



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

**DEPT. COMM. NO. 303**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

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December 15, 2023

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

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki,  
Speaker and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Thirty-Second State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

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

For your information and consideration, I am transmitting a copy of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's Report on Sister-State, as required by Act 150, SLH 2006, Hawaii Revised Statutes. In accordance with Section 93-16, Hawaii 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/>.

Sincerely,

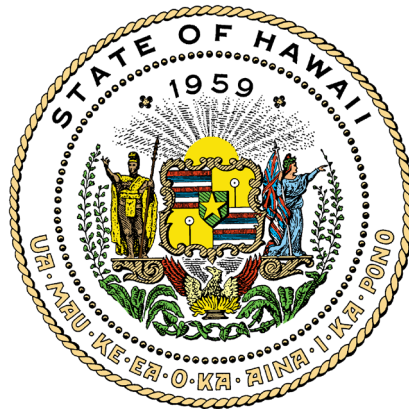
James Kunane Tokioka

Enclosure

c: Legislative Reference Bureau

**Report of Hawai'i's Sister State  
Committee on the**

**State of Hawai'i's  
Sister-States**



**Business Development & Support Division  
Department of Business, Economic  
Development & Tourism**

**December 2023**

A Report to the Legislature of the State of Hawai'i  
Prepared pursuant to Act 150, SLH 2006



## Hawai'i Sister-State Committee

As of 2023, the Hawai'i Sister-State Committee had four active members filling four of the five seats for this committee.

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Jane Clement</b>        | Representing: Hawai'i State Association of Counties   |
| <b>Vacant</b>              | Representing: Native Hawaiian Cultural Organization   |
| <b>Kurt Osaki</b>          | Representing: Speaker of the House of Representatives |
| <b>Jean E. Rolles</b>      | Representing: East-West Center                        |
| <b>Eduardo Topenio Jr.</b> | Representing: President of the Senate                 |
| <b>Dennis T. Ling</b>      | DBEDT – Committee Administration                      |
| <b>Mark Ritchie</b>        | DBEDT - Committee Administration                      |

With three committee members constituting a quorum, the Committee has been able to meet and continue its focus on the following goals and objectives:

- 1. The Committee takes an active role in evaluating prospective and current sister relationships, for both cultural and economic development reasons, with attention to fostering the most productive ties.**

There is agreement that most successful sister relationships occur when:

- a. There is commonality between Hawai'i and the sister, primarily from geographical, historical, cultural or economic standpoints.
- b. There are active and interested support groups, such as Chambers of Commerce, cultural and civic associations.

- c. There are economic benefits for both sisters, such as increased numbers of visitors, or enhanced investment or marketing opportunities.
- d. Close ties have been established between educational institutions of the two potential sisters, including both student and faculty exchanges.
- e. There is a clear, strong governmental interest in not only forming, but maintaining the relationship.

**2. To assure the productivity and viability of a sister relationship, the Committee has further reviewed and revised the sister-state application form. Last year, the Committee also reviewed and revised the Policies and Procedures Manual which governs the process of nominating and evaluating prospective and existing sister-states.**

In addition to completing the revised application form, additional requirements include:

- a. A letter from the Governor of the proposed sister.
- b. A designated point-of-contact person.
- c. Recent activity reports between Hawai'i and the proposed sister.
- d. Recommendations for future activities.

**3. The Committee periodically reviews the activities of each sister relation to determine which ties should be strengthened and which should be severed. The State has 20 sister relationships, dating back to 1981. Some relationships have been very active (e.g., Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Okinawa, Taiwan and Guangdong), while others have shown little or no activity (e.g., Azores Islands).**

| <b>SISTER-STATES (Chronological order)</b> |  |                         |
|--|--|-------------------------|
| <b>COUNTRY</b>                             | <b>PROVINCE/PREFECTURE</b>             | <b>YEAR ESTABLISHED</b> |
| Japan                                      | Fukuoka                                | 1981                    |
| Portugal                                   | Azores Islands                         | 1982                    |
| Greater China                              | Guangdong                              | 1985                    |
| Japan                                      | Okinawa                                | 1985                    |
| Philippines                                | Ilocos Sur                             | 1985                    |
| Korea                                      | Jeju                                   | 1986                    |
| Greater China                              | Hainan                                 | 1992                    |
| Greater China                              | Taiwan                                 | 1993                    |
| Philippines                                | Cebu                                   | 1996                    |
| Japan                                      | Hiroshima                              | 1997                    |
| Philippines                                | Pangasinan                             | 2002                    |
| Japan                                      | Ehime                                  | 2003                    |
| Philippines                                | Ilocos Norte                           | 2005                    |
| Philippines                                | Isabela                                | 2006                    |
| Morocco                                    | Rabat-Sale-Zemmour-Zaer                | 2011                    |
| Indonesia                                  | Bali                                   | 2014                    |
| Japan                                      | Hokkaido                               | 2017                    |
| India                                      | Goa (expired)                          | 2018                    |
| Japan                                      | Yamaguchi                              | 2022                    |
| Portugal                                   | Madeira (Approved, but not signed yet) | 202X                    |

