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AccessSurf Hawaii Inc
by Mark Marble, CTRS

In March 2006, a certified therapeutic recreation specialist Mark Marble created AccessSurf Hawaii to provide beach and ocean access to people with disabilities. Since then, its monthly "Day at the Beach" program has helped more than 400 people ranging in ages 3 to 83, into the water to surf, swim, snorkel, or simply float through the use of adaptive equipment in a barrier free and therapeutic environment. In addition, hundreds of volunteers including medical professionals, professional surfers, and community members, give of their time and resources to ensure a successful and safe program.

Each month, participants with disabilities such as paraplegics, quadriplegics, the blind, amputees, cerebral palsy, autism, downs syndrome and others, come to a "Day at the Beach" to enjoy the beach and ocean together with their ohana. Through participation in AccessSurf's programs, participants and their families have expressed feelings of empowerment and have experienced therapeutic benefits including improved communication and interactive social skills, improved self esteem, and increased mobility.

AccessSurf's vision is to offer its therapeutic ocean programs throughout the state and to make Hawaii's beaches accessible for everyone to enjoy. Through supporters from the community like Alan Pflueger and Pflueger Honda, AccessSurf can carry out its mission and vision of helping people with disabilities and their families for generations to come. For more information on how you can help, visit www.accessurf.org.