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# PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS



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Where are we as a nation headed in terms of wellness in the workplace in a post-Covid world? American City Business Journals assembled experts for their take on what you need to know. [Pages 12-17](#)

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NEWS

# Omidyar Group building in Kaimuki

BY JANIS L. MAGIN  
jmagin@bizjournals.com

The Omidyar Group plans to tear down a 71-year-old building in Honolulu’s Kaimuki neighborhood and replace it with a new \$31 million four-story office building that will include ground-floor space for a Goodwill Hawaii store and donation center as well as restaurant space.

The Kaimuki Gateway Plaza building is being designed by G70 for the site at 3650 Waialae Ave., which The Omidyar Group bought from an affiliate of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation for \$7.9 million in 2019.

The Omidyar Group is a collection of companies and organizations created by eBay founder Pierre Omidyar and his wife, Pam Omidyar. It is the parent of Hawaii social investment firm Ulupono Initiative as well as the philanthropic investment firm Omidyar Network, among others.

The existing 26,593-square-foot building was constructed in 1950.



EUGENE TANNER | PBN

*The Omidyar Group has filed building permit applications to demolish this 1950s-era building at 3650 Waialae Ave. in Honolulu’s Kaimuki neighborhood and replace it with a \$31 million four-story office building.*


Goodwill Hawaii, its longtime tenant, closed its store and donation center there on March 22.

The Omidyar Group declined to comment on the new building, but it is located two-tenths of a mile

from the offices of Honolulu Civil Beat, an online media organization founded by Pierre Omidyar and funded, in part, by the Omidyar Ohana Fund at the Hawaii Community Foundation.

Permit applications filed with the City and County of Honolulu’s Department of Planning and Permitting indicate the new building will have four stories with space for 200 employees, as well as 14,500 square feet of retail space for Goodwill and a restaurant space with 100 seats. The costs include more than \$2 million in site work, including the demolition of the existing two-story building and landscaping for the new building, as well as \$31 million for construction of the building.

“Having been a member of the Kaimuki neighborhood for more than a decade, our client sees this as an opportunity to plant deeper roots in the community,” Stephen Yuen, a principal at G70 working on the project and a Kaimuki resident, told Pacific Business News in an emailed statement. “It was important to them that Goodwill Hawaii be able to continue its important work serving the community, so we’re working closely with them to design a state-of-the-art space with many new features.”



TOM PETRUS & MILLER LLC

is pleased to announce

Katie Smith

has joined the firm as an associate

Katie Smith joined the firm as an associate in March of 2021. Katie was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and raised in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She graduated from Denison University in 2014 with a BA in Political Science and Psychology. Katie is a PADI Master Scuba Diver Trainer and her work in scuba diving brought her to Hawai‘i in 2016.

Katie attended the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa. While in school Katie was an active member of the University of Hawai‘i Law Review, for which she served as a Technical Editor and Board Member. She graduated from Richardson in 2020 and was admitted to the Hawai‘i State Bar following the September 2020 Bar Exam.

Katie has published an article: The Public Trust Doctrine: A United States and Comparative Analysis, in the Journal of International and Comparative Law. She is also currently pursuing an LLM in Dispute Resolution at Pepperdine Caruso School of Law, which is anticipated for December 2021.

As a member of the Hawai‘i State Bar Association, Katie is admitted to practice before all state courts in the State of Hawai‘i and the United States District Court for the District of Hawai‘i.

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## ON REAL ESTATE BY JANIS L. MAGIN



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### ► GOVERNMENT

## LEGE FAILS TO PASS AFFORDABLE HOUSING MEASURES

The Hawaii Legislature started the 2021 session in January with more than 50 bills aimed at boosting production of affordable housing in the Islands, but lawmakers failed to pass all but a few before they adjourned, sine die, last week.

Only a handful of bills made it to the desk of Gov. David Ige — who had also made affordable housing a priority at the beginning of the year — by the April 29 adjournment.

“The Legislature did not take major actions on housing this year,” said Sen. Stanley Chang, whose Aloha Homes proposal to build leasehold homes on state-owned land died in the House after crossing over from the Senate. “Some bills did pass, they are small, but good steps in the right direction.”

Among the bills that passed was House Bill 80, which would expand the pool of potential investors for low-income housing tax credits, which supporters said would create a more competitive marketplace and higher prices for the credits. That, in turn, generates more equity financing for low-income housing.

HB79 creates an affordable homeownership revolving fund using \$1 million in federal stimulus funds in the fiscal year starting July 1 to provide loans to nonprofit community development financial institutions and nonprofit housing development organizations to develop affordable for-sale housing projects.

One bill, HB1311, addressed a specific housing project by removing a deadline for construction completion for the Leialii affordable housing project on Maui.

### DEVELOPMENT

## Boutique hotel, wellness center planned for Kauai’s Kukuiula

The group that purchased a large parcel of land near Poipu Resort last month plans to build the first new hotel on Kauai since Hurricane Iniki, a luxury boutique hotel and spa that would be developed as one of Hawaii’s first large opportunity zone projects.

The \$227 million project is being developed by Kupono Capital LLC and is planned for 42 acres at Kukuiula adjacent to The Shops at Kukuiula, according to an investor prospectus obtained by Pacific Business News.

The plan is for a luxury resort and wellness center called The Ohia, with 85 hotel rooms and 65 residences in the first phase on 25 acres, followed by 150 residences on 17 acres in a future phase. The plan is for some of the residences to be fractional ownership units and some to be whole ownership. Construction could start as soon as this fall with a targeted opening date in the fall of 2023.

Kupono Resort LLC bought the first 25 acres for \$24.24 million from Alexander &

Baldwin’s joint venture with DMB Associates on March 29. The group has an option to acquire an additional 17 acres of the parcel, whose total acreage is 45.41 acres.

Kupono Resorts’ manager is Billy Williams, owner of Williams Construction LLC on Kauai and one of the general partners of Kupono Capital, along with Darrach McCarthy of Victus Capital Wealth in Los Angeles and Eric Horn of California-based Build Group. PBN has reached out to Williams.

Consultants include Mark Harmon, the founder of Auberge Resorts, although it is unknown what brand’s flag The Ohia would carry.

While new hotel brands have opened on Kauai since Iniki devastated the Garden Isle in 1992 — the most recent was Starwood Capital’s 1 Hotel Hanalei in the former Princeville Resort — this project would be the first new hotel from the ground up built in nearly 30 years.

Real estate consultant Ricky Cassiday, who is not

involved with the project, said it’s “good news for Kauai and for Poipu.”

Kauai’s economy was hit harder than the other islands by the Covid-19 pandemic because it pulled out of the state’s Safe Travels program that allowed visitors with a negative Covid test to bypass a mandatory quarantine.

“It means jobs for the community and a much larger tax base for the county with which it can help people, especially at this low point,” he said.

Cassiday also noted that the type of guests such a high-end hotel would attract are fewer but higher-spending, which puts less stress on the island’s resources.

The project is being proposed as an opportunity zone project, which carries tax benefits for investors, because the 1,000-acre Kukuiula resort community is located within one of Kauai’s two opportunity zones that were chosen by Gov. David Ige about three years ago.

*A portion of the 1,000-acre Kukuiula master-planned community on Kauai, where investors plan to build a boutique hotel ▼*



### INDUSTRIAL

## A&B PUTS MAUI LOTS ON THE MARKET

Alexander & Baldwin last week closed on the sale of five parcels totaling 6.3 acres at Maui Business Park for \$10.9 million to R.D. Olson Development for a new hotel near Kahului Airport and has placed a dozen lots on the market.

The 12 vacant condominium units have frontage along Hookele Street with asking prices from \$44 per square foot to \$58 per square foot.

A&B noted that since March 2020, it closed on the sales of a total of 8.7 acres of land at Maui Business Park for a total of \$15.1 million.





## ON **FOOD & BEVERAGE** BY CHRISTINA O'CONNOR

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### BREWERY BUSINESS

# Lokahi Brewing's co-owners live longtime dream with new brewery

Lokahi Brewing Co. has opened a brewery and taproom on South King Street, a project that has been in the works since co-owners Daniel Coronado and Rick Best first began homebrewing together as a hobby several years ago.

The brewery hosted a series of soft opening events over the past couple of weeks before celebrating its grand opening last Saturday.

"It's a little bit surreal, but I'm very excited," Coronado told Pacific Business News ahead of the grand opening. "The soft openings have had really good responses, and people seem really happy with the space and the beer."

Lokahi opened with a selection of six beers and one seltzer. Of those, four are Lokahi creations – including a hazy IPA, a hefeweizen, a honey macadamia nut brown ale and a lager. In addition to Lokahi's brews, there also will be three other taps designated for rotating selections from other breweries.

For food, they plan to partner with various local food trucks over the next few months. But their long-term goal is to open their own food truck, possibly in a more permanent partnership with an established brand. Once they secure that partnership, they also hope to launch weekend brunch and mimosas.

Coronado and Best first met through their day jobs – they both work in construction, and Best was buying supplies



COURTESY LOKAHI BREWING CO.

from Coronado's company. Best had already been homebrewing for a few years when they met, and after Coronado tried one of his creations, they decided to team up and build a brand.

Coronado said they had been looking for years for the perfect spot for Lokahi, and finally found it in the 1,086-square-foot space at 1160 S. King Street, in the building that formerly was home to Precision Radio before its 2016 closure.

"It was a shell of a building. ... The building needed a lot of work, and that played to our strengths in some ways, because we could really build it out in the way that we wanted to," he said.

They had planned to open during 2020, but the project

▲  
Co-owners  
Daniel  
Coronado,  
left, and  
Rick Best

faced delays amid Covid-19.

"We didn't really feel comfortable inviting a lot of people to the brewery to help with the buildout," Coronado explained. "So there were times when it was just Rick and I with shovels for 10-, 12-hour days. ... It was very labor-intensive, and we did just about everything we could ourselves."

Lokahi will ultimately have capacity for about 49 people; with current social distancing requirements, they can fit about 38-40. Coronado said they are also working on permanently installing a few tables outside for additional seating.

To start with, the brewery



ERIC HAYES

Lokahi Brewing Co. will feature signature Lokahi creations, as well as selections from other breweries.

is open Thursday-Sunday. It opened with four employees, and they're looking to hire three or four more. As they increase staff, they plan to expand hours.

Coronado said that they chose the name Lokahi – which means harmony, unity, and balance – because it exemplifies their goals for the brand.

"We thought it fit everything we want to be about. A good beer has balance. And then there's unity and connection, and I think beer definitely brings people together," he said. "If somebody has a bad day at work ... we want to help bring harmony back to their day."

"And we just really want everybody to feel welcome here," he added.



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## ON MONEY BY BRIAN MCINNIS



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### ► TRANSPORTATION



PBN FILE

Matson has looked to China service for a boost to income the last two quarters.

## MATSON LEANS ON CHINA SERVICE FOR BIG NUMBERS

In the first quarter of 2021, Matson Inc. picked up where it left off at the end of 2020 by capitalizing on its service to China.

Demand in Asia around the Lunar New Year drove a large part of the \$87.2 million in net income in the quarter, or \$1.99 per diluted share, said Matson Chairman and CEO Matt Cox in the company's earnings report. Those numbers were similar to Matson's postings in Q4 2020.

But in Q1 2020, at the outset of the coronavirus pandemic, Matson posted just \$3.8 million in net income and 9 cents per diluted share.

"Our financial performance in the China service was the primary driver of the increase in consolidated operating income year-over-year," Cox said in a statement. "Currently, significant supply chain congestion continues, particularly at the California ports, and these conditions will most likely persist through the second quarter and into the traditional peak season."

Matson's container volume to Hawaii in the quarter was 0.6% higher than Q1 2020, attributed to higher demand in sustenance and home improvement goods, and somewhat offset by a drop in westbound sailing and tourism as a result of the pandemic. Container volume to China, meanwhile, shot up 218.6% year-over-year.

Matson offered this analysis: "With eased visitor travel restrictions and increased vaccinations on the Mainland, tourism to the Hawaiian islands has recently picked up and is expected to accelerate into the summer as vaccinations become more widespread. The recovery in tourism is expected to lead to gradually improving economic conditions in the state, but the economic recovery trajectory continues to remain uncertain."

### BANKING

## Hawaii banks enjoy boosts in credit provisions in Q1

A reversal in provisions for credit losses led to a spike in net income for some of Hawaii's largest banks in the first quarter of 2021.

