

INSIDE: VISITING MILLENNIALS * KAUAI HOSPITALITY * ALOHA FESTIVALS

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checking in

Expert recruiters for Hawaii's tourism industry offer valuable tips in our report on how hotels and restaurants can hire and keep top employees.

Also in this issue, we take a look at the slew of upcoming festivals and other fun events that fuel the flocks of tourists and locals who are seeking something fun to do across the Islands. Major activities in September and October, for example, range from the Aloha Festivals in Waikiki to the Mokihana Festival on Kauai.

Just what can the hospitality industry do to better serve Millennials, a generation who now numbers more than Baby Boomers? Our report offers a peek inside their bucket list of things to do, such as information on cultural experiences or dining suggestions that are easily accessible via apps.

More hotels, resorts and other attractions now view yoga as a way for their guests to connect to a lifestyle while also showcasing their properties.

Yoga enthusiasts are finding inner tranquility on Hawaii's hotel lawns and even at a famous windward cemetery.

Also, check out our update on construction projects—ongoing and in the pipeline—that are dedicated to Hawaii's hospitality industry.

In this issue we welcome former *MidWeek* editor Don Chapman as he launches his column, "Hospitality People." Be sure to read his inaugural column on page 8.

Aloha!



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HLTA Hits the Links for Scholarship

PHOTOS BY
HAWKINS BIGGINS

The Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association held its 17th annual Scholarship Golf Tournament on Aug. 11 at the Hawaii Prince Golf Course. Don Takaki of Hawktree International chaired the HLTA golf committee.



Don Takaki, Karen Wataru-Nakaoka, Kimo Kahoano



James Madrid, Jason Lum, Jerry Arrayan



Leighton Hasegawa, Diane Muranaka, Rob Robinson



Fuji Schenck, Kevin Sahara, Sean Tamon, Alejandro Moxey



Mike Wilson, Bob Zane, Dean Uwayne



Michelle Fujii, Dricka Thobois, Kim Ibara, Malia Kahale



Earl Nakachi, Jill Kinoshita, Sheldon Yoshida



Chris Sbarbaro, George Otsuka, Ann Vasconcellos, Joslyn Bantilan, Carol Shimomura



Alfonso Oliver, Joseph Yaw, Matt Kotowski



Lei Lee-Lahue, Caro Hayashida, Erin Leiftee



Allen Wilson, Ron Tsukamaki, Roy Arakawa



Lynette Arakawa, Dean Nakasone, Harris Nakamoto



Toshi Masumoto, Hiro Tanabe, Keith Kitagawa



Jaz Nijjar, Richard Kersten, Harry Kersten, Tyler Tokioka



Bill Allen, Robin Graf, John Hulihee

Celebrating the Value of *Hookipa*

One of the truest things I know about the Hawaii hospitality industry—having covered it for 13 years as a daily columnist with the old *Advertiser* and for the past 22 years as *MidWeek* editor, a post from which I retired in August—is that it brings people together.

And while many places offer hospitality to strangers—howdy, y’all—the way we do it in Hawaii is completely unique, and true to our host culture. The native Hawaiian term is *hookipa*—yes, like the Maui surf break made even more famous in **Willie K’s** iconic hit “Hookipa Surf Song.”

The traditional definition of *hookipa* is both deep and beautiful. The website managingwithaloha.com describes it as “the value of Hawaiian-style hospitality, in which guests and strangers alike are welcomed with your spirit of *aloha*. There is complete generosity in *hookipa*: We call it *lokomaikai*, ‘the generosity of good heart.’ Those who aspire to the best practice of this value are highly empathetic, and very perceptive in anticipating the needs of others: We call them *mea hookipa* (host or hostess) and it is one of the highest compliments a person of *aloha* can receive from another.”

(Having covered several of the **Dalai Lama’s** talks over the years, that sounds a lot like something the Tibetan holy man might say.)

So it’s appropriate the theme of the 32nd annual Mokihana Festival on Kauai is “Year of *Hookipa*.” It happens Sept. 18-24 at multiple venues.

“Because of our culture, and where we live, we value Hawaiian hospitality, and want to continue to encourage that,” said festival director **Maka Herrod**, a kumu hula. It was his uncle **Nathan Kalama**, along with his Malie bandmates **James Panui** and **Larry Duhaylongsod**, who founded what grew into the Mokihana Festival, named for the anise-scented berry associated with the Garden Isle in lei. (Or is anise mokihana-scented?)

“They were all composers, so the first two years it was a composers’ contest

and concert,” Maka explained. “Two years later they added a hula competition.”

Oh my, how it has grown. But the composers’ competition remains a core event, and entrants are encouraged to use the theme *hookipa* in their songs, as are hula *halau* in their dances.

And this year, festival organizers are bringing back an event from the past. “I found it in an old newspaper article,” said Maka. It’s a flowerless lei competition in five categories: leaves and vines, nuts and seeds, shells, feathers and recycled-repurposed. Also of note: Besides multiple hula competitions involving *halau* from Japan, Washington state and Oahu as well as Kauai, is a presentation by kumu hula **Leimomi Akana** on various Hawaiian names for rain, based on her book, “Hanau Ka Ua.”

Festivals are fabulous, but few things day-to-day bring people together as does sharing a single meal. Whether with family, friends, associates or even total strangers, the act of “breaking bread” and perhaps hoisting a cup is just another means of human bonding.

“Here’s the beauty of the restaurant business,” said **Gregg Fraser**, Hawaii Restaurant Association president. “I went out for dinner last night with some people who were in town. We talked and had fun. I’ll tell you, if we had been in an office it would have been OK, but it wouldn’t have been nearly as much fun.”

The HRA Hall of Fame induction dinner is a good time to celebrate that, as well as the people who make restaurants happen. It happens Sept. 19 at Dole Cannery’s Pomaikai Ballrooms. For more information, visit hawaiirestaurant.com.

“This is the 10th HRA Hall of Fame class, and we’re honoring two businesses that have hit milestones,” said Gregg. Zippy’s is celebrating its 50th year, Aloha

PHOTO BY JOE OLIVAS

The original members of the group Malie: James Panui, Larry Duhaylongsod and Nathan Kalama.

Shoyu its 70th. There’s a sort of wonderful island poetry going on here, pairing these two, don’t you think?

And talk about bringing people together: **Brent Imonen**, race director for the Great Aloha Run, is hoping Hawaii’s hospitality industry can help educate visitors about the run and the week of events and the fitness expo preceding the Presidents Day (Feb. 20, 2017) race—8.15 miles (13.12K) from Aloha Tower to Aloha Stadium. Last year’s charity event drew nearly 24,000 runners, walkers, huffers and puffers, “and only about a thousand were from out of state,” Brent said. “I’m sure there are visitors who would like to participate if they knew it was happening. We just need help getting the word out.”

The GAR application booklet is due to be mailed in early October. For more information, go to grealoharun.com.

Have a good story about a good person in the Hawaii hospitality industry? Please e-mail me at chapmanwrite@hawaii.rr.com.





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"Vino and Vinyasa" is a top attraction at the Moana Surfrider, a Westin Resort & Spa

Millennial Travelers Inspire Creativity

Hotels in Waikiki tailor extra activities and comforts to suit younger, tech-savvy guests

BY CATHY CRUZ-GEORGE

Millennial travelers—people between ages 18-35—have changed how hotels do business.

But don't think of Millennials as "kids." At a population of 76 million nationwide, not only have they surpassed the number of Baby Boomers, but 25 percent are parents themselves.

Typically, Millennials fall under two groups: Younger (under 24) and older (between 23-35). The latter more likely are members of hotel loyalty programs, according to research by marketing group NPD.

Younger Millennials? Not so much. They prefer accommodations that meet their budgets, even if it means booking at the last minute.

Both groups, however, travel with Google-backed knowledge of local dining and entertainment options. Topping their bucket lists are cultural experiences and eating local foods.

Here are samplings of Waikiki hotels reaching out to Millennials:

- The Lotus Diamond Head Hotel

The Millennial Traveler ...

- is between ages 18 to 35 and comprises nearly 76 million people nationwide.
- is more health-conscious and fitness-minded than previous generations.
- seeks accommodations with unique designs inspired by the local culture.
- is not impressed by chain hotels with cookie-cutter architecture.
- expects Wi-Fi service in hotels, airports and restaurants.
- is comfortable in shared workspaces, such as in hotel lobbies and lounges.
- is ready to mix leisure with business travel; "work-life balance" is important to this generation.
- is budget-conscious. This group explores all options before choosing an accommodation.

at the edge of Waikiki has morning yoga classes at nearby Kapiolani Park, for guests only. The lobby of the hotel offers a wine-and-cheese reception from 4-6 p.m. daily, and guests have access to rented beach-cruiser bikes.

The hotel also accommodates pets up to 20 pounds.

• Hyatt Centric Waikiki Beach is scheduled to open before the end of this year in the Waikiki Trade Center. It boasts 230 rooms and suites, a fitness center, entertainment and swimming deck, restaurant and bar. Billed as "a full-service lifestyle brand," the Hyatt Centric concept targets younger, adventurous travelers who seek accommodations in the heart of a major city.

• Even the oldest hotel in Waikiki—Moana Surfrider, a Westin Resort & Spa—has grabbed its share of the Millennial market with monthly events that are edgy and creative. "Vino and Vinyasa" draws several hundred people to the resort's lawn for a relaxing yoga session followed by wine tastings. "Love of Libations," or "LOL," is a monthly themed party that garners the most buzz on the social-media platform Instagram. The LOL August theme, "Hot Havana Nights," drew a crowd of about 40 patrons. September and October themes will play off of Japanese sake, beer and bratwurst.

To appeal to Millennials, the Surfrider "likes to keep it fun, while knowing what's trendy," says Brittani Deeton, senior manager of social media and events.

Deeton herself is a Millennial. "The idea is that every time you leave our events, you've learned something," she says.

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Rendering of the upgraded
oceanarium at the Alohilani Resort
at Waikiki Beach



Keeping Up with Demand

Rising visitor numbers spur hospitality construction across the Islands



BY PRISCILLA PÉREZ BILLIG

Construction projects dedicated to Hawaii's hospitality industry are racing to meet the rising number of visitors. The Hawaii Tourism Authority reports that during the first half of 2016 the Islands had 4,415,801 total visitors—a 3.3 percent increase over the same period last year.

