

# 'ELELE

The Hawai'i Business Ambassador Program  
for Meetings and Conventions

Fall 2017

HAWAII TOURISM  
AUTHORITY

KAUAI • O'AHU • MOLOKA'I • LANA'I • MAUI • HAWAII

Meet  
HAWAII.

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS SELECTS HAWAII FOR 2020 CONVENTION

Everyone on the Meet Hawai'i team working to bring the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) 2020 Biennial Convention to Honolulu knew it was an uphill battle and longshot from the start.



Howard Komine

However, after more than three years of persistence and determination, the NALC Executive Council unanimously selected Hawai'i over Las Vegas to host its 2020 convention. This gathering is expected to bring 7,000 delegates to O'ahu, representing more than 25,000 room nights with an anticipated economic impact of \$30 million.

The last time the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) held its meeting in Hawai'i was 2004 and many deemed it "their best meeting ever." So began the process a decade later to get this group back to the Islands.

In February 2014, 'Elele Program Manager Debbie Zimmerman was introduced to Howard Komine, President of the NALC's Honolulu Branch 860. Komine was also one of three people on the NALC Site Selection Committee and very committed to helping the Aloha State.

The first step in the strategy was to entice a smaller NALC conference – the Council of President's Meeting – to O'ahu. Komine successfully lobbied for the meeting, which was held at the Hilton Hawaiian Village in April 2015. Leveraging this opportunity, the Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) partnered to provide attendees entertainment and fresh floral lei - getting everyone thinking about bringing the biennial meeting back to Hawai'i.

Despite a successful Council of President's Meeting and outpouring of support from HCC, in February 2016 word came back to Meet Hawai'i that NALC would likely not return to the Islands because of its cost.

Unwilling to take "no" for an answer, Komine invited NALC President Fred Rolando to be the keynote speaker at the Hawai'i NALC State Convention. While here,

Komine ensured Rolando had the opportunity to experience many of the attributes he felt made Hawai'i a great choice for the NALC meeting. Later that fall, Komine also wrote a formal letter of invitation for the NALC to consider Honolulu for the 2020 meeting venue.

When the request for proposals came out for 2020, Hawai'i was invited to participate in the bid process and turned in a strong submission. This gave the Meet Hawai'i team the opportunity to host the NALC Selection Committee for a site inspection.



When the customers came on site, the industry rallied together to educate the clients and prove their interest in the business. The Hawai'i Convention Center hosted a destination breakfast allowing the clients to meet key industry stakeholders participating in the citywide bid – including some hotel general managers and top HTA leadership. Moreover, the Center's site inspection was conducted by Sean Coffey, HCC's Director of Event Services, who had managed the successful 2004 NALC meeting. (Coincidentally, his wife happens to be a letter carrier!)

The Meet Hawai'i team received word in September that Hawai'i had been selected for the NALC 2020 Biennial Convention. Hard work and determination paid off thanks to the many involved. However, a special mahalo nui goes out to Howard Komine, who helped champion this effort from the very start.

# HAWAI'I TO HOST 3,000 COMPUTING EDUCATORS, RESEARCHERS AND PROFESSIONALS IN 2020

Group bookings for 2020 continue to be brisk with the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) selecting Hawai'i for its Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (also known as the CHI Conference) in April 2020.

This meeting is part of a series of academic conferences generally considered the most prestigious in the field of human-computer interaction and has been held annually since 1982, attracting thousands of international attendees. The Hawai'i conference is expected to draw 3,000 participants with an economic impact of \$14 million.

'Elele Program Manager Debbie Zimmerman first became aware of this meeting after having lunch with University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Professor Jason Leigh, Ph.D. in October 2014. Dr. Leigh shared with her different technical meetings Hawai'i should be prospecting. ACM's CHI meeting was one of them and Leigh knew that the ACM CHI board of directors was coming to town the following week.

Acting on Leigh's tip, Zimmerman worked with the Hawai'i Convention Center to organize a facility tour while the ACM meeting planner was in town. ACM had an interest in connecting with Asia and had scheduled a future meeting in Korea, but they hadn't considered Hawai'i as a venue to connect with the Pacific Rim without having to leave the States.

In November 2016, an opportunity for Hawai'i to bid on the 2020 meeting finally came to fruition and the Meet Hawai'i team put together the destination bid. Liking



**Association for  
Computing Machinery**

what they saw in the proposal, ACM scheduled an Executive Committee Meeting in Honolulu in February 2017. Hawai'i hosted a dinner for the committee

which included Dr. Scott Robertson, Professor and Chair of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Information and Computer Sciences Department, who had been involved with past conventions and knew several of the visiting executive committee members.

With an aggressive proposal in hand and local support, ACM was impressed with Hawai'i's offer and confirmed the Hawai'i Convention Center as the meeting venue this past September.

