

Girls Inc. Goes to Hawai'i!
Trip Journal Excerpts
May 2016



Departure



Woke up at 6 a.m. to get ready for our big trip. We got breakfast and it was really good. My best friend and family came to surprise me and I was really happy. It's a nice feeling to know you have family here for you. – Fatuma

We spent the night before the flight at Girls Inc. to make sure there would be no transportation issues with getting to the airport on time. I must say, the Fatboy bean bag chairs were pretty comfortable. Although I didn't actually get much sleep, it wasn't for lack of comfort....About 3:00 a.m. Ms. CT (in the Fatboy next to me) pointed out a raccoon in our courtyard. He

was snacking on a bird that had flown into our large window and died. The raccoon was chomping on that poor bird like it was a fried leg from Time Out. It was sad. And gross. And then the raccoon walked the perimeter of the building like he was trying to get in. I knew that was unlikely but it still made it difficult to fall back asleep. I was glad for morning and Ms. CT's reveille.

– Ms. Roberta

5 a.m. "Goodmornngg!" in CT's voice. This morning I woke up to Ms. CT's voice followed by the blinding lights of the Katherine Fletcher Center coat closet! I drag myself off of the Fatboy (which was really comfortable) and got my day started. After getting dressed, I was super hungry! I was beyond excited to see Ms. Fe. When she started dancing, it was funny. My day was started amazingly with an epic, mouth-watering, body-dancing breakfast. I was glad to see my grandma and mom who came to see me off. After pictures with them, I waved goodbye to them and, in a few hours, I'd be waving goodbye to Omaha. – Desy



Airport & Flight

The scanners and everything were really new to me...I was really scared because it was my first time. When the plane started moving I was like, 'Oh, no! This is not happening.' I looked over to Habiba and she was freaking out but I told her to chill...So when the plane started going up, my stomach dropped and I thought maybe this isn't too bad. So I started recording and taking photos. But Habiba was closing



her eyes to I told her to not miss out on anything. I really liked that flight [from Omaha to Denver] because it was short and extravagant. But once we got to Denver it was a whole different story. That airport was big and cool. It was totally something new. When I first got on the plane I was very...claustrophobic. – Fatuma

My first time riding on an airplane was quite scary. - Habiba

The thing I saw on our first flight was downtown. Everything looks so little when you're high up in the sky. Then pop my ears went but I had a piece of gum to fix the ear problem...I sat next to Ms. Roberta on my first flight so it really wasn't anything new. I see Ms. Roberta wears glasses but when she reads she takes them off. I was kind of confused by then again that's none of my business....We only have an hour and 25 minutes left on the plane. The lady who sat next to me was nice. Her name is Margaret D. Williams. We talked for a little bit before we got off the plane. She's going to be here for 14 days. I asked where she's from and she said Maryland. - Tasheonna

Today was a day full of first for me. Although I flew to America in 2004, I was too little to fully enjoy or remember the experience. Today I got to fly in a plane which established a whole new experience. – Amina

The traveling was good. I just couldn't get comfortable on the planes. The planes were cold but I had a blanket. I liked when we flew over Hawaii we got to see the water. - Ariyah

I was extremely nervous because I never experienced flying before. I enjoyed both plane rides until my ears popped. I became excited as I saw Omaha become smaller and smaller...and we were off! – Elijahiana

The plane ride was so long and for as many people as it was I'm surprised that it wasn't louder...I didn't really see too much sitting in the middle...I mostly slept... - Sakira

When we made it to Denver we rode on the human conveyor belt! I've never been on one of those before. It had to be the best thing ever. - Aariona

I haven't been to the airport in a long time. While there, I experienced my first pat down. It wasn't uncomfortable because the lady told me what she was going to do. I just didn't like that she was in my groin area, let alone my space. I took selfies for my mom and facetimes my best friend. Boarding the plane I was excited and nervous. Shortly after boarding, I quickly learned that my favorite part of the ride is the take off. I was chewing my gum so hard because the higher we got, the more my ears popped. I was mesmerized by the breathtaking view from the sky. The homes, buildings, cars, trees – everything was so tiny. It looked so fake. It was very interesting to look over and see Fatuma not looking out the windows. I learned she doesn't like height I laughed because she had Habiba taking pictures outside for her. We had a smooth ride and landing... Denver's airport is HUGE! Ms. Roberta was walking so fast, I had to pick up my suitcase and jog to keep up with her. I am going to nickname her Speedy! [The plane to Hawaii] was a lot bigger than the one to Denver. It was super full of people. – Desy

Sitting next to complete strangers was slightly uncomfortable...Even though the flight was eight hours, my anticipation and excitement increases. Also, even though I sat next to strangers in close proximity, I met a girl names Emaelani. She is from Hawaii and knows tons about Hawaii. It was cool learning about the origin of her name. Emaelani comes from the royal Hawaiian family. Hawaii's culture amazes me...! - Tori



Arriving

When we finally got to Hawaii, I thought I was in paradise. It was really beautiful. – Fatuma

I was excited to be on the Island. It felt a lot better than the freezing cold plane. I was speechless when I saw the actual scenery. I texted my mom and thanked her for allowing me to experience this. The island is full of green. The pants are so different from Nebraska's! They seem to be thicker and more colorful. The mountains are so tall. There are steps going up a mountain and the locals call it "Staircase to heaven." - Desy



While we waited for Ms. Sheebie we were in the wrong area but when we finally found her she greeted us with leis and a big ole kiss. – Aariona

I also paid much attention to the mountains...I was amazed to see how they touched the clouds. In a way, I still can't believe that I'm here in Hawaii. - Sakira

When I first got off the plane to Hawaii I was just standing by the wall and this little girl came up to me. She thought I was a princess because my scarf has some sparkly things on it. - Habiba

Ms. Roberta's sister came to pick us up. She gave us flowers and they were really beautiful. She had a lot of energy. We thought she must have drank like three 5-hour energy drinks. But I like that. She drove us through the beautiful scenery of the land. It was beautiful. – Fatuma

I was excited when we landed in Hawaii and the weather is so nice and everything is so colorful and trees everywhere. - Ariyah

The plants were my favorite part. Seeing the route to Ms. Sheebie's house made me realize how beautiful =raw nature is. Untouched and untamed mountains reminded me of **Jurassic Park** and how beautiful everything God created is. - Tori

Just like when I first came to America, Hawaii was also foreign and a whole new world. My first impression of Hawaii was mind-blowing. Everywhere I looked was lush green with nature, and flowers growing from all types of trees. There were huge hills full of different tiny trees and bushes. To top it off, the weather here is beautiful; it's not too hot or too cold and the breeze balances it all out. Hawaii obviously has so much to offer... - Amina

Shave Ice (4 trips...)



It was the bomb. I've never tried anything better. I would go for that any day. - Fatuma

The best ice cone I have ever eaten was super colorful and delicious. - Amina

Usually I get the same flavors but this time I got a different flavor. It was really good and savory. I am thankful for being able to go there again. I am also thankful for dinner last night. I know the staff put their hard work into our meals. – Fatuma

...amazingly and deliciously good. - Elijahiana

We went for shaved ice for the second time and I tried blue raspberry, strawberry, and sour lemon. It was great. We should open a shaved ice shop in Omaha so everyone else can fall in love like I did. – Aariona

It was soft and good and they had so many flavors. - Ariyah

Shaved Ice

1st: Strawberry & Pink Lemonade

2nd: Hawaiian Pineapple & sour lemonade

3rd: strawberry & blueberry

- Desy

The shaved ice was incredibly delicious. When I was in line I thought “Why is shaved ice so big here and not in Omaha?” But after eating it I now see why it is such a popular dish. Shaved ice in Omaha does not compare to the heavenly taste of Hawaiian shaved ice! – Tori

The shaved ice was amazing as always. I tried a new flavor and it didn't taste bad. It blended well with the Hawaiian pineapple, blue raspberry, and the Li Hing Mui. It was delicious with the new snowcap creamy taste as well. – Elijahiana

We went to get shave ice again. Yassss. - Ariyah





The Beaches



This was my first time at the beach and the scenery was breathtaking. I always saw pictures of the beach and the water rushing to the sand. Watching the waves was such a majestic moment. Finally the pictures on the internet came to life and I was living the moment. - Amina

This was my very first time on a beach. I loved feeling the sand between my toes and the water was beautiful. - Elijahiana

We went to Bellows Army ground and the beach was really cool and fun. – Fatuma

Kailua Beach was incredible. The waves

were soft and the water was warm and welcoming. - Tori

My favorite part was the beach! It was soooo pretty! OMG! The sand was soft, like a toss blanket. The view was of blue low waves and a mini-island further out. – Desy

I haven't gone out far because my grandma said I need more swimming lessons. I played in the sand and built a pyramid. I had a lot of sand in my shorts. – Tasheonna

We went to bellows Beach...I got to boogie board. It was nice to swim in the light blue water and ride on a wave. It felt like I was flying. – Ariyah.



At Bellows Beach the waves were so fierce. I really did enjoy boogie boarding when I did it correctly. The water was so pretty and the sand was so soft under my feet. - Sakira

We went to Bellows beach, which was incredibly beautiful. It was a military base. The base had cabins, a tennis court, basketball court, paint ball, mini-golf and more. It was a huge with a great view. While at the beach, I learned to boogie board. Sara helped me a lot. Thanks Sara! When a big wave came, I had to get off the ground and lay on the board. The wave rushed me back to the shadows, even to the sand. It was so fun catching

a natural high. Took my first public shower. It was odd and different. - Desy

The beach was very beautiful and nice... We had a sand castle contest. I thought Habiba's group had the nice decoration and organization. Our group had nice structure... Overall, I think both groups did well. – Fatuma

The view is so beautiful OMG and the breeze is so calm. – Habiba

Tori and Ariona tried to teach me how to float. I think I am getting better. At the beach, when the waves came I tried to swim under them.- Ariyah

The water felt good. - Ariyah

Every beach is different. The second beach, Bellows Beach, has big waves and if you want excitement and fun, you should go there. The Waikiki Beach is very relaxing and if you want to chill, go there! The first beach, Kailua Beach, is a good mix of both. - Tori

Today I tried something new. Although I was intimidated by the roaring waves of the sea, I gathered up the courage to go deeper into the water. Little by little I risked taking 10 steps farther in the water than I was before, being washed up on the shore. I found out that the water isn't that bad once you accustom yourself to the rhythm of its current. Overall, my first time in the beach water was fun if you exclude the taste of the salty water. – Amina

At Waikiki beach we were able to see people surfing. - Elijahiana

The beach sand castle competition – that was fun because the girls weren't so competitive but when I heard we won, I clapped my hands for both teams and high five'd them because that's what teamwork is. – Habiba

There was a sand castle competition. I was on a team with Tori, Ariyah, Amina, and Habiba. We created a Hanu Palace, which means Turtle Palace. We used our teamwork skills. None of us fought or argued and we incorporated everyone's ideas. I remembered some words in Hawaiian from the previous visits and we wrote them in the sand. "E como mai" means "come on in;" "Aloha" means "hello," "goodbye" or "love;" and "mahalo" means "thank you." We wanted to include the Hawaiian culture in the sand

castle. The Hanu, or turtle, is a sacred animal to the Hawaiians. We won and that was incredibly exciting. - Elijahiana



