

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**  
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI  
A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'I

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
DIRECTOR

**DANE K. WICKER**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804  
Web site: [dbedt.hawaii.gov](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov)

Telephone: (808) 586-2355  
Fax: (808) 586-2377

DTS: 202412231530TO

December 23, 2024

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,  
President and Members  
of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura,  
Speaker and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Nakamura, and Members of the Legislature:

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of the State of Hawai'i Offices in Taipei and Beijing Annual Report, as required by Section 201-84, Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, I am also informing you that the report may be viewed electronically at:

[http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/overview/annual-reports-reports-to-the-legislature/.](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/overview/annual-reports-reports-to-the-legislature/)

Sincerely,

James Kunane Tokioka  
DBEDT Director

Enclosure

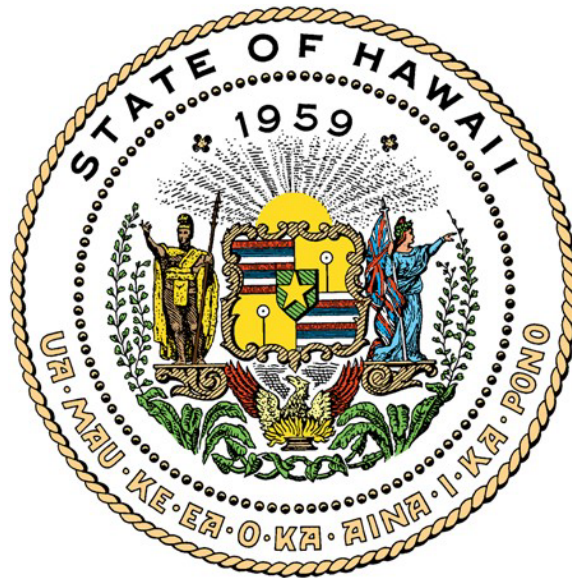
c: Legislative Reference Bureau

# State of Hawai‘i Offices in Taipei and Beijing

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

DECEMBER 2024

2024 Annual Report to the Legislature  
January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024



A report to the Legislature of the State of Hawai‘i as required  
by Section 201-84, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes



## State of Hawai'i Office in Taipei 2024 Annual Report

- Part 1. Promoted Study in Hawai'i
  - Part 2. Investment Attraction and Business Promotion
  - Part 3. Cultural Promotion
  - Part 4. Sister-State and Government Relationships
  - Part 5. Taipei Office Expense (FY 2024)
- 

### **Part 1. PROMOTED STUDY HAWAI'I**

- May 15: Ms. Helen from Nan Shin High School made a courtesy visit on July 4 to discuss school exchange programs and a planned trip to Hawai'i. Nan Shin High School, a prestigious institution known for its commitment to academic excellence and international collaboration, was planning to bring students to Hawai'i on July 14. The visit was to include cultural and educational activities, such as a campus tour at Kapi'olani Community College (KCC), as well as visits to St. Louis High School and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM).



*SHOT Executive Director met with Ms. Helen from Nan Shin High School*

- June 6: State of Hawai'i Office in Taipei (SHOT) Executive Director Alex Lei visited the UHM and KCC to discuss opportunities in distance learning and the promotion of educational programs. Mr. Cy Feng graciously provided a campus tour and shared insights into new initiatives, including the establishment of joint degree programs.



*SHOT Executive Director met with Mr. Cy Feng at KCC*

- July 17: A group consisting of two teachers and nine students from Nanshan High School visited Hawai'i. During their trip, they visited two high schools and one university. They were honored to be received by Hawai'i State Representative Adrian Tam. The group also had the opportunity to visit the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Honolulu. Special thanks to Director Lin from TECO for meeting with the students and sharing valuable insights on diplomatic and overseas Chinese affairs in Hawai'i. The students found the visit highly inspiring, and some expressed a strong interest in pursuing their studies in Hawai'i after graduating from high school.



*Nanshan High School visited Hawai'i on July 17, 2024*

- July 17: Sixteen students from Kamehameha Schools, aged 16 to 18, along with 14 cultural practitioners—including teachers, a navigator, a kumu hula, a traditional ceremony specialist, and weavers—visited Taiwan from July 14 to July 26. We would like to thank the Hualien County Government for extending the invitation. During their stay, they participated in the Indigenous Harvest Ceremony and visited various cultural villages. Their itinerary also included a trip to Taitung County, with the journey concluding in Taipei.



