

Hawaii

CONVENTION 2015

# Retail Grocer

the magazine of the hawaii food industry association

## NO SWEAT!

### Derek Kurisu Takes the Lead

KTA's Ambassador of Aloha Reprises Role as HFIA Chair

**ALSO:**

Hall of Famer Barry Taniguchi

Blue Zones: Living Like a Centenarian

Bob Stout Newest HFIA Exec

Golf Tourney: Hitting the Links in Honolulu

Path to La Tour Bakehouse & Café







MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

My time as HFIA Chair seems to have gone by too quickly, but while the days and months blur together for many of us because we are so busy, our industry does not remain static—it is constantly changing. The retail landscape is changing, and therefore consumerism is changing, and vice versa. The economy is in flux. The regulatory environment is in a state of change. Not only are things changing, but the change is rapid.

Everyone handles change differently and we are sensitive to making changes. Many of us don't like change and fear it because we associate change with the negative. The fear of change is really the fear of the unknown.

Thus, it may be helpful to look at change in a different light. Change is necessary for improvement. Change is a basic step toward a better food and beverage industry, toward a better community, and toward a better world. Some may concede this point, but still argue that a lot of change is being forced on us and threatens our industry. I agree that change can be either good or bad, and often seems to lean to the bad, but the real issue is what can and will we do about it. To do nothing means that we fall behind. I would argue that change can fall more into the positive column, but one must be willing to embrace it and seize opportunities. Making the right changes in the

face of adversity spurs innovation, ingenuity, growth, and ultimately, success.

We are embracing change at HFIA by laying pavers for our path forward. Strategic changes over the past few years have led HFIA to a financially stable position. When HFIA's Strategic Plan was updated in the past year, it allowed us to craft a new financial strategy that will focus on new members and increase participation. It will also better benefit all members, such as by upgrading HFIA events to make them more exciting and special. Through the strategic planning process, we have a good outline of where we are going as an organization. And by the time you read this, we all, as HFIA members, will have had an opportunity to vote at the Convention General Membership Meeting on the direction of our organization.

While I am happy that some things got done during my time as HFIA Chair, I wish we could have done more. I'm proud to have served on this board and hope that I have helped just a little to make a difference in our organization. Although my term as Chair is coming to a close, my involvement and commitment is stronger than ever, and I am looking forward to continue being a very active member and to serve and support HFIA in the future. I'm excited that Derek Kurisu will assume the key leadership role of Chair, and I will help him in any way that I can.

Finally, I am excited about the future of HFIA and the things we're trying to accomplish. We're building HFIA for the next generation, not only for the future of our organization, but for the future of our industry.

Aloha,  
*John*



**HFIA Mission Statement**

The Hawaii Food Industry Association actively promotes the interests of Hawaii's food and beverage retailers and suppliers through highly effective government relations and advocacy, member education, and industry and community relations.

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BY LAUREN ZIRBEL & ALEXIS CHAPMAN

The 2015 Hawaii Legislative Session ended on May 7 and brought to a close a very successful year for HFIA at the Capitol. Our new Pro-active Government Relations Strategy was implemented this year, and by strengthening our relationships with legislators, increasing member participation through new Action Alerts, and reaching out to a wider audience via social media, we were able to achieve our desired outcome on a wide range of bills.

## Labor

This year we successfully opposed six potentially damaging labor-related bills that did not become law. The sick leave bills HB496, SB129, and HB9 included various versions which required employers to provide sick leave to employees, greatly increased the amount of sick leave employees could take, expanded the reasons employees could use sick leave, and sought to create a leave insurance program or trust fund funded by employee withholdings. HB496 made it through most of session and only died when it failed to pass conference in the final week of session. We'll be keeping a close eye out for this issue to come up again next year.

We also testified against, and helped kill, SB234, the state holiday bill, which would have mandated that employers pay employees who work on holidays three times their regular wage, and prohibited an employer from taking any retaliatory action against an employee who refused to work on a holiday. In addition, we testified against and helped kill SB1122, which sought to increase the amount of monthly compensation required to exempt an employee from minimum wage and other requirements; and HB684, which required employers to implement procedures and training to prevent discrimination.

## Manufacturing

HFIA supported a very ambitious manufacturing bill in 2015 and we

are very pleased to report that after several years and several versions, a manufacturing incentive program has passed in the form of SB1001 and has been enrolled to the Governor. This bill establishes and appropriates funds for the manufacturing development program, through which the High Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) shall distribute grants to Hawaii manufacturers for various activities. This bill has a \$2 million appropriation! The grants will be awarded to help manufacturing businesses in Hawaii with certain purchases and employee training. No grant shall exceed twenty per cent of the cost of the mentioned purposes and no grant shall exceed \$100,000.

## Tobacco

HFIA testified in opposition to SB1032, which proposed to expand the definition of tobacco products and increase license fees, and SB749, which would impose on wholesalers and dealers a beach cleanup fee per cigarette. Both bills ultimately died. This session we supported HB145 and SB401, which sought to cap the tax on large cigars. These bills went through a number of versions with a variety of intents but did not end up passing this year.

## Food Waste

SB1227, which was deferred, was one of the more baffling bills that got a hearing this year. It attempted to prohibit the disposal of commercial organic material waste at landfills or waste-to-energy facilities and require all generators of commercial organic material to use

alternative means of disposal, such as donation or compost. HFIA was quick to point out in our opposition testimony that the State must create a waste distribution system for organic material before it mandates that we use it.

## Alcohol

Another one of our very positive successes in 2015 is the passage of HB770, which allows retail dealers with a liquor license to sell beer, malt beverages, and cider in growlers.

## Theft

In spite of strong and consistent opposition from HFIA and many members who responded to our Action Alerts, SB569 was passed. The threshold value for theft in the second degree is now \$750, rather than \$300 as it was previously. Although this is disap-

pointing, we are encouraged that the final version did not include language from previous drafts, which would have tied the threshold value to the CPI and increased it every year.

## Bottles and Glass

All three of the bills relating the Advance Disposal Fee (ADF) ultimately died this session. Prior to session, HFIA did an in-depth review and analysis of the Audit of the ADF and was well prepared when these bills came up. On SB1169, which sought to create a working group to discuss the audit, we provided comments explaining the importance of including HFIA in any such group. For SB353, which would have changed the ADF for glass to a tiered structure based on volume, we testified in opposition. And for SB1260, which mandated that the ADF Audit recommendations be implemented, we provided comments explaining why the ADF and HI-5 should not be combined. Though these all died, we expect more on the ADF to come up next year at the state level and possibly later this year in some counties. We will continue to closely monitor the situation and ensure that our industry is represented when this issue is addressed.

## Plastic Bags

This year, there were two plastic bag bills. HB620 would prohibit labeling of a plastic product as "compostable" or "biodegradable" unless it meets appropriate ASTM standards, and HB1507 to create a working group to study methods to reduce the use of all disposable bags. HFIA commented on both and both ended up dying.

## Labeling and Soda Fees

HFIA opposed four labeling bills this year and all four died at or before the first crossover. HB1428 and SB1270 were both warning labels for

sugar sweetened beverages; SB130 concerned GMO labeling; and SB594 covered requirements for geographic labeling of non-Hawaiian coffee in blends with Hawaiian coffee. We also successfully opposed the sugar sweetened beverage tax proposed in SB1256.

## 911 Surcharges

The 911-surcharge bill was back this

year as SB193. HFIA testified in opposition and the bill died. This bill would have mandated that retailers facilitate a 911 surcharge on prepaid phone cards. Our members opposed this administrative burden and extra tax.

*Mahalo to all of our members who helped make this session a successful one for HFIA. We look forward to celebrating with you at our annual convention at Turtle Bay!*



# 8 Foods to keep diabetes away

...And help balance your blood sugar

BY PHIL LEMPERT

Diabetes is caused by an imbalance in blood sugar and impairment of insulin use, often called insulin resistance. Insulin is similar to a key that opens the door to let much needed fuel (glucose) into our cells. When we have too much blood sugar due to diet or stress, insulin does not respond as well, and can lead to increased blood sugar resulting in type 2 diabetes. High blood sugar is very inflammatory, and people with diabetes may develop serious complications, including heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness, and premature death.

The latest statistics from the American Diabetes Association show that, 29.1 million Americans, or 9.3 percent of the population, had diabetes in 2012. Every year there are about 1.7 million new

diagnoses. Approximately 85 million additional Americans are thought to be pre-diabetic.

Here are eight foods that help balance blood sugar.

**Apples.** An apple a day may not only keep the doctor away, but may also keep insulin balanced. Apples are loaded with quercetin, a flavonoid which has been shown to reduce blood sugar levels, thereby lowering the risk of diabetes and heart disease.

**Beans.** They may just be the ideal plant based food: protein, fiber, vitamins, and healthy fats. In addition, the fiber in beans helps balance blood sugar levels while providing steady, slow-burning energy.



## Consumers are loving their smartphones!

It's time for stores to cash in!

BY PHIL LEMPERT

Consumers are increasingly using their smartphones to help on their shopping trips. In fact, according to a recent study called "Retail Without Limits" conducted by Redshift Research for Oracle and comprising 5,000 interviews about the shopping habits of consumers in 10 countries, mobile is the fastest growing method of shopping globally, with most

(67%) consumers now using smartphones to enhance their shopping experience. To put that number in context, only 26% did smartphone shopping last year.

The study noted that more and more shoppers are using their mobile devices to help shop and also fulfill specific needs from retailers. For example, access to inventory, personalized in-store services, and store apps that help them find products.

Other highlights from the study

Studies of high fiber diets and blood sugar levels have shown dramatic benefits.

**Berries.** One of the most blood sugar friendly fruits, berries are an excellent source of the aforementioned flavonoid quercetin, and are also rich in fiber.

**Chocolate.** Yes, you read that right! Cacao, raw unsweetened chocolate, improves insulin sensitivity. It's loaded with vitamins, minerals, and powerful antioxidants. When shopping, look for raw cacao beans, nibs, or powder. You can use it in a smoothie, or instead of coco powder in recipes. Get creative!

