



UCHINANCHU

THE VOICE OF THE HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION

www.huoao.org

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Strong and lasting
connections





President's Message

Haisai Gusuyo!

ALTHOUGH IT IS ALREADY JUNE, it feels like yesterday that I was able to participate in the many meaningful events and experiences since my last newsletter. The past several months have been both educational and heartwarming, and I am filled with gratitude.

Our Aisatsu Tour to Okinawa was an opportunity to strengthen the connection between Okinawa and Hawai'i, something that continues to define who we are as Uchinanchu. Our meetings in Okinawa made one thing very clear: these relationships remain strong, and there is genuine excitement to continue growing them together.

Founded in 1951, HUOA represents the vision of ten founding clubs and generations of leaders who worked to promote, preserve, and perpetuate Okinawan culture in Hawai'i. For 75 years, our community has shared its culture through music, dance, and events like the Okinawan Festival while building lasting relationships grounded in 'ohana. My theme this year is *Chimugukuru*, to polish, to protect, and to be proud to be Uchinanchu. It reminds us that culture is not simply inherited; it is cared for, strengthened, and passed on. In October, we are planning two separate programs around the Naha Tsunahiki: a Leadership Tour and a Heritage Tour. The Leadership Tour focuses on developing future leaders. Participants will take part in workshops, meet with leaders in government and business, and deepen their understanding of Okinawa today. Participants will also visit important cultural and historical sites such as Shuri Castle and the Okinawa Peace Memorial Park—places that ground us in history, resilience, and remembrance. The Heritage Tour offers a more personal journey, helping participants reconnect with their roots, learn their history, and build relationships with family and communities in Okinawa.

As we look ahead to 2026, our 75th Anniversary is more than a milestone—it is a moment to recommit ourselves to our values, our culture, and our community.

To carry forward *Chimugukuru*—with heart, with pride, and with purpose. Because the next 75 years begin with us.

WARMEST ALOHA,

BOB SHIROMA

UCHINANCHU

Ippee Niffee Deebiru... Mahalo!

Uchinanchu is our voice – the voice of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association, its members, and our “home”: the Hawaii Okinawa Center. By sharing information and experiences, *Uchinanchu* connects us as a family, dedicated to preserving our Okinawan cultural heritage. Donations and advertising help offset publishing costs—Mahalo and *Ippee Niffee Deebiru* to our donors for supporting *Uchinanchu*.

Uchinanchu newsletter donors from March 1 to April 30, 2026

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- HUOA President Bob Shiroma
- Editor Caro Higa
- Designer Erika Kim Yamane

ADVERTISING INFORMATION

Uchinanchu reaches over 8,000 households. For advertising rates and more information visit www.huoa.org, contact us at info@huoa.org, or 808.676.5400.

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2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Year at a Glance!

July 26	Hui Makaala Fashion Show, Hilton Hawaiian Village
TBD	International Hari Boat Festival, Wailoa State Rec. Area
Sept 5-6	Okinawan Festival, Hawaii Convention Center
Sept 19	Autumn Okinawa Dance Matsuri, Legacy I/II
Oct 10	Maui Okinawa Festival, Maui Mall
Mid-Oct	HUOA Heritage Tour, Okinawa
Mid-Oct	HUOA Leadership Tour, Okinawa
Oct 29	Uchinanchu no Hi, Legacy I/II
Nov 1	Kugani Warabi, Legacy I/II
Nov 8	Legacy Award, Sheraton Waikiki
Nov 28-29	Winter Craft Fair, Legacy I/II

Events are subject to change.
Visit www.huoa.org/events for more information

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I am available to respond 24/7 via email!

ON THE COVER

Bob and Frances visited Governor Tamaki
during the Aisatsu Tour

Please Kokua

Production costs for Uchinanchu have escalated due to increases in
circulation, labeling expenses and postage. Your contribution to help defray
some of the expenses is greatly appreciated.

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Please include this form with your donation and send to:

HUOA Newsletter Fund, 94-587 Ukee Street, Waipahu, Hawaii 96797

HUOA Aisatsu to Okinawa

BY BOB SHIROMA

I **N APRIL, FRANCES KUBA SENSEI** and I traveled to Okinawa on Aisatsu (meet-and-greet) visit from April 17–26. Altogether, Sensei scheduled over 35 meetings, allowing us to meet with government officials, education leaders, media representatives, and members of the business and Geino communities to share HUOA initiatives and plans for 2026.

More importantly, the visit reaffirmed the strong and lasting connection between Hawai'i and Okinawa. Through every meeting and gathering, we were reminded of the deep bonds of friendship, culture, and mutual support that continue to unite our communities across generations and oceans.

AISATSU HIGHLIGHTS

One of the highlights of our trip was attending a wonderful dinner at the residence of Consul General Ou. Serving as the Principal Officer of the U.S. Consulate General in Okinawa, Consul General Ou graciously welcomed our delegation with exceptional hospitality and aloha spirit.

Lively fellowship and camaraderie added to an already memorable evening. Everyone in attendance deeply appreciated the delicious cuisine, engaging conversation, and warm fellowship. Among the guests were Myles Nakasone, Naohisa Takakura, Daniel Chinen, and representatives from OPG, OHK, and the producer and writer of *550 Pigs from the Sea*.

Consul General Ou proved to be a terrific host, taking time to personally engage with everyone while sharing insightful stories and experiences from a distinguished



Visited Kyuzo Toyama's Statue with Kin Mayor and staff



NHK headquarters



At a Nishihara Town carehome



Second to the left, Speaker of the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, Kyoki Nakagawa



Department of Education

career in diplomacy. The evening was both meaningful and memorable, further strengthening the bonds of friendship and connection during our time in Okinawa.

HUOA AISATSU TOUR GATHERING AT WARYU DINING KURAMUTWU

A special mahalo goes to Kurt Nagamine, our “local” host in Okinawa, who annually hosts the HUOA Aisatsu Tour gathering. We thoroughly enjoyed an evening of fellowship, delicious cuisine at Waryu Dining Kuramutwu with Chef Makoto Kinjo, and outstanding entertainment.



Okinawa Prefectural Library



Visit to the University of the Ryukyus



Meeting with Mr. Takakura and family



Radio Okinawa



Okinawa TV headquarters

Special mahalo as well to Keiko Miyagi Sensei of Udui Haru; mother-and-son performers Emiko Shimabukuro and Taichiro Naka; and our very own Kenton Odo and Wreyn Waniya for making the evening so memorable.

UNIVERSITY OF ARTS AND MEIO UNIVERSITY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The business at hand also included meetings with Ryukyu University, Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts, and Meio University to renew and extend Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), respectively.

SPECIAL THANKS

I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the aloha and Uchinanchu hospitality extended to us throughout our visit. I especially want to mahalo my cousin, Chiaki Chibana, who safely provided personal transportation from meeting to meeting while making the journey enjoyable and fun, arigatou gozaimasu, Chiaki! Chiaki is also a member of the Okinawa Hawai'i Kyokai (OHK), which continues to strongly support Hawai'i under the leadership of OHK President Takao Kadekaru.