| <b>SISTER-STATES (Alphabetical order by country and area)</b> |  |                         |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| <b>COUNTRY</b>  | <b>PROVINCE/PREFECTURE</b>             | <b>YEAR ESTABLISHED</b> |
| Greater China   | Guangdong                              | 1985                    |
|   | Hainan                                 | 1992                    |
|   | Taiwan                                 | 1993                    |
| India   | Goa (expired)                          | 2018                    |
| Indonesia   | Bali                                   | 2014                    |
| Japan   | Fukuoka                                | 1981                    |
|   | Okinawa                                | 1985                    |
|   | Hiroshima                              | 1997                    |
|   | Ehime                                  | 2003                    |
|   | Hokkaido                               | 2017                    |
|   | Yamaguchi                              | 2022                    |
| Korea   | Jeju                                   | 1986                    |
| Morocco   | Rabat-Sale-Zemmour-Zaer                | 2011                    |
| Philippines   | Ilocos Sur                             | 1985                    |
|   | Cebu                                   | 1996                    |
|   | Pangasinan                             | 2002                    |
|   | Ilocos Norte                           | 2005                    |
|   | Isabela                                | 2006                    |
| Portugal  | Azores Islands                         | 1982                    |
|   | Madeira (Approved, but not signed yet) | 202X                    |

## **GREATER CHINA**

### **Guangdong Province (1985)**

With the support of Guangdong Foreign Affairs Office (GDFAO), the Consulate General of China in Los Angeles, the Agricultural Trade Office, Beijing (ATO Beijing), and the effort from the State of Hawai'i Beijing Office (SHOB), and Hawai'i Coffee Association (HCA), 12 coffee farms from Hawai'i received the certified Unroasted Coffee and Cocoa Beans Export Certificate from General Administration of Customs of China (GACC) in August 2023.

In April 2023, a delegation of five individuals from the GDFAO, led by the Deputy Director-General Mr. Luo Jun, visited State of Hawai'i and met with DBEDT Deputy Director Dane Wicker to exchange views with common interests for potential collaboration between Hawai'i and Guangdong, including but not limited to Hawai'i coffee, trade missions, participation in travel and tourism expos, and continuously supporting student exchange programs.

In August 2022, DBEDT and Synergistic Hawai'i Agriculture Council (SHAC) organized a virtual coffee presentation to introduce Hawai'i coffee to the Chinese market. With the support of the Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) based in Guangzhou, 26 companies participated in the virtual event, including JD Mall, HoteLEX, coffee distributors, coffee shop owners, and coffee roasteries.

As a result of the virtual coffee event, ATO Guangzhou has become enthusiastic about promoting Hawai'i coffee. The ATO office is planning to organize a similar virtual coffee event in the future, focusing on promoting the Hawai'i coffee industry in Guangdong Province.

In July 2022, the Guangdong Foreign Affairs Office invited Hawai'i schools to join the 2022 GD Youth Link Painting and Calligraphy Competition. One of the organizers was the Guangdong People's Association for Friendship. 'Iolani School and Pearl City Highlands Elementary School attended the competition and won awards.

Also in 2022, Sun Yat-sen Memorial Secondary School at Zhongshan invited Punahou school to an online musical collaboration that honors a 25-year partnership between the cities of Honolulu and Zhongshan, the birthplace of Sun Yat-sen. The two schools have been in a sister-school relationship since 2016.



## **Hainan Province (1992)**

In August 2023, Hainan Province sent a delegation of ten officials, led by the Vice Governor of the People's Government of Hainan Province, H.E. Mr. Chen Huaiyu, who met with Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke to promote bilateral economic and trade exchanges, particularly cooperation in trade of agricultural products, and to discuss cooperation and opportunities in the fields of tourism, culture and people-to-people exchanges between Hawai'i and Hainan.

The delegation also held a Hainan Free Trade Port promotion event in Hawai'i to introduce the development of Haina Free Trade Port and its preferential policies, to attract and encourage Hawai'i companies to take advantage of this Free Trade Port to export to China.

The Hainan Foreign Affairs Office invited the State of Hawai'i to the 24<sup>th</sup> Island Tourism Policy Forum (ITOP) in November 2023. The forum was the first to be held in-person after a three-year gap following the global pandemic. The meeting brought together officials to experience the scenery, culture, and achievements of Hainan.

In 2022 Hawai'i and Hainan celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their Sister-State Relationship; however, due to COVID restrictions in China, Hawai'i and Hainan were unable to plan a commemorative celebration.

There were not any other Sister-State activities between Hainan and Hawai'i in 2021 due to the pandemic. However, the State of Hawai'i Beijing Office (SHOB) maintained relations and discussions with the Investment Officer of Hainan's Department of Commerce and the Hainan Provincial Bureau of International Economic Development (IEDB) for possible cooperation in the future.

## **Taiwan (1993)**

In October 2023, the Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOFA) and Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Honolulu invited Hawai'i State legislators to Taiwan to promote cooperation and exchanges in tourism, agriculture, culture, education, and trade.

In November 2023, the Synergistic Hawai'i Agriculture Council (SHAC) and Hawai'i Coffee Association (HCA) attended the 2023 Taiwan International Coffee Show to introduce Hawai'i Coffee to the Taiwan market. This event was held concurrently with the Coffee Show and HAC also held a cupping event at Cuiqu Coffee in Taipei.

The Taiwan Council of Indigenous People (CIP) received an invitation from Governor Green to participate in the 2024 Festival of Pacific Art and Culture (FestPAC) and is working with the FestPAC Commission to confirm their participation.

In 2023, Hawai'i and Taiwan celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their Sister-State Relationship; however, due to the Maui Wildfires, Hawai'i and Taiwan postponed the commemorative celebration to 2024.