We tried boogie boarding. That was something I had never heard of before...I could not stay out of the water once I got the hang of it. Challenges I gave myself were to go further into the water and to have fun. I completed both! - Elijahiana

The second beach we went to was just



as pretty as the last one, Kailua. The waves were big and the sun was bright! - Tori

We went to Bellows Beach so that we could boogie board on some bigger waves. When we got back home I got back into the pool. I wish I was a mermaid because I love swimming so much. I could live in the water if it was humanly possible. - Aariona

...We went to the Kailua Beach. We had a sand castle building contest! It was so fun! We had a game plan and everyone had a role to play. It was funny how we all mixed our vision of the castle to make a masterpiece! Once again, my team lost, but it was still fun. That was the first time I built a sand castle. - Desy



Tori and I went to the Waikiki Beach. It's very rocky. The waves were further out than the rest of the beaches. The sand at Waikiki had rocks in it, big rocks. It was fun to sit and let the tides pull me in and wash me back to shore. - Desy

The one that we went to yesterday was wider and has more waves and they hit me real hard. - Habib



For the sand castle competition, Ms. Ct and I decided we wouldn't be impartial judges. We stopped some strangers strolling on the beach and asked them if they would judge the contest. They turned out to be women who helped other women develop leadership skills as Christian clergy. They were into the Girls Inc. mission because, as they noted, church leadership is traditionally dominated by males. After looking the castles, they walked down the beach to confer. They took their job very seriously! They liked the

symbolism in the one castle but appreciated the architectural detail in the other. All of the girls cheered at the end and really, when on a beautiful beach making a sand castle, who isn't a winner?! – Ms. Roberta





At the House

It was very nice of Ms. Roberta's sister to let us stay at her house because we usually stay in hotels but this trip we didn't have to pay much for anything. - Habiba

Back at the house, we went swimming and ate burgers. After, we watched Pearl Harbor. Of course, I cried the whole time. I think I had an inspiration to have a career change. I'm thinking of being a nurse for the military. We lost 3,000 Americans at Pearl Harbor. I want to make sure 3,000 more serving members survive. – Desy

After watching part 1 of Pearl Harbor my perspective on Hawaii has changed. Not only did I not realize the severity of the Pearl Harbor situation, it was followed by grief knowing so many people died. - Tori

After a long day of swimming and fun, we retreated back to the house for burgers and sleep. - Elijahiana

We came back to the house and I learned to do a little bit of swimming. We played a lot with Aariona, Desy, and Sakira. Then we had dinner which was good. – Tasheonna

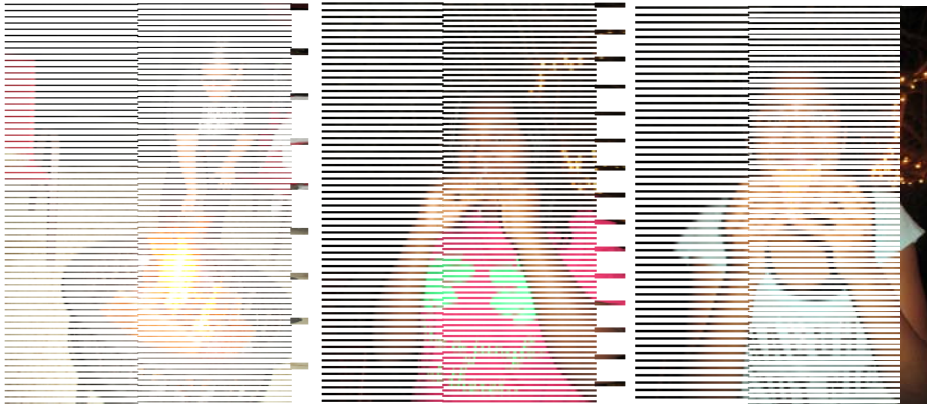




Last night after Amina and I were done praying, Tori and the others wanted us to read some Quran out of the book. I did and they were interested. They also asked if it is the same as the Bible. We said not really. - Habiba

At the house we all wanted to go to the store but only 2 of us could go. It was me and Aariona. I had a lot of fun to get things for everybody else. It was a good experience for me to see the different prices on things because the things here are \$2 more than home. \$5 for chips is HIGH. – Tasheonna

At night we got rained out of the tent but we had to make it work and disperse through the house. – Aariona



I appreciated Sara making me some s'mores. I got to sit and dole out ingredients. She did the hard work! – Ms. Roberta

When we come back home from the beach, I watch about 2 episodes of SUV, then helped Sheebie cut up toppings to put in our salads for dinner. Overall, it was a great day! – Amina

Gross alert!! Don't read this if you have a low tolerance for gross out. Mine is high. The girls were very freaked out by the geckos that walk around the yard and even on the walls in the house. I tried to tell them they eat the bugs but it didn't help. Once Habiba saw one behind her while she was eating breakfast and I swear her vertical jump would compare with LeBron's. And her shriek to a banshee's. I didn't dare tell the girls that once my sister, Sheebie, had a Hawaiian cockroach [don't know if that is really a thing except that the roaches are really big and tropical looking] crawled in her ear. She had to

go to the emergency room to get it out. On the drive to the hospital it was crawling around in her ear. Without warning her, they poured rubbing alcohol in her ear which really freaked the cockroach out. He was thrashing around in her ear. Then they removed it with a tweezers. I guess you can understand why I didn't share that story with the girls. None of us would have gotten any sleep. They would have been up all night on roach patrol. I say let the geckos get them! – Ms. Roberta

I enjoyed the **Pearl Harbor** movie. Even though it was sad, it was good to watch. I remember learning about this. The United States finally entered WW2 on December 8th, 1941 and then dropped two atomic bombs on Japan (Nagasaki & Hiroshima). Although this was a very sad period for a lot of people, I love learning about it. It's been a lovely trip so far. - Sakira

We watched the **Pearl Harbor** movie which was intense. I have known about Pearl Harbor since the 7th/8th grade. During my freshman year of high school for honors history we had to compose a paper on pearl Harbor and the affect it had on the people. I used a quote from Roosevelt that was quoted in the movie as well...The movie made me rethink the lessons I was taught about Pearl harbor...It was a brutal battle. - Elijahiana

Flea Market (3 trips...)



We woke up really early, earlier than I expected. The first thing we did was went to the Flea Market [Swap Meet]...I can't

wait to go back because there are more things I want to buy. – Fatuma

We had to leave at 7:00 on the dot and we did. – Tasheonna

We got to see things that usually are not in Omaha. And their clothing makes people happy because of how colorful they are. I mostly enjoyed being there with my friends and my sister. - Habiba



I was surprised by the prices at the flea market early this morning. 7 shorts for \$20! I would never catch a sale like that in Omaha! – Tori

There was so much stuff that you could buy. I ended up buying some nice things. - Ariyah

It turned out to be a very good thing that Sheebie had planned multiple trips to the Flea Market (swap Meet) around the stadium. The girls could plan their shopping and their budget carefully. Once we had been to the Flea Market, I could overhear them discussing items they had seen in a gift shop at one of

the museums or attractions. "Don't buy that here – it's cheaper at the Flea Market!" Savvy shoppers! Ms. Sheebie would make a good program facilitator! – Ms. Roberta

Today I was one of the last ones to wake up. Everyone kept saying they're on "Omaha Time," but not me! If you ask me, I've caught on to Hawaii time. I was surprised how early the whole Island gets going. 7:30 a.m. in Omaha, there's barely people on the streets! Here, in Hawaii, everyone is up and going. We went to the Flea Market today. It's better than a mall. I was just saying to myself, "Desy, don't buy everything you see! Just don't do it!" I'm telling you it was so heavenly. Well, not if you're a Shopaholic. Shout out to Ms. CT for getting us a deal on pretty dresses for the souvenir of this trip. This isn't the first time I have seen Ms. CT in action. It's like seeing someone grab a bull by the horns to get it to do what you want. Instead, it's our Girls Inc. staff making big moves to make the trip seem complete. – Desy



We started off our day by going to the flea market. I got a few things from there. Their prices were amazing. I don't see how they can make a living doing that. – Aariona



I bought 3 gorgeous hibiscus flower scarves. It was truly love at first sight. – Amina

Today we visited the flea market again!...I saw jewelry made from jade. I have never seen jewelry made from jade until now! I bought new wraps and bracelets for my family. – Elijahiana

Yesterday we went to the Flea Market. I was so happy because I found a dashiki. I was also really happy because we finally made it all the way around to the top. Now we just have the other side to finish. – Fatuma

I got some shirts that look weird and some key chains...Girls Inc. bought us dresses. I got a shirt because I don't like dresses. – Tasheonna

I enjoyed talking and interacting with the vendors. They are very nice and friendly. – Elijahiana

The flea market overall had amazing and breathtaking items. The jewelry at one of the vendors was amazingly beautiful. I didn't know which bracelets or earrings to get. I did end up getting a beautiful rhinestone bracelet cuff for \$7 less than its original price because it matched my outfit and the woman thought it was especially made for me. Of course I was flattered! So I bought the bracelet and it literally shines in the sunlight. – Amina

I swear I got enough shirts to last myself a year...Not really but I did get a lot. But all the deals were so good. – Aariona

I enjoyed the flea market. We all found a lot of really good sales. – Sakira

I want to thank Ms. Sheebie for letting us go to the flea market. - Habiba

Food

Within these next days, I hope to go out of my comfort zone and try foods I've never had the chance to try. - Tori

We went to Big City...Their food was very savory and delicious. It was like breakfast and lunch if you would ask me. – Fatuma

I kind of want to try poi but I kind of don't. – Fatuma

I finally tried Japanese Ramen. – Fatuma

We went to Lanikai Juice. I was amazed with how healthy the drinks were. I usually do not see places that healthy, but I was happy we stopped there!- Tori

For lunch we had Daiichi Ramen. It tried it and discovered I don't like curry. – Desy

For lunch I had beef curry. I didn't really care for it but I'm glad I tried it because now I know I don't like curry. – Aariona

We also tried the macadamia nut pancakes with haupia crème...Delicious! - Elijahiana

The girls loved the fresh Hawaiian pineapple and we had it almost every morning. They were not so sure about the mango until I started freezing it and putting it in smoothies. Mango, not so much; mango smoothie, two thumbs up! – Ms. Roberta

This morning we had eggs and potatoes that were cooked together. It was different, but good. I tried coffee cake for the first time. It was very good. The Hawaiian pineapple was super juicy and soft.- Desy

I enjoyed lunch. It wasn't too big of a meal or too small. – Fatuma

We went to Romy's Shrimp Truck. The food was so good! We had to peel the shrimp, which was super messy! When I took a bit of the rice with its seasoning, it was delicious. I found it cool how they had a shrimp farm at the back of the building. It was worth the 30 minute wait! – Desy



Romy's Shrimp Truck wasn't what I was expecting but maybe we are just living life not having to rip off the heads off and peel. – Aariona



