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checking in

Who knew that the Biki program would become such a big hit? Yet back in February, Bikeshare Hawaii says its little blue bicycles were taken on a record 4,863 rides. Along with this low-tech form of transportation, in this issue we take a look at all the ways tourists (and locals) can access to get around Hawaii, from taxis to ridesharing services to scooters.

More luxury hotels are being built to meet the expected growth in tourist numbers. Among them is Espacio, a nine-suite hotel that recently opened and features rock star amenities and with prices that start at \$5,000 a night.

How important are housekeepers to the hospitality industry? Almost 90 percent of hotel guests cite cleanliness as the top criteria travelers look for in online reviews, according to surveys. Be sure to read our report on housekeepers.

Great hospitality employees are vital in keeping Hawaii a top destination for travelers. Grooming the next generation of such employees takes a lot of work, and heart. As Tammy Fukagawa of TS Restaurants says, becoming a great hospitality employee is “sharing your aloha with others unconditionally and without expecting recompense—giving because you want to and never expecting anything in return.”

And be sure to check out Don Chapman’s column on cool pool guy Wendell Lee.

Aloha!

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The Cool Pool Guy

Wendell Lee helped lead the watery revolution that made Hawaii resorts famous for swimming pools with waterfalls, slides and caves

Although Chris Hemmeter wasn't a pool designer by trade, Wendell Lee gives the late, legendary hotel magnate credit for starting a worldwide trend



Wendell Lee

with properties such as the Hyatt Regency at Kaanapali, Maui, and its pool with a swim-through cave and waterfalls. That started a trend that's given Lee a 40-year career building pools and "water features" around the world.

"That was the beginning of what we would call true resort pools in Hawaii," says Lee, president and principal designer for Pacific AquaTech. "Hilton Waikoloa, the Grand Wailea on Maui, those properties were at the forefront around the world. That basically started the industry."



The Anaha pool hangs 12 feet over the edge.

That original generation of cool hotel pools is now going on 30 years old.

"One of the things keeping our industry busy is a lot of properties in Hawaii are aging, so they're redeveloping themselves, with more amenities," Lee says. "Grand Wailea is just one of many, along with Mauna Lani, the Lodge at Koele and Manele Bay, they're undergoing huge changes, looking trendy and



Wendell Lee says designing the pool at Disney's Aulani was challenging.

new. It's a refresh. That's a lot of our market right now.

"There's more opportunity in Southeast Asia—they really want to have a lot of water in their projects. It's kind of a feng shui thing, and association with water. It accentuates the architectural design, rather than having a small water feature just to have a feature."

With a client list that includes Hilton, Marriott, Outrigger, Disney, Hyatt Regency, Westin, Sheraton, Four Seasons, Ritz Carlton and Embassy Suites, and an equally impressive list in Asia, Lee and Pacific AquaTech—the design/engineering company affiliated with Pacific AquaScapes construction, headed by Don Morrison and Frank Fontana—have built scores of big projects that combine pools and waterfalls and rocks and caves.

Lee thought he'd seen just about everything. But then a representative of The Howard Hughes Corp. came to him with a first-time idea. For the new Anaha condo tower in Kakaako, they wanted a rooftop pool that hangs over the street, 75 feet below. A see-through acrylic pool.

"It's something obviously we'd never done before," says Lee. "There was definitely something of a learning curve from an engineering standpoint. We've done acrylic and glass pools before, but this is the first time it extended beyond the end of the building. We worked with the acrylic manufacturer and their

engineers to simplify the process."

The pool that stretches 12 feet into nothing but air instantly became one of his favorite projects: "I like it when we do something that is different, unique, something that makes a statement. Anaha was exciting, and the outcome was too, as you can see when you walk below it."

The pool for Disney at Aulani presented other challenges: "Now that is a different animal. It has interaction in the pool, it has discovery in the pool."

He's currently working on another project "where a zip line will drop people into a pool."

A career in pool design was not on Lee's mind while studying architecture and engineering at the University of Colorado. Later, having dropped out of law school at the University of Hawaii—which he entered to please his parents—the Punahou grad was "working for Makai Ocean Engineering out in Waimanalo at the pier, and Steve Kaiser of Sea Life Park asked me to do some preliminary design for a wave pool they wanted to add. So I did some drawings and sketches for them and made a presentation.

"A gentleman named Richard Heaton of Hardscapes Hawaii saw my work—he was doing some water features and pools at that time, design and construction. He contacted me and asked if I'd like to do that for a living. (laughs) That was something I never

thought about. I'd never even heard of it, especially something that could last this long. I had no idea the places it would take me, places I never thought I'd get to."

His passport is indeed well-traveled, with stamps from Barbados, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam and China, and a few Middle Eastern countries.

"One of the things keeping our industry busy is a lot of properties in Hawaii are aging, so they're redeveloping themselves, with more amenities."

As important as visuals are, Lee also engineers sound.

"Developers and architects like to use water for white noise to cover the sound of traffic, or foot traffic, things of that nature," he says. "They also like it for the ambiance, to create that mood, a level of noise that creates a certain image for that property."

"But it has to be done carefully. It can get very loud, very annoying. But it's usually for the positive. We know

what makes noise. We know water-to-water contact—splashing—creates more noise. We can create white noise with water walls, things with less splash, less vertical drop. We don't have it to a science where we get the perfect decibel or tones, anything like that. But we do know how to control with velocity and the water effects."

Regardless of the project, Lee builds

safety into each. "One thing we are concerned about on the design portion, we try to utilize the highest level of (water) turnover rate in the sanitation system. From a design standpoint, we have a responsibility that people using the pool can do so safely—whether it's signage, depth markers, sanitation."

Speaking of sanitation as a safety issue, "I would never go into a Jacuzzi on public property, ever," Lee says. "It's just that it's such a small body of water,

and bacteria can grow so quickly. It's an inherent fear based on what I know. I can't say it's not safe—I'd go into just about any public swimming pool—but spas I tend to steer away from. The key is the operator. They have to be diligent in maintaining the pool, testing the water, doing observations of the pool, enforcing safety measures like showering before going into the water."

Above all, he understands that a pool is mostly about the water, not his creativity.

"I would love to say it's the design that makes it, but most people just want to jump in the water and cool off," Lee says. "With all these 90-degree days we've been having, you do get some satisfaction that you're providing something of benefit for people."



Have a story about a good person doing good things in Hawaii's hospitality industry? Please shoot me an email at don@tradepublishing.com.

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Hawaii's Royal Court at the
2018 Pearlridge Keiki Ho'olaulea.
PHOTO COURTESY MELISSA CHANG



Enjoy Parades, Play Ukulele ... and More

2019 Aloha Festivals adds spice and sass with 'Ohana Events

The Royal Court is in session. Waikiki's Ho'olaulea is gearing up. Pa'u riders are fitting their gowns for the Aloha Festivals annual parade.

Looking for more?
In 2019, Aloha Festivals, which is

funded in part by the Hawaii Tourism Authority, is expanding its month-long celebration of all things local with 'Ohana Events—four weeks of vendor discounts, ukulele concerts, family gatherings, lessons in the Hawaiian arts

2019 'Ohana Events

Bishop Museum: 20 Percent Off Admission (Sept. 1-30)

Guests bearing a 2019 Aloha Festivals ribbon or shirt can receive 20 percent off general and kamaaina admission rates. Bishop Museum.

Prince Waikiki's 100 Sails Restaurant & Bar: 20 Percent Off Breakfast/Lunch Buffet (Sept. 1-30)

Patrons bearing a 2019 Aloha Festivals ribbon can receive 20 percent off the breakfast and lunch buffet. Prince Waikiki.

In The Southern Sun (Sept. 7)

A free beach concert features performances from local artists and a headline appearance by

Grammy-nominated Common Kings. Official pre-party 3-6 p.m. at Queen Kapiolani Hotel. 5-10 p.m., Queen's Surf Beach.

The Laylow, Autograph Collection: Ukulele Lessons and Performances (Sept. 8, 15, 22, 29)

Guests can bring their own ukulele and sign up for free lessons from 5-6 p.m. (all days). The Hideout features ukulele artists 7-10 p.m. (Sept. 15, 19). The Laylow, Autograph Collection.

Pearlridge Keiki Ho'olaulea (Sept. 14)

Enjoy the third annual Keiki Conch Shell Blowing Contest,

live music, hula halau, arts and crafts, and other fun activities for families and children. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Pearlridge Center, Wai Makai (Downtown) Center Court.

Tiki's Grill & Bar: Local Ukulele Legends (Sept. 22)

Talk story, strum a tune and learn about Hawaii's beloved instrument from masters who will also have their custom and vintage ukulele on hand. Free, all ages welcome. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Tiki's Grill & Bar.