Hawaii's ongoing hospitality redevelopment projects also are helping contractors to maintain busy construction schedules. Hospitality-related projects underway include the 839-room Pacific Beach Hotel renovation, scheduled for completion in December.

Nan Inc., a longtime contractor on U.S. military projects, expanded into hospitality renovation work four years ago and is handling the upgrades to the Pacific Beach Hotel. Lane Uchimura, executive vice president for Nan, says the company is averaging \$60 million to \$70 million yearly in hospitality renovations.

"We like the idea of helping hotels to reposition themselves," Uchimura says. "We just finished all the guestrooms at the Hyatt Regency Waikiki and currently are working on the Pacific Beach Hotel and also the Hawaii Prince Hotel."

Come fall 2017, the Pacific Beach Hotel will re-emerge into the market as a brand new hotel with a new name—Alohilani Resort at Waikiki Beach, according to General Manager Rob Robinson.



Renovated guest room at the reimagined Alohilani Resort at Waikiki Beach.

“The \$115 million redevelopment will completely transform the legendary Waikiki hotel from top to bottom,” Robinson says. “Guest safety has been our top priority throughout the project so we have taken steps to ensure that our guests are protected from any of the construction conditions. While this can cause some inconvenience, we have taken steps to minimize the impacts



Rob Robinson

on our guest experience. We limit the hours of noisy work, keep as many areas of the hotel accessible as possible and resolve complaints on a case-by-case

basis with personalized attention from our staff.”

As the newest hotel in Waikiki, the Alohilani Resort will offer a fresh, modern vibe, says Robinson. Design firm Rockwell Group and architectural firms WATG and Pacific Asia Design Group are handling the guestrooms and public areas.

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The Hilton Garden Inn renovated lobby by Indidesign with furnishings by Summa International

PHOTO BY TAGGART SORESEN

Supplying Products that Beautify

Firm orchestrates the delivery and installation of custom furniture and finishings for hotels' renovations

Summa International, a hospitality renovation management firm with offices in Hawaii and Los Angeles, offers planning, procurement, logistics and installment management for resort renovations worldwide. Procurement encompasses furniture fixture and equipment as well as operating supplies and equipment.



Bryce Sprecher

"We're buying millions of dollars of product in extremely large volume," says Bryce Sprecher, Summa International president and CEO. "It is our responsibility to mitigate owner liability by ensuring that every product arrives on time, on budget and with the vision that was intended."

Among its Hawaii projects, Summa worked with Honolulu Builders to create the Surfjack Hotel & Swim Club.

"Surfjack designers infused upscale residential finishes combined with millennial hospitality-friendly amenities to create a

comfortable, sophisticated and communal experience for those willing to look past the beachfront properties of Waikiki," Sprecher says. "Orchestrating the production of custom materials around the globe and managing the logistics in bringing them on budget, on schedule and most importantly with the vision that was intended is always a challenge."

Summa also worked with Swinerton Builders on the new Hilton Garden Inn on Kuhio Avenue in Waikiki (formerly the Ohana Waikiki West). As the first Hilton Garden Inn on the Island, the property has undergone a multimillion-dollar redevelopment over the past two years.

"Designed by Los Angeles designer Beatrice Girelli with Indidesign, the new 659-room Hilton Garden Inn brings a new modern resort feel combined with an authentic Hawaiian experience," Sprecher says.

Renovations include an upscale 5,900-square-foot lobby with framed weavings and custom features that include a ladder-like ceiling design and herringbone accent wall, a circulation corridor to guide guests between hotel entrances, making



The lobby of the Surfjack Hotel & Swim Club

movement seamless and intuitive and guestrooms that pay homage to the Island's culture through color palette and materials inspired by Hawaii's endemic nature.

Additional projects involving Summa International include Hilton Grand Islander Time Share, The Ritz-Carlton Residences Tower 2, Hawaii Prince Hotel, Coco Palms Kauai, Queen Kapiolani Hotel, Ilikai Waikiki, Kauai Shores, Maui Bay Villas Hilton Time Share, Hyatt Kauai Time Shares, Outrigger Reef, Outrigger Canoe Club, Marriott Waikoloa, Courtyard Marriott, Marriott Waikiki and The Modern Honolulu.

"Renovations are booming these days," says Sprecher. "Manufacturers are becoming backlogged resulting in longer lead times involved with getting products produced and delivered."

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Prince Hotel Waikiki's 567-oceanfront guest rooms and suites, restaurants, new lobby and onsite wedding chapel, is expected to wrap by mid-December. The final phase, including meeting rooms, pool area and the new Club Lounge, will be completed by spring 2017.

"Through thoughtful design and rebranding elements, the extensive \$55.4 million redevelopment aims to share the story of our Waikiki location's intriguing history and heritage," says Chuck Abbott, general manager.



Chuck Abbott

challenges in keeping the property running smoothly. "Since the hotel will remain

"Catering to the next generation Hawaii traveler, the all-new resort experience will also incorporate exciting new programs and amenities."

Abbott discussed the chal-

open for the duration of the eight-month refurbishment, our goal is to ensure little to no impact to our guests," he says. "We are utilizing sound-proofing barricades and working closely with our contractor to ensure that the majority of their work is completed during the day when most guests are off property exploring Oahu."

Mufi Hannemann, Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association president and CEO, says Oahu has "seen a number of exciting new developments and

Hospitality's Renaissance Man

After three decades with Starwood, Vieira guides other brands in shaping their futures

Keith Vieira, principal of KV & Associates Hospitality Consulting, has a practical view on why new construction and renovations help sustain the growth of Hawaii's hospitality industry.

"As a state, if we don't increase tax revenues, if we don't increase outside income to the state, how do we continue? If you look at all these renovations, they are primarily outside-of-Hawaii owners bringing in dollars, spending them in Hawaii on construction, which circulates into the economy," says Vieira, who worked for more than three decades steering Starwood Hotels & Resorts in Hawaii and French Polynesia into the 21st century.

"New properties create positive visitor experiences," he adds, "and positive visitor experiences create repeat visitors."

In 2013, Vieira founded KV & Associates—a hospitality consulting firm with clients in Hawaii, French Polynesia and Samoa as well as capital investment groups in the U.S. and Asia.

Before leaving his post as Starwood's senior vice president and director of operations, Vieira served an integral role in which he aggressively evolved the global organization from one brand to a broad portfolio of nine, ranging from affordable to luxury brands.

Vieira worked in close partnership with resort owners in a management, franchise and advisory capacity. He had direct involvement and oversight of new hotel acquisitions and new builds with extensive work in the assessment and execution of renova-

tions and repositioning within a brand or rebranding, including the evolution from a resort-only organization to include highly successful mixed-use vacation ownership.

He sees room for more growth in Hawaii's tourism-related construction sector.

"When you look at what's recently opened, like the Hilton Garden Inn, The Ritz-Carlton, the Waikiki Trade Center converted into a hotel and others in the process of being sold, renovated or repositioned, we are really seeing unprecedented growth on Kuhio Avenue, certainly supported by the International Market Place," he says. "What that whole corner looks like now is really positive."

In his oversight of the Hawaii and French Polynesia region for Starwood, Vieira led one of its most successful leisure destinations in a corporate portfolio of more than 1,180 properties in 100 countries. He directed Hawaii's largest private employer and was responsible for the largest marketing budget in the state.

In 2003 the Sales and Marketing Executives of Honolulu recognized Vieira as Salesperson of the Year. He was also part of the 2003 class of inductees to the University of Hawaii Shidler College of Business Alumni Hall of Fame and in 2013 Starwood Hawaii announced the creation of The Keith Vieira Hoowaiwai a Hoonauao Endowment Scholarship at the Shidler College of Business to honor his 36-year career in the industry.

With a focus on education, Vieira has served on the board of Good Beginnings Alliance, Be My Voice Leadership Council, chairing



Keith Vieira, principal of KV & Associates Hospitality Consulting

Hookakoo Corporation for 10 years and as chair for the Kualapuu School, Waimea Middle School and Kamaile Academy conversion charter schools. He served in an advisory capacity to Kapiolani Community College and Leeward Community College.

His community efforts include chairing fundraising campaigns for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and Aloha United Way. He has been a board member of the Blood Bank of Hawaii, Catholic Charities Hawaii, Ahahui Koa Anuenue, Friends of Hawaii Charities, Hawaii Business Roundtable and YMCA of Hawaii.

Born and raised in Hilo, Vieira graduated from the UH College of Business Administration with a degree in personnel and industrial relations. He is currently an Executive-in-Residence at UH.

renovations come to fruition, resulting in the creation of thousands of construction jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity.”

On the Neighbor Islands, the relationship between the hospitality industry

and construction industry is particularly strong, Hannemann points out.

“Over the past few years, we’ve seen a flurry of major redevelopment projects at places like the Hyatt



Mufi Hannemann

Regency and Hilton Grand Vacations on Maui, the Grand Naniloa Hotel on the Big Island and the long-awaited Coco Palms Resort on Kauai,” he says. “Projects like these lifted the Neighbor Islands’ economies out of the recession and provide ample evidence that good things happen for our local populace when the two industries are in sync.”

A Robust Outlook

The Hawaii Tourism Authority reports visitor spending for the first half of 2016 rose 1.6 percent to \$7.7 billion. During this period, visitors pumped \$119.3 million more into Hawaii’s economy than they did during the same period in 2015. HTA’s 2016 targets anticipate a 1.6 percent gain in spending to \$15.9 billion and a 3.5 percent increase in arrivals to nearly 8.8 million.

“Hawaii’s hospitality properties always need to refresh and renovate to stay relevant and competitive in the global tourism market.”

—MUFİ HANNEMANN

“Whether a property owner is looking at their product and how it can perform better in a very expensive market to operate, as in Hawaii, it’s all about rate growth,” says Keith Vieira, principal of KV & Associates Hospitality Consulting. “Everybody’s overall occupancy rate is pretty high—generally some of the highest in the country and the world, especially in Waikiki.

