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## Punahou gym flooring to be put to new use

Makeover of fieldhouse also sends benches, bleachers to recycler

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A small piece of Punahou history could end up in homes or businesses across Hawai'i thanks to the school's latest sustainability initiative.

The wooden floorboards that served dozens of gym classes, volleyball and basketball teams and more at Punahou School's gym over the past 28 years are being processed for resale by Re-use Hawai'i, a nonprofit organization that salvages used building material.

The flooring was installed in 1980 when Hemmeter Fieldhouse in the school's athletic complex was built.

But after nearly three decades of use, it was time for a replacement to be installed.

"The wood is still good. It's just that for our application, we're not able to use it," said Randy Overton, director of physical plant at Punahou. He noted that the floor had already been sanded three times and is irreparable from the high traffic of kids running on it, which creates dead spots.

The idea to deconstruct the floor instead of demolish it was part of Punahou's sustainability initiative, the "2016 Challenge." Under the plan, the school aims to address environmental issues that deal with water, waste, food, transportation and energy by its 175th anniversary in 2016, said Laurel Bowers Husain, director of communications at Punahou.

Not only will recycling the floor save waste from going into a landfill, but the wood can still be used by someone else and it was more economical, too.

Randy Overton, director of the physical plant at Punahou, said that the cost to deconstruct the old floor was 7 percent less than the cost of demolition. A tax credit will also be utilized, increasing the savings.

Re-use Hawai'i removed the maplewood in two weeks, finishing the work last Friday.

Besides the flooring, Re-use Hawai'i was also able to accept the bleachers in the gym.

The wooden benches and plywood decking will be resold and could be used as fencing or finished lumber in a house, said Overton.

Quinn Vittum, co-director of Re-use Hawai'i, said he encourages people to look at the positive impact they can make by facilitating harvested materials and redistributing them to the community.

"Putting in a little extra time for your project and going the deconstruction route makes a lot of sense for the folks that really believe in making a difference for the environment," Vittum said.

For those interested in re-using materials, Re-use Hawai'i estimates that people can save 50 percent to 75 percent by avoiding the cost of new material that has to be shipped.

The gym's lighting was also retrofitted with fixtures that house eight compact fluorescent bulbs before the flooring work began. Switching from metal halide bulbs reduced the number of fixtures from 110 to 65 and increased efficiency by 40 percent. The new fixtures are expected to pay for themselves in less than 16 months.

Re-use Hawai'i might also have a source that can reuse the old fixtures, Overton said.

Additionally, three fans, each 14 feet in diameter, were bought and installed for about \$20,000, a fraction of the cost for an air-conditioning system and not including the energy savings. All the fans run off a single 20-amp circuit.

"Especially now with the way energy costs are being driven and people realizing the value in investing in these types of technologies ; you can't afford not to do it," Overton said. "The payback periods definitely make it worthwhile."

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