I also tried new and exciting dishes from what I ordered and from other girls. My favorite was the rice, curry rice, and gyoza. They were all so unique and different from each other! - Tori



To finish off this exciting day, I ate local Hawaiian food! I ordered the shrimp scampi dish. It was covered in the scampi seasoning and the shrimp were humungous! I spent the first half of my time peeling my shrimp and the second half enjoying the fresh seafood taste provided by the local stand. The rice was very smooth and I enjoyed every bit of that dish! - Tori

Something new I tried today was the sauce we had on the chicken. I usually don't like trying new things but I told myself I should while I am here. – Tasheonna



The pancakes were so good. - Ariyah

I am glad we are having sandwiches with meat today instead of peanut butter and jelly. - Sakira

Let's not forget the big breakfast at Big City! I ordered "The Really Loco Loco Moco." It was fried rice, hamburger, and caramelized onions with gravy sauce. That dish was something to remember. - Tori



We went to get smoothies. I got a mango smoothie. It was really good. – Fatuma

New Food –

Hawaiian pineapple

Coffee cake

Potato & eggs

Hawaiian onion chips

Pepperoni, spinach, garlic pizza

Macaroni salad

Chicken katsu

Hawaiian donut

-Desy



I tried Red Velvet Pancakes. They were really good and sweet. – Fatuma



We had lunch at a Ramen shop called Daiishi. I watch too many animes not to know what Ramen is and I was excited because I never tried the traditional Ramen that includes fishcake, pork, and a broth. I picked the combo. It came with some gyozas which were pork and vegetables. We had fried rice that had fish cake and pork in it. The miso ramen was amazing...I have improved my chopstick skills and used them to eat the ramen. - Elijahiana





I usually don't buy shrimp with their shells but that was my first time peeling of their shells. It took me a while to get used to how to take off their skins, but at the end of the day it tasted good. – Habiba

We went to the Ramen place. It was nice to try something new. I ordered the kim chee. It was very spicy but I still ate a little but although I really didn't like it. - Ariyah

Today I tried a Hawaiian donut. It tasted exactly like the African Donuts Mr. Charles brings us but without sugar. – Desy

For lunch today we went to a Japanese restaurant called Daiishi. The food I ordered was udon with a side dish of curry rice and katsu chicken. The udon was a fatter type of noodle with chopped green onions and maybe collard greens. The noodles with the katsu sauce were good but I wish I knew that before eating all of the curry rice and katsu chicken. By the time I got to the noodles I was full. The udon was my effort to try something new while the chicken and curry was my plan B just in case the udon didn't turn out as I wanted it. – Amina

The Emma Lozier Center girls asked if we would buy ingredients for them to cook dinner one night. We took them shopping and they picked out what they needed. With the help of the other girls, they got an assembly line together to make sambusas. It was nice to have the girls take charge in the kitchen! – Ms. Roberta

We made sambusa's which are beef, onion, bell pepper, and cilantro fired in a tortilla. It was delicious. We made s'mores for the last time and camped out. - Elijahiana





While we didn't eat too much fast food, especially compared to previous trips, we did eat at McDonald's once on the Island. They have a haupia pie which is a Hawaiian coconut dessert. We got to try some haupia at the luau. McDonald's also has Spam on their menu, as do MANY restaurants in Hawaii. Hawaiians like their Spam. – Ms. Roberta



At the flea market there was a fruit vendor who told us his fresh pineapple with Li Hing Mui was "the bomb." He even had a sign that said it was the bomb. Ms. CT and I decided to give it a try. It was ice cold and so delicious. We took turns taking bites from a zip lock baggie that had been on ice. The Li Hing Mui powder – which is made of dried plums and is sour – put it over the top. I kept promising myself with each bite I wouldn't make any noises of pure happiness but I literally couldn't stop myself. Ms. CT and I had this treat twice! And we bought Li Hing Mui powder to bring home! (AND you can get it online!) #LiHingMuiFanClub– Ms. Roberta



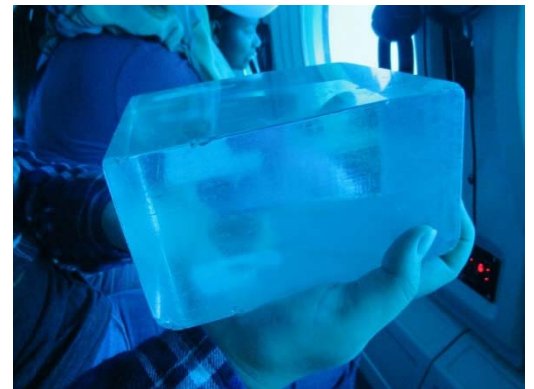
Submarine



We woke up really early and got ready. We had a long drive to go on a submarine. While we were on the boat [that takes visitors to the submarine] Ariyah, Habiba, Tori and I were talking and got to be real close friends. When we got to the submarine, the people helped us get off the boat and on to the submarine. When we got in and started going down, it got really cold....The fish down there were beautiful and it just looked extravagant...I was looking forward to seeing sharks and I saw one. – Fatuma

The guide passed around a sample of the material used to make the windows. It was very thick and had a magnifying quality that helped make the fish appear larger. – Ms. Roberta

To get to the submarine, we had to take a boat. It made me feel queasy but the view was worth it. The breeze felt so good. Getting into the submarine was exciting. It was a lot bigger than I thought. It was cool to see the sunken ships and airplanes. We submerged 109 feet. I saw a lot of little fish, a white tipped shark, and a turtle! I was amazed at how thick the windows to the sub were. After returning to shore, we ate lunch. I went swimming in the pool and that was awesome. It was fun watching Ms. Sheebie, Ms. CT, and Ms. Roberta do hand stands! – Desy



Today I went on my first submarine ride. I enjoyed the experience. I loved how I was able to see many fish and historical artifacts. I was amazed with the variety of fish...I saw a sea urchin for the first time and I was able to see a shark and sea turtles. - Elijahiana



The submarine was awesome...It was really cool to be underwater that far. - Sakira

The submarine adventure was so cool! It was exciting to see exotic animals I usually only see in movies. I especially loved learning about the underwater ruins. - Tori

Going to the Waikiki beach to get on the submarine was fun and also a new experience getting to see fish. I actually did get to see the fish that Ms. Sheebie was telling us about it and was pleasant to see it. When we were on the boat and I looked out to the ocean, I could see people going farther out to get a better wave so they can surf and actually it did look fun...When I first got on the boat I did feel sea sick because we were at the top and I'm scared of heights, but you know "you only live once!" So I should just enjoy my time with the girls and the new people that I shall meet. - Habiba

Today we got to go into a submarine and see all the life under the sand and water. Before arriving to the submarine we rode a boat way out into the water towards the submarines. It was an amazing experience to see the pretty aqua blue water create new patterns where the boat had passed. The submarine had round windows that were made up of a substance that enhances the fish we see through it by about 20%. What really made the submarine experience fun was the guide. The guide was continuously entertaining with jokes, so that's what kept everyone interested in the underwater tour.

I have been on a boat before but never on a submarine... I am very grateful I was able to go on the submarine. On the way back to the beach I felt like I was about to throw up. I felt really sick so I went to sleep. - Tasheonna

Queen Emma's Summer Palace



We went to Queen Emma's Summer Palace. It was really beautiful and historical. – Fatuma

We learned a lot about Queen Emma's family, history, and land. - Ariyah

I was surprised at the amount of space in Queen Emma's Summer Palace. It was a lot smaller than I thought. I find the story of her depression heartbreaking...The little prince was so cute. It surprised me that the color for all babies back then was pink. – Desy

When they were telling us the story of Emma, the Queen, and how she wanted to build a

school for girls that reminded me of how Malala wanted the same thing. What was different between them is that Emma didn't get hurt wanting to build the school for the girls but Malala got hurt. She had to make riots just for girls to have school in Pakistan and she even got hurt for women to have an education. - Habiba

This house was built in 1864 and so was Girls Inc. – Tasheonna

I like the son's room the most because the bed was very big and I like the...case that had some of his things in it. - Tasheonna



Aunty Leilani

We met Aunty Leilani. She's very loving, caring, and sweet. She knows so much about the history. She gave us these beautiful roses and I will never forget about it because she told me how much it means to her and the Hawaiian culture. I also enjoyed...the hula we did. It was very fun and beautiful. At first I was going to give up but then I was like, "let me use my opportunity." I also enjoyed the Ti leaf activity we did. – Fatuma

Today was very informative. I learned lots of new Hawaiian terms...Also, I learned new things about the history of Girls Inc. One new fact I learned about Girls Inc. is that it started in 1864...It is cool to know Hawaii was once a monarchy before it officially became a part of the US. I always wondered what it would be like to live under a monarchy. Obviously, the US didn't like it because they rebelled against Great Britain to become their own nation! We also went to Mauna Ala Royal Mausoleum of Hawaii. It was very spiritual. We began our process by making leis out of Ti leaves. Next we learned about the family lineage of the royals. One interesting thing I learned is that you are not supposed to turn your back on the deceased royals when you walk out of the vault. We laid our leis on...Queen Emma's grave. This was significant because we were giving our respect and hard work to her and it showed through making and presenting our leis. - Tori



Notes over the Hawaiian culture from a Kumuhula=highest status of a teacher! – Amina

She taught us how to hula and make necklaces out of leaves. She taught us her culture and how important it is to her. We learned the hand movements to the dance and the steps. She explained why saying aloha is important to her. She told us some words in Hawaiian that mean strong, smart, & bold. - Ariyah

The hula class with Aunty Leilani was really fun. She is so nice & sweet. The moves were hard to remember at first but fun once you got it down. I thought it was very interesting to learn about the Hawaiian royalty, to learn about their Kings and Queens and what they brought to Hawaii. - Sakira



I loved my Ti leaf rose... The Ti leaf flower is worn on the right wrist. – Desy

Meeting Aunty Leilani has made me think of things in a different view. She makes you open up your mind, think farther than life. She has really touched my heart. I'd like to mahalo a nui loa for letting us meet her. She was so nice. It was cool to learn a chant and learn the hula dance. It was tricky to get ahold of at first. – Desy

I learned that in Hawaii they do a lot of things with their hands. And I like hands on things. That's something I can relate to. I can learn things a lot

better and faster. Like the hula dance we learned today that was pretty easy. - Tasheonna

Today we had the pleasure and honor of having Auntie to teach us about her Hawaiian culture. Auntie was probably the most gentle, inspiring, sweet, dedicated and spiritual person I have ever seen. She was all of these things because of the Hawaiian beliefs of treating everything with kindness because it has a life. Auntie taught us various things today that personally spoke to me. Everything she believed about caring for all lives and using the right hand for specific things. A belief that really blew my mind and also blew me away was the giving of your breath when you have nothing to give. Before today I never thought my breath could be given as a gift or was even important to give. It is important because it comes from the very core of our body. Because of Auntie I've realized my breath isn't just there to keep me alive, but also to spread my belief, my stories, and my being so that I can mentally be in people's minds, continuously inspiring them to be or become a better person who has many perspectives on life, and other forms of beliefs of life. Another belief that inspired me was Auntie's encouragement to preserve our languages, culture, and religion because these are the things that form our roots and we need to stay grounded in this world. If we have no roots to help us stand fast, then we will be swayed by everything and not have anything to base our beliefs off of. Also we won't understand what our purpose in this world is. How will we be able to make a change and inspire others if we don't know who we, ourselves, are? Preserving our roots and passing them on to another generation is a gift, and our roots spread farther and farther, never breaking down in the time of turmoil. - Amina

