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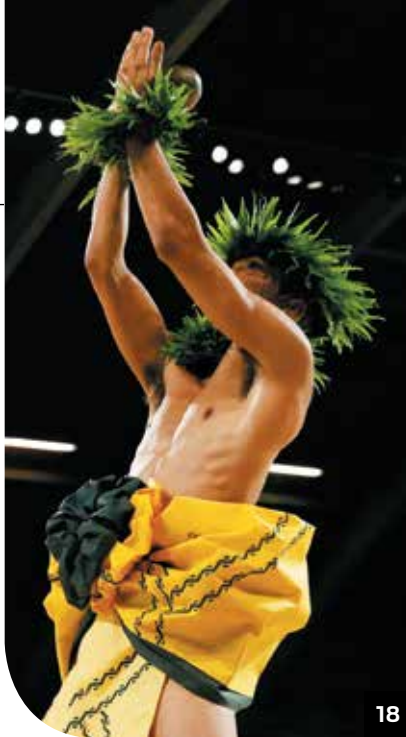
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checking in

Hula's 'Super Bowl'

The countdown has begun toward the 55th annual Merrie Monarch Festival in Hilo. Hawaii County will host the yearly show on April 1-7—an event that the renamed The Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau hails as a “cultural Super Bowl.”

Leaders in Hawaii's tourism industry offer their thoughts on travel and lodging trends for 2018. They tell *Hawaii Hospitality* that the Islands' visitors want more cultural experiences, great grinds and luxury space to play in.

Hotels and resorts work diligently to make themselves more attractive to tourists, and this year is no exception as renovations are taking place at several major properties. In this issue we report on construction upgrades in Waikiki and across the Islands.

Hawaii's hospitality industry is embracing new technologies and using apps that helps them cater to guests' wishes five times faster than ever. Read out report inside.

Don Chapman talks story with Chef Nico Chaize, who has opened a second Nico's on Oahu.

Aloha!

Editor
david@tradepublishing.com

HAWAII hospitality

Editor

David Putnam

Associate Editor

Brandon Bosworth

Assistant Editor

Brett Alexander-Estes

Contributing Editors

Don Chapman

Cathy Cruz-George

Director of Advertising

Barry Redmayne

Advertising Manager

Charlene Gray

Senior Account Executives

Ann Marie Ingham

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Advertising Administrator

Lorraine Cabanero

Controller

Tracy Kalahiki

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Austin Popa

Chairman & President

Carl Hebenstreit

Publisher & CEO

Ken Berry

Assistant Publisher

Amanda Canada

Associate Publishers

Karen Sayuri Berry

Barry Redmayne

287 Mokauea St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Tel: (808) 848-0711 | Fax: (808) 841-3053
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Nico's Catches On in Kailua

Chaize shrugs off the glam of being an owner-chef in paradise

There is one obvious question for Chef **Nico Chaize**, whose overwhelming success at Pier 38 starting in 2004 forced him into a bigger space across the parking lot in 2012, which has been so successful that he's now expanded with a second Nico's, in Kailua.

The question nearly a year after its April 2017 opening: Are you planning to franchise?

"No," he says with a shudder, thinking of all the work that has gotten him to this point. "No, no. The concept of Nico's is fresh fish at good prices from the fish auction."

His early morning visit to the fish auction, also at Pier 38, "that's the most important part of the day."

He buys about 2,000 pounds of fish a day, and availability and price drive what's on his menu and what it will cost customers: "We have to be really careful about that."

The new Nico's is the old Pinky's, and before that the old Yum Yum Tree, in the Aikahi area.

"I live in Kaneohe, and I'd been looking at this space for quite a while when it was Pinky's," Nico says. "You could see business was slow, they had issues. But it has its own parking lot, I thought the building was cute, and it's on the water."

It's not quite Pier 38 at Honolulu Harbor, but the canal that meanders down from Kawainui Marsh does indeed add a nice on-the-water touch.

Those who knew the old Pinky's say Nico has given it a bright, airy feel.

"I did the demo work myself," he says. "We filled up three big dumpsters." Then he set about to "refresh a restaurant that had not been taken care of. . . . It was built in 1982 and it showed." So he updated plumbing, put up walls, built the bar, set up the kitchen.

Oh, the glamorous life of an owner-chef.

Folks on the Windward side have no-



Nico Chaize outside his Kailua restaurant

ticed. These days, he says, lunches are solid, there's a fun bar scene, and diners are busy. "Live music in the evening Wednesday, Friday and Saturday—we're trying to bring some fun to Kailua."

Given his success, and background growing up in Lyon, France, it's a wonder he was not drawn to the kitchen earlier in life.

"Growing up in Lyon was a wonderful thing, a world capital of gastronomy—but you don't realize it so much until you move away. It was a part of life, everybody cooks. The recipes we learned from our grandmothers, mothers, grandfathers, fathers, cooking family meals. I had one great uncle who was chef for **Prince Rainier** and **Princess Grace** in Monaco. So Christmas dinner was very good—unfortunately, we only saw him for Christmas."

"I used to go shopping as a kid and have **Paul Bocuse** next to me in the market in Lyon—he just died a couple of weeks ago. So I grew up in a cooking environment."

Still, the furthest he got in a French kitchen was washing dishes. But he moved to Los Angeles with the intent

of learning to cook, and landed a job at a French bakery in Marina del Rey.

"I learned a lot there, and I learned a lot on my own—I went to the library and checked out cooking books, and bought more cooking books, and I'd cook at home."

Soon he was cooking for **Juliana Cook**, a Honolulu native. They met at a reggae nightclub and arranged lunch the next day. Talk about a life-altering encounter. Long story short, he would work as sous chef at a couple of fine dining restaurants in LA, then moved with Juliana to Hawaii. His first job was at Haleiwa Joe's in Kaneohe, and he would go on to work at Kakaako Kitchen, The Bistro at Century Center and Michel's.

And then his father-in-law **Jim Cook** came up with an idea that blossomed into the first Nico's. Cook and partner **Sean Martin** own POP Fishing Supply at Pier 38, and offered Nico 600 square feet of space to open a restaurant.

