



## STUDENT JOURNALISTS

# Keiki press embrace reporting rush

*Young broadcasters from Oahu schools are covering summit action for PBS Hawaii*

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New media covering world leaders this week include a team of aspiring broadcast journalists from Hawaii middle and high schools whose mission is to tell the APEC story from the youth perspective.

The students will be at a news conference with President Barack Obama, at APEC's CEO Summit, at MA'O Organic Farms in Waianae when first lady Michelle Obama stops by for a visit, and at Kualoa Ranch, where the first lady will lunch with the spouses of world leaders.

"They've sort of been thrown off the deep end of the pool," said Robert Pennybacker, vice president of creative services at PBS Hawaii, which helped secure media credentials at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit for the students as part of PBS' Hiki No student news network. "It's a great experience for them."

The students' work will begin airing tonight on PBS Hawaii.

Students from five schools — Wheeler Middle, Kalaheo High, Moanalua High, Waianae High and Punahou School — got the green light to cover APEC meetings.

Wheeler, Kalaheo and Punahou student journalists were at the Hawai'i Convention Center on Tuesday to catch preparations for big APEC events. They produced pieces on the army of APEC volunteers, international media covering the APEC forum and Hawaii-based green businesses showcased at the center.



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**Kalaheo High School student journalists Taylor Lopez, Cheyenne Low and Lahela Maxwell edited on Wednesday their piece about the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, which will air on PBS Hawaii.**

Waianae and Moanalua High students will cover APEC-related meetings this weekend, following the first lady and attending the CEO's summit in hopes of telling the stories with a youthful edge.

On Tuesday, Wheeler Middle School teacher Cherylanne Lee brought her media club students to the convention center, where they spent the day looking for a story, then doing the legwork to get interviews. After thinking through a couple of ideas — they got side-tracked by a crepe stand and considered profiling the food options available for APEC attendees — they decided to do a story on international journalists in town to cover the meetings.

Lee said the experience gave her kids a taste for what it's like to cover a big

story. "They knew it was a chance of a lifetime," she said.

One of Lee's students, seventh-grader Taylor Phillips, submitted an official request on Oct. 20 to interview Michelle Obama. In a letter to the first lady, Phillips said, "I would feel very ecstatic to get a chance to meet you because you are a strong woman."

Phillips added that her father is in the Army and, because of multiple deployments, has had to spend a lot of time away from home. "I admire you because you became a lawyer," she wrote, adding, "You deal with your husband, the President, being gone often."

The first lady's press office had not responded to the request as of Wednesday.

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Three student-produced video reports on the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings are scheduled to air tonight on "Insights" with Dan Boylan, which starts at 8 on PBS Hawaii. Additional pieces, shot over the weekend, will appear on Boylan's show Nov. 17, also starting at 8 p.m.

For more information, go to [www.pbs-hawaii.org](http://www.pbs-hawaii.org).

Janice Chen, a media teacher at Kalaheo High, said her students "received hands-on learning" at the convention center Tuesday by talking to sources, inter-

viewing them on camera, shooting more video and editing their piece, all in time for broadcast tonight.

"They were really proud of themselves," Chen said.

Taylor Lopez, 17, one of the Kalaheo student journalists, said the experience was "really different" from what she is used to doing. "We usually have a little more time to put it together," she said, adding that "it was nice to see (APEC forum preparations) firsthand."

Punahou media productions specialist Andrew Ryan said he was proud of how quickly his students acclimated to the stress of putting together a TV story quickly. He added, "Initially, there was a lot of awe" that they were even there. But that wore off pretty quickly. "They were able to focus. They did a good job," he said.