26th New Generation Seminar
September 18-October 2, 2016
Cultural Heritage and Identity in a Globalizing, Urbanizing World
Honolulu • Phnom Penh • Yangon

Honolulu Speaker Biographies

In order of appearance in program

Eugénie BIRCH
Founding Co-director, Penn Institute for Urban Research and the Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research, Department of City Regional Planning, School of Design, University of Pennsylvania; Chair, UN-HABITAT World Urban Campaign and President of its special initiative, the General Assembly of Partners toward Habitat III, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Eugénie Birch is the Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research, Department of City and Regional Planning, School of Design, University of Pennsylvania. In addition, she is the founding co-director of the Penn Institute for Urban Research, chair of UN-HABITAT’s World Urban Campaign and president of its special initiative, the General Assembly of Partners toward Habitat III, and co-editor of Penn Press’s The City in the 21st Century series. Dr. Birch has served as editor of the Journal of the American Planning Association, chair of the Planning Accreditation Board, and president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, the Society for American City and Regional Planning History, and the International Planning History Society. Dr. Birch has also served as a member of the New York City Planning Commission and of the jury to select the designers for the World Trade Center site.

Dr. Birch’s most recent publications include Slums: How Informal Real Estate Markets Work (2016), co-edited with Susan Wachter and Shohana Chattaraj, Global Urbanization (2011), co-edited with Susan Wachter, Women’s Health and the World’s Cities (2011), co-edited with Afaf Meleis and Susan Wachter, and Neighborhoods and Life Chances, How Place Matters (2011) co-edited with Susan Wachter and Harriet Newberger. Her awards include: Lawrence C. Gerken’s Award in Planning History, the Jay Chatterjee Award, the Margarita McCoy Award, and the Distinguished Educator Award. Dr. Birch holds a doctorate and master’s in urban planning from Columbia University and a bachelor’s degree in history and Latin American affairs from Bryn Mawr College.

William CHAPMAN
Director, Graduate Program in Historic Preservation and Professor and Acting Chair, Department of America Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

William Chapman is director of the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation and professor and acting chair in the Department of American Studies at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, specializing in architectural recording, the history of historic preservation and materials conservation. A four-time Fulbright scholar and American candidate at the International Center for Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property in Rome, he has traveled extensively throughout Southeast Asia and served as lecturer at Silpakorn, Kasetsart and Chulalongkorn Universities in Thailand and at the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He is a frequent contributor to UNESCO projects and is a member of the International Council on Monuments and Sites’ International Scientific Committees on the Theory and Philosophy of Conservation and Restoration and on Vernacular...
Architecture. Widely published in scholarly journals, he has also written on subjects ranging from the historic Volcano House Hotel in Hawaii to the Wright Brothers National Memorial at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. His most recent publication is *A Heritage of Ruins: The Ancient Sites of Southeast Asia and Their Conservation* (University of Hawaii Press, 2013). Dr. Chapman was educated at Columbia University (master's degree in historic preservation) and at Oxford University in England (Doctor of Philosophy in anthropology).

Mark Alapaki LUKE  
Chair, Kamakakuokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Alapaki Luke teaches courses in Hawaiian Studies and Geography of Hawaii at the University of Hawaii’s Honolulu Community College. He also lectures at the University of Hawaii Manoa campus. He is a member of the State of Hawaii Taro Security and Purity Task Force, an entity established by State Law to gather information from the taro communities in Hawaii and address issues to perpetuate the industry and cultural lifestyle.

Mr. Luke was born and raised in Hawaii and is an East-West Center (EWC) 2003 alumnus. He is one of the most active EWC alumni, organizing orientation sessions, presenting for various seminars and programs, and facilitating field-trips for various programs. He has served on the EWCA scholarship committee and has recently served as vice president for Participant Affairs on the EWCA International Board. Mr. Luke has facilitated various orientation activities for incoming EWC students; instilling in them an appreciation for Hawaii’s native people and culture. During their time with Mr. Luke, incoming students and seminar participants experience the true spirit of the ‘āina (land) and the metaphors within. Mr. Luke plants taro at his loi (taro patch) in Kahana Valley in the Koolauloa district of Oahu Island and makes poi (pounded and thinned taro) on a regular basis for the ‘ohana (family) and the community.