First Hawaiian Bank, Bank of Hawaii, American Savings Bank, Central Pacific Bank and Territorial Savings Bank benefited from reimbursements, or in FHB's case, no further issuance in the allowances they made over the course of 2020 bracing for the worst of the coronavirus pandemic. That factored directly into the companies' net income calculation for their Q1 reports.

"Some of that is coming back to us now because the economy isn't turning out as dismally as it could have," American Savings Bank President and CEO Rich Wacker told Pacific Business News at the end of April.

Bank of Hawaii led local banks with \$59.9 million in net income in the quarter, followed by First Hawaiian Bank at \$57.7 million; American Savings Bank at \$29.6 million; Central Pacific Bank at \$18 million; and Territorial Savings Bank at \$5 million.

BOH had an infusion of \$14.3 million in a returned, or negative, credit loss provision, compared to a loss provision of \$15.2 million issued the previous quarter; FHB had no loss provision after a \$20 million loss provision in Q4 2020; ASB got back \$8.4 million after issuing \$11.3 million; CPB was credited \$800,000 after issuing \$4.9 million; and TSB received \$913,000 after also getting money back, \$679,000, in Q4.

Territorial Bancorp., the parent company of Territorial Savings, wrote in its earnings report that, "because of the decrease in the



COURTESY RICH WACKER

Rich Wacker, ASB president and CEO



COURTESY CENTRAL PACIFIC BANK

Catherine Ngo, CPB president

size of the mortgage loan portfolio and in Hawaii's unemployment rate, as well as the increase in the amount of loans with higher loan-to-value ratios that have made six consecutive payments, all of which contributed to the reduction in the

allowance for loan losses."

BOH, ASB and CPB were up drastically in net income compared to the previous quarter, while FHB and TSB saw slight drops. The biggest jump, by percentage, came from ASB, which nearly doubled it from \$15.7 million in Q4 2020.

Wacker said that the credit loss provision will be a "volatile" aspect to income for the rest of 2021.

"We wouldn't expect to see that \$8 million [returned] every quarter, but it's nice we're running at that underlying \$20-plus million," he said.

Assets, which have risen for banks during the pandemic, continued to climb across the board. FHB leads the way with \$23.5 billion in that category. BOH, not far behind at \$21.9 billion, set an assets record for the sixth straight quarter as well as a record for deposits in a quarter, at \$19.6 billion.

CPB, meanwhile, recorded its highest pre-tax income in a quarter since 2007.

"It wasn't just on the income front, but really looking at any financial measure, so whether that be credit, capital, or liquidity, things were very strong on all those measures," CPB President Catherine Ngo told PBN.

As to what she attributed that to, Ngo said, "Certainly the improvement in the overall economy, but also we saw some lift from work we'd been doing from PPP loans [3,600 issued worth \$290 million in the quarter], and expanding relationships with a number of those companies we made PPP loans [for] last year," Ngo said.



GETTY IMAGES



# 'Mission first, people first, planet first'

BY JANIS L. MAGIN  
jmagin@bizjournals.com

When Jason Donovan flew from his home on Kauai to Honolulu last month for an Earth Day cleanup project at the Ala Wai small boat harbor, he was pleased to see volunteers from outdoor retailer Patagonia join a team from his company, Hawaii Volcanic Water, and its distributor, Pepsi Co.

Donovan and his wife, Channon, were inspired by the outdoor apparel company known for its sustainable practices when they founded Hawaii Volcanic Water more than 13 years ago and aspire to be the "Patagonia of the beverage industry."

The company bottles water from an aquifer on Hawaii Island in glass and recycled plastic that is sold in retail stores, supermarkets, restaurants, hotels and resorts in Hawaii and on the Mainland, and, since the Covid-19 pandemic began, also online.

The company follows the mission to "be pono, do what's right." The Ala Wai project involved volunteers using nets to lift trash and other debris from the water, but it was also a chance to show off the two Seabin devices that Donovan had installed at the harbor last summer, with permission from the state. Also there was Kauai Realtor Paul Kyno, an investor in the Hawaii Volcanic Water business, and executives from Pepsi Co., Hawaii Volcanic Water's distributor for the past two years.

The Donovans acquired their bottling plant in Keeaau when they bought the assets of another water company that went out of business during the last recession in 2011 and today have a team of 12.



## What attracted Pepsi to your programs?

Pepsi likes our pono programs and our environmental angle. I told Paul when he first invested in this company more than 10 years ago, the goal here is



A team from Hawaii Volcanic Water helped clean up the Ala Wai small boat harbor in Waikiki for Earth Day in April.

COURTESY HAWAII VOLCANIC WATER

## HAWAII VOLCANIC WATER

Jason and Channon Donovan, owners

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**Email:** info@hawaiiivolcanic.com

**Website:** hawaiiivolcanic.com

to be essentially the Patagonia of the beverage industry, meaning mission first, people first, planet first, and the products that we sell are a means to doing more good on the Earth. Because that's really what we started this company to do, is to create a positive difference.

## How have you grown the company?

We've been bottling products since 2013 and only in the last year and a half have we finally been able to expand outside of Hawaii. That's part of part of why Pepsi was out

here, because we're expanding into the West Region through them. The Pepsi deal is really kind of hyper-growth, because they're going to start putting us into all the major grocery stores and convenience stores over on the West Coast, starting right now.

## How did Covid affect your company?

It was devastating. We always knew how dependent on tourism the state was, but we didn't really, really know until this happened; we were down 75-80%. The airports stopped [ordering]. We sold no products for an entire year; the last order was March 2020. It was only three weeks ago that we started getting purchase orders for all the airports, for all the hotels, for a lot of restaurants. Fortunately, the local business sustained us but we knew that we had to pivot, we had to start selling elsewhere, and we are. We were able to secure a PPP loan and keep everybody on payroll and now the sales are picking up

and we're at about 80% of where we were a year ago.

**Do you expect to hire more people this year?** Yes, in the next three to six months, we're finally going to be able to start hiring folks, on the [Neighbor Islands] in particular.

## How do you carry out the company's mission?

One that we're doing now that I'm extremely proud of, because I'm a surfer, is a project called Seabin. Basically, we're building a fleet of Seabins for the state and so far we have five of them – two of them are in the water and three more [were to arrive this week]. It's like a trash can for the ocean. Pepsi was inspired by it, and they are now buying more Seabins. The Seabins for Hawaii program, it's not a one-off, it's an ongoing program. We'd like to put hundreds of those in statewide, because they work. Our hope is that not only do private donors have the ability to buy them, but also corporations.

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## NATIONAL NURSES WEEK 2021



**Hawaii university nursing programs and continuing education courses, such as Chaminade's Doctor of Nursing Practice program, will further support the state's efforts in workforce development for the profession.**

# EDUCATING THE NURSING WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

COURTESY CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY

**BY KELSEY KUKAUA** | [kkukaua@bizjournals.com](mailto:kkukaua@bizjournals.com)

Before Covid-19, the supply of nurses in Hawaii was just about equal to demand, according to a 2019 Nursing Workforce Supply survey conducted by The Hawaii State Center for Nursing. Now, HSCN Director Laura Reichhardt said the demand for nurses is outgrowing workforce capacity and resources statewide. In part, this is due to interrupted training of new hires. "With the onset of Covid, [Hawaii] lost all clinical placements (hands-on training) in the hospital setting for about nine months," said Reichhardt. That occurred when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended early in the pandemic that elective surgeries be postponed.

To a similar tune, Healthcare Association of Hawaii's 2019 health care workforce initiative report showed that before the pandemic, there were enough RNs graduating from schools in Hawaii, but they needed additional training to transition to specialty practice.

"During the pandemic, there was a need for additional health care staffing to assist during the peak of the Covid-19 surge in 2020," an HAH spokesperson said in an email to PBN.

In response, HAH issued a call for nurses who may have graduated but did not yet have their licenses, and helped to bring in nearly 200 travel nurses, nurse aides, respiratory therapists, and other health care professionals from out of state with \$17 million in CARES Act funds.

HSCN was established in 2003 by the state Legislature to be, as Reichhardt describes it, a "think tank for nurses" within the University of Hawaii System, addressing workforce issues. It's funded by nurs-



*Findings from HSCN's 2019 Nursing Workforce Supply survey:*

**95%**

of new graduate RNs living in Hawaii are employed

**13%**

of RNs employed in Hawaii are new graduates

**32%**

of new graduate RNs were educated out-of-state

Chaminade's DNP program is set to begin on Aug. 23, awaiting WASC accreditation in May.

The application deadline is July 1.

For more information, visit: [chaminade.edu/nursing-health-professions/dnp/](https://chaminade.edu/nursing-health-professions/dnp/)

ing license fees and renewals and though those fees have not increased in 18 years, Reichhardt said that organization's staffing and revenue have remained stable.

The pandemic also generated opportunity, however, for nurses to cross-train or get additional training in specialties, and generated statewide support for long-term care. It showed the need for training and support to continue.

"[Nurses make up] the largest licensed health care workforce in our state – we are moving a fleet here – and [we] do that by ensuring we have the right nurses in the right place," Reichhardt explained. "Everyone needs to be cared for, including nurses, but even though nursing is so large, it's important to recognize the whole health care team. Team-based care is critical to nursing care."

To support workforce development, HSCN engages with higher education, health care employers, insurance providers and nursing

homes statewide.

It also conducts industry research, as Hawaii's sole Evidence Based Practice initiative for nurses, such as its bi-annual Nursing Workforce Supply survey.

In 2019, that report found that "there were approximately 460 vacant RN positions at health care facilities throughout the state. ... These positions will be filled by the supply of approximately 400 graduates from Hawaii's entry-to-practice RN programs and in-migration of RNs from other states."

The report also estimated out-of-state hires would comprise at most 15% of the workforce.

### Evolving the profession

UH Manoa Nursing, a reoccurring U.S. News and World Report's Best Nursing Schools, told PBN that its alumni are well-respected nurses providing quality care in Hawaii, nationally and internationally.

Chaminade University of Honolulu, in partnership with HSCN and other community partners, is planning to launch its new Doctor of Nursing Practice program this fall to support workforce development in nursing.

"We have been discussing it for several years, and after seeing the data provided by The Hawaii State Center of Nursing, [what they found] has really indicated that the time is now," said Pamela Smith, associate dean of Chaminade's School of



EDUCATION



COURTESY CHAMINADE UNIVERSITY

Pamela Smith, associate dean of Chaminade University's School of Nursing and Health Professions



COURTESY HAWAII STATE NURSING CENTER

Laura Reichhardt, director, Hawaii State Center for Nursing

Nursing and Health Professions, who joined the private institution in February to direct the DNP program. Smith has worked for nearly 20 years as a family nurse practitioner and in academia.

She's already seen interest in the new doctoral program from within Chaminade's bachelor's of nursing program, as well as from potential DNP students across the country and locally, and from alumni.

The program offers three tracks: family nurse practitioner, psychiatric and mental health nurse practitioner and executive leader, all of them continuing education courses "designed to have at least 1,000 clinical hours to prepare graduates to enter their career as nurse practitioners with confidence," she said.

The third track may be especially appealing right now, as Smith said that through the pandemic, many nurses have been inspired to take leadership roles in their organizations.

"There is a significant need to provide complex, high-quality health care in Hawaii; nurses and nurse practitioners play a central role in delivering this care," Smith said.

Reichhardt said that there was a surge in hiring experienced acute care nurses from out of state at one point in the pandemic – with Hawaii having some of the highest paid nurses in that setting in the nation – highlighting the need for local training.

"We've had more engagement in professional development than ever before," said Reichhardt. "The momentum to support nurses will continue."



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Help us thank a health care hero by sending an e-card to a special caregiver you know, or to our entire Maui Health team.

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# UNITY IN THE NURSING COMMUNITY

BY KELSEY KUKAUA  
kkukaua@bizjournals.com



The Hawaii Nurses Association has represented nurses in the Islands since 1917. Daniel Ross,

president, told Pacific Business News that its frontline members are “traumatized” coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic, but that through unity, Hawaii nurses have been able to band together like never before.

**What’s been the association’s top priority in the last year?** Our primary concern is the safety of our members, our patients, and the community. This commitment remains unchanged. Our members are traumatized, but we lean on each other to give us the strength we need to make things better.

