



For immediate Release to Maui Family Magazine

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Camp Imua creates a magical week for Maui's special needs children and their families

If you can imagine a place happier than Disneyland, you must be thinking of Maui's Camp Imua.

A program provided by Imua Family Services, Camp Imua is a week-long overnight recreational camp for 50 Maui County school-aged children age 6 to 20 with developmental disabilities and special needs. Camp Imua exemplifies the true meaning of aloha, as it brings together Maui County families, businesses, schools, and students working collaboratively to provide a spectacular week of fun to children with special needs.



Morgan Malkovich with friend and camper, Alexa Purtee.

Morgan Malkovich, a 15-year-old young woman from Kula, was born with Klippel Tranauny Syndrome, which allows only limited use of her legs. Morgan attended Camp Imua, first as a camper, and most recently as a counselor-in-training. According to Morgan, "Camp Imua is a place where campers can come and be regular kids. We don't have to be someone who has a disability." Morgan says that, "Camp Imua is a place happier than Disneyland."

This year, Camp Imua will take place June 7th to 13th at Camp Maluhia, in the West Maui Mountains, and will change lives by opening doorways of contact, understanding, and compassion for children with disabilities. Camp Imua's goal is to provide the most wonderful week of the year to Maui's differently-abled children, complete with unconditional acceptance.

However, Camp Imua not only affects campers and their families. Nearly 120 community members are provided with the opportunity and experience of supporting this annual program. Volunteer staff includes two trained caretakers for each camper throughout the week ensuring each camper is safe and well cared for. Nearly half of the volunteer caretakers are Maui County teens. Many of these youth volunteers find Camp Imua to be an inspiring experience, leaving them with an expanded sense of community and compassion.

According to Morgan, "Camp Imua teaches you to see that everyone is a person, and we all have feelings. Some people may look different, some people may act different, some people may just be different but, it doesn't matter, everyone has feelings."

For more information about Camp Imua visit www.campimua.org or call 244-7467.