Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole
Prince for our People

Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole, defined by his name as a “royal chief without measure,” created a legacy for Hawaiʻi that is renowned, remembered, and revered today. In his lifetime he was a royal protégé, a prisoner, a politician, and most important, a prince of the people.

Kūhiō was the youngest child of High Chief David Kahalepoʻole Piʻiʻi and Victoria Kūhiō Kinoole Kekaulike (the sister of Queen Kapiʻolani), born on March 26, 1871 in Kēloa. Kūhiō, along with his brothers David Kawānanakoa and Edward Keliʻiahonui, was educated in Honolulu and in San Mateo, California. Kūhiō continued his studies in England and earned a degree in business.

King Kalākaua and Queen Kapiʻolani, to assure the continuity of the Kalākaua dynasty, adopted their nephew, Kūhiō and Kawānanakoa, and named them princes by royal proclamation in 1884. Kalākaua also sponsored Kūhiō for a year in Japan with his brother Kawānanakoa. At the time, the Republican Party mainly represented the business interests of those responsible for the overthrow. Nonetheless, the prince joined the Republicans in 1901, and by doing so helped his new party gain significant support from Hawaiian communities.

In 1902, Kūhiō won a landslide victory and unseated Robert Wilcox (of the Home Rule Party) as Hawaiʻi’s non-voting delegate to the U.S. Congress. He was sworn in to the Fifty-eighth Congress on March 4, 1903, at the age of 31. Kūhiō won a total of ten elections and during his 19-year tenure in Congress was effective in building alliances and coalitions with colleagues who had the privilege of a vote.

As a statesman, Kūhiō shaped the foundation for Hawaiʻi’s modern government structure. For example, he was responsible for instituting the county system still in place today, and he sponsored the first bill for statehood for Hawaiʻi in 1919. The prince is better known for advocating the passage of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act by Congress in 1921. He was so committed to supporting the rehabilitation of his people and is attributed with the following quote: “The Hawaiian race is passing. And if conditions continue to exist as they do today, this splendid race of people, my people, will pass from the face of the earth... The legislation proposed seeks to place the Hawaiian back on the soil, so that the valuable and sturdy traits of that race, peculiarly adapted to the islands shall be preserved to posterity.”

There is evidence in local newspapers as early as 1912 showing support in the Hawaiian community for a homestead program that would reverse the dire state Kūhiō observed. The Hawaiian Gazette reported that a hui of women “had a desire to go back to the soil, build little homes, cultivate the land and raise their families upon soil that they could call their own.” Challenged with the lack of support of the Governor and fellow congressman, Kūhiō formed the Hawaiian Civic Club to mobilize his Native Hawaiian constituency. He wanted to form a group of Hawaiians who would dedicate themselves to help elevate and promote their social, economic, civic and intellectual status, and become outstanding citizens and leaders in their communities. This movement started in 1918, and has evolved into the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs, an organization that is still very active in the advocacy of political issues that impact the Hawaiian community.

In July 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole is memorialized for his leadership, his tenacity, and his commitment to elevate his people, and this legacy keeps Kūhiō in the hearts of Hawaiians as Ke Aliʻi Makaʻinana, a prince for our people.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.

In 1921, President Warren Harding signed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and created the Hawaiian homestead program we know today. Although the final act included a 50% native blood-quantum requirement (Kūhiō preferred no such requirement) and a provision for leased land instead of granting fee-simple parcels, this program would still help the Hawaiians who most needed it. Kūhiō served on the first Hawaiian Homes Commission, but passed away on January 7, 1922, before the first homestead was settled at Kala-maua, Molokaʻi. Today, more than 10,000 Hawaiian families live on homestead lands still administered by the Hawaiian Homes Commission.