Today we met Auntie Leilani, a coworker of Ms. Sheebie's. Auntie Leilani is a native of Hawaii. "Lei" means flowers or necklace of flowers and "lani," if I have it right, means heavens, etc. She showed us how to perform a hula dance and we were also taught an oli. And oli is a greeting that is used as a gift to someone. She also told us even if you don't have a physical gift in your hands you give an oli instead. An oli is a significant gift because it connects the spirits together. - Elijahiana

Auntie Leilani took us to the Royal Mausoleum where the Kamehameha family members were buried...We went to visit the tomb of the last Hawaiian king of the Islands...We removed our shoes to show respect. - Elijahiana

[The mausoleum] where the royalty is buried is cool. The site had pretty flowers. Trying to debone our Ti leaves was quite the experience. - Desy

I was so eager to learn Hawaiian because Auntie Leilani spoke it so well that I bought 2 books and have been studying Hawaiian. Before she left, I was happy to be able to tell Auntie Leilani that she was the best and thank you very much in Hawaiian. I had a ball and it was a pleasure meeting here. Mahalo! - Elijahiana

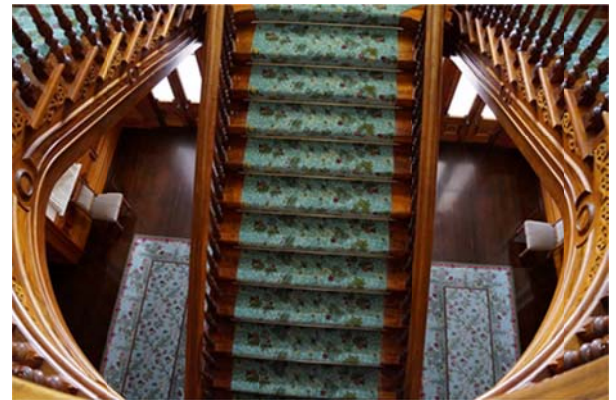


Iolani Palace

We had to put on funny looking booties. Our tour guide and Aunty Gladys had red ones on with silver shiny rhinestones. - Aariona



That was an amazing place. I got so much information. When Aunty Gladys told us there were 100 rooms in the palace I was like, "No way." She did such a good job and it was better than an audio tour because she expressed things better...My favorite room was the Throne Room. It was full of gold, jewels, and surpiseмент [sic]. I am so happy I got to go and see the beautiful enriched palace. - Fatuma



Today we went to explore the Iolani Palace. It was a massive 104-room palace. It was beautiful!...The residential floor (2nd floor) is my favorite. The floor is separated. On one side is the King's suite. His bedroom, dressing room, and office was decorated with "American Clutter." Unlike the King, the Queen's suite of 3 rooms was classy. A lot more ladylike. The Palace has 4 tower rooms. My favorite room is the Throne Room. It took my breath to see it in person. It was cool to see a copy of a dress the Queen once wore. ...I was amazed how many original pieces were still in the Palace...I was fascinated by the fact that the Palace had electricity before the White House! It also had hot and cold running water. - Desy

Kapu stick and feathers symbolize royalty and to be on your best behavior! - Tori

I liked the video we watched before we went on the tour because it gave me a better understanding of the building...The different tours have different stories about the same 6 kings and queens. - Tasheonna



The Queen was locked in a room on the second floor for 8 months. The arrested queen had a trial in her former throne room. – Desy

We went to the palace and learned so much about the family, but when you hear the story about the royal family they were almost alike because every family died just like the Kennedy family because they were cursed and people of the family had bad luck. – Habiba

The Palace was phenomenal. It was built in 1882 by King Kalakaua. It was the palace of the monarchy of Hawaii. The last queen in power was Queen Liliuakalani after her brother passed. The architecture was exquisite and unique...I loved the different types of wood although it wasn't authentic to the Palace. - Sakira



A lot of the woodwork is from Boston. The first tour we went on [Queen Emma's Summer Palace] also had beds from Boston...They had a lot of different drinking glasses because they had a lot of choices. This was in the dining room. They had dumbwaiters where the food came from. – Tasheonna

Today we went to a place envisioned by a king and suited for a king – the Iolani Palace. Here lived a king loved by all of his people and subjects. This king names his palace after his brother, who he truly loved... - Amina

Kula Kanuu [inlaid in a wooden table] means “Be the best you can be.” I will use that when I have

something to prove or get done. I'll just say to myself, “Kula Kanuu,” which to me can also mean try your hardest. – Tasheonna

Today's palace tour was fun! What made the tour more enjoyable was Aunt Gladys. Because of her dramatic storytelling way of introducing facts about the palace, I found myself more attentive throughout the tour. One thing that really stuck out to me in the tour was the missionaries affecting Hawaiian's culture. Because of them Hawaiians stopped hula dancing, one of their biggest ways of spiritually connecting/learning with their families...I find it sad that people think in order to fit in with society, they have to dim their culture. But it should be the opposite. I feel like when there are many different people with different cultures, that's the most fun! Also, because Hawaii preserved its culture, people are eager to come here to vacation and learn about it. - Tori

A lot of the kings and queens and princes died at early ages. As if they were very sickly then. – Tasheonna

We got to see the quilt she [Queen Liliuokalani] wove while confined in the little room for 9 months. The Queen wrote a book called the Queen's Prayer while she was in the room. - Amina

The quilt looks very nice and it looks like it took a long time to make. – Tasheonna



In the Palace, I really loved the detail in the architecture. Up close on the wood frame, there were roses carved into it. It was sad to know there are not many architects that pay that close detail like during that time. In today's style, it is modern, clean, and contemporary. Another factor I especially liked was having different things imported from various countries. The King only wanted the finest and when together, multiple pieces complemented each other. It was shown in the dining room at the fine palace. - Tori

159 diamonds were in her [the Queen's] butterfly pin. – Tasheonna

Today we visited the Iolani Palace...and it was absolutely beautiful...I learned that Queen Liliu (nickname) was locked in one of the rooms for 8 months. I could not imagine being held prisoner in my own castle. However, the queen wrote beautiful masterpieces and sewed a beautiful quilt. My favorite room was the Gold Room because of the design and culture in the room...Aunty Gladys was a good docent because she had us imagine we were royalty. I could imagine myself walking into such an astounding palace. The architecture was astonishing as I glanced at the details embedded in the walls and grand staircases. The jewelry and fashions that the royalty wore were beautiful. - Elijahiana

Kualoa Ranch

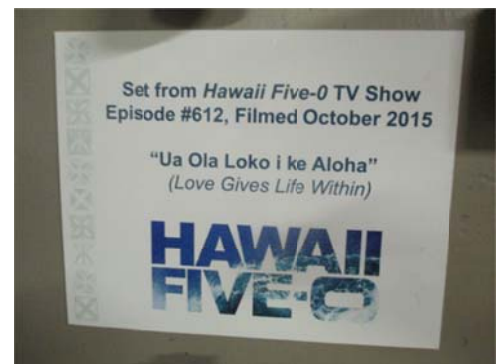
I also loved it because I took pictures by my Hawaii Five-0 signs. I was really happy. – Fatuma

It was super cool to see the WWII bunker. Walking through a time in history when my mom wasn't even thought about. Or my grandma. – Desy

We saw pigs, goats, and cows. We saw where all the movies got shot there. - Ariyah

I only saw three of the movies that were filmed out there. – Tasheonna

I loved the magnificent views and the bunker we walked through was cool. I loved the mountains. - Sakira



Our Jurassic/Other Movie Tour was fun and exciting. After watching Pearl Harbor and Jurassic Park and Jurassic World on my free time, I found myself relating to the site we toured. It was fun knowing we were on roads filmed and showcased in movies. I also liked learning about the land, trees, animals, and their uses. For example, the Kukui tree has sap, nuts, and ash. The native people used to hunt with, design with paint from the trees, and eat the tree nuts. However, it's no fun to eat too many nuts because they are a natural laxative! - Tori

At the ranch we did a movie tour. On the tour we saw a site of my favorite movie **50 First Dates**. – Aariona

I was able to see one of the rare birds found on the ranch even though the tour guides said they were shy. - Elijahiana



Dole Plantation

Halikahiki = Hawaiian term for pineapple. - Tori

We went to the Dole Plantation and saw how much work it takes to grow a pineapple. It takes 2 years. And we had the best ice cream in the whole wide world called pineapple whip. - Aariona

When we got there, I was amazed. I was really happy to do the maze, but when we got in it, it was really huge and I was like, “No way.” My group and I did really well. We had the best teamwork. I was using the best strategies every, going through small holes and stuff...It worked. I came in first. – Fatuma



We made a deal that whoever gets out first gets \$10 but we were in teams so we decided that one of us can get the \$10. Tori, Famo and I were the first ones out. We were a team. The Maze was so fun and we had to use teamwork and decide which way we were going. We also made up a name that we would call when one of us was lost or behind. The maze was my favorite part of the day. - Ariyah

I got to pick an oyster and we had to tap it 3X and say aloha! Inside we found twin pink pearls. I found out that pink pearls meant health. After that, my team of 4 went to explore the world's largest maze...We ended in second place but agreed that we had fun. It was so cool to actually communicate,

use teamwork and cooperation to get through and out of the maze. We caught the Pineapple Express train. We rode to the voice telling the 2-year process of harvesting pineapples. It also told the history of Dole...After departing from the train, we went to get ice cream. The pineapple waffle was delicious! From the pineapple ice cream to the pineapple tidbits in the waffle bowl, I thought I was in heaven. – Desy

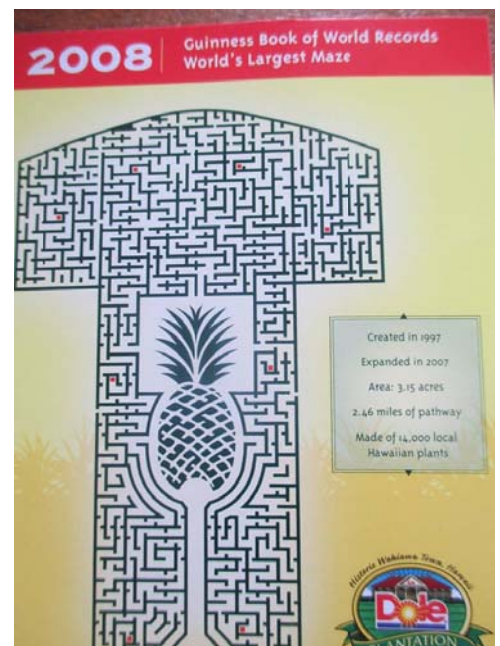


I've seen the Dole brand at home before but never did I think about the history behind it and the hard labor workers put in. Today I really got to appreciate the pineapples and bananas I eat at home. It takes 2 ½ years to completely grow pineapples and harvest them. The

audit tour that we took was very informal and we got an up close interaction with all the produce Dole ships in the U.S. and abroad. It's amazing how Dole started out as a small pineapple plantation but then grew very popular...to the point where it started to produce various types of produce such as macadamia nuts, cacao, bananas, sugar cane, pineapples, and coffee. All of these products are exquisite and considered to be amazingly tasty because of the perfect place in the world to grow various products. The Dole plantation has the perfect weather and soil nutrients to grow their crops to ripe deliciousness. - Amina

