautiful. Camp Erdman has also served as a place of healing for many social service organizations, including Camp Agape, an annual program for children who have a parent who is incarcerated.



## CAMP H.R. ERDMAN TODAY & FOREVER

For 100 years, Camp H.R. Erdman has delivered timeless values and lasting connections — helping shape futures for generations across our island. From camps and family camps to outdoor education, retreats, community days, and beachfront yurt and hale rentals, Camp Erdman continues to bring smiles, friendship and meaningful connection to our 'āina, culture and YMCA core values, now and forever.

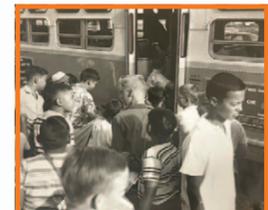


## 2005: ALPINE TOWER AND ODYSSEY HIGH ROPES CHALLENGE

The Alpine Tower Climb and Odyssey III Challenge was built and funded by a six-year, \$6 million federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Program grant supported by U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye. From 2005 to 2011, more than 6,000 teens from Wai'anae, Waialua, Waipahu and Wahiawā took part in this highly successful after-school and Camp Erdman experience, including two camp weekends that launched and culminated the program. Today, the 42-foot high ropes course and climbing tower continues to build confidence, communication and teamwork not only for youth most at risk, but also for school groups, retreats and is the mainstay of Camp Erdman programming.

## 1967: SCHOOL GROUPS & OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Beginning in 1967, the YMCA worked with school departments to provide Camping and Outdoor Education Programs for fourth, fifth and sixth graders. The program was a week of camp followed by a program of study planned by the teachers in cooperation with camp. Today, thousands of students experience overnight and outdoor programs at Camp H.R. Erdman.



## RAGGERS PROGRAM

Started in 1914 at a California YMCA and later becoming a signature program at Camp H.R. Erdman, the Raggies Program brings youth and adults together with mentors to commit to personal growth and positive character traits, progressively earning higher levels of colored kerchiefs. "Accepting your White Rag is the highest level of commitment and a pledge to help many others find their best selves," says Bobby Stiver, who received his white rag in 2016 and has helped hundreds of others progress through the program.



# Shin Family Continues To Enjoy Camp Erdman After 50-Plus Years

In a tradition that spans more than 50 years, Aileen Shin makes it a priority to continue her family's commitment to spending the Fourth of July at Camp H.R. Erdman.

"I saw an ad in the newspaper for the camp when I had two young children, and now, they're 58 and 56 years old," Shin says of the tradition's origin. "I currently have four children and 11 grandchildren that now come to camp annually. I saw it as an opportunity for my family to have a shared lifetime experience that required little or no effort on my part, meaning that all meals and activities

were included along with comfortable lodging."

Shin explains that memorable experiences enjoyed over the years by multiple generations of her 'ohana include campfires with s'mores, songs

and skits, evening crab hunts, arts and crafts (the family still has their tie-dyed shirts!), navigating the ropes course and enjoying expanded meal options that include a salad bar.

"The Shin family has been coming to Camp Erdman for decades, spanning multiple generations," says Eric Tutje, Camp Erdman senior program director. "Families like theirs are at the heart of what makes Camp Erdman so special. We offer a natural setting thoughtfully designed to foster connection with others and with the outdoors.

"Through activities that encourage participants to step outside their comfort

zones, we help build confidence in a community surrounded by support and encouragement. Their generous donation of time and financial resources help ensure that magical experiences are not only shared by their own family, but by everyone who comes through camp."

Shin and her husband, Cliff, serve as volunteers on Camp Erdman's Board of Managers. The role helps them play an active role in ensuring the camp maintains its "family focus" through its activities and facilities.

"Consequently, when we create new spaces for families, as in the container lodgings, I want to be sure to include spaces that allow for families to gather in the evening for interactive activities," Shin says. "Camp creates lifetime experiences that are passed on to multiple generations. With the distraction of social media and a sometimes-chaotic world environment, it's comforting to expose our family to the simple life on the beach — nature at its best."