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“We have to provide pricing that can fit people’s budget, the luxury traveler, mid-price and to some extent the budget traveler. But with this continued growth we’ve had in arrivals, clearly fueled by the strong growth of airline seats, it’s allowed hotel owners to re-invest in properties and do the renovations that are needed.”

Vieira credits airlines that are now gaining from flights to visitor destinations that were not as profitable in the past as “helping maintain our air seat growth and allowing our key airline, Hawaiian Airlines, to grow to new destinations in addition to adding flights to existing destinations.”

The Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism reports that since the 2008 implementation of a visa-waiver program, arrivals to Hawaii from South Korea have grown approximately 350 percent, from 38,110 visitors in 2008 to 171,524 in 2015.

Within the first year of the visa-waiver program in Taiwan, 2012 to 2013, arrivals to Hawaii grew roughly 210 percent.

According to the HVS Global Hospitality Report—citing robust increases in both domestic and international visitation since the 2008 recession—Hawaii’s major domestic feeder markets include cities in California, as well as Seattle, Portland, Phoenix, Chicago and New York. Visitation from a number of Asia-Pacific countries, including South



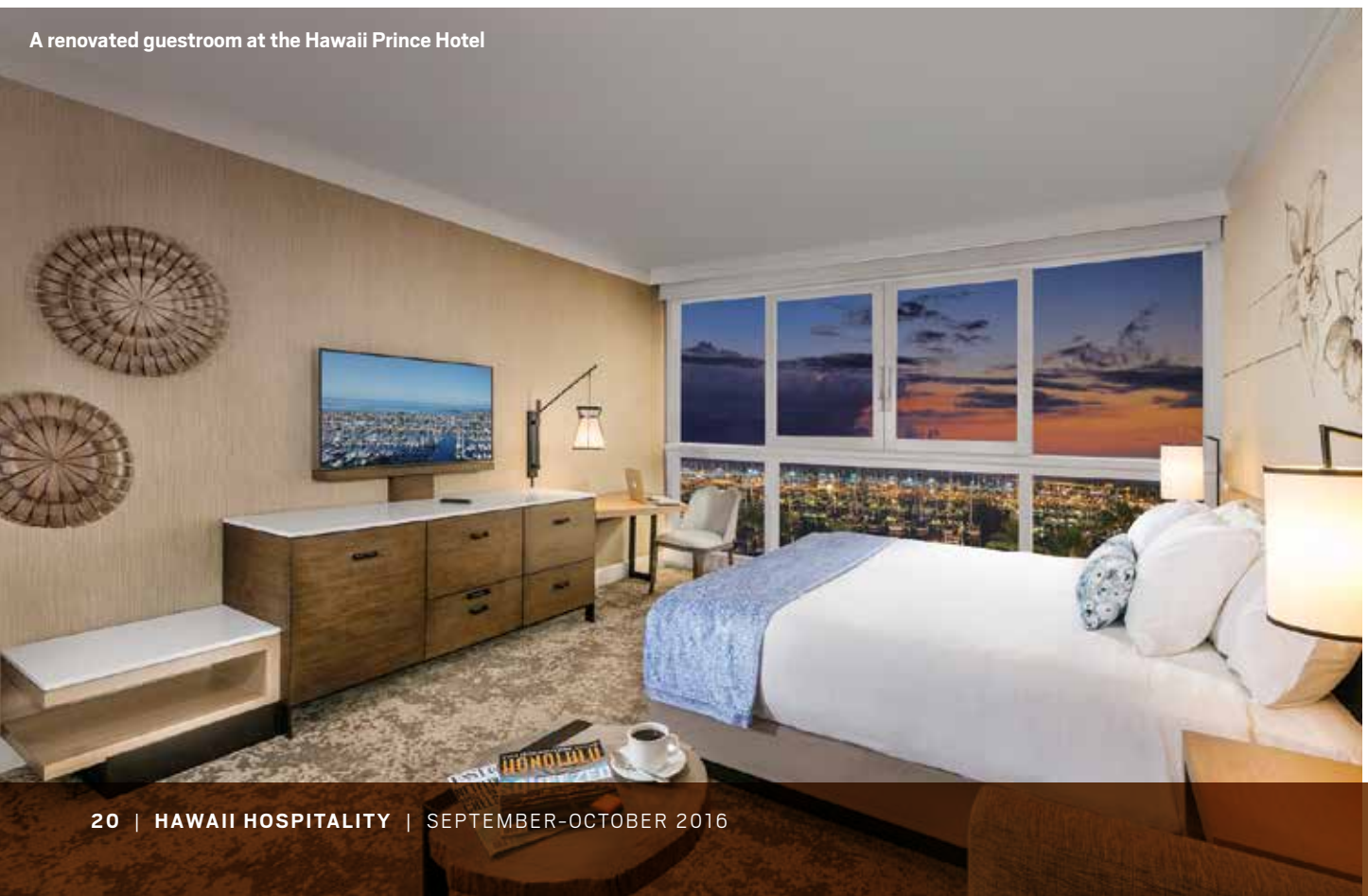
Korea, Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand, has also risen in recent years. The report notes that tourism from China has also grown at a tremendous pace with the country anticipated becoming the largest source of new international visitation in the near future.

The HVS report notes that Hawaii remains the second-strongest hotel market in the U.S., evidenced by the most recent performance data on occupancy and average rate. Given the

strong demand, the opening of new hotels and overall strengthening market conditions, Oahu hotel operators are likely to focus on raising average rates, a positive indicator of the strong outlook for the market in the near term.

“Hawaii’s hospitality properties always need to refresh and renovate to stay relevant and competitive in the global tourism market,” Hannemann says. “The last thing we want to do is to rest on our laurels and become complacent.”

A renovated guestroom at the Hawaii Prince Hotel





Rendering of the infinity pool at the Alohilani Resort at Waikiki Beach

Oahu Inventory

Of the approximately 27,682 rooms in inventory in Oahu as of July 2016, roughly 80 percent belong to a brand or a major parent company, with the remaining 20 percent operating as independent hotels.

Of the 22,985 branded rooms, Aqua-Aston Hospitality and Hilton Worldwide combined operate approximately 42 percent. Starwood Hotels & Resorts, Outrigger Hotels & Resorts, Marriott International and Hyatt Hotels Corporation also have sizeable representation in the market, ranging between 7 percent and 17 percent market share.

New Rooms Expected on Oahu

2016: 1,100
2017: 598
2018: 494
2019: 902

Where on Oahu?

Honolulu: 1,761 rooms
Kapolei: 1,153 rooms
Aiea: 180 rooms

Room Types

Luxury: 1,493 rooms
Upper-Upscale: 1,421 rooms
Upscale: 180 rooms

SOURCE: HVS



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Kauai Rendezvous

Garden Isle properties prepare for a rise in their meetings-and-conventions business

BY BRETT ALEXANDER-ESTES

Who wants to work on Kauai? Who wants to study charts, graphs and annual reports with an island often called “Hawaii’s most beautiful” beckoning just beyond the breakout room?

Leading hospitality properties and the Hawaii Tourism Association are betting that Kauai’s legendary attractions—coupled with new busi-

ness-friendly hotels and new meetings-and-conventions facilities—will entice an increasing number of business visitors to the Garden Isle from around the world.



Sue Kanoho

Sue Kanoho, Kauai Visitors Bureau executive director, says that currently, “the HTA-funded international

markets are looking into booking the meetings market on each island, and that has given Kauai a new chance at markets outside the traditional U.S. West, U.S. East and Canada.” Some of these potential customers, Kanoho says, include Japan, Europe, Oceania, China and other Pacific Rim countries.

In anticipation, leading hoteliers are opening sleek new business-friendly properties and expanding their business meeting facilities on the Garden Isle.

In March, the new Hilton Garden Inn Kauai Wailua Bay opened its doors,



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Koloa Landing on Poipu Beach

PHOTO COURTESY KOLOA LANDING RESORT



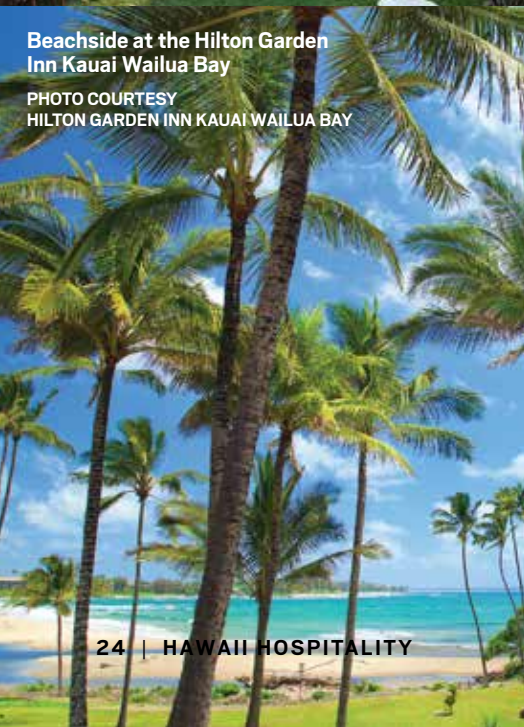
Kipu Ranch Adventures' ATV incentive

PHOTO COURTESY KIPU RANCH ADVENTURES



A recent incentive at Waimea Plantation Cottages

PHOTO COURTESY TRADE-WINDS MANAGEMENT GROUP



Beachside at the Hilton Garden Inn Kauai Wailua Bay

PHOTO COURTESY HILTON GARDEN INN KAUAI WAILUA BAY

offering both a traditional escape from modern life and an efficient hub for business travelers.

"Kauai's Hilton Garden Inn is strongly positioned to be a business-friendly destination, especially for small to mid-sized business groups and events," says Theresa van Greunen, public relations director for Aqua-Aston Hospitality, which manages the beachside resort. Van Greunen points to the Garden Inn's 7,460 square feet of event space that can host up to 350 people, a dedicated Business Center, and starting in September, she says, "the hotel will be equipped with some of the fastest WiFi on Kauai."

On Kauai's South Shore, Koloa Landing Resort and the Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa are both gearing up for an influx of meetings and conventions.