Zita CUP CHoy  
Historian/Docent Educator, The Friends of Iolani Palace, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Zita Cup Choy is historian and docent educator at Iolani Palace. She was a member of the first docent class back in 1977 and shared in the excitement as the Palace was reopened to the public in May of 1978. Ms. Cup Choy has conducted extensive research about the Palace and the monarchy era. She enjoys delving into the depths of the archives and discovering information to help support a wide variety of Palace programs and initiatives.

Kiersten FAulkner  
Executive Director, Historic Hawaii Foundation, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Kiersten Faulkner is executive director of the Historic Hawaii Foundation (HHF) and oversees all aspects of its preservation programs, strategic planning, business lines and operational matters. Prior to joining HHF in 2006, Ms. Faulkner was a senior city planner for the City & County of Denver, where she managed complex and controversial comprehensive planning, promulgation of land use and urban design regulations, and development proposals. She is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners and her community service has included terms on the boards of the Hawaii Ecotourism Association, the Honolulu Firefighters Foundation, Mālama Mānoa, the Honolulu Culture and Arts District, the University of Hawaii at Mānoa’s Design Advisory Panel, the Hawaii State Department of Transportation’s Scenic Byways Advisory Group, and the Honolulu Confinement Site Advisory Group. Ms. Faulkner holds a Master of Arts in urban and environmental policy from Tufts University.
Dean SAKAMOTO
Principal, Dean Sakamoto Architects and founder, SHADE group (Sustainable Humanitarian Architecture Design for the Earth), Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Dean Sakamoto is an educator and practicing architect with a national presence and diverse local expertise. As an educator, he served on the faculty of the Yale University School of Architecture and is currently a lecturer at the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and associate affiliate faculty at the University of Hawaii at Manoa in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning. His New Haven and Honolulu based firm, Dean Sakamoto Architects, is known for its environmentally sensitive and culturally specific designs. He is the architect of the Juliet Rice Wichman Botanical Research Center at the National Tropical Botanical Garden on Kauai, Hawaii, a LEED Gold certified and hurricane resilient building and recipient of the 2010 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Honolulu Award of Excellence. Mr. Sakamoto also currently serves on the AIA National Advisory Committee on Resilience and he is the lead developer of HURRIPLAN: Resilient Building Design for Coastal Communities, a Federal Emergency Management Agency certified professional training program offered at the National Disaster Preparedness Training Center. Mr. Sakamoto earned a bachelor’s degree in architecture from the University of Oregon, a master’s degree in environmental design from Yale University.

Shabbir CHEEMA
Senior Fellow and Director, Asia-Pacific Governance and Democracy Initiative, East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Shabbir Cheema is director of the Asia-Pacific Governance and Democracy Initiative at the East-West Center. He has been a visiting fellow at Harvard University's Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation and is currently coordinating East-West Center’s program on Urban Governance for Sustainable Development: Access to Services for Social Inclusion. Dr. Cheema is also a member of the UN-ESCAP Committee of Experts on HABITAT III. Previously, Dr. Cheema was director of the Democratic Governance Division of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), director of the UN Global Forum on Reinventing Government, and manager of the Urban Development Unit of UNDP. As a senior UN official, he provided leadership in crafting UN-assisted governance and urban management programs in over 25 countries in Asia, Africa and the Arab Region. He prepared the first UNDP policy papers on Urbanization and Poverty and Governance for Sustainable Human Development and served as coordinator of the UNDP/World Bank/HABITAT Urban Management Program (1990-2002), the largest global technical assistance program in this field. From 1980 to 1988, Dr. Cheema was a development administration planner at the United Nations Center for Regional Development, Nagoya, Japan. In this capacity, he directed regional programs on urban management, policy issues in urban services, and decentralization. He has taught at the University of Science Malaysia, and in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning of the University of Hawaii and New York University.