**FAMILY CAMP**  
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# CONGRATULATIONS YMCA OF HONOLULU

## ON CAMP ERDMAN'S 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY!



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**Ewa**  
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**Hau'ula**  
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Hau'ula, HI 96717

**Hilo**  
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Hilo, HI 96720

**Kamakana Ali'i**  
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# Benefits Abound as a Camp Erdman Counselor

At Camp Erdman, counselors strike the perfect balance between serving as responsible role models and tapping into their inner child to create an unforgettable camp experience for participants and fellow staffers.

Counselors are heralded for dedicating their entire summer to serving youth and emerging from the experience as more confident, capable and compassionate individuals.

"It is truly an all-in journey that creates lifelong memories for both campers and counselors," says Camp Erdman senior program director Eric Tutje. "Being a camp counselor is one of the most challenging and rewarding ways a young adult can spend their summer. Counselors provide 24-hour care for

campers, often living in cabins with up to 14 participants. Beyond keeping children safe and leading fun activities, they are rigorously trained to teach lasting lessons in personal growth, character building and living out Hawaiian values."

Tutje explains that the Native Hawaiian values woven through the Camp Erdman experience are 'imi 'ike (pursuit of knowledge); mālama (to take care); aloha (love and welcoming); kuleana (privilege of responsibility); na'au Pono (trusting one's gut instinct to do what's right); and laulima (many hands make light work).

"Being a Camp Erdman counselor requires a contagious fun-loving attitude with an eye toward safety and camper



Markey explains that "lunch and rest hour" breaks up the day before an afternoon of Camp Erdman's staple activities: ropes course, swimming pool, archery, sports, arts and crafts, mālama 'āina and other on-site activities. He says that campers end the afternoon with "Battle Challenge, which you'll have to experience to understand." Finally, campers participate in an evening talent show, camp dance, campfire, or large group game to end the day before winding down with shower time and reflections in the cabins, led by counselors.

experience," says Drew Markey, Camp Erdman summer camp senior director. "During the summer months, counselors begin their day at 7 a.m. with waking the kids up and starting the day with an oli (chant), learn about the fun activities planned for the day and start the day off strong with everyone at camp. The morning is filled with either activities that the counselors choose to run based on their own personal interests or passions, or taking the kids off-site to one of our specialty camps, such as surf camp, adventure camp, cooking with aloha, 'ike Hawai'i or Sampler Camp (a little bit of everything)."

"Camp Erdman is more than just our worksite, it's our home," Tutje says. "Each day brings new challenges, and the dynamic nature of the work keeps things engaging, meaningful and fun. For many who grew up on the island, Camp Erdman holds cherished memories, and families that continue that tradition by returning year after year keep the magic alive."



**CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF YMCA CAMP H.R. ERDMAN**  
 PDCA OF HAWAII IS HONORED TO HELP PAINT A BRIGHTER FUTURE



**FROM PAGE 2**

Camp Erdman and embraces the kuleana to ensure that the experience is available for keiki over generations to come.

“There is a constant battle to maintain the camp’s ability to serve,” says Anderson. “Nails and all metal rusts, rebar spalls, wood rots. Twenty-thousand campers a year add wear and tear. Only the generosity of our community keeps the camp going.”

He notes a good example of this is the Rotary Club of Honolulu. In 2005, it renovated and made a cluster of five cabins handicap accessible. The cluster is called Rotary Village and Rotary renovated the cabin cluster again in 2022. Several Rotary members have made the camp their personal project and spend many days each year making improvements.

“As a Rotarian, each year I organize a weekend of 100 volunteers to make camp improvements funded by the Rotary Club of Honolulu,” he continues. “Camp provides educational and character-building experiences for our young people.”