*16 students from Kamehameha Schools visited Taiwan from July 14 to 26*

- July 29: Professor, students, and parents from Chung Hua University visited the office this afternoon. During their visit, they engaged in meaningful discussions about potential academic collaborations and exchange opportunities in Hawai‘i. They also gained insights into Hawai‘i’s unique educational programs, cultural diversity, and lifestyle advantages, which generated great enthusiasm among the attendees.



*Professor, students, and parents from Chung Hua University visited the SHOT office*

- July 31: SHOT Executive Director Lei attended the inauguration ceremony of the new president of Jinwen University of Science and Technology. The new president, Huang Rongpeng, is also an alumnus of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). Executive Director Lei made a special visit to congratulate President Huang and wished him great success in leading the university to even greater achievements in the future, as well as to encourage more educational exchanges with Hawai'i.



*SHOT Executive Director Lei attended the inauguration ceremony of the new president of Jinwen University of Science and Technology*

- November 6: SHOT was delighted to welcome the visiting group from Saint Louis School in Hawai'i. The group, which visited Taiwan from November 1 to November 10, included fifteen students, four teachers, and two parents. Their itinerary featured visits to Nanshan High School, Ankang High School, Wulai High School, and the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP). The students actively participated in cultural and robotics exchanges, fostering meaningful connections and valuable learning experiences.



*Saint Louis School visited Taiwan from November 1 to November 10, 2024*

## **Part 2. INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND BUSINESS PROMOTION**

- March 13: SHOT was pleased to welcome President Song and his team to the office to discuss potential investment opportunities in Hawai'i. Mr. Song expressed interest in developing an affordable housing project in Hawai'i and introduced their new innovative, water-resistant construction materials. If a suitable project arises, they are eager to arrange visits from both their Taiwan and Texas offices to further explore collaboration possibilities.



*President Song and his team visited SHOT office to discuss potential investment opportunities in Hawai'i*

- March 19: SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei attended the Smart City Summit, where industry leaders, government officials, and technology experts gathered to discuss innovative solutions for sustainable urban development. Topics covered included smart infrastructure, green energy, and AI-driven technologies aimed at enhancing urban living. The summit provided valuable insights and networking opportunities with key stakeholders in the smart city ecosystem.



*SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei attended the Smart City Summit*



- SHOT was delighted to welcome President Jack Chi of the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i to the office for an engaging and fruitful discussion. During the meeting, President Chi shared valuable insights into the business climate and investment opportunities in Hawai'i, highlighting key areas such as real estate, renewable energy, tourism, and technology. The session brought together executives from Taiwanese companies, fostering a collaborative environment to explore potential partnerships and innovative ventures.



*President Jack Chi of the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i to the office for an engaging and fruitful discussion*

- From June 26 to June 29, the 2024 Food Taipei exhibition took place at the Taipei World Trade Center Exhibition Hall. As part of this renowned international food and beverage expo, the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) generously sponsored a booth for Hawai'i, providing a platform to showcase and promote authentic Hawai'i made products. This booth featured a diverse range of high-quality Hawaiian goods, including specialty foods, coffee, and unique local products, highlighting the islands' rich agricultural industry. This event presented a valuable opportunity to strengthen trade connections and introduce Hawai'i's unique offerings to a Taiwanese audience.



*SHOT attended the 2024 Food Taipei exhibition at the Taipei World Trade Center Exhibition Hall*

- July 30: Deputy General Manager Sarah Chan of Shao En Co., Ltd. and her assistant visited SHOT's office to discuss the development of new energy businesses in Hawai'i, including solar energy, wind energy, and energy storage equipment. Coincidentally, Jack Chi, the President of the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i, was also in Taiwan, so SHOT specially invited him to join the discussion.



*Deputy General Manager Sarah Chan of Shao En Co., Ltd. and her assistant visited SHOT's office to discuss the development of new energy businesses in Hawai'i*

- November 14: The Hawai'i Coffee Cupping Event was held at Zhanlu Coffee with great success. Five coffee farmers and owners from the Hawai'i Coffee Association (HCA) visited Taiwan to promote Hawaiian coffee. They were Juli Burden, Research Associate at the Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center; Ralph Gaston, Secretary of Synergistic Hawai'i Agricultural Culture (SHAC); Rusty's Hawaiian Coffee producer and roaster; Madeleine Longoria Garcia, co-owner of Isla Custom Coffees and Vice President of SHAC; Victoria Magaña Ledesma, Coffee Producer, Processor, and Owner of Misma Lani Farms; and Miguel Meza, Founder and Owner of Paradise Coffee Roasters. SHOT is also grateful to have had the support of Ms. Kathy Yao, Agricultural Trade Director at the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), and to welcome over 20 elite representatives from the coffee industry.