"It was a tiny little spot—Pier 38 did not exist, it wasn't on the map," Nico

Continued on Page 26



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5 Tips to Becoming a Better Hotel Manager

From motivating to delegating, running a top-notch property requires getting the most from your team

BY DEAN ELPHICK

A lot of effort goes into making a hotel successful, and much of that responsibility falls into the lap of the hotel manager. Regardless of the size or location of a hotel, the hotel manager needs to work cohesively with other team members to get the job done.

If you manage a hotel, you are probably always seeking advice on ways that you can improve your skills and become a better manager. We have compiled some tips and tricks to help you better manage a hotel and improve the operations at your property.

1. Be a motivator for your hotel staff

Successful hotel management relies heavily on a manager being able to motivate staff members to accomplish their own individual tasks and goals with gusto.

The best hotel managers are able to recruit top staff members for available positions, and continue to motivate them to do well by listening to them, evaluating their performance and rewarding them when they exceed expectations.

One of the best ways to motivate hotel staff members is to be a

manager who leads by example. Always be willing to do the work necessary to get the job done, even when it lies outside your normal range. This will earn their respect and admiration.

2. Be confident and make informed decisions

The hotel manager is required to make the most important decisions at the hotel, and it's necessary for you to be able to take quick, decisive action at a moment's notice.

As the leader, it is up to you to be able to make informed decisions that will produce the best results possible for the hotel.

A lack of confidence or displaying doubt in front of staff will lower morale and trust, leading to a decrease in performance that flows into the guest experience.

3. Always focus on the big picture

It's easy to get lost in the day-to-day details of running a hotel property, and it is important for hotel managers to stay informed of daily activity at the hotel. However, it's also the role of the manager to focus on the big picture while letting staff members

take care of their daily responsibilities.

You should be creating short-term goals for your team members that lead to long-term results, such as increasing revenue year-over-year, boosting direct bookings and improving the conversion rate on the hotel website.

4. Stay informed of industry trends and news

A good hotel manager is a knowledgeable hotel manager. You should create time in your daily routine to consume news from the most reliable industry sources. You could spend 30 minutes in the morning over a cup of coffee reading blogs, browsing Twitter feeds and catching up on industry news.

Knowing current trends and understanding the opinions of trusted experts will ultimately have a big impact on the decisions you make regarding the long-term success of your hotel.

5. Spend time in the hotel

It's easy to spend endless hours in the office, but it's important that you don't become disconnected from your property.

After the morning staff meeting, make it a point to spend time in the lobby greeting guests and discussing feedback with them. Regularly visit the kitchens, the laundry facilities and the common areas.

By being present in your hotel, you will have a better understanding of what needs to be done to make it a successful property.

In many ways, hotel management is an art form. Balancing your own unique approach with industry trends and technology is a delicate task, but these are all things you need to rely on to be successful.

This article first appeared at siteminder.com, an online cloud platform for hotels.





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the **RENOVATION** *race*

Island hotels upgrading
amid growing competition

BY BRETT ALEXANDER-ESTES



As Isle visitor counts keep climbing, so are multimillion-dollar renovations at Hawaii hotels. The Alohilani Resort Waikiki Beach, formerly the Pacific Beach Hotel, is in the final stages of its \$115 million renovation, which is being performed by general contractor Nan Inc. And renovations at the Queen Kapiolani Hotel are currently underway.

Both are poised to take advantage of Hawaii's rising visitor count.

In 2017, Hawaii hotel occupancy increased by 1 percent and revenue per available room (RevPAR) grew by 5.4 percent, according to data compiled by STR Inc. The STR report's findings were issued by the Hawaii Tourism Authority's Tourism Research Division.

Occupancy at some competing destinations, however, is even better.

STR reports 2017 occupancy increases in Miami/Hialeah, Bangkok, Phuket and Bali all bested Hawaii. Occupancy at Cabo San Lucas posted an increase of 7.1 percent and a 25 percent gain in RevPAR.

Current renovations—some targeting specific markets and demographics—are designed to push Hawaii ahead of the pack.

A Local Monarch Returns

The Queen Kapiolani Hotel, a venerable landmark presiding over the approach to Diamond Head, is currently undergoing a \$35 million renovation. The hotel is staying open during construction, which is expected to wrap in 3Q 2018.

"Queen Kapiolani Hotel is being renovated and re-launched to tell a story, with a design that is a throwback to the history of sun-soaked days gone by, perfectly complemented by the amenities and comforts of modern aloha," says Jeff Perkins, general manager at the Queen Kapiolani Hotel.

Sheryl Seaman, G70 project architect, says client ProspectHill LLC, an investment group based in San Francisco, is "intimately involved in the conception and execution of the design work"

Queen Kapiolani's new restaurant lanai and pool deck offers spectacular views of Waikiki and the Pacific.

RENDERINGS
COURTESY PHIL-
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The new Queen Kapiolani lobby is designed to capture the elegance of Hawaiian-style living.

RENDERINGS COURTESY PHILPOTTS INTERIORS

along with other design team members. These include G70, interior designer Philpotts Interiors and construction manager The John Hardy Group (JHG).

ProspectHill acquired the Mauna Lani Bay Hotel last year, and JHG recently completed the Hyatt Centric Waikiki Beach renovation.



Jeff Perkins

“a natural flow for guests from the porte cochère to the lobby itself.”

One of the most exciting features, Perkins says, is “our outdoor living-room concept, where guests and locals alike can kick back and soak up all that Waikiki’s unexplored edge has to offer; an on-site surf school and board storage facility; and our third-floor pool deck, which in addition to unparalleled views of Diamond Head, the beach and the park, will also be home to internationally acclaimed culinary sensation Plan Do See’s first concept in Hawaii.”

All of the

“Queen Kapiolani Hotel will become known as the locals’ hangout. Guests and locals alike can soak up all that Waikiki’s unexplored edge has to offer.”

— JEFF PERKINS

The Lanai Life

The team’s vision for the Queen Kapiolani is to “treat the lobby as a large lanai that welcomes the guests and provides a respite from the busy streets of Waikiki,” says Seaman, adding that the lobby’s open-air design provides

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The Rooftop Restaurant features trellises over the lanai and an expansive open-air lounge.