We're grateful to 'Elele like Dr. Jason Leigh and Dr. Scott Robertson who help Meet Hawai'i identify and close group opportunities for the 50th State.



*Jason Leigh, Ph.D.  
Professor, Information &  
Computer Sciences Laboratory  
for Advanced Visualization  
& Applications University of  
Hawai'i at Mānoa*



*Scott Robertson, Professor  
and Chair, Information &  
Computer Sciences Department,  
University of Hawai'i at  
Mānoa*



*ACM Executive Council and UH Faculty Member, Dr. Scott Robertson, in Hawai'i.*

# DIY: THE ART OF CREATING HAWAI'I-GROWN MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

*Second story in a three-part series*

*When the subject of “Made in Hawai’i” products comes up in conversation, most people naturally think of handcrafted aloha shirts, specialty food items or arts and crafts only available in the Hawaiian Islands. However, when it comes to the meetings industry, Hawai’i has produced its fair share of world-renowned conferences that have been drawing attendees to the Aloha State from all over the globe for decades. The Hawaiian Islands may be the most isolated land mass on Earth, but we sure have some persistent and passionate ‘Elele that have seen their gatherings grow in prestige and scale over the years.*

In this issue, we continue our three-part series with a closer look at the Hawai’i International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS) and talk with Dr. Tung Bui, Professor and Chair of Information Technology Management at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa’s Shidler College of Business, about how the event began and how it has evolved over the years.



*Dr. Tung Bui*

As noted on its website, the HICSS is the longest standing scientific conference in the information systems and technology field. Since 1968, it has attracted high caliber scholars and professionals in academia, industry and government agencies around the world to present their cutting-edge research. With its highly interactive working environment, HICSS offers a unique platform for participants to share and exchange perspectives and ideas. During the past five decades, research papers presented at HICSS have promoted innovations and advanced the development in the information systems and technology at the global scale.



*Dr. Norman Abramson (second from left), conference co-chair of the first HICSS conference organized in 1968, was honored at the event’s 50th anniversary gathering by David Lasner, president of the University of Hawai’i System, Vance Roley, dean of the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa’s Shidler College of Business, and Dr. Tung Bui, professor and chair of Information Technology Management at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa’s Shidler College of Business.*

*What was the inspiration or catalyst for starting HICSS? Please provide some context of the meetings landscape for your sector at that time.*

The conference started in 1968 with a small group of researchers at UH in the early era of the Internet. Due to the isolated location of the Hawaiian Islands, UH researchers set up the conference as an opportunity for scholars to get together. The first conference had about 200 scientists representing all national labs and top university researchers. We could safely argue that the Hawai’i International Conference on System Sciences was a contributor to the creation of the World Wide Web known as the Internet today.

*What were some of the burdles/obstacles in getting HICSS going? How were they overcome?*

Science evolves. In information technology, we are witnessing multiple revolutions in very short time cycles. We are witnessing technological disruptions over and over again. Just as an example, we have seen how media for data storage has changed – from gigantic hard drives to tiny USB sticks. To keep the conference going, HICSS has managed to stay at the frontiers of technological innovation. As a conference run by grass-roots researchers, the event is known to be the leader in exploring future technologies.

*- continued on back*

# Join the 'ELELE PROGRAM

Please use your network to help us!  
For more information,  
contact Debbie Zimmerman,  
'Elele Program Director, at  
debbiez@hawaii.rr.com  
or 808-202-0044.

*continued from previous page*



## *How has HICSS evolved over the years?*

The conference evolves with the evolution of information technology and its applications. In its first 10 years of existence, the event focused on the design of telecommunications and computer networks leading to the internet today. The conference now focuses on all issues that relate to the use of I.T. in all areas – from business (management information systems) to public institutions (e-government), from the use of technologies in healthcare to the impact of social media. We also discuss the dark side of information technology.

## *How does HICSS benefit Hawai'i and its economy?*

In January 2017, we welcomed more than 1,300 participants to our 50th annual conference. The conference generated an estimated 6,500 room nights with visitors coming to the Island of Hawai'i from more than 50 countries. More importantly, the conference is another example that Hawai'i is not just a destination for rest and relaxation, but also an ideal venue to advance cutting edge scientific research.



## *Advice for others interested in starting home grown conferences of their own? What resources should be leveraged for success?*

Everyone loves to visit our islands. But, to grow a successful conference, we need to propose a program that brings true value to its attendees. In our case, we provide a venue for collaborative research, where “ideas meet and science speaks.” The conference is known for high return rates, where co-authors located in different parts of the country and the world convene in Hawai'i and engage in small groups working on their research projects.



## *Any final insights?*

For most academics, it is not cheap to attend a conference in Hawai'i. We have tried to keep the conference affordable to participants, and in particular to young researchers and students. In addition to continuing to raise the reputation of the conference as the research conference of choice, our challenge is to provide the best Hawai'i experience to our attendees while containing operational costs.