The maze is the world's largest maze. We teamed up and had to find 8 secret stations. ...We split up and found 2 stations on our own and then regrouped. When we reached the back of the maze, it was more tricky because there were 4 maze stations in the back. Even

though the other groups were done with their findings, our team said that we would persevere through and find our last station. We located the last station and walked out with smiles. We may not have won the prize but we remembered what Auntie Leilani said about perseverance. - Elijahiana



My first time eating pineapple ice cream wasn't quite bad because I don't like pineapple. – Habiba

I got the sipper cup. The sipper cup had pineapple juice and ice cream in it. - Ariyah



My group and I really enjoyed the huge maze. We worked together to find the areas and get back into the main entrance. Even though we came in second, we still really enjoyed ourselves. I loved the train ride. The flower that I thought was the prettiest was the Gardenia. The pineapple ice cream was amazing. We all really enjoyed our ice cream. Today I learned what my name is in Hawaiian. It's "Kakila." - Sakira

I really liked the train ride. I saw so many fruits...mango, cantaloupe, bananas and more. – Fatuma

I like the maze because it was teamwork and I like working in groups. Even though we didn't win the 10 dollars, I still had fun with Aariona, Sakira, and Desy. – Tasheonna

Today was adventurous. It started with the Dole Plantation. Along with the main fruits – pineapples – there were many other fruits and nuts growing such as macadamia nuts and bananas. It was fascinating learning that it takes two and a half years just to grow a pineapple. After learning this fact, I definitely will savor the acidic and sweet taste of the pineapple. The maze was so fun! It is always fun having friendly competitions – especially when money is involved! - Tori

The maze was a lot of fun because it tested our directional skills, and also our patience. Although we were last to finish, we persevered til we got to all the stations. We had a great contribution of teamwork and patience. We were resilient whenever we went the wrong way or hit a barrier we would eventually think it out and eventually find the stations. - Amina

The pineapple ice cream was the bomb. I loved it so much and it's probably the only time I will have it in my life. I am happy I tasted that juicy, savory dessert. – Fatuma



Turtle Bay & Shark's Cove



We then went to Turtle Beach to see the big turtles. It was fun eventually seeing the big turtles move up the shore to soak up the hot sun. One turtle weighed a whopping 195 lbs! I was amazed seeing creatures that big! – Tori

I thought the turtles would be small. Actually, they were huge! – Desy

I loved the turtles. It was cool being able to see them come up out of the water. I have always wanted to see a turtle that up close. I also got to see some fish which I was scared to do but it was very fun. I am glad that I got to practice [snorkel]

breathing. I really loved seeing the fish. Today was a blessing for me because this is something nobody else has gotten to do in my family. - Tasheonna

Seeing those turtles didn't make my day they made my whole year. I absolutely love turtles. Even though I couldn't touch them I still got to see them close up and personal and I couldn't ask for anything better. – Aariona

I have never seen a turtle up close. They were so cute! Their shells were bigger than I thought they would be. They were all napping. I studied the features on the turtles. The flippers or "arms" were longer than the bottom flippers. 2 more turtles came out of the water and one was bigger than all the others. - Elijahiana

One of my favorite parts of today was snorkeling in Shark's Cove. As scary as the name sounded, there were no sharks actually in the cove! But there were tons of fishes and I experienced seeing them through Ms. Sheebie's snorkeling kit. I put my fears aside and got up close and personal with the various fish. I saw black, purple, and yellow fish of all different shapes and sizes. The highlight of my time was when I saw the Hawaiian state fish – yes! the Humuhumunukunukuapua'a. – Tori

We went to practice snorkeling and I managed to see a few more fish underwater. - Elijahiana





Poi Factory

This evening we also saw poi. In my opinion, it looked unappetizing. Similar to tan goo. However, if it is offered to me, I will try it! It is amazing how people come up with things like that. Also it is cool to know the flavor of poi changes within a couple of days. As it is left out, it will become more sour. – Tori



Polynesian Cultural Center



At first when they said Polynesian Cultural Center, I was like “ugh” that’s going to be boring. But when I went and experienced everything I had lots of fun. I learned a lot about different cultures...I went canoeing and did lots of activities. I liked the hula dance in the Hawaii Island and I liked the music we made and the words we got to learn in Hawaiian. New Zealand was my favorite because there was a game and you had to bend your arms. At first I couldn’t do it, but then I got the hang of it and I was the best of the group other than the trainers or professionals. When we learned the game, we came back in a circle and made it a dance and it was just really fun. That was the first time I danced in public. It’s always best to try something new. The culture parade was very...interesting and beautiful. I liked how they all had their different dresses or clothing and their own dances that are all unique. I very much liked that...I really loved the Cultural Center and would go back there any day. I also learned don’t judge something by the way it looks or sounds because there could be a whole other world behind those doors. – Fatuma



Today we spent the day at the Polynesian Cultural Center. As we pulled up I honestly thought it was going to be boring...but I was surely proven wrong. It was the best experience ever. Going around to all the different villages was very, very fun, interesting, and informational. My favorite one was Tahiti. Desy and I go to go up and dance in front of everyone. We also went to every village and experienced different thing in every one. If I had the chance to do something that we’ve done on this trip it



would be to go back to this center. And I would say from opening to closing. - Aariona

When we saw the schedule for the Polynesian Cultural Center, we thought it would be boring. It turned out to be the most fun I've had on this trip. I learned so much and had a lot of fun doing. When we first walked into the villages, we were greeted by photographers and their models. Then we went to the villages where we watched and listened to different tribes' presentations. My favorite presentation was Tahiti. We learned the women's traditional hip dance... We watched the canoe parade and that was amazing. I think that they knocked one of their men off the board on purpose. The funniest presentation was the Samoan. Samoa, the land of the happy people. – Desy

Hawaii: The Hawaii show was spectacular! I learned that hula dancing is mainly with your hands and not with your hips! Also, the dancing reacts the story told when you oleo or sing. I also learned the process of making pure coconut oil. After watching the long and tedious process, I have way more respect for the price and use of coconut oil. Not only can you use it on your hair and skin, the benefits include sunscreen and bug repellent. The coconut has so many uses! Fiji: I learned about Fiji history. It is so cool to know depending upon how close you live to the equator,

the darker you are. The Fiji people were the darkest of the Polynesian culture groups because they live closest to the equator. My favorite part of the exhibit was when the little boy went out to do his cultural dance. I was so impressed to know he memorized the entire dance at the age of five years... New Zealand: I loved the New Zealand accents the best. With this group of people, I received an arm tattoo that was symbolic of family and being strong. I also played games to increase my hand techniques. This included throwing and catching sticks and synchronizing it with other people. In their culture, hand technique is very important. Tonga: The Tongan culture was very lighthearted and funny. I am glad I saw this one last because it was very enjoyable! Volunteers played the drums while we encouraged them. Most of the actors, dancers, and helpers at the Polynesian Center were also full-time students at a college nearby. It was cool knowing the place provided scholarship opportunities for the students for sharing their cultural history! To be honest, I thought I wasn't going to like the educational site but it ended up being one of my favorite places to go while we were in Hawaii. - Tori

We met someone from ...California Girls Inc. – Tasheonna

So today we spent a long day at the Polynesian Cultural Center...We learned how to do a Tahitian dance and also how to greet people in each culture. For example,





to say welcome in Samoan is “Afio Mai” or “Susu Mai.” We learned all of them on the canoe ride. My favorite tribe or culture was Tahiti because it was so interactive and really fun. And Tong because it was really funny and interactive. We all took so many pictures with all of the tribes and their dancers. And I know we all lost some weight walking in the heat for so many hours. - Sakira

I thought it was going to be all talking but once we started to go from one station to another it was actually interesting. Some of the things I would love to teach my family back home. My favorite one is Tonga because they had only guys volunteer to dance and learn new things. It was funny because they weren't copying everything the men were telling them to do. The parade – I'm speechless because that's something beautiful. They didn't have only one tribe perform their dances but there were many tribes showing people the differences. They are not alike. OMG the games, they were fun because we got to play games that I never knew until today. I am proud to get to learn their games and words/music. Mostly the Tititorea stick game when we had

to know our left and right in their language. That was fun. I would always tell them the farther the better but they would disagree with me so I played the game their way which was fun. – Habiba

I enjoyed that we were able to interact with the island groups. I was able to learn about the various cultures of the Islands of Hawaii, Fiji, Samoa, Tahiti and Tonga...I enjoyed hula dancing and watching the dancers perform. They also said an oli just like Auntie Leilani. The dancers called out in Hawaiian and were in sync with the music. The outfits were beautiful along with the jewelry, which I believe were dark beads and shells. After the Hawaii exhibit we went to the New Zealand exhibit and played a game called Māori stick game/Tititorea. The objective was to be able to catch the stick and understand the rhythm and pass them. At first I dropped it during the practice rounds, but it was very fun. I ended up winning with the professionals. That made me feel amazing because I never thought I could catch on...I learned how to say “left,” “right,” and “spin” in Māori. “Mauī” is left and “katur (?)” is right and “haori” is spin. If they called “haori” you had to spin around and try to catch the stick before it fell. Tititorea was where we had to sing and catch sticks while sticking to the rhythm of the song. We did inside and outside tosses





along with catching the sticks with one hand. I performed a dance with the performers and others with sticks. We were able to get painted tattoos which were really cool. I went inside one of the meeting halls and the ancestors used to have someone mark them in ink and they had to purée the food and had to use an instrument to feed the people who were swollen from the procedures. Men would get the prints on their faces, while the women had it only on their chins. The buildings had the symbols from the painted

tattoos we got. I believe they said they represent family and strength. Afterward, we went to the Tonga tribe and watched them perform. They were very fun and energetic. We learned some sit down dances.
- Elijahiana

The Polynesian Cultural Center is absolutely mind-blowing and such a good experience. I would recommend this place for anyone who loves to learn new things or is interested in different people and their cultures. All of the activities the different groups provided were amazing and we got to learn some words in their language and also their games. I never knew these people existed before today! At the Tahiti section, we got to learn a game that contains sticks that we have to throw at one another and catch them. There was also another game we got to learn how to say "left" and "right" in Tahitian. Maowi meant "left" and Kathrow meant "right." Everyone had a large stick they had in front of them and when the person called "left" or "right" you were supposed to go in that direction and catch the stick that was now in front of you. The Tahitians were pretty amazing and patient people because it takes a lot of practice to learn throwing and catching the sticks. Another tribe I really enjoyed that I went there twice was the Tongans. Their show was really funny. The Tongans had men perform for the women and they chose men from the audience and they had to do whatever the chief did. As you can imagine, they were mostly way off. This was what was entertaining for the rest of the audience! Another aspect of the PCC was the parade of



the Polynesian people. This was basically the highlight of my day. All of the tribes showed off their dances and vibrant, exquisite clothes. Each one was unique in many forms but also similar in a way. – Amina