315 guestrooms will be renovated, but the hotel's mid-century exterior will be preserved, Seaman says.



Sheryl Seaman

Total public area renovation is about 215,778 square feet, and also includes the second floor atrium with new administrative offices, a state-of-the-art

fitness center, a tour agent venue and a self-service business center.

Seaman says guests of the renovated hotel "will most likely be a mix of east-and west-bound visitors of varying ages. Large meeting/convention travelers are not the target."

Perkins is even more specific: "Queen Kapiolani Hotel will become known as the locals' hangout," he says. "We want our property to be the place where you can enjoy a great staycation, store your board and grab a quick breakfast after a dawn patrol, or sip cocktails and watch Diamond Head glow at sunset."

A Competitive Edge

With the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism predicting growth ahead for Hawaii's visitor industry, the Queen Kapiolani may be unique in that it is also targeting an untapped market—local residents.

The renovated hotel's marketing and programming, Perkins says, "will be curated to offer a lifestyle-centric, experiential destination to the community."



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The Queen Kapiolani's new Grab & Go coffee bar is designed in the shape of a Hawaiian fish hook.

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*"Large meeting/
convention travelers
are not the target."*

— SHERYL SEAMAN



The Wow! Factor

Philpotts Interiors, Grand Overall Winner of the 2017 ASID Design Excellence Awards, is bringing its flawless *kamaaina* aesthetic to the Queen Kapiolani Hotel.

"Our goal with the interior design was

to create a relaxed, comfortable, and casual atmosphere tailored to the needs of today's traveler, while seamlessly integrating an iconic time in



Kristie Kiggins

Waikiki's history," says Kristie Kiggins, Philpotts senior designer.

The third-floor deck may become a style icon, too—it's the hotel's "Wow Factor," Kiggins says. "The pool, restaurant and private dining rooms have an incredible panoramic view of Diamond Head, Kapiolani Park and Waikiki Beach." Décor is clean mid-century modern, and the restaurant has the casual vibe of a beach bar.

At street level, the open-air lanai will create an engaging experience and connect guests to Kapahulu Avenue and Kapiolani Park.

"Kapiolani Park was, and still is, the centerpiece of Waikiki where sports, recreation, cultural and family-oriented activities take place," Kiggins says. "For visitors today, the park is a resource for interaction with our community, and an opportunity to be a part of the relaxed Hawaiian lifestyle."



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Bring Specificity to Your Tables

Hotel restaurants must go beyond the basics as frequently as chefs and sources can allow

BY LARRY MOGELONSKY

Just as they did a century ago, hotel restaurants have a mantle to uphold by striving to be culinary leaders in their respective locales. To do so in today's competitive foodservice landscape, however, requires constant ingenuity.

Everyone knows about the big push to offer healthier options, incorporate any purported superfoods and raise the profile of local producers through farm-to-table programs. By now your team already have these three well in hand.

Here are five more to consider. These include information gleaned from Mintel Group Ltd.'s (mintel.com/menu-insights) reports on global food and drink trends for 2018.

1. Allergies Abound

Fully in sync with the proliferation of individuals with various food sensitivities, every restaurant must first and foremost oblige these customers with total ingredient transparency. That means indicating everything used for the menu and more detailed buffet signage. Whether or not you decide to adjust your menu to accommodate those with allergies is secondary to this. But know that this has implications for other common trends like vegan (no animal products), gluten-free (no bread) or paleo dieting (think cauliflower-based faux-rice or faux-mash

potatoes) where more and more such alternative options are influencing where people choose to eat. This is also a particular challenge for banqueting, where the more components you have on a dish translates to the greater potential for substitution requests and a bottleneck in the kitchen.

2. Reducing Food Waste

Not only is food waste a leading environmental hazard but it adds up to a lofty expense for any provider. The good news is that sustainability programs and advisors are readily available to help set up something that's

feasible for your situation and that can save you money. For starters, you must become more conscious about using every part of an ingredient—the whole plant or all the trimmings from a cut of meat. Indeed, with a bit of research and experimentation, such ‘recycling’ can result in some very delicious and alluring creations. Two others that are no-brainers are composting and building a partnership to donate leftovers to a nearby food bank.

3. Boozy Brunch

Brunch is big these days. Meanwhile, sparkling wine sales have seen a sharp year-over-year uptick and this isn’t because people have substantially more to celebrate. Champagne, prosecco and others in this fizzy class are becoming more widely accepted as everyday drinkers, and not just as beverages for special occasions. This is not to say that sparkling wine is the only base that you can use for any sort of breakfast or brunch cocktail, but it’s a good start as the Bellini and mimosa are two popular drinks for the pre-noon crowd. So, if you offer a dedicated brunch service then you should also challenge your team to come up with some enticing beverages to complement the menu.

4. Seasonal Specificity

The word “seasonal” should imply local, but it should also go a step further by giving your menu a “limited time only” appeal. Next, the term “specificity” should give you a hint as to how you can best market your seasonal offerings—by drilling down to the exact cultivar of a vegetable or the subspecies variety that you used for a given dish. This not only suggests exclusivity and increased value, but it also educates the customers in just the right way. Along these lines, words like “heirloom” and “heritage” carry a lot of weight, even with issues surrounding consistent sourcing. While seasonal specificity works best when it’s married to local produce, it can also be applied to just about anything that’s in limited supply for a set annual duration. While seasonal menus are popular, they require significantly more maintenance as you



must work out the sourcing logistics, and your chefs must be willing to more frequently change what’s offered in the first place.

5. Popular Food, New Twist

As an extension of the point about reducing food waste and being more

conscious of your ingredients, the concept here is to add a bit of the unknown to your dishes while still operating within an acceptable framework. For instance, beets are already trending, but few restaurants are utilizing beetroot greens for salads or sides, which is taking the process one tiny step further. Similarly, you might opt to use fennel pollen instead of just fennel or substitute honey for royal jelly. Also, worth consideration are infused syrups or house-made specialty sauces that take what’s already palatable but with just a hint of the unknown. While the possibilities in this regard aren’t anywhere close to endless, you can still make a big splash by being just a tad different.