To assist the Hawai'i state government and victims on Maui, the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has pledged \$500,000 for recovery from wildfires on August 22, 2023. TECO in Honolulu, an official mission embraced humanitarian diplomacy to strengthen ties between Taiwan and the state of Hawai'i, also initiated and coordinated a fundraising campaign among the communities of Taiwanese Americans and Chinese from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, this campaign that raised \$155,260.

Another donation came from the Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce of North America (TCCNA) which raises funds among their members around North America. On behalf of all the members, Mr. Joey Chiang, President of TCCNA, visited Honolulu on September 18, 2023, to present a check of \$145,528 to the Hawai'i Community Foundation. TECO in Honolulu Director General Richard Lin, Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke, State Representative Adrian Tam, and State Representative Troy Hashimoto were also invited to the check presentation ceremony.

Including all donations, the Taiwan government and Taiwanese American community in Hawai'i and North America have donated more than \$800,000 in aggregate to assist with reconstruction following wildfires in Hawai'i.

On December 4, 2022, the State of Hawai'i was invited by the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP) to deliver a speech at the 2022 Indigenous Youth Employment Function and Exchange Activity, where 40 university students from Taiwan and Pacific Island nations attended. The State of Hawai'i Taipei Office (SHOT) represented Hawai'i and delivered a speech.

In November 2022, the Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOFA) invited foreign journalists to attend the World Journalist Mission to Taiwan. Hawai'i journalists attended as part of this mission from the U.S. to Taiwan.

On November 16, 2022, two coffee experts from Hawai'i, Ms. Madeleine Longoria Garcia and Mr. Miguel Meza, were invited to be guest speakers at the 2022 Pacific Rim Coffee Summit, which is the largest Taiwan coffee event held annually in Taipei with over 300 people attending.

On November 11, 2022, the Director-General of North America Affairs, Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Mr. Douglas Yu-Tien Hsu, held a working lunch event with representatives of the United States offices to share their activities over the year. The State of Hawai'i was one of the invitees that attended.

In October 2022, DBEDT and the Synergistic Hawai'i Agriculture Council (SHAC) held a reverse trade mission for Taiwan coffee buyers to visit coffee farms in Hawai'i. 12 people representing 8 different companies attended the 8-day mission to make connections between Taiwan buyers and the Hawai'i coffee industry.

In September 2022, DBEDT and the Synergistic Hawai'i Agriculture Council (SHAC) organized and conducted a 2022 Virtual Hawai'i Coffee Mart in Taipei to promote Hawai'i Coffee and encouraged buyers to attend the reverse trade mission to Hawai'i. Over 50 buyers attended the event.

On August 31, 2022, the State of Hawai'i was invited to attend an annual U.S. Business Day event organized by the Bureau of Foreign Trade, Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOFA). SHOT attended and gave a 30-minute presentation to promote investment and import/export opportunities with Hawai'i.

In August 2022, SHOT represented the State of Hawai'i at the opening ceremony of the 2022 Indigenous Rights Forum organized by the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP).

On January 13, 2022, the State of Hawai'i was invited by the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP) to attend the Austronesia Forum and Executive Council Meeting. SHOT represented the State at the event.

### **INDIA**

#### **Goa (2018)**

The State of Hawai'i and the State of Goa signed a Sister-State Agreement on October 28, 2018. According to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the agreement expires three years after the initial signing, which would be October 2021, unless both parties agree to continue the relationship. DBEDT has reached out to officials in Goa inquiring about their desire to continue the relationship but have not heard back at the time of the writing of this report.

On October 2, 2020, the Honorable Governor of Goa, Pramod Savant participated in a webinar organized by Honolulu-based Gandhi International Institute for Peace.

In July 2021 face masks, face shields and PPE gowns were donated by the Gandhi International Institute for Peace & the Hawai'i Sister State Committee to the Government of Goa to assist them during the COVID-19 crisis.

### **INDONESIA**

#### **Bali, Indonesia (2014)**

No activities reported for 2022-2023.

### **JAPAN**

#### **Hawai'i-Japan Sister Summit (July 27-28, 2023)**

DBEDT, in collaboration with the Japan-America Society of Hawai'i (JASH), convened the inaugural Hawai'i-Japan Sister Summit from July 27-28, 2023, at the Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort.

With the theme, "The Ties That Bind", the Governor of the State of Hawai'i, the Mayors of the City & Counties of Honolulu, Kaua'i, Maui and Hawai'i, and the Governors, Mayors and designated representatives of the six sister prefectures and sixteen cities and towns in Japan participated in the Summit. The Sister Summit was an opportunity to explore common issues to further deepen and strengthen sister and friendship relationships by setting goals to increase exchanges between our governments and municipalities and share information of the respective exchange programs. In total, over 400 participants attended the two-day event.

Each sister prefecture from Japan was represented at the Summit either by a Governor or Vice Governor. It was the first time that all of the sister officials participated in a joint meeting that solidified the relationships between the State of Hawai'i and the six prefectures.

The State of Hawai'i received tremendous support from the Japan sister prefectures as a result of the tragic wildfires on Maui and the devastation of Lahaina Town. The overwhelming support has further strengthened the close ties Hawai'i shares with Japan.

## **Fukuoka Prefecture (1981)**

The Hawai'i Fukuoka Kenjin Kai (HFKK) is the point-of-contact for many activities together with the Fukuoka Prefectural Government. There were numerous visits and activities that took place between June 2022 until 2023 as follows:

The Fukuoka International Exchange Foundation traveled to Hawai'i to meet with HFKK members regarding future exchanges and activities.