A quick shout-out as well to Kathy Ota, Frances Sensei's sister, who was in charge of the unexpected and handled every issue with grace and professionalism. Also, Yuuki Gowgiel, Frances Sensei's niece, and Daniel Chinen with their help with transportation. Arigatou!

And, of course, my wife Mimi did what she does best, keeping me focused and reminding me why I do what I do. Love you.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

A lunch invitation at Jimmy's with Seiichiro and his wife, Naomi Inamine. While meeting with executives at Okinawa TV Station, we also met ArinKurin, a popular comedy duo in Okinawa.

While meeting with Ryubo Holdings President, Tomohiko Higa, we had a chance meeting with Eibun Nakamura, a well-known soba personality.

A visit to Ikeda En Nishihara, a senior citizen home, where we had the pleasant surprise of meeting a relative of Jason Andaniya.

AND, IN CLOSING,

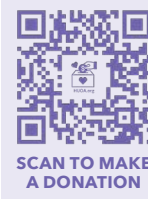
The Aisatsu visit was both productive and meaningful, strengthening old friendships while creating new connections that will continue to benefit the relationship between Hawai'i and Okinawa. The spirit of *Chimugukuru* was felt throughout the journey, reminding us that although separated by an ocean, our hearts and communities remain closely connected. My heartfelt aloha to Frances Sensei together with Caro Higa, Mikiko Nakada and Misa Uyehara who did an amazing job organizing and coordinating the visit. *Ippee Niffee Deebiru* for a job well done! 🙏

SCAN THE QR CODE
FOR MORE PHOTOS:





THANK YOU TO THE MANY members, friends, and businesses that have responded to our Annual Giving Campaign. Since November 2025, we have received 783 donations, representing \$163,290.17. We are deeply grateful for the confidence you have shown us. Let's continue embracing the theme "Chimugukuru – Polish, Protect and Be Proud", looking forward to new promises and challenges. Through your continued contributions, we can have successful cultural programs and upkeep our home, the Hawaii Okinawa Center. Thank you again for your support. *Ippee Nifee Deebiru!*



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Kahuushi, Heartfelt appreciation

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Visit by Vancouver Okinawa-ken Yuaikai Vice President

HUOA PRESIDENT BOB SHIROMA HOSTED a lunch meeting for Vancouver Okinawa-ken Yuaikai Vice President Asuka Kusano and four accompanying family members on May 15, 2026. Shiroma took them on a tour of the Hawaii Okinawa Center and explained its history before serving them a delicious lunch.

Over lunch, HUOA attendees learned more about the Uchinanchu communities in Canada. The Yuaikai, Vancouver's Okinawa kenjinkai, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2025. Kusano is also a member of the Canada Okinawa Federation, the umbrella organization for Canadian Okinawa kenjinkai groups.

Accompanying Asuka were her mother (Joyce Shimabukuro Kusano) from Canada, her mother's brother and sister (Bobby and Doris Shimabukuro) from Katsuren (Okinawa), and her cousin (Tomoe, Bobby's daughter) from Yokohama. This trip was especially meaningful for Joyce and Bobby, as they were born here in Hawai'i before their father moved the family to Okinawa in the 1950s, while they were still children.

They are grateful to Bob Shiroma and Caro Higa for organizing the meeting that included some present and past HUOA officers and staff. They look forward to seeing everyone again at the Worldwide Uchinanchu Taikai in 2027.



Vice Governor Tsuguyoshi Miyagi Visits the Hawaii Okinawa Center

ON MAY 22, 2026, members of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA) had the honor of welcoming Vice Governor Tsuguyoshi Miyagi to the Hawaii Okinawa Center.

Vice Governor Miyagi was in Hawai'i to attend the Hawaii-Japan Summit as a guest speaker but graciously took the time to visit both the Hawaii Okinawa Center (HOC) and Hawaii Okinawa Plaza (HOP) with members of his delegation. During his visit, he shared that this was his first trip to Hawai'i and spoke warmly about relatives living in Hawai'i. He also asked if HUOA could assist in tracing his Hawai'i family roots.

Since then, a research team has been organized to assist with his request. The team is chaired by Kanako Yamakawa and Jackie Toma (OGSH). Representing the Nago Club, Vice Governor Miyagi's ancestral hometown club, were President Jennifer Yamanuha, Jane Martin, and Alicia Rogan. During the visit, Jane Martin and Alicia Rogan presented gifts on behalf of the



Nago Club and offered their support in the family history research effort.

A special mahalo goes to Maurice Yamasato and Chris Shimabukuro for assisting with the Vice Governor’s tours of the Hawaii Okinawa Center and Hawaii Okinawa Plaza. Maurice shared the history and significance of the Hawaii Okinawa Center and Takakura Garden, while Chris helped guide the delegation through the Hawaii Okinawa Plaza presentation.

The gathering was attended by members from many HUOA clubs, as well as several past presidents. Past Presidents in attendance included Ed Kuba, Maurice Yamasato, John Tasato, Randy Kuba, Gladys Tokunaga-Asao, Rodney Kohagura, Jon Itomura, Norman Nakasone, Chris Shimabukuro, Tom Yamamoto, Jo Ige, Pat Miyashiro, and Frances Kuba.

Following the tour, members gathered for lunch and fel-

lowship at the Chaya, where friendships were strengthened and wonderful memories were created. During lunch, Ed Kuba shared remarks highlighting the history, accomplishments, and contributions of Okinawans in Hawai’i, providing the Vice Governor and his delegation with a meaningful perspective on the Okinawan community’s enduring legacy in the Islands.

A special highlight of the luncheon was a heartfelt Kariie led by Randy Kuba, who also generously donated a bottles of Awamori for the occasion. His gesture added to the spirit of fellowship and celebration that characterized the day’s gathering.

Special mahalo also to Jo Ige, Caro Higa, Clayton Uza, Taryn Hisamoto, Gainor Miyashiro, Zina Nagamine and Cynthia Uza, and the many volunteers and members whose efforts helped make the gathering such a warm and memorable occasion. 🍷



Okinawa Genealogical Society of Hawaii

IF YOU ATTENDED THE LAST TWO Okinawan Festivals and stopped by the OGSH booth, you probably noticed the striking red gate welcoming visitors. That gate was custom-built by Robbie Tsue of Wahiawa, thanks to a vision from Donna Nakamura, who wanted guests to experience a grand entrance, and Chase Takenaka, who knew exactly who could bring it to life.

Robbie was given a handful of reference photos—most notably the Shureimon and the replica found inside Naha Airport. His background in crafting props for marching band performances proved invaluable. Because marching band props must withstand weather, travel, and quick assembly, Robbie immediately understood that the gate needed to be lightweight, durable, and easy to transport. Within seconds of reviewing the photos, he had already visualized the materials required.

The columns were built from cement tubes, while the curved akagawara roof tiles were made by cutting the thick cardboard cores found inside rug rolls in half. White backer rod was used to mimic the caulking lines between roof tiles. The sanshin motif on the moyō was hand-drawn by a high school art teacher from Maehara Senior High School in Okinawa.

