

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Brent Keli‘iokamalu Nakihei

Brent Nakihei was born and raised on the Kalama‘ula Homestead in Moloka‘i. From an early age, Brent describes a tumultuous childhood filled with alcohol, violence, and drugs. His journey through Lahainaluna started at the end of his Sophomore year of highschool when he chose the boarding school over a boys home; a choice given to him by the officer that arrested him for drug possession. Brent credits Lahainaluna for creating an environment where he could excel at sports, experience important work responsibilities, and be exposed to Native Hawaiians from all over the state. Throughout his two years at the school, Brent learned the importance of education, learned how to be self-sustainable, and forged influential relationships that impacted his life trajectory. Although his post-grad life was plagued with more drug and alcohol problems, he was able to turn his life around. Inspired by his own journey with drug problems, Brent currently works as Molakai’s only juvenile probation officer after years of helping addicts as a drug counselor post rehab, in addition to finishing his Masters in Social Work back in 2016.



Brent Nakihei during his interview at the Moloka‘i Education Center in Kaunakakai on June 23, 2023.

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Brent Nakihei (BN)

June 23, 2023

Kaunakakai, Molokaʻi, Hawaiʻi

BY: Davianna McGregor (DM) and Wailana Medeiros (WM)

DM: Okay, so we'll start. Okay, so mahalo again for sharing your life experience at the Lahainaluna boarding program with us. And today is Friday, June 23rd, and the time is 12:01[P.M] And we're at the Molokaʻi Education Center in Kaunakakai Molokaʻi. And the interviewers are myself, Daviana McGregor, with the director for the UH Center for Oral History. And Wailana Medeiros, who is a graduate research assistant with the center. And helping us with the camera is ʻĀnela Smith, who's also an undergraduate research assistant with the Center. And thank you, we're going to start the interview by asking you first if you could give us your full legal name.

BN: Um my name is Brent Kealiʻiokamalu Nakihei.

DM: Oh what a beautiful name. And when were you born?

BN: I was born September 23rd, 1969, on Molokaʻi.

DM: Oh. And where—oh. Okay and then who was your mother?

BN: My mother is Theodora. Her maiden name is Theodora Me, M-E. But she, when she passed away, she was Theodora Coelho.

DM: Oh okay. And what was her life worth? What did she do? What kind of. . . .

BN: My mother, um---so from what I remember, my mom, my mother worked two jobs. She um---because I'm the youngest of twelve yeah, so I was pretty much like the baby of the family. However, when I was born, my dad left my mother. My dad left my mom with, with a cocktail waitress cuz he was a musician at the old Pau Hana Inn before, the group at the original Ebb Tides. My, my father was on the, on that group. He was a musician. He left with a cocktail waitress when I was born so pretty much my grandparents raised me. But I remembered my mom, um, she worked two jobs at Hotel Molokaʻi and Pau Hana Inn just to, you know, support us.

DM: Wow. Yeah. And, and what's your father's name?

BN: My father's name is Robert Lopaka Nakihei Junior.

DM: Okay and you already said he was with the Ebb Tides. Did he have other work as well?

BN: Um, I think he used to work for the I don't know if it was Young Brothers before but he was working on a tugboat.

DM: Oh. Okay.

BN: Yeah.

DM: Yeah. And then on your on your mother's side, who are your ancestors?

BN: Um, her parents is Agnes. Her maiden name is Agnes Pua'a. Her married name is Agnes Nē. My grandfather is Albert Kahakula Nē. He's from Kohala. And my my grandmother was born and raised on Moloka'i. I don't know my dad's side, but I do know that they lived on Moloka'i too, my paternal grandparents.

DM: Mm ok. Alrighty and so you were raised you said more so with your grandparents?

BN: Yes.

DM: And were there other—did you have like, was it kind of ohana like (inaudible) children.

BN: So, so pretty much the twelve of, twelve of us—like I'm the youngest of twelve—so twelve of us in my family. My, my auntie, um my, my mom's sister had her kids. Like I know there was twenty-three of us living in a three bedroom home. That's my grandmother and grandfather's house in Kalama'ula.

DM: Wow.

BN: So there was, like, I believe, four sets of families.

DM: Amazing.

BN: Yeah.

DM: Yeah, so it was all very much shared, an ohana.

BN: Yeah, it was, it was a three bedroom home but we kind of built our patio—an outside patio—with, you know, army bunks. So I remember had army bunks for all the cousins and.

DM: Yeah.

BN: Yeah, there was a lot of us so. . .

DM: So what kind of things did you folks do during the day? Like when you weren't at school, what kind of things would you folks—would you go, like fishing, hunting?

BN: Yeah, we, we did mostly we used to go crabbing. So actually my grandfather, my grandfather and his cousin, George Chong, with the Chong sport shop. So we call him Uncle Kulau. So Uncle Kulau and my grandfather originally um used to go fishing. So that's how they used to provide. But because um, the Mo'opuna's or the grandchildren—us guys—like the family was growing. So my grandfather just would let Uncle Kulau do the fishing and then he went his own way and did crabbing. So we used to go crabbing a lot, outside of Coconut Grove, Pālā'au side. So our thing was catching crab and selling raw crab.

DM: Wow, that's amazing, yeah. And so living up in Kalama'ula, what was it like living in that neighborhood?

BN: When I was, when I was small, all I remember is good times. Um however, with every good time, there's also bad times too. And because we was a big family, I grew up with a lot of violence, drinking, um at that time was paka lōlō mostly and um a lot of gambling. So my uncle, my grandmother, grandfather guys, they were all gamblers. Like, they used to always play cards. And of course, there's always family fights and stuff. So because there's twelve of us amongst my families, my siblings, they used to fight with each other. They never used to fight with anybody outside, you know, in the community. They used to just fight with each other and mainly because of jealousy and all this kind of stuff. So I do remember all of that.

DM: Oh.

BN: Yeah. But, but I had a really good childhood growing up.

DM: And were your family and you part of any church?

BN: At that time, we were—my, my grandmother was a reverend on the hill. The church on the Hill. He was a Ierusalem Pomaikai. So I do remember going to Ka Makua Mau Loa—the big church on O'ahu—um two weeks, every summer for the church convention.

DM: Yeah.

BN: Yeah. So I remembered all of that. But our church was on the hill before but today [phone rings, inaudible chatter] Might be mines. Nah I think it's mines. It's right here in my bag. I'm sorry.

DM: Reminds me to turn mine off too.

BN: Sorry.

WM: Church.

DM: Church.

BN: Okay church. So, yeah, I remembered um, we was going up to that church we used go every Sunday. It's all in Hawaiian. My grandmother and grandfather spoke fluent Hawaiian. I remember this always, if they don't like us know what dey talking about they would speak in Hawaiian. And um yeah so that's a church that we went to before.

DM: Oh that's great. Did you eventually get to learn Hawaiian too?

BN: Um, no. So I kind of—my kids can speak, though.

DM: Yeah, good.

BN: Yeah. So, yeah, that was when I was growing up. That was our church. And then as adults, we go to King's Chapel.

DM: Oh.

BN: Right across Kaunakakai school.

DM: And um, outside of Kalama'ula and you're being at Lahainaluna, where are other places you have lived. Other, other places on other islands just here and. . .

BN: Just Moloka'i and Lahainaluna.

DM: (Laughs). Okay and where do you live now? What part of Moloka'i?

BN: Kalama'ula.

DM: Oh, so they. . .

BN: I live on my grandmother dems, property.

DM: Ohh, how nice.

BN: Five, five acre.

DM: Wow, ok. And then who is your, your wife?

BN: My wife is Amber Isabella Lee Reuben. But we're married, so she's Nakihei.

DM: Oh, okay.

BN: She's from Wai'anae. Her, her grandfather—or her grandmother is Violet Kawa'a.

DM: Uh huh.

BN: That's her grandmother.

DM: Oh, like Earl Kawa'a's. . .

BN: Yeah the sista.

DM: Oh.

BN: She's the only sister of the family.

DM: Yeah, I've met her, wonderful lady. Um and so she's—you said from Wai'anae, and then what's her occupation now.

BN: Her occupation now, um, she was the school health aide for the past fourteen years, and she took over Lola Spencer at the high school.

DM: Uh huh.

BN: So she's been the healthy aid for the past fourteen years. However, this past May or last month—oh, no, no, last year May, she got her master's degree in psychology, so she was transferred and applied for the behavioral help and she was a school behavior help with, with Kim Lani. Like Kim Lani is one and she's the other one at the high school for the past year.

DM: Oh congratulations, thats great. What an accomplishment yeah?

WM: Mmhmm.

DM: And how many children do you folks have?

BN: I have, um, biological I have four daughters.

DM: Uh huh.

BN: But we just adopted three from my wife's brother. Three small kids. Three, two and one through C.W.S, through Child Welfare Service. So we're licensed foster parents, yeah.