*Juli Burden, Research Associate at the Hawai'i Agriculture Research Center; Ralph Gaston, Secretary of Synergistic Hawai'i Agricultural Culture (SHAC); Rusty's Hawaiian Coffee producer and roaster; Madeleine Longoria Garcia, co-owner of Isla Custom Coffees and Vice President of SHAC; Victoria Magaña Ledesma, Coffee Producer, Processor, and Owner of Misma Lani Farms; and Miguel Meza, Founder and Owner of Paradise Coffee Roasters visited Taiwan for the trade show and cupping event*

- November 15: ABV American Bistro & Bar, located in Taipei, officially launched the Hawai'i Food Festival, featuring 10 exquisite Hawaiian dishes. Running from that day through February 2025, the event not only offered authentic Hawaiian cuisine but also included Hawaiian coffee and craft beer. In addition to enjoying delicious food and drinks, guests could participate in a lucky draw (a free tour to Hawai'i) sponsored by Dragon Hawai'i Tours.



*ABV American Bistro & Bar, located in Taipei, officially launched the Hawai'i Food Festival*

- The 2024 Taiwan International Coffee Show was held at the Nangang Exhibition Center from November 15 to November 18. The HCA was represented by seven coffee experts who traveled to Taiwan to participate in the trade show. During the four-day exhibition, many visitors stopped by the Hawai'i booth and praised Hawaiian coffee. At the farewell banquet, coffee experts who had visited Hawai'i for a reverse trade mission in 2022 were invited to join the gathering, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere while strengthening relationships between coffee farmers and buyers.



*HCA was represented by seven coffee experts who traveled to Taiwan to participate in the 2024 Taiwan International Coffee Show*

### **Part 3. CULTURAL PROMOTION**

- April 16: In Kaohsiung City, SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei attended the World Indigenous Tourism Summit, an event that brought together global leaders, experts, and stakeholders in indigenous tourism to discuss sustainable tourism practices, cultural preservation, and economic empowerment for indigenous communities. Following the summit, Alex participated in the Austronesia Forum Executive Council meeting, which focused on advancing collaboration and initiatives among Austronesia-speaking regions. The goal was to foster stronger cultural exchanges, support the development of indigenous tourism, and promote the unique heritage of the Austronesian peoples.



*SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei attended the World Indigenous Tourism Summit*

- May 22: SHOT was honored to welcome Deputy Minister Calivat Gadu of the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP) to the office, accompanied by five other officials from the CIP. The purpose of their visit was to engage in a constructive discussion about Taiwan's participation in the upcoming 13th Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC). This significant event provided a unique platform to showcase the rich cultural traditions of the Pacific region and explore opportunities for Taiwan to share its indigenous heritage, foster international cultural exchange, and strengthen partnerships with the Pacific Islands. The meeting highlighted the importance of Taiwan's involvement in FestPAC to promote cultural awareness and solidarity among indigenous communities worldwide.



*Deputy Minister Calivat Gadu of the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP) visited SHOT office*

- FestPAC was held in Hawai'i from June 4th to June 16th, with 28 countries participating. Taiwan sent one of its largest delegations ever, comprising nearly 350 people, including representatives from the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP), the Ministry of Culture, and Taitung and Hualien Counties. During FestPAC, Taiwan not only fully participated in the festival's programs but also organized its own events, such as an Indigenous Cultural Exhibition at the Bishop Museum, an Indigenous Art Display at the Honolulu Art Gallery, and visits to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), Brigham Young University-Hawai'i (BYUH), and Kamehameha Schools. Additionally, the delegation had the opportunity to meet and engage with delegates from other participating nations, fostering cultural exchange and strengthening global ties.



Taiwan sent one of its largest delegations ever, comprising nearly 350 people to the 13<sup>th</sup> FestPAC, 2024

- June 18: Executive Director Alex Lei of SHOT attended the press conference for the Austronesia Joint Indigenous Harvest Festival, hosted by the Hualien County Government. During the event, Lei was invited to deliver a heartfelt speech, expressing gratitude to the Magistrate of Hualien and her team for their participation in FestPAC. He also took the opportunity to emphasize the importance of re-establishing the sister-city relationship between Hualien County and Hawai'i Island. This renewed partnership symbolized a commitment to further strengthening cultural ties, promoting mutual understanding, and enhancing collaboration between the two regions, particularly in indigenous cultural exchange and community development.