**What are you currently working**

**on for your members?** Since our members are on the frontlines of patient care, we know that quality care starts with sound policies and practices to ensure our members are adequately protected and treated with professional respect. We are advocating for pandemic guidelines, so we never have to go through what happened last year again. Other top priority issues include better security for our members from on-the-job assaults. There should also be safe RN-to-patient staffing ratios; employers intentionally short staff and under-hire to cut costs. We’re also advocating for a ban on mandatory overtime. We’ve had nurses mandated to work 20-hour shifts! Pay equity with similar markets on the Mainland is also important, as our cost of living is higher. This is important to retain great staff to maintain a high quality of patient care in our islands.



COURTESY HAWAII NURSES ASSOCIATION  
*Daniel Ross, president of Hawaii Nurses Association*

**What workforce development/training trends have emerged due to Covid?** Unfortunately, we haven’t seen much yet. Our newly

graduated nurses still cannot find work here. Many have relocated to the Mainland, while others work as nurse aides or in other ancillary roles. Employers need to post more entry-level positions and hire more nurses so we can have enough experienced nurses to fill our needs. Currently, our schools churn out quality graduates, but the hospitals hire Mainland nurses.

**What keeps you up at night?** So many things. As a working nurse I still think about: Did I miss a sign a patient is crashing? Did I make the best decisions for my patients? As a union leader, have I made the right decisions that will most benefit our members?

**What does the local nursing community need most now?** Unity. Unity gives us the strength to effect change. With unity, we can accomplish almost anything.



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**Jon Schram**

The Purple Guys  
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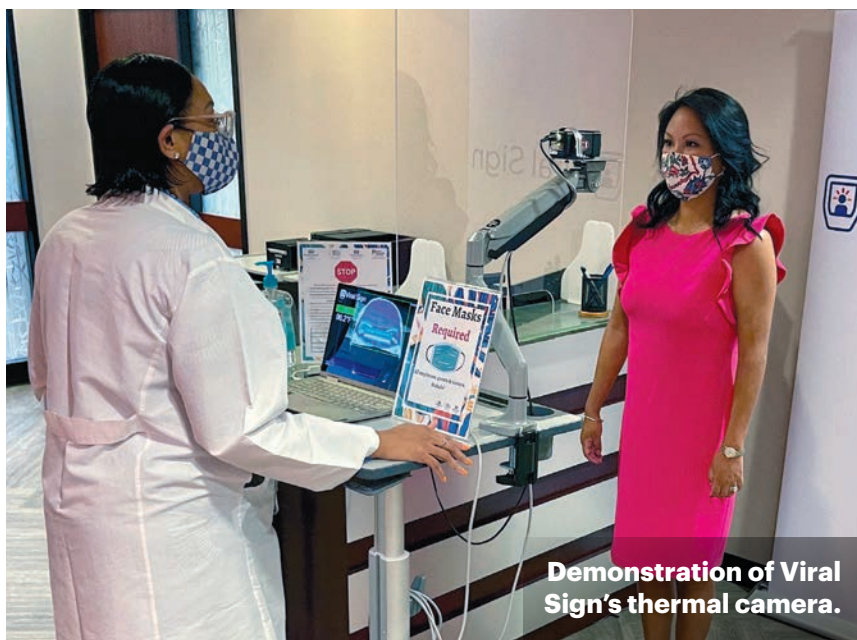
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## NATIONAL NURSES WEEK 2021



**Demonstration of Viral Sign's thermal camera.**

COURTESY SSOH & KMN

## KAHU MALAMA NURSES' SEARCH FOR TALENT

BY KELSEY KUKAUA  
kkukaua@bizjournals.com

A lot has changed for those who place nurses in Hawaii since the Covid-19 pandemic hit the Islands.

Kahu Malama Nurses, which was acquired two years ago by Staffing Solutions of Hawaii, found it challenging to place quality nurses into hospitals and other health care settings because of an accelerated need for specialty professionals, especially in the ICU. Certified nursing assistants were in demand, too, while demand for other types of nurses dropped, such as for nurse aides, which declined by 40%.

Lisa Truong Kracher, president and CEO of Staffing Solutions of Hawaii and Kahu Malama, told Pacific Business News despite this hurdle, the firm placed over 500 employees in the past year and currently has over 250 licensed and unlicensed employees including nurses, pharmacists, nurse aides and medical assistants in its "ready-to-work talent pool," and is still hiring.

She also noted the demand for nurses has made the hiring pipeline extremely competitive, with organizations having to step up their compensation packages to not just attract nurses, but retain them.

To address the need for training, Kahu Malama Nurses has provided

workforce development opportunities for new graduate nurses to gain experience working its vaccination clinics and surge testing sites across Oahu.

While Kracher has often heard nurses express their frustration about pay rates in Hawaii, she said opportunities like these will help prevent those nurses with less than a year of experience from leaving Hawaii for Mainland jobs.

Kahu Malama Nurses also utilized travel nurse contracts to help fill the staffing gaps for long-term assignments, which became especially prevalent amid Covid as a quick way to staff up acute care or specialty needs for Covid patients.

"We were in need for nurses coming here and saw a shortage there," Kracher said.

In response to the pandemic, Kahu Malama Nurses launched a new Emergency Response & Recovery service in partnership with Vivio Sustainable Solutions and Viral Sign for "early detection and prevention of infection."

Kracher said this added solution will provide resources in equipment, PPE and professional and health care staffing services such as temperature screeners, project managers, Covid testers and vaccinators to help keep businesses open, provide comfort for employees returning to the office and give families continued peace of mind.

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THE BUSINESS JOURNALS

# MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE 2021




**I**t turns out Business Journals readers are a resilient bunch.

Thirteen months of quarantining, constant nasal swabs and back-to-back video meetings have done little to dampen the spirits of respondents to a recent mental wellness in the workplace survey launched by American City Business Journals. In fact, well north of 80% say they are satisfied with their jobs and motivated to do their best for their employers, and the majority say their workplace stress has been unchanged or even decreased since the Covid-19 pandemic sent much of corporate America from downtown towers and office parks to the dining rooms, home offices and tricked-out garages of its workers.

But therein lies the rub: The average Business Journals reader isn't your average worker bee. They're relatively older and more established in their careers, and their home-work spaces are, without generalizing, more likely than not to be equipped with creature comforts, state-of-the-art gadgets and the legroom of a traditional office setting. In short, they've been pretty well-situated for much of the coronavirus scare.

Which is not to say workplace stress has been on the decline amid the pandemic. Quite the opposite, in fact, only it depends on whom you ask. For example, women were far more likely than men to identify a host of Covid-19-related factors negatively affecting their jobs, as were employees at large companies versus peers at small and midsize businesses. Based on feedback from roughly 3,400 respondents, it seems clear communication and the ability to garner facetime with managers were among the key drivers of those results.

The Business Journals' survey was conducted March 29-31, with about 49% and 34% of respondents identifying as women and men, respectively. Approximately two thirds worked at companies with fewer than 500 employees.

What follows are highlights from the survey as well as insight from featured speakers during the Business Journals' recent national event on wellness in the workplace in a post-Covid world. 

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“With the knowledge gained, our staff now understands the stages of burnout and is better equipped to manage the physical or emotional exhaustion of work and life.  
Harris County Resources for Children & Adults”

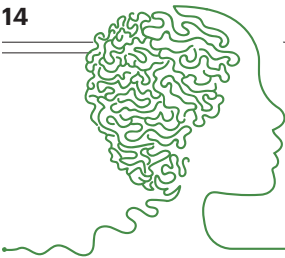
\* 2020 Behavioral Health Impact Update. (November 2020). The Standard.



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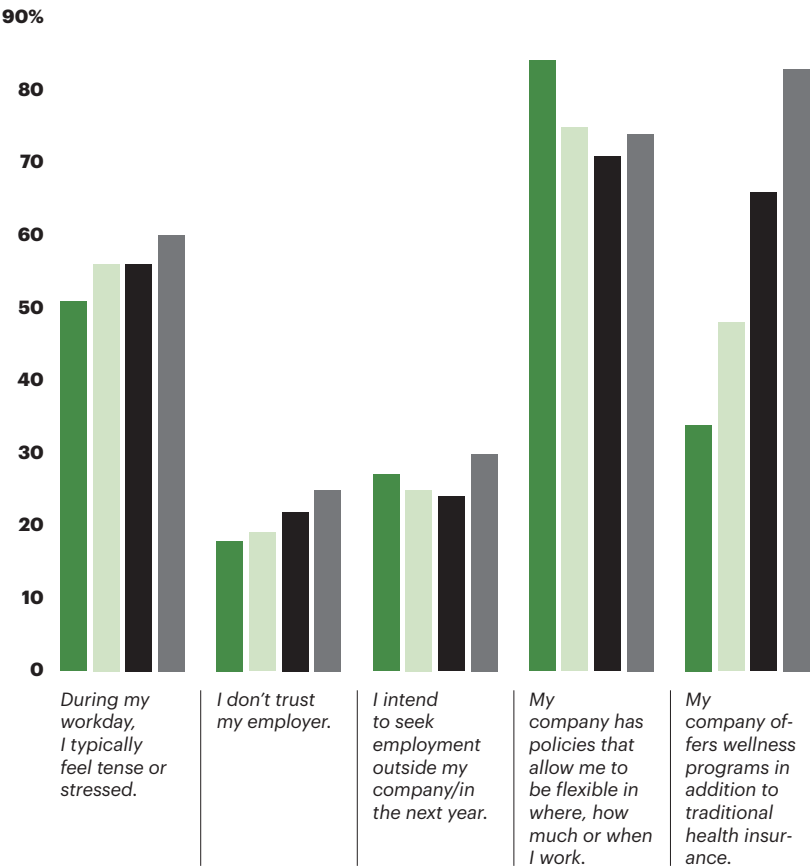
# READER SURVEY STRESSE

## SIZING UP COVID-19: THE BIGGER THEY ARE, THE MORE STRESSED THEY'VE BECOME

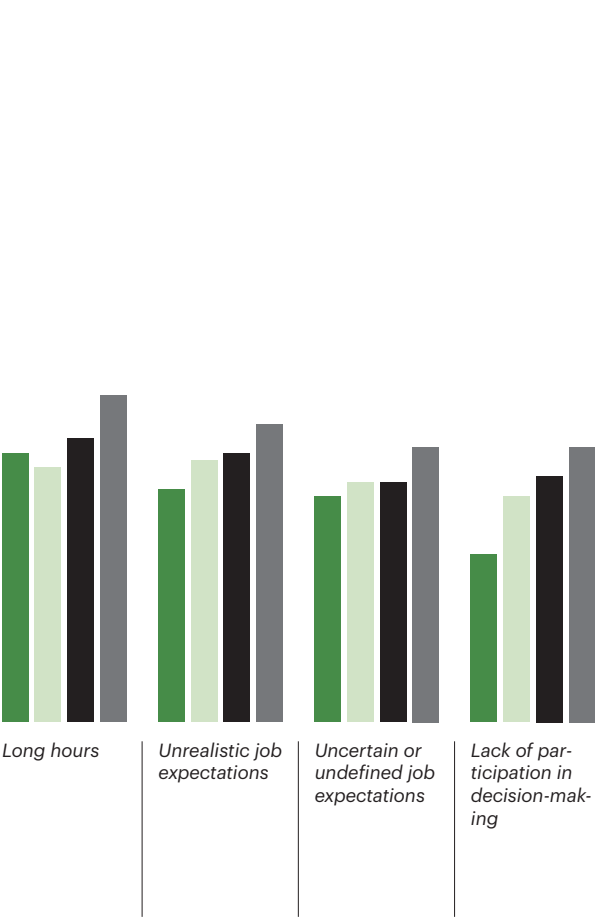
If there is a consistency to the 3,400 responses to *The Business Journals'* reader survey, it's that access to superiors and senior decision-makers is among the best relievers of stress. No surprise, respondents at smaller companies with fewer layers of management have proven to be far less affected by the pandemic's influence on mental wellness in the workplace. Conversely, it's the larger companies that have been more responsive — albeit less effective — with formal programs and supports intended to alleviate stress.

● UNDER 10 EMPLOYEES   ● 10-99   ● 100-499   ● MORE THAN 500

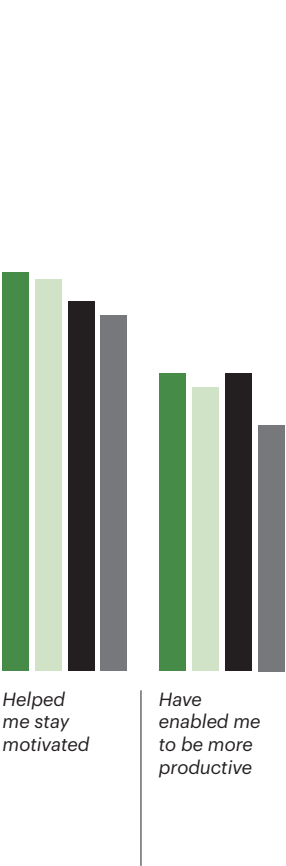
How strongly would you agree with each of the following statements regarding your overall work experience?