In January 2023, Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly members participated in the opening of the Hawai'i State Legislature.

In April 2023, Governor Josh Green hosted Fukuoka Governor Seitaro Hattori and 21 members of his delegation at a reception at Washington Place. During this event both Governors signed a sister-state reaffirmation agreement.

During the summer of 2023, Fukuoka Prefecture and Kapiolani Community College (KCC) entered into an exchange agreement where students from Fukuoka participated in a culinary program at KCC. Students from Hawai'i also had the opportunity to travel to Fukuoka to experience a culinary program there, too.

In July 2023, Fukuoka Vice-Governor Masaru Eguchi participated in the Hawai'i-Japan Sister Summit.

Fukuoka Prefecture, the Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly and the cities of Yame, Buzen and Ukiha made contributions to the Maui Wildfire relief efforts in excess of \$2,300,000 yen.

On October 17, 2023, the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu hosted guests from Fukuoka Prefectural Fisheries High School. The guests included Vice Principal Katsuyoshi Kominami, Training vessel Kaiyu-maru Captain Hirokazu Totoki and two student representatives. Fifty-four trainees from the school departed mid-September from Japan to spend a month at sea for longline tuna fishing training. Hawai'i was their last port of call during this training program. During their five-day stay in Honolulu, they engaged in exchanges with students from James Campbell High School and participated in a study tour before returning to Fukuoka.

The celebration of the 40th anniversary of Hawai'i's Sister State relationship with Fukuoka in August resulted in the development of a new sister school relationship between Washington Middle School and Jyoyo Hokuzei Gakuen in Yame City. Both schools have a past connection to the late U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye, and principals are committed to having students learn about each other's culture and history and will work together to provide a mutually beneficial student exchange program.

The Japan-America Society of Hawai'i (JASH) has coordinated and facilitated online exchanges between Washington Middle School and Joyo Hokuzei School, located in Yame, Fukuoka, since December 2021. Topics have ranged from sharing about holidays and famous foods and things to do in each city, as well as personal hobbies and likes. Since May 2023, Yame City has been directly taking care of arranging these exchanges, with JASH supporting them as necessary. The next online exchange is scheduled to be held on December 5, 2023, with Hawai'i students sharing about Thanksgiving and Yame students sharing about their hometown.

In November 2022, a goodwill mission by a global leadership team of six secondary school principals and two complex area superintendents led by Hawai'i Department of Education (HDOE) Superintendent Keith Hayashi and Board of Education Chair Bruce Voss visited six prefectures in Japan that have relationships with Hawai'i, including Fukuoka.

During the visit to Fukuoka, HDOE officials toured Kyushu Sangyo University (KSU) and discussed possible short-term visits by Hawai'i High School students. The delegation also met with representatives of the Fukuoka Prefectural Board of Education.

Also in 2022, DBEDT welcomed 22 officials representing the Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly and related government organizations. During the visit, the delegation made courtesy calls on Governor David Y. Ige and representatives of the Hawai'i State Legislature. In addition, the visit included meeting with the University of Hawai'i Kapiolani Community College and Fukuoka product promotion activities on O'ahu.

DBEDT also hosted a reception for the Fukuoka officials at Washington Place that included Fukuoka Kenjin Kai representatives, statewide. The evening reaffirmed Hawai'i's commitment to support this important relationship.

The Hawai'i Global Education Foundation, in collaboration with HFKK and DBEDT, received a grant-in-aid to develop memorial plaques for Governor George Ariyoshi, former U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye, and former astronaut Ellison Onizuka. The city of Buzen, ancestral hometown of Governor George Ariyoshi, unveiled a display at their City Hall to honor the former Hawai'i governor. The display included a bronze plaque gifted to Fukuoka by the State of Hawai'i, photographs, and an informational poster of Governor Ariyoshi's achievements in U.S. and Hawai'i politics. Members of Governor Ariyoshi's family visited Buzen during the fall of 2022.

The City of Yame, ancestral hometown of the late U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye, unveiled a commemorative bronze bust in a community park to honor the former United States Senator from Hawai'i. The bust was commissioned by the City of Yame with financial support from the State of Hawai'i. Adjacent to the park is a community center

and a small local museum honoring Senator Inouye. Members of the Inouye family visited Yame City in the fall of 2022.

Family members of the three gentlemen and representatives from the Hawai'i Fukuoka Kenjin Kai visited their Fukuoka ancestral hometowns for ceremonial unveilings of the memorial plaques. In addition, the Hawai'i delegation met with mayors of the respective cities, Fukuoka Governor Seitaro Hattori and members of the Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly.

### **Okinawa Prefecture (1985)**

HUOA may be the only Okinawan kenjinkai that arranges annual visits by HUOA Presidents and Presidents-Elect with Okinawan government officials, University of the Ryukyus, and news/media corporations including the Ryukyu Shimpo and Okinawa Times. Through these face-to-face visits, friendships are formed and the collaboration and education between Hawai'i Uchinanchu members and Okinawa friends and relatives can be perpetuated.

In March 2023, the 33rd Annual Student Exchange in Hawai'i was completed. HUOA welcomed 15 Okinawa high school students and coordinated homestay and cultural/educational excursions.

