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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Katie Putes or Ji In Lugtu  
[KoreanAdopteesHawaii@gmail.com](mailto:KoreanAdopteesHawaii@gmail.com)

**NEW COMMUNITY RESOURCE FOR LOCAL KOREAN-BORN ADOPTEES**  
Korean Adoptees of Hawai'i Aims for Growth, Fellowship

Adopted from South Korea as infants and youngsters, the now-adult Korean adoptees making up the charter membership of Korean Adoptees of Hawai'i (KAHI) don't appear any different from many of their island neighbors and colleagues. For some adoptees, however, the easy camaraderie they find with others of shared heritage is what draws them to KAHI meetings.

Based on O'ahu, the newly forming network for Korean-born adoptees ages 18 and older is the result of a series of chance encounters, overlapping friendships and word of mouth, thanks largely to the efforts of Katie Putes, 23, Kane'ohe resident and UH Manoa student, who was adopted from Korea to O'ahu as an infant. Iolani teacher Jinny Hall, 34, of Honolulu, was also instrumental in bringing the group to life.

Current KAHI members range in age and lifestyle, from first-year college students, to young professionals, to parents of teenagers. Some, such as Putes, arrived in Hawai'i directly from Korea. Others are newer islanders by way of mainland adoptive families.

KAHI is believed to be the first group to represent the Hawai'i contingent among a large population of Korean adoptees adopted out of their birth country since Korea's first wave of intercountry adoptions began in the 1950s and '60s. An estimated 150,000 to 200,000 Korean-born adoptees have been adopted overseas, to North America, Europe and Australia. The Korean adoptee community is active and thriving in places all over the world and the Internet, with large U.S. adoptee organizations based in such states as Minnesota, California, Washington and New York. Many adoptees have returned to Korea in search of their roots and to learn about their birth culture.

Some KAHI members are looking forward to traveling to Seoul next August to join an anticipated 700 attendees at the IKAA (International Korean Adoptee Associations) Gathering, an international gathering of Korean adoptees living all over the world. The IKAA Gathering is the fourth international meeting of its kind, and is organized by a delegation of Korean adoptees in the United States, Europe and Korea.

Since its first meeting in March 2006, KAHI has grown from a small showing of four to an assorted group of more than 15, and Putes and her fellow adoptees hope to attract as many new members as possible to upcoming events. The group aims to meet at least once a month for meetings or activities, which have included yakiniku dinners, a Korean cooking lesson and an outing to the Korean Festival at Kapi'olani Park. Future plans include social gatherings as well as informational meetings.

A KAHI pau hana is planned for Friday, Nov. 10, with new members encouraged to attend. Adult Korean-born adoptees living in Hawai'i can e-mail [KoreanAdopteesHawaii@gmail.com](mailto:KoreanAdopteesHawaii@gmail.com) to request more information about this and other upcoming events. KAHI also hopes to build mutually beneficial relationships with local businesses and organizations interested in supporting the group's efforts to grow and become a presence in Hawai'i's Korean-American community.

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