This article first appeared at ehotelier.com and is being reprinted with permission. Larry Mogelonsky, the principal of Toronto-based Hotel Mogel Consulting Ltd., has written four books that address operational and marketing issues for hoteliers. He can be reached at larry@hotelmogel.com.



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'Cultural Super Bowl'

The Island of Hawaii gears up for the annual Merrie Monarch

BY BRANDON BOSWORTH

Thousands of people from Hawaii as well as the Mainland and overseas flock to Hilo at this time every year to see some of the best hula in the world. Guestrooms at the Island of Hawaii's hotels and resorts soon will be packed as visitors arrive for the 55th annual Merrie Monarch Festival on April 1-7.

"Hilo is very busy during the festival," says Ross Birch, executive director of The Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau. "It's an economic boost for the island."

He calls the Merrie Monarch a "cultural Super Bowl." Yet despite its popularity and prestige, Birch

says, "the Merrie Monarch prides itself on keeping small, intimate and local."

The festival is one of the island's two major annual events. "The Merrie Monarch and Iron

Man Triathlon are opposite but similar," Birch says.



Ross Birch





The 55th annual Merrie Monarch
Festival begins on April 1.

PHOTO COURTESY THE
MERRIE MONARCH FESTIVAL

Much to Do, See and Taste

The Merrie Monarch may be the Island of Hawaii's "cultural Super Bowl," but there are many other cultural events held throughout the year.

April

The first Hilo Cacao and Chocolate Festival will be on April 14 at the Hilo Hawaiian Hotel. This free event aims to support and expand the growing and processing of cacao on Hawaii Island. For more information, email EHCA@groupmail.com.

On April 21, the 13th annual Laupahoehoe Music Festival will take place at Laupahoehoe Point Beach Park. In addition to live music, the festival features hula, handmade crafts and food booths. For more information, visit laupahoehoemusicfestival.org.

The 10th annual Kau Coffee Festival takes place in various locations throughout Kau from April 21 to May 6. The festival is designed to celebrate Kau as a premium coffee-growing origin and a unique visitor destination. For more information, visit kaucoffeefestival.com.

The seventh annual Big Island Chocolate Festival runs April 27-28 at the Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel. This year's theme is "Chocolate Around the World." For more information, visit bigislandchocolatefestival.com.

"Each one attracts visitors to one side of the island."

Many halau are returning to the festival this year, including Halau Hi'iaka-inamakalehua, Kawai'i'ula, Halau I



George Applegate

Ka Wekiu and 2017's Lokali'a Montgomery overall winner, Ka La 'Onohi Mai O Ha'eha'e. Other halau who sat out last year's competition are returning as well, such as Halau Na Mamo O Pu'uanahulu and Halau O Ka Ua Kani Lehua.

First-year entrants include Ke'ala 'O Kamailelauli'ili'i from Washington.

The festival has been expanding its social media presence, and now has a YouTube channel (<https://tinyurl.com/y8stqnx5>). The channel features

May

The Hawaii Kuauili Pacific and Asia Cultural Festival takes place May 18-20 at the Courtyard King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel. The event will feature food, fashion, cultural expressions, hula and workshops. For more information, visit hikuauili.com.

June

The fifth Ka Aha Hula O Halauaola will be on June 14-23 at various locations in Hilo. Presented by Lalakea Foundation, this event offers workshops and presentations on hula and its attendant arts. For more information, visit kahoh.org.

September

The second annual Hawaii Island Steel Guitar Festival is scheduled for Sept. 7-9 at the Mauna Lani Bay Hotel and Bungalows. The festival features live steel guitar performances, workshops and open stage sessions. For more information, visit hawaiisteelguitarfestival.com.

November

The 48th annual Kona Coffee Cultural Festival, on Nov. 9-18, offers a firsthand look at growing this world-famous crop as well as tastings, music, dancing and other cultural events. For more information, visit konacoffeefest.com.

behind-the-scenes clips of halau preparing for the festival competition, time-lapse video of the stage going up and interviews with kumu hula and 2017 Miss Aloha Hula contestants.

"The Merrie Monarch is so important," says George Applegate, former executive director of The Big Island Visitors Bureau (now the Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau) and currently a consultant to The Grand Naniloa Hotel Hilo—a DoubleTree by Hilton. "It brought back pride to Hawaiians, and there is nothing more beautiful than a people who take pride in themselves."

Hilo has gained more recognition over the years, in part because of the Merrie Monarch.

"Fifty or 60 years ago, Hilo didn't sell well to visitors," Applegate says. "People wanted white sandy beaches. Now they are looking for green, sustainable Hawaii, and Hilo is doing extremely well."



The Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau's revised logo.

PHOTO COURTESY THE ISLAND OF HAWAII VISITORS BUREAU

Rebranding the (Big) Island of Hawaii

For many local residents, the Big Island will always be the Big Island. But when it comes to hospitality, there is a shift toward referring to it as the Island of Hawaii.

"It started 10 years ago, and came from market research," says Ross Birch, executive director of The Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau. "There was big confusion as people outside the state assumed the Big Island was Oahu. They would hear 'the Big Island' and think, 'that's where Pearl Harbor is. That's where Waikiki is. That's where the main airport is.'"

The switch didn't take place overnight. "We've been gradually taking 'the Big Island' out of our communications. Two years ago we finally changed our logo." Previously, The Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau was known as The Big Island Visitors Bureau.

The response from the rest of the hospitality industry has been positive. "There's been a really good reception, and others in the industry are making a concerted effort to incorporate the change into their materials."

Birch says he has seen "three years of extremely positive growth" in all areas of the island's tourist industry. "Airlines having direct flights is a big boost," he says. "Our room rates are on the low end compared to Maui and Oahu."

"The word that represented the Island of Hawaii is 'inspired.' We have attributes you can't find on other islands. People have more freedom to explore here."

An aerial photograph of a resort complex. On the left is a multi-story building with balconies. In the center and right is a large, winding swimming pool with several palm trees and tropical plants around it. The sky is blue with some clouds.