*Executive Director Alex Lei of SHOT attended the press conference for the Austronesia Joint Indigenous Harvest Festival*

- July 2: Ms. Ann Fan and her team at the Hawai'i Culture Center in Taiwan showcased Hawaiian culture at National Taiwan University. The event, which attracted over 500 attendees, was a remarkable success in promoting the rich traditions, arts, and heritage of Hawai'i. Through a series of vibrant presentations, performances, and interactive activities, the Hawai'i Culture Center provided a unique opportunity for the Taiwanese audience to experience Hawaiian culture firsthand. The event not only highlighted the beauty of Hawaiian music, dance, and crafts but also fostered deeper cultural understanding and strengthened the ties between Taiwan and Hawai'i.



*Ms. Ann Fan and her team at the Hawai'i Culture Center in Taiwan showcased Hawaiian culture at National Taiwan University*

- July 19: SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei participated in this year’s annual Austronesia Joint Harvest Festival. The Hualien County Government made a special effort to invite teachers and students from Hawai’i’s prestigious Kamehameha Schools to perform and engage in cultural exchanges in Hualien. Their participation added a unique dimension to the festival, fostering deeper connections and understanding between the indigenous cultures of Taiwan and Hawai’i. Through performances, shared experiences, and cultural dialogues, this collaborative effort further enriched the festival. We were proud to witness the vibrant exchanges, which will undoubtedly have a lasting impact on both the participants and the audience.



*SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei participated in this year’s annual Austronesia Joint Harvest Festival*

**Part 4. SISTER-STATE AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS**

- July 31: A dinner was hosted by MOFA Minister Lin Chia-lung to warmly welcome 4 U.S. Congressional delegation to Taiwan. SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei was honored to have the opportunity to meet Hawai’i’s U.S. Representative, Ms. Jill N. Tokuda, during the event. It was a valuable moment to foster stronger government relations between Taiwan and the United States, particularly with Hawai’i. Both Representative Tokuda and Executive Director Lei addressed the request to Minister Lin and asked for his assistance to resume the China Airlines direct flight services to Hawai’i.



*MOFA Minister Lin Chia-lung to warmly welcome 4 U.S. Congressional delegation to Taiwan. SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei was honored to have the opportunity to meet Hawai’i’s U.S. Representative, Ms. Jill N. Tokuda, during the event*



- August 30: During a recent courtesy call to Director Raymond F. Greene of AIT, Director Greene took the opportunity to engage representatives from each state office in Taiwan, inquiring about ongoing work and areas where AIT could provide further assistance. This open dialogue provided valuable insights into the needs and priorities of Hawai'i. In response, SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei expressed concerns regarding the disrupted direct flight route between Taiwan and Honolulu. Executive Director Lei respectfully requested AIT's continued support in facilitating the reinstatement of this important flight. We are grateful for Director Greene's willingness to listen to our concerns and look forward to AIT's continued assistance in addressing this and other matters of mutual interest.



*SHOT Executive Director attended the meeting with Director Raymond F. Greene of AIT*

- October 8: SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei attended the opening ceremony of the 2024 Pacific Islands Leadership Program, organized by the MOFA. This joint training program, hosted by the East-West Center in Hawai'i and sponsored by the MOFA, marked its 9<sup>th</sup> year in 2024.



*SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei attended the opening ceremony of the 2024 Pacific Islands Leadership Program*

- From October 11 to October 16, SHOT Executive Director Alex Lei had the honor of accompanying Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luka of the State of Hawai'i and Senators Lynn DeCoite, Lorraine R. Inouye, Jarrett Keohokalole, and Joy A. San Buenaventura on a busy and fulfilling visit to several key institutions in Taiwan. The delegation began by visiting the Tourism Administration of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, followed by the MOFA, where they engaged in productive discussions. This was followed by a welcome luncheon, after which the delegation visited the CIP. There, they held extensive discussions on Austronesian issues, museum exchanges, academic cooperation, language revitalization, and cultural development. In the evening, they attended a welcome banquet hosted by Dragon Hawai'i Tour for the travel industry. The next part of the visit included meetings at the Taipei City Government's Department of Rapid Transit Systems and the Ministry of Agriculture, where the delegation enjoyed the presentations and discussions. The day concluded with a visit to the AIT. The delegation members were all very happy with the day's engagements, which were both enriching and insightful.



Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luka of the State of Hawai'i and Senators Lynn DeCoite, Lorraine R. Inouye, Jarrett Keohokalole, and Joy A. San Buenaventura visited Taiwan from October 11 to 16.