What are your largest contributors to stress in the workplace?



Among respondents whose employers have taken steps to relieve stress, which of the following applies?



The bottom line?

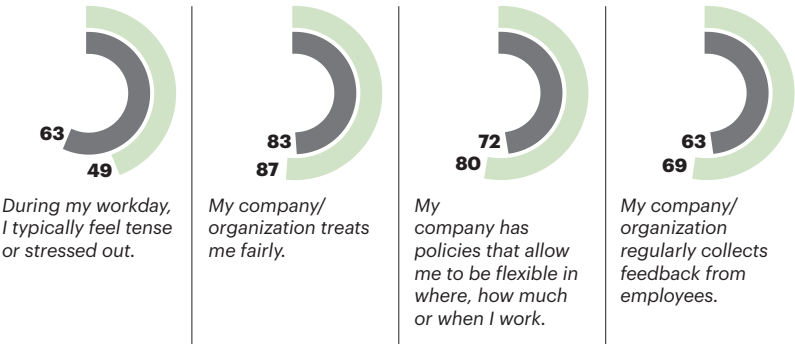
Employees at large companies are more stressed, more distrustful of employers and more likely to be looking for another job. They're also more likely to have access to wellness programs. While larger companies appear to have taken more steps to address wellness, the benefits of those programs were more strongly felt among smaller employers.

## THE GENDER DIVIDE: THE PANDEMIC WEIGHS HEAVY ON WOMEN

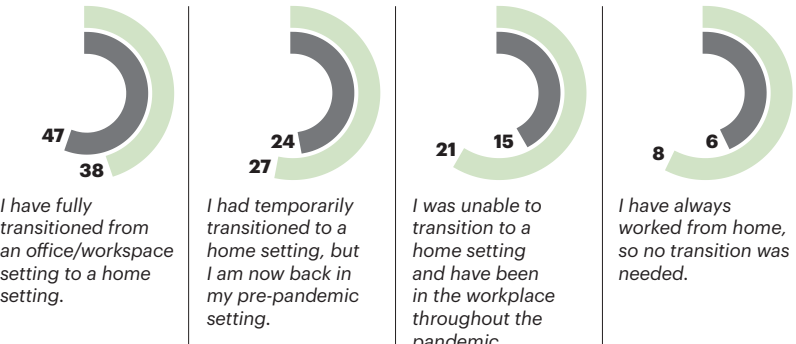
Approximately 82% of *The Business Journals'* survey respondents identified their gender, with slightly more women participating than men. Women also outnumbered men in identifying increased job-related stress and workplace frustration since the pandemic hit. Among the more obvious breaks was the fact that a greater percentage of women transitioned to full- or part-time work from home during the pandemic.



How strongly do you agree?



How has the pandemic affected the location where you currently work?





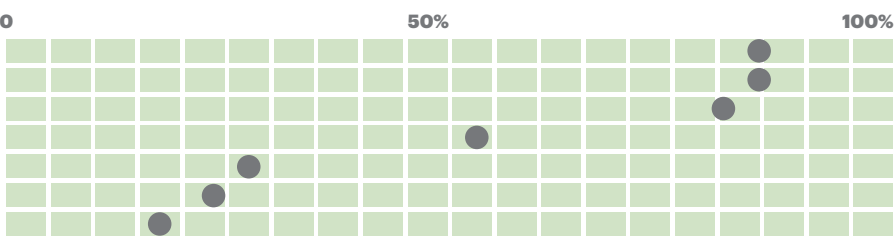
# S PANDEMIC'S EFFECTS

## THE BIG TAKEAWAYS: THE STRESS IS REAL, BUT EMPLOYERS ARE DOING THEIR PART

Has workplace stress increased for a material number of respondents during the pandemic? Absolutely. But what's also clear is employers have made a concerted effort to roll out programs and policies to keep people motivated and relatively balanced despite the pandemic's challenges.

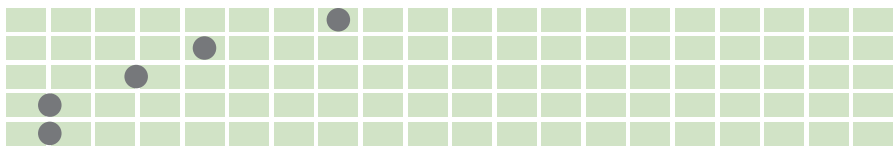
### How strongly would you agree with each of the following regarding your overall work experience?

- I have a positive relationship with my boss/supervisor.
- I am motivated to do my very best for my employer.
- All in all, I am satisfied with my job.
- During my workday, I typically feel tense or stressed out.
- I receive no monetary rewards for my achievements and contributions at work.
- I intend to seek employment outside my company/organization in the next year.
- I don't trust my employer.



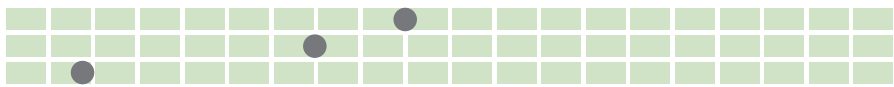
### How has the pandemic affected the location when you currently work?

- I have fully transitioned from an office/workplace setting to a home setting.
- I had temporarily transitioned to a home setting, but I am now back in my pre-pandemic setting.
- I was unable to transition to a home setting and have been in the workplace throughout the pandemic.
- I have always worked from home, so no transition was needed.
- I have a hybrid schedule, sometimes in the office and sometimes at home.



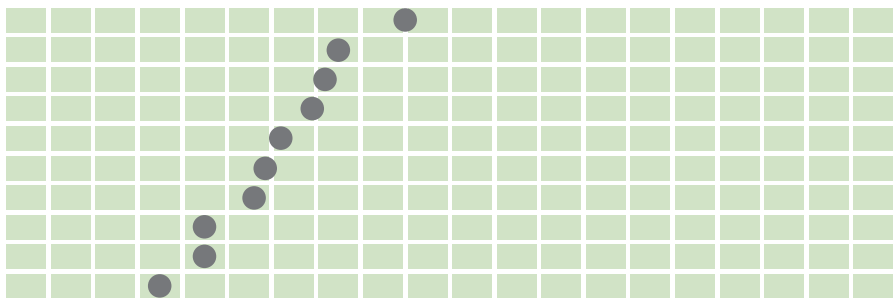
### How has your work-related stress been affected by Covid-19?

- My workplace stress has increased.
- There has been no change in the level of my workplace stress.
- My workplace stress has decreased.



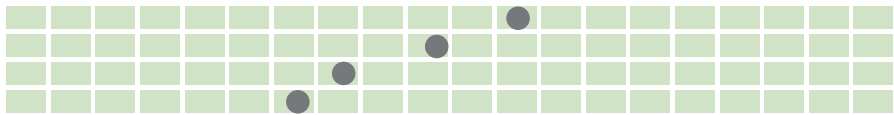
### Top contributors to workplace stress:

- Too heavy a workload.
- Long hours
- Unrealistic job expectations
- Work interfering during personal or family time
- Uncertain or undefined job expectations
- Lack of participation in decision-making
- Lack of opportunity for growth and/or advancement
- Job insecurity
- Low salary
- Inflexible hours

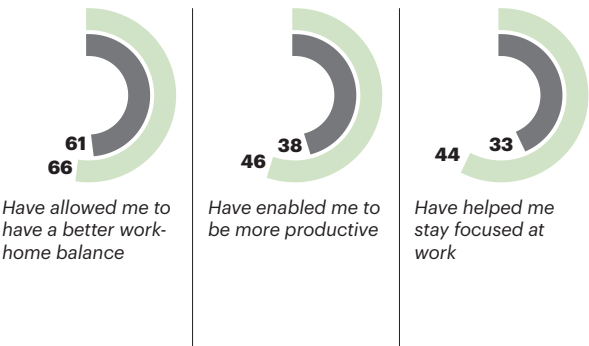


### Among those who said employers had taken additional steps, how have these steps helped you?

- Have allowed me to have a better work/home balance
- Have helped me stay motivated
- Have enabled me to be more productive
- Have helped me stay focused at work

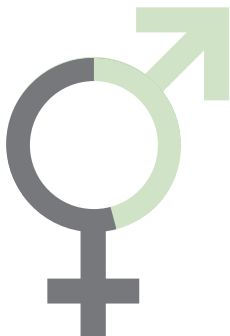


### How have programs adopted by your employer helped you?



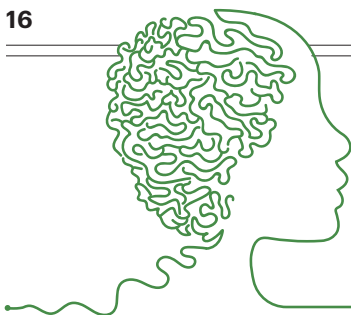
### The bottom line?

Women were more likely to have transitioned to full-time work from home during the pandemic, while men are more likely to have started the transition back to the office. And while differences were minimal around motivation and work-home balance, men and women had a large divide around productivity and focus. Workload was a top concern for all, though women outpaced men in virtually every survey category in citing specific sources of stress in the workplace.



In short, men were consistently more positive about their overall work environment, while women were consistently more stressed, distrustful of employers and feeling underappreciated (i.e. compensated for their work).





## MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE 2021



*Arthur C. Evans Jr. is a clinical and community psychologist and the CEO of the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C.*

### OPINION: ARTHUR C. EVANS JR., PH.D

## POST-PANDEMIC LESSONS: EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING IS PARAMOUNT

**B**usiness leaders can benefit from critical lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic as we begin reopening our workplaces, especially when it comes to employee well-being – a requirement for organizational success.

Stress in the United States is incredibly high right now, and the workplace has not been spared the pandemic's effects, as documented by numerous surveys. Consider your employees' stress levels when weighing decisions about the future of work for your organization. The transition back into the physical workplace will be stressful for many, even for employees who want to go back to the office. This, on top of the family-related stress that employees may be experiencing, should temper the amount of change that employees are asked to absorb.

As business leaders, we must respond to our employees' needs by creating psychologically healthy workplaces. A

**“Make sure employees know about your mental health benefits and create an organizational culture that normalizes talking to a mental health provider as part of an overall health checkup, not just if something feels wrong.”**

psychologically healthy workplace fosters employee health while improving organizational performance. How can we do this? And how has the pandemic reshaped the definition of a healthy workplace?

#### Science is key

Psychological science points to the key issues managers should focus on. For example, we know that uncertainty can harm our well-being – a major reason that this unprecedented pandemic has been so difficult. Organizational leaders should provide as much certainty as possible for their employees by overcommunicating plans for returning to work and involving employees however possible in the decisions that impact their lives.

Research also shows that there are other factors that contribute to psychologically healthy workplaces, as described in APA's five-domain model of science-based practices: 1) employee involvement, 2) health

#### APA'S STEPS TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES

- ▶ Provided furniture and supplies for home offices.
- ▶ Held biweekly virtual coffee breaks with the CEO and other APA leaders.
- ▶ Sent a daily e-blast connecting employees with the organization and each other.
- ▶ Held facilitated discussions on timely topics such as racial violence and resilience.
- ▶ Offered periodic paid mental health days to all employees.
- ▶ Established a virtual break-room where employees suggest discussion topics.
- ▶ Extended flexibility in when and how employees work.
- ▶ Offered free virtual wellness classes.
- ▶ Delivered care crates to employees' homes with a personal note of appreciation.
- ▶ Created a space on our intranet with resources for employees feeling overwhelmed.
- ▶ Sent regular reminders about confidential access to our Employee Assistance Program.

and safety, 3) work-life balance, 4) employee recognition, and 5) employee growth and development.

#### Building healthy workplaces


The many benefits of psychologically healthy workplace practices to employees include reduced stress, better concentration, improved sleep, and more stamina. The benefits to an employer are just as significant, and include lower health-care costs, reduced absenteeism, improved customer satisfaction, and greater employee retention. Organizations that intentionally implement healthy workplace initiatives consistently outperform organizations that do not focus on these key areas.

