



*Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Announcing Embracing Hope 2022: Suicide Prevention During the Pandemic Years**

Virtual Talk Stories on September 17, 2022 and October 15, 2022

Sources of Strength Workshop for Youth on October 22, 2022

August 24, 2022 – Honolulu, HI – Embracing Hope 2022: Suicide Prevention During the Pandemic Years is an interfaith speaker series centered on hope and forgiveness as approaches for both suicide prevention and coping with loss. The series is for people who feel ongoing distress from the pandemic, people contemplating suicide, and parents and youth leaders in the community, and will culminate in a “Sources of Strength” suicide prevention training for youth. All “Embracing Hope” events are free and open to the public.

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. In 2021, there were 195 documented suicides in Hawai‘i, according to the Hawai‘i State Department of Health. For every person who died suicide in Hawai‘i, 4-5 people survived a suicide attempt. “Embracing Hope” is a safe space to have conversations about suicide prevention and strengthen Hawai‘i’s resilience and well-being.

**Talk Story: Hope for Communities:** On Saturday, September 17, 2022, 10 am to 11:30 am by Zoom, Jeanelle Sugimoto -Matsuda, DrPH of the Prevent Suicide Hawai‘i Task Force; Ernestine Enomoto, mindfulness practitioner and dharma teacher; and Chad Starr, a suicide loss survivor, for a discussion about coping the pandemic, faith as a source of strength, and how can interfaith communities begin anew after a pandemic.

**Talk Story: Hope for Youth:** On Saturday, October 15, 2022, 10 am to 11:30 am by Zoom, Join Deborah Goebert, DrPH of the Prevent Suicide Hawai‘i Task Force; Candice Biernesser, PhD, LCSW of the University of Pittsburgh; and Chad Starr, whose 12-year old daughter died by suicide, as they talk about suicide awareness among youth and how youth can find purpose and strength in the face of challenges and adversity.

**Workshop: Embracing Strengths:** On Saturday, October 22, 2022, 10 am to 11:30 am, high school students can attend a 90-minute free workshop with Dr. Deborah Goebert of the Prevent Suicide Hawai‘i Task Force, held at Community of Christ Church, 2319 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819. They will be introduced to Sources of Strength, an interactive suicide prevention program. Learn about safe messaging strategies, protective factors, and tapping into sources of strength, including when to support others.

“Embracing Hope” is presented by BDK Hawai‘i, and Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai‘i, and Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai‘i, in partnership with the Prevent Suicide Hawai‘i Task Force.

For more information and to register: [embracinghope2022.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/embracinghope2022).

**About Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai‘i**

Established in 1989, Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai‘i provides professional and accessible mental health counseling sensitive to the spiritual traditions of individuals, families, and communities in Hawai‘i, regardless of their ability to pay. The Center also sponsors community outreach and events to provide mental health education and resources, strengthen community resilience, and help reduce the stigma of mental illness.

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**Celebrating Over 30 Years of Service**

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