**Part 5. TAIPEI OFFICE EXPENSE (FY 2024)**

<b>Description of Expense</b>	<b>Total</b>
Director's Contract	\$47,081.06
Assistant's Salary	\$20,883.32
Office Rent	\$12,578.43
Parking Rental	\$1,453.63
Health Insurance	\$861.22
Labor Insurance	\$1,467.87
Newspaper Subscription	\$142.89
Copy Machine Rental	\$964.52
Utilities	\$296.86
Phones/Fax/L-Distance	\$795.79
Mobile Phone	\$1,196.73
Postage	\$55.16
Freight & Delivery Charge	\$13.39
Office Supplies/Internet	\$49.52
Taxi Fare	\$320.90
Miscellaneous Exp.	\$145.16
Membership Fees	\$387.10
Printing	\$41.37
FestPAC Event - Traveling	\$4,142.60
Marketing/Promotion/Other	\$209.03
Business Weekly Magazines	\$89.03
Telephone Equipment	\$405.06
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$93,580.64</b>



## **State of Hawai'i Office in Beijing 2024 Annual Report**

Part 1.	Collaboration with HTC for Tourism Development
Part 2.	Hawai'i Made Products and Business Promotion
Part 3.	Education and Cultural Exchange
Part 4.	Sister-State and Government Relations
Part 5.	Beijing Office Expense (FY 2024)

---

### **Part 1. COLLABORATION WITH HTC FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

- The State of Hawai'i Office in Beijing (SHOB), in partnership with Hawai'i Tourism China (HTC), successfully carried out its inaugural China Travel Mission from May 27 to May 31 at the ITB (Internationale Tourismus-Börse) Shanghai, followed by a Beijing Industry Networking Event on May 31 at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. HTC's goal was to reconnect local stakeholders and island chapters with China's outbound industry partners, travel media, and social influencers in the post-pandemic era, while also identifying emerging travel trends and new opportunities.

The mission resulted in over 150 agency connections and 114 meetings at ITB Shanghai. HTC further strengthened relationships by hosting a Shanghai VIP networking dinner, attended by 20 influential industry leaders, including representatives from Japan Airlines, Asiana Airlines, ANA, Spring Airlines, and major agencies such as Trip.com, LY.com, Tuniu.com, and Jinjiang Travel.

In Beijing, 56 agencies participated in the trade meeting, and 15 key industry leaders attended the VIP dinner. Notable attendees included representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, HNA Group, Asiana Airlines, Caijing Media, SparkleTour, Mafengwo, and others. These interactions helped forge strong connections, generating interest in future collaborative packages and events.

The mission also included a productive meeting with Fangda Group, the parent company of HNA Group, alongside our legislators, HTA, and HTC. During this discussion, potential opportunities for new non-stop and stopover routes were identified, and efforts were initiated to develop a systematic approach to secure flight approval rights.



China Travel Mission, in partnership with HTC, at the ITB Shanghai

- SHOB and HTC facilitated HTA's participation in the 14<sup>th</sup> U.S.–China Tourism Leadership Summit, held in Xi'an, China, from May 21 to 23, 2024. Hosted by Brand USA, with support from the U.S. Department of Commerce and China's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, this event marked the first summit since 2019. It brought together nearly 400 government officials and travel industry leaders to promote the return of Chinese visitors to the U.S. and strengthen tourism partnerships.

The U.S. delegation, led by Assistant Secretary of Commerce Grant T. Harris and Brand USA CEO Chris Thompson, included representatives from prominent organizations such as the U.S. Travel Association, Destination DC, Destination Niagara USA, Hawai'i Tourism Authority, Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board, Marriott International, Mastercard, New York City Tourism + Conventions, San Francisco Travel Association, Travel Oregon, Travel South USA, Visa, Visit California, Visit San Diego, Discover Puerto Rico, Guam Visitors Bureau, Hilton Worldwide, and Visit Seattle. The Chinese delegation was led by State Councilor Yiquin Shen and other senior officials.

A key achievement of the conference was HTA's signing of a strategic partnership with Spring Airlines. This collaboration aims to attract Spring Airlines' customers to Hawai'i by leveraging the airline's position as China's largest budget carrier, as well as its codeshare partnership with Japan Airlines for Hawai'i routes. There is significant potential to expand these codeshare connections, linking multiple cities in China to Hawai'i via Japan.



SHOB and HTC facilitated HTA's participation in the 14<sup>th</sup> U.S.–China Tourism Leadership Summit

- SHOB and HTC were invited by Brand USA and the Jiangsu Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism to participate in the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Grand Canal Cultural Tourism Expo in Suzhou from September 12 to 15. SHOB/HTC shared a booth with Brand USA at the Expo, where HTC showcased information about the Hawai'i Islands.