**Cinnamon.** Real cinnamon, called Ceylon cinnamon, has been clinically proven to stabilize blood sugar and to have a healing effect on the pancreas. Studies have shown that eating just a half teaspoon of cinnamon a day can make cells more sensitive to insulin and to more easily convert blood sugar into energy.

**Oatmeal.** It's a long-time breakfast favorite, and for good reason. The fiber in oatmeal helps curb appetite, decreases risk for both colon cancer and high cholesterol, and can help balance blood sugar.

**Sweet potatoes.** These spuds are deceptively sweet, but are also a rich source of complex carbs. Complex carbs help to slow the release of glucose in the blood stream to even out the spikes and dips that cause mood and energy imbalances, and ultimately more sugar cravings.

**Vinegar.** This pungent liquid is not just for salad dressing (or cleaning the house). It actually appears to help with blood sugar control. Arizona State University's Nutrition Program Director, Carol Johnston, PhD, has been studying apple cider vinegar for years and believes it can have pronounced affects on blood sugar. Johnston says that vinegar prevents at least some dietary starches from being digested and thus raising blood sugar.

Keep in mind that having a diet rich in all fruits and vegetables will help contribute to a healthy blood sugar balance!

Continued on page 10



# Redefining Target

What are retailers doing to appeal to ever changing consumer demands?

BY PHIL LEMPert

Target, for example, recently announced a new strategy to reposition its approach to food, focusing on six categories — better-for-you snacks, coffee and tea, premium sauces and oils, specialty candy, wine and craft beer, and yogurt and granola. They also have expanded the availability of natural, organic, locally grown, and gluten-free choices. In their commitment to developing a new direction in grocery, the retail giant has named a new head of grocery, who will start to shape and take hold of this new direction. Anne Dament is now SVP, merchandising, and is responsible for leading the company's strategic repositioning of its food business. Dament was formerly a Vice President at PetSmart Inc., and prior to that spent nearly a decade at Safeway, where she expanded assortments and

worked on meal solutions and grab-and-go options.

As a part of the commitment to re-imagining how they approach grocery, Target has also begun working on a new project called the Mortgage Lifter Project. Josh Kilm-er-Purcell and Brent Ridge, best known as “The Fabulous Beekman Boys,” launched their Beekman 1802 Mortgage Lifter Pasta Sauce back in 2013. The key point of this tasty heirloom tomato sauce is that 25% of the profits go back to farmers. Small farms can apply at [beekmanmortgagelifter.com](http://beekmanmortgagelifter.com) to be a part of the program, with one lucky small farm receiving a \$15,000 check, which the pair calls the “Grand Prize Lift.” Three other farms will also receive \$1,049 “mini-lifts.” With the help of Target, the Beekman pasta sauce has been rolled out in stores across the country, and according to Brent Ridge, in November of last year Target put Mortgage Lifter Sauces in 250 of its SuperTarget stores. They were so excited by the enthusiastic customer response that they have rolled out the sauce to over 1,500 additional Target stores nationwide just last month.

By focusing on local products like Beekman pasta sauce that in turn helps local farmers, as well as its redirection in grocery to organic, natural, and healthy grab and go options etc., Target is a good example of how a retailer can diversify to keep up with changing consumer demand and appeal to new customers. As shoppers continue to be faced with a myriad of options from grocery stores to grocerants, to boutique stores and farmers markets, it is those retailers who continue to rethink and expand their offerings that will continue to win customers.

*Continued on page 8*

are: 25% of consumers want store associates to recognize their shopping history and personalize interactions accordingly, and 44% are more willing to make a purchase from a store assistant using mobile technology to check availability, product information, or delivery choices. Almost a third (31%) of consumers said that right product, right place, and the right time is most important to them in their shopping experience, and the majority (51%) would be more loyal if that was done right.

With so many customers now armed with smartphones, shoppers are aware of the growing benefits that can be gained from using technology to help shop. From inventory to personalization or prices comparisons, the challenge is for retailers to make sure that they are using this technology too.

Retailers who successfully meet the expectations of the tech savvy shopper will be rewarded with customer loyalty.





"My grandfather was a very humble man. He felt, and we still feel...we don't talk about ourselves."

# Family calling for Hall of Famer

Barry Taniguchi's family values reach across generations

BY JASON Y. KIMURA

Being in the spotlight is not Barry Taniguchi's style. He was a bit embarrassed about the attention he was receiving as the newest inductee to the HFIA Hall of Fame. There is little to nothing that the KTA Super Stores Chair of the Board and CEO will take credit for when it comes to accomplishments, instead pointing to a group effort, or laughing it off when others would consider him a financial whiz. "My grandfather was a very humble man," says Taniguchi. "He felt, and we still feel...we don't talk about ourselves." An abiding family belief has been that actions, whether individually or through KTA, speak for themselves. Indeed, there are plenty of others who recognize the things Taniguchi has done throughout his career at KTA Super Stores and those that go far beyond the walls of the stores. What he does acknowledge



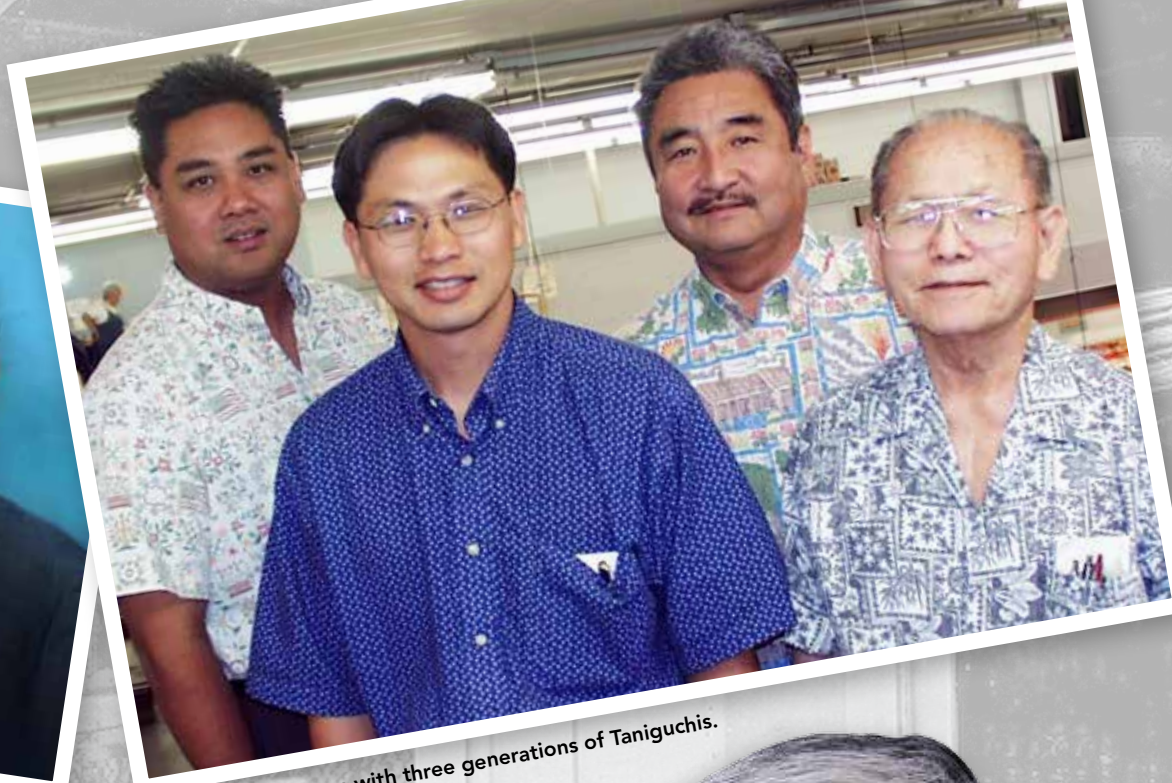
are the family values that have shaped him, some of which have become even richer and more meaningful as he discovered things about his family's history much later in life.

A 1965 Hilo High School graduate, Taniguchi played offensive lineman right guard for the football team. (He

wasn't nimble enough to be a back, says he, downplaying his role from the start.) However, KTA Executive Vice President Derek Kurisu says that Taniguchi was a standout student and active in student government. Taniguchi admits that his strongest subject was math, and that he easily related



Koichi and Taniyo Taniguchi



The legacy continues with three generations of Taniguchis.