The Kahala's Veranda: Contemporary Hawaiian Music (Sept. 22, 23)

Na Hoku Hanohano award

winners Lehua Kalima and Sean Pimental and other artists perform at The Kahala's popular lounge overlooking the beach and dolphin lagoon. 6-9 p.m. The Kahala Hotel & Resort.

Queen Kapiolani Hotel: Celebrate Aloha (Sept. 26-29)

Learn hula, how to make a haku lei and how to make a grand entrance during four days of classes that also feature a concert and a pop-up fashion show. Queen Kapiolani Hotel.

For continuously updated 'Ohana Events programs and more discount information, go to www.AlohaFestivals.com/Ohana-Events.



and sunset serenades. The Festivals' main attractions, still on track, are:

17th Annual Waikiki Ho'olaulea (Sept. 21)

Honolulu's biggest block party. Hawaii artists perform onstage and booths feature Hawaii's culture and cuisine. 6-9:30 p.m. Kalakaua Avenue.

72nd Annual Floral Parade (Sept. 29)

Pa'u riders, floral floats and other vivid celebrations of Hawaiian culture fill Kalakaua Avenue from Ala Moana to Kapiolani Park. 9 a.m.-noon.

'Ohana Events run Sept. 1-30, and begin with month-long Festival discounts at Bishop Museum and Prince Waikiki.

For more information, go to www.AlohaFestivals.com, [facebook.com/AlohaFestivals](https://www.facebook.com/AlohaFestivals), Twitter (@AlohaFstvl), Instagram (@alohafestivals) or call 923-1094.



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Make Room *for* 10 MILLION



Extra space and extreme luxury are top 2019 trends at Hawaii hotels

BY BRETT ALEXANDER-ESTES

(Above) Each of Espacio's nine suites is 2,250 square feet.

PHOTO COURTESY AQUA-ASTON HOSPITALITY

As Hawaii gets ready to celebrate 10 million visitor arrivals this year, Hawaii hotels are providing the luxury that global visitors increasingly demand.

Opening this month, the new ultra-luxury Espacio hotel opposite Waikiki Beach offers nine 2,250-foot suites, each occupying an entire floor of the former Waikiki Beachside Hotel.

Kowa Waikiki LLC bought and gutted the 88-room, 13-story hotel, then outfitted the new \$50 million "Jewel of Waikiki" with Italian marble, Moroccan metalwork and in-suite spas.

Building cost per suite is approximately \$5.6 million. Rates start at \$5,000 per night.

"Espacio means 'space,'" says Theresa van Greunen, senior director of corporate communications at Aqua-Aston Hospitality, which manages the new hotel. "Espacio will be the first of its kind in Honolulu—and arguably even Hawaii."



Theresa van Greunen



Each of Espacio's ultra-luxury suites features a spa.

PHOTO COURTESY AQUA-ASTON HOSPITALITY



Halepuna Waikiki by Halekulani, the Halekulani Hotel's new sister property

RENDERING COURTESY HALEPUNA WAIKIKI BY HALEKULANI



Sky Ala Moana's hotel tower is slated to break ground later this year.

RENDERING COURTESY AVALON

As wealth continues to grow, so does a need for privacy and high-touch experiences. What we're establishing here, our owners are hoping to one day establish worldwide."

Luxury Lineup

Three more luxury Hawaii hotel projects are about to start, are underway or will soon uncork the champagne: the Mandarin Oriental near the Waikiki Convention Center, the Mauna Lani Bay Hotel on Hawaii Island and the Halepuna Waikiki by Halekulani.



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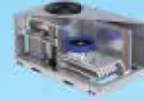
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Poolside at the future Mandarin Oriental
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As at Espacio, Hawaiian Dredging Construction Co. Inc. is the general contractor on all three projects.

The Mandarin Oriental—with a reported value of more than \$1 billion—will break ground in a matter of weeks.

“The Mandarin Oriental Hotel and Residences, Honolulu, will serve as a new gateway to Waikiki and Ala Moana,” says Lisa Rapp, project architect at AHL (formerly Architects Hawaii Ltd.).



Lisa Rapp

Plans call for 125 guestrooms and suites and 99 ownership residences in a new 36-story tower on the corner of Atkinson Drive and Kapiolani Boulevard.

Amenities for both residents and guests, Rapp says, include a signature restaurant and bar on the second level, a retail salon, a wedding chapel, ballroom and meeting rooms, and an expansive indoor-outdoor terrace surrounded by gathering spaces. The property’s multi-level spa and fitness center, she says, “will be the largest and most lavish spa on Oahu.” Construction is expected to end in 2022.

At the Mauna Lani—poised to debut as the “Mauna Lani, Auberge Resorts Collection,” in January—35 guestrooms are reportedly being eliminated to make way for more and larger suites. Other enhancements include two new pools and expanded dining venues. First budgeted at \$100 million, renovations are now reported to be \$200 million—nearly as much as the property’s \$225 million purchase price in 2017.

Back on Oahu, the new Halepuna Waikiki by Halekulani will celebrate its grand opening on October 25, says Julie Arigo, Halepuna Waikiki general manager.

Arigo, who is also spearheading Halepuna’s project operations committee, says the \$60 million renovation of the former Waikiki Parc Hotel creates 284 rooms and four suites.



Julie Arigo

A newly designed grand lobby will allow for a seamless guest service experience, she says, and “the eighth floor



ALOHILANI RESORT WAIKIKI BEACH
PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALOHILANI RESORT

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Halepuna's eighth-floor raised wood pool deck
RENDERINGS COURTESY HALEPUNA WAIKIKI BY HALEKULANI



Halekulani Bakery & Restaurant at Halepuna
Hotel by Halekulani

'Urban Oasis' will feature an infinity pool, hot tub, fitness studio with equipment geared for 'functional' fitness, and an open-air garden—the first of its kind in Waikiki." Further below, the new Halekulani Bakery & Restaurant will offer full-service, all-day dining.

"The Halekulani brand's global reputation for exceeding service expectations has always been why guests continue to return," Arigo says, "and this is what guests of Halepuna Waikiki by Halekulani can also expect."

Ultimate Retreats

For visitors who demand the ultimate vacation, Pure Kauai provides spectacular private estates—and a full suite of high-touch services—on Kauai, Maui and Oahu. A stay at Hale 'Ae Kai, a 9,245-square-foot mansion on 15 acres overlooking a secluded Kauai beach, starts at \$12,000 a night.

"Generally, a one-week (booking) is most common," says Phil Jones, founder of Pure Kauai, adding that "people book about two years in advance."

Espacio and Hawaii's other luxury playgrounds can seem over the top, but

actually have a practical purpose, says Bryan K.K. Li, NAIOP Hawaii Chapter president.

"When it comes to vacation destinations, our visitors have myriad choices," Li says. "So it's



Bryan K.K. Li

extremely important to create reasons for loyal visitors to return to Hawaii, and for new visitors to be attracted to Hawaii."

Moreover, he notes, it's "important to have a diverse offering of hotel product to welcome visitors of all income levels."

Opportunity Knocks

Since Hawaii hotels run at 90 percent capacity most of the time—one of the highest rates in the nation—mid-scale hoteliers are also expanding their Hawaii visitor plant.

The Residence Inn by Marriott Oahu Kapolei, one new West Oahu property in this sector, is about to open.

The four-story, 135,000-square-foot Inn offers 183 rooms to area residents and visitors, and features a sport court and a pool area with nearby fire pit and barbeques, says Michael Parker,



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preconstruction manager for Layton Construction Co. LLC, the project's general contractor. "In addition," he says, "the hotel offers some of the amenities that you would find in a home—a kitchen/kitchenette, refrigerator and microwave."



Michael Parker

A light renovation, also called a "refresh," occurs every four to five years, says Li, and is also underway at many Hawaii properties.



Sky Ala Moana will include a hotel tower.
RENDERING COURTESY AVALON

At the Waikiki Beach Marriott, says Ryan Nakaima, vice president at general contracting company Nan Inc., guestroom renovations started in January and are scheduled to wrap in the first quarter of 2020. "Scope includes the renovation of 656 guestrooms and suites in the Kealohilani Tower," he says, "and 654 guestrooms and suites in the Paoakalani Tower."



Ryan Nakaima

In Kaanapali, renovations at the Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa are also in full swing. Swinerton Builders finished 508 guestroom enhancements last year, and plans to complete the common area refresh in November.

