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17th Annual Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search Announces Four Finalists



*Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search Finalists (L-R):
Maluhia, Rickey Kamai, Kekoa Lopes-Torres and Tevita Lisiata Apina-Pacheco*

HONOLULU – OUTRIGGER Resorts & Hotels is proud to continue its support of Hawai'i musicians through its annual Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search, which is now in its 17th year. After an extensive review of submissions from across the Hawaiian Islands, the Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search committee announced the four finalists who will play-off for a coveted month-long contract to jam at the home of Hawaiian music, Kani Ka Pila Grille at [OUTRIGGER Reef Waikiki Beach Resort](#).

The distinguished finalists are Rickey Kamai, Kekoa Lopes-Torres, Tevita Lisiata Apina-Pacheco and the band, Maluhia. These talented artists have earned the opportunity to perform live in front of a prestigious panel of Hawaiian music industry professionals. The final showdown will take place at the 30th Annual Made in Hawai'i Festival on Saturday, August 24, from 3-6 p.m. at the Hawai'i Convention Center.

The esteemed panel of judges includes Kawika Kahiapo (award-winning musician, singer-songwriter, slack key award winner); Milton Lau (CEO of Ki-Ho'alu Foundation and Founder of the Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festivals); Bobby Moderow Jr. (award-winning musician, singer-songwriter, slack key award winner) and Eric Lagrimas (Assistant Professor, Music & Entertainment Learning Experience).

With Billy V and Bruddah Wade serving as emcee's, each performer will present three songs or perform for 20 minutes. Last year's winner, Kahiau Lam Ho, will play a short set while the judges deliberate. The winner, once announced, will then play a final performance for the audience.

The winning artist or band will receive a contract to perform four times within a month in 2025. Additionally, the winner will also receive a personalized social media marketing package featuring an electronic press kit and promotional audio/video clips recorded at Honolulu Community College's Mike Curb MELE Studios.

"It's my honor and privilege to support our up & coming musicians, provide them with an opportunity to fulfill their dreams and sing Hawaiian music professionally," said Luana Maitland, OUTRIGGER's Area Director of Cultural Experience.

Located poolside at the OUTRIGGER Reef Waikiki Beach Resort, Kani Ka Pila Grille is Honolulu's home for nightly live Hawaiian music. The restaurant offers delicious dining in a relaxed and open atmosphere from 11am – 9pm. A regular line-up of award-winning musicians kick-off each evening at 6pm, including Kawika Kahiapo, Sean Na'auao, Ho'okena, Nathan Aweau, Kala'e Camarillo, Ei Nei and Ka Hehena with occasional special guest appearances and impromptu kanikapila! For reservations, call (808) 924-4990 or visit www.outrigger.com/events/music/kani-ka-pila-grille.

About the Four Finalists

Kekoa Lopes-Torres: Kekoa hails from Maunaloa Valley in Makiki, O'ahu and is a product of Hawaiian immersion and Hawaiian culture-based charter schools. This Kanaka Maoli/Puerto Rican comes from a line of experienced Hawaiian entertainers, and learned to play ukulele, guitar and sing from his tutu kane as a child. His forte is mele o Hawaii (Hawaiian songs), although he also plays reggae, country, contemporary music, and oldies.

Rickey Kamai: Rickey's musical journey traces back to the heart of Hawai'i, where he inherited a profound love for music from his family deeply engrained in the industry. With Familial ties reaching back to the renowned band Hulili and contributions to The Palasades, music was not just a passion but a legacy for Rickey. His musical palette blossomed with old-school Hawaiian melodies and church hymns. Driven by an unwavering passion to leave his mark in the industry and aspires to become a successful recording artist and producer.

Maluhia - 'Elia Akaka, Kyle Moriguchi, Remington Tang and Liki Tavete: Maluhia, a Hawaiian music band deeply rooted in nostalgia and tradition, transports listeners throughout generation of Mele Hawai'i through their enchanting melodies and harmonies. Formed by a group of passionate musicians who share a profound love for the music of their upbringing, Maluhia embodies the spirit of aloha in every note they play. With each member having been on their respective musical journeys for some time, these four gentlemen have banded together with one goal in mind: perpetuating the musical legacies of Hawai'i. Together, Elia, Kyle, Remington and Liki form a musical synergy that captures the essence of tranquility, "Maluhia."

Tevita Lisiate Apina-Pacheco: Tevita has been singing traditional Japanese music professionally for 12 years and has been a student of Craig Shimizu for 16 years. He has been singing Hawaiian music for five years now and his dream is to sing Hawaiian music professionally. His life goal is to keep traditional Japanese and Hawaiian music alive.

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ABOUT OUTRIGGER RESORTS & HOTELS

For more than 75 years, OUTRIGGER has charted a journey of discovery – expanding from Hawai'i to premier resort destinations including Fiji, Mauritius, Thailand and the Maldives. The privately held hospitality company invites guests to 'Come Be Here' with authentic Signature Experiences and the [OUTRIGGER DISCOVERY loyalty program](#) – a member of the award-winning Global Hotel Alliance (GHA). OUTRIGGER's multi-branded portfolio includes OUTRIGGER® Resorts, OHANA Hotels by OUTRIGGER®, Hawaii Vacation Condos by OUTRIGGER®, Kapalua Villas Maui and Honua Kai Resort & Spa Maui while also managing select properties from top international hotel brands including Embassy Suites by Hilton®. Find out more at OUTRIGGER.com.

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