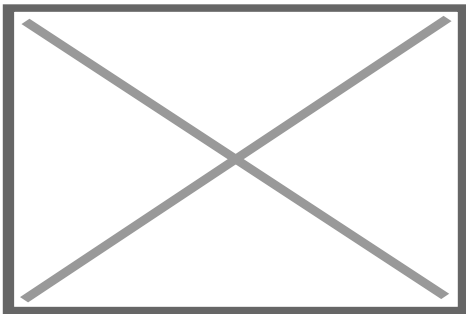


Kroc Center breaks ground in Hawai'i

New center due to open in late 2011.

by Daniel De Castro –



Holding Hawaiian o'o sticks, dignitaries broke ground for Kroc Center Hawai'i. From left are The Rev. Kordell Kekoa, Bram Begonia, Maj. Phillip Lum, Capt. Debbie Lum, Commissioner Patricia Swyers, Don Horner, Commissioner Philip Swyers, Maj. Edward Hill, Todd Apo, Barry Fukunaga, and Micah Kane. [Photo by Randy Fujimore]



As Hawaiian o'o sticks gently turned Kapolei's red dirt during the traditional groundbreaking of the Kroc Center, Joan Kroc's dream of building another "beacon of light" for children at risk and their families became closer to reality in Hawai'i. The Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center broke ground on September 3 in Kapolei. Due to be completed in late 2011 in East Kapolei, the 120,000-square-foot center will be the largest of its kind in Hawai'i.

"Something significant is coming to this ground," said Commissioner Philip Swyers, territorial commander of the Western Territory. He envisions young people fulfilling their potential as they benefit from the many programs that the Kroc Center will offer.

"This building brings soul to this community," said Micah Kane, former chairman of the State Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. Kane was a key figure in securing the land where the Kroc Center will be built. "I am honored to be part of making this happen and to have worked with The Salvation Army and a team of dedicated and committed leaders in the community."

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“At a time when our struggling economy needs it, the Kroc Center will be a blessing to our community by creating many construction jobs and more than 90 permanent jobs once it’s opened in 2011,” said Don Horner, CEO of First Hawaiian Bank and chair of the Kroc Center Hawai’i Steering Committee.

“The Kroc Center will be situated within one of our island’s highest need areas. More than 20,000 students already attend schools within a few miles of the site and there are plans for more schools to come. The Leeward area is very much in need of more recreational infrastructure for its growing population.”

“Groundbreaking is the landmark step in realizing this God-inspired project that will benefit many families in West O’ahu,” said Divisional Commander Major Edward Hill. “The Kroc Center will indeed bring hope and opportunities for many generations to come. It will offer children and families educational programs, a variety of athletic choices, and family enrichment classes. We estimate serving more than 2,000 individuals per day. And, thanks to Mrs. Kroc, the generosity of the people of Hawai’i and God’s grace, no child will be turned away for lack of funds.”

Major Phil Lum, the Kroc Center’s project director, stated: “The Kroc Center’s overall mission is prevention, intervention and hope. We shall focus on giving our children healthy choices versus drug and alcohol abuse, gangs and teen pregnancy. The Salvation Army knows that preventing these problems is a lot better—and cheaper—than trying to treat and cure them at the other end. Mrs. Kroc wanted to give her ‘Kroc Kids’ the opportunity and confidence to succeed in life.”

The 15-acre center will consist of:

The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Education & Resource Center, which will include vocational classrooms, technology training, art and recording studios and multi-purpose rooms. The Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation made a significant \$3 million gift to the Kroc Center.

The 500-seat Jack and Marie Lord Worship & Performing Arts Center, which will include an adjacent 500-seat dining room and commercial kitchen, to be used for performances, graduations, banquets and community functions. Lord, the late *Hawaii 5-0* star, and his wife bequeathed in excess of \$4 million in endowment to The Salvation Army via First Hawaiian Bank’s Trust Division and the Hawai’i Community Foundation.

The Clarence T.C. Ching Athletic Center, including a multi-purpose NCAA-size gymnasium for basketball, volleyball, and other recreational and after-school activities. The center also includes team rooms and showers. The athletic center was made possible by a \$1.5 million gift from The Clarence T. C. Ching Foundation.

The Walter F. and Mary Dillingham Frear Early Education Center, a preschool with capacity for 150 children. The center was made possible by gifts of \$750,000 from the Mary D. and Walter F. Frear Eleemosynary Trust and \$250,000 from the Atherton Family Foundation.

A Health & Wellness Center, including a 12,000-square-foot fitness center with the latest cardio, weight training, and assessment equipment, plus small- and large-group fitness studios, health assessment and personal training rooms.

An Aquatic Center, featuring a competition pool that can host swim meets and water polo matches; a major recreational pool for interactive family water play, aqua therapy and swim lessons; and outdoor pavilions that can be used for children’s birthday parties and other family celebrations.

Hale Ho'okipa, an air-conditioned, 48-bed dormitory for use by local and mainland traveling sports teams, retreats and conferences. The facility was made possible by a \$300,000 gift from the First Hawaiian Bank Foundation.

A three-acre grass park with restrooms for outdoor sports activities.