"The new design of the lobby,

...continued on page 28



Marble-topped dining room table in an Espacio suite
PHOTO COURTESY AQUA-ASTON HOSPITALITY

A Wealth of Luxury

The Espacio in Waikiki offers high-end services and rates—starting at a mere \$5K per night

BY BRETT ALEXANDER-ESTES

Like a midnight sky, the deep blue tabletop in Espacio's Sapphire Suite is a portal to another world.

"It's blue marble, from Carrara, Italy," says Theresa van Greunen, senior director of corporate communications at Aqua-Aston Hospitality, which manages the new Espacio hotel opening this month on Kalakaua Avenue.

Blue marble is used throughout the Sapphire Suite, van Greunen notes, indicating the surrounding expanse of polished stone, Persian carpets, ocean views—and complete privacy.

Like the Sapphire Suite, each of Espacio's nine suites is 2,250 square feet and occupies an entire floor.

Besides marble in a signature color (green, pink or blue) that marks a particular level of luxury, each suite features three bedrooms or two bedrooms and a den, three bathrooms, a balcony spa, a dry sauna and a designer kitchen.

Espacio's rooftop venues and infinity pool overlook Waikiki Beach 13 floors below.

Guest services are no less spectacular—as should be expected with room rates starting at \$5,000 per night. As part of its launch, Espacio is offering a pre-opening introductory rate of \$1,500 a night for September stays and \$2,500 a night for October stays. After that, the regular



Espacio's rooftop infinity pool overlooks Waikiki Beach

PHOTO COURTESY AQUA-ASTON HOSPITALITY

starting rate is \$5,000 a night for lower floors, up to \$8,000 a night for higher floors (suites 9, 10, 11 and penthouse).

Guests will have access to a robust hospitality team, including concierge and butlers, and a dedicated luxury house car. Guests can order personalized meals from famed chef Jason Yamaguchi as well as prized wine and liquor from Mugen, Yamaguchi's in-house Japanese-French restaurant.

The guest's hospitality team can arrange private art, library and film viewings and personalized culinary experiences as well as more standard excursions.

Espacio's guests, van Greunen says, are expected to come from Japan, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City and the tri-state area, Southern Florida and Texas.

With a continued increase in wealthy travelers, she says, Espacio will meet the demand for a high-end, multi-suite, exclusive experience in the heart of Waikiki.

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■ ■ I just wanted to thank and congratulate Swinerton on a terrific job on the TCO Royal Hawaiian project – the feedback throughout Tiffany right up to the top levels of the business has been excellent and you've set the bar for Flagship expectations going forward. ■ ■

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Experts share keys in grooming Hawaii's hospitality workforce to continue to be the best

BY DAVID PUTNAM

What makes for a great employee in Hawaii, where expectations are at their highest among both employees and guests to the Islands?

First, there's the spirit of aloha, the common trait found in all of the best hospitality workers. Without this, Hawaii is just another sun-and-sand resort.

"Most would define hospitality as a friendly and generous reception of visitors or strangers. However, it is so much more than being a joyful host," says Tammy Fukagawa, executive vice president



Tammy Fukagawa

at TS Restaurants. "It is sharing your aloha with others unconditionally and without expecting recompense—giving because you want to and never expect-

ing anything in return."

Michael Miller, director of operations at Tiki's Grill & Bar, agrees. "The difference it makes when an employee cares about the guests they are speaking to or helping is so powerful," he says.

"There are many jobs that can be done by technology, but when we can connect on a human level, it matters. In Hawaii, we enhance great hospitality with the spirit of aloha, with caring, love and service that is both unexpected by the guest and appreciated for its sincerity.

"And it all starts with a positive attitude toward each other and treating our guests with kindness."

Jerry Agrusa, an associate professor in the University of Hawaii at Manoa's School of Travel Industry Management (TIM) who specializes in hospitality



Michael Miller

and tourism management, says "one of the most significant challenges facing the hospitality industry in Hawaii is keeping quality employees."

He says at U.H.-Manoa's School of TIM, "we train the students to think like managers so when they graduate they can become front-line managers and supervisors."

Agrusa and his colleagues are working on a research project to determine the "impact of 'cultural intelligence' of job satisfaction of hospitality employees in Hawaii." He points to the value of "cultural intelligence"—CQ, as they call it—in grooming the next generation of Hawaii's hospitality workforce.

"To be a good manager in the hospitality field in Hawaii," Agrusa says, "you



Jerry Agrusa

The Makings of Greatness

Identify traits valuable for success in the hospitality industry

The makings of a successful hospitality employee begin with the characteristics of the employees themselves, says Sheryl Matsuoka, executive director of the Hawaii Restaurant Association.

"There are many traits of a great hospitality employee, and any combination of these traits may be the perfect mix that works," she says. "Identifying the traits that you find valuable in your employees will help you identify whether or not a person will be a good fit.

"The age-old question comes to mind: Can you teach a person the traits of a great hospitality employee, or are they born with the natural ability?

Matsuoka recommends "looking for trainable characteristics" while determining if the candidates "naturally possess" the following traits:

"They wear a smile: A smile is contagious. A smile can transform. Can you teach someone to smile naturally while 'on the clock' for eight hours?

"You will notice that they have strong social skills: The hospitality industry is a people industry. Strong social skills are vital.

" 'Sincerity' is a word you would use to describe them, as well as 'empathy,' 'genuine,' 'trustworthy' and 'honest.' Could a great manager teach a hospitality employee to be sincere when greeting a customer?

"Street smarts skills are just as important as having book smarts. People with street smarts are adaptable. People with street smarts are more resilient."

So, does the key to knowing who will become a great employee lie in hiring an inexperienced person who smiles, is sincere and possesses street smarts and strong social skills?

"Even if they are inexperienced," Matsuoka says, "take a chance and encourage, empower and motivate him or her and, before your eyes, a great hospitality employee is born."



Sheryl Matsuoka

have to try to understand the different cultures of visitors as well as employees.”

The CQ Solution

“With close to 10 million culturally diverse tourists visiting our islands, providing excellent service to each different cultural group is difficult,” Agrusa says. “Challenges include language barriers and the type and speed of service that the different guests expect.”

These types of challenges cast a spotlight on the need for cultural intelligence. Agrusa says his TIM students “have to be aware that one guest, say from California, may want the waiter to spend time and talk story while waiting on the table. But a guest from Western Europe feels it is inappropriate for the wait staff to ask the guest a lot of questions about their stay. Or a couple from certain cultures is on their honeymoon and there is a language barrier that can cause the husband in that culture to ‘lose face.’

“If you and your team can be supportive to the employee, it will make a world of difference.”

—Michael Miller

“Managers in Hawaii have to be aware of these cultural differences and share them with their employees and do their best to not have a miscommunication develop into a major problem where it is now shared all over social media.”

By learning and understanding CQ, he says, managers “can use this knowledge to address challenges with guests and employees. And sharing this knowledge with employees will lower their frustration level and reduce turnover.”

Practicing Inclusion

Miller also stresses the importance for the management team to support their employees’ efforts and performances.

“If you and your team can be supportive of the employee, it will make a world of difference,” he says. “We all have great days and not-so-great days. Finding a way to be understanding on the ‘off’ days will help motivate employees, rather than making them feel beat up.

“At Tiki’s, we strive to give positive coaching with written commendations for five-star reviews that mention staff members’ names. We try to work as an *ohana*, as a family, and try every day to treat each other with respect.

“Supporting our employees and cele-

brating with them in both good and bad times,” Miller adds, “is essential for encouraging a culture of great hospitality.”

Fukagawa notes that aloha “is a concept uniquely Hawaiian, and yet everyone is capable of adopting it. The best hospitality employees strive to live a life of aloha. I am fortunate that our company is filled with employees who exemplify the best definition of hospitality, *hookipa*. It is easy to understand the meaning of the term, but it is entirely different to embody it. For our employees, it is a way of life, and that is the secret to a great hospitality employee.

“People want to feel like they are part of something special and we should give such a gift, the gift of belonging, to others without conscious thought,” she adds. “In the hospitality industry, it is our privilege to share with our guests a cultural experience of Hawaii, providing them with a true sense of place and inclusion.”

As an example of *hookipa*, Fukagawa recalls an incident when a restaurant guest left a camera behind. “Our office manager took it upon herself to do some detective work and sought to find the owner of the camera,” Fukagawa says. “After looking at the photos on the camera she identified the hotel the guest

was staying at. She then looked at our reservations and found a reservation of a guest who was staying at that hotel.

“She was able to identify what table the guest sat at, and that indeed this was the table where the camera was found. Rather than simply calling the guest and asking them to come in and pick up the camera, the GM and office manager called the guest and took the camera to her. Now that is true hospitality.”

