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**Hawai'i Middle School Students Express School Pride
Via Newest Bishop Museum Exhibition, *Aloha Bricks '26: Stories of Hawai'i***

*The students' school mosaics and other LEGO®-inspired creations take over
the Castle Memorial Building on Saturday, March 14, 2026*

Members of the press are invited to a pre-opening Media Preview of the exhibition
on Thursday, March 12 from 1-4 p.m.; please see details below.

Honolulu, Hawai'i — [Bishop Museum](#), the State of Hawai'i Museum of Natural and Cultural History, is proud to present *Aloha Bricks '26: Stories of Hawai'i*, a family-friendly exhibition celebrating the people, places, plants, animals, and legends that shape the islands. In partnership with the Hawaii LEGO® Users Group (HILUG) and middle school students from across the state, the exhibition will combine play and culture through dynamic models, original artwork, and hands-on experiences. *Bricks* opens in the Museum's Castle Memorial Building on Saturday, March 14, 2026.

One of the highlights of the Museum's newest original exhibition is a Middle School Mosaic Gallery representing 50 schools across the state of Hawai'i, with LEGO®-like brick creations built by students.

"Building the exhibit has been a lot of fun for us internally and we wanted to find a way to share that fun with the broader community," said Brad Evans, Bishop Museum director of exhibits and lead designer of *Bricks*. "Statewide, there was just the right amount of middle schools to fill up our back gallery with brick mosaics of their logos and mascots. We put out the word and 50 schools from all the main islands responded. All together, the students from the various schools placed nearly half a million bricks on the mosaics!"

Evans' team worked to design and order custom kits of the various schools' logos and/or mascots, then delivered or mailed the kits to the schools free of charge. Student teams then spent the next several weeks building their mosaics for installation in the exhibition. When the exhibition closes, the mosaics will be returned to the schools to keep.

"I really enjoyed this project!" said Jamie Nause, social studies teacher at Island School on Kaua'i. "It was a great way for students to work together and succeed in feeling satisfaction about a project in which they only saw a small piece at first, and then saw the entire finished mosaic put together. I would love to do a

project like this again.”

While working as teams, different students had different approaches to their builds, and different preferences as well.

“My preference (in building with bricks) is definitely to build based on instructions, instead of free play,” shared Patrick, a student at Island School. “I always end up making a mess with no instructions. Instructions guide your way and help you build correctly — unless you accidentally do something wrong.”

Ariel Villanueva, an Industrial Engineering Teacher at ‘Ewa Makai Middle School on O‘ahu, has used bricks in his curriculum in the past and sees the value of a brick-building project like the mosaics.

“They help develop problem-solving strategies within a team,” said Villanueva. “The students learned to work together and compromise in a professional manner to accomplish their goals.”

‘Ewa Makai Middle School students Vera and Emma shared their school pride in leading their team to build their mosaic.

“Our school mascot, called ‘Battle Cat,’ represents how trustworthy, helpful, reliable, and able we are to be able to work together well,” they shared. “Our mascot represents how we are able to carry our school to victory.”

Additional features of the *Aloha Bricks '26: Stories of Hawai‘i* exhibition include:

- Mini-figure scale models of Hawaiian landmarks including Hawai‘i Theatre, ‘Iolani Palace, and the Arizona Memorial, plus a Pasha Hawaii container ship and the Hawaiian Airlines fleet through the decades
- Large-scale brick sculptures of endemic Hawaiian species such as the humuhumunukunukuapua‘a, kalo, and the Kamehameha butterfly
- A “Tales of Maui” installation
- 2D mosaics of Hawaiian flora and fauna, inspired by species researched by Bishop Museum scientists
- Interactive and immersive experiences including a 10-foot wave and Free Play Zone

[A full list of the bricks creations in the exhibition is provided towards the end of this news release.]

When asked what they’d like to see in future bricks exhibitions, the students shared many creative suggestions, from representations of their home island to characters from popular culture.

“I would like to see them build a model of Kaua‘i,” said Gemma of Island School (located on Kaua‘i).

“We would like them to build a Pokeball with Pikachu inside. And Pikachu wearing an aloha shirt representing Hawai‘i,” said Vera and Emma.

In reflecting on the exhibition, Villanueva and Nause shared their thoughts on the impact it may have on visitors.

“Seeing themes and models related to Hawai‘i, I think, brings all the myths and legends of Hawai‘i to life,” said Villanueva. “I think through this type of media, it turns simple ‘story-time’ into actual conversations students can talk about and see.”