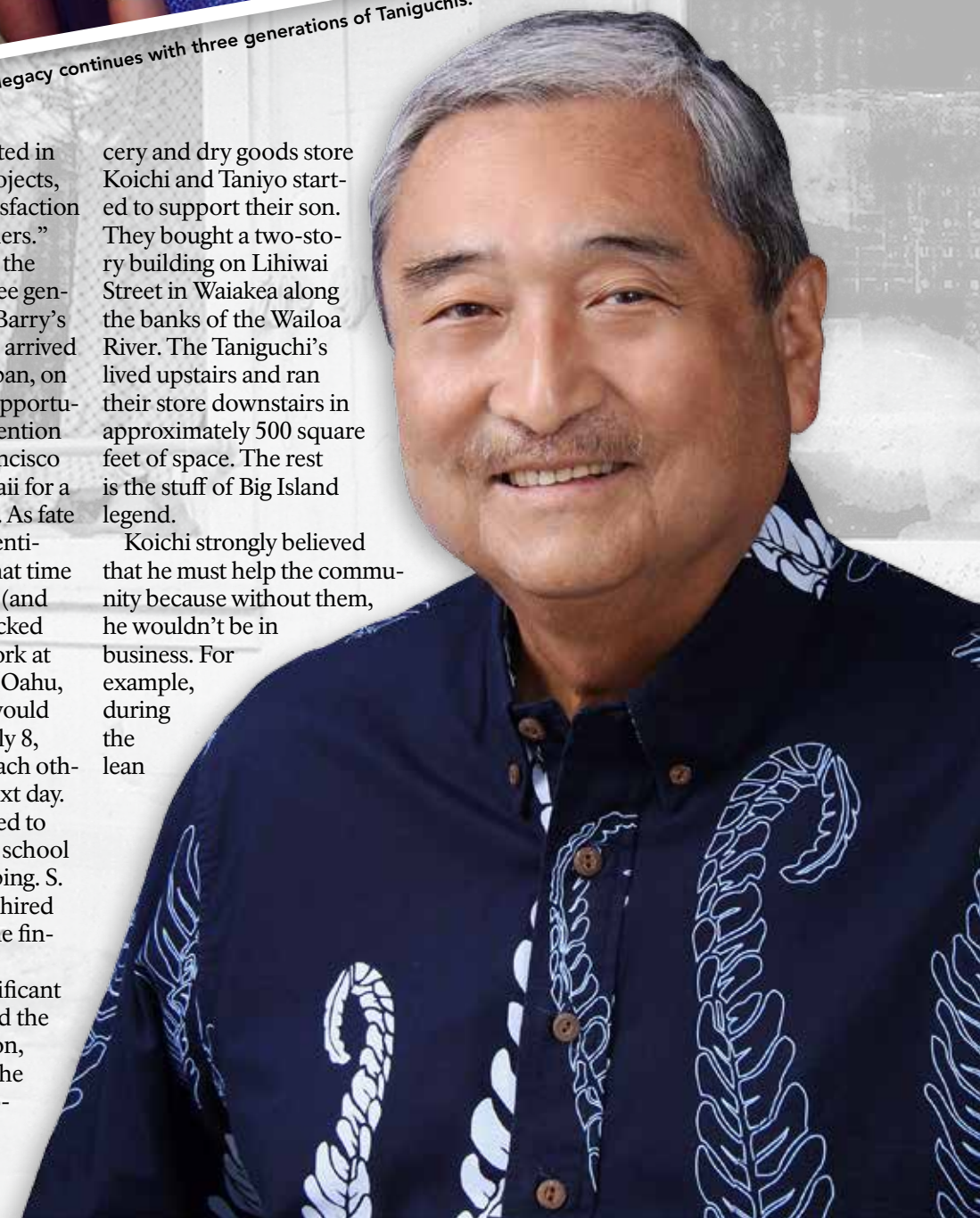
to numbers. He also participated in a lot of community service projects, discovering firsthand "the satisfaction one gains through helping others."

That family value of helping the community started at least three generations ago. At the age of 17, Barry's grandfather, Koichi Taniguchi, arrived in Hawaii from Hiroshima, Japan, on January 14, 1907 seeking the opportunities America offered. His intention was to travel on to the San Francisco Bay Area, but lingered in Hawaii for a while at the urging of a cousin. As fate would have it, anti-Japanese sentiment reached a peak during that time and immigration from Hawaii (and Mexico) to California was blocked on March 14. Koichi found work at the Heeia Sugar Plantation on Oahu, and Taniyo, the woman who would become his wife, arrived on July 8, 1913. The two already knew each other in Japan and married the next day. A couple years later, they moved to Hilo, where Koichi attended a school to learn English and bookkeeping. S. Hata, a wholesaling company, hired Koichi as a bookkeeper after he finished his courses.

Nineteen sixteen was a significant year for two reasons. It marked the birth of the Taniguchi's first son, Yukiwo, and the founding of the first K. Taniguchi Store—a gro-

cery and dry goods store Koichi and Taniyo started to support their son. They bought a two-story building on Lihikai Street in Waiakaa along the banks of the Wailoa River. The Taniguchi's lived upstairs and ran their store downstairs in approximately 500 square feet of space. The rest is the stuff of Big Island legend.

Koichi strongly believed that he must help the community because without them, he wouldn't be in business. For example, during the lean





# KTA Super Stores

## A Big Island Legend

**Company name:** The name of the store was changed to “KTA,” which was taken from the markings on merchandise shipments given at Hilo Harbor. Shipments to competitor K. Tahara Store were marked “KT,” while K. Taniguchi Store shipments were marked “KTA” to distinguish them.

**1916:** First store in Waiakea

**1939:** Keawe St. store in Hilo opens

**1946:** Waiakea store destroyed by the 1946 tsunami

**1953:** Keawe St. store becomes a supermarket

**1959:** Kona store opens (relocated in 1975)

**1966:** Puainako St. store in Hilo opens  
(headquarters)

**1977:** KTA becomes first supermarket in  
Hawaii with an in-store bakery

**1977:** KTA first to install UPC bar  
code scanners

**1984:** Keauhou store opens

**1989:** Waimea store in Kamuela opens

**1990:** Waikoloa Village Market opens

**1994:** Mountain Apple Brand launched

**2007:** 1916 brand launched



World War II years when food was rationed, the Taniguchis did their best to ensure no one went hungry. This included extending credit to many of their customers, some of whom eventually had their bills cleared by their children. Going beyond the walls of the store is a philosophy he imparted to his sons Yukiwo (Barry’s father), Tony, and Hidetoshi, who in turn, passed those values down. “We were brought up with that feeling,” says Barry Taniguchi, “It’s always stayed with me, and I’ve tried to promote that in my family.” Particularly rewarding to Barry is when he is able to help someone who is not proficient in an area become successful.

Barry is inextricably linked to KTA, but he didn’t always plan to come back to the business as a career choice, although at first, his path pointed in that direction. Beginning in 7th grade, he worked part-time at the courtesy counter and helped his dad Yukiwo on the weekends. Taniguchi worked throughout his high school years; working at the store became his first paying job when it became legal for him to earn a pay-

check at age 15. He worked almost full-time at KTA when he went to UH Hilo, which was only a two-year college at the time. After transferring to UH Manoa, Taniguchi worked at Star Markets.

At first, Taniguchi majored in business management because he intended to work at his family’s business. Then he began to ace his accounting classes and decided to change his major to accounting, a decision that took him down a different path. Taniguchi interned at major auditing firm Haskins & Sells (today Deloitte) and was hired as an auditor for their Hilo office when he graduated in 1969. Among Haskins & Sells’ Big Island clients were the sugar plantations and a few other companies, one of which was Realty Investment Co., Ltd. In his role as auditor, Taniguchi had recommended that the company have a controller, and at the beginning of his fifth year at Haskins & Sells, Realty Investment offered him the controller position.

Taniguchi relates that as controller for Realty Investment, he was able see and experience a different side of accounting. As an auditor, he examined other accountants’ work; as head accountant, he now took the front seat and was in charge of creating the accounting work. Taniguchi also learned a lot about financing, which would come in handy later at KTA. He stayed at Realty for eight years, through 1981. Taniguchi then went to National Car Rental back on Oahu. He fully intended to continue his accounting career while remaining connected to KTA by serving on the board.

Then fate intervened. There once was a beloved em-



ployee at KTA Super Stores named George Matsumura. “He was everything you’d want in an employee,” remembers Taniguchi. “He was smart, insightful, a hard worker.” Back in his college days working at KTA, Taniguchi had spent a lot of time talking with Matsumura during the evenings when stores used to close early. When Matsumura would share his ideas on how to improve KTA, Taniguchi encouraged him to tell his father Yukiwo and uncle Tony. Matsumura declined, telling Barry to share the ideas. He said, “You’re a relative, I’m not.”

Little did Matsumura know that the Taniguchi family believed that he could one day run KTA, that he may have become the heir apparent to the presidency; if he did, he would have been the first non-family member to take the helm. Tragically, Matsumura was killed in an auto accident in October of 1981. With a heavy heart and no heir to the leadership, Yukiwo asked Barry if he would consider coming back to the store in mid-1982.

At the time, KTA had gone through a reorganization of leadership titles, in which Yukiwo became the president of KTA, while his brothers Tony and Hidetoshi made up the rest of the executive team. Barry came back to KTA in January 1983 with the title of executive assistant. In 1986 the executive titles were again revamped. Yukiwo became chair of the board, and Tony president. When Tony passed away in September 1989, Barry was promoted to president. At the beginning of 2014, after years at the helm, Barry became chair and CEO, and his son Toby is now president and chief operating officer. (Taniguchi has five children: Tracy Watanabe, Toby Taniguchi, Terri Hayashi, Amanda Taniguchi, and Ryan Taniguchi.)

KTA has faced its challenges during Barry’s tenure. Many local competitors faced them as well and closed up shop due to competition from Oahu

supermarket chains and mainland big box stores. When the economic bubble burst in the 1990s, KTA had to work to stabilize operations and survive. However, Taniguchi is quick to say that the success of the store hasn’t been through his leadership, but because of everyone working together.

“We can’t compete price-wise,” admits Taniguchi, especially with canned goods, “but we [focus on] customer service and local products in meats, deli, and produce.” You can be creative, he says, such as offering pastries with the local pal-

support local farmers and the Big Island economy after the demise of the sugar industry, Mountain Apple set out to use the highest quality products grown, processed, or manufactured in Hawaii. The 1916 brand was launched in 2007 to bring to consumers unique products from the mainland. The name is a tribute to Yukiwo Taniguchi, commemorating the year he was born, as well as the year the store was established. The brand features unique products from relatively small companies, but generally larger producers than Mountain Apple.

Through it all, Taniguchi hasn’t compromised his family’s values, especially when it comes to helping the community. Exceedingly humble, he calls himself just an “ordinary guy trying to do ordinary things to help ordinary

people.” Other guiding principles include “try to put yourself in the other person’s shoes,” and “management is not the same as leadership.” The Taniguchi family values go deep, and their meaning have gone deeper still later in Barry’s life. Taniguchi has tried his best to uphold and honor the memory of his grandparents, Koichi and Taniyo. Koichi was such a humble man that Kurisu first remembers seeing him sweep the front of the store and thought he was the janitor. He devoted so much time and energy to the Kyodan (the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin) that they wanted to make him president, yet he refused any title. Instead, Tony became Kyodan president-elect, but passed away, so Barry took his place, feeling it was a family calling. However, it became more than a calling, and was a meaningful experience in giving back.