Dr. Cheema is the co-author of The Evolution of Development Thinking (Palgrave and Macmillan, 2016) and the author of Building Democratic Institutions: Governance Reform in Developing Countries (Kumarian Press, 2005). He is the contributor and co-editor of the four volume Series on Trends and Innovation in Governance (United Nations University Press, 2010-13); Decentralizing Governance: Emerging Concepts and Practices (Brookings Institution Press in cooperation with Harvard University, 2007); and Reinventing Government for the Twenty First Century: State Capacity in a Globalizing Society (Kumarian Press, 2003). Dr. Cheema holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Hawaii.
Kem LOWRY
Adjunct Senior Fellow, East-West Center Research Program, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Kem Lowry is adjunct senior fellow in the Research Program at the East-West Center. He is professor emeritus and former chair of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Hawaii. Dr. Lowry has conducted research and training and served as a consultant to several donor organizations, foundations and national agencies in Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, China, the Philippines, and Thailand. He has published articles on planning and environmental management, coastal management and evaluation in journals including the American Planning Association Journal, Urban Law Annual, Publius, Environmental Impact Assessment Review, Policy Studies Review, Ocean Yearbook, Journal of Ocean and Coastal Management, Journal of Planning Theory, Journal of Planning Education and Research, and the Coastal Management Journal. Dr. Lowry holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Hawaii. From 1966-69, he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Sarawak, Malaysia.

Karen MOTOSUE
Co-founder and Vice President, Hawaii Heritage Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Karen Motosue founded the Hawaii Heritage Center (HHC) in 1980 with Larry F.C. Ching & Agnes Conrad. She is vice president on the HHC Board of Directors and program/operations administrator. She is a third generation family member to live and work in Chinatown. Previously, Ms. Motosue was director of Governor Burn’s multicultural studies program operating at the Hawaii Multi-Cultural Center, and assistant administrator from the State of Hawaii, Department of Land and Natural Resources, State Parks Division. She has also served on the City & County of Honolulu Chinatown Rail Advisory Committee with a diverse Board of Directors including the Hawaii Government Employees Association, the Excluded & Managerial Workers Association, the Hawaii Council for the Humanities, the Pacific Gateway Center, and Noelani School Community Council. For the past 39 plus years, Ms. Motosue has been centrally involved in documenting and preserving Hawaii’s multicultural heritage through interpretive exhibits, multi-media & TV productions, workshops and concerts, archival and library work, and the Chinatown walking tours. Ms. Motosue received her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Hawaii, Manoa.

Nicole REID
Owner, The Manifest Art Café and Bar and Secretary, Arts, Culture, Merchants, Etc. (ACME) Group, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Nicole Reid has owned and operated the Manifest in Chinatown, Honolulu with her husband Brandon since opening in 2009. She currently oversees 25+ employees at Manifest which operates as an art cafe and bar and serves, on average, over 50,000 guests annually. For the past 7 years, Ms. Reid has witnessed the economic tides shift to support more local business in the historic district from both resident and visitor markets. She is an active participant in area policymaking in state and local issues and as secretary of the Arts, Culture, Merchants, Etc. Group or ACME, she searches for grants, plans events and is called upon for development meetings surrounding the incoming rail station in Chinatown. Ms. Reid earned her master’s in public administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Stephen LOHSE
Chair, Chinatown Gateway Plaza Tenant Association, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Steve Lohse has been a Chinatown Gateway Plaza (CGP) resident since 2000. He chairs the CGP Tenant Association that he helped organize in 2006 to inform and represent resident voices for affordable housing and a livable community. Mr. Lohse also serves on the board of Hawaii Interfaith Power & Light for renewable energy and climate
action and he chairs the Social Justice Council of the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu. He has coordinated a statewide alien pest species group; designed ecosystem-based watershed projects; drafted business plans for clients including Parker Ranch and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; and managed the office and environmental science for a contract archaeology firm. Today, Mr. Lohse is semi-retired and a social justice organizer. He is fond of saying, Think Whole Community – Business-Resident-Governance communication, collaboration, and coordination work; alienating a community that has to live with your decisions fails. Mr. Lohse holds masters degrees in political science and biology from the University of North Texas and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa.