"We are completing a 12,000-square-foot multipurpose building with seven breakouts, an additional 8,000 square feet of pre-function space, and a 6,000-square-foot event lawn, perfect for weddings or luaus," says Sally Halm, Koloa Landing director of sales



Sally Halm

and marketing. The new multipurpose facility at the Poipu Beach resort will open in December, Halm says, "and we are looking at hosting our first group in January 2017."

At the Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa, also on Poipu Beach, the meetings-conventions-incentives (MCI) market currently accounts for "approximately 35 percent of the property's total business," says Katy Britzmann, Grand Hyatt Kauai's sales and marketing director. 2015 was a record year for MCI travel at the resort, she says, and "2017 overall is pacing similar to our three-year average for group business."

Iconic Events

"Our incentive groups look for events and venues that present an authentic and unique experience for their



Theresa van Greunen

clients, who are often affluent and very discriminating," Britzmann says.

Britzmann cites a recent event—a joint effort by Waimea Plantation Cottages, Trade-Winds Management Group/Martin Roberts and the Grand Hyatt Kauai—as an example of "a growing demand, particularly in incentives, for events at very unique venues and properties."

Kauai's pristine landscape presents high-energy meeting and convention options as well. "From an eco-tourism standpoint, Kauai offers incredible natural beauty with great facilities," Kanoho says, pointing to the island's many outdoor venues and ATV incentive tours like those offered by Kipu Ranch Adventures. And *Golf Magazine* just ranked four Kauai courses in its biennial winner's list, securing the island's standing as a top U.S. golfing destination.

Britzmann notes that MCI visitors to Kauai who travel in small groups and have free time also gravitate to authentic cultural, arts and dining events—like the Mokihana Festival and Art Night.



Katy Britzmann



The Garden Inn's dedicated Business Center.

PHOTO COURTESY HILTON GARDEN INN KAUAI WAILUA BAY

Productivity in Paradise

Says the HTA's 2016 strategic plan: "Hawaii's strong leisure brand continues to have the negative side effect of discouraging organizations from 'boondoggle' meetings" (non-productive junkets) "in the Islands." Now, with new business-friendly Kauai facilities surrounded by unparalleled scenic beauty, MCI planners can offer prospective clients the best of business and pleasure.

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Dance, Music Await at Mokihana Festival

The annual Mokihana Festival is the soul of Hawaii, pure and passionate. For one week, Hawaii's most influential composers, musicians, dancers, singers and poets present new works of art that express the essence of their heritage and *ohana*.

Chanel Flores, a Kauai composer and singer, will accompany her father to the Mokihana Festival this year as he presents *Aloha* and *Ohikilolo* in the Composition Contest. Flores' grandfather was a frequent festival competitor, and Flores herself has been singing and entering her songs in the festival since she was five years old. "Music is in our blood," she says.

Halau Hula O Haliileo, a troupe of 80 dancers, will also grace festival stages, as it has for 20 years. "Competition has a way of forcing us to turn inward

and delve deep within our mind and heart to determine our intentions as well as strength," says Kuulei Keamoai, the group's *kumu hula*. "Our hope is that our *halau* and *haumana* (students) will continue to love hula and will embrace all the experiences the festival has to offer."

Kauai's greater Hawaiian community joins in, and grass-roots gatherings—from church services to craft fairs—spring up around the island, celebrating *hookipa* (hospitality), this year's Festival theme.

The 2016 Mokihana Festival gets underway Sunday, Sept. 18, and runs through Sept. 24. Tickets for the festival are available at Vicky's Fabrics, Kapaa, (808) 822-1746; Kauai Beach Resort, Lihue, (808) 246-5515; and Kauai Music and Sound, Kapaa, (808) 823-8000.



Mokihana Festival, Sept. 18-24

Sunday: Hawaiian Church Service

Monday: Kauai Composers' Contest and Concert

Tuesday: Children's/Youth Music Competition, Under the Palms at Wailua

Wednesday: Hawaiian Cultural Event

Thursday: Hula Competition: Solo/Group Kahiko Nei

Friday: Hula Competition: Group Auana

Saturday: Hula Competition: Solo Auana & Finale



PHOTOS COURTESY AARON BRYAN EMAYO AND JOE OLIVAS



Food and Fun

In addition to the Mokihana Festival, other popular attractions on the Garden Isle include:

Kauai Food Tours, North Shore

Sept. 6: A taste tour of the North Shore's luxury resorts and farmers' markets. Contact Michelle Lemay at (888) 431-6660.

Westin Princeville Jazz & Wine Festival

Sept. 17: Blue notes, bubbly and Island cuisine under the stars. For tickets and information, call the Westin Princeville concierge at (808) 827-8808.

Slack Key Guitar & Ukulele Concerts

Various dates through December: Hawaii's local melodies and masters are featured in a series of themed concerts. For more information, go to the Kauai Visitors Bureau site at go.hawaii.com or kauaifestivals.com.

Kilauea Art Night

Sept. 24: Held on the last Saturday of each month, the festival offers local food, pottery, paintings and more. Contact Courtney Puig at (808) 635-2572.

Kauai Coconut Festival

Oct. 1-2: Games, contests, carvings and cooking demonstrations featuring Polynesia's most revered staple. For more information, call (808) 652-4988 or visit kbakauai.org.

Hoike Holoku Gala

Oct. 15: The Kauai Historical Society presents a celebratory parade of Hawaii's traditional gowns. Contact Helen Wong Smith at (808) 245-3373 or director@kauaihistoricalsociety.org.



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TOP PERFORMERS

Can You Spot, Hire and Keep Them?

4 ways to attract hospitable and productive workers

BY CATHY CRUZ-GEORGE

As Hawaii's tourism industry continues to thrive, one of the top issues facing hotels and restaurants is employee retention.

In 2015, the U.S. hospitality industry saw an employee-turnover rate of 72.1 percent, the fifth consecutive year of increase, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That's up from a turnover rate of 66.7 percent in 2014.

Ed Crofton, a hotel and restaurant recruiter with Gecko Hospitality, sees this revolving door of workers on a regular basis. His mission is to match job seekers with employers in Hawaii and the Mainland.

"Whenever I see new hires leave a

company in less than 30 days, I would tell myself that there's a training problem, a selection problem, or a culture problem," he says.

But that's not always the case.

Some employers on Oahu create work environments that foster loyalty and enthusiasm. The telltale signs: Employees stay onboard for years, sometimes decades. Team members work together toward common goals with minimal conflict. And whenever a position opens—which is rare—a flood of resumes and applications vie for that spot.

How do companies gain that clout? And how do managers rally up employees, in good times and in bad?

To gain insight, *Hawaii Hospitality* spoke with Crofton, industry leaders and human resource specialists on Oahu. Here are their tips:



Ed Crofton

Be a Competitive Recruiter

Know of a hospitality worker who

might be a good fit for your team? Make your move. Fast. Tell the person about available positions and offer to connect with a hiring manager.

Crofton leaves his business card with hotel or restaurant workers who give him exceptional service. Usually, the majority are not actively seeking a new job, "then one day, they will call me," he says.

When a candidate is assessed, the first interview should last about one hour. In subsequent meetings, however, speediness is the key. "When management is slow to interview or not respond, that causes them to lose a good candidate," Crofton says.

The hiring process can move quickly if all managers and supervisors commit to the cause. At Cholo's Homestyle Mexican Restaurant on the North Shore, three managers set aside the time to meet with a job candidate, sometimes individually or as a group.

"That way, we can get a better perspective of not only their work skills, but their communication and social

skills,” says Nancy Salemi, owner of Cholo’s.

Restaurants in Hawaii—particularly inside kitchens—are experiencing labor shortages at a time when the state’s unemployment rate already is down.

As of June 2016, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Hawaii was 3.3 percent, compared to 4.9 percent nationally in the same month.



Gregg Fraser

“We have the lowest unemployment, and that hurts us,” says Gregg Fraser, executive director for the Hawaii Restaurant Association.

“You can’t drive on Ala Moana Boulevard not realizing we have a construction boom in the state. Candidates that could possibly be back-of-the-house are in the construction industry,” he says.

Spot the Red Flags

You can’t fake genuine kindness.

Good recruiters are quick to identify candidates who exude warmth, and those who do not.

Many years ago, hiring specialist Juan King worked for a company that assessed job seekers upon the first interview. When a recruiter met with a candidate, he or she would smile and offer a warm salutation. A smiling candidate passed the first assessment.



Juan King

“Money awards and other incentives ... foster a sense of excitement, but (are) exercised carefully to not confuse motivation with compensation.”

—JUAN KING, THE KAHALA HOTEL & RESORT

“No smile? No job,” recalls King, who now is the director of learning and development, human resources, of The Kahala Hotel & Resort. “If the applicant couldn’t offer a smile, they

didn’t have the right stuff.” Of course, the interview still went on as planned, and the straight-lipped candidate was treated with respect.

In the recruitment process, a red flag also should go up if a candidate does not have references, or immediately cannot provide a list of contacts.

“If somebody just left a job, I want to know why and will check their references because there may have been something that happened,” Crofton says.

Candidates should be able to state honest reasons for leaving previous jobs. Typically, kitchen workers quit for higher rank and more pay. Mean-time, hotel workers are drawn to other

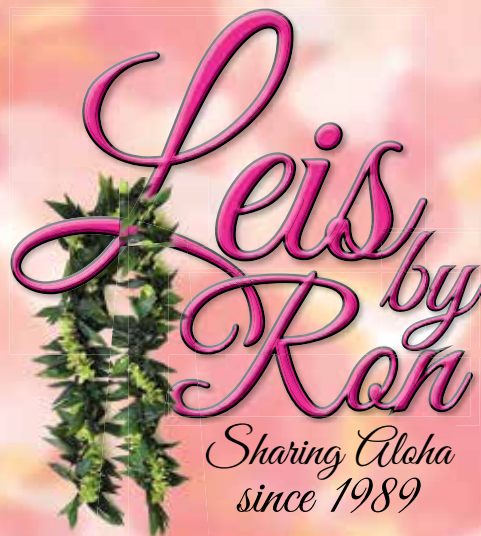
companies with better benefits and job advancement.