Kurisu relates that after Barry took a trip to Japan in 2010 and met his relatives, he came back a changed man. He learned a part of his grandparent’s story that he didn’t know before. His grandparents’ ashes had been taken to Hiroshima, where their



ette in mind. Visiting KTA’s produce section is an eye-opener; 95% of it from local

comes farmers, to whom the supermarket chain has made commitments. The only mainland produce you will find is items that are not grown in Hawaii. Forty percent of KTA’s beef is local, grass-fed beef. The stores provide local eggs, and the milk is almost exclusively produced in Hawaii. KTA has been able to do this through partnerships with local producers, who give them competitive prices.

KTA also launched two private label brands, “Mountain Apple Brand” and “1916,” both spearheaded by KTA Executive Vice President Derek Kurisu. Launched in 1994 to



graves were being cared for by an aunt. But when the aunt passed, there was no one to look after them, so the plan was to go to Japan and bring the ashes to a columbarium at the main Hongwanji temple in Kyoto. There, a bon-san would be able to watch over the ashes in perpetuity. When Taniguchi met his relatives in Hiroshima, they insisted on doing everything for him and his party. On the final night of their stay, they reluctantly allowed him to host. Taniguchi didn't understand their extreme graciousness until he learned that after World War II, his grandparents had sent them care packages of canned goods and clothing that had been essential to their survival. They remembered his grandparents' kindness from long ago, and were eternally grateful.

Taniguchi's friends and colleagues say that what's important to him are people, whether they are among the approximately 750 KTA employees or those in the community—and that he really cares. “He brings people together on his reputation of integrity and getting things done,” adds Kurisu, noting that Taniguchi not only knows how to bring out people's strengths, but is also empathetic and compassionate. “He sets the example for others.” Many say that Taniguchi is a major catalyst for the Big Island's economic development. Through KTA Super Stores, Taniguchi has created many endowments and donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to causes that make Hawaii a better place. He has not only committed considerable treasure, but has given his time and talent as well by serving on numerous boards across several industries and working with many service organizations. He has been committed especially to educational and health care causes. At the end of last year, Taniguchi was one of the founding members—and also became president and chairman—of Community First, a new nonprofit group that promotes preventive health through a set of wellness initiatives.

## Past Leadership Involvement

Barry Taniguchi has served on numerous boards across many industries, including the HFIA Executive Committee (President, Advisor), Mauna Kea Management Board (five years as Chair), the UH Hilo Chancellor's Advisory Committee, Hawaii Employers Mutual Insurance Company (Chair), Food Basket, the Big Island's foodbank (Chair), Hawaii Health Systems Corporation Corporate Board (Vice Chair), Hawaii Community Foundation, Public Schools of Hawaii Foundation, Tax Foundation of Hawaii, The Queen's Health Systems, Lyman House Memorial Museum, Pacific Tsunami Museum, and others.

Taniguchi's work and giving to the community has come with personal sacrifice. “My family put up a lot with me,” he says frankly, referring to his 12- to 13-hour days six days a week and 10 hours on Sundays. But his wife Sandy enjoys doing much on her own with the Junior Young Buddhist Association, Sunday school, and working with kids. Apart from his work and community activities, Taniguchi has simple tastes, with an occasional round of golf and spending time with friends. He'll be enjoying some well-earned R&R at the HFIA Convention and is looking forward to it, but will be a little embarrassed by all the attention. 🙏

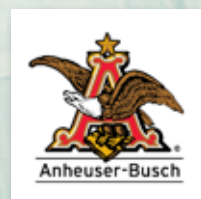


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# NO SWEAT! DEREK KURISU TAKES THE LEAD

KTA's Ambassador  
of Aloha reprises  
role as HFIA chair

BY JASON Y. KIMURA

The wonderful thing about Derek Kurisu is not only his sincere efforts to make Hawaii a better place, but the welcoming, laid back, and infectious way he does it. That commitment to Hawaii and its people is a part of what brings Kurisu back to serve as HFIA Executive Committee Chair for a second time. Under Kurisu's leadership, HFIA will be in for a year of good vibes, but also serious, committed work, too. Kurisu has devoted a considerable amount of time and energy to HFIA, the Executive Committee being just one example. He can be found at the Made in Hawaii Festival doing cooking demos with local chefs, or officiating the Food Challenge at the HFIA Convention, or moderating a panel discussion at the State Capitol.

Most long-time HFIA members know the KTA Super Stores executive vice president well, as he has been a fixture since his early days in the grocery industry. Others who don't, can start by watching Kurisu's two KTA TV shows, *Living in Paradise*, and *Seniors Living in Paradise*, which are produced monthly and repeated twice a day on Oceanic Time Warner channel 27. Or watch them anytime via the KTA website, or on YouTube, where hundreds of episodes are posted. The shows feature cooking segments and noteworthy Big Island community events and individuals, as well as promos for KTA products. The two shows bring the younger and older generations together by showing what each is doing. It records the history of the people, he says, and in that way they can live forever. With so much negative programming on TV, explains Kurisu, he wanted to create something totally positive, and in doing so, he captures the essence of old-fashioned local values. Those and his two new collaborative cookbooks

(see sidebar story). You're probably getting by now that Kurisu is a pretty prolific guy, but these examples are just the tip of the iceberg.

Officially, his job as executive vice president is to oversee purchasing at KTA,



particularly for the stores' perishable foods operations. The rest of what he does defies description. In his collaborative cookbook *From Kau Kau to Cuisine: An Island Cookbook*, *Then and Now*, Arnold Hiura makes an attempt:

"His days are a dizzying maze of activity that could take him from nameless country roads to the boardrooms of Hawaii's most influential decision makers, from preparing lunch for residents at a long-term care home to emceeding a massive, sold-out event at one of Waikiki's glitzy banquet halls—sometimes all in the same day."

Kurisu also chairs Hoku, which he helped establish. Hoku is an organization of groups working together to establish a public-private sector collaboration to make Hawaii's food supply safer and more sustainable while helping the economy. Kurisu's tireless work has earned him the SBA Minority Small Business Advocate of the Year Award in 1997, and the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources named him Alumnus of the Year in 2002.

## Plantation Values

"I'm real fortunate to grow up in a sugar plantation," says Kurisu of his days at Hakalau Sugar Plantation along the Hamakua Coast. "We learned to respect our elders and treat everyone with dignity and respect." Since everyone was poor, he says, people learned to look at how others behaved, not at what they possessed. "Regardless of our race, age, religion, or character, we lived together as one big family and saw the positive in everyone," he writes in an article on his background and career with KTA. "Everyone had strengths and used them to contribute to the plantation community. We were a family of families creating the force, energy, and strength of thousands of individuals working together." At the same time, his grandmother, Shizue Kurisu, constantly reminded her grandchildren not to get into trouble because it would tarnish the family name. This not only kept Kurisu out of trouble for the most part, but more importantly, motivated him to do good to make his family proud. These values continue to shape both his life and leadership style.

Kurisu relates that he began to work for KTA (then called Taniguchi Supermarket) as a bag boy (courtesy clerk today) part-time when he was 16. That was in 1968—47 years ago. Back then, the only requirement for bag boy was being able to carry a 100-pound bag of rice on your shoulders. At the plantation, Kurisu's father had encouraged him to practice carrying the 100-pound bags of rice, and 50 to 80 pound bags that chicken, pig, rabbit, and horse feed came in; if they purchased two bags, one could be carried on each shoulder. His training paid off.

After bagging groceries for a year, Kurisu became a stock clerk. He worked hard to impress the owners to show that plantation students were hard workers with a good work ethic. If the other stock clerks carried one case of Vienna sausages, Kurisu



carried three. When they walked, he ran. He arrived at work 15 minutes early and volunteered to do any job, no matter how undesirable.

During high school, Kurisu worked for Koichi Taniguchi, the founder of the store. Kurisu describes him as “a petite, humble man who wore a three-quarter sleeve white shirt with khaki pants. He swept the entrance of the store daily, and walked about the store to greet

and thank his customers, employees, and suppliers on a daily basis. He was often mistaken to be the janitor.” Kurisu relates that the humble way Taniguchi carried himself inspired him to work even harder.

One Christmas, Santa Claus was supposed to appear, but the employee who was supposed to don the Santa suit wasn’t able to come at the last minute. Kurisu explains that in those days, Santa was a big deal, so he jumped into the suit and played the part. “Ever since then, [Taniguchi] really took a liking to me,” relates Kurisu. “He liked that I jumped in to do it.” When he was given the privilege

of driving Taniguchi between stores and home, Kurisu got to know him, and describes him as “brilliant.”

## Two Mentors, Two Private Labels

Yukiwo Taniguchi, Koichi’s first son who was KTA’s CEO at the time, was a great influence in Kurisu’s life. He was born in 1916, the same year the store was founded. Koichi and his wife Taniyo had founded the store as a way to support their new son. Kurisu describes Yukiwo as “an amazing, down-to-earth businessman.” Mr. Y, as he was called, took Kurisu under his wing, and Kurisu became a hanai son and close friend. Mr. Y. took Kurisu on trips, often visiting Seattle and San Francisco. He made Kurisu taste fruit picked fresh off the tree, and they traveled together for hours by train to show the distance some people had to travel to go to work. “He showed me how the rest of the world lives because I was a country bumpkin,” Kurisu reflects. “Looking back, I think he wanted me to realize the differences

between Hawaii and the rest of the world. He also wanted me to appreciate the value of Hawaii. . . .” Kurisu learned that there is a bigger world outside of Hawaii, and places where people didn’t know their neighbors and seemed to be more concerned about themselves than others.