Work began in early August with a hard deadline at the end of the month to debut at the 2024 Festival. Countless hours of cutting, sanding, and painting resulted in a beautiful showpiece for the OGSH booth. We named it “Gateway to Okinawa”, a fitting title that reflects our mission to help Nikkei Uchinanchu reconnect with their roots.

On festival day, the gate was transported to the Hawai‘i Convention Center in a sprinter van. With four people, setup took only about twenty minutes—another testament to Robbie’s thoughtful, practical design.

Preserve Your Okinawan Heritage – Share Your Story

SHORT STORIES - VOLUME 8, produced by the Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii is in the works! Here’s an opportunity to share personal stories to promote knowledge of Okinawan history for future generations.

The Volume 8 project is chaired by Karen Oshiro with a committee of six OGSH members who are now seeking stories from individuals to publish this book by the middle of 2028. The final deadline for stories is targeted for the 2026 Okinawa Festival and may be turned in up to and at the Festival. The sooner the better, for consideration for publication. Selection, editing and production will then proceed for final publication.

Every Okinawan has a story worth telling. Maybe it’s your story, maybe it’s a relative’s, but all contribute to the tapestry of the life of Okinawans in Hawaii. It is the project’s intent to preserve stories and related photos of local Okinawan life past and present for future generations. Stories need not be entire life stories, but snippets of life unique to local Okinawans. Stories will be limited to 3-5 pages, double-spaced, in 12-pt. font.

Audio stories may also be submitted for transcription and editing by the project staff.

All contributors will be asked to sign a Consent and Legal Release Agreement since the final stories will be published in a bound volume that will be offered for sale to the general public. It is anticipated that widespread publication could support education and research by those pursuing more knowledge about Okinawans in Hawaii, past and present, and personal stories can be a valuable resource. Because of the wide dissemination, privacy cannot be guaranteed, so all submissions should have the approval of those mentioned within the stories.

Everyone interested in sharing a story may contact oshirok@gmail.com. for links to pertinent preliminary documents and more in-depth guidelines. Please note Short Story Vol.8 and your last name in the subject line.

CLUB PICNICS LIST

Date	Time	Club Name	Location	Contact
7/11/2026	9:30am	Aza Yogi Doshi Kai and Bito Doshi Kai	Ala Moana Beach Park, Area 9	Shea Gutierrez (Aza Yogi): 808.499.9812, kiku568@msn.com, Kylie Sato (Bito): 808.772.9618, bitoclubhawaii@gmail.com
8/2/2026	9am	Chatan-Kadena Chojin Kai	Ala Moana Park, Ewa Side	Eric Nitta: ChatanKadena@gmail.com
7/12/2026	9am	Club Motobu and Itoman Shijin Kai	Ala Moana Park, High Rise Area #28A & 28B	Mavis Gushiken (Club Motobu): 808.222.5183, mavisg808@gmail.com, Shari Tamashiro (Itoman): pigsfromthesea@gmail.com
7/11/2026	9am	Gaza Yonagusuku Doshi Kai and Nishihara Chojin Kai	Ala Moana Beach Park	Cynthia Arnold (Nishihara): 808.221.8345, ctgoya@gmail.com
6/28/2026	8am	Ginowan Shijin Kai	Ala Moana Park	Garrett Iha: 808.927.1339, giha001@yahoo.com
7/12/2026	9am	Gushichan Sonjin Kai	Magic Island Picnic Area 31	Derek Uesato: 808.780.8427
7/5/2026	10am	Hawaii Sashiki-Chinen Doshi Kai	Ala Moana Park	Lynn Nakamura: nakamural017@hawaii.rr.com, 808.352.1615
7/19/2026	9am	Hawaii Shuri-Naha Club	Ala Moana Regional Park, The Risers	Greg Kuwazaki: gmkuwazaki@gmail.com
7/26/2026	9am	Kin Chojin Kai	Ala Moana Park, Picnic Site 14	Brian Ikehara: 808.384.4791
7/25/2026	10am	Kohala Okinawa Kenjin Kai	Kamehameha Park Hisaoka Gym	Ted Matsuda: 808.756.5894
7/25/2026	9am	Nakagusuku Sonjin Kai	Kapiolani Regional Park, Areas 12,13 (Paki Ave side)	Denise Liu: 808.284.9793, deniliu@hotmail.com
7/19/2026	9am	Okinawa City-Goeku Son	Kapiolani Park, Area 12	Stephanie Higa: 808.255.9686 stephiga@gmail.com
7/19/2026	8am	Oroku Azajin Club	Magic Island	Darren Chun: andorah@hawaiiintel.net
7/19/2026	10am	Tamagusuku Club	Kapiolani Park, Areas 4 & 5 (Near the Mauka Tennis Courts)	Ford Chinen: 808.753.0507
8/2/2026	9:30am	Tomigusuku Sonjin Kai	Ala Moana Park, Section 9 & 11	Eugene Kaneshiro: ek4fisherman@hawaiiintel.net
7/26/2026	9am	Urasoe Shijin Kai	Ala Moana Park, Area 9	Larry Nishihara: 808.221.3593
7/26/2026	9am	Yomitan Club	Ala Moana Regional Park Area #8	Lea Ann Kakimoto: 808.384.724
7/19/2026	9am	Yonashiro Chojin Kai	Ala Moana Park, Area 9	Gainor Miyahiro: gmiyashiro777@yahoo.com

Clubs Shinnen Enkai

Chatan Kadena



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**MASA'S CAFETERIA
FEBRUARY 28, 2026**

Gushichan Son Jin Kai



Hawaii Shuri-Naha



Hawaii Shuri-Naha



Hawaii Shuri-Naha



Clubs Shinnen Enkai

Itoman Shijin Kai and Club Motobu



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CLUB NEWS

Oroku Azajin Club

BY NATALIE TERUYA

THIS SPRING, THE OROKU AZAJIN

Club came together for our first book club, meeting three times in May and June to read *Born Again Uchinanchu* by Karleen Chinnen. What made the experience special wasn't just the book itself, but the people in the room. Many of the names in the chapters are Oroku Aza members — our parents, grandparents, friends, and family — so stories that were already meaningful became even richer as memories, small details, and personal reflections were shared. We were also grateful to welcome special guests Karleen Chinnen, Joyce Chinnen, Ed Kuba, Bob Nakasone, and John Tasato, whose presence added warmth, color, and depth to every conversation.

For me, *Born Again Uchinanchu* was a reminder that the HUOA we see today didn't simply appear. It was nurtured and grew into the organization we celebrate, in this 75th Anniversary year, because so many people cared enough to give their time, their energy, and pieces of their hearts to keep it moving forward.

It also helped me see being "born again" as a journey — one shaped by curiosity, openness of heart, courage, and community. As we look ahead, I find myself wondering what stories we will one day add to this legacy — and how we'll continue to carry it forward. *Chibariyo!*

If you would like to start your own *Born Again Uchinanchu* book club, you can see how we organize the meetings at www.orokuazajinhawaii.org/activities/born-again-uchinanchu-book-club.