In June 2023, 15 Hawai'i high school students participated in a two-week homestay and school immersion program in Okinawa.

During the Hawai'i-Japan Sister Summit, one of the goals of the summit was to re-invigorate and strengthen Hawai'i and Japan's connection that was on pause during the COVID-19 pandemic. Okinawa Prefecture Governor Denny Tamaki was the keynote speaker on the first day of the Summit, followed by Mayor Hideo Tobaru from Kumejima Cho. This preceded the panel on sustainable energy – which the Hawai'i-Okinawa partnership has been working on for over a decade in their commitment to clean and efficient energy development and deployment. In conjunction with the Summit, HUOA hosted an Aloha Party to welcome officials from Okinawa and celebrate Hawai'i-Okinawa relations.

In September 2023, 11 HUOA members representing different clubs traveled to Okinawa to meet with the Governor and Mayors of their respective ancestral clubs. In addition, invitations were presented for the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Okinawan Immigration celebration in Hawai'i in 2025.

The 41<sup>st</sup> Okinawan Festival was held at the Hawai'i Convention Center in September that attracted over 50,000 attendees, some from Okinawa, too.

In October 2023, 23 HUOA members participated in the annual HUOA Heritage (Study) and traveled to Okinawa to learn about their heritage and experienced meetings with government leaders and participated in hands-on activities.

Also in October, a delegation of 16 individuals representing the Okinawa Association of Corporate Executives traveled to Hawai'i and met with State officials. The group's travel objectives were to study potential overseas business opportunities in advanced overseas locations in the U.S. The group met with Department of Transportation officials to discuss issues and countermeasures in Hawai'i related to traffic congestion. They were also interested in learning how Hawai'i met the challenge of labor shortages as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic.

HUOA established the YUIMAARU Maui fundraiser in Hawai'i and in Okinawa to assist the residents of Lahaina impacted by the August 8<sup>th</sup> wildfires. Current contributions exceed \$200,000.

The HUOA had a busy and productive 2022 in Hawai'i and Okinawa.

The 40<sup>th</sup> Okinawan Festival was held in September 2022 at the Hawai'i Convention Center. This event attracted over 45,000 community members and visitors back to the largest in-person ethnic festival in the state since 2019.

In October 2022, Governor David Y. Ige and First Lady Dawn Amano-Ige traveled to Okinawa at the invitation of the Okinawa Prefectural Government to participate in the 7<sup>th</sup> Uchinanchu Taikai. Governor Ige had a number of speaking engagements including addressing members of the Lions Club where over 200 business executives were in attendance. Governor Ige also participated as a leader in the Taikai Parade along with U.S. Ambassador Rahm Emanuel and approximately 700 participants from Hawai'i.

### **Hiroshima Prefecture (1997)**

Since the establishment of the Hawai'i-Hiroshima Sister-State Relationship, the Hiroshima Hawai'i Sister State Committee (HHSSC) has worked together with the Hiroshima Prefectural Government on mutually beneficial programs and causes in the spirit of building a partnership of friendship, cooperation, and aloha between the people of both regions. It has been the committee's goal to concentrate their collective efforts on programs focused on education; business and economic development; culture and the arts; athletics; and peace initiatives.

In 2023, the HHSSC initiated and participated in the following programs and events in collaboration with Honolulu Hiroshima Kenjin Kai (HHKK):



-The HHKK selected two students from Hawai'i to participate in its International Student Exchange Program. The students traveled to Hiroshima and engaged in a positive educational opportunity.

-The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Otafuku Sauce company was held in Honolulu. HHKK and HHSSC assisted Otafuku with a Hawaiian vacation for its employees. Otafuku has supported Hawai'i in many ways including welcoming Hawai'i officials to visit its factory in Hiroshima and donating its famous okonomiyaki sauce on many occasions.

-Hiroshima hosted the Hiroshima Junior International Forum in 2023, which was held after the G7 Summit was held in Hiroshima. 85 high school students from 24 countries participated in this event. The State of Hawai'i was represented by one student.

-Both HHKK and HHSSC hosted the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kamotsuru Sake Brewery's sales management in Honolulu to promote the sake within the state. Kamotsuru has been the official sake of the HHKK since 2016. The Hiroshima-based sake brewery also has supported organizations on Hawai'i Island such as the East Hawai'i Hiroshima Kenjin Kai and Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

-Hiroshima Prefecture was well represented during the Hawai'i-Japan Sister Summit by Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki and members of his delegation. Governor Yuzaki spoke during a panel discussion with former State Senator Brian Taniguchi and facilitated by Mr. Paul Yonamine, Chairman Emeritus, Central Pacific Bank.

-A major undertaking by Mr. Wayne Miyao, President of the HHKK and HHSSC, was the establishment of a Sister-Park relationship between Pearl Harbor and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. World War II in the Pacific tragically started on December 7, 1941, at Pearl Harbor and ended with the unfortunate bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. Although Hiroshima and Hawai'i are linked by war, the Sister-Park relationship will promote peace, goodwill and reconciliation. In April 2023, Mr. Miyao was contacted by the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, the U.S. Consulate in Osaka, and the office of Hiroshima's Mayor. After a lengthy process, an agreement was reached and signed on June 29, 2023, by U.S. Ambassador Rahm Emanuel and Hiroshima's Mayor Kazumi Matsui at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.