Kurisu’s second mentor in his formative years was Tony Taniguichi, Koichi’s third son, who had been named KTA president as Mr. Y. transitioned to chairman of the board. After attending Hilo College, which was a two-year program at the time, Tony encouraged Kurisu to finish his degree in agriculture at UH Manoa. To the amazement of Kurisu’s coworkers, Tony would pick him up at his part-time job at Times and take him to dinner when he was in Honolulu.

Armed with his agriculture degree, Kurisu came back to KTA and worked his way up to vice president. He had been bag boy, stock clerk, frozen food clerk, meat cutter, supervisor, and buyer. There was one plantation value Tony dissuaded him from. “I used to believe in the plan-



Derek, 1970s

go,” says Kurisu. “Instead, he forced us to be innovative, progressive, and different.”

Several years before his death in 1989, Tony took Kurisu aside and told him he needed to help the families when the sugar plantations closed. He didn’t understand what

tation mentality of unquestioned obedience to the boss,” Kurisu explains, “but Tony taught me a different approach.” Kurisu was amazed when Tony put him in charge of KTA’s entire perishable goods operation and entrusted his management team with million-dollar decisions. “When mistakes were made, he did not reprimand us by demotion or letting us



Tony was talking about. Sugar had been their lifeline for so long, and Kurisu wasn't convinced it would happen. Yet, a year after Tony's death, the mills began to close. Kurisu felt a tremendous obligation. After thinking about it for weeks, he decided to create a private label brand consisting of locally grown and manufactured products. "The goals were to create jobs, revitalize the island economy, and fulfill my obligation to Tony and the sugar plantation families," explains Kurisu. "We named this label the Mountain Apple Brand.®"



Jay Higa and Derek at Food Challenge.

Launched in 1994, the Mountain Apple Brand has steadily grown, and now has about 230 products representing some 60 partnerships. At KTA, 95% of the leafy greens come from local farmers and almost 40% of the beef is local. The eggs and every drop of milk are local. "Just like in my childhood days in Hakalau, the strength of Mountain Apple Brand lies in people and businesses working together toward one goal and direction," says Kurisu. "We work with our suppliers to insure they are profitable and the products are of the highest quality."

In 2007, Kurisu created a second private label brand in Mr. Y's honor called "1916." It's also a reminder, he says, that KTA will be 100 years old in 2016. The items under the 1916 label represent the best products made outside of Hawaii sold at the best possible prices. The label features fruits, nuts, a special soft beef jerky, wine, and other products. More products will be launched in 2016. "The goal is to provide local people the same experience that Mr. Y provided me," explains Kurisu.

Two cookbooks, No-Sweat Cooking! and From Kau Kau to Cuisine: An Island Cookbook, Then and Now, give readers insights into local style cooking and serious bouts of nostalgia. For sure they'll make you hungry, but the good news is that they're filled with easy-to-follow recipes. Read on for more details:

## No-Sweat Cooking!

Derek Kurisu believes that every man should know how to cook—at the simple, home-style favorites that locals crave. No-Sweat Cooking! features the recipes from fun-loving Big Island culinary stars George Yoshida and Derek Kurisu of Seniors in Paradise, who have been entertaining cable TV audiences since 1999. The cookbook has been praised by many women who now have at least semi-culinary literate husbands, and has helped widowers who previously couldn't even prepare a pack of instant noodles. Budding cooks can find recipes for such local grinds as No-Sweat Corned Beef Hash Patties, Miso Soup, Derek's No-Sweat Spaghetti Dinner, Killer Chili—and a two-pound lau lau made in a crockpot. Even experienced cooks will enjoy comparing their own local recipes with those of Yoshida and Kurisu, and will perhaps learn a new trick or two for a fast meal. The spiral-bound book is available at KTA Super Stores or can be ordered by writing George Yoshida at 2321 Nohona Street, Hilo, Hawaii 96720; calling (808) 959-8677; or emailing ciyosh@hawaiiantel.net.



## From Kau Kau to Cuisine: An Island Cookbook, Then and Now

From fine dining to food trucks, Hawaii's contemporary cuisine is indelibly influenced by its small-town, plantation past. From Kau Kau to Cuisine is a unique and user-friendly culinary guide to the connection between old and new. Author Arnold Hiura shares the life experiences and culinary plantation perspectives of Derek Kurisu paired with new, innovative dishes inspired by the same flavors from Jason Takemura, Executive Chef of the Pagoda Floating Restaurant. For example, try the traditional Pork Adobo recipe, then next time, flip the page and make Garlic Lemongrass Pork. Go from Loco Moco to Sake-Soy-Braised Short Rib Loco Moco. Or go forest-to-table with Warabi and Pork, then try Chef Takemura's Smoked Pork and Warabi Salad. The 195-page hard-cover coffee table book includes over 60 easy-to-follow paired recipes, from classic to creative cuisine, beautiful photography, and the fascinating historical context of these uniquely Hawaii flavors. Published by Watermark Publishing (ISBN 978-1-935690-44-3), From Kau Kau to Cuisine is available at KTA Super Stores and local bookstores.

## The Big Picture

Over the years, Kurisu began to see the big picture of Hawaii's food industry and got more and more involved. Now he sees the need for the food industry to get out in the community and spread the word to everyone else in Hawaii because the industry needs

to be supported. Although well-intentioned, there are many ideas out there today that could potentially harm Hawaii's food supply chain because they are based on emotion, not facts. Kurisu describes the debate in the nicest way possible: "The vocal minority is so vocal. The silent majority gotta step up to the plate and care about our



Derek & wife Georgeanne

community more.

"We're one of the most important industries in Hawaii," says Kurisu. "We make food available, affordable, and safe. We help the tourists, chefs, restaurants, hotels, and every single industry—even the homeless through the food banks. When you look at the food industry, we take care of everybody. People gotta know that."

Kurisu's perspective is inclusive, saying there is room for everybody. There are general stores and specialty stores. Supermarkets may carry some organic foods, for example, but can't carry everything that a health food store has and vice versa. Whether you are a vegetarian, want only organic foods, or you are a traditional eater, you have choices. "We should be proud that we give everybody choices," he says. "Whatever type of store you are, we keep everybody fed."

Since Kurisu's last time as chair (2006-2007), some of the issues have changed. New issues include food safety, and the rising cost of transporting food. "We should focus on

local—it's a no brainer," says Kurisu. "Transportation is always going up. It's cheaper to produce food here, and it also helps the local economy. Realistically, it's tough to have everything made here. But we also have to support local manufacturing. Without manufacturing, we can't preserve and use off-grade items [to make salable products]. We need this for sustainability."

Kurisu notes that one of the issues facing HFIA is membership—not only in terms of growth, but involvement. "I'm happy now to see younger faces," he says. "We need to give them more opportunities to get involved. I see lots of children at the convention. We should help them understand what the food industry is about too."

There's a lot to do, but Kurisu can do a lot to get things moving and get HFIA's message out—and for you to get involved. If you don't know him well, his humble style may mask the fact that he's widely respected as a marketing genius, so no worries, with your help, he'll advance the ball at HFIA—no sweat! 🍹



# Bottoms Up

## Bottle boy becomes Times president and newest HFIA exec

BY JASON Y. KIMURA

Sure, it's fun to go to HFIA socials, play golf, and benefit from the networking, but there comes a time to take action—time for Times to step up to the plate. Bob Stout, Times Supermarket President, is the newest member of the HFIA Executive Committee. He is the new Secretary/Treasurer, and in three short years of ascendancy will become Chair. “Times has to be involved,” insists Stout, who has already been an HFIA board member for two years. As one of Hawaii's major retailers, sitting on the sidelines is not an option. Not that Times hasn't been a strong supporter of HFIA—it has—but the political battle is getting more intense.

Stout has been with Times since 2002, when he moved to Hawaii to join the company as director of store operations. Originally from San Jose, Stout got his first taste of the food industry in high school when he took a job as a bottle boy, a position that no longer exists. For those too young to remember when there were no aluminum cans, soda used to come in glass bottles that were returned, sorted, sterilized, and reused. Bottle boys did the sorting of the sticky bottles by manufacturer. “It was below courtesy clerk,” relates Stout of the filthy job, which included facing the ants and roaches that came with it, “but the money was good.”

Stout went to San Jose State, and then, considering becoming a pastor, studied theology with Youth With A Mission in Switzerland for a year and a half. However, upon returning to the U.S., he got back into the grocery business. His training still came into play though, as the food industry is a people business, Stout notes. From a grocery clerk at Fry's Food Stores, he worked his way up to a management position, then went to work for grocery wholesaler Fleming as a retail ac-

count executive. After 14 years, Stout went back into retail as the director of operations for Spanish grocery chain Mi Pueblo Foods.

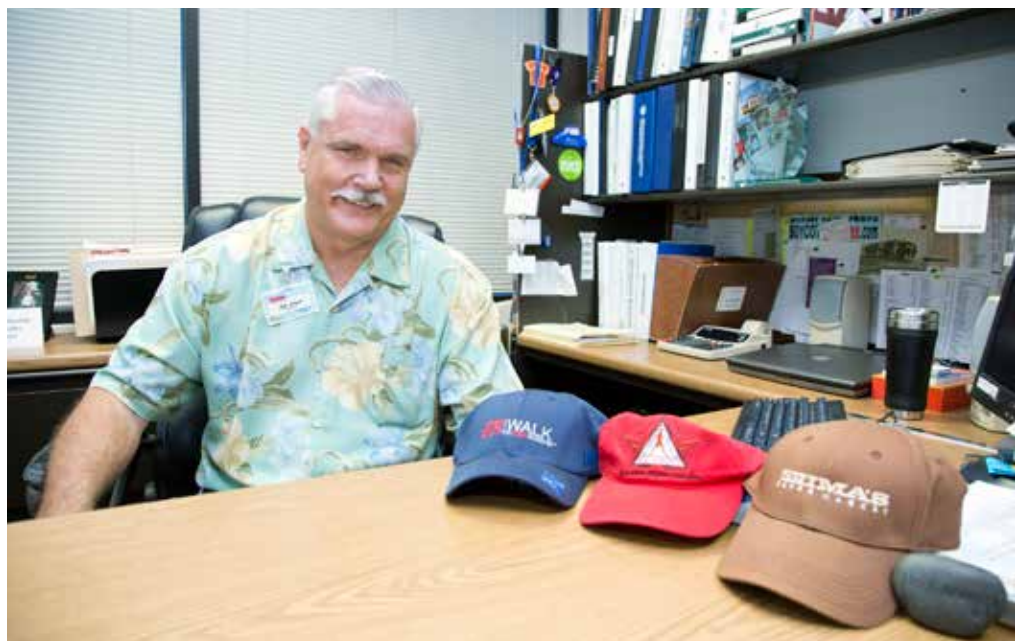
Then Stout joined Times Supermarkets. Times had just been sold to John Quinn, who knew Stout from when they both worked at Fleming and offered him the director of store operations position in Hawaii. “It was a big opportunity [to be involved in] turning the company around,” says Stout, “and in the process, I managed to get promoted to president.” The past five years have been busy times at Times with the acquisition of Star in 2009 and Big Save in 2011; things finally got settled in 2014.

