

# GOOD NEIGHBOR

## Russell Tanoue

Not a lot of people would spend their birthday giving back to others, but that is exactly what local photographer Russell Tanoue will do this Saturday, Aug. 27. Proceeds from his 22nd annual birthday bash will support both his Project Shine Hawai'i and nonprofit HUGS (Help, Understanding & Group Support) Hawai'i.

Tanoue selected the latter nonprofit because he wanted to support the local community. HUGS Hawai'i, which has benefited from Tanoue's birthday event for more than five years, is dedicated to helping Hawai'i families with seriously ill children.

"I've learned a lot of my clients had support from HUGS Hawai'i," Tanoue explains. "To be able to supplement a family during a time where most would feel hopeless is great."

Launched in 2001, Project Shine Ha-

wai'i is a personal project of Tanoue's. It offers free makeovers and photo sessions to those fighting diseases, victims of domestic violence and teens rehabilitated from drug abuse. With this effort, Tanoue hopes to "pull them out of the dark and shine."

"My project also promotes positive messages to encourage everyone that there is always an option during the hard times — and that is, to always choose joy," Tanoue says. "Along with reminding our teens that they are enough with my 'I Am Enough' wristbands, my goal is to be able to help teens rise above their challenges and reach their dreams."

Tanoue's birthday celebration kicks off at 6 p.m. at Trump International Hotel Waikiki and will feature entertainment, a silent auction, giveaways and delicious food.

"My birthday is a reminder that I have been given the gift of another year to love, create beauty, give joy and make an impact in our community, all with gratitude," Tanoue shares. "I can't believe it will be 22 years of celebrating my birthday while making a difference. I just love being so blessed to help others and make a positive change."

Tanoue has always been passionate about helping others, and believes that if only takes one dedicated individual to begin a movement within a community. His wish is that one day, serving others will become an integral part of everyone's lives.

"The impact on the community is not limited to this one instance on the day of my birthday," Tanoue notes. "It is an ongoing movement that I will never stop



Photo courtesy Tien Nguyen

spreading and bringing about change for the people I meet along my life's journey."

For tickets, visit eventbrite.com (and search "Shine!").

— Tasha Mero

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