The Expo featured more than 5,000 exhibitors, including 66 cities, 38 countries and regions, 653 enterprises, and public service units. Approximately 130,000 attendees visited the four major theme exhibitions. Over the course of the event, more than 384 promotional sessions, 1,000 performances, 922 interactive projects, 427 buyers, and 1,132 negotiation pairs took place, with an estimated transaction value of 235 million RMB.

The online segment of the Expo included over 3,000 exhibitors and 730 buyers, offering online consultations and communication. The total number of buyer-seller consultation appointments exceeded 64,000, with a 44% success rate in matching. The online Expo page was visited more than 247 million times.



*SHOB and HTC were invited by Brand USA and the Jiangsu Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism to participate in the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Grand Canal Cultural Tourism Expo in Suzhou*



## **Part 2. HAWAI'I MADE PRODUCTS AND BUSINESS PROMOTION**

- In 2024, SHOB played a crucial role in promoting Hawai'i coffee in China and strengthening its market presence. The office worked diligently to introduce the unique qualities of Hawai'i coffee to Chinese consumers, raise awareness, and build strong relationships with local stakeholders. Through various promotional events, engaging with key partners, and creating content for social media platforms, SHOB made a significant contribution to Hawai'i's coffee industry's efforts to expand its reach and establish a foothold in the Chinese market. By addressing the needs of local coffee businesses, maintaining communication with both U.S. and Chinese authorities, and establishing an emerging sales network, SHOB laid the foundation for future growth.

Key initiatives and accomplishments by SHOB in 2024 included:

- Organized multiple tasting and promotional events to introduce Hawai'i coffee and its unique qualities to potential Chinese customers.
  - Maintained regular communication with the Hawai'i Coffee Association (HCA) and local Hawai'i coffee farms to support their growth in the Chinese market.
  - Sustained contact with the USDA and Agricultural Trade Offices (ATO) of the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenyang to stay informed about the latest policies, regulations, and industry trends relevant to Hawai'i coffee farms.
  - Established a preliminary sales network for Hawai'i coffee in China, building connections with China Customs, supply chain stakeholders (importers, distributors, roasters, coffee shops), and some end-users.
  - Published articles and videos on Chinese social media platforms to educate and raise awareness about Hawai'i coffee among the public in China.
- 2025 Plan:
    - Expand promotional efforts for Hawai'i coffee and farms on Chinese social media platforms, particularly by collaborating with the HTC social media team.
    - Develop a Hawai'i Made Products showcase area in the office to feature select products and promote Hawai'i coffee.

- Invite HCA and Hawai'i farms to participate in the 2025 China Kunshan International Fair for the Coffee Industry (May 16–18, 2025). Opportunities include co-hosting, exhibiting, delivering VIP speeches at forums, and participating in matchmaking meetings.
- Organize a Chinese buyer group to visit Hawai'i for the 54th Kona Coffee Festival (November 7–16, 2025). Planned activities include farm tours, matchmaking meetings, and visits to the Hawai'i Tropical Agriculture Research Center.



*SHOB attended different coffee events to strengthen its market presence for Hawai'i coffee*

### **Part 3. EDUCATION AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

- Kumu Hula Sonny Jean Preston from Hawai'i, in collaboration with her Chinese partner, Hula dancer Cindy, successfully organized her first workshop series in Shanghai and Beijing from October 6 to 24, 2024. The workshops, which offered 20 hours of intensive training, attracted over 60 Chinese students.

On October 26, SHOB attended a Hula performance in Beijing, where they engaged with Kumu Sonny, Chinese Hula dancers, and students, expressing appreciation for her dedication to promoting Hawaiian culture in China. Kumu Sonny plans to visit Beijing 4–5 times in 2025 to continue sharing Hawaiian culture and Hula dance. She also aims to host dedicated performances at the Blue Note venue, further enriching cultural exchanges.



*SHOB attended Kumu Hula Sonny Jean Preston who organized her first workshop series in Shanghai and Beijing*

- In 2024, SHOB, in partnership with Russel Leu, a Board Member of Maryknoll School and Professor of Law at Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) School of Law, Member of the SHOB China Strategic Advisory Group, facilitated several key educational exchanges:

In January 2024, a group of 13 students and teachers from BFSU Foreign Language School visited Maryknoll School for the first time, where they were warmly welcomed by Maryknoll students and parents.

From August 30 to September 8, 2024, 11 teachers and students from Maryknoll School traveled to BFSU for a 10-day immersive humanistic education exchange program.

On September 18, 2024, 13 representatives from Maryknoll School visited BFSU and met with Mr. Zhang Wenchi, principal of BFSU Foreign Language School, to discuss collaboration opportunities for a language teaching exchange program.