But what is an acceptable number of previous jobs? Hiring specialists say, “no more than two jobs in the past five



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years is the standard.”

That number is on the rise, however, as more Millennials (ages 18-35) shuffle around in the job markets. Unlike previous generations, Millennials rarely stay at a single company for more than a decade.

“It’s not because they haven’t done a good job,” Crofton says. “They think they’ve learned everything and are ready for new opportunities.”

“The fast pace can take a toll over time, so they’re treated with TLC as we are one big family.”

—NANCY SALEMI, CHOLO’S



Motivate and Recognize Employees

There are two surefire ways to attract top employees and discourage exits: Offer competitive wages and guarantee regular pay raises.

Crofton once had a restaurant client whose kitchen had an unusually high rate of turnover. “My client couldn’t keep anyone (in the back of house),” Crofton recalls. After a series of exit interviews, the restaurant client discovered his former employees left for similar jobs with significantly higher salaries.

At Cholo’s, the kitchen staff is critical to the restaurant’s success. Not only do back-of-house workers set the pace of service, but they also take pride in the kitchen’s efficiency and food quality. When the North Shore restaurant “hits certain numbers,” the Cholo’s kitchen staff is “bonused out, which helps them feel invested in the business,” Salemi says. “The fast pace can take a toll over time, so they’re treated with TLC as we are one big family.”

Hiring directors suggest another method to retain workers: A referral-bonus program. Whenever an existing employee’s referral is hired, that employee receives a one-time bonus.

The referral program promotes two things: A financial incentive for existing workers; and a company culture comprised of friends, relatives and like-minded people. “The likelihood is that employees will stay longer,” Crofton says.

Incentive programs aren’t always financial, however.

Employees at The Kahala publicly nominate their peers and celebrate achievements at a monthly Legendary Service luncheon. And the resort’s “Kahala Flower” program is a year-round activity encouraging employees and managers to recognize positive work.

“Money awards and other incentives are peppered throughout the activities to foster a sense of excitement, but exercised carefully

to not confuse motivation with compensation,” King says.

Encourage a Supportive Culture

Strong-performing companies have “managers and supervisors who truly care” because employees feel validated, Crofton says. The key is to create a nurturing, supportive environment.

One way to do that is to regularly communicate with team members. When an employee runs late for a shift or is a no-show, a good manager might already know the reason.

Perhaps the tardiness is related to family issues or lack of transportation. Or the chronic absenteeism is from the demands of a second job. Maybe an employee suffers from poor health—physical or mental.

Supportive managers are familiar with their employees’ personal lives outside of work. “You’re not going to



have a beer with them, but you're connecting with them and truly concerned about them," Crofton says.

Strong leaders understand this balancing act. At The Kahala, managers walk the fine line between "respecting and fostering employees' natural talents and not getting in the way," King says. "If we treat our employees as if they are the No. 1 asset in our business, then they will naturally care for our guests."

Salemi agrees. The "festive atmosphere" at Cholo's stems from "the camaraderie of working together in a fast-paced environment." All of the workers, including "the crossover from the front to the back of the house," are friends inside and outside of work.

Another way to create a supportive work environment is to overstaff, especially for hourly positions. "Always have four or five employees more than what you need," Crofton suggests. Overstaffing can be a challenge for some companies, as they already struggle to fill basic positions.

Crofton says overstaffing prevents employees from feeling overburdened when a team member fails to report to work. "It may cost you more money, but in the end, it will cost you money if you lose somebody today and have to interview and train another candidate tomorrow," he says.

Overstaffing also protects a company from becoming another statistic at the labor department: In 2015, the "quit" rate of hotels and restaurants was an alarming 50.3 percent.

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PHOTO COURTESY MATT BULGER

(Top) Weekly yoga classes are offered at the Ocean View Terrace at the Valley of the Temples Memorial Park. (Above) Yoga classes are a popular activity at the Kalani Honua Retreat Center.

BY MEREDITH ENOS

When friends took her to VINO & Vinyasa, the Moana Surfrider, a Westin Resort & Spa's monthly yoga session, Kaira Resch didn't know what to expect. "I was told it was going to be yoga on the beach; I thought it was going to be some small, informal thing on the sand, surrounded by tourists."

Instead, Resch, a Honolulu-based project manager, was pleasantly surprised. "They really make it an event. It's on the lawn, by the beach. It's a relaxing experience."

Launched in March 2014, VINO & Vinyasa is part of the Sheraton's "global initiative dedicated to enhancing the well-being of travelers around the world and locals in our very own community," says Shannon McAneeley, the Moana Surfrider's Spa Sales Manager.



Shannon McAneeley

The Surfrider is not alone; many properties across the state now see yoga as less of an exotic activity, and more of a way to connect to a lifestyle that both visitors and locals can enjoy, in ways that showcase their properties. For example, the newly renovated Kauai Shores offers complimentary morning yoga on



Kaira Resch

its oceanside lawn.

Other properties, like The Modern Honolulu, have more elaborate offerings. In addition to thrice-weekly yoga classes around its Sunset Pool, which is free for guests and \$15 for non-guests—comparable to the price of a class at a local yoga studio—and a monthly "Glow Flow Yoga," with body paint, black lights and a deejay spinning music.

Kalani Honua Retreat Center, a "nonprofit educational retreat center and eco-community" on the "Yoga Coast" of Puna on the Big Island, has seen a rise in interest in yoga and other wellness practices since opening in 1975. The center currently teaches more than 50 classes per week in more than 10 styles of yoga, and over 100 residential workshops annually.



Alexandra Slous

"Most recently, we have experienced tremendous growth in the demand for educational retreats such as Yoga Teacher Trainings as well as offerings in meditation, sound healing, dance and wellness-oriented events," says Alexandra Slous, marketing and communications director.

Kalani is hosting its fourth annual Hawaii Yoga Festival on Oct. 11-6.

"The Puna District and Hawaiian Islands have a wealth of resources and wisdom to share with regard to yoga and wellness practice," Slous says. "The Hawaii Yoga Festival aims to bring our community together for a celebration of life and the collective pursuit of well-being. We hope this festival helps position the Puna District as a 'must-visit' for yogis and spiritual seekers because of its rugged natural beauty, spectacular local sites and energetic power."

Yoga and meditation enthusiasts seeking a peaceful and inspiring setting are also attracted to the Ocean View Terrace at the renowned cemetery on the windward side of Oahu—the Valley of the Temples Memorial Park. The park offers three free and/or donation-based yoga and meditation sessions a week. Ocean View Terrace, built in June 2013, includes a heart-shaped garden. The park, with views of the Koolau Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, features a stream and a cascading waterfall.

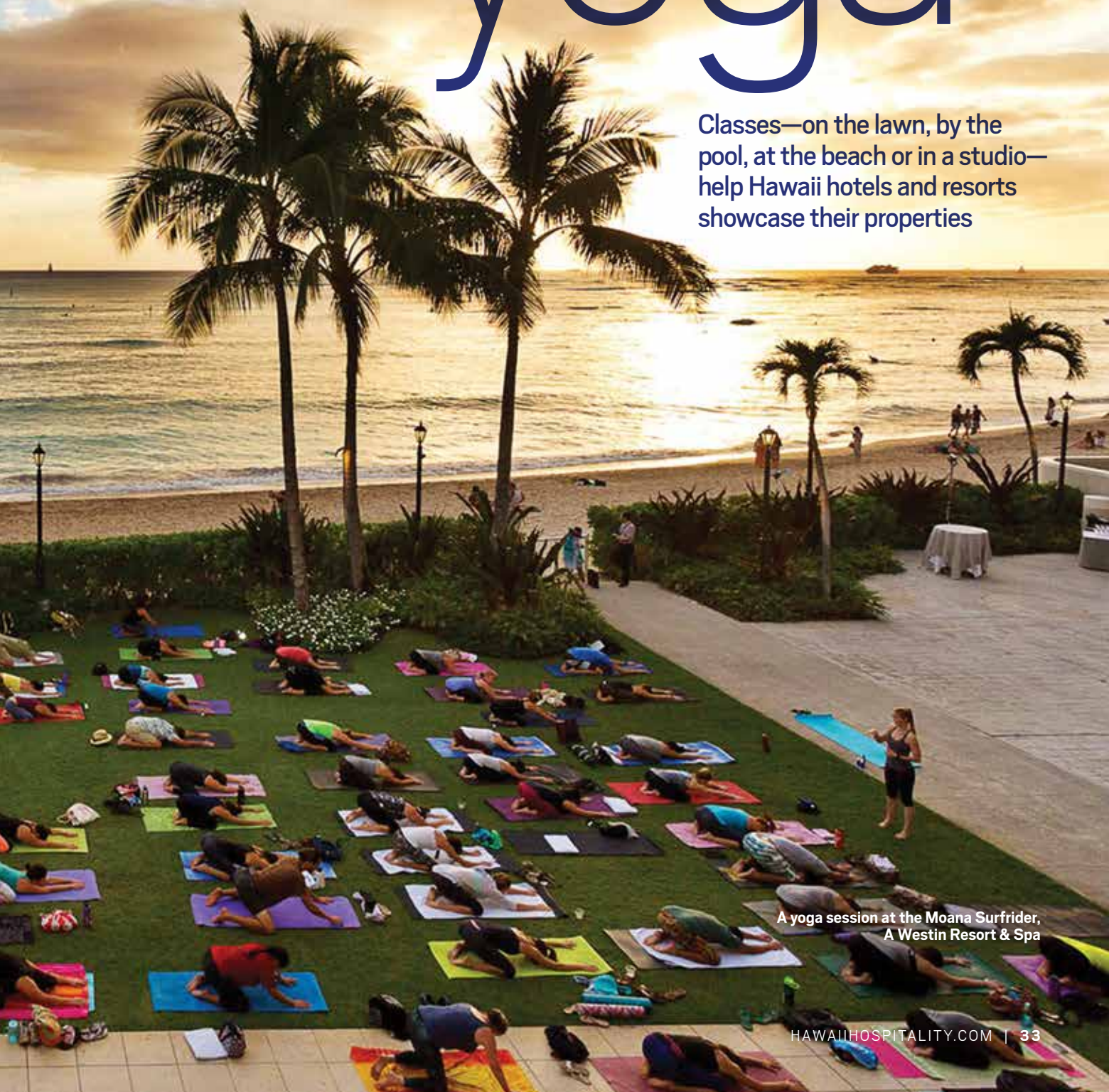
At the Moana Surfrider, it's not just about yoga: after class, attendees can have a glass of organic wine, some *pupu* and peruse local craft and clothing vendors.