After 50 years, the legacy continues

Paranku Club of Hawaii

IN 1976, SENSEI JOSHO MATSUMOTO from Okinawa, was invited to teach Eisa dance (folk dancing with music, singing, and drums) as a one-credit course during the University of Hawaii summer session. Matsumoto Sensei taught his style of Eisa using the Paranku, a small hand-held drum. In 1978, some of the original summer session students, along with other interested individuals, wanted to continue learning Eisa dancing. They invited Matsumoto Sensei back to Hawaii to teach them privately.

Eisa was traditionally an all-male dance form, but this group of continuing students was primarily made up of women. Matsumoto Sensei agreed to teach them, and they eventually organized themselves into becoming one of the first Okinawan drumming groups in Hawaii. Most importantly, they were one of the first Okinawan drumming groups made up of women.



Josho Matsumoto Sensei with the Paranku group

Violet Ogawa was one of the original students, and she became the lead sensei in Hawaii. She was assisted by eight women who had also joined the group. In 1990, these women were recognized for their efforts and were awarded certificates appointing them as assistant instructors. These women were Betty Doi, Lillian Hamasaki, Patsy Koki, Catherine Matsuda, Betsy Miyahira, Jane Miyashiro, Jane Sakima, and Shizu Toguchi.

As the group began performing publicly, their popularity grew. They received requests to perform at events such as birthdays, weddings, and other celebrations. Realizing that Eisa was performed only during Obon season and wanting to perform throughout the year, the founding members asked Matsumoto Sensei for permission to call themselves the Paranku Club. The name was later changed to its current name, The Paranku Club of Hawaii.

In the early days, the Club performed for various Okinawan organizations in several cities across the United States. The group was also invited to entertain at several festivals and events in Canada and Okinawa.

In 1988, a significant event happened. The Paranku Club of Hawaii was invited to participate in an Eisa festival in Okinawa City. As stated earlier, by tradition, only men performed Eisa dances. However, when the Hawaii group arrived at the stadium, the Okinawan audience



The Senseis - Eiko Sakai, Jane Tateyama, Lillian Hamasaki, Pat Koki, Violet Ogawa, Shizu Toguchi

CLUB NEWS

was shocked to see that all the dancers were women and older women at that. This started a trend as more native Uchinanchu senior women began to take part in Paranku and Eisa dances. Today, there are no age or gender restrictions in Okinawan drumming.

Since the group’s beginning 50 years ago, the Club has displayed its versatility by marching in many parades and entertaining at conferences, conventions, community festivals, and business grand opening celebrations. One year, the Club opened the UH baseball season by performing on the field of the Les Murakami Stadium. The Club has also worked with the educational community, teaching students a Paranku routine for the school’s May Day program.

Although in the past, there were groups on Maui, Kauai, the Big Island, and Oahu, today, the Pearl City group is the main active branch. The Club continues to promote community service by performing at nursing homes, adult day care centers, senior groups, and other community organizations.



Performing at a Senior Club

Through the energetic dancing and the beating of the drums, Paranku unites the performers and their audiences with the Uchinanchu spirit.

Paranku practices are held every week at the Brene Harimoto Manana District Park. The members range in age to 90+ years young. The Paranku Club of Hawaii is open to Everyone, regardless of age, gender, or experience. Our goal is to perpetuate the legacy of our dedicated Senseis and share the Paranku style of drumming. 🇺🇸

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A Life of Purpose, Service, and Vision: Remembering Gregg Hiroshi Takara

BY RANDY KUBA

THE OKINAWAN COMMUNITY in Hawai'i recently lost a respected leader, devoted family man, and visionary with the passing of Gregg Hiroshi Takara on March 27, 2026, at the age of 64. While his passing leaves a deep void among family, friends, and colleagues, Gregg's life stands as a powerful reminder of the values that have guided the Okinawan people for generations: humility, perseverance, responsibility, compassion, and service to others.

Gregg Takara lived a life grounded in purpose. Known professionally for his dedication and expertise in financial management, he earned the respect of many through his disciplined work ethic, calm leadership, and steady integrity. During his distinguished 27-year career with Morgan Stanley, Gregg became known not only for his professionalism, but also for the genuine care and guidance he extended to the people around him.

Yet beyond his professional accomplishments, those closest to Gregg will remember him most for his deep commitment to family, community, culture, and future generations. Like many Okinawan families who settled in Hawai'i, Gregg understood the sacrifices made by those who came before him. He carried within him the enduring spirit of the Okinawan immigrant generation, a spirit shaped by resilience, humility, and hope. Despite hardship, discrimination, and uncertainty, Okinawan pioneers persevered with dignity and determination so their children and grandchildren could build brighter futures. Gregg embodied those same values throughout his life.

Family remained at the center of Gregg's world. He believed strongly in caring for loved ones, building stability, and creating opportunities for future generations. Friends often described him as thoughtful, dependable, and steady, a man who never sought recognition for himself, but instead found fulfillment in helping others succeed. His quiet strength reflected the character of many Okinawan men and women whose actions spoke louder than words.

Gregg's leadership extended far beyond the professional world. Within the Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association, he served as President of WUB Hawai'i and later became President of the WUB Network, representing 16



countries worldwide. In these roles, Gregg helped strengthen connections among Okinawan descendants across the globe while promoting cultural understanding, education, business collaboration, and community advancement.

He understood the importance of preserving Okinawan identity while embracing the opportunities of the future. Gregg believed deeply in the Okinawan concept of *yuimaaru*, helping one another and moving forward

together, and saw it as a guiding principle not only for the Okinawan community, but for society as a whole.

One of Gregg's most meaningful contributions was his involvement in helping organize and strengthen the WUB Foundation. He recognized that education and mentorship are essential to empowering younger generations. Gregg believed that when communities invest in their youth, they invest in the future itself. Through his efforts, he helped lay the groundwork for opportunities that encouraged students to pursue leadership, education, and personal growth. His vision extended beyond individual achievement; he believed in lifting communities together and building bridges between cultures through understanding and mutual support.

In today's fast-moving world, where success is often measured by titles, wealth, or recognition, Gregg's life reminds us that true success is measured differently. It is reflected in the lives we touch, the people we encourage, and the example we leave behind for others to follow.

Many admired Gregg because he represented balance. He worked tirelessly in his professional career, cared deeply for his family, and still found time to serve the community. He understood that leadership does not always need to be loud or visible. Often, the strongest leaders are the ones quietly building foundations behind the scenes while others stand in the spotlight.

His passing has caused many to reflect not only on his accomplishments, but also on the importance of living with intention and compassion. The Okinawan people have long been known for strong family ties, humility, and a deep sense of community. Gregg's life reflected those values beautifully within modern Hawai'i. He demonstrated that success and kindness can coexist, and that professionalism and compassion are not separate paths, but complementary ones.

As the community gathers to celebrate Gregg's life, there is growing appreciation for the example he leaves behind.

Younger generations can look on his journey as proof that one person can make a meaningful impact without seeking fame or attention. Through sincerity, discipline, and unwavering commitment to others, Gregg created a legacy that will continue long after his passing.

The loss of a respected community member is never easy. Yet in Hawai'i, especially within the Okinawan community, we believe in celebrating the life a person lived. We honor their journey, their contributions, and the relationships they nurtured along the way. We gather not only to grieve, but also to support one another and carry forward the values they represented.