DM: And all your children are here on Moloka'i.

BN: No, they're all adults. umm my youngest one—which you guys just heard—she's at the cadet program. She's the youngest. She goes to Kamehameha. She's a freshman. She will be a sophomore next year and the rest is adults. They're in the mainland. My oldest lives in Oregon with her—the father of her children. She get four kids and I have one in

Washington state. She has one son and then umm I have—so the one in Oregon is my oldest and then her name is Patience. My second oldest is Christina, she's in Washington State, and my third oldest is Crystal. She has two, two children and she's in the US Army.

DM: Oh, Okay.

BN: Based in Colorado.

DM: Yeah. Oh. You go visit?

(Laughter).

BN: Oh, yeah.

DM: So um, after Lahainaluna, what kind of things did you do?

BN: After?

DM: Yeah.

BN: When I finished?

DM: When you finish Lahainaluna. Shes gonna talk about Lahainaluna, but we are just trying to get all your occu—you know how you got to where you are now. What, what did you—what kind of—what did you do after high school?

BN: After high school? I actually lived on, in Lahaina for---so I graduated in 1987. 1988, 89, 90, 91 and 92, I lived umm—actually 87, then I came back to Moloka'i in 88, 89, and then umm I ended up moving back to Lahaina. I lived there because umm a high school girlfriend of mine came Moloka'i so I went back with her. So I lived in Lahaina from 89 to 92, and then I moved back to Moloka'i. When I was living in Lahaina, I worked at the old Lahaina luau, so I was there for three years. Began as a luau set up crew and then I became the bartender.

DM: Oh, yeah. and then yeah. . .

BN: Move back in 92. Move back. Worked at the corn fields because that was the only employment willing to hire me. And then 96, I quit working up until 2004. Then I went back to work for the corn fields, and then things took off from there.

DM: You—when were you in OHA [Office of Hawaiian Affairs]? I remember you worked at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in the administrative. . .

BN: Okay. No, let me just tell you guys my story.

WM: Okay.

DM: Alright.

BN: So I'm. [pause] I began drinking and doing drugs on Moloka'i since I was in high school. Pretty much umm when I was in the sixth grade, my, my grandfather—I mean, I guess you guys would call him my—he's a drug dealer. He was a drug dealer. He grew---we grew the Paka lōlō, he sold 'em. So my chore—when I was in elementary school—was watering Paka lōlō, watering marijuana. So my grandfather passed away when I was in the eighth grade. Um, that's pretty much when my life went downhill. So I became an alcoholic, drug addict in the eighth grade. Mind you, I was one of the smartest kids in elementary, sixth grade. I was promoted to seventh grade. I was in the smart class with all Japanese. Umm I was considered, you know, with all of the geeks. But umm and I loved it, however, when my grandfather passed away when I was eighth grade. I just never cared about nothing cuz he was my role model. He was my father figure. He he raised me to who I am. I was an avid sports player. I loved basketball. If wasn't for basketball, we didn't go to school. However, when my grandfather passed away, my life took a turn. Paka lōlō, cocaine, umm drinking in school. My grades, my grades went downhill. Eighth grade. Ninth grade. Like I said, the only reason why I went school was because of sports. And I think at that time, the principal was Clifford Horita. Umm he never kicked me out because I was on the varsity volleyball, I was on the varsity basketball my ninth grade year and my tenth grade year. I was on the varsity basketball and volleyball for Moloka'i High School. 10th grade year, the last day of school, I was drunk. A whole bunch of---I took a whole bunch of students, we went in the bushes, we was drinking hard liquor, smoking Paka lōlō . Security came, we got busted. We ended up going down to the office, um, actually, Lindy Kuit was my girlfriend that time, and she, she you know was drinking too with us yeah, so she *wen* bust up the vice principal's office, I was getting stupid, the police came, I got arrested. So I ended up in the police station that afternoon and the arresting officer at that time, his name was Sergeant Michael Arakawa, umm he pulled me into the station and he told me, "You know what boy, umm you going to Ko'olau Boys Home." And I was like, "You know what, ey whatevas [Whatever] I no care, what eveas." He go, "But I have an option for you." And I was like, "Oh, okay. So, so what?" He go, "You have two choices right now." He closed the book. He looked at me and he said, "You can either go to Ko'ilau Boys Home or come play football for me at Lahainaluna."

DM: (Laughs).

BN: For real thats how I ended up at Lahainaluna. That was the last day of school my sophomore year. Five weeks later, I was on the football field with other youth convicts, we was all playing football. All our coaches was cops, cops and firemen. Lenny Tihana, Michael Arakawa, Bobby Watson. Bobby Watson was the farm foreman for the boarding department. Yeah so I went there my junior year. I went, I went Lahainaluna and I tell you what, man, if wasn't for Lahainaluna, I wouldn't be where I am today. I learned so much over there. I learned farming. They put me in charge of the farm, umm, tractors. I mean, I had my own crew, we would grow cucumbers—everything we grew on the farm, we used that in the cafeteria because we worked for our room and board yeah. So we

worked for our room and board and everything from the farm went into the cafeteria and that's all we ate. And then we also had pigs, we had chickens, we had all kinds of stuffs *ova dea* [over there].

BN: But my junior and senior year, I was at Lahainaluna. umm of course I got into sports *ova dea*. I was still smoking Paka lōlō, I was still drinking, but, I was able to manage not getting caught. However, I met a whole bunch of other like—this was a whole different world for me because I grew up born and raised on Moloka'i, and now I'm open to this, these these braddahs from Ke'anae, these braddahs from Kipahulu, braddahs from the Big Island, braddahs from Lanai, Oahu, Kauai, even from New Zealand, all these guys was all boarders. Plus, I was open to braddahs from Kahului, brothers from Waiehu. I mean, everything *wen* open up for me, like I was more exposed to these good Hawaiian bruddahs and sistas. So umm, yeah, so I was playing football my junior year, my basketball, umm varsity, I made it on the varsity over there too. And my senior year, I was quarterback. I was quarterback for Lahainaluna, and I loved it. Although it used to always get hit in the head by Coach Lenny Tihana cause I used to always go practice stoned. He look at me, he go, "Your eyes red again." "Sorry." Boom he wack me on the head. But then I still stayed, I stuck it out, and we went to the championship game for for Maui Interscholastic League and came down, we was tie-tie and—I forget was Maui High or Baldwin we was playing but umm—shoots I had an opportunity for win the game and I messed up. I threw] I threw one—we had a bootleg play where the quarterback come out the, the running back, run into the corner and I throw him the ball and that would have ended the game. So whoever got the first touchdown would win the entire game. So we had an opportunity and they had an opportunity. So when they guys went first they would score. So was our turn, I *wen* do the Bootleg Pass, turnaround, I *wen* pass 'em and got intercepted, so we lost. I was really heartbroken. But when basketball season came around, that was my, my thing, yeah. So *wen* special.

WM: Redemption.

(Laughter).

BN: Redemption, dunked over their, I dunked over them. So, yeah, you know, that's that's my life *ova dea*. And like I said, I learned a lot. I learned a lot in Lahainaluna. If wasn't for them, you know, I would be in boys home. I would have had a different turn of events. Yeah, I learned a lot over there Lahainaluna. If wasn't for that school, I wouldn't be where I am today and I wouldn't know the people I know today. So if I don't know a lot of people on Maui, they know me because of sports.

DM: Right, right.

BN: Sports is a big thing in Lahaina. So even, even today, a lot of them, "Oh Brent, oh Brent, Brent Nakihei?" I was like "Uh yeah why?" They go, "Oh you was [inaudible] da kine?" "Braddah, that was thirty-five years ago." (Laughs). "Oh I remember you." I go, "Oh yeah, yeah." Oh man, you know, it is what it is now.

DM: Yeah. Well let's get into the questions about Lahainaluna and then we'll come back to that.

WM: Yeah, umm so what—do you have any first memories of like arriving on campus?

BN: Well, like I said, my first memory arriving on campus was through the police department.

WM: Oh, yeah.

BN: Because they were all on—that was all the coaches. Umm never been in the boarding department before. But there was another Moloka'i student also there. I felt comfortable with him. His name was Kekoa Moa, Bridget's son. So that kind of made me feel comfortable. And then umm, when I went there um, I met, you know, the football players, which they all made me feel comfortable.

WM: Mm hmm.

BN: Yeah.

WM: So you were, were you homesick at all?

BN: No.

WM: No, not home sick.

BN: I neva like come home 'cause I was already upset at my grandfather passing away. I was upset because, you know, nobody was—I don't know I was just one spoiled brat, you know, I wanted things my way and I wasn't getting on my way on Moloka'i so that was the best fit for me is being away.

DM: Mm mm.

WM: What were the living conditions like? Like, can you describe your space?