"They are not in a rush to get everyone out the door, and I appreciate that," Resch says. "You can do yoga with people around the world, and we always have someone new hang out with us at the tables afterward."

"I've been there when there are about 100 people, but it's very low-key, very easy, very intimate," she adds. "There is music, but sometimes the teachers turn it off and instruct us to listen to the waves, watch the sunset. It's such a perfect setting."

Travelers Unwind with *yoga*

Classes—on the lawn, by the pool, at the beach or in a studio—help Hawaii hotels and resorts showcase their properties



A yoga session at the Moana Surfrider,
A Westin Resort & Spa

The Princess of Niihau was presented during last year's Aloha Festival floral parade. The opening ceremony (below) featured the hula *halau*, Ka La Onohi Mai o Haehae.

PHOTOS COURTESY ALOHA FESTIVALS

Aloha Festivals

An Economic Boon for Waikiki

BY CATHY CRUZ-GEORGE

Kalakaua Avenue from Sept. 9-24 will be the site of the annual Aloha Festivals, a weeklong celebration of music, food and art of the Hawaiian Islands.

This year's theme, "Halia Aloha" (treasured memories), marks the event's 70th anniversary and is a collective account of Hawaii's history, the *aina* (land) and *kanaka* (people).

The theme blends stories of "seafaring people reaching a new land, the rebirth of a chain of islands into a nation," says festival organizers. "The joyful sharing of life spread across the global community, celebrating the cornerstone of Hawaii's uniqueness, the Aloha Spirit."

Not only is Aloha Festivals an economic boon for Waikiki, but nearly 100,000 people attend the Hoolaulea (Sept. 17) and the Floral Parade

The Royal Grove is the *piko* of the Royal Hawaiian Center and the Helumoa.

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The Hawaiian Airlines Float in last year's floral parade.

PHOTO COURTESY ALOHA FESTIVALS



Aloha Festival Schedule

Friday, Sept. 9

Aloha Festivals Royal Court Investiture & Opening Ceremony, 5-7 p.m., Investiture – Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Coconut Grove

Opening Ceremony – Royal Hawaiian Center, Royal Grove. The *Alii*—king, queen, prince and princess—take their places in the 2016 Aloha Festivals Royal Court. Members of this year's court are *Moi Kane* (king) Dale Keolohilani Akeo, *Moi Wahine* (queen) Lynn Puanani Akeo, *Kamalii Kane* (prince) Louis Kahanuala'onapualeilani Akeo and *Kamalii Wahine* (princess) Lily Awatea Malama Ola Carrero.

Saturday, Sept. 17

Waikiki Hoolaulea, 7 p.m.
Kalakaua Avenue

A block party in Waikiki with food, entertainment and cultural activities.

Saturday, Sept. 24

70th Aloha Festivals Floral Parade, 9 a.m., Kalakaua Avenue from Ala Moana Park to Kapiolani Park

An equestrian procession of *pau* (long-skirted) riders, floral-covered floats, hula *halau*, marching bands and dignitaries along Kalakaua Avenue.

(Sept. 24), combined.

Out-of-town visitors comprise 48 percent and 49 percent of the Hoolaulea and parade, respectively.

Revenues stem from the sale of Aloha Festivals ribbons and merchandise. Major sponsors include the Hawaii Tourism Authority, City & County of Honolulu, Royal Hawaiian Center, Hawaiian Airlines, KFVE, Hawaiian 105 KINE, Christ Embassy Hawaii and Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

Since 1980, the Royal Hawaiian Center has provided a stage at the Waikiki



Hoolaulea and has sponsored a VIP parade-viewing stand. In addition, the Royal Hawaiian Center's Royal Grove hosts the *alii* opening ceremony with a traditional chant and hula *kahiko*.

"The Royal Grove is the *piko* of the Royal Hawaiian Center and the Helumoa," says Sam Shenkus, director of marketing for the center. "Princess Pauahi inherited Helumoa and was known as a gracious hostess."

The center's restaurants and Paina Lanai Food Court will be busy on the night of the Hoolaulea, she adds.

HRA Celebrates Hall of Fame Induction

Annual event includes 'Dine Around' with Hawaii's top chefs

The Hawaii Restaurant Association celebrates the 10th annual HRA Hall of Fame Induction and "Chefs of Aloha" Dine Around on Sept. 19 at Dole Cannery's Pomaikai Ballrooms.

The event begins with cocktails and reception at 5 p.m. The Dine Around, a highlight of the evening, begins at 6 p.m. followed by the Hall of Fame program.

Inductees are selected for their dedication to the growth, quality and image of Hawaii's restaurant and food service industry. The 2016 inductees:

- **On Oahu:** Mark Shishido, wine director at Alan Wong's; John Morton, vice president of the University of Hawaii Community Colleges; Edward Doty of Eagle Distributors/JMD Beverages; Alicia and Raymond Kam of



Hawaii Restaurant Association

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Alicia's Market; Mel and Lynn Tanioka of Tanioka's Seafood and Catering; David Nagaishi of Ocean House, Pounders at PCC; and Jacqueline Lau of Roy's Hawaii.

- **On Kauai:** Bob and Christine French of Brennecke's Beach Broiler.
- **On Maui:** Aaron Placourakis,

president and CEO of Tri Star Restaurant Group, JAS Restaurants and AMP Restaurants Ltd.

- **On Hawaii Island:** Debra Ching Maiava and Ric Maiava of Ken's House of Pancakes.

The "Chefs of Aloha" Dine Around will bring back chefs from the past nine celebrations, ranging from 2007's Chef Russell Siu of 3660 On The Rise/Ka-kaako Kitchen to last year's Chef Mark Noguchi of Mission Social Hall & Café.

New to this year's celebration, the HRA will honor two member businesses as Legacy Members. The honored members have been in business for 50 years or more, playing a major role in supporting the food service industry. The honorees are Zippy's Restaurants (FCH Enterprises), 50th-year anniversary, and Aloha Shoyu, 70th-year anniversary.

A portion of event proceeds will benefit culinary students statewide through the HRA Scholarship Program at the UH Community Colleges.

Thank you for 50 years of loyal patronage and many more to come!





Sleep Tight

Tackling bed bug infestations starts with identifying the problem

BY PRISCILLA PÉREZ BILLIG

The proliferation of travel has brought the ancient parasitic bed bug back with a vengeance, making it a common pest in Hawaii and across the U.S.—especially for lodging establishments where the turnover rate of occupants is constant.

Poor sanitation or housekeeping do not cause bed bug infestations. These insects are hardy hitchhikers and typically are transported on an individual's clothes or in luggage through domestic or international travel.

"Housekeeping needs to know what to look for," says Manny Lopez, owner of Magic Isle Spray Service, who recently gave a free inspection lesson to housekeepers and owners at the Castle Resorts & Hotels' Waikiki Grand Hotel. "They may not only be in the bed, but they may also be in baseboards and furniture. Stripping the bed and removing

Where to Look

- Check for rust-colored stains on bedsheets, mattress, bed skirt and pillow cases
- Closely check mattress seams
- Items stored under the bed
- Nightstands and all drawers
- Room furniture, whether padded or not
- Books in the room
- Closets

linen may just spread them more. If you have to strip the bed for treatment, use a garbage bag and segregate it."

Lopez recommends that housekeep-

ers conduct a quick-check inspection of the mattress for black spots (bug poop) and look for blood spots on the sheets. He says the head of the mattress, especially in seams, is a likely location for bed bug infestations.

"Pull up the mattress to inspect the bed skirt," Lopez says. "That's where you are going to find bed bugs because bed skirts are rarely changed. As it gets more infested, you will see more signs."

In Hawaii's ideal insect-breeding temperatures, the adult wingless bed bug grows to the size of an apple seed as it develops through five nymphal stages—all requiring blood for sustenance. While the bed bug is not known to spread disease, its nocturnal bite often causes red, itchy welts and, sometimes, allergic reactions.

"A bed bug will feed on you for 15 minutes," Lopez says. "It's the perfect bug because it will numb you first with



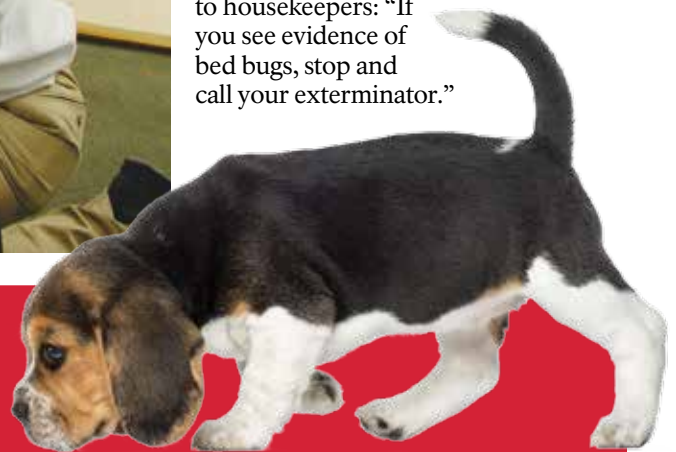
Disease Control issued a joint statement that reaffirmed that bed bugs are a public health pest.

Conventional treatments to rid a property of bed bugs usually involve steaming, vacuuming and chemical application. Still, housekeepers may be the first line of defense. Lopez' advice to housekeepers: "If you see evidence of bed bugs, stop and call your exterminator."

its saliva, then bite. That's why a lot of people, when they wake up, find they have bites all over them. They start itching and scratching and it just gets worse."

