



### **HPGS Government Awardee, Naomi Sugihara**

Naomi Sugihara is the Planner for the Kaua‘i Agency on Elderly Affairs (KAEA). She is described by her nominators as “a true public servant who continually demonstrates her commitment and passion to the field of aging.” Naomi spends much of her time in the community listening to older adults and family caregivers, service providers, and other stakeholders to facilitate the development of a county area plan on aging that is truly responsive to local needs.

As a planner, Naomi is also involved in program development. One program that she leads is the Healthy Aging Partnership (HAP) on Kaua‘i. As a HAP leader, she works closely with *kūpuna*, service providers, and representatives of the State Department of Health, University of Hawai‘i, Executive Office on Aging, and the Mayor’s Office in implementing the statewide Healthy Aging Partnership in Kaua‘i County.

Furthermore, under Naomi’s leadership, the EnhanceFitness program is being offered to older adults in Kaua‘i county. EnhanceFitness is a stretching, flexibility, balance, low impact, aerobics and strength-training exercise program. Since 2007, more than 200 elders have participated in this program at 7 sites across the island. Not only has Naomi led the implementation of EnhanceFitness across Kaua‘i, she has also championed the funding of the project, which is supported by the Kaua‘i County Council, the Kaua‘i District Health Office, the U.S. Administration on Aging, and others.