Gregg Hiroshi Takara's life was one of humility, vision,

strength, and service. His contributions to family, community, education, and the worldwide Okinawan network will not be forgotten. The seeds he planted through his leadership and generosity will continue to grow through the countless lives he inspired.

To Gregg Takara, we express our deepest gratitude. Thank you for your guidance, your humility, and your unwavering belief in helping others rise. Your legacy will continue to inspire the Okinawan community in Hawai'i and throughout the world for generations to come.

May his family find comfort in the love and support surrounding them, and may Gregg Hiroshi Takara rest in peace knowing that his life truly made a difference. 🌺

A Legacy of Responsibility and Connection: Remembering George Ariyoshi

BY JODIE CHING

WITH THE RECENT PASSING OF

GEORGE ARIYOSHI at the age of 100, Hawai'i reflects on the life of a leader whose legacy is deeply rooted in service, heritage, and community. As the first Japanese American governor in the United States, his rise was not only a personal achievement, but a milestone for generations of immigrant families in Hawai'i who had long worked quietly and diligently to build their communities.

Ariyoshi often reflected a strong sense of *sekinin*—a deep responsibility to serve others and to care for the greater good. This value shaped his leadership and underscored his belief that public service was not just a role, but an obligation to uplift the people he represented. He understood that his work carried meaning not only for himself, but for the wider Japanese American community, including the Okinawan community, whose identity and contributions are deeply woven into Hawai'i's history.

His impact on the Okinawan community is perhaps most enduringly reflected in his role in establishing the Hawai'i–Okinawa sister-state relationship in 1985. This historic partnership created a lasting bridge between Hawai'i and Okinawa, strengthening connections grounded in shared history, migration, and cultural



exchange. Over the decades, this relationship has expanded to include collaboration in education, business, culture, and innovation.

The significance of this milestone was reflected by the 1985 Hawaii United Okinawa Association president, Ryokichi "Rick" Higashionna, who recalled: "Much effort went into having the sister-states relationship. Okinawan communities and Okinawan descendants of Hawai'i state senators and representatives worked diligently to make the sister-states happen.

Governor George Ariyoshi and Governor Junji Nishime signed the sister-state documents at Governor Ariyoshi's office at 2 p.m. on June 14, 1985."

The Hawaii United Okinawa Association has played a vital role in nurturing these ties, and in 2015, proudly recognized Ariyoshi as a HUOA Legacy Award Honoree. This honor reflected not only his distinguished public service, but also his commitment to strengthening and uplifting the Okinawan community in Hawai'i and beyond.

Beyond formal agreements, Ariyoshi's leadership affirmed the importance of cultural identity in shaping Hawai'i's future. During times of economic challenge and rapid growth, he remained grounded in values of balance, stewardship, and responsibility—principles that resonate strongly within the Okinawan spirit.

George Ariyoshi's legacy lives on not only in the history of Hawai'i, but in the enduring relationships between communities. For the Okinawan community, his life's work stands as a reminder that leadership rooted in heritage can build bridges across generations and across oceans.



What Did Uchinaanchu Learn From Hosting the Micronesian Voyaging Society?

BY KOUTARO YUUJI, NISHIBARU, UCHINAA

ON APRIL 11TH, a navigation canoe of the Micronesian Voyaging Society, Alingano Maisu, arrived at Yonabaru Marina and departed from Ginowan Marina for Guahan (Guam) on the 22nd. The captain of the Maisu, Cesario Sewralur, inherited ancestral voyaging knowledge from his father, Mau Piailug, who helped Hawaiians revitalize their navigation culture and voyaged with them to Tahiti in 1976. Before this achievement, the mainstream and academic worlds, which sought to justify their colonial rule over the Pacific, believed the people had drifted to their islands, denying the people's oral histories of their ancestors' navigation legacy. It is important to remember that the revival of Hōkūle'a is part of the Hawaiian Renaissance, alongside 'ōlelo Hawai'i, the Hawaiian music movement, Kaho'olawe, and many protests for Native Hawaiians' rights, which boosted Hawaiian pride. Each aspect relates to the history and lives of the Ruuchuu Uchinaa, so our people had to understand the significance of hosting the MVS members very well.

As a similar event to the visit of the MVS and Maisu, Hōkūle'a visited Uchinaa in 2007, and Uchinaanchu performed Yeisaa and Hula to welcome the crew members and the canoe from Hawai'i. At that time, our people might have felt it was the proper way; however, Yeisaa was practiced only during Shichigwachi, in July on the lunar calendar, when our ancestors came back from Niraikanai, and Hula is, needless to say, a Hawaiian culture, not ours. I am not against contemporary-styled Yeisaa at all, as long as people recognize the authentic ones and understand why our ancestors practiced it. Still, we need to think about what the guests want to see and experience, not whatever we want to show. Whether it's the revitalization of Hawaiian voyaging or the perpetuation of the unbroken chain of ancestral

knowledge the MVS carries, the important idea is restoring the continuity of Indigenous identity and ancestors' legacy, no matter what the Western world and colonizers say about civilization. Accordingly, rather than what we think is flashy and more entertaining to others, we have to focus on the meaning, background, and context of each event in which we present our culture.

Ukwanshin Kabudan's co-director, Eric Nakamura-Nakamutu Wada shinshii, flew from Hawai'i to Uchinaa to organize and supervise the welcoming and send-off ceremony with traditional ways. With his knowledge and guidance, we conducted the ceremonies with our ancestors' language, chants, music, and dance. As the Maisu approached the land from afar, we started chanting and hitting teeku until the crew members got off the boat and sat down. Then, sanshin and kuuchoo players sang *Kajadifuu/かぎやで風節* with the lyric: *Ishinagu nu ishi nu ufushi naru madin, ukakibushemishori waushuganashi*, and I performed Meekata with a boo. This lyric symbolizes unity among people, whereas the more commonly known lyric expresses joy and is always sung at celebratory events. Then, the ceremony moved on to the offering of Aamui to the crew members while *Guyinbushi/御縁節* is played and sung. Its lyrics celebrate a reunion with a sibling after a long absence. The captain, Cesario Sewralur, noted in his speeches that traditional voyaging once connected people and cultures across the entire Pacific, but colonialism imposed many restrictions, dividing people by nationality and borders. Of course, we celebrated their historic arrival too. But more importantly, we wanted to make this the beginning of our commitment to our renaissance and to building a relationship with our Pacific cousins.

Not only were the Maisu crew members happy, but many Uchinaanchu in attendance have also come to us and said they felt a strong sense of Loochoo Uchinaa pride for the first time. As a Uchinaanchu born and raised in Uchinaa, I remember feeling the same way when I attended Ukwanshin Kabudan's Loochoo Identity Summit for the first time in 2017. 9 years later, I had the opportunity to be involved in this historic event under Eric Shinshii's guidance, and I feel very blessed to have learned so much: the meaning and clear intention behind the decision-making for each song and ritual, grounding ourselves in a proper *chimunuchi/肝持ち* (attitude and mindset).