I saw how coconut oil is made. First you have to peel the coconut. Then you have to cut it and shave it. And then squeeze the shaved part to make the milk and leave it out in the sun and it makes it. I learned that the coconut oil helps keep flies away. - Ariyah



I really learned not to judge a book by its cover because I really thought it was going to be boring when I hear Cultural center. But it was really fun and the parade was very good and different. I never saw a parade in water or on boats. - Tasheonna

Pearl Harbor – USS Arizona Memorial

Before visiting the Memorial, we visited the museum. We were able to decode messages and locate planes as if we were aviators, a part of the U.S. fleet. - Elijahiana

At the memorial we watched a movie giving us some background information. – Aariona

We watched a 25 min film about Pearl Harbor. It was so sad. - Ariyah

It was very interesting. The movie or video clip was a lot of information and very sad. We went to the boat and they drove us out. It was very quiet and the whole place was beautiful. When I looked at the white wall, there were so many names. It was very sad. – Fatuma



Visiting Pearl Harbor was sad. Watching the movie we watched gave me a better understanding of that day. I was shocked when I saw the Arizona blow up. Once again, it brought tears to my eyes...Seeing the sunken ship with my own two eyes was heartbreaking. As I sat there, I said a prayer for the souls of the trapped bodies. – Desy

I was so excited because ever since the 8th grade I have heard about the U.S.S. Arizona being seen underwater. I never knew there was still an oil leak from the ship...As we watched the film I began to learn new facts that were not covered or revealed to me in history class in high school...The film also said America's soldiers knew that the Japanese could possibly attack but were not prepared for the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor...When we rode the boat out to Pearl Harbor Memorial, to me it began to feel heavy in the air. I could not have imagined what the now deceased soldiers could have felt, being trapped in a ship to where they could not have escaped. Waiting the countless minutes for someone to reach out a hand of hope or just to see the light...I learned there are only 6 survivors left of the U.S.S.

Arizona. Most of the men plan to be buried with the ship and their comrades. I paid my respects to the fallen/deceased because to me they were heroes who served with a purpose. Their lives were essential to allows us to have the things we have today. I am grateful for all of the veterans...because they put their lives on the line to protect us...I am grateful to have been able to pay my respects and view the history of Pearl Harbor up close in order to better understand the meaning of bravery and sacrifice. - Elijahiana

USS Arizona Memorial was sad because there are so many people who have died... - Habiba

The video was sad but I didn't cry because my crying never works when it's supposed to...I looked at the way back to see all of the names. I also looked to see if...anybody with my last name. There was one but I am pretty sure I was related to them. I think it is cool that there are still people alive from that attack. 96 years old is the oldest person that is still alive. – Tasheonna

USS Arizona You Will Always be Remembered

In 7 minutes 1,177 of American soldiers were trapped under water.
BANGING, BANGING against the ceiling for someone, anyone, to respond to their desperate situation.
The water is filling up every second, soldiers fighting for their lives every second, comrades drilling for an opening every second.
The ceiling gives way, just enough space for a few hands to grab for help.
But the water doesn't give way; it takes in its new, unready, young and desperate possessions.
They fight and fight for their lives, in a vain effort to breathe the fresh air again.
They are too young to die, the average age among them was 20 years old, the youngest being 17.
The water gets higher and higher.
First the chin, and it's fine because they can still breathe and call for help.
Then the mouth, the shouts are silenced by the water.
As if that's not enough, the water climbs up to their noses, stripping them of the ability to breathe.
But that's OK because they can breathe underwater.
The CAN breathe underwater for a short period of time.
But it seems like the longest time of their lives, and the water is getting higher.
The opening in the ceiling that was barely big enough to fit three men's hands looked like their last hope. LAST hope.
They wriggle their hands through the opening, seeking a companion to help them leave, knowing there are people who know they're down there. FOREVER.
The water embodies every aspect of them, organs, souls, and hearts. Til they surrender their lives to the sea.
Today these men still linger about the USS Arizona.
The men that survived are between the ages of 92 to 96.
When they die they are put into the memorial with the others.
The man who adds the urns to the memorials said he feels a pull each time he adds an urn, "it's like the soldiers are accepting one of their own back."
They have built the memorial to honor the men trapped under the Arizona.
- Amina

It was very sad because many people died with the surprise attack on Hawaii...Out of the people who died 63 were brothers and one son and dad died. It's devastating to think of what their families had to go through after finding out the news of their loved ones dying. ..We went to the site on the sunken ship. There I deeply thought about the lives of the fallen soldiers...and the families. I spent the time respectfully looking at the site and taking pictures of the ship under water. One thing I was sad about was the technology during the era. If the technology was more advanced, like today, so many more lives would have been saved. People would have had the materials to get the people out of the boat, protect themselves, and fight back. - Tori

Pearl Harbor – USS Missouri Battleship tour

It was very interesting and informational...The tour guide said the ship was 3 football fields long. ...The ship had 9 guns. What I thought was really cool was that there was a basketball hoops when they're bored or have free time they play. Something else I liked was the choir group from Portland, Oregon. These kids were strong, smart, and bold. They went up there and sang their hearts out. – Fatuma



I felt special as our tour guide took us to places that were only allowed to be visited by staff. The ship was huge! As we made our way farther down towards the boiler room, it got hotter. It felt like we went back to the 1940's. It wasn't hard imagining things because most of the equipment was original. Phones, computers, paintings, hospitals, tools, floors, etc.... were all original. It was cool to learn about the history of the ship. It sat for 3 decades before being used again...Before we went on the tour, I met Everett H. He's the youngest Pearl Harbor survivor. He has an amazing story. – Desy

The USS Missouri was so cool and inspiring. When I graduate, I want to become a Navy nurse and this inspired me even more. It was awesome to see all of the different floors that it had with all of the

different buttons and contraptions. - Sakira

On the tour, I learned about the [peace] signing process after World War II. Even though not all of them wanted to sign, like the Imperial Japanese leader, they consented for the overall wellbeing of the nations. Watching the children's choir was very fun! I enjoyed seeing all the youth sing on the Missouri ship. - Tori



It was very interesting because we got to see each part of the ship; the boiler room, the commanding room, the rooms the commanders slept in, and also the bunks where the soldiers slept. In one of the rooms there was a TV screen with the guns of the Missouri aiming into the sky. In the same room there were 3 notches, two had 3 bumps on them and the other didn't. The one without the bump was the firing button. We had the opportunity to press the button and the guns in the TV screen fired. It was a good experience. – Amina

I was excited because I have never been on a battleship before... The canon guns were huge. There were a total of 9 canons. I learned that the canons move, not the boat. I was able to look inside the captain's cabin and did not expect such exquisite dishes

and cups laid out extravagantly on the tables...I saw the seal where both Japan and the U.S. signed because they wanted peace. - Elijahiana

We learned that the soldiers used to live in a crowded area to sleep; something I can't do...The part I liked about the boat was when the kids sang a song for the soldiers and for what happened in the war. - Habiba

Desy and I met one of the survivors of Pearl Harbor. His name was Everett Hyland and he was a former Radioman Third Class, United States Navy...I got to go under the hatch...The boat was really big. I am really blessed that I was able to go and get a tour of the boat and I know it wasn't cheap. - Tasheonna

Our tour guide, David, explained everything without making it boring. My favorite part was when we went to the steam room. - Aariona

Punchbowl National Cemetery



We...went to a cemetery and I didn't feel comfortable going in but I did it anyway. - Aariona

Going to the cemetery is something that I didn't plan on doing but it also further inspired me to do my service in the military (Navy). - Sakira

We went to the...cemetery to pay respects to the fallen soldiers. I felt proud knowing and seeing some of the people who died for the nation's safety and wellbeing. I even gave them a moment of silence. Within this moment, I felt like the fallen soldiers felt my presence. I did not know how to explain the feeling I felt, but it was a good aura. - Tori

We visited a national cemetery and it reminded me of Arlington Cemetery in D.C. except that the tombstones were flat. I went to see the flag with my friends and we had a moment of silence once again out of respect for the fallen. - Elijahiana

When we went to the cemetery I walked and calmed down because I was at a place where many people were buried. I paid my respects. Amina, Tori, Elijahiana, and I did a moment of silence for a minute and when we were doing that I felt that their spirit felt out prayer because the flag moved when we were doing the moment of silence then when we were done, it stopped. - Habiba



Makapu'u Lighthouse Trail

Today was one of my favorite mornings on the trip because we hiked up the Makapu'u Trail. Having an early morning workout really boosted my energy for the rest of the day. I found I was not sleepy on the bus which I usually am. During the hike, my thighs and calves burned. But it was all worth it for the

breath-taking view and amazing group photos and video. Actually, Ms. Sheebie recommended us doing the Running Man dance on the top of the mountain! - Tori



We went on a hike called Makapu'u Lighthouse Trail. I tried to find some geocache. I couldn't find any but I still gave it a try because I'm here to try something new. – Tasheonna

We hiked all the way to the top. It was fun. We stopped to see lots of views and we saw so many cute dogs...I loved when we got to the top and you could feel the wind and the little rain drops. - Ariyah

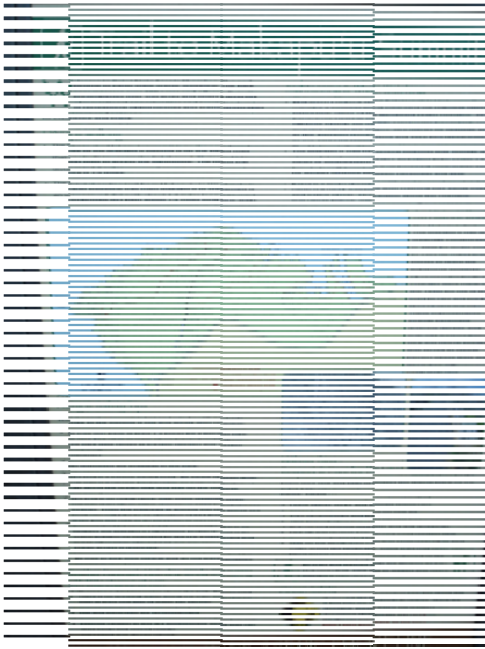
entire trail until we were at the stopping point and the trail was finished. We notice some people began to climb to the very top of the mountain. The view of Hawaii was beautiful and I saw the infinite sea...When we got to the stopping point, we were able to view the entire island. We saw the turtle-shaped island along with the island shaped like a Chinaman's hat...At first it was difficult for me to walk all the way up the mountain, but I was able to do it...It was my first time climbing a mountain. - Elijahiana