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WHAT'S NEW IN 2018

Industry leaders share insights on this year's trends in travel and lodging

BY CATHY CRUZ-GEORGE

Tourism in Hawaii ended on a high note in 2017 with record-breaking arrivals, the construction of new properties and the absence of major natural disasters that could have halted daily operations.

As we continue into the new year, *Hawaii Hospitality* asked industry leaders, “What do you predict for 2018?”

Here are their replies:

CONCIERGE SERVICES

Susan Koki

Chef Concierge/Member, Les Clefs d'Or USA
The Kahala Hotel & Resort

The role of concierge and guest services will continue to be extremely important in 2018. Although technology is easily accessible for all of us, human



Susan Koki

interaction and that personal touch provides The Kahala's visitors with more valuable information and insight versus the Internet. Guests will connect a name to the place, and when they arrive to The Kahala, a face to the name. The level of service is elevated with that personalized connection.

Cultural experiences and offerings will be more in demand in 2018. The Kahala's focus is to provide our guests with a connection to our island by sharing Hawaii's culture, delivering

memorable experiences and authentic Island hospitality, and exceeding guest expectations. Providing outstanding customer service will always be at the forefront of the guest experience.

LUXURY TRAVEL

Kristen Whyly

Resort Manager
Four Seasons Resort Oahu at Ko Olina

Two things: A desire for social connectivity (the trend to social share in the luxury space is now an integral part of the travel experience) and, relatedly, a demand for more meaningful experiences and opportunities for personal growth.

We answer this need with organic programming that offers a deep connection to the people and geography of west Oahu—from local farm tours and fishing with our chefs, to a guided hike to Kaena Point with an award-winning kumu hula from Waianae.



Kristen Whyly

FITNESS AND HEALTH

Kirk Fritz

Director

Ko Olina Beach + Sports Club

The fitness industry is very economy-dependent. The coming year will be an exciting one in the fitness, exercise and health industry. Gym memberships will increase as the economy continues



Kirk Fritz

to improve in 2018. The recently passed federal tax reform legislation will have both employees and employers more willing to spend money and time on their health. Corporations

will enhance their wellness benefits to support their employees' fitness, which has proven to increase productivity.

This is good news for clubs across all categories, but some will benefit more than others. Functional fitness

studios, like Orange Theory, whose programming maximizes the time spent with heart rate-linked, high-intensity interval training in a supportive "team effort" environment, will realize the largest gains. On the other side of the spectrum, CrossFit gym memberships will decline as people have come to realize the injury risks associated with maxing weight Olympic lifts attached to time goals.

This is not to say that injuries won't occur among fitness industry end-users. Physical therapy offices, especially those who specialize in sports rehabilitation and incorporate functional personal training, will see busy schedules in 2018.

CULINARY

Monica Toguchi

President and Chief Executive Officer
Highway Inn

I expect consumers to continue demanding adventurous and globally inspired eating. We've seen poke explode across the country, and I think that trend will continue, along with Asian desserts, like Taiwanese

ice-cream. Filipino food is gaining national attention; its soy sauce, ginger, vinegar and fish sauce flavors are exciting, new tastes we're already familiar with in Hawaii.



Monica Toguchi

Finally, I think the vegetable-centric diet and growing demand for vegetable protein will develop into new, flavorful, healthy products and offerings. Of course, I secretly hope that kalo and poi will have their day in the spotlight outside of Hawaii.

HOUSEKEEPING

Rose Galera

President and Founder
Clean Plus Systems II

There will be a critical need for more housekeeping employees, education and motivational training as new guest rooms and timeshare units are built and upgraded. We will also witness the



use of new technologies, such as the HotSOS Housekeeping cloud-based program that automates housekeeping daily operations.

As a former executive housekeeper for Waikiki hotels, I would like to see more of the younger generation pursue careers in housekeeping management. Cleaning is an art and a science. It is recession-proof, promotes good health and leaves a lasting impression on our visitors. I enjoy sharing my knowledge and passion for cleaning when I conduct workshops for hotels, schools, restaurants, hospitals and senior living communities.



Rose Galera

OPTIONAL TOURS

Ronald Hee

*VP Sales – Westbound and Asia Division
Roberts Hawaii*

Companies that rely on optional tour and activities sales will continue to



Ronald Hee

face challenges throughout 2018. Hotels and airlines will always be the first and foremost purchase by visitors when they plan their leisure trips. As hotels renovate, their rates will

rise due to the newer improvements, which, in turn, means visitors have fewer discretionary dollars for optional tours and activities. In addition, social media plays a huge role in influencing travelers on which activities and products they should choose. Tour and activity companies absolutely must continue to improve the guest experience and deliver a consistently stellar experience. Staying abreast of technology and listening to customer feedback will continue to be key to a company's success. We are fortunate that Hawaii remains one of the most sought-after vacation destinations, but we cannot take that for granted. We all need to work together to keep Hawaii top of mind.

RETAIL

Breana Grosz

*Marketing and Sponsorship Director
International Market Place*

From celebrating beloved events like Chinese New Year, Girls' Day and Spam Jam, visitors can gain a sense of



Breana Grosz

our local culture fused with global influence. We expect dining and entertainment will continue to complement the overall retail experience. We've aligned ourselves with some of the sharpest culinary minds—chefs Michael Mina, Roy Yamaguchi and Brian Malarkey—to create destinations that place an emphasis on food and experience. Creating dynamic partnerships are a must in driving tourism traffic. International Market Place will collaborate with hospitality partners to offer visitors experiential shopping, dining and group packages.



Continued from Page 6

says. "There were only two buildings at the pier, POP and the fish auction. The concept was fresh fish cooked differently every day, I put my French influence into it. But then have a menu with all the local favorites—beef stew, loco moco, katsu, barbecue chicken. This is to serve the people who work around the pier, big local guys. For lunch they don't care too much about the fish."

When I comment that his stew is the best Hawaiian stew I've ever tasted,



Bartender Ricky Estrada oversees a lively bar scene at Nico's in Kailua.