Another point Miller says that “is essential for great hospitality” is training employees to develop the “ability to connect and have a connection with people. When a hospitality industry employee takes the time to talk story or share with a guest, it can create a life-long connection with the destination and its employees. Memorable experiences are made with connections, which can be as simple as a genuine welcome back or a caring, unexpected gesture to help guide a guest.

“Hospitality is people sincerely helping people. Great hospitality is people helping people with heart, with the spirit of aloha.”



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Where To?

Travel options keep
Oahu on the move

BY PRISCILLA PÉREZ BILLIG

Biki riders explore Waikiki.
PHOTO COURTESY BIKI

Getting around Honolulu via ground transportation is as easy as riding a bike ... or a bus, handivan, taxi, ridesharing service ... even a scooter.

"Bicycles are the most efficient vehicles on the planet, 50 times more efficient than cars, and twice as efficient as walking," writes Godo Stoyke, author of "The Carbon Buster's Home Energy Handbook: Slowing Climate Change and Saving Money."

Honolulu's newest ride craze Biki (*bee-key*), Bikeshare Hawaii's low-tech commuting venue, offers 1,300 bicycles for rent at 135 self-service "Biki Stops." The noticeable curbside lines of blue bicycles can be found from Iwilei to Diamond Head, Kapiolani Community College, the University of Hawaii and all over Waikiki.

"Our record is 4,863 rides in a single day in February," says Kelsey Colpitts, Biki marketing and communications

manager. "The most popular time to ride is Friday between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. The busiest Biki Stop is #321 on Seaside and Kalakaua where there were more than 30,000

combined check-ins/outs during the last year at this station alone."

Renting is easy, Colpitts adds. "Just step up to the screen and follow the instructions."

Bus Stop

TheBus, with about 540 vehicles currently in operation, is the cheapest mainstay mode of Honolulu transportation. It carries the distinction of being the only mass transit system in the nation to be twice awarded the title of "America's Best Transit System."



Kelsey Colpitts

With hotel pick-up and drop-off, popular guided bus rides are the Oahu Grand Circle Island Tour and Day Tour, which take visitors from Diamond Head Crater to world-renowned surfing spots on the North Shore. Stops include scenic views, such as the Byodo-In Temple, Dole Plantation and Waimea Bay.

For individuals with disabilities that prevent them from using the City and County's bus service, there is TheHandi-Van, a public transit service with a fleet of 190 vans on the island. Available islandwide, riders must be certified ADA-eligible and make advanced reservations. Riders are picked up and dropped off at the nearest and safest curbside point of their destination address.

Visitors to Oahu who request ADA paratransit service will be eligible to ride the TheHandi-Van for a period of 21 days per a 365-day period. If planning to remain on-island longer, the



Charley's Taxi offers wheelchair transport.
PHOTO COURTESY CHARLEY'S TAXI

TheHandi-Van: 768-8380
TheHandi-Van Advanced Reservations: 456-5555
TheHandi-Van Eligibility Center: 538-0033

Department of Transportation Services: 768-8300
Charley's Taxi: 233-3333
Charley's Virtual Driving Lab: 233-1234
Roberts Hawaii: 523-7750



Besides ride sharing, Uber offers food pick-up and delivery service.
PHOTO COURTESY UBER

visitor must go through the eligibility process established for residents.

Hail that Cab!

Taxi services, like Charley's Taxi, remain a popular choice among many visitors to the Islands. Charley's Taxi currently has several hundred cars serving Oahu which offer regular metered taxi or flat-rate with reservations required for domestic visitors only. The fleet includes full-size sedans, vans, SUVs and limousines.

A third-generation, women-owned

business, Charley's trains its drivers in an advanced simulator, clears them with background checks and teaches them how to assist people with special physical needs.

"We can also offer other options, such as buses for groups and wheelchair transport for disabled visitors," says Dale Evans, president of Charley's Taxi.

Charley's Virtual Driving Lab, the first privately owned driving simulator in Hawaii, offers opportunities for all Hawaii drivers to improve their driving skills. The Virtual Driving Lab also of-



Charley's Taxi Virtual Driving Lab
PHOTO COURTESY CHARLEY'S TAXI

Charley's Virtual Driving Lab

FLEET VEHICLES AND DRIVERS: Simulator training for fleet drivers can reduce loss ratios, and potentially insurance costs as a result.

REHABILITATION: If you're recovering from an injury, our simulator offers a completely safe way to get some practice before going back on the road.

DRIVER'S EDUCATION: Whether you're turning 16 or you're new to Hawaii, getting your driver's license can be stressful. Our simulator is a safe way to practice driving with zero risk of an accident. You'll be much more confident when you first get behind the wheel of a real car.

VALET COMPANIES: Parking lots or ramps and lots of people walking around are a dangerous combination. The Simulator can be used to screen potential new hires and train existing valets to improve safety performance.

NOVICE AND NERVOUS DRIVERS: Individuals who just want to get some extra practice to gain confidence on the road are also welcome. Whatever makes you most uncomfortable about driving, we have a simulator scenario to help you gain confidence.

SOURCE: Charley's Taxi Virtual Driving Lab Car & Small Truck Simulator website

fers custom programs to meet specific driver needs.

Set a Destination

Ride-sharing companies, like Uber and Lyft, are part of a market exploding in popularity using an online-enabled platform to connect passengers with drivers who use their personal, non-commercial vehicles. Clicking a downloadable app on your smart phone and filling out the pick-up and destination addresses will get a driver to your exact location, usually within



Roberts Hawaii offers big tour bus or van transportation.

PHOTO COURTESY ROBERTS HAWAII



Lyft offers rides in sedans, supersized six-seaters and luxury high-end vehicles.

PHOTO COURTESY LYFT

minutes. For obvious safety reasons, it may be wise to have the driver say your name before getting into the vehicle.

According to the “Global Ride Sharing Market Size & Share, Industry Report, 2019-2025” by Grand View Research, a market research and consulting company, the global ride-sharing market size was valued at \$6.68 billion in 2017. It is projected to expand at a compound annual growth rate of 7.5 percent over the forecast period.

The report claims the need to reduce urban traffic congestion and the demand for a cost-effective mode of commute with better comfort are the key factors driving the growth. Increasing penetration of smart devices, such as smartphones, tablets and others is projected to drive the market. In the ride-sharing business model, smart personal devices hold the most significance as the platforms on which the apps are installed.

See the Sights

Roberts Hawaii, the state’s largest



PHOTO COURTESY WAIKIKI TROLLEY

tour and transportation company with a fleet of approximately 900 vehicles, offers transportation for guided tours, activities and excursions on four islands or just a pick-up at the airport. One of its most popular tours is the movie set of “Jurassic Park” on Kauai.

The company’s shore excursions offer tours and activities at a discounted price created specifically for passengers on cruise lines. With a 48-hour advance notice, Roberts Hawaii will schedule a wheelchair-accessible vehicle.

For visitors with a lengthy wait time because of early arrivals or late departures, Roberts Hawaii in August launched its new Visitor Concierge Services. These services offer a side trip to Ala Moana Center for guests using Roberts Hawaii’s airport shuttle

service between Waikiki and the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport at no additional cost.

On the street level of Ala Moana Center’s *ewa* wing, the Visitor Concierge Services lounge offers a range of amenities, including luggage storage, personal lockers, complimentary WiFi and Instagram-friendly walls. For guests with a reservation on Roberts Hawaii’s airport-Waikiki shuttle, there’s no additional cost to visit the Visitor Concierge Services. Prices for Roberts Hawaii’s shuttle transportation between the airport and Waikiki begin at \$17 per person.

Other Oahu sightseeing tours include Hoku Hawaii Tours, E Noa Tours, Royal Star Hawaii Motorcoach Tours & Destination Services, Go Waikiki Shut-



Segway of Hawaii offers eco-friendly personalized tours.
PHOTO COURTESY SEGWAY OF HAWAII

tle, Honolulu Shuttle and Tour Services and many more.

Clang, Clang, Clang

San Francisco may be famous for its hill-climbing cable cars, but the Waikiki Trolley has them beat with its unlimited hop-on, hop-off system and double-decker trolleys. Tickets are available for purchase online for 1-day, 4-day or 7-day passes for various sightseeing, scenic spots and shopping.

Tours include sightseeing cultural Honolulu and Oahu's panoramic coastline, Waikiki shopping, historic Pearl Harbor, Diamond Head and Honolulu dining.