At first, I didn't think I could make it. I thought I was going to be up there last. I just didn't [see] potential in myself. But when I got to the halfway mark, I was like, "Yay! I did it." As I was walking, I was saying to myself that this was like walking on the Great Wall of China. What I was happy about was seeing Ms. Sheebie walk all the way to the top with us even if she has a leg injury. – Fatuma

At first it was very easy because it was just like walking at a normal pace, but as the paved trail became higher it was tiring on the feet, and also very slow. No matter the ups and downs of the trail, I hiked all the way to the top. On my mind the whole time was perseverance and courage. During the time that I hiked I was mostly by myself, and it was hard not having anyone but myself to encourage me I can do it. This is when I realized, sometimes our goal to succeeding in life is based on if we are willing to be

resilient, strong, smart, and bold, and persevere with these 5 characteristics...Once I made it to the top, I regrouped with the other girls. We saw Ms. Sheebie coming up on the paved trail and followed her up on the side of one of the mountains. It was hard getting up on the mountain because the path wasn't as paved as the other one we came up, but with perseverance, we all managed to get there. The sky and the ocean at the top of the mountain were gorgeous and breathtaking. The sky was a light blue mixed with a little bit of grey, while the ocean was a turquoise color. Both of these colors met at the horizon and together they produced breathtaking scenery. Here is where we: me, Habiba, Ariyah, Fatuma, Tori, Elijahiana, Desy, and Tasheonna took pictures sitting on the rocks. Here is also where Fatuma, Tori, Tasheonna, Habiba, Ariyah, and Desy were filmed by me dancing the Running Man on the rocks. Elijahiana held the music to the camera while Ms. Sheebie also recorded on one of the Girls Inc. cameras. The video is now going viral; so far we have over 1,000 views on this video. We girls are very proud and hope to go on the Ellen show if we go more viral. That was one of our most exciting and enjoyable times spent in Hawaii. – Amina



Even though I was wearing so many layers of clothing, I still made it to the top. While we were up there we made an awesome music video that I'm proud of. Maybe next time we can do it with all the girls together. – Habiba

The hike was a lot of walking, I can admit, but I'm glad I made it to the top. There were so many times I looked at the many slopes that I had left and doubted myself several times just knowing that I wasn't going to make it. But I am glad I took the effort and made my way to the top. The view was extravagant and it was worth it. – Sakira

Even though I didn't make it to the top I made it far enough to feel proud of myself. – Aariona

We started the day with the best hike ever! The sights were amazing. I was thinking it would be a dirt trail but, no, it was a sidewalk. We had to motivate each other to get to the top. While hiking we tried to geocache. We weren't successful but it's OK. We tried something new. At the top we took beautiful group pictures. We even did The Running Man Challenge [a video], which is getting lots of views. That was very fun. As we ran, walked, ran, and walked down the trail, Fatuma and I made summer plans!! – Desy

Paradise Cove Luau

Everyone's dresses were very beautiful and pretty. To be honest, overall I thought it was #LifeChanging because the stuff I did there I don't think I would've done anywhere else. First things first. Desy and I and Aariona took pictures with parrots. I was really scared because I had one on my shoulder and one on my wrist. But I was brave and I stood still. The second thing I did was get a [temporary!] tattoo and a bracelet. They were all very beautiful and I was



thankful. After that we went to see the guy climb the palm tree. It was really cool...At the top he throws down flower petals to show gratitude and thankfulness. Aariona and I went canoeing. That was my first time paddling. It was lots of work but it was worth it. It took teamwork but it was fun. On the same beach area they picked random guys to do the hula for us...It was funny and cute. Finally, after that the show started. The food was the bomb but I liked the program better. I loved all of the clothes and the dances they did. I also liked how they recognized everyone and said Mahalo. I really think all the Mahalo's go to them because they are the ones who put the show on for us. I was also really happy when they gave us an opportunity to get up on the stage and dance. When I went up there, I thought to myself, "Am I really doing this?" but when I went up and danced it was really fun and I am happy for myself. My favorite or most interesting thing was the fire [dancer]. The guy really amazed everyone. – Fatuma



I had an amazing time and really enjoyed the fire dance. I also noticed there were different packets you could buy for the luau but I'm grateful for the packet Girls Inc. paid for. I say thank you to all the donors and Ms. Sheebie for getting us booked in all the places we've been. – Tasheonna

The first thing I did was to take a picture with the parrots. One was on my shoulder trying to eat my braids...Once the meal started we got to try a couple of new things. I tried poi. I didn't really like it but at least I tried it. We all were able to get on stage and try to hula. A little later, I got to go up by myself and do a traditional Tahitian dance. Tonight was the most fun I have had in a while. – Aariona

The luau was amazing...It was full of so much culture and fun activities we took part in. From watching the man climb the coconut tree to watching the tribal dances – it was all really enjoyable and also very funny. It was very fun going on the stage and dancing although I was very nervous. I don't even think we took the time to think about what we were doing until we got on stage. It was easy because Auntie Leilani taught us some of those moves, too. I got a Polynesian tattoo on my arm that just so happened to wash off. But we all enjoyed ourselves a lot and had so much fun watching the cultural dances and performances. ..PS: I honestly didn't know what to expect at the luau, if it was to watch, but I never expected to have that much fun. Thank you guys. - Sakira

The luau was everything I imagined and beyond light years. Every act or activity that was represented...was insightful and entertaining. The males, as you can imagine, were very entertaining to all of us because they were sooooo handsome. The most entertaining though during the whole show was the god of fire. He did some pretty amazing tricks with the torches of fire. At one point he put the fire closer to his face and also licked it. He held the torches where the fire was with his feet. It seemed like the fire





for him. – Ariyah

didn't faze him. He was invincible. Another aspect of the performance was when we girls were told we could go up on stage and do the hula. It was pretty funny watching our girls do the hula. They were pretty good to be honest. Before the performances Elijahiana and I participated in a variety of activities such as canoeing and translating our names from English to Hawaiian. I found out my name in Hawaiian is AniAni which meant soft, pure, and kind-hearted. Although Elijahiana was reluctant to find out what her name was in Hawaiian, I still asked the people at the vendor. Her name is Ho'oniki which meant Oath of God. We got a flower bracelet made and put them on our right hands because we are single. We also participated in the archery section where we had to throw a big stick to a target in front of us. My aim was horrible and didn't make it at all. – Amina

It was so fun. I want to go back...When the man came out with the fire I thought he was going to burn himself. I was scared

We got colored tattoos which was amazing. We also got to learn how to dance Hawaiian (hula) and that was fun. I loved how the girls' outfits looked amazing in the performance part of the different dances they did. That also goes for the guys, they did great, too. I love how they worked so hard to make everybody's day even if it took hard working to make a perfect show. The headbands and bracelets they made for us, they are beautiful. - Habiba

I really enjoyed the luau! It started off with tons of activities including temporary tattoos, canoeing, crafts and spear-throwing. Next we did the pig ceremony where they took the pig out of the ground from cooking it for 8 hours! Let me tell you, I enjoyed the pork! It was very seasoned and tender. Another food that I enjoyed was the coconut flan. The Hawaiian drinks were so good! I really liked the lava flow drink which included strawberry purée and coconut and pineapple slushi. The strawberry acted as the "lava." The drink was beautiful. One dish that surprised my taste buds was the poi. It didn't have a



taste but it was sour. The color of the dish was purple. Even though I didn't enjoy the poi, I loved the show. The luau was very interactive. I enjoyed being on stage and watching people I know trying to hula. The professionals were so good at their jobs and I couldn't help but think about how I do not have a visual culture like the Polynesians. However, I would like to carry on

traditions and make them fun when I go home. - Tori



This was my first luau EVER. When the gates opened we were welcomed with gifts like juice and shell necklaces. I got a charcoal Polynesian tattoo. It was a pretty flower. We then went on a canoe ride and I was able to see the fish and the bottom of the water. While paddling we were able to see the ocean and the sun beam on our faces. We met a woman named Lita and she did flower bracelets for us. She braided the Ti leaves and attached the flowers while braiding...I tried Kailua pork and taro bread and other food. It was all delicious. – Elijahiana

I got a surprise turtle tattoo which the chief did for me. It had different shades of blue and green. After, I went to get a grass crown and bracelet. When I got my bracelet, I was asked if I was single or married. Of course, I said single! She placed the bracelet on my right because I am not married. The flowers on the crown and bracelets smelled so good. We learned how to wear Hawaiian wear...We saw the pig get picked up from the pit. It was gross. After we went to watch the main show... They played a Hawaiian wedding song and couples got up to dance. Our host sang a song and when she pointed at us we said, "Aloha!"...we ended the night with more dances and an epic fire show. - Desy

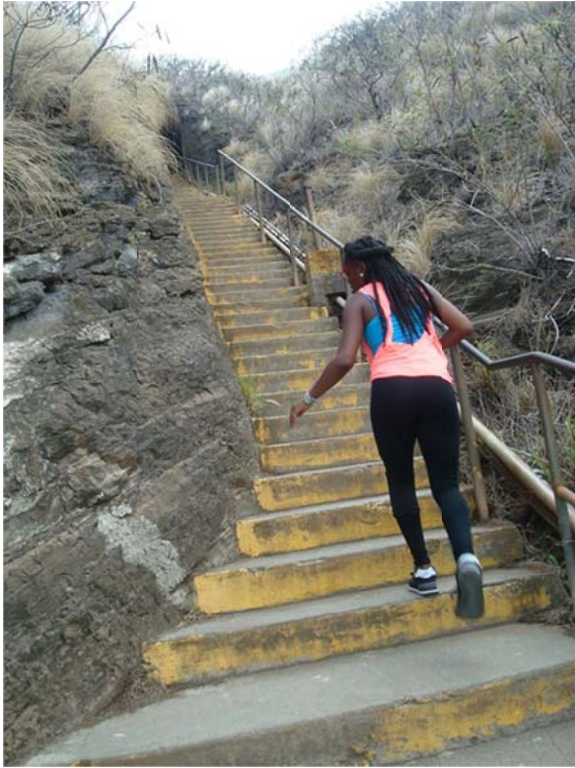


Diamond Head

Then we faced the Diamond Head trail. It was more difficult than the Makapu'u Trail we went up yesterday, but the view was spectacular! One of the main reasons the hike was harder was because of the steep stairs we faced. There was also a dark tunnel we had to go through. Also, the hike trail was way more narrow than Makapu'u. Do to the rain, there were many puddles along the kike so we had to jump and skip throughout the trail. Even though I know I will be sore tomorrow, it was worth the view we got at the top! - Tori



I really enjoyed it and got exercise. – Fatuma



Unfortunately, due to an allergic reaction to pollen (possibly), I cannot recall much of Diamond Head. - Elijahiana

It wasn't a hard hike. The trail was rocky but walking through a mountain was cool. It was my favorite hike of all the hikes I have taken in my life. – Desy

Today we went hiking late because of all the rain pouring down. Hiking Diamond Head was very challenging compared to the hike on Makapu'u. I hiked $\frac{3}{4}$ of the mountain and got really tired. My legs were cramping from yesterday's hike and also the 3 quarters of walking. There were other girls such as Habiba, Tori, Desy, Tasheonna, Fatuma, and Ariyah who made it all the way to the top and came down. - Amina