“Seeing three-dimensional representations of Hawai‘i helps students to see meaningful parts of our lives in tangible ways,” said Nause. “For example, our school mascot, the Voyager, is deeply integral to the culture and history of Hawai‘i. When students can see concrete representations of the mascots that embody our

schools, they can feel more of a connection to the schools and communities that make up Hawai‘i. Additionally, the inclusion of our school in the exhibit is a source of pride for our students. Knowing that they had a hand in creating a mosaic for the exhibit brings a sense of school spirit and pride for the students involved. Many students have expressed interest and excitement in seeing the other school mascots that are involved. As many other schools make up our communities, students feel a sense of togetherness when the entire community is celebrated and united.”

For more information on *Aloha Bricks ‘26: Stories of Hawai‘i*, please visit BishopMuseum.org/Bricks.

Invitation for News Media

- Exclusive Media Preview of *Aloha Bricks ‘26: Stories of Hawai‘i*
- Thursday, March 12, 2026 | 1-4 p.m. HST | Castle Memorial Building, 1st Floor
- Bishop Museum ‘ohana and keiki will be playing in the exhibition for photos and b-roll footage, and a parent spokesperson will be available for interviews.
- Please RSVP with Krislyn Hashimoto via the information above.

Bishop Museum extends its appreciation to the following sponsors for their generous support of this exhibition: Hawaiian Telcom, First Insurance Company of Hawaii, Kyo-ya Hotels & Resorts, Pasha Hawaii, Hawaiian Airlines, and AIA Hawaii.

List of *Aloha Bricks ‘26: Stories of Hawai‘i* Creations

3D models created by the Hawai‘i LEGO® Users Group (HILUG):

- Bishop Museum’s historic Hawaiian Hall
- Arizona Memorial
- Hawai‘i Theater / Honolulu Chinatown street scene
- Hōkūle‘a
- ‘Iolani Palace
- Pasha Hawaii container ship
- Skyline / HART street scene
- USS Bowfin
- Five different airplanes from the Hawaiian Airlines fleet over the decades:
 - Bellanca Pacemaker
 - Douglas DC-3
 - Douglas DC-9
 - Boeing 717
 - Boeing 787

3D models created by Bishop Museum staff:

- Duke Kahanamoku’s surfboard
- Maui’s fishhook
- Maui’s kapa kite

3D models created by World Traveling Exhibitions in London, England:

- Humuhumunukunukuapua‘a
- ‘Iwi
- Kāhuli
- Kalo
- ‘Ōpe‘ape‘a
- Tardigrade

2D mosaics assembled by Bishop Museum staff and community volunteers, representing the plants, animals, and cultural objects studied by and/or cared for by Bishop Museum researchers and collections managers.

- ‘Ama‘u, *Sadleria cyatheoides*
- ‘Apapane, *Himatione sanguinea*
- cover of “Arts and Crafts of Hawai‘i” (a Bishop Museum Press publication)
- Bishop Museum’s Hawaiian Hall
- Blacktail butterflyfish, *Chaetodon austracius*
- Flame Angelfish, *Centropyge loriculus*
- Fuchsia flatworm, *Pseudoceros ferrugineus*
- Hawaiian plate coral, *Leptoseris hawaiiensis*
- Hini hini kua mauna, *Succinea newcombiana*
- Honu‘ea, Hawaiian hawksbill sea turtle, *Eretmochelys imbricata*
- ‘Īlio holo i ka uaua, Hawaiian monk seal, *Neomonachus schauinslandi*
- Kāhuli, *Hiona exaequata*
- Kamehameha butterfly caterpillar, *Vanessa tameamea*
- Kaua‘i endemic moth, *Spheterista hoihoi*
- Kīkākāpu, Ornate Butterflyfish, *Chaetodon ornatissimus*
- Koa longhorn beetle, *Megopis reflexa*
- Naka kua mauna, *Cookeconcha hystricella*
- Naupaka kuahiwi, *Scaevola gaudichaudiana*
- O‘ahu endemic tree cricket, *Prognathogryllus kahea*
- ‘Ohe naupaka, *Scaevola glabra*
- ‘Ōhi‘a, *Metrosideros polymorpha*
- Orange cup coral, *Tubastraea coccinea*
- Pāpa‘i, *Liomera* sp.
- Pūpū kuahiwi, *Laminella venusta*
- Red-billed Tropicbird, *Phaethon aethereus*
- ‘Ū‘ū (menpachi), Blotcheye soldierfish, *Myripristis berndti*
- Five mosaics of collectible Hawai‘i state car license plates
- A mosaic of the painting “Diamond Head from the C. R. Bishop Residence, Waikīkī” Attributed to Margaret Girvin Gillin
- A mosaic of a quilt by Kuahine Kamalau c. 1900s to commemorate Halley's Comet of 1910