BN: In Lahaina?

WM: Yeah.

BN: I was in, in a room with another roommate. The space was good. Like I said, you know, that was my first time in a boarding department and I would say things was all right, I guess? You know, I wasn't there for my freshman year so when I went there my junior year, I was already one upperclassmen yeah. So I never really go through all the things that the underclassmen go through. So, I mean, I wouldn't say I was special, but it wasn't my fault we were there at my junior year, you know, even to this day, I just, you know, I wish that I went there for my freshman year 'cause that way I can learn the game of football. I neva know football. I stepped on that field with no knowledge of football. I

didn't even know what position was what, but I learned it in one year and I was able to understand what a quarterback does and that's how I was able to be one quarterback.

WM: mmmm. So you had you had---who was your roommate? Your junior year.

BN: My roommate, my junior year was Peter Crosier. His name is Peter Crosier. He lives on Maui. But he was, he was, he was okay. He was a senior. I believe he was—I'm not sure—but I kind of forget that year 'cause that was my first year there yeah. But he was my roommate, my, my junior year but my senior year I not gon forget 'cause my roommate, my senior year is Kalapana Keli'ihō'imalu and he's my neighbor today.

WM: Kalapana Keli'ihō. . . .

BN: He's from, he's from the Big Island.

WM: Kalapana, that's the [Inaudible].

BN: His real name is Peter. His middle name is Kalapana.

WM: That's the Ohana from Kalapana.

BN: Yeah. That's all his brother's Uncle Bobby. That's his dad.

WM: I'm, I'm friends with some of them.

BN: Yeah.

WM: That's Minnie's uncle!

BN: Yeah Minnies uncle.

WM: Yeah!

BN: I was going to ask you about da kine but I know he's not the type to, you know, sit down and talk. But yeah he was my roommate my my, my senior year. So so so the thing is, when, when I went to Lahainaluna and I was already one drug addict, I was already one criminal 'cause I was arrested earlier for, for breaking into Taki's and all that kine. Um I was Pakalolo addict and cocaine so the the idea was to send me to Lahainaluna to get me rehabilitated and house me with, with students that that neva do that. So Peter never used to do drugs, alcohol. Kalapana never used to do drugs, alcohol so I ended up my senior year when I was in Kalapana, he was really into church, he neva did drink, and neva did smoke. But one day he came, he came into the room and I used to always like, get hard liquor and I used to drink in a room yeah so he used to always scold me, "Ay mate, you know, you better stop doing that. You better not be drinking." I was like, "Oh ok sorry." I come back stoned, he scold me. One day he came back to the room and his girlfriend *wen* dump him. So he looked at me—I have a bottle of vodka—he look at me give me go, "Ay

mate, give me that thing." So he ended up drinking and that's when he started drinking alcohol. So he was drinking alcohol from that year in 1987, pretty much into when he was he was living over here and then he was running amok over here and then he went—he's been sober for a while though now. And we we, we both into the Fellowship uh, Christian Men's Fellowship.

WM: Mmm. So uh you guys got along, you two, real well.

BN: Oh, yeah. That's my good friend. I mean, yeah, I love that brother.

WM: And was there any other, like, problems within the, the, the dorm with any other boys or. . .

BN: With me?

WM: . . .or what was the dynamic. I mean in general.

BN: Oh amongst the boys?

WM: Yeah.

BN: You know just the the upperclassmen pushing their weight around, yeah, to the underclassmen. I, I never did anything to the underclassmen because I felt like I wasn't um there long enough to push my weight yeah. And besides, I was just trying to get through the day (chuckles) I was just finally get through the day.

WM: Oh, yeah. Can you describe what the campus was back then? Because I know now. . .

BN: Oh campus was beautiful. Like I said, had chickens, have one poultry department, had swine, the pigs, um had a farm. I used to run both farms, the orchard and the regular farm. Yeah, the campus was mean, was nice. The, you know, we had worker boarders working on the campus, in the dorms, in the farms, in the different areas, utility in a gym all over. It was nice. It was really nice.

WM: And now it's real different yeah, with the traffic.

BN: Yeah it's real different now and I understood that because in 2017, my, my daughter graduated from there. So she was there from freshman. My daughter Christina.

WM: She was a boarder?

BN: Yep. She was a boarder from freshman year. That's the one in Washington State. So she was always independent. Soon as she graduated, she was gone. She went Main Land. She neva like come back home. She neva like—she just wanted to do her own thing and she's doing her own thing. But how I knew it was changing because the year she was there, in fact, throughout those four years she was there, things was already changing. There was

already changing the work where, oh, you know, these kids cannot be working before 7:00 in the morning. So they ended up changing the work in the mornings to study time. That's when it began in those years. And then um, when she graduated, I was I—already knew that things was really changing over there.

WM: What were what were some things besides the the study period? What was some of the work that they would do?

BN: They were doing the same kine work when I was there.

WM: Yeah, oh, really?

BN: Yeah. But I believe they neva have chickens. I think after my years, the chickens ended up no more than the pig died, so they ended up not having a pig. So there was hardly any—I know they were still doing farming, but mostly on the campus, like cleaning up the campus.

WM: And then, while she was there, it turned into more studying.

BN: More studying yup, well mostly for the underclassmen. But the upperclassmen could work. Yeah apparently, from what she said, one one parent *wen* complain, their their kid was, you know, oh, you know, too early in the morning they gotta go work, you know, and then somehow, some way they found it that you got to be one certain age to be able to work in the morning so that's why only the upperclassmen was able to work in the morning and the underclassmen would do study time. So I guess today, it's just full study.

WM: Mm hmm. Yeah wow. Well, back then, can you take us through your daily schedule? What was your daily schedule like?

BN: From the morning when you wake up, get ready for work. Work began at 6:00 [A.M.], so I would get off maybe like 15 [minutes before 6:00], 5:45 [A.M.]. We go to work in the morning and like I said, I was working on the farm. So we'd be pulling weeds, planting, beans, planting cucumber, corn, all this stuff and we would maintain all of that. 7:00. 6:00 to 7:00. Then we'd be done with work, and then 7:00 to 7:15 we would, would have to somehow find a way to shower and do everything before school from 7:00 to 7:20. So I believe from 7:00 to 7:15 we would have to shower, get ready for school. Then, either 7:15 or 7:20 we would go eat breakfast. And from breakfast, was able for go to school, which was probably—school began, I believe, 7:45 or 7:50. So that's when school began for me I had, I, I was mostly in the farm, so I took up agriculture. Everything for me was ag yeah. So I spent most of my day in the ag field with the ag teachers.

WM: Were you in FFA at all?

BN: No at that time neva have, was pau already. Yeah. So I was mostly in the in the farm with the Agriculture Department. And then would work through school, I mean, going to class and then we would get done with school at 2:00 [P.M.] from 2:00 to 2:10 or 2:15, I

believe, we have to go back to the dorm, change into our work clothes, then check into work. Then we would work till 4:00, I believe. But those with sports, you get to get off at like 3:45.

WM: Mm mhmm, early to go play sports.

BN: Yeah so I would go sports. So I was sports through the whole year, uhh in the beginning was football, and then after that was basketball, and then after basketball towards the ending of the year was track. So I was in track too and I was down—and the triple jump, long jump, and the high jump. I qualified for States for the High Jump.

WM: Mhmm, So what was it like balancing all your work, plus your schoolwork, plus sports?

BN: I don't know, I mean, I just I just knew that's what I had to do. Yeah, I just knew that's what I had to do and, and I loved it, you know? I loved I love sports. I love my friends over there. I mean, I had a lot of friends, male and female. Um, yeah, as far as balance, I just I just felt like, you know, it was it was my family. So like that's pretty much like the family I never had yeah. I loved it there.

WM: Mhm um, so you only worked in the farm for. . .

BN: I only worked in the farm

WM: . . .two years you was there.

BN: The two years.

WM: Oh, I see. And then, I guess we can go into this question. What was what was dating life like for boarders. Did you guys mostly date the girl boarders or the day student girls or. . .

BN: Yeah both. Yeah was both. So I mean thinking back now the—we wasn't boarding, we were—I mean like for me I had a girlfriend in the boarding but when I went to school I had a girlfriend in school too and now I think back is like the boarding girlfriend, she knew that I had a day student girl (chuckles).

WM: Oh my gosh (chuckles).

BN: But then like I would still go back to her in the evening and she would still come. So, you know, thinking back, I was like, wow these boarder girls, it was crazy.

(Laughter).

BN: They already knew that we had one day, day student girlfriend. But yeah, there was a lot going on, a lot of dating going on, amongst boarders. But I think it came to a point where because we lived together as boarders, you know, we kind of looked at them as sisters.

And so that's, that's where that went. Again, we look more towards relationships with the day students. I mean, I can just speak for myself.

WM: I see

BN: Yeah.