Cameron McELROY
Sales and Operations Manager, ROC Honolulu (Real Office Center), and Vice President, Arts, Culture, Merchants, Etc. (ACME) Group, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Cameron McElroy began working with Real Office Centers (ROC) in Orange County and Los Angeles, California in 2012, managing company-wide sustainable business practices. He moved to Honolulu, Hawaii in 2014, spending over one year renovating a building in Chinatown to prepare for the opening of ROC Honolulu in 2015. Mr. McElroy currently manages landlord and operational responsibilities including ongoing construction and build-out of five restaurants and 22 private, fully-serviced offices and co-working space in the building. Prior to his work with ROC, he was involved in landscaping and small-scale sustainable agriculture activities on the island of Maui, Hawaii. Mr. McElroy has a bachelor’s of science degree in environmental studies from the University of California Santa Barbara.

Rich RICHARDSON
Executive Director, The ARTS at Marks Garage, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Rich Richardson is executive director of the Hawaii Academy of Performing Arts and The ARTS at Marks Garage. A working artist in Hawaii for over 20 years, Mr. Richardson is also founder of Chinatown Artists Lofts, co-founder of First Friday Honolulu, owner of pioneer Chinatown art gallery salon5, an adjunct professor of art at Hawaii Pacific University, and he develops after-school arts programming for at-risk teens. Mr. Richardson’s notable honors include US Small Business Administration Minority Small Business Champion of Honolulu 2013, a Business Leadership Hawaii Award, the Award of Merit in Recognition of Outstanding Contributions to the Community from Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell, and a Hall of Proclamation for “Excellence in the Perpetuation of the Arts and Culture” from Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle. Mr. Richardson has a master’s and bachelor’s degree in creative arts studies from San Francisco State University.

Wesley FONG
Chinatown Community Leader and Past President, Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Wesley Fong is an attorney and adjunct professor of law at the University of Hawaii, School of Travel Industry Management. He is also a commissioner (vice chair) of the Honolulu Liquor Commission, chair of Neighborhood Board 14, director of the Military Officers Association of America, Hawaii Aloha Chapter, and president of Pacifica AOUO, the See Dai Doo Society and the Chinatown Community Center Association. Previously, Mr. Fong held several positions in the Department of the Corporation Counsel, City and County of Honolulu. He also served as president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the Palolo Chinese Home, the Mun Lun Chinese Language School, the Hawaii Chinese Civic Association, the West Honolulu Rotary Club, the Reserve Officers Association, and the Concerned Citizens on River Street Housing. A Vietnam veteran, Mr. Fong is a retired Colonel of the United States Army.
Mr. Fong is a recipient of the national Jefferson Award for Public Service, Distinguished University of Hawaii Alumni Award, the Organization of Chinese Americans Award for Community Service, and the Hawaii Chinese Civic Association’s Mandarin Award for community service and personal achievement. He graduated from the University of Illinois School of Law with a Juris Doctor degree and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Hawaii. Mr. Fong is also a graduate of the US Army Judge Advocate General’s School, US Army Command and General Staff College, and the US Army War College.

Harrison RUE
Community Building and Transit-Oriented Development Administrator, Department of Planning & Permitting, City and County of Honolulu, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Harrison Rue is community building and transit-oriented development (TOD) administrator for the City and County of Honolulu. He is leading the creation, adoption, and implementation of Neighborhood TOD Plans for Honolulu’s 20 mile rail line, including revised codes and zoning, financial tools, catalytic project development, and an islandwide affordable housing strategy. He has decades of experience in smart growth and sustainability, transportation planning and policy, transit-oriented development, transit and transportation demand management, scenario and corridor planning, community development, affordable housing, construction and development, climate change, green building and green infrastructure, and public participation and communications.

Mr. Rue has developed integrated plans, programs, policies, training, and implementation strategies at the rural, urban, regional, and statewide level. As founding director of the Citizen Planner Institute, he created inclusive planning processes and training materials on sustainability and smart growth, and led hundreds of workshops for communities and agencies throughout the United States. As a principal of ICF International, Mr. Rue led the development of several guidebooks for the Federal Highway Administration’s livability initiative; developed tools, training, and technical assistance for the Environmental Protection Agency’s smart growth program and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s sustainable communities program, and he helped develop health and transportation evaluation tools for the US Department of Transportation and the Center for Disease Control.