2D mosaics assembled by Hawai‘i middle school students of their school mascot and/or nickname; note that the below list is updated as of March 9, 2026, with additional mosaics expected to be added:

- ‘Aiea Intermediate School
- Āliamanu Middle School
- Connections Public Charter School
- Damien Memorial School
- Dream House ‘Ewa Beach
- ‘Ewa Makai Middle School
- Hawaii Academy of Arts & Science
- Hawaii Baptist Academy
- Hawai‘i Technology Academy
- Hilo Intermediate School
- Homeschooled Students
- Honouliuli Middle School
- ‘Īao Intermediate School
- Ilima Intermediate School

- Island Pacific Academy
- Island School
- William P. Jarrett Middle School
- Ka ‘Umeke Kā‘eo Hawaiian Immersion Public Charter School
- Kahuku High & Intermediate School
- Kaimukī Middle School
- Kamaile Academy
- Kamehameha Schools Kapālama
- Kanu o ka ‘Āina
- Kapa‘a Middle School
- Kapolei Middle School
- Prince David Kawānanakoa Middle School
- Ke Kula ‘o Samuel M. Kamakau
- Princess Ruth Ke‘elikōlani Middle School
- Kona Pacific Public Charter School
- Kua O Ka Lā Public Charter School
- Lahaina Intermediate School
- Lāna‘i High & Elementary School
- Lokelani Intermediate School
- Maui Waena Intermediate School
- Mid-Pacific Middle School
- Mililani Middle School
- Moanalua Middle School
- Namahana School
- Niu Valley Middle School
- Punahou School
- Saint Mark Lutheran School
- SEEQS: The School for Examining Essential Questions of Sustainability
- Robert Louis Stevenson Middle School
- Trinity Christian School
- Waimānalo Intermediate School
- Waipahu Intermediate School
- President George Washington Middle School

Oversized brick displays/treatments created by Bishop Museum staff:

- Rainbows (2)
- Skyscrapers (2)
- Wave, 10-foot tall

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About Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, the State of Hawai‘i Museum of Natural and Cultural History:

Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum’s mission is to inspire our community and visitors through the exploration, celebration, and perpetuation of the extraordinary history, culture, and environment of Hawai‘i and the Pacific. The Museum was founded in 1889 by Charles Reed Bishop in memory of his wife Bernice Pauahi Bishop, a royal descendant of King Kamehameha I. Today, the Museum thrives as an educational center for the community and is widely regarded as the world’s premier institution for Hawaiian and Pacific content.

Bishop Museum’s vast collections of more than 25 million objects and specimens represent nine disciplines

and include more than 22 million biological specimens, over 2 million cultural objects, 115,000 historical publications, and 1 million photographs, films, works of art, audio recordings, and manuscripts. These collections tell the stories of the cultures and biodiversity of Hawai‘i and the Pacific as well as the proud legacy of scholarly research spanning 130 years.

Bishop Museum proudly serves more than 200,000 visitors each year, including 20,000 children on school visits. Guests are encouraged to pre-plan their trip to #HawaiiisMuseum with its [free digital guide](#), available through Bloomberg Connects.

To learn more about the Museum’s research, collections, exhibits, and programs, visit BishopMuseum.org, follow @BishopMuseum on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), visit Bishop Museum’s [YouTube](#) channel, or call (808) 847-3511. Bishop Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Bishop Museum is proud to be an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer, and welcomes applicants from the military, veterans, and those with disabilities. Learn about careers at Bishop Museum at BishopMuseum.org/Careers and on its [LinkedIn](#) page.

[Bishop Museum Press](#) is Hawai‘i’s oldest book publisher and one of the first scholarly publishers in the Western Hemisphere, and has published over 1,200 titles and distributed over 1 million books in 72 countries worldwide. Bishop Museum hosts a restaurant and gift shop on campus, [Tūtū's Place by Highway Inn](#) and [Shop Pacifica by Nā Mea Hawai‘i](#).

Past news releases can be viewed and downloaded at BishopMuseum.org/NewsRoom.

About the Hawaii LEGO® Users Group (HILUG):

The Hawai‘i Lego Users Group (HILUG) is a group of LEGO® builders, collectors and fans dedicated to spreading the joy of plastic brick building in Hawai‘i and further afield. From novice to expert, our club includes a diverse group of people coming together to build amazing creations, share our creativity, and host events to spread our love of LEGO® to the public. We are always looking for like-minded people that enjoy LEGO® as much as we do!