Norman Soderberg

You'd think that serving 700 to 800 lunches a day, which Nico was doing at the original site, would make a restaurant chef-owner happy. Not Nico.

"The old Nico's was overgrown to the point I was not happy doing what I was doing," he says.

About that time the state put up another building across the parking lot with the intent of turning it into a research site for the University of Hawaii.

"But thanks to the recession, the state cancelled the project, and they were open to businesses to take over. So we did," Nico says. "It was an expensive, expensive project. It was risky and scary. It was the worst two years of my life. We created a monster: we keep hiring, not enough people; keep hiring, not enough people. The volume was

Nico chuckles. "The stew is basically beef bourguignon—that's exactly what it is, French-style beef stew. The secret is three and a half gallons of wine."

tripling. When you're not used to this kind of numbers . . . and then the bar was new to me, and I had to learn how to do a retail store, and everything is on the fly, I opened everything at one time. Plus expanding to breakfast, lunch and dinner. I learned fast, I had to."

After that, expanding to Kailua was relatively simple, though Nico admits that owning a restaurant he can't see all the time feels a bit like a parent sending a child off to the first day of school.

"I'm actually in Kailua two days a week, and often in the evening, but what makes this work is chef **Norman Soderberg**. We've been friends a long time. He was at Cheesecake Factory and the Star of Honolulu, and I always told him we have to work together one day, so when this place was opening I called him. He runs Kailua and then manages town when I'm here."



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

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HRA Rings in Chinese New Year



(Front) Janey Bullock, Janayhe Self, (back) Ray Seapno, Taylor Bramwell, Alexander Wong

PHOTOS BY ANJJ LEE

Lions and dragons welcomed Hawaii Restaurant Association members and guests to the HRA's "Gung Hee Fat Choy!" celebrating a Happy Chinese New Year on Feb. 20 at the Ala Wai Golf Course Clubhouse.



(Front) Jeremy McQuat, Gregg Fraser, Dan Pence, (back) Brandi Kiana-Jo, Anny Barlow, Sharon Shigemoto, Gerda Tom, Heather Pence



(Front) Kira Stephens, Tyra Kuhar, (back) Chris Clark, Tina Rogers, Nick Domingo



Riki Shimabukuro, Sidney Higa, Kyle Akagi



Brendan Beeg, Dan Pence, Mike Nonaka



Geri Oshita, Janine Tokigawa, Wesley Brum



Ben Dowling, Tyler Roukema, Gregg Fraser, Kawehilani Ballou



Jeremy McOuat, Sharon Shigemoto, Gerda Tom, Luella Costales



Paul Yokota, Matt Kauwe, Bradley Pang



Andrew Ling, Nolle Ajimine



Jay Kaneshiro, Mike Griffin, Kawehilani Ballou



**(Front) Doug Harris, Tyler Roukema, Doloresse Gregoire,
(back) Frank Nagamine, Theresa Cherry, Jeremy Kiyabu**



Anhchi Ly, Jason Gardner, Sherri Lynn Ablao



Jodi Uehara, Jamie McOuat, David Kim

Chun Named Director of Tourism Research at HTA

Jennifer Chun was named director of tourism research at the Hawaii Tourism Authority, effective Dec. 1.



Jennifer Chun

She will lead HTA's Tourism Research Division, which provides strategic analytical information about Hawaii tourism and conducts special research that supports state marketing and product development efforts, planning by industry partners, and policy making.

"Jennifer is one of Hawaii's top research experts for tourism strategy and has a

keen understanding of how gathering and analyzing this data is essential to improving the industry's future, both in supporting the business models of companies statewide and evaluating the sentiments of the community," says George D. Szigeti, HTA president and CEO.

Chun joined HTA in 2014 as tourism research manager and prior to that served for a decade as a director at Hospitality Advisors LLC. Her background also includes serving as a member of PwC LLP's Global Hospitality & Leisure Industry Group.

A 1988 Kamehameha Schools graduate, Chun earned a bachelor's in Asian Studies from Dartmouth College and a master's in Destination Hospitality Management from Cornell University.

The Ritz-Carlton Residences Appoints New Directors

Jon Ushijima has been appointed as director of Asia sales, and **Huy Vo** has been named the director of public relations at The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach.

In his new position, Ushijima is responsible for overseeing the resort's Asia sales strategy.

He was with Irongate, developer of The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach, as part of the resort's pre-opening team where he spearheaded strategic sales and initiatives in Asia. Previously he held sales leader positions at other hotels and resorts in Hawaii including The Kahala Hotel & Resort and Starwood Hotels & Resorts' properties in Waikiki and Sheraton Maui.

Born in Okinawa, Ushijima graduated from Saint Louis School and earned a bachelor's in international business from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Vo oversees the resort's global communications strategy, which includes public relations, advertising, digital marketing and community relations.

He previously served as director of marketing for Irongate as part of the resort's pre-opening team. His career includes working at The Kahala Hotel & Resort and Hawaiian Airlines.

Born and raised in Honolulu, Vo graduated from McKinley High School and earned a bachelor's in journalism from the University of Oregon.

Yada to Manage Bali

Jay Yada joins Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort as restaurant manager for Bali Steak & Seafood.

Most recently he served as manager of Tommy Bahama Restaurant & Bar in Waikiki, and previously was floor captain at Morton's The Steakhouse in Honolulu.

Yada's career includes several years at Quiescence, a farm-to-table restaurant in Phoenix, and as general manager of Haru Sushi in the Boston area.



Jay Yada

ARDA-Hawaii Supports Hawaii Rise Foundation

The Hawaii Chapter of the American Resort Development Association (ARDA) recently donated \$2,500 to the Hawaii Rise Foundation on Hawaii Island.

The Hawaii Rise Foundation provides services and programs for vulnerable or moderate and low-income children and families.

"ARDA-Hawaii is pleased to support the Hawaii Rise Foundation as part of our organization's ongoing commitment to provide funds annually to causes that help create a stronger community," says **Mitchell A. Imanaka**, ARDA-Hawaii chairman and managing principal of Imanaka Asato LLC.