At first I didn't think I could make it but I thought about Kula Kanuu which means "try your hardest" or "give it your all." I made it to the top which was so good to me because at first I didn't think I was going to make it. I had fun

with Desy... My legs hurt but it was all worth it. - Tasheonna

The Girls

This trip has been really good for me...everyone cheers me up so they are becoming to be like my sisters and really close family. I love the girls on the trip. It's a really god group. – Fatuma

I was getting to teach the girls how to sing my favorite Kenyan song (Jambo) and it is a welcoming song to anyone. That's what I like about the song. - Habiba

Also, I really didn't like how some of us acted to be honest, but I feel we could have done much better. – Fatuma





I appreciated how Habiba and Amina were trying to teach us all words and songs in their language. We learned a lot of things from them on the car ride home. - Sakira

Living with 10 girls is difficult. However, once I overlooked the messes we constantly created, our sleepovers, movies we watched, and conversations we had were worth it. - Tori

Living with 10 girls is a challenge. There are so many different personalities. It's really fun because you make stronger bonds with them. I like when I get to know all the girls more in depth. - Desy

I am thankful to be here today with all these lovely girls. I hope it continues to be nice like this until the end. - Habiba

Being on this trip taught me everything doesn't need a reaction and let some things go. You can't be mad at everything living with 10 girls in one house for 13 days. - Sakira

Hanauma Bay

We woke up really early to go to Hanauma Bay. It was really cool and fun. - Fatuma

We woke up early in the morning. It was 5 o'clock this morning and I didn't think it was going to be worth the wake up but I got up and saw some WONDEFUL fish. I don't know the names of all the fish I saw but some of them had wonderful colors. I am so grateful that I was able to go to Hanauma Bay...I finally got the hand of swimming with all of the gear on while I was swimming. It was a very good experience for me. I swallowed a lot of sea water but it was just because I was panicking a little. - Tasheonna



First I was so confused and also frustrated that we had to wake up so early. I was also scared to touch the coral and I frequently panicked about the mouthpiece and not being able to breathe through my nose. We went in a group and all saw some really cool fish of all shapes and sizes. But I started to get used to it and really enjoyed our time there. The water was so clear and even the sand had crystals or at least it was sparkling. - Sakira

From the second you went into the water there were already fish you could see without putting your face directly in the water. I enjoyed floated on the boogie board and feeling the warm sun. - Elijahiana

We went snorkeling at Hanauma Bay and it was amazing. At first, I was scared because the fish had little to no fear. They were so close...It was a fun experience that I think everyone should do. It might be frightening at first but the fear will surely go away. - Aariona

Today we went snorkeling and it was so cool! I saw fish of all colors. They were so close that if I wanted to touch them, I could. The coral reef wasn't colorful when I saw it. There were so many different fish. Some were huge and some were little. The scariest fish were the transparent fish because we couldn't see them until they were super close. It was a lovely experience. – Desy

We went for an early morning swim. It was very refreshing and I thoroughly enjoyed seeing all the different kinds of fish under the water. I was glad to go early because not a lot of people were there and the tides were low. Since the tides were low, lots of fish were trapped in the coral. I even saw the state fish. I got so carried away with swimming and snorkeling that I went out to the buoys. However, since the current got stronger, I had to go back to shore...After swimming, I looked at the possible things I could have seen while scuba diving and was surprised to know I could have potentially seen small sharks and turtles. I would have been really scared if I saw a shark but really happy if I saw a turtle. -
Tori



The trip



On the Friday night before the trip, Ms. CT asked the girls how many would be on their period during the trip so we could pack tampons, pads, etc... One girl said she would start her period towards the tail end of the trip. Friends, eight of the ten girls ended up having their period on the trip. Think about that for a minute. We went to the drug store so many times for tampons; I wish I had bought stock in Tampax. – Ms. Roberta

I loved all the beaches we went o. I enjoyed staying at Ms. Sheebie's house. I loved the food and the different people. So I am very thankful I got to come on this trip. Mainly I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for my behavior, Girls Inc., my parents, mentors, and girlfriends! It was really Girls Inc. but I want to say thank you to my family's mentor's brothers Andrew and Chris Timmerman. They paid a good amount of money for us to come. I want to say thank you to Betsy and Bridget Timmerman for getting us the stuff for our trip. Also I want to say thank you to everyone from Girls Inc. involved in the trip. And I want to thank the girls who came on the trip. – Fatuma

The girls played lots of riddle games during the van rides. Amina is good at coming up with them and solving them. – Ms. Roberta

One thing in particular that I like about Hawaii is that they preserve their natural trees and plants in lots of areas. It is so scenic here and I imagine how Nebraska would look if the government preserved more of the natural land. Would it be as pretty as Hawaii? – Probably not ☺. - Tori

The part of this trip that I like is that the teachers/staff are getting to know me better than just a shy girl because I am the opposite of that. – Habiba

This trip has been fun because of all of the group activities. – Tasheonna

Hawaii makes me more of a morning person. In spite of laying/sleeping on the hard floor last night, I woke up at 5am with a smile on my face. That's rare! I woke up happy because I knew how amazing the weather was! - Tori



Overall this trip was very insightful, informational, educational, entertaining, and enjoyable. All the activities that were planned in an effort to help us learn more about other cultures, people, our country and its veterans, and also how and where our food is produced. I had a lot of fun with all of the 9 girls and three teachers. - Amina

Going to Hawaii has been amazing. When I told people I was going to Hawaii for 14 days they couldn't believe it. I am so thankful about this trip. Many kids can't say they were in Hawaii for 14 days. I am so glad I was picked for the Hawaii trip. I have seen so many cool things...I'm thankful that my mom and dad helped me go on this trip. - Ariyah

Thanks to Ms. Sheebie for letting us stay. – Desy

Words –

Mahalo – Thank you

Aloha – Hi, bye, I love you

Kumu hula – lead hula instructor

Lawakua – strong

Akuamai – smart

Lehua – bold

- Desy

I want to thank Ms. Sheebie for letting us bash at her house. - Habiba

I want to thank everyone who donated to my trip...I've never been on a better trip and I'm very thankful for the opportunity I got for these 11 days. - Tasheonna

I usually do not talk about my shopping experiences; however I noticed that the Target in Hawaii no longer has plastic bags for customers. This made the recycling plastic and "going green" more realistic to me! I now know just how important it is to save the work through resources. - Tori

Thanks to girlFRIENDS for donating the beautiful journals to the girls to write about their experiences while they were fresh. They make wonderful trip souvenirs! - Ms. Roberta

I want to thank all of the teachers who have been caring for us while we were on this trip. We had our ups and downs but at the end of the trip, we had an amazing time together and also with the girls. - Habiba

This trip has given me a chance to travel to Hawaii, a place I probably wouldn't have gone to see until I was older. Girls Inc. is great to travel with because we do a lot of educational things and with my family I would normally do all fun things. - Aariona

I would like to thank all of the donors who contributed to the trip. I had a wonderful time in Hawaii. I would also like to thank Ms. Sheebie for opening her home to us. She was an amazing hostess. My mom paid for my trip clothes. And thanks to my father for giving me spending money! Mahalo to everyone! - Desy

This trip was a once in a lifetime chance. I'm glad I had this opportunity. I want to thank Betsy who is Fatuma's family's mentor. She got all of the materials that are necessary to go to Hawaii. Betsy also had two men who donated money for us 3 Muslim girls to go to Hawaii and I want to say thank you for your donation and it went to good use. Thank you for giving us this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I also want to thank Ms. Stephanie who also helped us get to Hawaii. Also my mentor who inspired me several times no matter the pressure from everyone [not to go] this trip will contribute to my learning



and I will also have a great time. I truly enjoyed myself for the last 13 days, that has been an amazing learning experience and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! I'm so glad I had this experience. Thank you for everything, everyone! Specifically Chris and Andrew Timmerman - Thank you for everything. – Amina

Thank you so much for the fund-raising to make it possible for me to experience this wonderful sight! – Tori

Thanks to my nephew Sean for keeping me in coffee. I am not sure how it was that my sister didn't have any in stock when I arrived. She does know me, right? We are sisters, right?...

- Ms. Roberta



I want to thank all of the donors that gave so generously to make this trip happen. It is wonderful to know that people believe in the transformative power of travel. Through my many travels with the Girls Inc. family, I know it changes lives when girls have the opportunity to see the world and to meet people from other parts of the country, to get outside of their own neighborhoods. I want to thank the girlFRIENDS guild for donating the beautiful journals. I also want to thank my sister, Sheebie, for letting us crash in her house for 12 days (!!!!!). The laundry alone was terrifying. Ms. CT did most of it but we still left a pretty impressive pile of wet towels from our last day of snorkeling. I also appreciate all she did to line up our activities, plan our itinerary, shop, cook, and more. And, amazingly, she never seemed crabby or put out! I also want to thank my niece Sara, my nephew Sean, and Sean's wife Sascha. I know we were noisy and chaotic. Thanks for letting us do that to your lives! I also want to thank Ms. CT, the champion of Girls Inc. travels, and the staff who held it down for us while we were away. #TeamStrongSmartBold - Ms. Roberta



Overall, I really enjoyed this trip, coming here not knowing what to expect, not knowing what I was going to see. I really enjoyed my time here and I'm glad I was chosen... I saw that our flight along was around \$1,200. I would like to thank all of the donors who donated. This trip would not have even been possible without you! I also wanted to thank my mother for paying for my hair; my Grandmothers, Grandpa, dad, and my mom's boyfriends for all giving me spending money. Ms. Sheebie for allowing us to stay in her house, cooking for us, and driving us everywhere. Also Ms. CT and Ms. Roberta for planning this whole trip for us and finding the donors. – Sakira



Overall on this trip, the best part was trying new challenges with the girls...And getting the opportunity to learn new dances and words. Many people can't come here because of how expensive it is to come here. I will never take this trip for granted because many girls wanted to come on the trip. – Habiba



The trip to Hawai'i has been amazing. . I enjoyed spending time with the girls and meeting new people while on this trip. There were many activities that were new to me but I gained enough confidence to try new things. I would like to say thank you to Ms. Sheebie for letting us stay in her house and for making us breakfast, and for helping us with the trip. I'm thankful for aunty Leilani for sharing her culture with us and for telling us the history of Hawaii. I want to thank Ms. CT and Ms. Roberta for allowing me to attend this trip!

Also everyone – Ms. CT, Ms. Sheebie, Ms. Roberta - for preparing us lunches and allowing us to visit places that most people cannot visit easily. I want to thank my mom for helping me go on this trip and also allowing me to go. I want to thank all of the generous donors for donating in order for me to have the experience of a lifetime. I am thankful for the donors making my dream come true. I had a ball and I'm sad it's ending but we had a phenomenal time getting to know each other in the beautiful islands of Hawai'i. In the words of Hawaiian – Mahalo nui loa, thank you very much! – Elijahiana

