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18th Annual Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search – Call for Entries

Winner receives month-long contract to play at OUTRIGGER Reef Waikiki Beach Resort's Kani Ka Pila Grille



2024 KKPG Talent Search Finalists & Judges

HONOLULU – The Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search contest returns for its 18th year, continuing OUTRIGGER Resorts & Hotels' long-standing commitment to celebrate & showcase local musical talent. Up-and-coming musicians from across Hawai'i are invited to enter for a chance to perform live at the finals, taking place on August 16, 2025, during the 31st Annual Made in Hawai'i Festival at the Hawai'i Convention Center.

The winner will receive a month-long contract to jam at the home of Hawaiian music, Kani Ka Pila Grille at the [OUTRIGGER Reef Waikiki Beach Resort](#), which includes four performances within a month in 2026. In addition, the winning artist or band will 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.

"Each year, the Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search brings new voices to the stage and reminds us how deep and vibrant Hawai'i's musical roots truly are," said Luana Maitland, OUTRIGGER's Area Director of Cultural Experiences. "We're honored to help nurture the next generation of Hawaiian musicians and give them a platform to shine."

To enter, aspiring traditional and contemporary Hawaiian musicians are invited to share a DVD music sample or digital link to a past performance. Registration must be completed by July 15, 2025, and include the name and high-resolution photo of the artist or group, along with a contact name, address and phone number. Submissions can be sent to luana.maitland@outrigger.com or Luana at Kani Ka Pila Grille, c/o OUTRIGGER Reef Waikiki Beach Resort, 2169 Kaila Road, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815.

OUTRIGGER Reef Waikiki Beach Resort will announce four finalists on July 25. These top island musicians will then be invited to perform live at the Made in Hawai'i Festival main stage in front of a panel of renowned Hawaiian music industry professionals. Last year's winner, Rickey Kamai, will kick off the show on Saturday, August 16, with a short set at 3pm, followed by competition performances by the four finalists starting at 3:30pm. After the judges scores are tabulated, the winner will be announced and then return to the stage and perform.



All-Time Kani Ka Pila Grille Talent Search Competition Winners

2024 - Rickey Kamai	2016 - Puuloa
2023 - Kahiau Lam Ho	2015 - Waimanalo Sunset Band
2022 - Anthony Pfluke	2014 - Kaiao
2021 - Kekoa Correa	2013 - Na Pali Trio
2020 - Hui Mele	2012 - Kamakakekahu Fernandez
2019 - Hawaiian Blend	2011 - KeOahu
2018 - Ke Olu	2010 - Pule Ohana
2017 - Ei Nei	2009 - Kupaoa

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 of course, impromptu kanikapila! For reservations or restaurant information, call (808) 924-4990 or visit: www.outrigger.com/events/music/kani-ka-pila-grille.

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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, Hawaii Vacation Condos by OUTRIGGER®, The Kapalua Villas Maui and OUTRIGGER Honua Kai Resort & Spa while also managing select properties from top international hotel brands including Embassy Suites by Hilton®. Find out more at OUTRIGGER.com or visit @OUTRIGGERResorts on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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