

Honoring the First Native Hawaiian Medical Doctor

Insights

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In honor of February being Mahina ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi or Native Hawaiian Language Month, Hooper, Lundy & Bookman, P.C. recognizes Matthew Puakakoilimanuia Makalua as the first Native Hawaiian or Kānaka Maoli to study Western medicine and become a medical doctor.

Born and raised in Lahaina, Maui, Makalua was sent to England by King David Kalakaua to study medicine. In a column with the Pacific Commercial Advertiser, it requested Makalua return to teach medicine and assist with translating medical books into the Hawaiian language. However, after graduating from Kings College in 1892, Makalua settled in England where he continued practicing medicine until his death.