-Mr. Miyao was invited to participate in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Service on August 6, 2023, along with U.S. Ambassador Emanuel and many foreign dignitaries. He was received warmly by the citizens of Hiroshima, including the hibakusha (survivors of the Atomic bomb) and participated in a press conference with Mayor Matsui.

-In September, Ohana Arts presented Peace on Your Wings in Hiroshima. The performance included 25 students from Hawai'i and a total delegation of 50 participants.

-Also in September 2023, the Hawai'i Department of Education (HDOE) led a delegation of elementary and middle school students and faculty to Hiroshima. The experiences shared by students confirmed the impact of these international visits for students to learn about complex global issues that they can hopefully apply to innovative solutions during their education journey.

-DBEDT led a legislative delegation to Hiroshima in August 2023. Legislative leaders had the opportunity to meet with Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki. They also met with the owner of the Hiroshima Toyo Carp Baseball team and the president of Hiroshima Mazda Motor Corporation, owner of a restaurant in Hawai'i.

Hiroshima Prefecture and citizenry made contributions to the Maui Wildfire relief efforts totaling in excess of 9,250,000 yen.

2022 was an auspicious year for the Hawai'i-Hiroshima Sister-State Relationship with the commemoration of 25 years of establishing this formal relationship between the two regions. The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was honored and celebrated in Hiroshima and in Hawai'i during 2022.

A delegation of over 60 individuals, led by Governor David Y. Ige and First Lady Dawn Amano-Ige traveled to Hiroshima to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hawai'i-Hiroshima Sister-State Relationship. Working in collaboration with the Hawai'i-Hiroshima Sister-State Committee, the Hiroshima Prefectural Government and DBEDT, the visit included the following activities and events:

- Courtesy calls on Hiroshima Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki and Hiroshima Prefectural Assembly Chair Takashi Nakamoto;
- A 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala event with entertainment by Hawai'i's Jake Shimabukuro and Herb Ohta, Jr. Governor and Mrs. Ige were honored by the Hiroshima Prefectural Government during this event for their dedication and commitment to the relationship through the years. In addition, the Hawai'i State Legislature honored Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Assembly Member Shin Uda and Kamotsuru Sake Brewery for their continued support of the Hawai'i-Hiroshima relationship with legislative messages for each honoree;
- Visit to the Orizuru Tower that overlooks the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum. This visited was hosted by owner Mr. Tetsuya Matsuda;

- Visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum where the State of Hawai'i placed a wreath at the monument;
- Tour of the Mazda Museum and Factory;
- Signing of a sister-library agreement between the Hawai'i State Public Library System and the Hiroshima Prefectural Library;
- Attendance at a Hiroshima Carp professional baseball game which was billed as "Hawai'i Night" where Governor Ige threw the first pitch;
- Visit to Sera Town where a reaffirmation agreement was signed between the Sera Town School Board and Niu Valley Middle School;
- Visit to the state-of-the-art Hiroshima Global Academy which is a prefectural international boarding school where English is the language of instruction;
- Visit to Hiroshima Eikei University which established relationships with University of Hawai'i campuses.

Also in 2022, Governor Ige welcomed Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki and a delegation of 27 officials to Hawai'i. The delegation attended many events on O'ahu and on Hawai'i Island.

During their stay, the delegation was represented at the following activities and events:

- Visit to Pearl Harbor National Memorial where Governor Yuzaki and Assembly Chairperson Takashi Nakamoto presented wreaths to honor the memory of those who lost their lives during the Pearl Harbor attack;
- Meetings with Governor Ige and Hawai'i State Legislators;
- Governor Yuzaki and delegation made a stop at the Hiroshima Torii Gate where a brief program and ceremony was arranged by the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce;
- Visit to the University of Hawai'i where Eikei University and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa entered into an exchange agreement;
- Visit and tour of the Hawai'i State Library as a follow-up to the signing of the sister-library agreement that was held in Hiroshima;
- Attended a special reception at Washington Place hosted by the State of Hawai'i where members of the Hiroshima community also attended and met with the visiting officials from Hiroshima;
- Held various activities on Hawai'i Island that included special events with the Hiroshima Kenjin Kai in Hilo and Kona and visit to the Puna Geothermal Venture among other site visits.

### **Ehime Prefecture (2003)**

Ehime Prefecture was represented by its Vice Governor during the Hawai'i-Japan Sister Summit in July 2023.

In September, the Ehime Prefecture International Center's (EPIC) Ehime-Hawai'i High School Exchange program was held in Hawai'i. The annual educational program included a visit to the Ehime Maru Memorial at the Kaka'ako Waterfront Park.

In October 2023, the Executive Committee of the Ehime-Hawai'i Goodwill Youth Baseball, led by Ehime Prefectural Assembly Member, Junnosuke Kaino, signed an International Program Agreement with Dr. Ken Ito, of the Asia Pacific Exchange and Development (APED), to reestablish the Ehime-Hawai'i Goodwill Baseball Exchange, which was suspended due to the global pandemic. This memorandum of understanding was signed at the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu. The youth baseball tournament that started in 2002 will continue again from 2024.

Also during the October 2023 visit, the Executive Committee of the Ehime-Hawai'i Goodwill Youth Baseball met with Misaki Takabayashi, Chancellor of Kapiolani Community College (KCC) to establish potential educational exchanges between Matsuyama University and KCC. Earlier in the day, the group paid respects at the grave site of Dr. Seiji Naya, former DBEDT Director, who was instrumental in creating the exchanges with Ehime Prefecture through youth baseball.