Young at Heart

And, finally, there is the Segway, the smart self-balance scooter/personal transporter that can travel up to 12 miles per hour. Waikiki Segway offers personalized tours of Waikiki and Diamond Head, Chinatown and Hawaiian historical landmarks, Magic Island and Kapiolani Park for those over 10 years of age.

Segway of Hawaii serves Waikiki, Kaaka and Kona on the Big Island with guided tours on its more than 120 personal transporters. Offerings include personalized tours, such as scavenger hunts, birthday parties, bachelor/bachelorette parties, family reunions, launch of a new product or service event, trade show marketing and sampling, Segway Olympics and obstacle courses, as well as tours for company outings and

Kirk Hendricks, owner of Honolulu Pedicab & Tours, operates the only permitted and licensed pedicab company in the city. In 1989, the City Council voted to ban pedicabs from Kalakaua and Kuhio avenues, Ala Wai Boulevard and Kalia Road when there were more than 100 pedicabs operating in Waikiki. A cyclist and mountain biker, Hendricks says he wants to build up a fleet of pedicabs for historical tours from his base at Aloha Tower to the State Capitol and throughout Chinatown.

According to a 2013 study by the John

Marshall Law School, the word "pedicab" is synonymous with the term "rickshaw," a shortened form of the Japanese word *jinrikisha*, which means "human-powered vehicle" and refers to the familiar hand-drawn, two-wheeled cart. Japan was the first country to use this human-powered mode extensively for transportation.

By 1880, Tokyo boasted an estimated 40,000 rickshaws in use on its city streets. Other Asian countries soon followed, and the rickshaw emerged as a means of employment for many rural peasants migrating to the cities. Historically, drivers rented rickshaws and barely earned a living from the fares, often working 18-hour shifts and sleeping in their vehicles.

Honolulu has adopted an elastic approach to regulating the number of pedicabs. Its ordinance requires the City Council to establish a limit on the number of pedicabs based on a finding of public convenience and necessity.

Kirk Hendricks takes passengers on a pedicab tour.

PHOTO COURTESY HONOLULU PEDICAB & TOUR



corporate events.

"Segway was founded on a vision of eco-friendly, short-distance transportation alternatives," says Alan Rice, president and owner. "Our mission is simple: to give our customers a green, personal transportation experience

that transforms the way people work, play and live."

Taking in the sights in Hawaii—or just getting around—has become as easy as simply getting onboard. The offerings are numerous, varied, available to young and old ... and loads of fun.

Make Yourself Comfortable

Hotel housekeepers—the unsung heroes of the hospitality industry

BY PRISCILLA PÉREZ BILLIG

Whether on a vacation or a staycation, every guest enters their hotel room not really knowing what to expect. Within the first few minutes of settling in, they're sure to notice one thing—whether their room is fresh and clean.

Guests travel to Hawaii from all across the globe, arriving at all hours. Wherever they come from, pretty much everyone has stayed previously in a hotel. But Hawaii is different from say, Detroit, and the Islands offer the opportunity to show off their unique culture and stunning scenery.

The value of good housekeeping offers guest comfort, a good hotel experience, repeat business, justification for pricing, favorable online reviews and, perhaps most importantly, hygiene.

There are more than 50,000 hotel rooms to clean on Oahu alone, according to the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports in May 2017, its most recent data, that Hawaii employs approximately 12,400 housekeepers across the state.

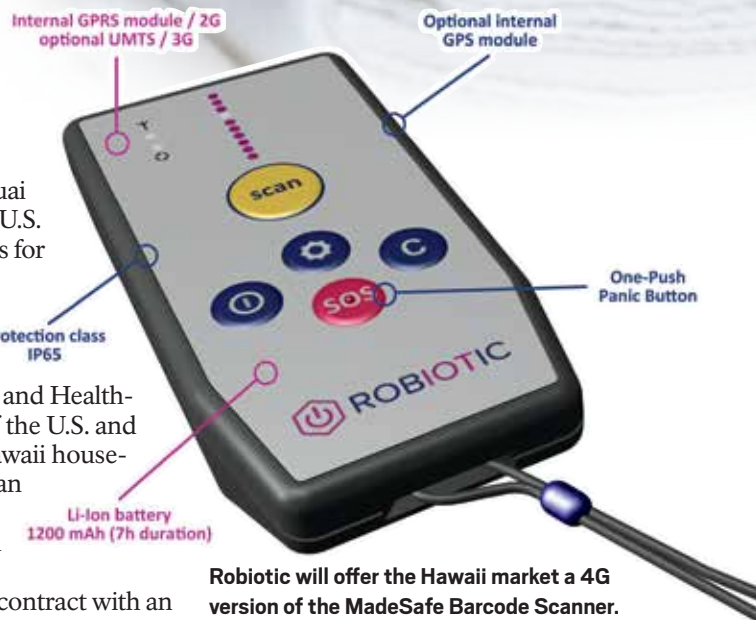
Urban Honolulu, with its plethora of new high-rises and its obvious need for additional housekeepers, is the top-paying U.S. metropolitan area for this occu-

pation. Hawaii and Kauai rank as the top-paying U.S. non-metropolitan areas for housekeepers.

Paola Rodelas, spokeswoman for Unite Here Local 5, Hawaii's Hospitality and Healthcare Union and part of the U.S. and Canada union, says Hawaii housekeepers start at a median hourly wage of just over \$23 per hour with health and retirement benefits in a four-year contract with an increasing hourly wage over the term of the contract.

Clean = Healthy

"The most apparent reason to have a clean and attractive room is for sanitary purposes for the guests, and to make sure they have an enjoyable stay in a clean environment," says Glen Deliz, director of housekeeping at the Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach. "For us, a clean room means they'll want to come back and stay with us again, which is important for our repeat customers, as well as our government business travelers that come here quite often."



Robiotic will offer the Hawaii market a 4G version of the MadeSafe Barcode Scanner.

PHOTO COURTESY ROBIOTIC

Nearly nine out of 10 guests cite cleanliness as a driving factor when booking rooms. Eighty-six percent of respondents to a survey from cleaning brand CLR said that cleanliness is the top criteria they look for when reading online hotel reviews.

Hilton Garden Inn Waikiki Beach



Stephen Hinck

General Manager Stephen Hinck says Ecolab and Diversity are among the largest companies offering cleaning products for the hospitality industry that are safe for the consumer and

for the environment.

"We're part of a brand so we have large buying power," Hinck says. "We don't limit our housekeepers as far as supplies. We want them to clean the rooms to the best of their abilities. So there is no limit. The cost is the cost. There are no shortcuts when cleaning."

A Career in Housekeeping

Jerry Agrusa, of the University of Hawaii's School of Travel Industry Manage-

OSHA Recommendations

To improve housekeepers' working conditions, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration says:

- Allow and provide for housekeepers to use long-handled or adjustable-length tools for dusting, mopping and other cleaning.
- Modify the bed-making process, such as using fitted sheets, to minimize the lifting of mattresses (right now, housekeepers

lift each mattress—which can weigh as much as 100 pounds—at least four times to make a bed).

- Provide motorized carts and lighter-weight vacuums to minimize force exerted.
- Organize work in a manner that minimizes travel distance between rooms and the laundry room.

SOURCE: National Council for Occupational Safety and Health

ment, says guests only notice cleanliness when it's not there. He points out that in most hotels, housekeeping is the largest department by far. From a demographic standpoint, the worker is a woman of color between 50 and 60 years of age and most likely an immigrant.

"Where are we going to get the next group of housekeepers? Each new generation doesn't want to do this job," Agrusa says.

The biggest factor that comes into

play, especially in Hawaii, he says, is to keep the housekeepers' morale up.

"Train them properly so they know what's expected of them and keep them feeling positive about their job," Agrusa says. "One of the challenges they face is they usually only hear about things when something



Jerry Agrusa

is wrong. People will leave a hotel if it's not clean, and they will put it on social media. And it does have a huge effect."

There are also the physical and health effects of a career in housekeeping. According to Unite Here, hotel workers have a 40 percent higher injury rate than all service sector workers. Of all hotel workers, housekeepers experience the highest injury rates.