According to the National Pesticide Information Center, the steady rise of inquiries it has fielded over the past decade indicates that public awareness and concerns about bed bugs are on the rise. In 2010 the Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for

Canine Control



A recent trend in bed bug control is utilizing canine detection teams to pinpoint infestation areas because hiding places can be very hard to find. The bed bug dogs are trained to find the bed bugs in what is known as a sweep. The dog sweeps through suspected infestation areas and alerts to the scent of bed bugs.



Disney's Aulani celebrates its fifth year in Hawaii.

PHOTO COURTESY DISNEY AULANI

Aulani Sails into 5th Year in Hawaii

Disney resort at Ko Olina spreads aloha by supporting Islands' culture—and brings in special friends

BY CATHY CRUZ-GEORGE

To spread aloha on its five-year anniversary, Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa, has donated \$25,000 to Friends of Hokulea and Hawaiiloa, a nonprofit organization for the building and preservation of canoes. A one-sixth scaled model of the Hokulea also is on display in the Aulani's lobby.

The Disney-inspired resort has deep ties to the Hokulea. Prior to the Aulani's construction, Disney Imagineers sailed on the famed canoe and consulted master navigators about its design, which then was incorporated into the resort's architecture.

Cultural touches are evident throughout the Aulani, from educational programs for guests to entertainment cast members well-versed in local ways.

"Aulani Resort has been extremely proud to call West Oahu home for the past five years, and we're looking forward to continuing to share the vibrant culture of Hawaii—with a touch of Disney magic—with the world," says Nikki Moreno, public affairs director for the Aulani.

Since its Aug. 29, 2011 grand opening at Ko Olina resort, the Aulani has been recognized as one of the top choices for family vacations, staycations and spa treatments. The 351-room hotel and its accompanying timeshare villas, Disney Vacation Club, underwent a major expansion project in 2013, adding new dining venues, water-play features and more recreational space.

As a five-year anniversary treat for young guests, the Aulani has invited three new Disney friends to the prop-



erty. Pluto, Daisy Duck and ShellieMay (Duffy the Disney Bear's companion) will be spotted around the resort.

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HLTA, IUCN Honor 22 'Green' Hotels

The Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association (HLTA) and representatives of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) recognized 22 hotels that have met sustainability best practices through the Green Hotels Initiative and are participating in the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress hotel room block.

The hotels honored during a ceremony on Aug. 26 at the HLTA were the Ala Moana Hotel, Aqua Pacific Monarch, Aqua Palms Waikiki, Courtyard by Marriott Waikiki Beach, Double Tree Alana Waikiki, The Equus Hotel, Ewa Hotel Waikiki, Hawaii Prince Hotel Waikiki, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Holiday Inn Waikiki Beachcomber Resort, Luana Waikiki, Pagoda Hotel, Ohana Waikiki East, Ohana Waikiki Malia, Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach, Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort, The Royal Hawaiian, Ramada Plaza Waikiki, Sheraton Princess Kaiulani, Sheraton Waikiki Hotel, Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort and the White Sands Hotel.

The Green Hotels Initiative is a partnership between the IUCN, the Hawaii Green Business Program, HLTA, the Hawaii State Energy Office, Hawaii Tourism Authority and Kupu. The initiative has been supporting Hawaii's hotels in meeting sustainability best practices for the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress, and has helped prepare hotel room blocks by implementing a three-level program to certify and recognize green practices in hotels.

Kunia Country Farms Wins Gold

The Institute for Sustainable

Infrastructure (ISI) has presented the Envision Gold award to Hawaii's Kunia Country Farms project, one of the largest commercial aquaponics farms and producers of leafy greens in Hawaii. Owned by partners **Jason Brand**, **Cary Takenaka** and **C. Scott Wo**, Kunia Country Farms is the first private corporation and first entity in Hawaii to receive Envision sustainable infrastructure recognition.

Kunia Country Farms grows local produce in a manner that minimizes wastes, achieves economic sustainability and helps reduce Hawaii's food dependence on imports. The project won the Gold for its focus on the development and implementation of Zero Impact Farming, which minimizes water and electricity use, soil degradation, pollution and other environmental economies, and maximizes land efficiency, labor efficiency and the production process.

Chef Jenkins Heads Stripsteak Waikiki

Benjamin Jenkins is the executive chef of Michael Mina's Stripsteak Waikiki at the International Market Place. Located on the third-level Grand Lanai, the 8,600-square-foot modern American steakhouse offers contemporary fare with a focus on all-natural certified beef cooked over mesquite wood.

A 1998 graduate of the New England Culinary Institute, Jenkins joined Mina's team more than 15 years ago as a cook at Aqua in San Francisco and then as sous chef at The Mansion in Las Vegas.



Benjamin Jenkins

In 2003 Mina offered Jenkins a position at Nobhill Tavern and later at SeaBlue as executive sous chef.

Jenkins was promoted to executive chef in 2005 and later moved to Stripsteak at Mandalay Bay before working as executive chef of the Michael Mina restaurant at the Bellagio.

Ritz-Carlton Appoints Anderson

Dean Anderson, whose sales and marketing experience includes the 2009



Dean Anderson

launch of Trump International Hotel Waikiki Beach Walk, has been appointed director of resort sales and marketing for The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach.

Anderson will oversee and direct

all strategic global sales and marketing initiatives for the luxury resort, which opened in July and is the first Ritz-Carlton Residences on Oahu. The position comes through RCWB LLC, sales and marketing agent for the property and a subsidiary of Irongate, the resort's developer.

Most recently, Anderson served as corporate vice president of sales and marketing at Castle Resorts & Hotels. Other past positions include director of sales and marketing at Destination Resorts Hawaii and director of revenue management at The Fairmont Kea Lani on Maui.

Anderson graduated from Iolani School and holds a master's in Japanese Business Studies from Chaminade University and an MBA from the Thunderbird School of Global Management in Glendale, Ariz.



Kunia Country Farms

PHOTO BY ARI ESPAY

Hale Koa Hotel Hires 4

Hale Koa Hotel has named **Jack Smithback** chief engineer, **John Shoda**



Jack Smithback



John Shoda



Bernice Fielding



Sonny Wasim

as rooms division manager, **Bernice Fielding** as landscaping superintendent and **Sonny Wasim** as assistant director of food and beverage operations in charge of front-of-the-house operations.

Overseeing all resort facilities, Smithback has been a single- and multi-property chief engineer for more than 20 years. Shoda, with 26 years of hospitality experience on Maui and in Korea, Japan, Las Vegas and Pebble Beach, oversees housekeeping, reservations, front office, bell desk and aquatics departments.

Fielding focuses on creating sustainable landscape design and horticultural beautification projects with a team of landscaping professionals. Wasim's 30-year hospitality

career includes management positions at the Willard Intercontinental, Hilton Embassy Row and the Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C.

Gesteuyala, Cho Join Hampton Inn & Suites

Aqua-Aston Hospitality and DeBartolo Development announce appointments of **Wade Gesteuyala** as general manager and



Wade Gesteuyala



Leslie Cho

served as the general manager of Hawaii Prince Hotel Waikiki and has two decades of industry experience.

Cho will develop and implement strategic sales plans for the hotel. She was manager at the Ala Moana Hotel and has more than 25 years of hospitality experience with various hotel brands.

"Wade and Leslie will be the cornerstones of this property. They play integral roles in the success of this hotel and will be instrumental in providing exceptional customer service to our guests," says Matt Bailey, Aqua-Aston Hospitality president and CEO.

White Takes Post at Castle

Castle Resorts & Hotels has named **Diane White** as reservation sales center manager. She will



Diane White

train, lead and direct all agents and generate revenue for the hotel and resort management company's 23 properties in Hawaii and New Zealand. White brings more than 20 years of hospitality experience to her position. Recently she served as guest services manager at the Maile Sky Court where she was responsible for maximizing revenue for the 596-

Leslie Cho as director of sales for Hawaii's first Hampton Inn & Suites by Hilton. Currently under construction in Kapolei's new Ka Makana Alii shopping center, the 175-room hotel is set to open this fall.

Gesteuyala will lead all aspects of hotel operations, including guest services and satisfaction, hotel administration and overseeing marketing efforts. Previously, he

room hotel. White also managed daily reservations and front-of-house operations, overseeing a staff of 20. She previously held positions in the areas of human resources, sales and hotel management for Castle Resorts & Hotels, Aqua Resorts and Hotels and Aston Hotels and Resorts.

Hilton Garden Inn Picks Lead Team

Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach's executive team includes **John Taffin** as



John Taffin



Stacy Manzo



Terri Racine

general manager, **Stacy Manzo** as director of sales and marketing, **Terri Racine** as director of revenue and **Thushara Perera** as director of finance.

Previously, Taffin was chief operating officer with CoHo Services where he managed 12 hotels and was executive vice president of Red Lion Hotels and Cavanaugh's/West Coast Hotels. He served in a governor-appointed position on the State of Washington Tourism Commission and was an executive and former president of the Washington Lodging Association.

Manzo is a 31-year industry veteran with sales and marketing expertise in the wholesale and online travel agency markets repositioning Turtle Bay Resort, Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort and Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort. She oversaw sales and marketing efforts of the property sales, catering and reservations staff at the Aqua Kauai Beach Resort, served in sales leadership positions with Starwood Hotels & Resorts and the Hotel Valencia Santana Row in San Jose, Calif.

Racine is experienced in four- and five-star franchise properties and has more than 26



John Morton, UH vice president for community colleges, discusses the new Culinary Institute of the Pacific with Daniel Hilton (center) and Noel Trainor (right).

years of experience in operations, sales, marketing and revenue management. Racine was director of revenue at The Modern Honolulu during the hotel's transition to an independent property.

Perera previously served as director of finance at Oahu's Turtle Bay Resort. He began his career as a valet parker at the Four Seasons Hotel in Newport Beach, Calif. while earning his undergraduate degree. He was part of the opening of Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley as assistant director of finance.

Hilton Tours Diamond Head CIP Site

Daniel Hilton, son of Barron Hilton and grandson of the late founder of Hilton Hotels Conrad Hilton, was in Hawaii in late July to tour the construction site of the Culinary Institute of the Pacific at Diamond Head.

When finished, the CIP will house the advanced patisserie and confiserie courses of Kapiolani Community College's current associate in science pastry arts degree. In 2008, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation made a \$5 million matching gift to support the culinary school.