Wing Tek LUM
Executive Vice President, Lum Yip Kee Limited and treasurer, Chinatown Improvement District, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Wing Tek Lum has worked for his family’s real estate investment company, Lum Yip Kee Limited, for four decades and he now serves as the company’s executive vice president, carrying on the legacy of his grandfather who started a general store in Honolulu Chinatown in 1899. In addition, Mr. Lum serves as co-chairman of the Chinese Community Action Coalition’s voter registration project targeting Chinese immigrants, and he is treasurer of the Chinatown Improvement District, an organization of private landowners seeking to revitalize Honolulu Chinatown. Mr. Lum is also a poet and business manager of Bamboo Ridge Press, a journal of local literature. His most recent volumes include The Nanjing Massacre and Poems, and he is currently working on a series of poems set in Honolulu Chinatown at the beginning of the twentieth century. Mr. Lum received a degree in engineering from Brown University and an Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary.
Carol FUKUNAGA  
Councilmember, Honolulu City Council District 6, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

A 25-year veteran of the state legislative arena, Carol Fukunaga has been a member of the Honolulu City Council since 2012. She presently represents Council District 6, which is comprised of some of urban Honolulu’s most diverse neighborhoods, including portions of Makiki, Downtown, Punchbowl, Pauoa Valley, Nuuanu, Alewa Heights, Fort Shafter, Moanalua, Halawa, Aiea, and portions of Liliha and Kalihi. Some of Council District 6’s biggest community challenges include aging infrastructure, the lack of affordable housing, and increasing homelessness. Council District 6 currently struggles with the highest level of unsheltered homeless in Honolulu, including Kakaako, Downtown, and Chinatown, and the borders of Punchbowl and Nuuanu. One of Councilmember Fukunaga’s highest priorities is to address the current homeless epidemic, and assist the most vulnerable in this population—including families with children, unaccompanied youth, those afflicted with disabling conditions, and the elderly.

Councilmember Fukunaga has extensive experience in community land use, planning, and transit oriented development. She is chair of the Honolulu City Council’s Committee on Public Works, Infrastructure, and Sustainability, is vice-chair of the Committee on Executive Matters and Legal Affairs, and is a member of the Committees on Budget; Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; Parks, Community, and Customer Services; and Zoning and Planning. Councilmember Fukunaga is a proud alumna of the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Charles MORRISON  
President, East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

President of the East-West Center since August 1, 1998, Charles Morrison has had extensive involvement in the conceptualization, organization and funding of policy-oriented educational research and dialogue projects in both Japan and the United States, and has long been involved in promoting the concept of an Asia-Pacific community. He was elected chairman of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council in September 2005, is a founding member of the US Asia Pacific Council and the US National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation, and is a member of the US Committee for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific. He was the past chair of the US National Consortium of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Study Centers and is co-director of the East-West Center-University of Hawaii APEC Study Center. Prior to becoming president, he was director of the East-West Center’s Program on International Economics and Politics, and was formerly a US Senate aide.