In a Unite Here survey of more than 600 hotel housekeepers in the U.S. and Canada, 91 percent said that they have suffered work-related pain. Of

Tips from Freelance Housekeepers

- Bathroom: Spray down and give cleaners time to work; towel wipe shower curtain, shower walls, tub and fixtures; make sure drain is operating well; use bleach in toilet, brushing bowl and seat (top and bottom); supply toilet tissue.
- Hygiene: Inspect the bedskirt for signs of bed bugs; throw out trash and make sure containers are clean and lined with bags (add extra bags beneath main bag).
- Bed: Wash mattress cover, sheets, pillows, pillow protectors, pillow cases, bedspread, bedskirt (where bed bugs often reside).
- Carpets: Vacuum; professionally clean regularly.
- Kitchen: Check all household appliances for cleanliness: toaster, coffeemaker, countertops and wipe down refrigerator inside and out.
- Lanai/All Tiled Floor Areas: Vacuum for sand; wash down any tile with white vinegar (other products may damage grout).
- Mirrors/Windows: Clean with white vinegar or Windex.
- AC: Clean filter.
- Remote Control: Considered one of the most overlooked objects needing to be cleaned, yet one of the worst germ-carrying devices in a room.
- WiFi: Most-asked-about amenity; make sure it's working properly and that the guest can find the access code.
- Leave some clean-up supplies: Hand and dish soap, fresh sponge, paper towels, dish towels, housekeeper's container of cleaners.
- Avoid chemical-based products: Some guests may be allergic.

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The Hospitality Housekeeping Council (from left), Richie Palafox, Outrigger Royal Sea Cliff Resort; Kimo Akiu, Hilton Waikoloa Village; Sandy Hanson, Kona Billfisher; Marleen Okuno, Hilton Waikoloa Village; John Yamamoto, Park Shore Waikiki; Wanda Astrero, Sobel-Westex; Malia Ching Robinson, Outrigger Royal Sea Cliff Resort; Nita Kanoa, Hilton Waikoloa Village; Kanoa Lapa, Royal Kona Resort; Hao Dang Tanacsos, HAOsekeeping Inc.; Alex Berger, Hilton Waikoloa Village; Shelly Awaya, A-1 Textiles & Hospitality Products; Kani Copp, Outrigger Royal Sea Cliff Resort; Teresa Calabrese, A-1 Textiles & Hospitality Products; Keola Swinney, United Laundry Services Kona; Tammy Nguyen, Royal Kona Resort; Guy Noa, Royal Kona Resort; and Madeline Paulo, Kona Reefshare

What the Experts Say

Hawaii Hospitality reached out to the Hospitality Housekeeping Council (HHC) Chairperson Hao Dang Tanacsos for insights into special touches that might be applied when preparing a hotel room for its next guests. In turn, she asked HHC at a Big Island meeting to offer suggestions. Here are a few:

- “Make sure the front door is clean and inviting as it is the first impression upon arrival.” —Kona Reefshare Housekeeping Supervisor Madeline Paulo
- “Appeal to their senses with a clean and fresh smell.” —Royal Kona Resort Housekeeping Manager Guy Noa
- “Turn on some lights for the guests’ arrival to enhance the ambiance. Turn the AC on the ‘cool’ setting so the room is at a perfect temperature.” —Kona Reefshare General Manager Katharina Findlay
- “Spotless sliding doors and windows enhance the view and clean feeling.” —Royal Sea Cliff Hotel Executive Housekeeper Kani Copp
- “Turn on the TV with a local channel, which is informative and inviting upon arrival.” —Royal Kona Resort Assistant Director of Rooms Tammy Nguyen
- “For celebrations, add amenities for birthday, honeymoon or anniversary upon arrival.” —Wanda Astrero of Sobel-Westex
- “Go the extra mile and put a creative decoration on the bed to greet the guests upon their arrival; it costs a little, yet makes a great impression.” —Hilton Waikoloa Resort Executive Housekeeper Marleen Okuno and Housekeeping Manager Kimo Akiu



Hao Dang Tanacsos

those who reported workplace pain, 77 percent said their pain interfered with routine activities, two out of every three workers visited their doctor to deal with workplace pain and 66 percent took pain medication just to get through their daily work quota.

“Housekeepers are of great value because it takes a lot to perform a rigorous job such as theirs,” says Shelly Awaya, communications director for HLTA’s Hospitality Housekeeping Council. “Housekeeping is the most hard-working and, oftentimes, least-credited when it comes to the success of the business.

“With social media now a huge part of a property’s overall reputation, housekeeping takes the brunt of negative comments when a guest is displeased with their room,” she says.

Freelance Housekeepers

The advent of online booking services for privately owned hotel rooms,

private home rooms and entire home rentals—about 3,000 are legally operating in Hawaii, according to the Hawaii Department of Planning and Permitting—has spurred employment for a number of freelance housekeepers. They often operate their own cleaning businesses, usually spread by word of mouth, and average an hourly wage of about \$20 with no benefits.

Most say they usually use basic cleaning supplies, such as unscented bleach, vinegar and powdered cleansing products. Work is sporadic, on call, with a clientele built along the way.

On the Tech Side

Like most industries, the housekeeping business is getting a helping hand from new technologies such as Robiotic’s MaidSafe Barcode Scanner that includes a “panic button” should a housekeeper encounter a troublesome guest. The device is designed to improve operational productivity, given that cleanliness

remains critical to guest satisfaction.

The scanner offers improved communications between supervisory staff, the front desk and other departments, such as security, to determine when a particular room is ready or if a problem exists, optimizing productive, efficient and safe housekeeping.

Housekeepers hold up the user-friendly device to a barcode label outside each room. The scanner automatically transmits the data to the hotel’s Property Management System and booking systems via a mobile communication network with a permanent “virtual dedicated line” that ensures constant connectivity.

Upon leaving the room, the housekeeper scans again, showing completion of room cleaning. The front desk then knows which rooms are available for guests, ensuring shorter wait times. Automatically logged internal data tracks cleaning times, identifies gaps in performance, floor routes and inventory.

Hargrove Named Prince Waikiki GM

Prince Waikiki has appointed **Joshua Hargrove** as general manager. With 14 years of hospitality experience with the Prince Resorts Hawaii collection, Hargrove is charged with all aspects of the 563-key Honolulu hotel overlooking the Ala Wai Yacht Harbor, including its signature 100 Sails Restaurant & Bar and meeting and event spaces.



Joshua Hargrove

Hargrove's background spans positions at Hawaii hotels including The Modern Honolulu, The Royal Hawaiian, A Luxury Collection Resort and The Sheraton Keauhou Bay Resort & Spa in Kona.

Most recently, as hotel manager at The Westin Ka'anapali Ocean Resort Villas in Lahaina, he was responsible for overall strategy, performance and leadership of the operations team.

Hargrove graduated from Washington State University with a bachelor's in hospitality and business management. He relocated to Honolulu in June 2006 and has lived on Maui and the Island of Hawaii.

HRA to Induct Kim, Kodama

Peter Kim and **DK Kodama**, two of the Islands' leading restaurateurs, head the inductees to the 13th annual Hawaii Restaurant Association Hall of Fame.

The event, paired with the HRA's annual "Chefs of Aloha" Dine Around, will be held on Sept. 23 at the Sheraton Waikiki Ballrooms.

According to the HRA, the inductees are individuals who have "demonstrated dedication and commitment to the growth of the restaurant and food service industry in Hawaii, contributed to the enhancement of its quality and image and demonstrated service through outreach."

Kim, of Signature Prime Steakhouse and Yummy Restaurant Group, and Kodama, of DK Steakhouse, Sansei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bar and Vino, will be honored along with seven award winners at the event.

They are: **Steve Ueda** of Suisan Food Service, the Legacy Award; **Wally Takara** of Cavalier's Restaurant, the Pioneer Award; **Charlene "Charley" Goodness** of Maile Restaurant, the Pioneer Award; **Miles Ichinose** of McDonald's Franchisee, the Active Restaurateur Award; **Eric von Platen Luder** of Luana Hospitality Group, the Active Restaurateur Award; **Dean Okimoto** of the Hawaii Agricultural Foundation, the Local Champion Award; and **Felix Tai** of Pounders Restaurant, the Local Champion Award.

Grosz Promoted to GM at International Market Place

International Market Place marketing and sponsorship director **Breana Grosz** was



Breana Grosz

promoted to general manager. She succeeds **Michael Fenley**, who is transitioning into a new role with Taubman before retiring in early 2020.

As GM since June 24, Grosz oversees all aspects of the shopping, dining

and entertainment destination, including operations, marketing, sponsorship, retailer relationships and community relations.

She joined Taubman as an owners' representative assistant in 2016 to work on the International Market Place development project. She then joined the International Market Place marketing team where she most recently served as director of marketing and sponsorship.

Grosz holds a bachelor's from Michigan State University.

York, Stark Join HVCB

The Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) has selected **Armida**



Armida York

York and Becky Stark as managers of membership development and engagement.

From being part of the opening team of three major hotels to public relations experience with the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, York has amassed a skillset underpinned by local knowledge and hospitality expertise.