WM: And then who was your, your supervisor for your jobs again?

BN: At the uhh?

WM: At Lahainaluna.

BN: Bobby Watson.

WM: Bobby Watson. So he was a farm foreman?

BN: He was the farm foreman. He was overall foreman.

WM: Did you guys have Chief at that time?

BN: Yeah. Chief was there. Yeah, he was the overall, Bobby was below him. So Bobby Watson, I mean we had a farm foreman but I forgot their names. Yeah, I forgot their name. But I remember Bobby Watson and I remember Chief.

WM: And you guys also had voting officers yeah?

BN: Yup, yeah, we had boarding officers. I was never one. Only because of the—I only had two years yeah.

WM: Yeah, I see.

BN: Which was fine with me.

WM: Did you ever have to go to Boarders Court at all?

BN: A few times (chuckles) yeah.

WM: (Laughs) What was that like?

BN: Uh, that was um, that was interesting for me. But I did like, you know, I just felt—actually I only went one time. One time because I was drinking one night and then I ended up punching one window and *da ting wen* broke. And apparently it went into my eye. Or I thought it went into my eye and this was late at night after everybody's supposed to be sleeping. The counselor drove me to the hospital, they *wen* look inside, neva have nothing. So when I came back, Watson, *wen wen* put all us guys on the kine,

whatchu call that, restriction, the seniors only the seniors. So that that was the only time. But they was piss off with me.

WM: I bet (Laughs). Oh, so what was discipline like?

BN: Discipline? You got to you got to work overtime. You did something wrong, you know, you got to work overtime, they give you extra hours and you had to do it on your own time, usually on the weekends. I never really got too much overtime, only small kine. Like, you know, I neva make my bed, I never do this, my, my hair was going to be too long, you know, that kine stuff. And that was never given to me by the officers. It was always given to me by the um, Ms. Lindsay.

WM: Ms. Lindsay is that Ma Lindsay or. . .

BN: I'm not sure.

WM: The daughter?

BN: I'm not sure but I remember her name was Lindsay. And she just passed away, I think, either last year or this year.

WM: And so on that same note, what were some of the things that people got in trouble most for?

BN: Pakalōlō.

WM: Pakalōlō. And was that like they got hours? Or would they get kicked out?

BN: They got hours. They got hours, restriction. Restriction you got to do hours and then you get confined to the campus. Yeah, to the boarding. You can not go out on the weekends.

WM: You can not, oh I see.

BN: Yeah. But Paka lōlō—neva have fighting. They neva fight because once you fight you get kicked out. It was Paka lōlō and then um, I guess like relationships, sometimes relationships, they get caught. Oh and stealing.

WM: Girls get caught in the boys dorm?

BN: Yeah there, there was some. Rarely that happens, but there was a lot of stealing.

WM: Stealing?

BN: Yeah they would go into your room and steal money. Steal stuff, there was a lot of that.

WM: Amongst the boys dorm?

BN: Amongst the boys and I guess the girls had their own thing too. But the boys was, they was stealing from, like stealing money mostly.

WM: Hmm I see. Hmm so you talked a little bit about free time, yeah, so people couldn't go out on the weekends. What would you do on the weekends or when you had free time?

BN: Honestly. Drink.

WM: (chuckles) Would you go down to Lahaina town—mm I see.

BN: Yeah.

WM: And would you guys walk down or?

BN: Yup, I would catch the taxi down and I would buy me a quart of beer and I would go sit at the harbor, by myself. Sometimes I would invite other seniors, but then they realized I was an alcoholic. (Laughs) And then they were like, we [inaudible]. But I would either buy or I would go steal from the ABC store, hard liquor.

WM: Mhm. And then, um, so that would be every single weekend yeah?

BN: Not every single weekend. Most weekends I would, I would do that—I would mainly do that on Sunday. Sunday I would do that um 'cause. . .

WM: And then, what time would you guys have to be back up?

BN: 6:00 [P.M.] on Sundays. And then on Saturday we get uh, we gotta come back by 10:00 that night. So on Saturdays, most times I would go with the, the, the bruddahs and sistas from Ke'anae.

WM: You would go to Ke'anae?

BN: Yeah I would go with them.

WM: And what would you do in Ke'anae?

BN: (inaudible)

WM: Oh, (inaudible)

BN: Yeah. Uh what I would do over der, honestly smoke Paka lōlō.

WM: Would you ever work in the lo'i?

BN: No, no. I would just, you know, just to get out of da kine, the boarding department. But I

was, um—I did meet the parents, which their, their father was, was classmates with my father. Yeah. Harry Paukoa. Yeah so I guess my dad was a graduate from Lahainaluna, and I guess he was an all star football player. ‘Cause all of them told me that,

WM: Oh. (Laughs).

BN: Yeah they remembered him as the only football player in high school who wen, who would catch the football with one hand.

WM: One hand? oh wow.

BN: Yeah, so.

WM: Do you have any memories of Lahaina town? Like, what was it like at that time?

BN: Umm Lahaina town at that time was, I would say it was slower. Before neva have too much tourists. But there was a lot of uhh, I don't know, it wasn't like today. Like before in Lahaina town, it was more peaceful. It was more peaceful. Was able to—we could walk around town and, you know, of course we would stand out as boarders because we had to have the white shirt, we had to have the belt, you know, and long pants and, and shoes and stuff but. . .

WM: Would you ever bring like extra clothes and change?

BN: Oh, yeah.

WM: Oh, yeah?

BN: All May. We'd, we dress, we dress down at the school catch the taxi, come down, take ‘em off and put on shorts and stuff. That's when the officers would see us, would, would give hours for that like overtime hours.

WM: Officers like the?

BN: The boarding officers .

WM: The boarding boys. Ohh. So you, you had to have your clothes on.

BN: Supposed to, that's the rules.

WM: Oh, I see.

BN: But, you know, they never did give me.

DM: Why did you have to wear certain clothing?

BN: That's part of the boarding department rules.

DM: If you go off campus?

BN: If you go off campus, apparently. From my, my understanding is you have to look proper in, in the community. You have to look proper, with your short hair, your white shirt and gotta be one collared shirt, if I remember. But you got to have pants and you got to have shoes.

WM: So was those people that you visited in Ke'anae, were they kind of like your sponsors or did you have sponsors?

BN: No, it was just my uh, my classmate was was one of the, my classmate Lemomi Paukoa was uh, lived lived over there. Lived in um her and her brother Harry Paukoa and J.D. Pocoa. So we used to just go and visit the family and just relax in Ke'anae it's beautiful, I loved it. We used to go to the taro patch, but we never used to jump in because we never have time, yeah. Because we had to come back. So we leave on Saturdays. Saturdays we worked from, if I remember correctly, I believe 8:00 [A.M.] to 10:45 [A.M.], 8:00 or 7:00 to 10:45. I remember we pau at 10:45 and then we get to eat lunch at 11:00. But the the day begins, your free time begins at 10:45, all the way to 10:00 [P.M.] at night. You got to be back by 10:00 at night. So as soon as 10:45 [A.M.] came, we all gathered, and then we we jumped on the truck and then the guys came from Ke'anae for pick us up. And then we went back there for the day and then we came back.

WM: So all in one day you would go to Ke'anae and then come back?

BN: Yeah, they used to come with the big high 4x4 trucks.

WM: Woah, that's kinda far. (Laughs).

BN: Yeah, they know that road like the back of they hand, you know,

WM: Oh I bet

BN: I mean I loved it.

WM: (Laughs)

DM: Did you. Did you ever meet Harry's father in-law?

BN: Yeah.

DM: Harry Mitchell? You met uncle Harry. . .

BN: Oh, no, no. No, um I might have, because I know I met a lot of kupunas ova der, but I forget. Yeah. But they all met me, and they all knew the Nakihei's because of my dad. Yeah. First ting they tell me, "Oh, you follow Bobby?" I was like, "Oh yeah. I guess."

(Laughter)

WM: So I guess switching gears—ohh first, did you have any sponsors? I know there was sponsors.

BN: I know was supposed to have sponsors but I don't remember because I don't remember, ohhh yeah, yeah. Was was my, my, I had sponsor was my uncle Billy Pua'a and Auntie Sharon Pua'a.

WM: Mhmmm. Would you go with them on the weekend?

BN: I went a couple of times. I stayed with them like during the, the Thanksgiving weekend. We would be off from Wednesday yeah, so a lot of boarders had to go home, from Wednesday to Sunday and then um, yeah I would go stay with them, in Kahului.

WM: And would they be the ones to take you to the airport?

BN: Yeah

WM: I see. Can you talk a little bit about liming the L.

BN: Hou, liming the L, uhh that was an experience. An experience because there was, you know, a whole bunch of students and a whole bunch of boarders going up to the L with bags on the back of the, the lime. And we kind of just helped out each other going up. Of course, some people took their time. Some people, you know, still young running up the thing with the bag on their back, but just liming the L itself was was an experience in itself and and going up to David Malo's grave, yeah. Yeah, that was really, really awesome.

