# Iolani Palace and Abigail Kawananakoa: Preserving Hawaii's Royal History and Philanthropic Legacy



Iolani Palace, the only royal palace in the United States, located in Honolulu, stands as a symbol of Hawaii’s royal history. Built in 1882 in an 'American Florentine' style by three architects over three years, the palace served as the residence of King Kalakaua and Queen Kapiolani, and later Queen Liliuokalani, Hawaii's only reigning queen.

Abigail Kawananakoa, often referred to as Hawaii's last princess, died in December 2022 at the age of 96, leaving behind a $250 million estate. Although she held no formal royal title, Kawananakoa was a cultural figure and philanthropist deeply connected to Hawaii’s heritage. Her wealth, inherited from her great-grandfather, sugar baron James Campbell, was aimed at benefiting Native Hawaiian causes.

In January 2024, her estate was settled, allocating $40 million to her wife, Veronica Gail Kawananakoa, and $100 million to various Native Hawaiian initiatives, including scholarships, medical expenses, and cultural preservation. The remaining funds will support these causes through the Kawananakoa trust, ensuring the continuation of her philanthropy.

Kawananakoa's estate has been the focal point of legal disputes since 2017, when she suffered a stroke. A 2020 court ruling declared her impaired, leading to the appointment of a trustee to manage her estate. Despite these challenges, her contributions have significantly impacted Hawaiian culture and social welfare.