With the consolidation of the grocery business, Times has to be actively involved with HFIA, explains Stout—all the retailers have been over the years. “HFIA has been a huge amount of help in the political arena,” he says. “If there's no HFIA, there will be tremendous damage to the industry.”

In the supermarket business, you have to reinvent yourself every three to five years because times and circumstances change. HFIA is no different. Getting more people involved in HFIA is critical, says Stout, who says that he's spent more time on politics in the last two years than in the last 40.

Stout points out that HFIA needs to develop a stronger membership, not only in numbers, but also in stronger ties between members. “There's room for more interaction between members to develop greater ties in common causes,” he says, indicating that this would create a synergy we're missing out on. Developing a stronger membership means that people need to have a greater understanding and awareness of what's going on politically, Stout points out. We particularly need to crack the communication code of the new generation, the Millennials. How do you make today's issues important to them?

Stout feels that for some reason, bills that are bad for business now seem to come in four or five versions of the same thing with slight tweaks, as if proposed legislation is being thrown up on the wall to see what sticks. “The fight is going to intensify—we need to have our voices heard,” Stout says of the food and beverage industry. “Doing nothing is not an option.”



Bob Stout wears a lot of hats, from overseeing a major supermarket chain to being the company's face in community outreach—and now HFIA Secretary/Treasurer.



# THE PATH TO LA TOUR BAKEHOUSE & CAFE



BY JASON Y. KIMURA

If you’ve had a baguette or one of a myriad of artisan breads or a macaron at a Hawaii establishment, or a Papa John’s Pizza, likely you’ve eaten a La Tour Bakehouse product.

There are also two La Tour Café’s, with more on the way. The path to La Tour was paved with Ba-Le. Yes, that’s right, the well-known sandwich shops that dot Oahu. The company is a relatively new HFIA member company.

The story begins when Thanh Quoc Lam and his then fiancée fled their native Vietnam and arrived in Hawaii in 1984. With no education or trade, Lam decided that the only way for him to make money was to go into business for himself.

Lam saved up some money and opened a small shop in Chinatown

in 1986 that sold bahn mi, a French baguette sandwich of ham, pate, or sausage fused with Vietnamese flavors such as cilantro and do chua (pickled carrots and daikon). An almost unknown flavor in Hawaii at the time, Ba-Le would put bahn mi on the culinary map.

However, Lam became frustrated with finding a supply of baguettes on Oahu, so he learned how to bake the bread himself. Although not formally trained, he became the best baker of French bread in Honolulu, and even way back then had dreams of becoming like Love’s Bakery,



supplying supermarkets, hotels, and restaurants.

## WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Twenty-five years and nearly 20 Ba-Le sandwich shops later, Lam took a different direction by re-branding Ba-Le and opening La Tour Bakehouse and La Tour Café on Dillingham Boulevard in the huge old (and now renovated) Weyerhaeuser box plant. The two are distinct, but closely related entities.

Ba-Le is Vietnamese for Paris. Lam has rights to the name only in Hawaii. La Tour is French for “the

tower,” referring of course to Paris’s famed landmark. Both businesses reference the Eiffel Tower; Ba-Le with the image of the tower in its logo, and La Tour directly in its

name. The problem with the Ba-Le name, says Lam’s son Trung, is that the sandwich shops are so inextricably linked to their well-known offerings that customers are confused

when there’s only bread and desserts and no bahn mi at a farmers market, for example. Trung Lam and his younger brother Brandon run much of the business, while their semi-retired father remains the visionary, doing research and development, providing a lot of the new ideas, and approving new products or making adjustments to the flavors using his sensitively gifted palette.

The name Ba-Le is now associated only with the sandwich shops, which are licensed—not formal franchises—and run mostly by former employees and relatives. The only Ba-Le owned by Lam is the one on the University of Hawaii campus. La

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



Left: A rainbow macarons; Above right: Buu Truong slicing dough; Top left: Trung Lam, son of owner Thanh Quoc Lam.



Tour Bakehouse's main products are a line of traditional French artisan breads (modified slightly for island tastes), made possible when Lam hired world-class pastry chef Rodney Weddle. Under Weddle's expertise, La Tour also produces a line of pastry and snack items, such as biscotti, cookies, crisps, lavosh, puffs, and macarons, all in a variety of flavors.



Freshly baked Japanese bread

La Tour Bakehouse products can be found in varying types at many of Oahu's farmers markets, La Tour Cafés, and Ba-Le sandwich shops. Other retailers that carry La Tour products include Foodland, Kokua Market, Longs Drugs, Safeway, Walgreens, Wholefoods, and 7-Eleven. Although La Tour's facility is now bigger than Love's, the volume is not nearly as big because they don't do much in the way of commodity items. They do manufacture some non-artisan breads, such as the square shaped Japanese sliced bread, but prefer to leave most commodity items to fully automated companies that produce them in large volumes.

La Tour Bakehouse is also a food manufacturing facility that makes everything from Andy's Bueno Salsa to salads and humus, to teriyaki chicken and rice meals for Hawaiian Airlines, as well as the dough for all Papa John's Hawaii pizza restaurants. Non-baked goods make up about 10 to 15% of the volume at the Dillingham facility. "We want to find and help customers with good volume," says Trung of the food manufacturing side of the business. He would be happy to form partnerships with other high volume customers like perhaps Dunkin' Donuts or Krispy Kreme franchises. La Tour Bakehouse also supplies baked breads



Shena Tabaniag serving up La Tour's fresh products at a farmer's market.

for many local restaurants, including Macaroni Grill, Ruth's Chris Steakhouse, Nordstrom's Café, Harbor Pub, Island Vintage, Nico's, and the Pig and the Lady. They're also behind the scenes at numerous caterers and hotels. Collectively, Trung says that La Tour Bakehouse makes over 700 different items, admitting that the product line probably could use some streamlining.

La Tour Café isn't owned by the senior Lam, but is a partnership between Trung, Brandon, and Weddle. Trung sees the Café as a test for them, to see what they will do with the

venture. There is already a second La Tour Café in the Gateway Shopping Center in Pearl City and one coming to the Aina Haina Shopping Center this fall. The partners want to open in other locations too. La Tour Cafés are casual eateries, but more upscale than Ba-Le. If you're not that familiar with artisan breads, then have a meal at La Tour Café and they'll show you what they do with their breads in the form of paninis, tartines, flatbread pizzas, burgers, sandwiches, and more.

The Lams aim to make the La Tour brand as familiar as Ba-Le, and it looks like it very well might be. 🍞

# Living like a centenarian

## Blue Zones show what it takes to live to 100

A unique concept to helping people find the keys to good health and longevity has come to Hawaii. The keys are found in 9 specific characteristics called the Power 9.® When a large percentage of the population living in certain regions or areas of the world follow these 9 characteristics, it is considered a Blue Zone. Heidi Kim, Vice President-State Well-Being Initiative, of the Blue Zones Project by Healthways, was invited to explain the Blue Zone concept at the April HFIA general membership meeting.

At the beginning of this year, HMSA, Blue Zones LLC, and Healthways, Inc., a well-being improvement company, selected three Hawaii communities—East Hawaii and North Hawaii on the Big Island and Windward Oahu—as the state's first Blue Zones project demonstration communities. They join the island of Kauai, which was a Blue Zones Project pilot chosen in 2013.

The Blue Zones concept came about in 2004, when Dan Buettner, an American explorer, educator, author, and public speaker, teamed with National Geographic and top longevity researchers to find pockets around the world where people live much longer. They found that in these Blue Zones, people lived to age 100 at rates 10 times more than the average in the U.S. The five Blue Zones the team identified are: Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Loma Linda, California; Icaria, Greece; and the Nicoya Peninsula of Costa Rica.

Buettner and National Geographic then took teams of scientists to each location to identify lifestyle characteristics that might explain the longevity. These characteristics became the Power 9, and Buettner wrote a book called *The Blue Zones* to describe his findings. After the book made the New York Times best seller list, and Buettner was invited to speak everywhere, the success prompted a new challenge: improve health and longevity in the US.

In 2009, Buettner partnered with

### MOVE NATURALLY

1. Make daily physical activity an unavoidable part of your environment.

### RIGHT OUTLOOK

2. Know your purpose.  
3. Downshift: work less, slow down, take vacations.

### EAT WISELY

4. Eat until 80% full.  
5. More veggies, less meat & processed food.  
6. Drink a glass of red wine a each day.

### BELONG

7. Create a healthy social network.  
8. Connect/reconnect with religion.  
9. Prioritize family.

For more detailed information, visit [www.bluezones.com](http://www.bluezones.com) or read *The Blue Zones* or *The Blue Zones Solution* by Dan Buettner. For more information on the Blue Zones Projects in Hawaii, email Heidi Kim at [Heidi.Kim@Healthways.com](mailto:Heidi.Kim@Healthways.com).

other organizations and applied the Power 9 principles to Albert Lea, Minnesota, and they worked. According to the Blue Zones Project, in just one year, participants added an estimated 2.9 years to their average lifespan and health care claims dropped by 49%. Since then, the Blue Zones Project has been attempting to build Blue Zones in cities and businesses across America. The three Hawaii communities are among the latest to be launched. (See box for brief descriptions of the Power 9.)