Stark, through her time with the Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce and Dis-



Becky Stark

ney Cruise Line's hotel operations, is skilled at promoting responsible destination-based messaging at local, county, state and regional levels, and also understands the importance of supporting the visitor experience.

Managers of membership development and engagement are responsible for the continued advancement of HVCB's membership programs and sales campaigns. They are instrumental in providing support and strategic direction to partners and the community.

York and Stark will also be actively involved in providing interactive resources, events and industry expertise within the community.

Hale Koa Hotel Adds Three

The Hale Koa Hotel, a Waikiki beachfront hotel for members of the U.S. armed forces and their families, has added two executive officers and a food and beverage director.

Joseph Scanlon joins as chief financial management officer, and will direct all department functions, including financial statements, reports, forecasts and annual budgets.

Previously, Scanlon served as chief of the finance division at NATO's U.S. Mission in Luxembourg, and has held other federal and armed forces financial leadership positions in South Korea, Afghanistan and Germany. He holds a master's in business



Joseph Scanlon



Embassy Carpets, which has been doing business in Hawaii since 1985, celebrated its fifth year as an exhibitor at the annual Hawaii Lodging, Hospitality & Foodservice Expo in July at Neal S. Blaisdell Center. Representing the company are master installer David Zamora (far left) and owner Dara Jilla (far right) and members of their *ohana*. Since 2013, Embassy Carpets also has been a regular exhibitor at the annual Hawaii Building, Facilities & Property Management Expo.

PHOTO COURTESY EMBASSY CARPETS

administration and economics from the University of Colorado.

Steven Snyder joins as human resource officer, and will direct labor relations, training, safety and employee assistance programs.

Previously, Snyder served as the



Steven Snyder

chief of the Human Resources Management Service at the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Pacific Islands Health Care System. Snyder holds a J.D. from Brooklyn Law School.

Norman Verdeprado joins as food



Norman Verdeprado

and beverage director, and will oversee two full-service restaurants, snack and catering operations, luaus and three bars with combined annual revenues in excess of \$26 million.

His previous experience spans the private and military sectors, and includes Four Seasons, the San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina and Naval Base Coronado, where he served as food and beverage director. He holds a bachelor's from San Diego State University.

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currently in progress, provides a light touch to the building, and seeks to emphasize and enhance the resort's enduring architecture and the property's unique natural features," says Rapp, AHL's project architect. "The new layout provides more spaces for seating and relaxation, and draws guests to the dramatic views of Pu'u Keka'a (Black Rock) and the ocean. Overall, the renovation is a seamless blend of old and new, providing a fresh update to the look and feel of the resort."

Linking Rail to the Sky

Avalon Development's Sky Ala Moana, with a reported total value of \$510 million, is slated to start construction later this year.

The "two-tower, mixed-use residential, hotel



Mark Berkowitz

and retail project encompasses more than one-and-a-half acres in the center of Ala Moana's transit-oriented development (TOD) district," says Mark Berkowitz, project sales manager at Sky Ala Moana.

The 39-story hotel tower will offer 300 units with upscale appointments, as well as a 54,000-square-foot Sky Terrace amenity and recreation deck. Construction is expected to take 33 months.

\$800 Million in Play

Timbers Hokuala, a new Kauai luxury resort with a reported value of \$800 million, will soon unroll new phases of development.

These include condominiums, hotels, home sites and a 33,000-square-foot wellness, retail and restaurant complex. Currently, design development is underway on the next phase of townhomes and a 210-key hotel.

A Worldwide Stage

"Rival (visitor) markets such as Mex-



Mufi Hannemann

ico and Costa Rica have been working at ... improving their reputation as a viable vacation option for international travelers," says Mufi Hannemann, president and

CEO of the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association.

Mexico, for example, "has witnessed record numbers in tourism, and is poised to see substantial growth ... as household names such as Hilton and Marriott have very large development plans in the pipeline," Hannemann says. "Therefore, to stay competitive on the worldwide stage, our hospitality industry must remain vigilant, creative, and aggressive in strengthening our presence in our top markets, pursuing new opportunities, and responding to changes in the travel marketplace."

Golf Tournament Provides Major Tourism Scholarships

The mission of Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association is built upon three pillars: education, philanthropy and advocacy. The first two of these pillars bring me great joy in fulfilling my duties as president and CEO of HLTA, and I would like to share with you information about one of our staple fundraising events and how it supports our goals.

HLTA's 20th Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament was held on Aug. 8 at the Hawaii Prince Golf Club. This is an event that I look forward to each year on HLTA's calendar, and I am pleased to announce that it has continued to grow in popularity and success. This year was completely sold out with over 250 golfers taking part in the festivities, ultimately raising nearly \$100,000.

This is a huge success for HLTA and is crucially important as the funds generated through team registration fees, prize drawings and giveaways support various scholarships that we award to deserving Hawaii youth.

Our scholarships are intended to help those who are pursuing degrees, and eventually careers in hospitality-focused fields. Each year, the HLTA Scholarship Committee sifts through an impressive array of students to find those who are best suited and most deserving of scholarships.

Overall, HLTA awarded scholarships to 70 students this year. The following are some of the 2019 scholarship awardees who we announced at the golf tournament:

- **Ileana Nii** was the recipient of both the Clem Judd Jr. Memorial Scholarship and the Pouhana Hokele Scholarship, which is administered in collaboration with the Ke Alii Pauahi Foundation.

Ileana is a graduate of Waipahu High School and currently a student at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas where she is enrolled in the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality. Upon completing her undergraduate studies, Ileana hopes to return to Hawaii to open and manage a hotel that would expose visitors to the authentic Hawaiian culture rather than a commercialized version of it.



With HLTA President and CEO Mufi Hannemann are, from left, Christian Chinen, scholarship winner Camryn Chinen, scholarship winner Ileana Nii, Mileka Nii and HLTA Oahu Chapter Chair Bonnie Kiyabu.

State Sen. Kurt Fevella joined me in presenting the Clem Judd Jr. Memorial scholarship to Ileana during a special ceremony held at our golf tournament. It was fitting that she and her mother, Mileka, be recognized in front of a crowd of the very people whose generosity made this possible.

- **2019 R.W. "Bob" Holden Scholar Gellyn Flores** is a student at the University of Hawaii–West Oahu where she is majoring in hospitality and tourism and marketing. A member of the class of 2020, she is a UHWO Chancellor's Scholarship winner and serves as a student ambassador on campus.

In addition to her academic workload, she has worked at the Four Seasons Resort Oahu as a turnaround attendant.

- **Jillian Paganiban** is another recipient of the R.W. "Bob" Holden Memorial Scholarship. She is a student at UH–West Oahu and is slated to graduate in the spring with a bachelor's in business administration with a concentration in hospitality and tourism.

Her interest in the visitor industry began while a senior at Waipahu High School, which inspired her to pursue a career in hospitality. She also has been employed at Ko Olina.

- Our final R.W. "Bob" Holden Scholar is **Noah Matagi Magalei**. A graduate

of Kahuku High School, he is currently a student at Brigham Young University–Hawaii where he has excelled as a hospitality and tourism management major.

He also has work experience with the City & County Parks Department as a summer aide and as an employee of the Polynesian Cultural Center. He is also a former member of the HLTA Mentoring Program, which he completed last spring.

- **Kaiulani Fernandez**, a Pacific University sophomore, is the 2019 Don Ho Legacy Scholarship recipient. We created the scholarship in memory of Ho who throughout his career was responsible for many magical moments for thousands of tourists who visited Hawaii. The scholarship is awarded to a student of Hawaiian ancestry who is

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

Encourage, Empower and Motivate

The hospitality industry is a quickly growing industry and a vital sector of not only the world's economy, but also Hawaii's economy. The National Restaurant Association says it serves a half-million restaurant businesses and their more than 750,000 hard-working employees—a number that we can expect to grow in the coming years.

Hawaii's leisure and hospitality industry showed strength in 2007-2017 with a gain of 12.2 percent, and posted Hawaii's largest overall numerical gain of 13,450 new jobs. What is it about this industry that brings in a continuous influx of new talent, and what are we looking for when we see this eager new group?

To be a great hospitality employee you need to be able to think on your feet, be able to handle and resolve situations sometimes without guidance.

Of course, anyone hiring these days is looking for raw talent—that diamond in the rough. But are we looking for an innate personality, or for someone we can train? The big question is: What are the personality traits we are looking for and, if they are trainable traits, how do we train someone to care about our guests just as much as we do?

While there are many traits a person should possess in a service-related industry, one seems to stand out above all the rest: sincerity. Although a person may be able to put on a smile at the most ideal

time, is it genuine? Do they really care? Do they really adopt the “treat others as you would like to be treated” motto?