WM: Did you ever get to light the L?

BN: Uh, no. That's my—that's on my bucket list.

WM: Oh, yeah.

(Laughter).

BN: That's on my bucket list.

WM: 'Cause the alumni they go up, yeah?

BN: Yep. Yeah. One year I gon do that.

WM: Oh, I see.

BN: Yeah, but, um, yeah, so David Malo's grave on the top, the L on the bottom, and then my, my class, class of '87, we get our plaque up there too.

WM: What is your plaque made out of?

BN: Cement.

WM: Cement?

BN: Yeah. Was cement. When my daughter graduated in 2017, she went up and she took one picture of 'em. And it's still there but can hardly see because of the decay and ages and stuff. But um. . .

WM: When you guys would go to David Malo's grave, what would you guys sing?

BN: We would sing um, I guess Okou Aloha and then the alma mater. I think we sang one more song, but I forget.

WM: Yonder?

BN: Yup that one.

WM: [soft laughter] Yonder. Oh, that's cool. Yeahum, so you would say maybe, liming the L was one of your highlights?

BN: Yeah, everything. Everything about Lahainaluna was my highlight. Well, you graduated from *ova dea*?

WM: Oh, no. (Laughs)

BN: But you, you know, a lot of...

WM: I did the interviews.

BN: Oh, okay, okay, ok, k.

WM: But, um. So what were your classes like? You remember some of your classes or. . .

BN: Classes. Like I said there were six periods in a day, Four of the periods was agriculture. So I was mainly just in the ag field, on the farm, you know, doing whatever. But the two classes I had was, was, um, what you call like you have to do, uh, English and uh not math but social studies. So, um yeah, I *wen* pass 'em. I *wen* pass 'em. Yeah I *wen* pass 'em.

WM: (Laughs) Was there any specific classes that were, like, especially memorable? Maybe some of your ag classes, what teachers.

BN: Umm Boss.

WM: Boss?

BN: Umm, yeah, Boss. He was the Ag teacher.

WM: Kawamoto. . .

BN: Kawamura?

WM: Kawamura, Kawamoto, I don't know.

BN: Kawamoto. I think was Kawamura I think.

WM: Okay.

BN: But um, I, I liked him because he, trusted me for for drive the backhoe. He *wen* teach me how for drive one backhoe. So I was the operator yeah, so I used to operate the backhoe, we used to install umm, sprinkler systems, we used to make cement, and so he trusted me most of the time. And I like that class because he allowed us to use dark glasses (Laughs) 'cause I was stoned most of the time.

(Laughter).

WM: I see, um, was there any other like teachers or dorm advisors or administrators or anyone that kind of stood out that you remember that, maybe affected you? I guess coaches to, then yeah.

BN: Yeah the coaches, the coach. Coach Lenny Tihana, Michael Arakawa, my basketball coaches too. Um George Nunez, he was my basketball coach. Larry Carinin. Yeah, they all stood out for me because they um, they helped me to get where I am. I mean, all though I was still one knucklehead at that time but they, they would help me plenty. And as far as teachers, I, I like the shop class, a metal shop, yeah. Other than that. . .

WM: Mostly the coaches?

BN: Coaches and Bobby Watson. Bobby Watson was one, was, was good too.

WM: Um, so how did the boarders and the day students get along. Was that okay or was there like tensions or anything?

BN: There was tensions at times, but looking back now, that tension only was because of a few day students that would start that trouble. But once those, when I was there those day students that started the trouble ended up in jail, like as students, at Ko'olau boys home. So once they guys was gone, then things was fine.

WM: Mhmm, and you guys all got along?

BN: Yeah.

WM: Was the, the football, basketball, all the sports teams comprised of. . .

BN: Yup, day students and boarders.

WM: And boarders. Was it like an even half-half or?

BN: Umm, yeah I would say even half-half. But for basketball, it was only me. Was only me as the boarder and the rest was day students.

WM: Mm, I see. So there wasn't really any separation during the school day. . .

BN: No

WM: But people could tell you guys was boarders?

BN: Yeah, yeah, they knew.

WM: I see. So what was the dynamic of having girl boarders with the boy boarders?

BN: I thought it was good because, you know, there's a balance yeah. As far as having them there, I mean, I thought it was good, you know, just having a bunch of testosterone is not good.

WM: (Laughs)

BN: So at least, you know, with the few females, you know, they were able to balance the, balance whatever was going on.

WM: Mm hmm and you guys all got along?

BN: Mm hmm.

WM: Was there any differences between the workload for girls and boys or?

BN: Uhh no, they actually mixed up the girls with the boys. Had girls in the farm, had girls in the dorms, had girls at the utility and the maintenance of the school grounds. So it was a mix of both.

WM: Uhh when people would get into trouble with other people, did the boarders really, like back up?

BN: Yeah, yeah. Like I said, we felt like a family. So when one got into trouble with somebody else, you know, we would all kind of like back them up for support.

WM: I see mm.

BN: Yeah.

WM: Okay I guess we kind of gonna get into sports a little bit. So you participated in track, football, and basketball?

BN: Yeah.

WM: Can you talk little bit about your experiences as a boarder in sports?

BN: Uhh my experience as a boarder in sports, you know, we had to get off work early, which was good, but umm, I don't know, just being in the sports kind of helped me out too because I kind of got exposed to more, more players like more day students and like they just started taking me home to their house, introducing me to their families. So I thought being in sports was really good as far as for being exposed to other kids that lived there in Lahaina. Uhh my junior, my junior year of basketball, we, we, we was the Maui, Maui champs. We ended up going to the States, but I never go because I got busted drinking at the boarding department. Yeah so, that's the only thing I remember.

WM: Mmm hmm. Did you have any leadership roles in any of the sports that you played?

BN: Yeah, my senior year.

WM: Your senior year. Were you captain or?

BN: I was captain for the basketball, but not football. Yeah and then track too.

WM: Mm hmm. Oh, okay and then what did you do for track again?

BN: Uh triple jump, long jump, and the high jump. And I qualified for the states for the high jump.

WM: Mm hmm. So all around athlete? (Laughs)

BN: Yeah I just did that because I wanted to get out of the dorms yeah, just for. . .

WM: Mm was that common for a lot of the boarders to go play sports because they didn't want to be stuck in the dorms?

BN: Yeah. Yeah.

WM: Yeah so how much of the boarders do you think played sports?

BN: Uh I would say maybe around when I was there, maybe like 20%.

WM: Twenty?

BN: Yeah

WM: Oh, I see. So were you involved in Boarder's Chorus?

BN: Yes we all was.

WM: Was it mandatory?

BN: Yeah, it was mandatory.

WM: Mandatory. And what are some memories you have for boarders course?

BN: Umm singing the Hawaiian songs. Um just being with the other boarders and having to sing together. And I remember Miss Gomez. She was our teacher. Uh, Mr. Filizar, Art Filizar. Yep. So at that time, our boarding, our boarding department wasn't that big. I mean, in the beginning of the year, it starts off with a lot and by the end of the year, like throughout the year, the kids just get either kicked out, you know homesick, and they started leaving so. . .

WM: How many would leave?

BN: During the year I would say maybe around fifteen.

WM: Fifteen?

BN: Yeah

WM: Oh, wow. And most of that was just like homesick.

BN: Homesick, getting in trouble, getting kicked out.

WM: Mm hmm, I see. Um and for boarders' chorus would you guys go off campus and sing?

BN: I don't remember going off campus. I know we, we sang for the Boarders, Boarders Day, the Borders' Day program.

WM: The David Malo?

BN: Yeah, David Malo.

WM: David Malo. Can you talk a little about David Malo and what you guys would do for David Malo Day?

BN: Oh, I know that we had to work plenty in order to get things prepared, or had to make sure our room was clean, like they come with the white glove, make sure no more dirt. I got to see my parents and my grandparents and stuff. It was really strict though. A lot of the things we had to get in place and get prepared for David Malo day. You know, I never really, I never really understand who David Malo was until I *wen* pau, *wen* I *wen* graduate and then I kind of looked back and started studying yeah.

WM: What, what is your understanding of David Malo now.

BN: That he just wanted to see um—he knew that the Hawaiian people was, was literate and he knew one school would be the first step yeah? You know that was the first Hawaiian newspaper was printed there. You know, in Hale Pa‘i, they get the printing station on, on the campus. I just know that he did a whole lot of stuff for, for the Hawaiian people.

WM: So how does that like make you feel having graduated from Lahainaluna?