The new CIP is being built at the former U.S. Army Fort Ruger Cannon Club site on the northern slope of the Diamond Head monument. The new CIP will occupy 40,000 square feet on 7.8 acres and will have two laboratory buildings, a classroom building, an administrative and faculty office facility and a culinary amphitheater in addition to a restaurant designed to serve the public as well as a training site for students.

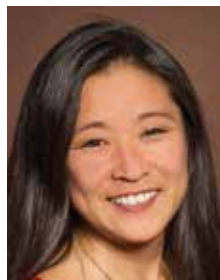
Jacobsen Construction is general contractor on the project, which was designed by the architecture firm Ferraro Choi and Associates Inc.

"The Culinary Institute will give Hawaii's students access to affordable, world-class culinary training from top chef instructors from industry and internationally-renowned guest chefs, preparing them for success in their chosen field," says Noel G. Trainor, former general manager for Hilton Hawaiian Village and currently president of Savoy Independent Hospitality Consultants. "Graduates from the program will greatly enrich our hospitality sector and help secure Hawaii's global reputation as a culinary destination of choice."

Joining Hilton and Trainor on the tour were University of Hawaii and UH Foundation leaders. Hilton and Trainor also visited the UH John A. Burns School of Medicine and the UH Cancer Center.

Leong-Lyons Returns to Hyatt Waikiki

Rodahl Leong-Lyons has been named director of operations for the Hyatt Regency Waikiki Beach Resort and Spa resort.



Rodahl Leong-Lyons

Asia Pacific at Hyatt Hotels Corporation in Hong Kong.

Leong-Lyons returns to Waikiki with her husband Michael, another alumnus of Hyatt Regency Waikiki Beach, and two daughters.

Graf Named to OPMA Board

Castle Resorts & Hotels Vice President of Operations **Robin Graf** has been



Robin Graf

appointed to the Onsite Property Management Association (OPMA) Board of Directors.

Graf currently oversees operations of Castle Resorts & Hotels' 24 properties in Hawaii and New Zealand. His past experience includes general manager positions for such companies as Halekulani, Outrigger and Aqua Hotels & Resorts and senior management positions with local companies including Hyatt Hotels and Resorts, Hilton Hawaiian and Waikoloa Village.

New Managers at Hawaii Prince

Charles "Chuck" Abbott has been named general manager and **Randi Fernandez** as hotel manager at Hawaii Prince Hotel



Charles Abbott

Waikiki and Golf Club.

Abbott previously served as regional vice president for Starwood Hotels and Resorts and oversaw 31 hotels in Southeast Asia.

At Starwood for 35 years, he has served as general manager at several properties. A graduate of Michigan State University, Abbott has taught at the University of Guam's School of Business and Tourism.



Randi Fernandez

Born in Honolulu, a graduate of Kamehameha Schools and having earned a master's degree at the University of Hawaii, Fernandez has more than 16 years of industry experience.

Transforming Tourism in Hawaii

In my first 15 months leading the Hawaii Tourism Authority, our team has focused on improving collaboration within Hawaii's No. 1 industry, marketing to support the business interests of our partners and positioning Hawaii to reach the travelers of tomorrow.

Those qualities will be at the forefront of the Hawaii Tourism Conference, taking place Sept. 26-30. I encourage you to register for the conference and see how Hawaii's tourism industry of today, and especially tomorrow, can benefit your future.

The theme for the conference says it all: Transforming Tourism Together.

HTA is evolving this year's conference format to sharpen its focus and better address Hawaii's future in the evolving global marketplace. What you will experience is intriguing insight, more engagement by participants and a heightened effort to generate new business opportunities.

HTA is bringing together experts from various industries, markets and travel interests, both locally and internationally, to share best practices and network with participants on how Hawaii businesses can embrace the future of travel.

The new multi-track schedule will allow participants to customize their conference experience by selecting the sessions, workshops and panels most relevant to their interests. Moderators will encourage interaction from participants, not simply to ask questions, but to offer opinions and solicit answers on how their business can benefit in the global travel market.

Technology and its ever-growing influence on travel will be a central theme throughout the conference. To this end, HTA has developed a custom conference app that offers personalized scheduling, live audience polling and enables one-on-one networking opportunities. To successfully collaborate, we need to stay connected.

HTA will debut our virtual reality marketing of the Hawaiian Islands, a program certain to spark interest from travelers worldwide. Plus, we are going to present a sneak peek of the new GoHawaii website that is slated to launch in 2017.

Much discussion will be devoted to preserving the Hawaiian culture, protecting our beautiful environment, and perpetuating sustainable tourism—qualities that are the core to ensuring Hawaii remains a cherished place to

live and a dream destination for travelers worldwide.

Every business and resident in Hawaii benefits by having a vibrant tourism industry, especially those who provide consumer services, products and merchandise.

We are fortunate that Hawaii is on track for a fifth consecutive record-setting year for visitor arrivals and expenditures. But as we all know, success in tourism is never guaranteed. We always need to plan, take action and collaborate with our travel industry partners, both here and overseas, to constantly strengthen our opportunities for continued success.

That's the overriding objective of this year's Hawaii Tourism Conference—positioning the tourism industry and its partners for success in the future.



I hope you will join us. To register, visit hawaii-tourism-conference.com.

George Szigeti is president and CEO of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA), the state's tourism agency.

Why Food Safety is So Important

You may have seen or heard a lot about the spread of Hepatitis A in Hawaii recently. It was reported that 226 Hepatitis A cases (as of Aug. 24) have been discovered. The Hawaii Department of Health located the actual product that started the problem.

It is important to remember that the restaurant that was announced to have the product was just as surprised as everyone else. It's also good to note that none of the over 600 employees that work in the restaurant's 11 locations had the Hepatitis A virus. In fact, only 4 percent of the people that were diagnosed with Hepatitis A work in the food service industry.

It is important for everyone to know the facts about Hepatitis A and how

to protect themselves from infection. But also know that once the business is informed and takes measures to solve the problem, it is safe to go back to those businesses again. Just as it is still safe to fly your favorite local airline, any restaurant named in the media with this issue, is safe to return to and bring your friends and family.

As a precaution, the Hawaii Restaurant Association is doing what we can to assist businesses in getting their employees vaccinated, both at the pharmacies and hosting clinics at their place of business. Employers should strongly suggest that all their staff get a Hepatitis A vaccination shot, in addition to ensuring that they all follow the rules of proper handwashing set forth

by the DOH.

The other thing that we can all do is support and frequent those businesses that have been affected by this issue. If it was your business, you would hope that people would start coming back immediately after the problem is addressed. They all need our support.

Gregg Fraser is executive director of the Hawaii Restaurant Association. He can be reached at gregg.fraser@hawaii-restaurant.org or 808-944-9105. For more information about the HRA visit www.hawaii-restaurant.org.



Rockin' from HYPE to HIP

A few months ago the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association successfully launched our newest committee called HYPE (Hospitality's Young Professionals & Entrepreneurs) at the fresh and hip outdoor lounge and nightclub, SKY Waikiki. The event gathered a crowd of nearly 200 people and had rave reviews from millennials in hospitality and seasoned veterans alike.

The evening proved that those in Hawaii's hospitality sector not only know how to have a good time, but are excited to get together and enjoy a night with fellow industry contemporaries.

With the successful HYPE launch party as a model, HLTA and SKY Waikiki decided to start an "industry night" in Waikiki. From this, HLTA, in partnership with SKY Waikiki, the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser* and Hawaii.com introduced a new monthly networking event called HIP: Hospitality Industry Pau Hana at SKY Waikiki.

This initiative, taking place every first Wednesday of the month, is a fun-filled evening of fellowship, networking, live entertainment and door prizes. What's more, HIP celebrates and says *mahalo* to members of our hospitality industry—Hawaii's leading economic industry sector. At each HIP event, HLTA recognizes one outstanding individual for his or her hard work and contribution to the state's leading industry with a Kahiau Award (meaning "selfless generosity").

In our inaugural HIP on July 6, we presented the Kahiau Award to Thelma "Ke-haulani" Kam, director of cultural services at Starwood Hotels & Resorts. Kam has been with Star-



View from SKY Waikiki



Thelma Kam



Troy Hiura



HAWAII LODGING & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

wood since the day the Sheraton Waikiki Resort opened its doors in June 1971. She is a recognized leader among her co-workers and peers and is a gracious ambassador for the hotel chain. She has also volunteered with every Charity Walk for the past 38 years and is actively involved with the Aloha United Way. Kam has been lauded locally by HLTA and by our national partner AHLA for

her outstanding accomplishments as a manager and employee.

Our August HIP celebrated the dedicated efforts of Troy Hiura, an extraordinary bellperson from the Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort. Hiura is also a genuine ambassador of aloha who exudes his authentic Hawaiian hospitality by going as far as personally treating guests to local dining spots and attractions. Many locals have also commented on Hiura's inimitable aloha spirit that one can't help but notice when you meet him. He has left a lasting positive impression on everyone he comes into contact with that makes them want to return to the Outrigger.

HIP is open to all employees and guests of HLTA members. A \$25 admission charge for members and member-employees includes one complimentary wine, beer or soft drink (provided by Young's Market Company and Heineken) and SKY Waikiki's award-winning pupus and first-class live entertainment. Nonmembers are assessed a \$30 fee and an opportunity to join HLTA. Registration is available online at www.hawaiilodging.org.

Mufi Hannemann is president and CEO of the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association (HLTA).

The collage displays a variety of media owned by OPI. At the top left is the **Star Advertiser** with a large '2' for the Rio Olympics. Next to it is the **Garden Island** newspaper. To the right is the **West Hawaii Today** with a headline about money talks. Below these are several other publications: **Maui Hospitals** (a magazine), **Waikomo Road project deferred again**, **Isle residents inundate pharmacies as officials push hepatitis A vaccine**, **HI LUXURY** magazine featuring Marcus Mariota, **KAHALA Life** magazine, **101 THINGS TO DO** magazine, and a screenshot of the **Hawaii.com** website showing a 'King Kamehameha Celebration' and 'HAWAII VACATION' packages.

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