#### Mental health care coverage

One of the most critical ways to support employee well-being is by fully integrating mental health into your organization's benefits package. APA encourages businesses to ensure their benefits comply with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, enacted in 2008. The legislation requires employers to provide mental health and substance use coverage that is equal to or better than the coverage offered for physical health, with no annual limits or higher copays/deductibles for treating these conditions.

Make sure employees know about your mental health benefits and create an organizational culture that normalizes talking to a mental health provider as part of an overall health check-up, not just if something feels wrong.

On average, we spend 90,000 hours of our lifetimes at work. As businesses and employers, it's our responsibility to ensure that those hours support the mental health and well-being of our employees and their families.

The return on investment for employee mental health and well-being programs can be enormous for both employees and their organizations. As businesses, we must continually look for new ways to invest in our employees and create an environment where they can thrive and grow. 



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LAW FIRMS: **REAL ESTATE**

# Brandee Faria on legal trends post-Covid

BY KELSEY KUKAUA  
kkukaua@bizjournals.com

Brandee Faria said the best compliment she's received in her more than 20-year legal career was earning the nickname "Robinhood-ette" by colleagues.

"I'm an attorney who advocates for the little guys and it's rewarding to know that the work I do as a lawyer makes a difference," said Faria, managing member of Perkin & Faria.

Faria established her Honolulu-based law firm last year in a career that started with her working as a law clerk to the late John Lim, a former judge of the Hawaii Appellate Court, then continuing on with him as an associate and partner through 2020 before his death. She was also previously recognized in PBN's 40 Under 40 class of 2010.

Currently, her practice is 60%

class action cases, she said, which include a blend of real estate lawsuits involving mortgage, bank and employer clients.

"From a real estate perspective, it's booming right now, but because of foreign purchases pushing out locals, it's compromising the authenticity of the Islands and we've already begun to lose valuable assets such as [Native Hawaiian] language," said Faria, who is a quarter Native Hawaiian.

On the commercial real estate side, she said the competing interests of landlords and tenants heightened by the stresses of the Covid economy were a common dispute in the last year. In employment law, she saw companies struggling to find the balance between running their business and being mindful of employee sensitivities and different levels of fear related to the virus. Faria also noticed clients needing



COURTESY PERKIN & FARIA

more frequent communication, perhaps due to social isolation related to the pandemic.

Throughout this past year, she said the firm remained stable and maintained its staff of four. This year, she's looking to add an associate. The firm's biggest transformation will be transferring its operations to purely remote by September.

"Covid has forced many different

professions and sectors to get up-to-date with technology, and business will be better for it," she said. "For one thing, it's made Hawaii's court process more efficient."

Giving back to the local community and to younger lawyers is also a key component to Faria's practice – she estimated having directed over several million dollars to local nonprofits in her career. For example, Faria's law firm settled a case that resulted in thousands of \$200 Foodland gift cards being delivered to hospitality workers in March; the funds were funneled through Aloha United Way, which processed in applications and collaborated with Foodland to disperse the gift cards. Other recent nonprofit beneficiaries of her work include Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, Hawaiian Humane Society, Family Promise of Hawaii and YMCA of Hawaii, among others.

Faria also spends time working with Hawaii's aspiring lawyers, through partnerships with Kapiolani Community College, University of Hawaii at Manoa and Kamehameha Schools to help students "get exposure instead of just theory training, teaching them to apply what they learn through hands-on experience and internships," she said.



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Managing Partner Laura Lucas



# Home sales would have to disclose sea level rise

BY JANIS L. MAGIN  
jmagin@bizjournals.com

A bill requiring all sellers of residential real estate in Hawaii to disclose whether their properties are in a sea level rise exposure area passed the Legislature last week, one of a handful of potential new laws that will affect the real estate industry.

Senate Bill 474 amends the state law requiring flood hazard area disclosure to add sea level rise exposure area “as designated by the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission or its successor.” The bill was sent last week to Gov. David Ige for his signature.

The bill arose from a 2017 law that established the Hawaii climate change mitigation and adaptation commission, which identified and studied the areas of the state that will be affected most by sea level rise through 2050.

Its report identifies those areas, down to the tax-map-key level, that are most susceptible to a 3.2-foot increase in sea level that’s projected to occur by 2050, or earlier.



PBN FILE

*A view of homes along the shoreline in the Kahala neighborhood*

The data is available online on the state’s Hawaii Sea Level Rise Viewer tool, which can be found at [hawaiisealevelriseviewer.org](http://hawaiisealevelriseviewer.org).

The sea level rise susceptibility doesn’t just affect coastal or beachfront areas, although those are likely to see the most impact. According to the online tool, inland parts of Kakaako on Oahu, Kihei on Maui and Kapaa on Kauai could be impacted by a 3.2-foot increase.

“The value of property lying within the boundaries of a sea level

rise exposure area will likely be affected over time, which the Legislature determines to be a material fact that should be disclosed by the seller in a real property transaction,” the bill said.

The Hawaii Association of Realtors supported the bill and said in testimony that it has been working to review the sea level rise viewer with new tax-map key and property address overlay features.

Another bill slated to become law with Ige’s signature would signifi-

cantly increase the conveyance tax on residential properties sold for \$4 million or more.

House Bill 58, among other things, would double the conveyance tax for single-family homes and condominiums that sell for between \$4 million and \$5.99 million, triple it for sales of \$6 million to \$9.99 million and quadruple it for sales of \$10 million or more.

The tax, typically paid at closing by a seller, would increase to \$1.40 per \$100 from the current 70 cents per \$100 for homes sold for \$4 million to \$5.99 million; and to \$2.70 per \$100 from 90 cents per \$100 for homes sold for \$6 million to \$9.99 million; and to \$4 per \$100 from \$1 per \$100 for sales of \$10 million or more.

Condo sales would see similar rates of increase, but a condo selling for \$10 million or more would see the conveyance tax jump to \$5 per \$100 from \$1.25 per \$100.

Conveyance tax rates for commercial properties would remain at the current levels, topping out at \$1 per \$100 for sales of \$10 million or more.

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Compiled by Lucy Tuitupou  
808-955-8037, @pbnresearch  
ltuitupou@bizjournals.com

# LAW FIRMS, REAL ESTATE & CONSTRUCTION

RANKED BY NUMBER OF ATTORNEYS SPECIALIZING IN REAL ESTATE & CONSTRUCTION LAWS

	Business Name / 2020 Rank (* did not previously rank) Website	Address Phone	Year Est. in Hawaii	Attorneys	Top Local Executive(s)
1	<b>Cades Schutte</b> ② cades.com	1000 Bishop St., #1200 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-521-9200	1922	46	Amanda Jones, Nathan Okubo, Ryan Wilson, Partners
2	<b>Carlsmith Ball</b> ③ carlsmith.com	1001 Bishop St., #2100 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-523-2500	1857	44	Jon Yamamura, Chairman Laura Lucas, Managing Partner Michelle Imata, Managing Partner
3	<b>McCorriston Miller Mukai MacKinnon</b> ① m4law.com	500 Ala Moana Blvd., 4th Fl. Honolulu, HI 96813 808-529-7300	1989	42	William McCorriston, Founding/Managing Partner Richard Budar, Managing Director
4	<b>Starn O'Toole Marcus &amp; Fisher</b> ⑥ starnlaw.com	733 Bishop St., #1900 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-537-6100	1994	24	Peter Starn, Chairman/President Norman Cheng, Managing Director Duane Fisher, Director of Real Estate, Construction, Business Terence O'Toole, Director of Litigation Sharon Lovejoy, Director
5	<b>Bays Lung Rose &amp; Voss</b> ④ legalthawaii.com	700 Bishop St., #900 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-523-9000	1986	22	Adrian Lavarias, Managing Partner
6	<b>Goodsill Anderson Quinn &amp; Stifel</b> ⑤ goodsill.com	999 Bishop St., #1600 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-547-5600	1878	21	Johnathan Bolton, Judy Lee, Lisa Woods Munger, Barbara Petrus, Dale Zane, Partners
7	<b>Watanabe Ing</b> ⑨ wik.com	999 Bishop St., #1250 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-544-8300	1971	19	Jonathan Lai, Managing Partner
8	<b>Case Lombardi &amp; Pettit</b> ⑩ caselombardi.com	737 Bishop St., #2600 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-547-5400	1888	17	Dennis Lombardi, Director/President Nancy Youngren, Managing Director
8	<b>Clay Chapman Iwamura Pulice &amp; Nervell</b> ⑦ paclawteam.com	700 Bishop St., #2100 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-535-8400	1977	17	Robert Chapman, Managing Director
10	<b>Chun Kerr</b> ⑧ chunkerr.com	999 Bishop St., #2100 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-528-8247	1970	15	Danton Wong, Managing Partner Katelyn Shelly, COO
10	<b>Damon Key Leong Kupchak Hastert</b> ⑪ hawaiiilawyer.com	1003 Bishop St., #1600 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-531-8031	1963	15	Kenneth Kupchak, President Michael Yoshida, VP
12	<b>Ashford &amp; Wriston</b> ⑭ ashfordwriston.com	999 Bishop St., #1400 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-539-0400	1955	14	Kevin Herring, Managing Partner Robert Graham, Partner/Management Committee Member Wayne Nasser, Partner/Management Committee member
13	<b>Imanaka Asato</b> ⑬ imanakaasato.com	745 Fort St. Mall, 17th Fl. Honolulu, HI 96813 808-521-9500	2012	12	Mitchell Imanaka, Founding Principal
14	<b>Porter McGuire Kiakona &amp; Chow</b> ⑫ hawaiiilegal.com	841 Bishop St., #1500 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-539-1100	2011	11	Bryson Chow, Co-Managing Partner Kapono Kiakona, Co-Managing Partner R. Laree McGuire, Partner Christian Porter, Partner
15	<b>Ekimoto &amp; Morris</b> ⑮ hawaiicondolaw.com	888 Mililani St., 2nd Fl. Honolulu, HI 96813 808-523-0702	2005	10	John Morris, Richard Ekimoto, Partners
15	<b>Schlack Ito</b> ⑮ schlackito.com	745 Fort St., #1500 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-523-6040	2003	10	Jeff Piper, Member
17	<b>Sullivan Meheula Lee</b> ⑬ smlhawaii.com	733 Bishop St., #2900 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-599-9555	2014	9	Barry Sullivan, William Meheula, Terrence Lee, Partners
18	<b>Schneider Tanaka Radovich Andrew &amp; Tanaka</b> ⑯ stratlaw.com	1100 Alakea St., #2100 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-792-4200	2004	8	Robert Schneider, Manager
19	<b>Settle Meyer Law</b> ⑰ settlemeylaw.com	900 Fort St. Mall, #1800 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-534-4434	2013	7	Scott Settle, Managing Principal William Meyer III, Principal Natalie Banach, Principal
20	<b>Yamamoto Caliboso</b> ⑳ ychawaii.com	1100 Alakea St., #3100 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-540-4500	2001	6	Dean Yamamoto, Managing Member Carlito Caliboso, Member
21	<b>Bronster Fujichaku Robbins</b> ㉔ bfrhawaii.com	1003 Bishop St., #2300 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-524-5644	1999	5	Margery Bronster, Founding Partner Rex Fujichaku, Partner Kenneth Robbins, Partner
21	<b>Ogawa Lau Nakamura &amp; Jew</b> ㉔ ollon.com	707 Richards St., #600 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-533-3999	1978	5	Roy Ogawa, President/Director
23	<b>Deeley King Pang &amp; Van Etten</b> ⑰ dkpvlaw.com	1003 Bishop St., #1550 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-533-1751	1985	4	William Deeley, Managing Partner
24	<b>Lyons Brandt Cook &amp; Hiramatsu</b> ㉔ lbchlaw.com	841 Bishop St., #1800 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-524-7030	1977	3	Thomas Cook, Managing Partner
24	<b>Tom Petrus &amp; Miller</b> ㊟ tpm-hawaii.com	1164 Bishop St., #650 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-792-5800	1994	3	Michael Tom, Richard Miller, Attorneys
24	<b>Tsugawa Lau &amp; Muzzi</b> ㊟ hilaw.us	1132 Bishop St., #2400 Honolulu, HI 96813 808-531-0490	2005	3	Alan Lau, Christopher Muzzi, Eric Tsugawa, Partners

CLOSER LOOK

ABOUT THE LIST

Information was obtained from firm representatives. Information on The List was supplied by individual companies through questionnaires, phone interviews, company websites, and could not be verified independently by Pacific Business News. Only those that responded to our inquiries were listed.