Bob Shiroma, Vice Governor Miyagi and David Jones at the Summit

HUOA Participates in the 2026 Japan-Hawaii Sister Summit

THE HAWAII UNITED OKINAWA ASSOCIATION (HUOA) was honored to participate in the 2026 Japan-Hawaii Sister Summit Welcome Reception, hosted by the Japan-America Society of Hawaii (JASH) at the residence of the Consul General of Japan in Honolulu.

Representing HUOA at the reception, Karen Kuba-Hori and Taryn Hisamoto prepared and presented our display booth, which showcased Okinawan culture and the long-standing ties between Hawaii and Okinawa. Their efforts helped create a welcoming and informative experience for summit attendees from Hawaii and Japan.

A highlight of the summit was the participation of Okinawa Vice Governor Tsuguyoshi Miyagi, who joined a panel discussion on Disaster Preparedness and Resiliency: Lessons from Island Communities. The session explored the shared challenges faced by Hawaii and Okinawa as island communities vulnerable to typhoons, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tsunamis. The discussion provided valuable insights into how both regions can learn from one another and strengthen their disaster preparedness and resilience efforts.

HUOA was proud to be part of this important gathering, which celebrated the deep cultural, educational, and governmental partnerships between Hawaii and Japan while further strengthening the bonds of friendship that connect our communities.

Mahalo to JASH for the opportunity to participate in this meaningful event and for bringing together leaders and organizations dedicated to advancing the longstanding relationship between Hawaii and Japan.



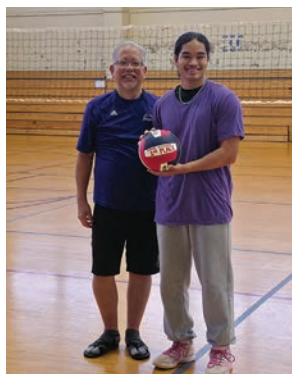
Karen Kuba Hori and Taryn Hisamoto with Vice Governor of Okinawa, Tsuguyoshi Miyagi

HUOA Mixed Volleyball League 2026 Season

Congrats to the following teams for their outstanding season!

OPEN DIVISION

1st place Haneji



2nd place YOH 1



A DIVISION

1st place Aza 3



2nd place Aza 1



B DIVISION

1st place Oroku



2nd place YOH 2





We had a great turnout of junior golfers.



Congrats to Tamagusuku Club for winning the coveted Inamine Cup!



Tournament Grand Champion Shawn Sakoda with HUAO President-Elect Jeannene Oshiro.

54th Golf Tournament Moves to Ala Wai

THE 54TH ANNUAL Hawaii Okinawan Invitational Golf Tournament was held over the Memorial Day weekend. With this year's location changed to the Ala Wai Golf Course, over 120 golfers came out to enjoy two days of golf. We greatly appreciate our sponsors, especially Bob Tanaka Realty, and supporters for their generosity. Mahalo to the tournament chair Sean Sadaoka, the committee and all the volunteers who made this year's tournament and banquet a great success. Check out our Google Album (photos.app.goo.gl/dj6gNfCbTu1kTzQbA) to see photos from the tournament.

Tournament Results

Fumio Teruya Grand Champion (Low Gross) - Shawn Sakoda - 142

Larry Nakama Champion (Low Net) - Shirlyn Ogata - 116

David B. Tamashiro Senior Flight Champion (Low Net) - Len Nakahara - 122

Jane F. Serikaku Women's Flight Champion (Low Net) - Shirlyn Ogata - 116

Junior Golf Grand Champion (Low Gross) - Aiden Mizuno - 162

Inamine Cup Club Champion - Tamagusuku Club



Flight Winners

CHAMPION FLIGHT:

- 1) Calvin Shiroma
- 2) Bronson Pausa
- 3) Sheldon Tokuda

A-FLIGHT:

- 1) Blaine Tajiri
- 2) Mark Fukeda
- 3) John Iyoki

B-FLIGHT:

- 1) Ethan Okamura
- T2) Calvin Nakama
- T2) Dustin Yamaguchi

SENIOR FLIGHT:

- 1) Len Nakahara
- 2) Wesley Yonamine
- T3) Ford Chinen
- T3) Mark Tamashiro
- T3) Neal Tamashiro

WOMEN'S FLIGHT:

- 1) Shirlyn Ogata
- 2) Kimi Yamamoto
- 3) Kadee Iha

JUNIOR CHAMPION FLIGHT:

- 1) Ian Sadaoka
- 2) Aiden Mizuno
- T3) Kyson Kupahu
- T3) Cody Mau

JUNIOR A-FLIGHT:

- 1) James Ross
- 2) Bennett Li
- 3) Khellen Chan

GUEST FLIGHT:

- 1) Crystine Ito
- 2) Derek Fukuda
- T3) Ed Essex
- T3) Stuart Lum



University of the Ryukyus Scholarship

BY RAEANN UYEDA

FIRST LEARNED ABOUT this scholarship program at the 2025 Okinawan Festival. I talked to a representative from the University of the Ryukyus there, who gave me a flyer for the program. At that time, I was about two months out of undergrad and was preparing to begin law school in a month. Thus, I thought I knew exactly what the next three years would look like for me, so I buried my disappointment and convinced myself that I would think about the scholarship in a few years. But I was very wrong, and I would soon figure out that law school and I were not meant to be (at least for the time being), and I would make the difficult decision of pulling my enrollment and pivoting all my plans to find something more fulfilling. As I was resetting everything, I began reflecting on what I really wanted. And that made me think about a flyer that I had kept from the Okinawan Festival. The scholarship I had heard about was such an incredible program that I took the flyer home from the festival, showed my mom in the car, placed it in a folder, and brought it with me to Washington (where I was supposed to be studying law for three years). I pulled out the flyer and

began emailing and researching to find out more about the program. The more I learned, the more convinced I was that I had to apply. Thus, I did so, despite my own doubts telling me to find something more “stable” and my own fears wondering how rejection, as I was just finding my footing again, would feel. I had realized that this was something I could not just let go of. I had to try. And now, I’m in Okinawa making new connections and learning things I never could have if I hadn’t decided to take the risk. I am still finding my way, but I am also learning to seize each opportunity and to move forward without the regret of “I should have”, even if I feel kind of crazy for not doing things the “typical” way.





Ryukyu Sokyoku Koyo Kai Hawaii Shibu: 50th Anniversary Fundraiser & Celebration Events

ON APRIL 26, 2026, Ryukyu Sokyoku Koyo Kai Hawaii Shibu (Koyo Kai) held a lunch and variety show at Waipahu Soto Zen Temple Taiyoji to help raise funds for this year's 50th anniversary events. About 150 people attended to show their support. Guests enjoyed performances by friends of Koyo Kai, including Waipahu Taiyoji Taiko, Dustin Ebesu, Yuttai Kwattai, Tom Yamamoto, Hanayagi Mitsuakemi, Chinagu Eisa Hawaii, Dazzman Toguchi, and Anju Madoka of Madoka no Kai. Koyo Kai members also shared baked goods and handmade crafts, and the silent auction was a fun highlight. Koyo Kai extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone who came out to support this special milestone and help make the fundraiser a success.

Koyo Kai is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2026. To mark this special year, two events are planned for September.

