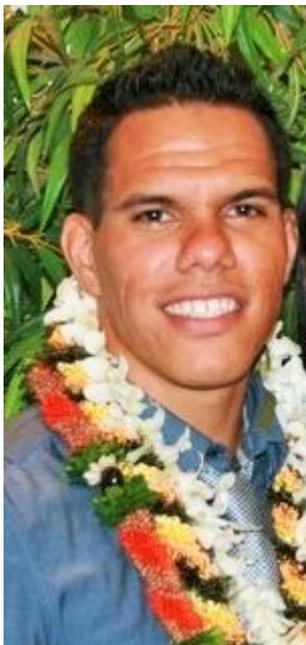


Alumni Profile: Bryscen “Makana” Prothero, a Hawaii Keiki APRN

Growing up, Bryscen “Makana” Prothero, APRN-Rx, MS, CPNP (Manoa MSN '13, BS '08) was a volunteer practice patient for his mom, a second-career nurse. Being an active part of his mom’s nursing education ignited his passion for medicine.



In college, Prothero studied pre-medicine and after graduating from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas with a degree in biology, Prothero moved back to Hawaii and volunteered at Kaiser Hospital where he was able to see the inner workings of a hospital. He took a hospital aide position and grew to appreciate every aspect of the health delivery system. But it was the special patient/nurse interaction that sold him on becoming a nurse.

Prothero applied to the UH Manoa Nursing Master’s Entry in Nursing Program (MEPN), an accelerated alternative entry program to an advanced degree designed for adult learners who have not attended an RN program and who have a baccalaureate degree in a field other than nursing. As the eldest of three children and the oldest grandchild, Prothero was experienced in caring for others. He graduated as a pediatric nurse practitioner with a master’s degree. During his time as a MEPN student, Prothero was awarded the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s New Careers in Nursing Scholarship, The Queen’s Medical Center IKE A0 PONO Scholarship, and The Friendship Fund for his study in pediatric nursing.

Following his UHM Nursing graduation, Prothero again, took time to reassess his goals, the impact he wanted to make, and waited for the right opportunity. During this time he worked as an RN at Kaiser Hospital in Moanalua and was recognized as the 2013 Rookie Nurse of the Year. While he considered moving to the mainland to pursue his dream of working as a pediatric nurse practitioner, Prothero really wanted to stay in Hawaii. Having grown up on the Waianae Coast and being of Native Hawaiian ancestry, Prothero feels a strong connection to Hawaii and the community.

In July 2014, Makana joined the Hawaii Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn program, a partnership between the Hawai 'i Department of Education and UH Manoa Nursing. The program is designed to improve the access and quality of health services available to school children. Having come full-circle back to his own community, Prothero is an APRN (PNP) at the Nanaikapono School, Nanakuli Waianae Zone of School Innovation. He says being placed in his own community has a special meaning. He is serving the Native Hawaiian populations, giving back to his community, and contributing to ensure a healthier future for Hawai'i's children.



At Nanaikapono School, Prothero provides a range of services from on-site consultations for students, development of follow-up health plans with parents, health awareness presentations, health living activities, health and nutrition education and – his favorite responsibility – interacting with the students. Earlier this month, Prothero gave a presentation about diabetes awareness at a parent/student night that drew more than 90 attendees. In addition to providing information, Prothero demonstrated examples of physical activities for the entire family and provided a cooking demonstration.

One of the core focuses of Hawaii Keiki is keeping the students healthy, so they are ready and able to learn. By having an RN on campus, early diagnosis of contagious illnesses keeps the entire student population healthy and on-site diagnosis speed up a child's recovery time and get them back in the classroom quicker.

Asked if the Program has picked up traction with parents,

students, and teacher, Prothero believes that it has. Students listen to “Mr. Makana’s Kau Kau Time” morning announcement where he shares nutritional information specific to that day’s lunch. Kids will stop him in the halls excited to tell him that they ate their vegetables to keep their bodies strong. He hopes that early nutrition education will help students develop lifelong healthy eating habits.

At UH Manoa Nursing, cultural sensitivity is woven throughout curriculum and clinical experiences, something that Prothero takes to heart with his work at Nanaikapono. In an effort to communicate with parents and the community in ways that work for them, Prothero is trying a new approach to health and wellness, using social media. Follow his #StayHealthyNanaikapono blog where he shares information and updates from the health benefits of cinnamon to measles to helmet safety to asthma. He is also on Instagram @StayHealthyNanaikapono, Twitter @StayHlthyNpono, and Facebook /StayHealthyNanaikapono.

For more information about the Hawaii Keiki program, contact Brendon Friedman, director at brendonf@hawaii.edu or (808) 956-4897. UH Manoa Nursing proudly supports the good work of our alumni. If you know of an alumnus who is giving back to the community, making strides in research, bringing impact and change to their specialties, please share their stories with nursalum@hawaii.edu.