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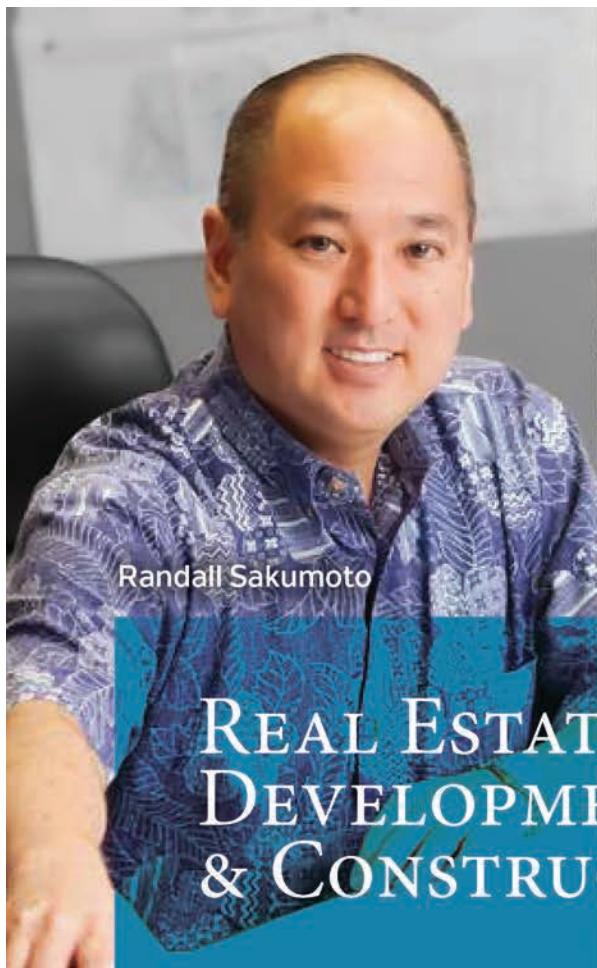
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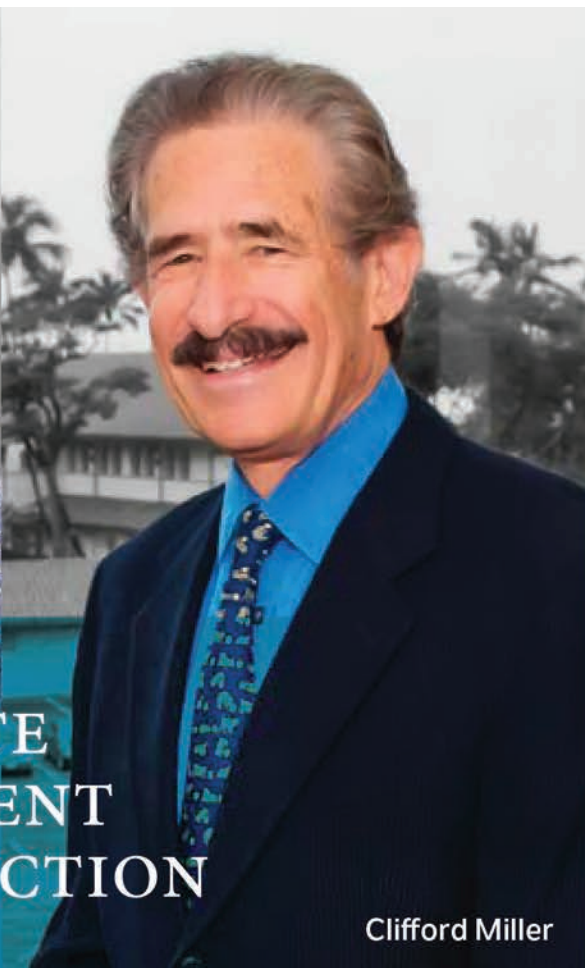
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1 Management committee.  
NOTES: NA - not applicable, not available or not approved.





Randall Sakumoto



Clifford Miller



Scott MacKinnon

## REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION

Our real estate attorneys handle a full range of complex and sophisticated transactions involving real estate development, construction and development loans, loan restructuring and work-outs, acquisitions and dispositions, commercial leasing and equity investments. Our clients include landowners, developers, banks and investment banks, investment firms, property managers, insurance companies, architects, construction contractors and others involved in all facets of the real estate industry.



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## New deals and new development in real estate law

LINDSAY ORMAN, DIRECTOR,  
STARN O'TOOLE MARCUS & FISHER

BY LUCY TUITUPOU  
ltuitupou@bizjournals.com



**What are some of the top issues your firm dealt with in 2020, and what are you seeing so far in 2021?** Covid impacted all of our clients in one way or another. A number of businesses that were closed or at reduced capacity during the pandemic used the time to undertake renovations and other construction projects. Real estate transactions have generally been going strong as interest rates remain low, and we expect to continue to see more new deals and development projects through 2021.

**Are there any new laws regarding real estate and/or construction industry businesses?** HB58 passed out of conference

committee on April 27. As amended in conference, it will raise conveyance taxes effective Jan. 1, 2022, on the sale of non-commercial properties over \$4 million.

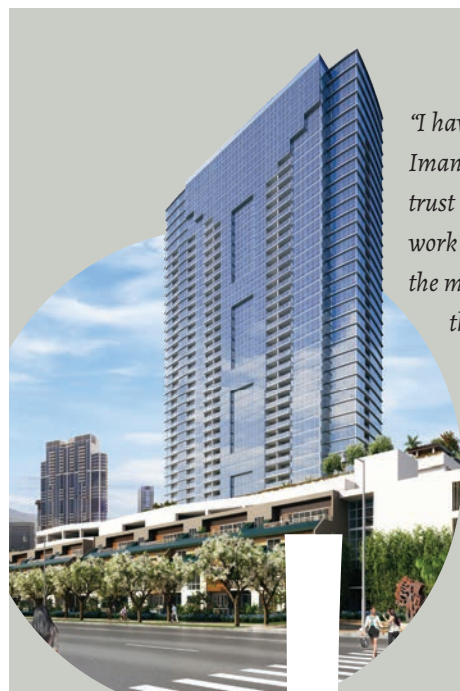
Although not yet passed, there are several proposed changes for Maui County that could impact real estate development. Maui County is currently considering placing a moratorium on hotel building permits for West and South Maui. New shoreline setback rules have also been proposed for Maui, which would potentially increase shoreline setbacks based on a sea-level rise predictive model.

**Are you currently hiring? If yes, are you hiring to increase or maintain staff?** Yes, we are currently hiring for a newly created staff position and are also looking to add an experienced litigation attorney to our team.



**“There are several proposed changes for Maui County that could impact real estate development.”**

LINDSAY ORMAN, director, Starn O'Toole Marcus & Fisher



*“I have worked with the team at Imanaka Asato for over 30 years and trust them to consistently provide high level work product and innovative solutions to the most complicated issues faced during the real estate development process.*

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At Imanaka Asato, we strive to provide our clients with the personal attention and thoughtful solutions to help them succeed. We understand that every project and client goal is unique. Whether it's preparing for litigation or working our business and governmental relationships, we are driven to provide results. For over 40 years, we have helped our clients maximize their success in the Islands.



Mitchell A. Imanaka



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GOURMET EVENTS HAWAII NAMES  
MADELEINE NOA AS GENERAL MANAGER

HONOLULU, HI – (Wednesday, April 14, 2021) Gourmet Events Hawaii, the state’s premier event planning company, has named Madeleine Noa as its General Manager effective immediately. Noa’s appointment will play a critical role in supporting the company’s continual growth strategy as she provides guidance and leadership to Gourmet Events Hawaii and Kau Kau Box, the company’s popular weekly meal box service.

“We’re pleased to announce the appointment of Madeleine Noa as the General Manager of Gourmet Events Hawaii,” said Kat Lin-Hurtubise, founder and CEO of Gourmet Events Hawaii. “Madeleine is a

talented, hardworking leader in the local community, and we’re confident she will bring an unparalleled level of skill and business insight into her general manager role. We feel great about entrusting the care of our valued loyal clients and new clients to Madeleine.”

Noa most recently served as senior sales manager of Roberts Hawaii, the state’s largest employee-owned tour and transportation company, where she was promoted from account representative to sales manager, and then to senior sales manager, where she oversaw both the concierge sales desks and all reservations agents.

“I am truly excited to be working closely with the industry, again, and am delighted to have been granted this opportunity to become General Manager,” said Noa. “I will be working hard to expand the company’s footprint across the state and continue the level of excellence and service Gourmet Events Hawaii is known for.”

For more information, please call us at (808) 735-7788 or visit [www.gourmeteventshawaii.com](http://www.gourmeteventshawaii.com).

About Gourmet Events Hawaii

At Gourmet Events Hawaii, our mission is to create memorable and successful events that exceed our clients’ expectations, nurture relationships and delight the senses - one client, one event, one experience at a time. Incorporating each client’s unique vision, we create sumptuous occasions, memorable well beyond

the last morsel of dessert or sip of fine wine.

Gourmet Events Hawaii is comprised of a team of senior staff that together brings over 70 years of event management and catering experience to every event they produce. The team unites experts in every aspect of event management, from catering and menu planning, to staffing, facilities and logistics, vendor management, and marketing and communications. The unified vision of the entire Gourmet Events Hawaii team is to produce exceptional events with style and taste that go beyond expectations. For more information, please visit [www.gourmeteventshawaii.com](http://www.gourmeteventshawaii.com)

About Kau Kau Box

Kau Kau Box is the brainchild of Gourmet Events Hawaii, originally created to serve the people of Hawaii during the Covid pandemic with delicious, healthy, chef-prepared meals made with fresh local ingredients at an affordable price. Our goal was to help families stay safe, support local farms and other local businesses, keep hospitality professionals working, and help the local community eat healthy with convenient weekly meal boxes. One year later, and Kau Kau Box has become a way of life for many people, and growing in popularity. Kau Kau Box is proud to collaborate with the talented Chef Thomas Naylor, founder of Ke Nui Kitchen, to produce our weekly boxes. For more information, please visit [www.kaukauboxnow.com](http://www.kaukauboxnow.com).

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July 4, 2021

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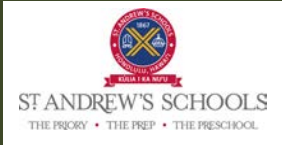
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**Gwynn Nakamura**  
*Assistant Vice President & Branch Manager*  
**First Hawaiian Bank**  
Gwynn Nakamura has been promoted

to assistant vice president & Kapahulu Branch manager. She oversees all aspects of branch operations and leads a team of bankers who provide business and consumer clients personalized solutions to achieve their financial goals. Nakamura has over 25 years of financial services experience and previously served as a personal banker and sales manager at First Hawaiian's Kahala Branch and assistant vice president and team leader at the Bank's Main Banking Center.

LAW PRACTICE

Promotion



**Amanda M. Jones**  
*Partner, Member of Management Committee*  
**Cades Schutte LLP**  
Cades Schutte is proud to announce

the election of Amanda M. Jones to its Management Committee, effective April 1, 2021. Amanda is a partner in the firm's Litigation Department and Employment Law and Labor Relations team, recognized for her work by publications including Chambers and Partners USA and The Best Lawyers in America. She regularly advises and represents employers in labor and employment matters as part of her broader commercial litigation practice.

REAL ESTATE

New Hire



**Hokule'a Atoigue**  
*Realtor*  
**Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate Advantage Realty**

Hokule'a is originally from Guam. Having been stationed with her family overseas, Hokule'a had the pleasure of attending many schools and mastered the art of moving frequently. Hokule'a has resided in Hawaii for over 20 years and has enjoyed a long career in the medical field working in the operating room, assisting surgeons during surgical procedures. Hokule'a has always been passionate about helping others and finds it extremely rewarding to be a part of her clients' homeownership journey.

SPOTLIGHT

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT | PROMOTION

**Jon McKenna**  
*President*  
**Hawaiiana Management Company, Ltd.**

Jon McKenna joined Hawaiiana Management Company, Ltd. in October 2016 as Vice President. He was placed in charge of Hawaiiana's Covenants and Design Review team, and in addition, assigned a substantial portfolio including luxury high-rise buildings from the development stage, and large single-family master homeowner's associations. McKenna began his career in property management as a portfolio manager for Certified Management, Inc. (now Associa Hawaii) in the late 90's, ultimately becoming their Vice President of Business Development in 2004. There he encountered a variety of clients and industry business contacts, including Haseko Development, Inc. In 2007, Haseko invited Jon to become Development Project Manager for their company. Working



on the "client" side of the equation provided Jon with the unique insight into the needs and wants of a developer, which serves as a great asset to Hawaiiana's clients today.