Presenting the check to the Hawaii Rise Foundation are, from left, Sidney Fuke, ARDA-Hawaii; Mike Sohriakoff, Hawaii Rise Foundation; Neil Gytoku, director of the Hawaii County Office of Housing and Community Development; and Gretchen Watson-Kabei, ARDA-Hawaii.

Roth Joins HTUSA

Alexandra Roth has joined the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) as eastern regional director of travel industry sales.



Alexandra Roth

As a member of the Hawaii Tourism United States (HTUSA) team, Roth will relocate to New York in March. She will represent the Hawaiian Islands

in the Midwest and East Coast markets supporting sales and marketing through activities with travel agents, wholesalers, consortia and other key industry partners.

She also will promote and deliver customized live and virtual destination training including the Hawaii Destination Specialist program as part of her HTUSA duties.

Previously she served as the director of communications and special projects for the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA).

Roth, born and raised in Hilo, earned her bachelor's from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and a master's of business administration at Argosy University in Honolulu.

Hawaiian Airlines Names Wong New Executive

Lee Anne Wong, chef and owner of Honolulu's Koko Head Café, was chosen by Hawaiian Airlines to lead its in-flight dining program as executive chef, starting June 1.



Lee Anne Wong

Wong, whose dishes have been showcased in-flight as part of Hawaiian's "Featured Chef Series," currently oversees meals on the carrier's inbound flights from Japan. In her expanded role, she will oversee the meal program for first class guests on domestic flights and business class and economy guests on international flights.

Wong graduated from the International

Culinary Center (ICC), formerly known as the French Culinary Institute, and appeared on Bravo's flagship series, "Top Chef." She debuted Koko Head Café in Kaimuki in 2014.

Waikiki Parc Reorganizes Sales Team



Chi Hoon Bang

international markets.

Prior to his expanded role at Waikiki Parc focusing on international markets, Bang was the director of sales and marketing for Asia at both Waikiki Parc and its sister property, Halekulani.

Kano previously served as sales manager for Waikiki Parc and Halekulani assigned to the Asia markets, and was responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and enhancement of relationships with businesses to increase



Makoto Kano

sales. He is responsible for overseeing the coordination of sales exclusively at Waikiki Parc, with expanded supervision to include international and domestic markets.

Inamasu Named GM at Lahaina Shores Beach Resort

Wendell Inamasu was named general manager of Lahaina Shores Beach Resort on Maui.

He is responsible for the overall operation of Lahaina Shores including two key areas. He manages the Lahaina Shores condo rental program for owners and also serves as general manager of the Association of Apartment Owners (AOAO).

Inamasu previously was GM of Aston-The Whaler at Kaanapali.

Outrigger Appoints 2 New Managers

Mayukh Chatterjee and **John Shelton** have been named the new area director of revenue management and director of food and beverage, respectively, for both Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort and Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort.



Mayukh Chatterjee

Chatterjee is responsible for identifying and maximizing all potential revenue opportunities for Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort and Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort by formulating long- and short-term revenue management strategies and overseeing execution toward the advancement of RevPAR market share.

Shelton leads Outrigger's beachfront



John Shelton

resorts' culinary and food and beverage service experience to include the Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort's Voyager 47 Club Lounge, freshly opened The Reef Bar & Market Grill and banquet programming development.

Four Promoted at Halekulani

Jason Waterlow has been appointed director of food and beverage at the Halekulani, which also named **Geoff Pearson** as its director of sales and marketing, **Kazuki Takaoka** as associate director of sales and marketing for the Asia market and **Nelson Arlos** as associate director of sales for all other markets.

Waterlow is responsible for overseeing Halekulani's dining venues including La Mer, Orchids, L'Aperitif, Lewers Lounge and House Without A Key.

Previously Pearson was director of sales and marketing at Halekulani for the U.S. and international markets.

Takaoka was senior sales manager for Asia at Halekulani and its sister property Waikiki Parc.

Arlos was senior sales manager of U.S. East Coast markets for Halekulani and Waikiki Parc.

Connecting Tourism and Lawmakers

At HLTA, we believe it is of utmost importance that we continue to engage with our state lawmakers to remind them of the importance of tourism. We were able to do just that at our third annual Tourism Day at the Capitol held on Feb. 21.

Each year this event has gotten better and better, and this year we added a wonderful breakfast so legislators and our board members could network and once again share our priority issues for the legislative session. We also held a mini-trade show on the fourth-floor foyer of the State Capitol, featuring exhibits by members including Outrigger Hotels and Resorts, Ko Olina Resort, Polynesian Cultural Center, Enterprise Rideshare, University of Hawaii Travel Industry Management School, Hawaii Pacific University, Windward Community College, Hawaiian Coolwater, Oahu Resource Conservation & Development Council, Hawaii.com and HART (Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation), among others.

Speaking of the legislature, this session we are advocating for a measure calling for matching funds to assist homeless service providers fulfilling their mission by funding programs, such as repatriating the homeless back to the mainland. This bill, which was introduced by State House and Senate Tourism Committee chairmen Rep. Richard Onishi and Sen. Glenn Wakai, would appropriate up to \$2 million in transient accommodations tax revenue, to be matched dollar-for-dollar by businesses and other private donors.

One of our priority issues is the need for reducing the population of homeless individuals, particularly in tourism-impacted areas. HLTA has been a longtime supporter of agencies that work with the homeless and have worked with them to begin or bolster homeless repatriation programs. Through HLTA's support and the yeoman work of Institute for Human Services, Kauai Economic Opportunity, and Maui Family Life Center, there has been great success with this initiative. In



Last year, HLTA members walked the Hawaii State Capitol and greeted 78 legislators with lei and invited them to Tourism Day at the Capitol.

fact, less than 1 percent of the repatriated individuals on Oahu have returned to Hawaii and on Kauai and Maui there have been no returnees.

We are confident that with this measure, we will continue to be successful in repatriating even more individuals than the 491 individuals that have gone back to the mainland thus far, largely as a result of HLTA's funding.

Another one of our priority issues is public safety, and we have gotten a great headstart on finding solutions to make our tourism destinations and communities safer.