*A group of 13 students and teachers from BFSU Foreign Language School visited Maryknoll School*

- SHOB participated in the "Bond with Kuliang 2024 China-US Youth Festival" in Fuzhou City, Fujian Province, held from June 23 to 27. Fuzhou City and Honolulu established a sister city relationship in 2021. The event was co-organized by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the Fujian Provincial People's Government, and the All-China Youth Federation. The festival brought together over 200 American youth and more than 300 Chinese youth.

During the conference, SHOB Executive Director Dennis Suo took part in the Sino-US Youth Roundtable alongside Honolulu City Council member Andrea Tupola, Jack Zhang from the Hawai'i Fujian Business Association, and other notable speakers. The discussion focused on tourism between Hawai'i and China, expanding cultural and educational exchange programs between Fujian Province and Hawai'i, and boosting the export of Hawai'i-made products to Fujian Province. The roundtable was broadcast on various platforms, including FM100.7 Fujian Traffic Emergency Broadcasting, Learning Power, Haibo TV, Live Channel, Fujian Travel Channel, Fujian IPTV, and Himalayas.



SHOB participated in the "Bond with Kuliang 2024 China-US Youth Festival" in Fuzhou City, Fujian Province

#### **Part 4. SISTER-STATE AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

- March 16: SHOB, in partnership with the Hawai'i Fujian Business Association, facilitated the visit of a business delegation led by Madam Guo Ningning, Executive Vice Governor of Fujian Province. Sylvia Luke, Lieutenant Governor of Hawai'i, welcomed the delegation on behalf of the state government. The delegation also held discussions with representatives from the Honolulu City and County government and City Council and conducted site visits to local businesses in Hawai'i.



*Led by Madam Guo Ningning, Executive Vice Governor of Fujian Province, visited Lieutenant Governor of Hawai'i, Sylvia Luke in Hawai'i*

- SHOB, in partnership with the Hainan Foreign Affairs Office, facilitated the visit of Governor Liu Xiaoming of Hainan Province and his delegation to Maryknoll School, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), Brigham Young University–Hawai'i (BYUH), and the Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC). From the State of Hawai'i side, Director of DBEDT Jimmy Tokioka and House Representative Sean Quinlan met with Governor Liu during his visit.

Governor Liu extended an invitation for Maryknoll School students to participate in a study tour to Hainan, which would include exchange programs with high schools in the region. The program is scheduled for the summer of 2025. Additionally, discussions focused on the potential for a direct flight between Beijing and Honolulu operated by Hainan Airlines. As the fourth-largest airline group in China, Hainan Airlines owned 12 provincial airlines. Governor Liu, a strong advocate for restoring direct flights between Hawai'i and China, emphasized the importance of this connection for fostering closer cultural and economic ties between the two regions.

During the meeting, the parties agreed to jointly pursue cooperation projects in areas such as sister-state exchanges, establishing direct flights, addressing climate change, clean energy, agricultural technology, education and cultural exchanges, and medical tourism.



*Governor Liu Xiaoming of Hainan Province and his delegation visited Hawai'i*

- Invited by Hainan Province, SHOB attended the 2024 Hainan Liaison Meeting for Sister States from July 15 to 18. The meeting aimed to enhance mutual understanding and friendship through face-to-face communication, share the social and economic developments of Hainan, and explore opportunities for future cooperation. Representatives from 14 countries and regions attended, including Colombia (Sucre), Hungary (Pest County), Indonesia (Bali), Japan (Hyogo), Laos (Luang Prabang), Malaysia (Penang), Poland (Lubuskie Voivodship), Serbia (Vojvodina), Sri Lanka (Southern Province), and others, along with representatives

from the Hainan Provincial Foreign Affairs Office and the Hainan International Economic Development Bureau. Dennis Suo, Flora Wu, and William Zhang from SHOB office represented Hawai'i at the meeting, as Hawai'i is the only U.S. state with a friendly relationship with Hainan Province.

During the meeting, SHOB Executive Director Dennis Suo, representing the State of Hawai'i, delivered a presentation that introduced Hawai'i's geographical location, its various islands, the development of its industries, and detailed information on volcanoes, ports, and coffee crops. He also provided a practical and constructive overview of potential areas of cooperation between Hawai'i and Hainan. The Chinese participants included representatives from the Hainan Provincial Foreign Affairs Office and the Hainan International Economic Development Bureau.

Executive Director Dennis Suo was interviewed by two Hainan media outlets: the Hainan Broadcasting Group International Communication Center and the Hainan Daily. The interviews were published the following day and received widespread acclaim.