Saturday, September 12, 2026: Koyo Kai will host a free workshop that is open to the public, led by Hideaki Miyazato Sensei from Okinawa. More details (time and full schedule) will be shared as plans are finalized.

Sunday, September 13, 2026: Following the workshop weekend, Koyo Kai will host a 50th anniversary celebration at the Generations Ballroom at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i. The event will include a commemorative performance, followed by lunch. Tickets are \$60 and include lunch and parking.





Okinawan Emigrants' Descendants and Asian Scholarship (Kempi) Program

BY CARINA ISHIHARA

EVERY DAY HAS BEEN such a blessing, being able to study in one of my favorite places on Earth. By the time I'm writing this, it's been almost two months in Okinawa. I am very thankful to have gotten along with all the other Kempri members. We have been grocery shopping and practicing sanshin together, and having long talks while walking to and from school.

From our apartment to the Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts, we walk up hills and stairs in Shuri for about 30 minutes. I like to think of it like a quick workout session at 7:30 a.m. before our first class starts. The rainy season just started, so it's a bit humid and tough to walk, but I'd take this over summer in Okinawa any day.

Time is going by so fast that sometimes it's hard to keep track of my own schedule. Classes at Okigei have been so much fun, especially this "P.E." course I signed up for. Rather than sports and running, it's more like a nature class where we walk around campus and around Shuri Castle and talk about the native plants in Okinawa and how they

were used back in the day. We gathered some plants that looked like weeds and made tempura! Then we had a little snack before class. So far, we've learned how to weave a horse with an adan leaf, gathered vines and woven a basket, and done so much more.

Apart from classes, I have been going to sanshin class five days a week to prepare for my Shinjin Sho exam. I started learning Nufa Bushi around mid-April, and just yesterday my sensei asked me to sing the song while everyone in class played. To my surprise, I was able to sing the entire song, although not without several errors. But the feeling of my sensei pushing me to sing and play, and then being able to complete the song, was unlike anything I had felt before since I began learning sanshin two and a half years ago.

This feeling of accomplishment and growth has given me so much confidence and motivation to study harder and learn as much as I can. I'm excited for my future and for what Okinawa has in store for me.



Gateball Your Way to Better Health

REPRINTED COURTESY OF HMSA'S ISLAND SCENE MAGAZINE

O **N HIS 67TH TRIP** to Japan, retired robotics and aerospace teacher and retired Hawaii Air National Guard Lieutenant Colonel Art Kimura brought back an unexpected gift – gateball.

Kimura visited Ogimi, a village in Okinawa with the highest number of centenarians in the world. This was his third visit to Okinawa, having been stationed there with the U.S. Air Force from 1970-72 and returning in 2017 to help introduce robotics to schools in Okinawa.

When he asked residents why they lived so long, he said, “Though it is known that diet, exercise, and social interactions are the reason, they would smile and say, ‘gateball, gateball.’”

In Japan, during the postwar era, when there was a rubber shortage to make balls for most sports, lumber worker Suzuki Kazunobu realized that the abundance of wood could be used to shape balls and mallets. Suddenly, a new sport was born.

Gateball, similar to croquet, is played on a rectangular field with two teams of five players and 10 balls. Teams must work together and combine strategic touches to move the balls through various gates.

Kimura, who’d never heard of gateball before his 67th trip, had the sport on his mind when he returned to Hawaii. He learned that gateball was initially popular with children, and gradually garnered elder and international interest, likely for its universal appeal – it doesn’t involve running or jumping and could be played by anyone, young or old.

During its peak in Hawaii, there were 12 gateball clubs with over 500 players. The islands even hosted a world championship game in 1998 at Ala Moana Beach Park, inviting thousands of players from over 13 countries.

But what got Kimura’s attention was the research studies that documented the health benefits for seniors.

“Physical health benefits of playing gateball are numerous,” says Jason Kaneshige, M.D., an orthopedic traumatologist and assistant clinical professor at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine. “Movements such as swinging the mallet improve strength, balance, and flexibility. Weight-bearing exercises are crucial to maintaining bone health, reducing the risk of fracture. Building muscle strength and tone also contribute to injury and fall prevention. Continuous movements provide cardiovascular benefits as well as calorie expenditure leading to weight loss.”



Kimura's gateball quest led him to a small group of gateball players who had been playing for years and invited him to learn and play.

"Gateball is an easy game to learn," says Kimura, who enjoys the sport's mental and physical exercise and incorporates his science background to find ways to minimize errors and improve his striking strategy. "After a few minutes of instruction and practice, you could start playing."

An unofficial gateball ambassador, Kimura shares gateball's benefits with senior centers, schools, and gyms all while coordinating his own Ohana Gateball group. Reviving gateball tournaments in Hawaii, he helped organize two contests last fall with plans to host more. This year, he and a group of gateball players are scheduled to visit Ogimi to thank the villagers for introducing them to gateball and play a game.

"Everyone can play gateball together," says Kimura, who now helps host two out of the four gateball clubs throughout the Hawaii.

"The social benefits are very important," says Dr. Kaneshige. "Since gateball is enjoyable to people of all ages, it promotes interaction between people of different age groups."

While Kimura attributes his health and well-being to his love and passion for gateball, he also believes in finding your ikigai, your life's purpose. He says, "Whether it's gateball, pickleball, bon dance, or volunteering, I believe that finding an activity that one can be passionate about, one that brings you to meet and make friends while reducing isolation, will add quality years to your life."

For more information, email Art Kimura at ohanagateball@gmail.com. Art Kimura taught biology at McKinley High School, then became an aerospace education specialist after the 1986 Space Shuttle Challenger accident. He worked for the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism; the Department of Education (DOE); NASA; and the University of Hawaii Space Grant Consortium. Kimura retired from the DOE after becoming a vice principal at Keaau Elementary School and Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School.

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Welcoming of Consul General Hideaki Chotoku

O N FEBRUARY 18, 2026, HUOA was honored to welcome the newly appointed Consul General of Japan in Honolulu, Hideaki Chotoku, and his wife, Misato Chotoku, during a special gathering of Hawai'i's Japanese community organizations held at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii Generations Ballroom.

Consul General Chotoku has represented Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in postings throughout Europe, Southeast Asia, and other regions around the world. Despite his distinguished international career, this marks his very first assignment in Hawai'i, and he shared that he already considers Hawai'i to be "the best place."

Since arriving in Honolulu, Consul General Chotoku has quickly become an active and familiar presence within our community. Whether attending important commemorative ceremonies, strengthening ties between Japan and the United States, dancing Bon Dance at community events, or even joining in Okinawan kachashi celebrations, he has embraced Hawai'i's multicultural spirit with genuine warmth and enthusiasm.

Beyond festivals and gatherings, the Consul General has also been meeting with community leaders and government officials to further strengthen diplomatic and cultural

relationships. His efforts reflect a deep commitment to promoting friendship, mutual understanding, and cooperation between Japan and the United States.

At a time when the Japan-U.S. alliance continues to play an important role in maintaining peace, security, and prosperity throughout the Indo-Pacific region, Hawai'i remains a special bridge connecting the people of both nations. We are grateful to have such thoughtful and engaging leadership representing Japan here in Honolulu.