BN: Ohh I feel proud. Brah, like I said man, um the only school with only Hawaiian alma mater in the whole state of Hawai‘i. I mean what can I say, my daughters go Kamehameha school and I was like, “Ey you know, Lahainaluna get the al alma mater, how come. . .” you know. That’s just my, my, you know. But I feel very, very proud and honored to have been an alumni of Lahainaluna. Um I always go back there and I always—when I go to Maui, I always make it a point to visit the school, walk around, and they got beautiful football field now. You know I’m really honored and, you know, sometimes my wife kinda get, not sick, but she kinda get tired ‘cause I always singing the alma mater you know what I mean?

WM: (Laughs)

BN: Ey, brah I’m proud brah. And then through all these years, the football team winning, you know, the state championship. The coach is my classmate Garrett, Garret Tihare is my classmate. When we was in high school, I was the quarterback, he was the receiver, the wide receiver. He was an all star our senior year and I tell people today, I made him an all star.

(Laughter).

WM: And so um, kind of talking about like being Hawaiian and Lahainaluna, um, was—would you consider that boarding department, like, inherently Hawaiian?

BN: Yeah yeah.

WM: And can you talk about a little bit like what you think made it Hawaiian? I mean, aside from there's choke Hawaiians, right?

BN: Yeah well um. . . what makes the school Hawaiian you mean?

WM: I guess so.

BN: What makes the school Hawaiian and the students that go there? I mean you know, it is the oldest school west of the Rockies. Um you know just, uh, just David Malo himself you know. The story behind that and having the boarding department that began in the fifties [1950s] or—yeah I think my father graduated in, I don't know, but I know he graduated—just having the boarding department there for so many years and having all these Hawaiians there, I feel is, is makes it Hawaiian. I mean, where you gon find a whole bunch of Hawaiians, you know, working in the farm, you know, working with the pigs, the chickens, and actually maintaining everything to sustain your room and board, you know. I don't know but this—I feel this, the name itself Lahainaluna I mean, you just feel like that's one Hawaiian school to me.

WM: Mm mmmm, I see, and then on David Malo day, would you guys dance?

BN: Yeah we had a whole program that day. We would dance, the Boarder's Chorus would do their thing.

WM: What kind of prep would you have to do?

BN: We gotta make the food like the lau lau and stuff, so we would come into the cafeteria, and then everybody like, this group do this, this group do that, this group do that. We would have to take out the pig from the imu so that the boys or certain boys would help prepare the, you know, the pig. We would have to kill the pig, you know, do our ting, prep um for put 'em in the imu. We would put 'em in the imu, cover um, the next morning we'd take them out, shred um. So we did everything from from killing, to the table. From farm to table. We would do all that with the pigs and with the vegetables and stuff.

WM: You put the vegetables in the imu too?

BN: No, no just, just growing 'em from, from, from the beginning and then taking them to the cafeteria, yeah. From farm to table.

WM: So were you ever dancing with Aunty Lori in her halau or no?

BN: No I never did take up any Hawaiian classes. I never did dance. But I was really proud to be one Hawaiian.

WM: So talking about food little bit, um, what was your guys's meals like?

BN: Um typical food, typical school kine food. But for, for the borders we had, we had some good food I would say. Kinda made good friends with the cafeteria lady. She would always give us extra.

WM: (Laughs).

BN: Yeah, I don't know if it was because of my looks or what. . .

WM: (Laughs).

BN: She used to always give extra.

WM: Aw, that's nice. So what, what do you do you remember eating for breakfast most days?

BN: Eggs.

WM: Eggs like the ones you grow?

BN: Yeah. Yup. Eggs, milk, umm shoots cannot really remember, that, that far.

WM: That's okay, So was there—do you remember if there was, like, particular cafeteria ladies for boarders as opposed to. . .

BN: It's the same.

WM: It's the same one?

BN: It's the same.

WM: Oh I see. Okay.

BN: But I remember, um we called her Auntie Patty.

WM: Aunty Patty?

BN: Yeah her name is Patty Nishiyama. And then I remembered Ms. Barcoma. I don't know her first name.

WM: Just quick question about um, I know there's like fires at Lahainaluna. Was there any in your time?

BN: No.

WM: No, no fires.

BN: That time was more green.

WM: More green?

BN: Yeah 'cause had the sugarcane fields yeah. That's the only fire had when they would burn the field, the cane field. But that was controlled yeah.

WM: Do you have any memories of like going into the sugar cane fields, or?

BN: Honestly?

WM: Yeah.

BN: Yeah, looking for Pakalolo.

(Laughter).

WM: Well, what other things would you guys do for fun together as boarders?

BN: Um we would play on the Boarder's Field. Um, I don't know we would just hang out and, like, sing songs, play volleyball, you know in one circle, play tackle football sometimes. But we just did fun kind of stuff. Other than that, we would go in the dayroom and watch movies. Uh, yeah we would do a lot of things together.

WM: Do you have a lot of memories on Boarder's Field?

BN: Um, yeah. Initiation. (laughs)

WM: Initiation? What kind of initiation?

BN: Just going through the mud and then like getting, getting—not bust up—like getting physically, um, touched.

WM: (Laughs). Okay.

(Laughter).

WM: All right, so I guess we can switch gears little bit to, uh, what you did after Lahainaluna.

BN: So as I mentioned, when when I graduated from high school, I came home for a little while, in 88 [1988]. And then one girl, you know, I ended up with one girl, went back to Lahaina, lived there, '89, '90, '91, '92, I worked at the Lahaina luau as a bartender. Mind you, mind you when I graduated from—prior to graduating from Lahainaluna, I neva have plans for nothing. My plan wasn't for go to school. My plan wasn't for go to the army, wasn't military. You know what was my plan? Party. That was my plan. So that's what I did. I partied. Although I got one job as a bartender, I was still partying, I was still

drinking and mind you, I'm not twenty-one, but I had access to alcohol and I was working in the bar, bar back. Bartender sometimes. Had access to cocaine. So '90, '91, '92 in Maui, I ended up smoking cocaine, and I was still drinking alcohol so I was smoking crack cocaine and my life *ova dea* was getting so bad into drugs that I ended up coming back home to Moloka'i to get away from that. So I ended up—the my my boss guys over there they was they was, not upset, but they was bum out that I left 'cause I was a really good worker yeah.

So I came back Moloka'i, trying for start a new life. I ended up getting a job at the Hawaiian Research Holdings Foundation Seeds. I was working for Tom DeCoursey from '92 to '95. I would go work in the morning, 7:00 [A.M.], 3:30 [P.M.] I would pau work. I would end up drinking with my coworkers, my cousins in Kalama'ula. So we would drink from 3:30 [P.M.] to probably 11:00-12:00 [P.M.] at night. And then after we finished drinking, we'd end up snorting cocaine. So I thought I was going to get away from the the cocaine stuff. I did. But when I started drinking again over here, that that that took a turn. So I ended up drinking like with my cousin guys and then I would get up at 6:00 [A.M.] in the morning, go work. This cycle went on for, from '92 to '95 every day, even on weekends. Drink, snort cocaine, smoke Paka lōlō. And then one night, neva have cocaine, neva have cocaine, but had ice and crystal meth. So I ended up grabbing some crystal meth, my life changed. My life changed for the worse. I ended up quitting the cornfield. I ended up just selling.

So I was dealing drugs, I was dealing crystal meth, and addicted to crystal meth from 1996 all the way to 2003. Mind you, within this time period, I was on probation, for family court. I was on parole. I did time at M Triple C [Moloka'i Community Correction Center]. I did six months at M Triple C, then they transferred me to Halawa Correctional Facility. I did another three months there and then they wen parole me back to Moloka'i to—because my my charges was drug charges, they wen parole me back to Moloka'i for do drug treatment at the only substance abuse treatment on Moloka'i. At that time, Hale Ho'okupa'a up in ranch camp. I was supposed to go to KASHBOX [Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, Habits, Behaviors, Opinions, and X-factors] Waiawa on Oahu to do my drug treatment, but the parole board gave me five years. When (inaudible) five, the parole board gave me nine months. So that's why it was six months in Triple C, three months at Halawa. They wen parole me back to Hale Ho'okupa'a for do drug treatment. Was good because I got for come back home and be with my family yeah. So my oldest, my my oldest daughter was born in 1996. I met my, I met my wife in 1995. Same wife till today. Did Hale Ho'okupa'a treatment in 2004. Came out January 9th, 2004; I came out parole. I did treatment in Hale Ho'okupa'a to 2005, graduated, and went back to work for the cornfield. So when I went back work cornfield, the executive director from Hale Ho'okupa'a saw me in town and she says, "Hey Brent, so what are you doing?" I was like, "Oh, I went back work cornfield." She go, "You know, you'd make a great counselor." So I looked at her and I was like, "Nahh no way, I hate school." So I went back to work cornfield, sitting on the one tree in the hot, hot sun in the middle of one cornfield. I looked up and I was like, 'Brah, gotta have something better than this.' So in 2006, I came into these doors [points at doors in room] and I registered for school. 2006, I registered for school. I saw the same executive director from Hale Ho'okupa'a, Mary

Jane Brown Willis her name was. She saw me, “Hey Brent how you doing.” I go, “Hey guess what Mary Jane.” She go, “Yeah.” I took up your advice. I going. I *wen* register for school. I like be one counselor.” She look at me, she go, “Really? You registered?” I said, “Yeah.” She go, “Good, I’ll hire you.” She hired me right there as an intern. Paid intern 2007, I started at Hale Ho‘okupa‘a as a drug counselor.