In February 2022, a traditional memorial service for the Ehime Maru was held by the Japan-America Society of Hawai'i at the Kakaako Waterfront Park. Consul General Yutaka Aoki, Governor David Y. Ige and Honolulu Mayor Rick Blangiardi laid wreaths during the ceremony.

In August 2022, Governor and Mrs. Ige made an official visit to Ehime Prefecture which was the first visit by a Hawai'i Governor. During this visit, they met with Governor Tokihiro Nakamura and Ehime Prefectural Assembly Speaker, Hiroshi Watanabe. In addition, Governor and Mrs. Ige traveled to Uwajima City and met with Uwajima's Mayor Fumiaki Okahara and presented a floral bouquet at the Ehime Maru Memorial at the Uwajima Fisheries High School. It was also an opportunity for the Governor and First Lady to meet with bereaved family members of the Ehime Maru.

From September 30 – October 4, 2022, eight students representing high schools in Ehime traveled to Hawai'i to participate in a cultural exchange hosted by the Ehime

Prefectural International Center (EPIC). EPIC has organized this exchange program that annually sends students from Ehime to Hawai'i. Students visited various sites on O'ahu such as the Ehime Maru Memorial, University of Hawai'i and Honolulu Hale. They also participated in a two-day home visit with students from Punahou and St. Louis Schools. They also visited Punahou School to experience school life in Hawai'i and made presentations about their hometowns, culture and school activities. They also had an exchange meeting with the Moanalua High School Japanese Club members.

### **Hokkaido Prefecture (2017)**

In January 2023, Hokkaido Prefecture sent a delegation of 40 people to Hawai'i that included government officials, students and representatives of the Ainu people. DBEDT welcomed the delegation with a reception at Washington Place. Representatives of the Hokkaido Club in Hawai'i and other community leaders were represented.

During the January 2023 visit, five Hokkaido school students participated in a student exchange program. In March, Obihiro Hakuyo High School and Kalani High School signed a sister-school agreement. This was followed by Kalani High School visiting Obihiro Hakuyo High School in the summer of 2023. During the month of October, Anuenue School traveled to Hokkaido. Hokkaido has had great interest in learning how the Hawaiian Immersion School developed its curriculum. Also in October, Kokusai Joho High School visited Kaiser High School. All of the above educational exchanges were planned and organized, in partnership, between the Hawai'i Department of Education and the Hokkaido Board of Education.

Hokkaido Prefecture was well represented during the Hawai'i-Japan Sister-Summit in July 2023. The prefecture's exhibit was one of the most popular during the Summit.

Hokkaido's support of the Maui Wildfire relief efforts included total contributions of 3,439,552 yen of which 1,000,000 yen was donated by the Hokkaido Government and 1,000,000 yen was donated by the Hokkaido Legislative Assembly. The remaining 1,439,552 yen was collected from among the employees of the Hokkaido Government.

During 2023, the Hokkaido Hawai'i Club traveled to Hokkaido on a number of occasions, promoted Hokkaido Genghis Khan cuisine hosted by the Hokkaido People's Association, promoted Hokkaido ramen at a festival in Honolulu, and hosted a luncheon meeting welcoming the Hokkaido Prefectural delegation to Hawai'i during Hawai'i Sister-Summit.

2022 marked the 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hawai'i-Hokkaido Sister-State Relationship. To honor this milestone anniversary, Governor David Y. Ige, representatives of the Hawai'i State Legislature and Hokkaido Club Hawai'i traveled to Hokkaido.

During the visit, in addition to the customary courtesy visits with Governor Naomichi Suzuki and Assembly Members in Hokkaido, the Hokkaido Prefectural Government hosted an anniversary reception in honor of Governor Ige and the Hawai'i delegation. Attendees were also treated to a live performance by the Ainu who are indigenous citizens of Hokkaido.

International educational exchanges are important to the Hokkaido Prefectural Government similar to Hawai'i's interest in fostering and nurturing student exchanges between Hawai'i and Hokkaido. In this regard, the prefecture hosted an educational roundtable with Governor Ige and other Hawai'i representatives as well as the Superintendent of the Hokkaido Board of Education and representatives of universities and high schools. The dialogue encouraged increasing educational exchanges between Hawai'i and Hokkaido beginning in 2023.

The Hawai'i delegation also had an opportunity to visit the Kokusai Johou High School to better understand a typical school day for students. The students also treated the Hawai'i visitors with a performance that demonstrated their command of the English language.

### **Yamaguchi Prefecture (2022)**

In January 2023, Vice Governor Hiraya led a delegation of 20 officials and 160 students to Hawai'i. During this visit, the Hawai'i State Legislature and the Yamaguchi Prefectural Assembly signed a legislative friendship agreement. Also, during this visit, the signing of a sister agreement between the Hawai'i Department of Education and the Yamaguchi Prefectural Board of Education was held at the Ohana Waikiki East Outrigger Hotel. The Honolulu Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai also hosted the visiting delegation from Yamaguchi Prefecture to an Aloha Reception that included club members from Honolulu.

Vice Governor Hiraya and members of his delegation also made a courtesy call on Governor Josh Green. In recognition of this visit and the sister-state agreement, DBEDT hosted a reception at Washington Place.