Guests at the event also enjoyed learning a few personal details about the Consul General and Mrs. Chotoku. The evening's yellow table napkins were intentionally chosen in honor of the Hanshin Tigers, Consul General's favorite baseball team, adding a lighthearted and personal touch to the celebration.

We look forward to seeing Consul General and Mrs. Chotoku at many upcoming community events, including the Honolulu Festival, the Hawai'i-Japan Sister Relationship Conference, the Pan-Pacific Festival, and of course, the Okinawan Festival.

HUOA extends its warmest aloha to Consul General Chotoku and Mrs. Chotoku, and we look forward to creating many wonderful memories together here in Hawai'i.

WUB-HUOA Goodwill Gift

HUOA PRESIDENT BOB SHIROMA RECEIVED a goodwill gift from Randy Kuba, president of the Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Association (WUB), consisting of 60 award-winning “Born Again Uchinanchu” Okinawan community books.

The intent of the gift was to strengthen the relationship between the two organizations, with HUOA celebrating its 75th anniversary this year and WUB its 30th anniversary next year. At the outset of the BAU project, HUOA supported BAU by endorsing it.

The 60 books are for each of HUOA’s 50 member clubs and 10 for its Executive Council.

The book was authored by Karleen Chinen, with its publication cost underwritten by 27 lenders who extended zero-interest loans, to be reimbursed as the books were sold. Over half of the lenders were members of WUB so, in a sense, BAU is a WUB book.



Also on hand to receive the generous gift were HUOA Pres.-Elect Jeannene Oshiro, Caro Higa and Taryn Hisamoto, as well as Ed Kuba, volunteer coordinator of the BAU project.

The project is a fundraiser for UH’s Center for Okinawan Studies, the only center of its kind in the country, so we all have to keep it financially healthy!



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- | | |
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Left: Kevin Kaneshiro of Vacations Hawaii with the winner of the grand door prize of a 2 night stay at the California Hotel in Las Vegas.

Scan the QR code for more photos:



Senior Health and Fitness Fair

BY BOB SHIROMA

THE 16TH ANNUAL Senior Health and Fitness Fair featured almost 50 vendors focusing on health and wellness, legal and financial services, and community resources. Attendees also enjoyed free blood pressure screenings, educational presentations, and Tai Chi and yoga classes.

Originally scheduled for April 10, the 16th Annual Senior Health and Fitness Fair was postponed because of a rare series of Kona Low storms affecting O’ahu. Having two Kona Low systems occur within days of each other is highly unusual, and the March 2026 storms resulted in some of the most significant flooding on O’ahu in nearly 20 years.

The rescheduled Senior Fair took place on Thursday, May 7, 2026. I participated in the Fair and would like to mahalo Caro, Clayton, Taryn, and Scott, along with the three clubs responsible for organizing this wonderful event: the Tamagusuku, Urasoe, and Wahiawa clubs.

Everyone did a terrific job, truly demonstrating a “can-do” attitude and the Okinawan spirit of *Chimugukuru*. There are far too many dedicated volunteers to name individually, but please extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone for their hard work, flexibility, and commitment in making the Senior Fair such a tremendous success. I could not be prouder!

Important notes for our calendar entries:

- All events may be subject to change. Entries as of 6/5
- EC and BOD meetings will be held in a Zoom format until further notice

JULY 2026

- 03 HOC OFFICE CLOSED – INDEPENDENCE DAY
- 07 Okinawan Festival Core Committee meeting, Online only at 7pm
- 09 Executive Council meeting, Online only at 7pm
- 21 Okinawan Festival General Committee meeting, HOC at 7pm
- 23 Board of Directors meeting, Online only at 7pm

AUGUST 2026

- 04 Okinawan Festival Core Committee meeting, Online only at 7pm
- 13 Executive Council meeting, Online only at 7pm
- TBD Okinawan Festival General Committee meeting (on-site), HCC, TBD
- 21 HOC OFFICE CLOSED – STATEHOOD DAY
- 31-Sept 04 Festival Transportation/Prep, HOC

CLASSES · OTHER MEETINGS:

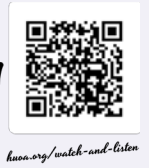
- Sanshin: Every Thursdays @ 7pm
- Shorin-ryu Seibukan Karate Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 6:30pm-8:30pm
- Ichi Go Ichi E: 1st and 3rd Tuesday @ 7pm
- Ikebana: 2nd Tuesday @ 7pm
- Karaoke: 3rd Thursday @ 10am
- Monday Crafters: Every Monday @ 9am
- Okinawan Genealogical Society board meeting: 3rd Saturday @ 9am

For more information, please call 808.676.5400 or email info@huoa.org

'Ōlelo Community Media Channel NATV 53 broadcasts a new Hawaii Okinawa Today, half an hour episode that premieres on the 4th Friday of each month at 7:00pm and repeat Saturdays at 5:00pm. Special programs will also be scheduled with dates and times noted below.

In addition to these fixed time slots, these programs are eligible to be considered for additional airings when appropriate airtime is available.

All 'Ōlelo shows are concurrently streamed on the Internet at www.olelo.org. Our latest shows are available on-demand on the 'Ōlelo website: select Tune In, then 'ŌleloNet On Demand, then type in "Okinawa" in the Search Archives box. The HUOA website www.huoa.org also has links to the site. In addition, HUOA shows on 'Ōlelo with their air dates are published on HUOA's website huoa.org/watch-and-listen



You can also download the 'Ōlelo Mobile App! Share the QR code with your friends and family and they'll be able to watch your show using any mobile device using the App.

JUNE 26 AT 7PM; 27 AT 5PM; JULY 4, 11 AND 18 AT 5PM

HOT: 2025 Okinawan Festival featuring Ryukyu Koten Afuso Ryu Onagaku Kenkyuu Choichi Kai USA/Hawaii, Choichi Kai Akebono Sound

JULY 11 AT 6PM; 12 AT 10PM; 18 AT 8AM; 19 AT 4PM

SPECIAL: 2025 Okinawan Festival: Okinawan Groups

JULY 24 AT 7PM; AUGUST 1, 8, 15 AND 22 AT 5PM

HOT: 2025 Okinawan Festival featuring HUOA Ichigo Ichi E, Kilauea Okinawa Dance Club

AUGUST 31 AT 6PM; SEPTEMBER 3 AT 4:30PM; 5 AT 10AM AND 6 AT 10:30PM

SPECIAL: "Warabi Ashibi" Children's Day Camp



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- Chef Alan Wong

LEARN MORE: Call: (808) 780-3440, Email: sharemanasu@gmail.com
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Tune in every Sunday from 4:00-5:00 pm on KZOO AM 1210 for an hour of Okinawan culture and



connection. The show features Okinawan music, voices, and stories, with conversations with guests from across the Hawaii United Okinawa Association. Together, we explore Okinawan culture, lived experiences, and the events shaping our community today—celebrating tradition, legacy, and present-day involvement within Hawaii's Okinawan community.

Can't listen live? Catch clips and replays on our social media channels and new Spotify account.



Hawaii United Okinawa Association
 94-587 Ukee Street
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2026 OKINAWAN FESTIVAL SCRIPS PRE-SALE

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