

## KCAA Preschools of Hawaii

*Pre-kindergarten education centers*

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# New 'Gem of Moiliili' will train teachers

## EDUCATION

BY LYNN NAKAGAWA  
PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

A preschool organization is building a \$3.2 million center to train early childhood educators.

The KCAA Preschools of Hawaii center will be on the grounds of the KCAA Mother Rice Preschool at 2707 S. King St. in Moiliili. It is being funded by grants from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, McInerny Foundation, Castle Foundations and the Atherton Family Foundation, among others.



Cox

The largest grants came from the Weinberg Foundation, \$930,000, and the McInerny Foundation, \$600,000.

Christina Cox, president of KCAA Preschools of Hawaii, said she hopes that the two-story, 6,000-square-foot facility

will be seen as a "Gem of Moiliili" upon its completion in August 2012.

She has been involved with KCAA Preschools for nearly three decades and formulated the idea for the center about a decade ago.

"One recurring theme is that there's an extreme staffing shortage with early childhood educators, which is more profound in the Islands," she said. "We need a lot of job support."

Constructors Hawaii Inc. is the contractor on the project, located on the former site of a commercial kitchen, which was vacated and demolished last March.

When completed, the center will house a central meeting room with audiovisual equipment, two offices, a resource library and a kitchenette. The first floor will serve as a model demonstration center, with approximately 24 pre-kindergarten children in a practice teaching environment.

Cox said the organization plans to join with Teaching Strategies Inc., a national educational publishing company that specializes in childhood curriculum, assessment materials, and training programs. The center also will offer distance learning and online professional development classes with the University of Hawaii Manoa and Chaminade University. A partnership with Kamehameha Schools also is in the works.

Cox said the center will be mostly self-sufficient, offering meeting space for small businesses as a revenue generator. The central meeting room will accommodate up to 48 people.

KCAA Preschools of Hawaii has seven locations.

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