Dr. Morrison is a research adviser to two binational Japan-US Commissions. His on-going projects include the APEC trade and development cooperation, the New Generation Seminar, the Congressional Study Group on Japan, the Congressional Study Group on the Pacific Islands, and the annual Asia-Pacific Security Outlook, which he co-edits. His publications in recent years include: “Leadership Succession and US Foreign Policy: Implications for East Asia”; “Japan, ASEAN, and East Asia from an American Perspective”; “Community Building with Pacific Asia (report to the Trilateral Commission)”; “ASEAN: Forum, Caucus & Community”; “Asia-Pacific Crossroads: Regime Creation and the Future of APEC”; and “Development Cooperation in the 21st Century: Implications for APEC.” Dr. Morrison holds a doctorate from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) specializing in Asian international relations with research specialties in the APEC forum, Asia-Pacific international relations, economic issues, and security issues as well as US Asia policy and trade policy.
Todd APO
Vice President, Community Development, The Howard Hughes Corporation, Ward Village, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Todd Apo is with the Howard Hughes Corporation as vice president of community development for Ward Village, a 60-acre master planned community in urban Honolulu. In his role, he is responsible for corporate citizenship activities, including community, media and government relations, as well as the Ward Village Foundation. He also oversees community public relations, and branding and marketing for Ward Village in an effort to “tell the story” of the new community being developed. In addition, Mr. Apo currently serves on the boards for Special Olympics Hawai‘i, Boys & Girls Club of Hawaii, Make a Wish Hawaii and Na Kupa’a – a non-profit organization that develops infrastructure for the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands projects.

Mr. Apo transitioned from five years with the Walt Disney Company as director of public affairs in Hawaii. Previously, he served as vice president of corporate operations at Ko Olina Resort, responsible for the development and operations of the 642-acre resort. From 2005-2010, Mr. Apo served on the Honolulu City Council as the Council chairman, representing the West Oahu region. He is a graduate of Brown University and he obtained his law degree and Masters of Business Administration from the University of Hawaii.

Deepak NEUPANE
Director of Planning and Development, Hawaii Community Development Authority, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Deepak Neupane has served as the director of planning and development for the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) since 2006. The HCDA was established by the Hawaii State Legislature in 1976 to supplement traditional community renewal methods by promoting and coordinating public and private sector development in underutilized areas of the state. As the director of planning and development for the HCDA, Mr. Neupane oversees all redevelopment activities, including planning and zoning, within the Kakaako Community Development District (KCDD). The KCDD, which is located in urban Honolulu between downtown Honolulu and the tourist district of Waikiki, was designated as the first redevelopment district by the Legislature, recognizing the area's potential for increased growth and development and its inherent economic importance to both Honolulu and the rest of Hawaii. Mr. Neupane is also a registered professional architect and a registered professional civil engineer licensed to practice both professions in the State of Hawaii. He has over thirty years of experience in urban design, architecture, engineering, construction, and real estate development. Mr. Neupane is a graduate of the University of Hawaii and holds a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in civil engineering as well as a master’s in business administration.

Robert IOPA
President, WCIT Architecture, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Specializing in architecture and design, Robert Iopa has honed his craft through years of experience with several noteworthy firms, including with his own, WCIT Architecture, for the past decade and a half. Under his leadership and direction, WCIT Architecture has grown from a startup group into one of the largest firms in Hawaii with an impressive international clientele. Throughout his career, Mr. Iopa has led and participated in the development of projects throughout Asia, South America, the South Pacific, and all of the major Islands of Hawaii. Some of his most notable completed projects include the Westin Kaanapali Ocean Resort, Honua Kai Resort, the Ritz Carlton Kapalua Bay Club & Residences, and the Royal Hawaiian Hotel historic renovation.
A native Hawaiian born and raised in the islands, Mr. Iopa has become known as a respected advocate and creative interpreter of culture, and has developed into one of the most sought after designers and community planning professionals in Hawaii. He demonstrates a unique ability to plan, design and implement sophisticated and complex proposals and sustainable strategies that strive to create uniquely special places and environments that are rooted in the Hawaiian way of life. Mr. Iopa received his Bachelor of Architecture from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

Ron IWAMI
President, Friends of Kewalos, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Ron Iwami a retired fire captain of the Honolulu Fire Department and he currently serves as president of Friends of Kewalos, a non-profit organization with a mission to protect, preserve, and malama (take care of) Kewalo Basin Park and its surrounding shoreline for future generations to come. In 2014, he released his first book, Save Our Kaka’ako – A Story of the Power of the People. The book tells the story of how the power of the people stopped a major residential and commercial development from being built on Kaka’ako Makai, one of the last public oceanfront lands in urban Honolulu. A landmark law was passed as a result of the people’s opposition and it prohibits residential development, forever protecting this special land. Mr. Iwami received a bachelor’s degree in Business Management from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.