

The Value of Recognition

It is my personal and professional belief that you can never thank enough.

In my experience, regardless of the reason, appreciation is best expressed sincerely and often. I am committed to what I call the “mahalo principle,” and make it a point each day to thank people in my life, be it for things big or small. It costs nothing, but it makes a world of difference to the recipient.

In the business of hospitality, “above and beyond” is an everyday expectation. However, the constant pressure and impeccable standards of the industry can be grueling for employees. In an effort to shine a spotlight and share a lot of gratitude for all their hard work, the Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association takes every opportunity to thank those who make tourism the number one industry in the state.

We acknowledge the efforts of the hospitality workforce throughout the year. We start with the **Na Po'e Pa'ahana Awards**, which just celebrated its 29th year this January. The awards recognize employees in eight professional categories from across the state who are nominated by

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— MUFU HANNEMANN

their peers or supervisors from small, medium and large lodging properties. This well-attended luncheon is popular among both managers and employees as a way to celebrate their shared accomplishments along with a thousand of their colleagues at the “Oscars of Tourism,” as I call it.

The annual **aio Media Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Awards**, on the other hand, have a different focus. Nominations are submitted by the public, in more than a dozen categories, and winners are selected by a blue-ribbon committee. These awards were conceived to bring together Bishop Street and Kalakaua Avenue to recognize excellence in categories such as



2019 Na Po'e Pa'ahana Awards finalists

agritourism, industry leadership and tourism events, as well as food and beverage and accommodations.

The **Kahiau Award** is presented on a quarterly basis during our Hospitality Industry Pau Hana (HIP) events. This accolade is granted to the “unsung hero” whose individual, generous contributions to tourism may sometimes go unnoticed, but are valuable and constant.

Honoring existing employees is one thing. Investing in the next generation and inspiring them to pursue excellence is another. Those are the reasons HLTA takes such pride in its numerous scholarships, which provide financial assistance and help to incentivize our future professionals. Among our scholarship initiatives are the Citizen-Scholar Awards, which award a top senior from all 42 public high schools with a \$1,000 scholarship—plus an additional \$2,500 to the top student from each of the four counties.

We also sponsor a program called **Generational Mentoring**, in which hospitality college majors are paired up with some of our finest hotel GMs to

provide them with an up-close look at the operations of some of our leading businesses.

Beyond Citizen-Scholar, HLTA also offers scholarships such as the **Bob Holden and Clem Judd Memorial Scholarships**, which are for Hawaii residents with strong academics and majoring in hospitality management.

Others include the **Don Ho Legacy Scholarship** for a Native Hawaiian student in pursuit of a career in music and the arts, and the **Pouhana Hokele Scholarship** for students of Hawaiian ancestry who are studying travel industry management, both of which are offered in partnership with the Ke Ali'i Pauahi Foundation of the Kamehameha Schools. We also award two \$2,500 scholarships to children of HLTA members, one for a lodging property member and one for an allied (non-hotel) member.

For further information about our scholarship opportunities, which are now open, please contact HLTA

Director of Fiscal Services
Jessica Caires, at
jcaires@hawaii lodging.org
or 923-0407.

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

