

## ONE PATIENT AT A TIME :

✦ by : Claire Morris-Dobie

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Conventional wisdom tells us that good news travels slowly, but Dan Schaal's name and physical therapy practice seem to turn this theory around. With his wife, Suzie Woolway, a speech therapist, Ohana Sports Medicine (formally known as Kauai Independent Rehabilitation Associates 'KIRA') is on the fast track to becoming a household word in the field of outpatient physical therapy services on Kauai and perhaps beyond.

A highly skilled, observant, and analytical physical therapist, Dan describes his work as a 3-D puzzle in movement. "It's like working with a human Rubik's Cube to solve a mystery," says Dan. "Every patient is different and there may be many avenues open to the remedy. We look at what might be diagnosed as a tennis elbow and try to find the root cause. There may be numerous causes not even remotely related to the elbow itself. What we do is take the time that's needed to develop an appropriate and effective treatment regimen for each patient. The cure may be something as simple as changing the ergonomics of the client's work station."

**NAME:** Dan Schaal

**TITLE:** Owner/Head Physical Therapist

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Born in Fort Collins, Colorado, Dan graduated from the University of New Mexico in 1995, and in 1998 he received his degree in physical therapy from UNM's School of Medicine. Since moving to Kauai in 2001, he and Suzie agree that Kauai is "even better than we anticipated." He likens it to Fort Collins 30 years ago, with its rural lifestyle and friendly people.

Ohana Sports Medicine is located in the Port Allen Marina Center in Ele`ele on Kauai's West Side. With two other PTs on the staff, Michelle Pacilio and Stephen Mongiello, their mission is to restore their patients to optimum health and maximize human function by providing a wide range of specialized PT rehabilitation programs. That mission has become a reality since Dan and Suzie opened Ohana Sports Medicine in 2005.

## DAN SCHAAL

With support and recommendations from more than 65 physicians and specialists on the Garden Island and throughout the State of Hawaii, the business is growing at a steady, healthy pace.

Shan Seto, front office manager, provides a well-balanced combination of expertise and experience with local style, which keeps the office moving smoothly and efficiently.

"We structure our hours to fit workers' schedules," says Dan, "so we're open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. instead of the traditional 9 to 5. We strive to make physical therapy accessible to the hard-working people of Kauai."

Although Ohana Sports Medicine is west of the central business area, patients visit the facility from all parts of the island, knowing that they'll receive customized, thoughtful evaluations and solutions. Dan's "hands-on" technique, coupled with impressive technology and personalized service, attract both repeat and new clients who are impressed with the "aura" of Ohana Sports Medicine. Soothing, friendly attitudes prevail and combine with progressive equipment and balanced thinking to produce a high comfort level and positive results.

Ohana Sports Medicine treats patients of all ages, including high school and college athletes, forty-something extreme sports aficionados, and the elderly.

"Kauai has a lot of residents and visitors who are very active," says Dan, "and sometimes, too much of a good thing can trigger problems. Surfers, golfers, hunters, skateboarders, and bikers are some of those most prone to injury. What we are best known for is targeted and scientific therapy rather than standard issue care. Our state-of-the-art care leads to better results and faster recovery from injury. We tend to be precision-oriented."

Doctors on Kauai and throughout the state are increasing their referrals to Ohana Sports Medicine as they develop a relationship to and confidence in Dan's work, coupled with an increased demand for therapy services. Internists, surgeons, orthopedic specialists, family doctors and neurologists know they can trust Dan and his staff to think outside the point of pain and take physical therapy to a level not available at other facilities.

As for the future, "In five years, we hope to have a significantly larger practice," says Dan. "We are bringing a level of care and integration with our doctors that is rare in rural healthcare. We'd like to become the Cedars Sinai of Kauai, with *Aloha*." 🌺