

Letter to My Parents™ Contest in Hawaii 2018

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Madison Directo, Alyssa Ramiro Cortez, and Gisella Kahapea
—Award Recipients Announced at the 2018 Letter to My Parents™ Contest in Hawai'i
Honolulu, November 17, 2018

The Final Presentation for the 2018 Letter to My Parents™ (LTMP) Contest in Hawai'i was held on Saturday, November 17, 2018, where ten contestants recited their letters dedicated to their parents. The contest was organized by **Kalamansi Books and Things**, **Filipino Association of University Women** (FAUW), and **Reiyukai America**.

Celebrating its 6th Anniversary, LTMP contest received a total of 105 letters not only from Oahu students but from Maui and the Big Island. After a challenging screening process, the Organizing Committee invited the following ten contestants as winners of the 2018 LTMP Contest and to present their letter.

The ten winners for the 2018 contest are: Rachele Agustin, Alyssa Ramiro Cortez, Vianca-Mae C de Guzman, Madison Directo, Gisella Kahapea, Kristina Lerin Linares, Rana Stephanie Ballesteros Mejes, Marc Mercado, Alofaaga Siaopo Tumanuvao, and Makenna Riye Yoshinobu.

The final presentation took place at the Hawaii State Library in Honolulu, Oahu. After the letters were read, the winners received a \$50 Gift Certificate along with a Certificate of Participation. Each of the contestants will be also receiving a "1 Year TestPrep Course Subscription" courtesy of BenchPrep.

Based on the guidelines, the group of judges selected three award recipients.

The Bravery Award was awarded to Madison Directo. Alyssa Ramiro Cortez received the Reflection award, and the Proposal Award was awarded to Gisella Kahapea. Besides the prizes mentioned earlier, each one of them received \$500 as their award prize.

The judges were Araceli C. Jimeno (Book Editor of the award-winning book; an anthology of letters and art work made by children of overseas Filipino workers), Dr. Richard Kebo (Chairman, State Commission on Fatherhood at the Department of Human Services), and Martha Nakajima (Retired Diplomat with the United States Foreign Service specialized in economics and trade).

"Poignant and heart-wrenching, the voices of our youth are begging to be heard. LTMP Contest provides an accessible platform for open communication among family members," noted Mylene Reyes, President of Filipino Association of University Women.

Rose Churma from Kalamansi Books and Things commented, "We are honored to be part of this program that enables Hawaii's youth to share their stories and realize the power of the written word."

Noriko Sotta, Chair of the Reiyukai America National Committee noted, "The fundamental philosophy of Reiyukai is 'cause and effect.' We truly believe our job is to guide and nurture the Hawaii youth at its precise moment for a brighter future. This contest is definitely one of the projects that we can make an impact on our community."

The event was co-sponsored by BenchPrep, and Hawaii State Library.

The community supporters were Sariling Gawa Youth Council, Inc., and Ishihara Enterprises, Inc.

Photos available at: <https://goo.gl/ZqgT17>

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