While at Hale Ho‘okupa‘a, 2007, worked there from 2007 to 2016, was my last day. While at Hale Ho‘okupa‘a, I got my CSAC license. I’m a certified substance abuse counselor and I’m still that today. I’m a certified criminal justice professional and I’m still that today. And at the same time, I was going school. So in 2006, I registered over here. In 2009, I got my Associate in Science for Substance Abuse Counseling. I got my Associates in Science for General Human Service. And in 2010, I got my liberal arts, um, liberal arts Associate in Arts for liberal arts. I continued to do my education after my my triple degree, associate's degree, and I was still working at Hale Ho‘okupa‘a. So in 2010 I did one online with Ashford University. I got my bachelor's in Science with a minor in Criminal Justice from Ashford University. And then when that finished in 2011, I continued to my master's in social work with UH Manoa through over here with the Thompson School of Social Work. I got my master's degree in 2016, the same year Hale Ho‘okupa‘a—well not the same year, but I left that year because came down the pipe that Hale Ho‘okupa‘a was gonna close down in 2017. So I left Hale Ho‘okupa‘a in 2016, not knowing what I was gon do, but I had a master's degree, so I applied with the—put my put my feelers out. I did my application with LT [Lili‘uokalani Trust], OHA [Office of Hawaiian Affairs], and other places. OHA was the only one *wen* call me. So I ended up working for OHA for um eighteen months, August 2016. I worked OHA for eighteen months. It's not like I didn't like the job. I loved the job, however, one opportunity came up for work with the State of Hawaii Child Welfare Service, so I got that job with CWS [Child Welfare Services] Moloka‘i. I left OHA, worked with CWS for another eighteen months, and then opportunity came up to work for the Judiciary Family Court. So I left CWS, and I became Moloka‘i’s only juvenile probation officer, which I am today. Been there almost six years

WM: Awesome. Um, how would you say that Lahainaluna maybe influenced your life trajectory when it comes to your career options or your drive for finishing school and getting through all of these things?

BN: I believe what I went through at Lahainaluna had to happen, because it made me realize what I needed, which was my education. And I already knew I had the farming background. I already knew—I mean they *wen* teach me all of that stuff. They *wen* teach me how to farm. They *wen* teach me how to be self-sustainable. They *wen* teach me about PACE [Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement], which I still have today. You know, I have a farm too, you know, growing orchards. I have an orchard farm. I growing mangoes, avocado, lychee, and sour-sap. Lahainaluna *wen* teach me all of that. As far as my job today, the cops *wen* influence me, my coaches, you know. I wanted to, you know, after all these years and getting my master's and stuff, I actually wanted to be one cop, but I was too old. I was too old for be one cop, I couldn't. So yeah, probation officer is close enough for me. And uh, mind you, the day I came out in 2004—I was

arrested April 17, 2003, I ended up in M Triple C. That's when I did my nine months. That's the—April 17, April 16 was the last day I wen smoke ice, I wen drink beer and I wen smoke pakalōlō. Actually, when the judge *wen* sentence me to five years in 2003, he gave me one week for come home, for be with my family. Being one drug addict, I nevah go see my family. I was with them at home, but I wen go see all my drug dealer friends who had the big load and I fronted whatever I could from them. I nevah tell them that I had to go jail. I fronted eight (inaudible), fronted eight (inaudible). So I had all this dope with me one week before I had to check myself into M Triple C. I wen smoke 'em all. At that time, had the um, the Maui Princess—the boat that go from here to Maui. The morning of April 16, 2003, I was on that ferry on the bottom where the chairs was and I was smoking my ice still yet, going to M Triple C. I was picked up, taken to M Triple C. When the gates wen open, I had my ice pipe in one hand and I had the Bible in the other hand, knowing I cannot go back and smoke ice. So at the rubbish can right in the front intake, M Triple C intake where the gates open, I through my ice pipe in there, went in with the Bible, and I was clean ever since this year. This year I made 20 years clean and sober, from ice, pakalōlō, cocaine, ice, pakalōlō, cocaine, and beer.

WM: Congratulations.

BN: Thank you.

WM: Cool.

DM: So, so for Lahainaluna, back to Lahainaluna, what was the—we like to know, kind of like to know what you think were your best experiences and what were your worst experiences as a boarder over there? What were—I know you said the highlights was all athletics.

BN: Mm hmm.

DM: But did you have any like, bad experience—you know what relatively was one of the bad. . .

BN: The only bad experience I had. The only bad experience I had at Lahainaluna High School was with a day student. A particular day student—one Tongan actually—who um—me and my friend was talking. My friend was playing Hawaiian music with his ukulele. His name is Joe Kala. This Tongan came over there. He was talking to Joe. Me and Joe started laughing. The Tongan thought I was talking about him. He *wen* punch me [recreated punching sound].

DM: Oh my God.

BN: Yeah he *wen* punch me right in my head. Boom, boom! So I was like, “Woah!” I look at him. I *wen* look at my friend Joe. I look at him again and I was like, “Brah, you're lucky I cannot hit you, 'cause if I hit you I'm going to Ko'olau Boy's Home.” And I nevah hit 'em, I nevah. I stood up, looked at my friend Joe and I said Joe, “I'm gonna go walk over

there brah. I'm gonna go on that side." And then Joe *wen* go—we was all friends, but this, this—and I still remember his name. His name is Kulei Hafoka. Kulei Hafoka. He came tell me sorry after because he realized. . .

DM: Oh he didn't get punished?

BN: Well this was during school 'cause I nevah tell nobody. Nobody knew nothing, you know. He *wen* punch me in front plenty guys now. But I *wen* walk away. I *wen* walk away. I *wen* man up, because I nevah like lose what I had *ova dea*. You know what I mean? I was, I mean, to me it was one gift being at that school, being on my own, being with friends like Joe Kala, being with friends like Kalapana Keli'ihō'omalū, you know. Being with friends like Leimomi Paukoa, you know. I nevah like lose that and I nevah like go boys home, because I knew once I go boys home, I would have to come back to Moloka'i and I nevah like. So that was the only bad experience I had, other than not being able to participate in sports because I was being punished for drinking alcohol on cannabis and at the Boarder's um, Boarder's Field. Um, my highlight is meeting all these, meeting all these Hawaiians from all over. I mean, like I said, I was from Moloka'i. I was stuck in this bubble thinking only get us Hawaiians over here. Brah, get plenty Hawaiians out there, get plenty. And I was exposed to all that and all these Hawaiians is all good people, you know. And for me, you know, being—because I'm a pure Hawaiian yeah. Both my mother and father is pure Hawaiians and um, I just felt special because there was a lot more other pure Hawaiians out there, especially from Ke'ānae, Hana. All these pure Hawaiians. I thought I was one, I thought only Moloka'i had pure Hawaiians. When I went over there, had pure Hawaiians in Hana, Kipahulu, Ke'ānae. Brah I was like, "Yeah!" I felt proud because not only Moloka'i has 'em. They was out there too. Yeah.

DM: Yeah. And then um, so you must have—I mean you chose to have your daughter attend or did—how did it come about that your, your daughter—did she choose or did you encourage her or. . .

BN: Lahainaluna?

DM: Yeah.

BN: I kind of influenced her.

(Laughter).

BN: I kind of influenced her. She went there from freshman year, yeah. Nah, I nevah influenced her, I just told her it was—she actually went there because she, she nevah passed the test for Kamehameha. So I told her—'cause she really wanted to go Kamehameha. So I told her, I said, "Well you know, now that you nevah passed it, there is another option." So in my mind I'm thinking she just wanted to go. She nevah like stay home with us guys. And at that time, I believe she was maybe thirteen. Yeah so she was always independent, but she thanked me after. After she *wen* graduate, she thanked me.

She said, “Dad, thank you for, you know, pushing me for go Lahainaluna.” I said, “Brah, now you feel what I feel.”

DM: (Laughs).

BN: Now, ‘O ka Malu ‘Ulu o Lele.

(Laughter).

BN: Yeah but there's a lot of pride that goes in that yeah, at Lahainaluna. She loves it, and even her, she met, she met a lot of friends too, that she have to today and, it's awesome. Yup.