Report link:

[http://enfaohn.hainan.gov.cn/News/Latest/202407/t20240718\\_3699791.html](http://enfaohn.hainan.gov.cn/News/Latest/202407/t20240718_3699791.html)







SHOB attended the 2024 Hainan Liaison Meeting hosted by Hainan FAO

- November 22: SHOB held an online meeting with the Guangdong Foreign Affairs Office (G DFAO) to discuss plans for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hawai'i-Guangdong Sister State/Province Relationship in 2025. The discussion also centered on strategies to enhance collaboration and further strengthen exchanges and cooperation between the two regions.



SHOB held an online meeting with the Guangdong Foreign Affairs Office (G DFAO)

- August 26: SHOB attended the Independence Day Sponsor Appreciation Reception at the U.S. Ambassador's Residence. During the event, SHOB highlighted the visa challenges faced by MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) groups. As a tourism-focused destination, Hawai'i welcomed a significant number of visitors and incentive travel groups annually, but visa-related obstacles remained a considerable concern in China. SHOB emphasized the importance of streamlining group visa processes to enhance convenience and support Hawai'i's tourism industry.



SHOB attended the Independence Day Sponsor Appreciation Reception at the U.S. Ambassador's Residence

- Invited by Mr. Nicholas Burns, U.S. Ambassador to the PRC, SHOB attended the 2024 Election Day event in Beijing on November 6, 2024. During the event, SHOB engaged in discussions with various embassy departments, focusing on plans to promote tourism and Hawaiian coffee in 2025. SHOB also expressed its commitment to maintaining close contact with the embassy to provide enhanced support for Hawai'i businesses in areas such as policy regulations, market insights, and government relations.



Invited by Mr. Nicholas Burns, U.S. Ambassador to the PRC, SHOB attended the 2024 Election Day event in Beijing

- Ms. Emily Scott, Director of the Agricultural Trade Office (ATO), along with Mr. Eric S. Mullis, Agricultural Specialist, and Ms. Angie Han, Marketing Specialist from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, visited SHOB to discuss promoting Hawai'i coffee in China and planning future collaborations. Both sides acknowledged that Hawai'i coffee, as a signature U.S. agricultural product, was highly appreciated by Chinese consumers and held significant market potential. However, several challenges were identified, including the limited and uncertain production capacity of Kona coffee and the restricted quantities available for export to mainland China. Additionally, tariff barriers remained a significant obstacle, as Hawai'i coffee was subject to retaliatory tariffs on U.S. agricultural products, which led to higher overall prices. Both parties agreed on the need to intensify efforts to raise consumer awareness and appreciation of Hawai'i coffee in China.

The HCA planned to organize a delegation to China in May 2025, while SHOB planned to lead a group of Chinese buyers to Hawai'i in November 2025 for the Kona Coffee Festival. SHOB continued collaborating with the USDA, ATO, and other official institutions to strengthen partnerships between Hawai'i coffee estates and key industry stakeholders.



*Ms. Emily Scott, Director of the Agricultural Trade Office (ATO), along with Mr. Eric S. Mullis, Agricultural Specialist, and Ms. Angie Han, Marketing Specialist from the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, visited SHOB to discuss promoting Hawai'i coffee in China*

- December 3: SHOB met with Director General Liu Quan, Director Song Yueping, and Vice Director Zhang Peipei from the International Communication and Cooperation Bureau of the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) in Beijing. As SHOB was registered with this government department, this marked the first meeting since Executive Director Dennis Suo assumed his role. The discussion focused on strategies for tourism development, particularly efforts to attract more Chinese visitors to the Hawaiian Islands and encourage Hawai'i residents to explore various provinces and cities in China. The meeting also addressed MCT's support for restoring and developing non-stop flights between Hawai'i and China. Additionally, plans for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hawai'i-Guangdong Sister-State Relationship ceremony in 2025 were discussed, with an emphasis on seeking MCT's support for the event.



*SHOB met with Director General Liu Quan, Director Song Yueping, and Vice Director Zhang Peipei from the International Communication and Cooperation Bureau of the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT) in Beijing*

**Part 5. BEIJING OFFICE EXPENSE (FY 2024)**

<b>Description of Expense</b>	<b>Total</b>
Director's Contract	\$42,820.00
Assistant's Salary	\$22,800.00
Office Rent	\$26,557.05
Bank Fees	\$2,640.37
Utilities	\$175.88
Phones/Fax/Long Distance Call	\$93.10
Office Supplies	\$221.98
Office Equipment	\$10.89
Taxi Fare	\$132.71
Miscellaneous Expense	\$6.55
Printing	\$298.19
Travel Expenses	\$558.96
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$96,382.45</b>