TO SUBMIT YOUR INFORMATION

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**Diego Miranda**  
*Realtor-Associate®*  
**List Sotheby's International Realty**  
Diego Miranda has broken 7 sales record in one of the most competitive

real estate markets, Turtle Bay Resort, which included luxury sales. Total dedication and love to help his clients achieve their goals drives Diego to be one of the best realtors in Hawaii. He's fluent in 3 languages and his experience with many cultures along with the ability to implement the right strategy to help his clients has helped him navigate the different personalities and cultures found in the real estate industry.

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**Sung Yoon**  
*Realtor-Associate®*  
**List Sotheby's International Realty**  
Sung Yoon was born in Korea, grew up in Honolulu and calls Hawaii his Forever

Home. His heart for people combined with his respect for others and pride in his work shines through in all that he is as a person. As a Realtor, you will be hard pressed to find someone who will put his heart and soul into achieving your needs, work harder than anyone else, communicate effectively what is going on and will pay attention to every detail. (John 3:16)

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**Kimm Hirahara**  
*Vice President, Realtor®, Broker-In-Charge*  
**List Sotheby's International Realty**

Kimm Hirahara is dedicated to representing clients with their general brokerage needs. She is a top producing agent, marketing and selling luxury properties in Oahu's most desirable neighborhoods. An award-winning Realtor, Kimm's success is based upon providing clients with exceptional service and effective marketing. Her extensive knowledge of the local real estate market combined with a knack for property match-making has made her expertise highly sought after for both buyers and sellers.



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NEW DOMESTIC CORPORATIONS

DOMESTIC LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC)

**'Da' Big Island Family Maid Services LLC,** Jolynne Lee, 7B Hoaloha St., Hilo 96720.

**111 Pohailani LLC,** P.O. Box 988, Brookings, Ore. 97415.

**1427 Ernest LLC,** Evan Amakata, 7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy. #A143A, Honolulu 96825.

**2560 Kekaa LLC,** 2100 Northrop Ave. #900, Sacramento, Calif. 95825.

**44 Fit LLC,** Jonathan Kahalewai, 45-019 Mahalani Cir., Kaneohe 96744.

**4point Solutions LLC,** Kathleen Lefotu, 46-241A Haiku Rd., Kaneohe 96744.

**808 Grindz Enterprises LLC,** P.O. Box 13101, Lahaina 96761.

**A&A Tree and Landscaping LLC,** P.O. Box 971637, Waipahu 96707.

**A&B Ground Maintenance and Cleaning LLC,** Mary Gaoiran, 2019A Kalihi St., Honolulu 96819.

**A0721 Kihei Admin Holdings LLC,** 2000 E. 4th St. #205, Santa Ana, Calif. 92705.

**A0721 Kihei Development LLC,** 2000 E. 4th St. #205, Santa Ana, Calif. 92705.

**A0721 Kihei Holdings LLC,** 2000 E. 4th St. #220, Santa Ana, Calif. 92705.

**Ace 1985 LLC,** Erin Oglesby, 6922 Niumalu Loop, Honolulu 96825.

**Adkins Consulting Solutions LLC,** 1875 Kapiolani Blvd. #2, Honolulu 96826.

**Akamai Vision Investments LLC,** Alexandra Pena, 2236 Kalihii St., Honolulu 96819.

**All You Can Eat Togo LLC,** Xuan Nguyen, 2888 Ala Ilima St. #2302, Honolulu 96818.

**Alliance Healthcare Services LLC,** Erika Piano, 94-910 Moloalo St., Waipahu 96797.

**Aloha Hana Tours LLC,** 1001 Bishop St. #2685A, Honolulu 96813.

**Aloha Sailing Adventure LLC,** William Denney, P.O. Box 494, Kekaha 96752.

**Aloha Snorkel LLC,** Joseph Hamman, 36 Kaikane Place, Kihei 96753.

**AM Contracts LLC,** Melia Marcos, 89-751 Nanakuli Ave., Wai'anae 96792.

**Amanda Ogimachi LLC,** 1165 Hele St., Kailua 96734.

**Ancient Rains LLC,** 6392 Lagunitas Ct., Carpinteria, Calif. 93013.

**Andaya & Associates LLC,** Bryan Andaya, 1939 Kuapapa Place, Honolulu 96819.

**Anvira Systems LLC,** 4348 Waialae Ave. #354, Honolulu 96816.

**Arena Finishes LLC,** P.O. Box 790764, Paia 96779.

**Ario Territory LLC,** Gina Hara, 750 Kaheka St. #1707, Honolulu 96814.

**As Media LLC,** Alexandria Matthews, 22 Polohina Ln. #1, Lahaina 96761.

**Atomiq Dawg LLC,** 99-040 Kauhale St. #993, Aiea 96701.

**Attractive Real Estate LLC,** Linda Thompson, P.O. Box 492786, Keaau 96749.

**Aurora Vending LLC,** 1778 Ala Moana Blvd. #1317, Honolulu 96815.

**Awesome Avocados LLC,** 1001 Bishop St. #2685A, Honolulu 96813.

**B-Safe Consulting Services LLC,** Jon Wagner, 47-198 Pulama Rd., Kaneohe 96744.

**BB Jewels LLC,** Bryana Yoshida, 92-156 Kohi Place, Kapolei 96707.

**Be Maui LLC,** Timothy White, 2531 S. Kihei Rd. #D616, Kihei 96753.

**Big Hawaii LLC,** Brett Sawrey, 32-1048 Old Mamalahoa Hwy., Ninole 96773.

**Big Island Inspection Connection LLC,** Steve Grooms, 475 Kinoaole St. #102-425, Hilo 96720.

**BIGDI & CK Investments LLC,** 2664 N. Buffalo Dr. #2226, Las Vegas, Nev. 89128.

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**Bioecotek Hawaii LLC,** Bleys Wright, 642 Kakala St. #1703, Kapolei 96707.

**Blessings General Services LLC,** P.O. Box 1554, Kailua 96734.

**Blulicious LLC,** Danielle Sampaio, 111 Hekili St. #A3364, Kailua 96834.

**Bomb Chicken USA LLC,** 98-1005 Moanalua Rd. #1201B, Aiea 96701.

**Broken Dog Ranch LLC,** Deborah Trimboli, 840 Kulaloa Rd., Hilo 96720.

**Bruno's Cleaning Solutions LLC,** 10 S. Kamehameha Hwy., Wahiawa 96786.

**Buffins LLC,** 91-3524 Iwikuamoo St. #301, Ewa Beach 96706.

**C. Masuda Law LLC,** Craig Masuda, 1561 Akolea Place, Hilo 96720.

**Camp Haleakala LLC,** Jason Celata, 213 Kealakapu Rd., Kula

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The Business Leads is a collection of information gathered from Hawaii area courthouses, government offices and informational websites. We gather these public records so you can build your business.

No matter what business you are in, you can gain a competitive edge by reading the Business Leads. Find new and expanding businesses and new customers. Find out the area's commercial and residential hot spots. Find clues about the financial condition of your vendors, customers or competitors.

Listings for each category may vary from week to week because of information availability and space constraints. (Note: \*Indicates listings are not available for this week.)

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<b>CE Enterprises LLC,</b> Casey Emmons, 1983 10th Ave., Honolulu 96816.	<b>Cocolani Gardens LLC,</b> Leandra Gollob, 41-568 Waikupanaha Place, Waimanalo 96795.	<b>D&amp;C Properties LLC,</b> Dayton Galindo, 2222 Aloha Dr. #102, Honolulu 96815.	<b>DIY Wellness LLC,</b> Aulani Rosales, 1050 Bishop St. #137, Honolulu 96813.
<b>CGS LLC,</b> Irene Kishida, 2846 Booth Rd., Honolulu 96813.	<b>Colburn Construction LLC,</b> Spencer Colburn, 643a Alexander Rd., Kahuku 96731.	<b>D's Automotive LLC,</b> P.O. Box 4601, Honolulu 96812.	<b>DMN Kanoë Property LLC,</b> Akira Nakamura, 670 Apuwai Place, Honolulu 96816.
<b>Chaya Hawaii LLC,</b> Yuji Machida, 520 Lunalilo Home Rd. #6304, Honolulu 96825.	<b>Color Lounge LLC,</b> 3408 Waialae Ave. #102, Honolulu 96816.	<b>Da Shop at Kealakekua LLC,</b> Marsha Isaacs, 81-6645D Mamalahoa Hwy., Kealakekua 96750.	<b>DNA Promotions LLC,</b> 16-411 Old Volcano Rd., Keaau 96749.
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<b>Chrisjeninv Consulting LLC,</b> Christopher Lee, 1533 Laukahi St., Honolulu 96821.	<b>Cooking Mama Shirلز LLC,</b> Marlou Agpaoa, 91-1001 Keaunui Dr. #447, Ewa Beach 96706.	<b>De Brums Lanai LLC,</b> P.O. Box 631179, Lanai City 96763.	<b>Drew &amp; Associates Residential Services LLC,</b> P.O. Box 452, Kapaa 96755.
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<b>Chronic Roots Coffee LLC,</b> Trevor Perry, 95-999 Ukuwai St. #1902, Mililani	<b>Cozy Buddha Cleaning LLC,</b> Kikue Decker, 1110 Nuuanu Ave. #1123,	<b>Diesel Elite LLC,</b> 1432 Kaleilani St., Pearl City 96782.	<b>EGM Investments LLC,</b> Emily Manuel, 4152 Uka Ikena St., Kalaheo 96741.
			<b>Elegant Hardwood Floor LLC,</b> 333 Ward Ave. #3

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<b>Element Fund LLC,</b> P.O. Box 6077, Auburn, Calif. 95604.	<b>Hana Jeep Rentals LLC,</b> 100 Kauiki St., Hana 96713.
<b>Elite Construction Management LLC,</b> Jesse Alverio, 92-1021 Palailai Place, Kapolei 96707.	<b>Happy Ohana Hale LLC,</b> Lee Lewis, 1777 Eames St., Wahiawa 96786.
<b>Ellsworth Solutions LLC,</b> Carol Kosaki, 1444 Akiiki Place, Kailua 96734.	<b>Hauula Vacations LLC,</b> Micah Casey, 54-264 Kamehameha Hwy., Hauula 96717.
<b>Elopement Oahu LLC,</b> Christopher Bluhm, 66-059 Alapii St., Haleiwa 96712.	<b>Hawaii Adventure Rentals LLC,</b> Thomas Finn, 75-5919 Alii Dr. #DD22, Kailua-Kona 96740.
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<b>Eva Kiezik DMD LLC,</b> 1441 Kapiolani Blvd. M #1720, Honolulu 96813.	<b>Hawaii LBLG LLC,</b> 250 Flour Mill Rd., Heber City, Utah 84032.
<b>Fairbright LLC,</b> Jeremy Fairbank, 134 Kealaloa Ave., Makawao 96768.	<b>Hawaiian Havens Coffee Rub LLC,</b> Susan Havens, 576 Kaiola St., Kihei 96753.
<b>Fineapple LLC,</b> Michelle Distajo, 89-630A Haelakala Ave., Wai'anae 96792.	<b>Hawaiian Sports and Hobby Kards LLC,</b> Peter Moore, 936 20th Ave., Honolulu 96816.
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<b>Fiver Five LLC,</b> Marylou Marylou O'Neal, 47-710 Hui lo Place, Kaneohe 96744.	<b>HI ESCP LLC,</b> Loretta Sherwood, P.O. Box 207, Maunaloa 96770.
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<b>Gem Investment Properties LLC,</b> Joice Castillo, 917 Kana Place, Lahaina 96761.	<b>Hokulani Express LLC,</b> P.O. Box 8101, Honolulu 96830.
<b>Global Group Incentive &amp; Meetings Done Right LLC,</b> 10 Meleinoa Place, Kahului 96732.	<b>Hooulu Honua LLC,</b> Karl Baker, 394 Auwaolimu St., Honolulu 96813.
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<b>Hakuhia LLC,</b> Christopher Pan, 45-550 Kionaole Rd., Kaneohe 96744.	<b>Island Custom Tinting LLC,</b> Harvey Mendoza, 91-1159 Mikohu St. #35T, Ewa Beach 96706.
<b>Hana Hou Hawaii Products LLC,</b> Natasha Pohina, 28-1692 Mamalahoa Hwy. #3,	<b>Island VibeZ Rentals LLC,</b> 91-202 Paiaha Place, Kapolei 96707.