According to Buettner, centenarians eat a high-carb, 90 percent plant-based diet that consists mostly of unprocessed foods like whole grains, corn, beans, sweet potatoes, and other vegetables. For example, Okinawans

eat a lot of tofu and sweet potatoes, while in Loma Linda, centenarians avoid most processed foods and eat a lot of salmon and oatmeal. In Icaria, where a Mediterranean diet prevails, centenarians drink rosemary, sage, and mint teas daily. Age-related dementia is nearly nonexistent there.

Of course, food plays a part in only three of the Power 9, and the other six areas are important as well. However, there is also a community component of Blue Zones. Kim explains that there are three broad categories: 1.) Engaging the community; 2.) Changing where people live, work, and play; and 3.) Making health choices easy. For a community to become a Blue Zone, there are requirements that a certain percentage of restaurants, grocery stores, and worksites earn a Blue Zone designation.

For example, 10 percent of restaurants in a Blue Zone must become Blue Zones Project Approved. This involves nutrition improvement, menu offerings, server training, and the eating environment. Approved grocery stores implement at least one pledge from each of the following categories: promoting healthier beverages, environment, education, and promotions. Twenty-five percent of grocery stores should also be Approved. Whole Foods is working toward these goals. For the worksites requirement, the major employers in the area should become Approved with at least 25 percent of employees signing the Blue Zones Pledge, and must pledge action in the six pillars of worksite well-being. Ed Treschuk of Foodland shared that his company "went Blue Zone," and employees are beginning to reap the benefits.

Taking the Power 9 steps to better health are incremental, says Kim, and she emphasizes that participation in the selected communities is completely optional. However, she also pointed out that the suggested lifestyle changes don't require a lot of extra time and effort, but could reap huge benefits for not only the length of your life, but its quality as well.





Derek Kurisu, KTA Super Stores, Don Hirota, Meadow Gold Dairies, Riki Morimoto, ABC Stores, and Neil Ishida, ABC Stores



Rahn Ogino and Clinton Takasaki of Webco



Shellie Hayashi, Horizon Lines, Gary Hanagami, May's Hawaii, Larry Ishii, American Savings Bank, and Bonny Amemiya, aio

# Hitting the links in Honolulu

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BY JASON KIMURA

HFIA's 22nd Annual Golf Tournament on March 26, 2015 was held at the Honolulu Country Club to a record turnout of about 140 golfers. Once again, thanks goes to HFIA Director of Golf Mike Kaya of Meadow Gold Dairies and all who helped organize the event. A heartfelt mahalo goes to our tournament sponsors and donors of goodies and prizes.



Stan Marple, C&S Wholesale, Stacie Tanonaka, Hansen Distributors, Jill Chiang, Rainbow Sales & Marketing, and Michele Maeda, Rainbow Sales & Marketing



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Chris Villanueva, Young Brothers, Arthur Furuta, Paradise Beverages, and Jim Thornberry, HFM Foods



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Koha Foods  
KTA Super Stores  
Pasha Hawaii  
Pint Size Hawaii  
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American Savings Bank  
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Horizon Lines (2 teams)

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The Orchid Lei Co.  
Unified Grocers

Banquet Wines at open bar donated by Southern Wine & Spirits, and Soju from Lotus Spirits, LLC.



## NEW MEMBERS



Owner Karen Okada with managers Landon and Chad Yamamoto

### Bionic Chevron

#### Company Profile:

Bionic Chevron is a Food Mart and gas station chain that has been family operated since 1976 when Karen Okada opened the very first Food Mart in the State of Hawaii. It started as a Chevron experiment to see if it was economically feasible to get into the convenience store/gas station trend that “started popping up on the mainland.” Located on Farrington Hwy fronting Waipahu Intermediate School, the original Bionic Chevron was just an enclosed service station bay with a walk-in reefer installed. Now, 39 years later, Bionic Chevron is still a family operation, with stores in Waipahu, Piikoi and King Streets in Makiki, and on the corner of Harding and 11th Avenue in Kaimuki near the westbound freeway onramp.

#### Reason for Joining HFIA:

To network and brainstorm with other HFIA members in the competitive, ever-growing convenience store market.

#### Unique to the Company:

In addition to selling snacks, chips and candies, Bionic Chevron also offers wine and hand-held electronic accessories. “Who would’ve thought of buying wine at a gas station 30 years ago?” muses Okada.

#### Location & Service Area:

Waipahu, Makiki, and Kaimuki

#### Contact Information:

Karen Okada, Owner  
Landon Yamamoto, Manager  
Chad Yamamoto, Manager  
Phone: 808-737-3300  
Fax: 808-737-5552  
Address: 3541 Harding Ave.; Honolulu, HI 96816

### Choyce Distribution, Inc.

#### Company Profile:

Choyce Distribution started in 1988 with the sale of

one fish to a restaurant in Chinatown. Founder Edmund Choy was the former owner of another food distribution company—Innovative Foods. Originally known as Choyce Products, the company specialized in bringing fine meat and seafood to restaurants and retailers in Hawaii and grew as it gained a reputation for quality products, efficient delivery, and friendly yet professional service. In 2014, Choyce Products was purchased by Michael Sen and Craig “Skippy” Nagan, a longtime friend of Choy. The newly acquired company became Choyce Distribution, Inc., and expanded its product line to better serve its customers.

#### Reason for Joining HFIA:

To further cultivate Choyce Distribution’s network in the food service industry while being exposed to latest products, services, and technologies.



#### Unique to the Company:

As a frozen food distributor, Choyce Distribution specializes in ethnic protein products. The company offers a variety of seafoods from shellfish and octopus/squid to fish, sushi, and poke items. Choyce stocks all sorts of beef, poultry, pork cuts, and even whole, skin-on goat. Other items include durian, hash brown patties, taro, and cassava.

#### Location & Service Area:

Located on Oahu, Choyce Distribution’s service area is statewide (need to verify)

#### Contact Information:

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Web: www.choycehi.com

### Cintas Hawaii

#### Company Profile:

Cintas Hawaii captures the spirit and tradition of the Hawaiian Islands by specializing in aloha wear made in Hawaii. Its Honolulu office started in 1997 with local designers, manufacturers, and image consultants. The company’s clients include hoteliers, hospitals, fast food and other restaurants, retail stores, country clubs, distribution companies, cleaning services, construction firms, and more. Cintas Hawaii offers over 150 aloha wear patterns to choose from, or they can help your



## NEW MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

company create its own exclusive design. The fabric used is exclusive to Cintas, with features such as color retention, durability, non-shrinkage, moisture wicking, soil release, wrinkle resistance, and home laundering.

Cintas also offers a Catalog wear line with over 250 polyester styles and colors recycled from post-consumer plastic bottles. Recycling plastic bottles into fiber saves 33% in energy consumption over manufacturing from virgin fiber derived from crude oil. It also helps divert waste from landfills and reduces the CO2 emissions by 47%. Another Cintas product line is its matting solutions for entrances and other high risk, high traffic areas. Cintas matting limits the danger from slips and falls

### Reason for Joining HFIA:

Cintas Corporate is deeply involved in over 400 communities worldwide. Cintas Hawaii was looking into becoming involved with a food organization and HFIA was highly recommended. Staying in touch and educated with all businesses in Hawaii made HFIA a perfect organization to branch into. Cintas believes that safety, the environment, branding, and education are important.

### Unique to the Company:

Over 5 million people a day go to work in a Cintas uniform. Although Cintas is an international company, Cintas Hawaii's Aloha Wear line is made in Hawaii and has a local office with a strong network and support system that takes care of customers.

### Location & Service Area:

Cintas Hawaii services all the Hawaiian islands, as well as Guam and Tahiti. The Cintas Hawaii sales and production facility is in Honolulu.

### Contact Information:

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Corporate Website: Cintas.Com  
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3375 Koapaka Street, Suite F-290; Honolulu, HI 96819

## La Tour Bakehouse

### Company Profile:

La Tour Bakehouse's humble beginnings can be traced back to a small Vietnamese sandwich shop in Honolulu's historic Chinatown. When Thanh Lam opened the very first Ba-Le sandwich shop in 1984, his vision was to offer delicious and authentic banh mi sandwiches



on freshly baked bread. Unable to find a supplier that could produce the crusty French bread he remembered from his youth, he learned how to bake it himself. His dedication to quality bread and a focus on customer service has spanned nearly three decades and countless loaves of bread.

Throughout the years, the small family business has grown to include nearly 20 Ba-Le shops, a thriving wholesale business, presence at numerous farmers' markets around the island and an exciting retail concept. Due to the tremendous growth and success of the wholesale operations, Thanh and his two sons decided that a new name would better encompass the range of products offered. La Tour Bakehouse was introduced in 2011 and features traditional artisan breads.

### Reason for Joining HFIA:

After 30 years of concentrating on its business, the company felt it was time to reach out in the food industry.

### Unique to the Company:

La Tour Bakehouse is also a food manufacturing facility that makes everything from salsa, salads and humus, to airline meals, as well as the dough for all Papa John's Hawaii pizza restaurants. Non-baked goods make up about 10 to 15% of the volume at their Dillingham facility.

### Location & Service Area:

Statewide.

### Contact information:

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Address: 888 N. Nimitz Hwy #102; Honolulu, HI 96817  
Visit us on Facebook



## Hawaii News Now

### Company Profile:

Hawaii News Now is "Your Source for Breaking News," broadcasting more than 40 hours of local news content each week across three platforms, including television

stations KGMB, KHNL, and online at HawaiiNewsNow.com. KGMB (CBS) and KHNL (NBC) are the local network affiliate stations in Hawaii. Both stations are owned by Raycom Media, an employee-owned company based out of Montgomery, Alabama.