Hood notes that YMCA Camp Erdman is dedicated to ensuring that the “magic of camp is accessible to all.”

“This means we need support from all angles: paying program participants, government grants, foundation and individual donor support, and volunteer time, talent and treasure.”

To ensure that everyone can attend camp, its leadership seeks out funding to provide support for transportation, program costs, supplies and other support needs. For many attendees, this means 100% of the costs will need to be covered.

“Currently, we raise anywhere from \$150,000-\$200,000 annually through our annual campaign, major gifts and grants, but it is only a scratch on the surface,” Hood says. “We estimate that we will need to raise upwards of \$500,000 a year to ensure that the door is wide open for those that need support to provide this magical experience to their own child, or to their school.

“As we move in to our 100th year and look forward, we would ask for as much support as we can get from our island residents and businesses to help us get there this year, and every year going forward as we continue our historic mission to serve.”





**CAMP H.R. ERDMAN  
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS  
1926 - 2026**



**100 YEARS TOGETHER AT CAMP ERDMAN**

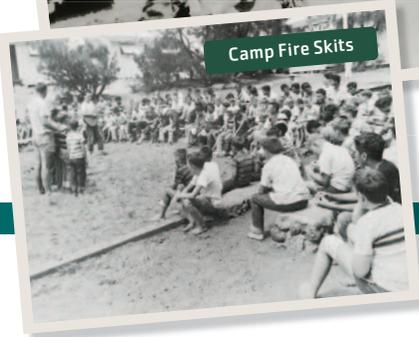
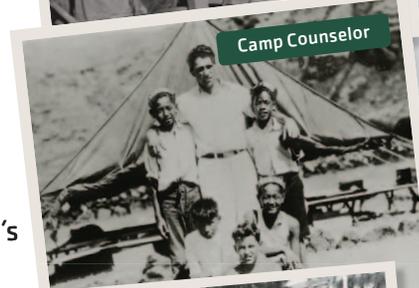


For generations of keiki and kama'āina, Camp H.R. Erdman has been a place where friendships are formed, character is built, and life lessons take root. As we commemorate our 100th anniversary, we're celebrating not just the years—but the people, stories, and shared moments that made Camp Erdman unforgettable.

**SHARE YOUR STORY**

Were you a camper, staff member, volunteer, or part of a retreat? Your memories are part of Camp Erdman's legacy. Share your favorite moments—big or small—for a chance to be featured in our historical exhibit, anniversary media, and centennial celebrations.

Tell us your Camp Erdman story at: [camp100.ymcahonolulu.org](http://camp100.ymcahonolulu.org)



**JOIN US FOR COMMUNITY DAY**

**Saturday, March 7, 10am-3pm**

Bring the whole family to YMCA Camp Erdman in Waialua for a free day of fun, connection, and discovery. Enjoy classic camp favorites like field games, water play, and campfire cooking, explore the cabins, and get a taste of camp life. Learn more about youth and teen summer camps, family camps, retreats, and other programs. Enjoy special promotions, prize drawings, and food available for purchase.

Pre-register online at: [bit.ly/CampComDay](http://bit.ly/CampComDay)



**A CENTENNIAL KEEPSAKE**

Celebrate 100 years of Camp Erdman with a limited-edition tote and hip pack, created in partnership with Aloha Collection. Featuring a special Camp Erdman design, these splash-proof bags are made for adventure, the beach, and everyday island life—perfect for carrying gear, essentials, and memories alike.



Sign up to get priority access: [bit.ly/CampAloha](http://bit.ly/CampAloha)

All about  
Camp Erdman  
[bit.ly/CampErdman](http://bit.ly/CampErdman)



# Congratulations on 100 years of making a difference.

We're proud to help honor the YMCA's Camp Erdman on its centennial anniversary. As a bank born to help local families and businesses, we support the good work of the YMCA in our community.

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100 years?  
That's a lotta  
happy campers!



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