In 1997, I spearheaded a Visitor Crime Solutions Conference as a Honolulu Councilmember, which inspired many public safety initiatives including the creation of the Waikiki Business Improvement District Association and the Ambassadors of Aloha. HLTA took this model and recently held a Visitor Public Safety Conference on Feb. 27 at the Sheraton Waikiki which I co-chaired with Waikiki Councilmember Trevor Ozawa with key input from Honolulu Police Chief Susan Ballard and City Prosecutor Keith Kaneshiro and their staffs.

The goal was to gather key stake-

holders and engage them in a dialogue on how we can better ensure a safer environment for our visitors, residents and workers. The day's program featured four panel discussions on law enforcement, crimes against visitors, military affairs, and youth and juvenile reform. Panelists for the session included high-level representation from the Drug Enforcement Agency's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), Hawaii Hotel Visitor Security Association (HHVISA), Visitor Aloha Society of Hawaii (VASH), Military Victim Services, Hawaii Arms Service Police, the Armed Services Board, the First Circuit Court, Storefront School, Adult Friends for Youth and, of course, HPD and the Prosecutor's Office.

HLTA is now in the process of

reviewing key takeaways from this conference and putting them into action.

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





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Honor the Year of the Hawaiian

No quality is more important to marketing Hawaii tourism than sharing the legacy of the Hawaiian culture.

The Hawaiian people, language, music, arts, heritage and culture is what distinguishes Hawaii and raises these islands above every other destination. Travelers come to experience the essence of Hawaii and embrace the traditions we all cherish.

The Hawaii Tourism Authority is committed to honoring the Hawaiian culture as we fulfill our mission in support of Hawaii's tourism industry.

The Hawaiian culture is integrated into every element of our tourism marketing, both in elevating Hawaii's brand and highlighting the enjoyment of experiencing our islands.

HTA invests approximately \$6 million annually in programs to support, honor and perpetuate the Hawaiian culture.

HTA's reach with these programs is broad-based and extends statewide, from funding such events as the Merrie Monarch Festival to aiding the Polynesian Voyaging Society with its educational outreach and sponsoring the admirable work of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association.

We take particular pride in our Kukulu Ola Program and the assistance it provides to community-based nonprofits statewide. This year, we distributed funds totaling \$1.24 million to 33 programs, all of which share our commitment to perpetuating the Hawaiian culture.

HTA's efforts are led by Kalani Ka'ana'ana, our director of Hawaiian cultural affairs. Under Kalani's leadership, HTA is continually striving to more deeply ingrain knowledge about the Hawaiian culture into all of our programs.

Kalani and his team speak the Hawaiian language and dedicate each workday to bringing a greater level of awareness about their native culture to residents and visitors.

An outstanding HTA resource that everyone can utilize for free is the Maemae tool kit. Simply download it from our website, HawaiiTourismAuthority.org. The tool kit is invaluable for understanding how to accurately and sensitively present the Hawaiian culture and Hawaiian language in daily life.

This year is especially significant to the celebration of the Hawaiian culture, as Gov. David Ige has declared 2018 to be "Ke Au Hawaii: Year of the Hawaiian."

The governor's proclamation honoring the history, traditions, language and culture of the Hawaiian people comes during a year in which three notable anniversaries are being recognized:

- Twenty-five years ago, Congress and the president of the United States presented a formal apology to the Hawaiian people for America's role in the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom on Jan. 17, 1893.

- This year also marks the 40th anniversary of the Hawaiian language immersion programs that saved the native tongue of the Hawaiian people from near extinction.

- It was 100 years ago that the first Hawaiian Civic Club was founded by Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana'ole.

HTA is proud to support the Hawaiian culture, and we encourage everyone to join us in honoring the Year of the Hawaiian.

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



Let's Focus on Root Cause of Litter

The first quarter of every year brings a number of things, one of which is the legislative session. This year we see many of the same issues coming to light; labor-related issues, healthcare issues and litter initiatives among many others. The challenge during this period is deciding what issues will truly be of benefit without placing more burdens on the businesses.

The food service industry is constantly barraged by issues that continue to increase the cost of doing business. There is a misconception by some that the restaurant business is a license to print money. I can tell you firsthand that is not the case. Every month, operators struggle to make a 3 percent to 6 percent margin at best.

For now, let's talk litter.

This may sound simplistic, but where does litter come from? Trash.

And where is the trash? Typically in inadequate trash receptacles at our beaches and parks. Litter is not litter until it leaves the trash receptacles.

So why don't we focus on controlling our trash rather than banning products that we think are creating litter? Products don't create litter; lack of proper trash cans does.

If you replace one item for another and it ends up on our beaches or in our ocean, is it not litter? Of course it is. Maybe it could be considered a better litter? Is that our goal? Better litter? No.

So let's take all of this energy and focus on the root of the problem. Let's keep our trash from becoming litter. No one disagrees with the idea of a more

environmentally friendly world. But we can't just ban products in hopes that it will solve another major issue, and at the same time put undue financial stress on the restaurant operators.

The Hawaii Restaurant Association is working closely with other groups and initiatives, like Malama 808, and we're willing to partner with all to address the root cause of the problem.

Gregg Fraser, executive director of the Hawaii Restaurant Association, can be reached at gregg.fraser@hawaiirestaurant.org or 944-9105. For information, visit hawaiirestaurant.org.



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LEAK REMEDIATION AND CONCRETE RESTORATION

These exterior concrete stairs were exposed to years of rain water flowing down three floors and ponding on the bottom slab. In combination with water infiltration through below grade perimeter walls and the slab, embedded reinforcing steel was severely rusted. Epoxy injection and extensive spall repair were implemented to restore the concrete and the walking surfaces to a safe condition.

PROVEN REPAIR SYSTEMS. QUALITY WORKMANSHIP.

RCM has established a successful track record with leading design professionals and building managers. Call us and put our extensive remedial experience to work for you.



CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

Phone: 545-2177 | Fax: 538-1914
866 Iwilei Road, Bay 219, Honolulu, HI 96817

LIC.NO. ABC 13668