### Reason for Joining HFIA:

To support Hawaii's food and beverage retailers and suppliers on issues happening within the food industry.

### Unique to the Company:

KGMB, one of the stations that is part of Hawaii News Now, is also Hawaii's oldest television station, first broadcasting on December 1, 1952.

### Location & Service Area:

The Hawaii News Now Multimedia Center is located in Honolulu, and its television stations are broadcast across the entire State of Hawaii.

### Contact information:

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Honolulu, HI 96817



## Kona Gold Rum Co.

### Company Profile:

Established in 2002, Kona Gold Rum Co. is a family owned and operated bakery that is home to "Hawaii's favorite rum cakes" and 100% Kona Coffee, a taste of the Hawaiian Islands. Customers enjoy freshly baked Macadamia Nut Rum Cakes from Hawaii's Big Island. Kona Gold Rum cakes are baked daily with premium Hawaiian craft rum, using fresh local macadamia nuts, pineapple, and 100% Kona coffee. Vacuumed sealed and guaranteed for six months, the cakes are best



## NEW MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

served chilled.

### Reason for joining HFIA:

Networking with other companies and wholesale clients.

### Unique to the Company:

The Kona Gold Rum Co. offers a unique experience in its Kona Coffee Tasting Room with a full espresso bar and sampling of three rum cake flavors: original macadamia nut rum, macadamia nut pineapple rum, and macadamia nut Kona coffee rum. Why rum? Early explorers and whalers brought rum to Hawaii, and it is still the most popular spirit consumed in the islands. Locally produced rum began after the introduction of sugarcane and its popularity steadily increased. The Kona Gold Rum Co. also offers locally produced honey, mamaki tea, coffee bean tea served hot or cold, and other Hawaii-made products at its Big Island bakery and retail location. Wholesale inquiries welcomed.

### Location & Service Area:

The Kona Gold Rum Co. and Kona Coffee Tasting Room is (are?) located in Kealahou, but its products are also offered at other retail locations on the Big Island, Maui, and Oahu (visit [www.konagoldrum.com](http://www.konagoldrum.com) for details). The company will be at HFIA's Made in Hawaii Festival August 21 to 23. Kona Gold Rum Co. products can also be ordered via its website.

### Contact information:

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Kealahou, HI 96750  
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# TRUNO

retail technology solutions

## Truno

### Company Profile:

Truno (True North) is the national leader in integrated technology solutions focused solely on the retail industry. With over 30 years of experience and innovation, 3,000 customer sites, unmatched customer service and a world-class network of partners, Truno delivers retailers secure, stable, and integrated technology solutions enabling them to navigate through an environment of ever-changing regulation, competition, and technology.

### Reason for Joining HFIA:

Truno believes it's important for them to participate in areas that they and their partners serve, in both professional and philanthropic ways. The company has a

vested interest in supporting groups like HFIA that not only understand, but also promote and advocate for the interest of partners that both organizations have the honor of working with.

### Unique to the Company:

The Truno mission statement captures its uniqueness best: "The forces of technology, regulation, and competition may change the route at times, but Truno promises to always press on and guide you towards security, stability, and integrated solutions for your Retail Technology." Truno is their customers' partner. The company sees itself as an extension of their business. The value added for Truno customers is delivered through this partnership. It's Truno's responsibility to do its best to ensure success for the retailers they work with, even if this means taking a stance that is not always the easiest to take, and not easy for a partner to hear.

### Location & Service Area:

Truno is designed to go where its customers grow. Stretching from coast to coast across the United States to the islands—and even internationally in some instances—Truno can provide the coverage its customers need wherever they go.

### Contact Information:

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## FCH Enterprises, Inc. (Zippy's, et. al.)

### Company Profile:

In 1966, Francis and Charles Higa opened the first Zippy's Drive-In on Oahu. Thirty-five years later in 2001, FCH Enterprises, Inc. was formed to encompass various entities within a growing organization. These entities include Zippy's Restaurants, Napoleon's Bakery, A Catered Experience, Pomaika'i Ballrooms, and Food Solutions International. (The corporate name, FCH Enterprises, Inc., is based upon the initials of founders Francis and Charles Higa.)

Today, there are 24 Zippy's locations in the state, all serving Hawaii's favorites, including the original recipe chili, golden fried chicken, Zip Pac, and more. Napoleon's Bakery is located within each Zippy's location and offers quality, European-style pastries and desserts, including its signature item, the Apple Napple.

Founded in 1978, A Catered Experience is a full-service catering company providing banquet event

services at the Hawaii Okinawa Center, as well as at off-site locations.

Food Solutions International is a USDA-certified central kitchen facility that produces food products for Zippy's Restaurants, as well as for supermarkets, hospitals, and hotels.

Pomaika'i Ballrooms is the newest addition to FCH Enterprises. Conveniently located at Dole Cannery in Iwilei, the Pomaika'i Ballrooms provide elegant banquet facilities with state-of-the-art technology and flexible accommodations. Pomaika'i Ballrooms can accommodate an intimate group of 25 persons to a larger gathering of 1,000 guests and is ideal for business meetings, seminars, or social events.

### Reason for Joining HFIA:

HFIA is comprised of industry leaders who effectively advocate on behalf of Hawaii's food and beverage retailers and suppliers. FCH Enterprises welcomes the opportunity to join in HFIA's efforts to collaborate with lawmakers in the best interest of the Hawaii food

industry and community.

### Unique to the Company:

The Zippy's Benefit Chili Program provides much needed funding for hundreds of Hawaii non-profits since its inception in 1972 and currently generates over \$1 million every year for non-profits.

### Location & Service Area:

There are 22 Zippy's Restaurants on Oahu, one in Kahului, Maui, and one in Hilo, Hawaii. Pomaika'i Ballrooms is located in

Dole Cannery, Iwilei. A Catered Experience and Food Solutions International are located in Waipio-Gentry.

### Contact Information:

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[www.pomaikaiballrooms.com](http://www.pomaikaiballrooms.com),  
[www.acateredexperience.com](http://www.acateredexperience.com)





## THE LAST WORD

BY LAUREN ZIRBEL

In September of 2014, the HFIA Board met to establish a road map for the future of our organization and craft a Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is an opportunity to make decisions about what we are building onto the solid foundation that has been created throughout the rich history of HFIA. The plan will ensure that we are meeting the standards that we've set for ourselves in the past, and that we are dynamic and responsive to the needs of our membership as we move into the future.

One of the first tasks of the strategic planning sessions was to thoughtfully evaluate, and ultimately reaffirm, HFIA's Mission Statement "The Hawaii Food Industry Association actively promotes the interests of Hawaii's food and beverage retailers and suppliers through highly effective government relations and advocacy, member education, and industry and community relations." This mission has guided us to create clear, actionable goals for the future in the areas of Government Relations, Membership, Convention, Finances, and Association Governance. Over the past seven months, we have been working to implement strategies to achieve our goals and objectives in each of those areas.

Our Proactive Government Relations policy has already helped us navigate a very challenging legislative session with a high rate of favorable

outcomes, and we're excited to build on this momentum. Our next step is to make some changes to HFIA's bylaws. These changes are about streamlining some aspects of the organization and enabling the committees to be more functional and create a greater impact. To that end, we're proposing the following 10 changes:

**1. The office of the Secretary and the Treasurer will be combined into one office.**

**2. The Board Chair or a designee will chair the Government Relations and Advocacy Committee.**

**3. The Vice Chair of the Board or a designee will chair the Membership Committee. The Executive Director will be a voting member of the Board.**

**4. The Executive Committee will consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer/Secretary, Executive Director, Immediate Past Chairperson, and up to five Advisors appointed by the Board of Directors.**

**5. The Executive Director and Advisors shall serve as ex-officio voting members of the Executive Committee.**

**6. Every member of the Board of Directors shall serve or appoint a member of their company to one of the Standing Committees.**

**7. The four Standing Committees will now be Government Relations and Advocacy, Membership, Community Service and Education, and Convention and Social.**



**8. The Executive Committee will appoint a chair or chairs for the Convention and Social Committee.**

**9. The chair of the committee will determine the mission and scope of authority of each committee.**

**10. The seal with a pineapple on the left and the words, "HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION" or "HFIA" on the right will be one of the official seals.**

By updating the HFIA bylaws with these changes, our organization will be more efficient, more affective, and most importantly, more beneficial to our members. We believe that these changes and the entire Five Year Strategic Plan are the right path for our organization to ensure that we are actively promoting your interests in the best way possible. We thank the Board of Directors and everyone else who has provided the vital knowledge and feedback that has enabled us to get this point. We encourage you to continue to participate as we move forward.

## Remembering Roger Godfrey, food industry giant, mentor and friend

HFIA remembers Roger Godfrey, who passed away on March 5, 2015. A founding member of HFIA, Godfrey was a giant in the food industry, but also cared about people both in business and personally. He had an incredible work ethic, was known for his honesty and integrity. Godfrey served as president/chairman of HFIA's Executive Committee in 1996. At the time, he was division

president of Fleming Companies, Inc. After Fleming, Godfrey helped negotiate the sale of Times Supermarkets and served as president before retiring, but remained active in both the community and in business. In 2012, HFIA inducted Godfrey into the HFIA Hall of Fame, honoring him for a lifetime of outstanding work in the food industry and in the community. (You can read his

complete story in the 2012 Convention issue of Hawaii Retail Grocer, or at [www.hawaiiifood.com/docs/roger-godfrey-story.pdf](http://www.hawaiiifood.com/docs/roger-godfrey-story.pdf).)

Roger Godfrey left a lasting impact on those who knew him and a legacy for all to remember. His influence continues to have a positive impact on the food industry. He was a mentor and a friend, a member of the HFIA extended family, and is deeply missed.