DM: And then um—ah so, you know, I think the, the boarding program, as you said, even with your daughters, it went through some changes and then even—I don't know might be looking at—I don't know what its future would be, but what would you want Lanhainaluna to be going forward, with regard to the boarding program?

BN: I would want what I had when I was going, you know? I would want them to have farming. I would want them to have um, a swine department. I would want them to have poultry. And I tell you why, because today, everybody is trying to teach self-sustainable. That's one pilot program that can bring back and start over again. Nothing wrong with starting ‘um again, you know. This time, just figure out the law and what can and cannot do, but still able to implement self-sustainable. How to grow a cucumber, how for um, grow beans. How for grow, um, corn. And use that! Because nowadays they get plenty farm to table. Farm to table. Was already going. Lahainaluna already started that years ago. Farm to table. But today, they kind of highlighting oh yeah, you know, farm to table, farm to table as a self-sustain. Brah, Lahainaluna was doing that way before these guys was figuring that out. So just bring it back, all of that. And I tell you why because if there's anything you wanna teach our keikis today is stuff like that, you know. Of course, you know, not gon have like before the, the physical touching, you know. Not gon have the physical touching like, you know, initiation and all that, you know, ‘cause before everybody used to get, I mean, bust up. (Laughs) That's what I mean by physical touching, you know. We used to get bust up before. But of course, today no can, but you still get the positive stuffs that can do that was working. Although get the negative kine stuffs like that, you still get the positive stuffs that was working. That was working. So I would say, research the law, and implement whatever can. But with that in mind, self-sustaining farm to table.

WM: ‘Āina.

BN: ‘Āina, yeah.

DM: And um, do you think your daughter would send her children to Lahainaluna?

BN: Definitely.

DM: Yeah.

BN: Definitely.

DM: So have you kept in touch with your classmates? Have you gone to any of the reunions?

BN: I never went to any reunions in Lahainaluna no, I haven't. But we do have a Facebook page that we all collaborate with each other, yeah.

WM: Yeah that's how.

DM: That's how you got in touch. . .

(Laughter).

WM: That's how everybody started calling my phone.

DM: Oh that's good, that's good.

BN: Yeah so when you *wen* tell me, I *wen* put 'em on my, my Facebook page—our class Facebook page—and they *wen* spread 'em.

WM: Oh yeah. (Laughs)

BN: Yeah.

DM: Yeah thank you for that.

BN: No problem. Like I said, everybody, you know, we're proud. We're all proud, um, graduates of that school. That school did a lot. That school did a lot man.

WM: Well any final thoughts or things you would want to say?

BN: Um, no but if there's any way possible, like you guys can bring that, bring all of that back, you know, the Boarding Department or just, you know, trying for start that up again and all the other people would really appreciate it.

WM: There, there is talk about um—well the Lahainaluna Boarders Association did just—they're trying to do the orchard again.

BN: Oh, ok ok.

WM: Which is kind of cool. (chuckles)

BN: Okay. Okay. Yeah I'm not sure I heard only get the Hoapili dorm, stay open. David Malo is closed. So yeah, I don't know, but. Um yeah, other than that, thank you so much for the opportunity.

WM: Thank you.

BN: That's my story.

WM: Mahalo.

DM: Thank you for sharing.

WM: What are you going to do?

DM: Action. Ok give it some time. Yeah if you could tell us what other kind of, um—besides your work—what kind of work you're doing with and for the community.

BN: Um, when I'm not working, I'm involved with different nonprofit organizations, 'cause I try to give back yeah. As I was mentioning before, during my, during my drug use and stuff for all these years, you know, and I was taking because I was selfish, um because I realized that was a big problem in the community. So, you know, now it's all about solutions and for me, one solution is giving back. And today I'm giving back to the community by volunteering my time—I'm not paid—I'm volunteering my services as a board member for the Kalamaula Homesteaders Association. I'm the vice, um vice president and also the chairman for the Moloka'i Community Federal Credit Union, the only credit union on Moloka'i now, and um, and also I'm a member of the Moloka'i Advisory Council for the College Moloka'i Education Center here with Kelly, Kelly Duduoit. Um, yeah it's all about giving back for me because I took so much before. Now I have to. It's a fact, I have to give back. And um, other than that, you know, I'm really involved with my church too. King's Chapel, Moloka'i. King's Chapel is the first, um, first branch off of the King's Cathedral on Maui with Dr. James Marocco. I'm heavily involved with the church volunteer stuff in our church too, with transformation. We have a program there called Transformation for Recovering Drug Addicts and Alcoholics, so we have a special service on Monday for, for that type of population. We feed them, we have a word, and then we break out into groups. And I'm a facilitator also, and I still attend Narcotics Anonymous meetings because, you know, I'm a recovering addict and I've been clean and sober for twenty years this year.

DM: Yeah.

BN: Thank you, thank you.

DM: That's really good. But you were also saying you're with the Ho'olehua um—you said you folks are managing the common pasture. What is that?

- BN: Oh, yeah, I'm sorry. I'm also involved with the Moloka'i Livestock Homestead Association. It's actually the only Livestock Homestead Association in Hawaii, right now. And I'm that treasurer for that nonprofit organization where each member has, has cattle, cow, and um, small kine cows and stuff. Heifers, yeah, wean-outs. So yeah, we do a lot of that. Well I do a lot of that.
- DM: So you were saying that the cattle have to be—so can you slaughter them and eat them here or. . .
- BN: Well whatever is on Moloka'i has to stay on Moloka'i. So, you know, if we're going to sell, if we're going to sell any, it has to go through the slaughterhouse over here because they would, you know, prepare 'em. And I think they are selling our, our cattle and meat to the stores over here. So yeah but before we used to ship them off island to the Big Island and the mainland but we cannot do that now because uh, Moloka'i is in quarantine for cows. It wasn't from our, it wasn't from our pasture, but it was from the other pastures on Moloka'i. But because it's condensed on Moloka'i with the different areas, the, the state just *wen* um, condemn or quarantine the whole island. Yeah and they don't know when it's going to end.
- DM: But there is a big deer problem in that common pasture. You folks do any culling of the deer or?
- BN: There's a—Moloka'i Hunting Club. Um because we have the lease for over 100 acres and DHHL [Department of Hawaiian Home Lands], where our cattle is, the Moloka'i Hunting Club comes in and, and does their hunting thing at night on, in the pasture. And we also had some funding to put up the eight foot deer fence because the deer is pretty much eating all the cows' food, yeah. All the grass and stuff so we're slowly taking care of that problem.
- DM: Okay well thank you so much again.
- BN: Your welcome.
- DM: So you told us that and I thought that was a nice thing to share as well. And then tell us about your work as a probation for juveniles and how you, you know, why is this something that you feel is important?
- BN: Okay um, I also wanted to note that, you know, being that I was incarcerated and I was on probation before as an adult, you know, so pretty much my life now is taking a full circle. Now I'm part of the system and giving back as the only juvenile probation officer on Moloka'i and my job entails helping the youth. I was given an opportunity to work for the adult probation. But in my years of experience, I've learned that, um, helping the youth, there's a better chance of them changing their life as opposed to helping an adult. So my thing is to help the youth so that way they can pave the way, you know, as they become adults. But um yeah, I help the youths get the help they needed to kind of steer them on the right track yeah. And just just giving back that way.

DM: Yeah so you—does that involve getting any kind of like getting into Lahainaluna or? Like have you gotten into that?

BN: Well, I, I, I can get the court to order them to do things. So a majority of the time they're court ordered to do like drug treatment or some kind of program off island, like the Salvation Armys, Boys Safe House on the Big Island and they got one on Maui and the Girl Safe House on the Big Island. So it's just alternative, um, residential places where they can stay just to like take a break from being at home and stuff. And then we also get the Bobby Benson program on Oahu, the only drug treatment facility for teenagers in Hawaii. So I try to do my best for them. But most of the time, you know, it's pretty much the parents gon need the help too. And, you know, if the parents can put in their, their time for help, you know, the kids gon follow but it is what it is and I just do the best I can. But there's other friends of mine who's helping the adults, so. It's not like I'm not helping adults. I'm sitting in the back scene, helping adults, but through other avenues.

DM: And that program, the Hale Ho'ikupa'a, it's finished? Or is it. . .

BN: Yeah they closed down in 2017 because of funding.

DM: Oh.

BN: Yeah and then Ka Hale Pomaika'i yeah. They were the Sherry Lind them.

DM: Uh huh, there's another one?

BN: Yeah. They, they, they took over. Not took over, but they, they, they're doing treatment now for adults.

DM: And then, I thought that was one was or was that Alu Like by Mahana.

BN: Yeah that was one residential, um with Wayne Lee.

DM: Yeah.

BN: Yeah that was a twenty-one day residential program for teenagers but that, that funding got cut from Alu Like so Wayne, he's not doing that anymore.

DM: Oh. All right Mahalo. Thank you.