Here in Hawaii, we have “aloha.” It's not just a word, it's a true way of life, a feeling, a spirit. But can this be taught, or is this inherent?

I like to think aloha is infectious: It just evokes a feeling inside that makes you want to do good and be happy, and to treat others with kindness and respect. Sincerity, or aloha, is a genuineness. It tends to come out in a smile which is so important in this industry, where facial expressions and body language can say everything without saying a word.

No matter what language you speak, a smile is universal: It's welcoming, it's hopefully very genuine and, most importantly, it tells the world that you are approachable.

Every day, every guest and every situation is unique; there isn't one that is exactly the same. To be a great hospitality employee you need to be able to think on your feet, and to be able to handle and resolve situations, sometimes without guidance. Oftentimes, anticipating guests' needs even before they are aware of them, and meeting those needs

requires great social and interpersonal skills as well as having the ability to use judgment and common sense.

Everyone has social skills, but at what level? And are they able to use those skills to connect with people to “talk story,” and make people feel welcomed and included? Much of what we do in this industry isn't always based off of the products we have. It's the people and the connection we have with our guests that will make us unique.

Think of a place you enjoy. Is it because of what it offers, or is it the experience that it provides? Or is it the employees who make you feel so welcomed and warm and fuzzy inside that you know they will do almost anything to meet or exceed your needs?

Any of these traits can be taught, but it's the willingness to learn and adapt that makes the best hospitality employees. Ultimately, it all comes down to leadership: A leader must lead by example, and must exemplify the traits that are expected of the team.



Sheryl Matsuoka is executive director of the Hawaii Restaurant Association. For more information on the HRA, email Info@hawaiirestaurant.org or call 944-9105.

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pursuing music or the arts. This is also offered through a partnership between the Hawaii Hotel Industry Foundation and the Ke Alii Pauahi Foundation.

She is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools–Kapalama and aspires to become a vocal instructor where she hopes to share her passion for music with her students.

• **Camryn Chinen** is a junior at the University of Las Vegas, Nevada and

was selected to receive the Pouhana Hokele Scholarship. This is awarded to a student of Hawaiian ancestry and is renewable for up to four years.

Camryn is completing her undergraduate studies and majoring in hospitality at UNLV. She attended Kamehameha Schools–Kapalama from kindergarten through high school and one day hopes to be able to share her Native Hawaiian culture with tourists

as a hotel manager.

Let me conclude by acknowledging the work of John Hulihee and our golf committee that he co-chaired for putting together a memorable and highly successful golf tournament. It gives us great pleasure to be able to contribute in some small way to the new generation's educational journey. We look forward to seeing them accomplish so much more in the years to come.



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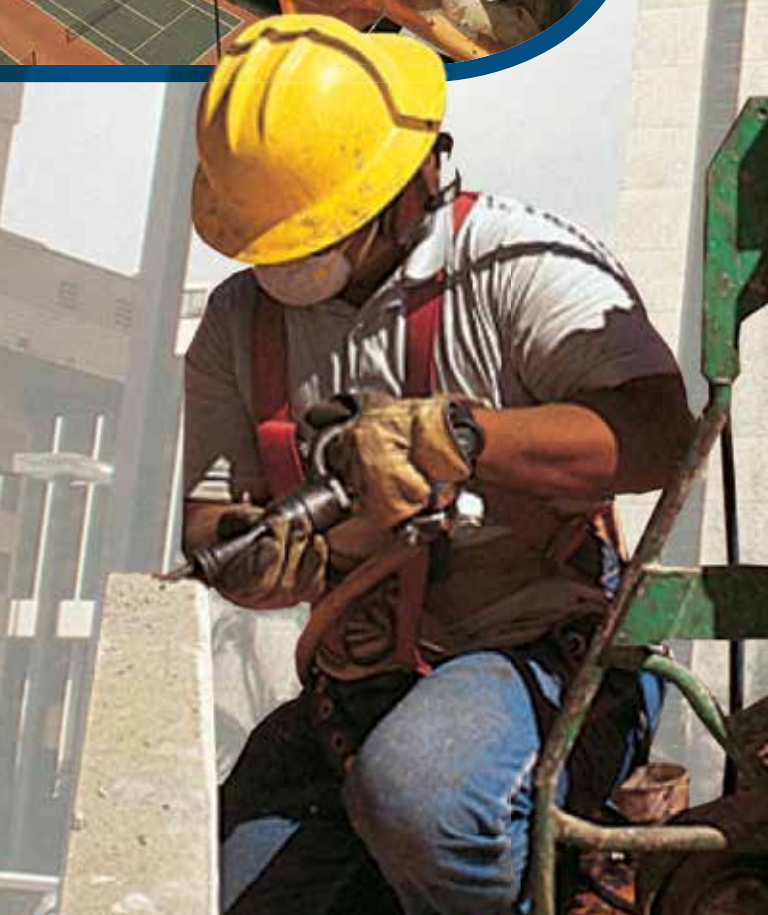
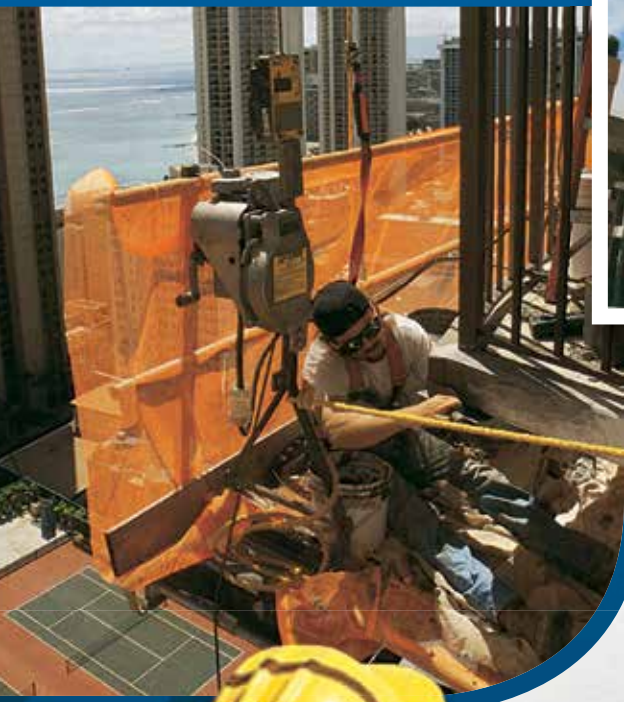
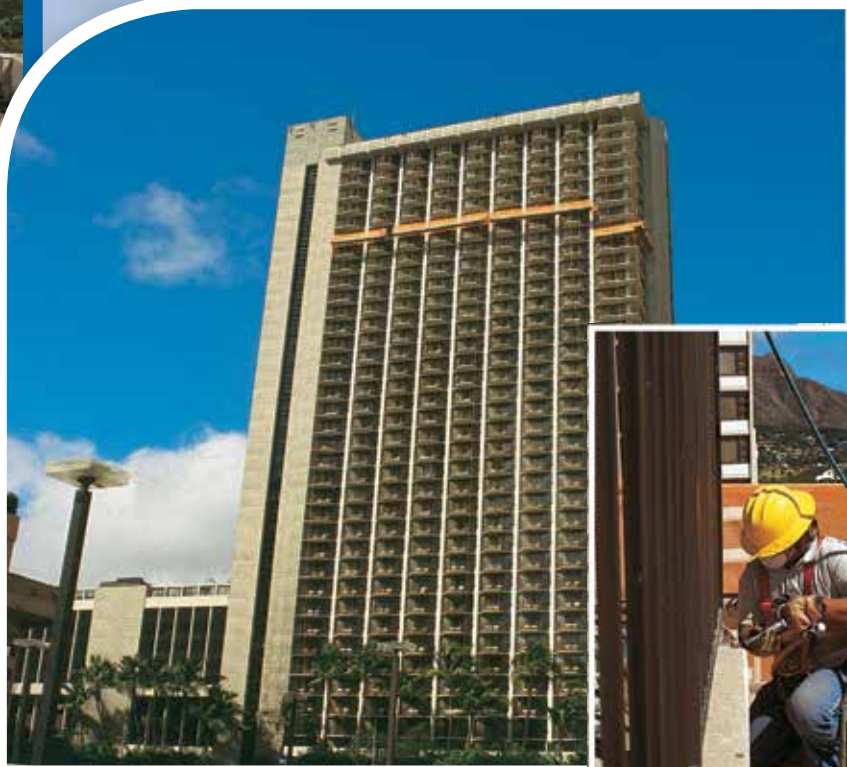
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