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# OPINION

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## PUPU PLATTER 258

# Who should pay for Biki?



A. Kam Napier  
*Editor-In-Chief's Notebook*

### Who should pay for Biki?

Last month, we reported on Biki's woes during the tourism Covid downturn. Secure BikeShare Hawaii is shutting down six Biki stations and reducing services in the face of revenues that are half of the nonprofit's \$500,000 peak.

Recently, the Blue Planet Foundation launched an online petition at change.org titled "SAVE BIKI: Ask Honolulu Leaders to Embrace Biki as Public Transit," along with Sustainable Transportation Coalition of Hawaii, Ulupono Initiative, Hawaii Bicycling League, Faith Action Environmental Justice Task Force, Sierra Club, Oahu Group, and Blue Zones Project – Hawaii.

As of early Wednesday morning, it had 1,234 signatures from people who want to turn Biki into TheBike with city funding.

Which means, really, they want you to pay for it, through your property taxes, whether you use it or not.

Biki already received \$2 million in start-up funding from city and state governments, funding no other small business renting bikes – and they do exist – ever received. It has privileged access to the use of public property for its stations that no other such business receives and a guarantee of exclusivity in delivering a bikeshare service.

A city audit in December concluded that:

"The structure of the Biki bikeshare program, established in part by the city's agreement with Bikeshare Hawaii, lacks accountability and transparency.



A Bikeshare Hawaii Biki station on Bishop Street in Downtown Honolulu.

PBN FILE

The agreement circumvented certain requirements of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu resulting in an estimated revenue loss of \$460,728 from the displacement of metered stalls and exemption from permit fees. ... [T]he city does not share in sponsorship revenue, despite similar arrangements between municipalities and bikeshare programs in other jurisdictions. We also found that DTS is not effectively monitoring Bikeshare Hawaii."

This looks to me like substantial taxpayer support coupled with lax oversight of the people's money. Add to that the value, which has got to be in the hundreds of millions, of all the lanes the city has been taking away from cars to devote to bicycles.

The petitioning organizations want more, calling Biki "critical." Except, Biki is in financial trouble precisely because, absent recreational tourist customers, the actual behavior of Honolulu residents is that most of us do not want to rent bikes very often, if at all. And I say all this as someone who has written positively in this

column about the Biki experience.

According to the audit, available at [bizj.us/1q9zdz](https://bizj.us/1q9zdz), as of 2019, Biki had 18,669 members, or 2% of the county's population, and 97,876 casual riders, a substantial portion of whom were non-residents.

Biki's top plan is \$25 a month, offering "a month of unlimited 60-minute" rides, or \$300 a year. As I write this, Walmart Pearl City has a 21-speed Huffy mountain bike for sale at \$124.

For \$2 million, the city could've given away 16,129 bicycles at \$124 each, nearly matching Biki's membership count. So what are we being asked to subsidize, really? The experience of biking without the responsibility of bike ownership, and the symbolic value of the existence of a bikeshare program as something that makes our anti-car environmentalists feel good about Honolulu.

Perhaps the eight nonprofits supporting this petition, and their signatories, could dig deep and come up with the money themselves to be the change they want to see in the world.

### Buck passed

A bill to limit the governor's emergency powers died in the House last week. Gov. David Ige has renewed his emergency Covid-19 orders 19 times since March 4, 2020, imposing quarantines, subordinating county government to his authority, and assuming the authority to determine whether or not your business gets to operate. The 19th installment weighs in at 36 pages of rules for us, and suspension of rules for government – read it in full at [bizj.us/1q9ze2](https://bizj.us/1q9ze2).

The bill, introduced in the House by state Rep. Scott Nishimoto, would've put a 60-day limit on emergency proclamations, and would've required any governor who wants to renew such a proclamation to get the Legislature's permission via a resolution.

On April 19, I emailed Nishimoto to ask for more information:

"As I've been a vocal critic of the endless emergency declarations pertaining to Covid-19, I'm encouraged by HB 103's existence and progress. But I am wondering why this bill is necessary and am reaching out to you as the representative who introduced the bill [to] learn more.

"HRS are pretty clear on this issue and past legislators already discussed and voted in a limit, and the limit is automatic:

"§127A-14 State of emergency. ... (d) A state of emergency and a local state of emergency shall terminate automatically sixty days after the issuance of a proclamation of a state of emergency or local state of emergency, respectively, or by a separate proclamation of the governor or mayor, whichever occurs first. [L 2014, c 111, pt of §2; am L 2019, c 214, §5]"

"What is stopping the Legislature from holding the governor to the law as written?"

I never heard back.

Nishimoto's bill died in committee without debate.

It did pass in the Senate, 24-1, so at least one of our two houses remembered why it exists.

### ► WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Pacific Business News welcomes letters from readers. We reserve the right to edit for space and/or clarity. All letters must be typewritten or emailed and include the writer's name, address and phone number. Mail to: **Pacific Business News, 737 Bishop St., Suite 1550, Honolulu, HI 96813**. Send via the Pacific Business News website at [PacificBusinessNews.com](https://PacificBusinessNews.com). Submissions become the property of PBN and may not be published or used in any other medium.



# EXECUTIVE INSIGHT

## KARA KUSUNOKI

Executive director,  
Read to Me  
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COURTESY READ TO ME INTERNATIONAL

# Nonprofit builds up reading aloud skill

BY KELSEY KUKAUA  
kkukaua@bizjournals.com

Kara Kusunoki first became familiar with local nonprofit Read to Me International at a young age with an early love of reading herself, and has now come full circle as the organization's executive director.

In her career, she's worked closely with many families in Hawaii in education and had always been drawn to the organization's mission to share the love and joy of reading aloud through children's language and literacy development programming.

"We like to call our children, 'our children,' because it's a collective responsibility," Kusunoki told Pacific Business News.

Prior to this role, Kusunoki was a public school teacher and moved over to the nonprofit sector more than 10 years ago. She joined Read to Me International

three years ago to continue to "spark joy in reading" and build a strong foundation of learning for children up to the age of 9. Her day-to-day responsibilities include meeting with partners, fundraising and managing the team of four staff, among other duties.

Kusunoki said fundraising changed slightly in the last year, when the organization couldn't hold its annual dinner, but received a boost from individual, corporate and community donors. According to Read to Me International's 2020 annual report, its total revenue and support came in close to \$400,000.

Although overall revenue was down because of the economic impacts of Covid-19 pandemic, the nonprofit increased family participation from Neighbor Islands and the Mainland with its shift to a virtual setting, while the remaining in-person activities were redesigned to follow social distancing guidelines.

Existing programs for students to practice reading aloud, as well as parent programs geared toward "wholistic caregiving to raising healthy children" continued uninterrupted, she said. To eliminate cost barriers, select offerings were held for free.

Amid Covid, a new immediate need arose once many Hawaii schools ceased meeting or switched to online learning.

"There was an issue with the kids connecting and engaging in a virtual environment, especially for the younger and more tactile, hands-on learners," Kusunoki said. "One priority in the last year was keeping kids from falling behind and finding new ways to interact in their development."



**What sets your organization apart?** We have the privilege of living in a state

that respects and honors Native Hawaiian language and culture, so we use that in our protocols

and the books we read. Having our children understand the value for caring for the land is also an important dimension. Our primary language is English, but we use books with a global view to try to include text and literature students can see themselves in, which will help them develop skills, such as empathy, to grow into a good human being.

**What difference do you hope to make?** On an annual basis, we service roughly 7,000 individuals, including all family members. This year, we plan to expand and make virtual programming more dynamic. Our philosophy is that parents are children's first teachers in life with immense power and influence to shape a child's life. We are bridging the learning that's happening in home with at school.

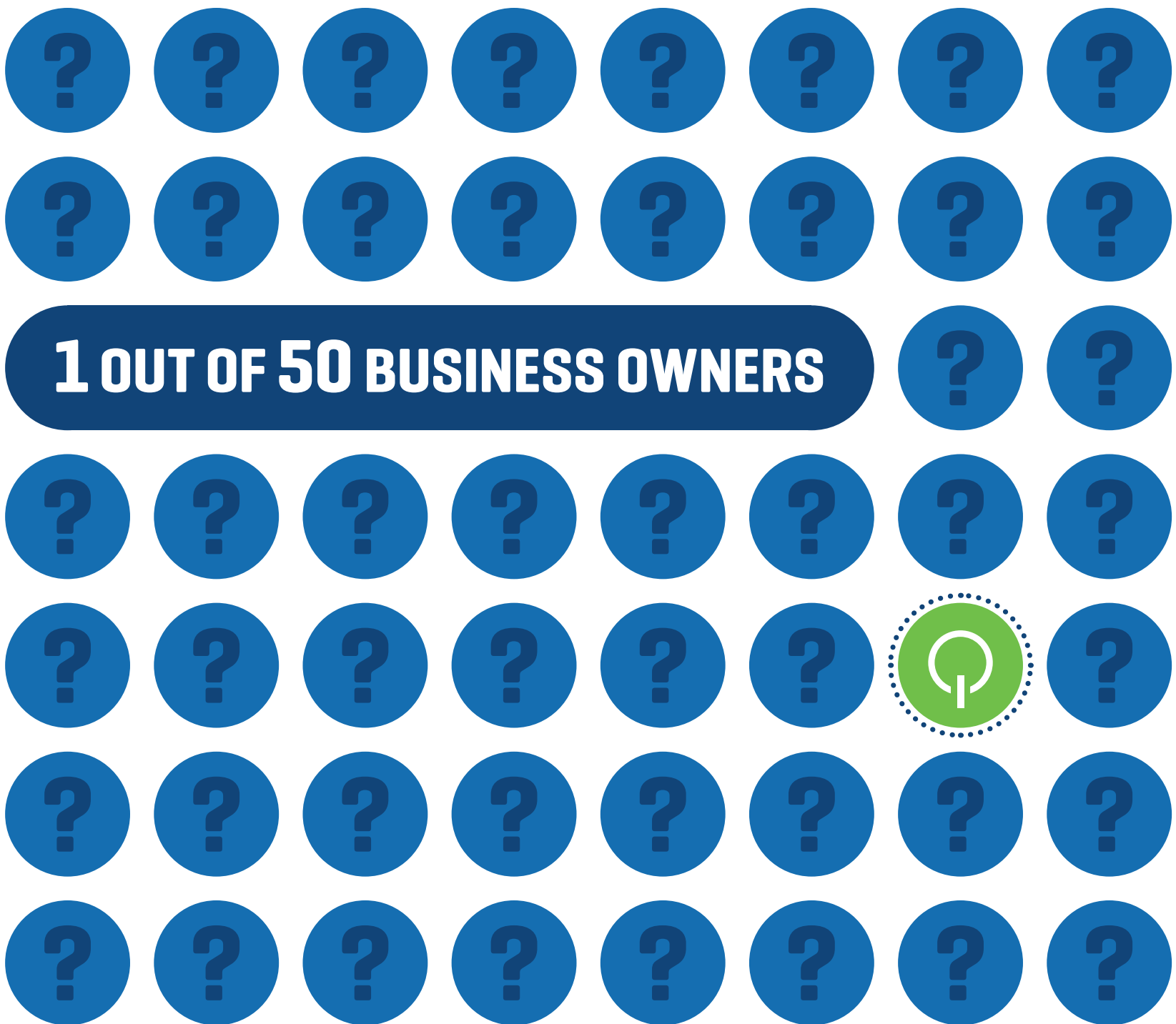
**What's been the dynamic of your board in the last year?** Our 14 board members spent a lot of time with me assessing both the financial and programmatic implications of the pandemic. They developed a strategy around how to address potential shortcomings with programming and the increased cost of running things, like mailing out supplies and purchasing licenses and fees. It came naturally to them to want to step up and do what they could, based on their subject member expertise. They were more engaged to take action.

**What's the best advice you'd offer to other leaders?** To make positive change, you have to experience and see it for yourself; you have to live an experience in order to understand an experience. You have to test out what works and what doesn't work because things are changing, especially now.

**What do Hawaii nonprofits need most now?** The early education spheres in Hawaii are battling through some tough issues and questions and there is a lot of potential for movement to happen. We're excited to be a part of that conversation. Hawaii is unique in that we're so small, we achieve more and faster.

**What keeps you up at night?** That changes every night, but I'd say the reoccurring challenge about how to address and ensure all our keiki can access and receive high quality education in home, at school and in the community.





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