In July 2023, Governor Tsugumasa Muraoka and Prefectural Assembly Chairperson Yanai participated in the Hawai'i-Japan Sister Summit. Coinciding with this event, the 6<sup>th</sup> Overseas Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai World Grand Meeting was co-hosted by the Yamaguchi Prefectural Government and the Honolulu Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai and attended by representatives of Yamaguchi, Brazil, Shanghai, Los Angeles, Kaua'i, Kona and Honolulu. The World Grand meeting also included exchanges between youth from Brazil, Los Angeles, Kaua'i and Honolulu Kenjin Kai Clubs.

On October 16, 2023, Mr. Kiyotaka Fujimoto, Mayor of Suo-Oshima Town of Yamaguchi Prefecture visited the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu. In 1885, many residents from the town immigrated to Hawai'i when the system of Kanyaku-Imin, or contract laborer immigrants, first began. This year marked the 60th anniversary of the town's sisterhood with the County of Kaua'i. Consul General Yoshinori Kodama shared that he was impressed by the longstanding friendly relationship between Suo-Oshima Town and Hawai'i and expressed his hope for further expansion of exchanges.

Yamaguchi Prefecture has a four-year project funded by Japan's Ministry of Defense to support (1) increasing their students' English proficiency, (2) doing it with Hawai'i schools (3) having students develop projects that are both local and global in scope, and (4) improving relations between the residents on the U.S. Marine Corps Air Base in Iwakuni and the surrounding community.

Yamaguchi Prefectural Assembly Chairperson Yanai visited Governor Josh Green and pledged 1,000,000 yen to the Maui Wildfire relief efforts. In addition, Yamaguchi Prefecture, its citizens, and organizations contributed in excess of 6,000,000 yen.

The State of Hawai'i and the Prefecture of Yamaguchi officially entered into a Sister-State Relationship in 2022. The signing event was held in Suo-Oshima and witnessed by over 30 representatives from Hawai'i with Governor David Y. Ige and First Lady Dawn Amano-Ige leading the delegation.

The Honolulu Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai and Kaua'i Yamaguchi Kenjin Kai were represented during this auspicious occasion. Members of the Hawai'i State Legislature also participated in the visit and State Representative Dee Morikawa spoke on behalf of the Hawai'i State Legislature and the island of Kaua'i. Kaua'i and Suo-Oshima have enjoyed a sister-island relationship since 1963.

Official calls on Governor Tsugumasa Muraoka and Suo-Oshima Mayor Kiyotaka Fujimoto by Governor Ige and the Hawai'i delegation were captured by the Japan

media. Both sides look forward to strengthening cooperation in various areas including cultural and educational exchanges.

In 1885, the government of Hawai'i worked with the Japanese government to implement an immigration policy known as "Kanyaku Immin" where approximately 10,000 immigrants traveled to Hawai'i from Yamaguchi Prefecture. There is much historical interest in this relationship including the information that can be found in the Museum of Japanese Emigration to Hawai'i that is located in Suo-Oshima.

### **KOREA**

#### **Jeju Province (1986)**

In October 2023, Hawai'i was represented during the Jeju International Youth Forum where 200 participants, including 31 city and 13 country representatives, convened in Jeju. The Hawai'i Department of Education sent four high school teams to participate in this international event.

2022 marked the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hawai'i's sister-state relationship with Jeju. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, a virtual conference was held in celebration of this milestone. "Carbon Neutralization for the Next Generation: Local Cooperation to Achieve Carbon Net-Zero and Climate Action" was the theme of the conference which included speakers from Hawai'i and Jeju. Lieutenant Governor Josh Green and Jeju Lieutenant Governor Manseop Koo gave opening remarks. Maria Tome, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Program Manager from the Hawai'i State Energy Office was a featured speaker giving an update on the State's renewable energy efforts. The conference also included a panel of student speakers to talk about their vision for the future. Hawai'i was represented by Stacie Bae, a Kalani High School senior.

### **MOROCCO**

#### **Greater Region of Rabat-Sale-Zemmour-Zaer (2011)**

No activities reported in 2022-2023.

### **PHILIPPINES**

In collaboration with the Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i, DBEDT is co-sponsoring the Hawai'i-Philippines Sister States & Provinces Business Symposium on



March 13, 2024. Due to the uncertainties of the pandemic, the event that was initially scheduled for 2021 was delayed until 2024 and is expected to attract attendees from Hawai'i's sister-provinces in the Philippines.

**Ilocos Sur Province (1985)**

No activities reported for 2022-2023.

**Cebu Province, Philippines (1996)**

No activities reported for 2022-2023.

**Pangasinan Province (2002)**

No activities reported for 2022-2023.

**Ilocos Norte Province (2005)**

No activities reported for 2022-2023.

**Isabela Province (2006)**

No activities reported for 2022-2023.

**PORTUGAL**

**Azores Islands (1982)**

No activities reported for 2022-2023.

**Madeira (202X approved, but not signed yet)**

The Hawai'i Sister-State Committee was tasked by the Hawai'i legislature to consider a sister-state relationship with Madeira, Portugal. The Hawai'i Sister-State Committee met on November 16, 2021 to consider the application for Madeira, Portugal and Hawai'i to form a sister-state relationship. This was a very strong application with many people and organizations in Hawai'i and Madeira offering supporting testimony in written form and by videoconference. The Sister-State Committee made a unanimous recommendation to accept the application. DBEDT staff informed the Hawai'i legislature of the Committee's decision. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic an official

signing ceremony has not been scheduled yet although discussions have begun with the Consulate General of Portugal in San Francisco, which covers Hawai'i.