MINUTES OF THE REGENTS' COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Date: Thursday, April 18, 2002

Place & time: Outrigger Waikoloa Beach Hotel
Ali'i Rooms I and II
4:56 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Regents
Dowling (presiding)
Lee
Ikawa (ex-officio)

Committee Members Excused: Regent
Kawakami
Thurston
Weiner

Other Regents Present: Regents
Bergin
Kobayashi
Kurisu
McElrath
Nunokawa
Poe

Others Present:
Evan S. Dobelle, President, University of Hawai‘i
Deane Neubauer, Interim Chancellor, University of Hawai‘i at M~noa
David Iha, Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board
Carl H. Makino, Executive Assistant to the Board

Awarding of Honorary Degrees to Elizabeth M. Birch and Robert R. Midkiff

Interim Chancellor Neubauer recommended that the Committee award the honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, to Elizabeth M. Birch, Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign, and Robert R. Midkiff, founding board member of the Hawai‘
Community Foundation, President of the Atherton Family Foundation, and President of the Good Beginnings Alliance. He explained that the systemwide Honorary Degree Committee met and recommended that both individuals be awarded honorary degrees from the University of Hawai’i. Both have excelled in their professional and personal lives and are worthy of this recognition.

Elizabeth M. Birch is a 1980 graduate of the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa and is currently the Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), America’s largest gay and lesbian organization. Under Birch’s leadership, HRC has become a highly visible and effective advocate for the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans. Today, HRC has a reputation as one of the top political organizations on Capitol Hill and across the nation. Birch also heads the HRC Foundation, the organization’s educational arm. During her tenure, the Foundation has pioneered an array of unique programs including the HRC WorkNet, a comprehensive resource center for workplace advocacy, and HRC FamilyNet, a virtual online village for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender families.

Prior to her HRC appointment in 1995, Elizabeth Birch was Worldwide Director of Litigation and Human Resources Counsel for Apple Computer, Inc., a Fortune 500 Company. In addition to her corporate duties, while at Apple, she found time to advocate for the rights of gay Americans in the workplace. She has assisted a variety of Fortune 500 companies develop and implement nondiscrimination and domestic partner policies. Prior to joining Apple in 1989, she was a commercial litigator at the firm of McCutchen, Doyle, Brown & Enersen in San Francisco.

Elizabeth Birch has a long history of activism in the gay and lesbian community. She has authored a number of AIDS anti-discrimination policies that have become law in California. She is the founder of AIDS Legal Services, a model program for people with AIDS/HIV in northern California and for her work, she has received numerous legal awards including Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year in California.

She also served as General Counsel to Claris Corporation, Apple’s wholly owned software subsidiary. She has represented HRC and the community throughout the country and in the media. Under her leadership, HRC has also developed a reputation for innovative communications strategies and products as well as its approaches to educating America.

Robert R. Midkiff is a kama‘ina in the deepest sense of the word and has led the way in a myriad of community efforts to make Hawai‘i a better place to live. As a descendant of a long-line of Hawai‘i leaders, Bob and his family have played pivotal roles in Hawai‘i’s history. His great-great-grandparents, Amos Starr Cooke and Juliette Montague Cooke, were New England missionaries who came to Hawai‘i, taught for many years, and founded the Hawai‘i Chiefs Children’s School that educated the future King
Minutes of the Regents’ Committee  
on University and External Affairs  
April 18, 2002  
Page 3

*Kamehameha IV, Queen Emma, King Lunalilo, King Kalakaua, Queen Lili‘uokalani, and Princess Bernice Pauahi*. Later, Amos Cooke co-founded Castle & Cooke. Bob’s great grandparents, Joseph and Juliette Cooke Atherton, established the Atherton Family Foundation. His grandparents, Theodore and Mary Atherton Richards, established Kokokahi (“Of One Blood”), an early experiment in multi-racial living in Kane‘ohe, and the Friend Peace Scholarship, which brought Japanese students to Hawai‘i and took Hawai‘i students to Japan. His father, Frank Midkiff, served as a long-time teacher at Kamehameha Schools and later became a trustee of the Bishop Estate.

Bob Midkiff forged ahead in his own manner to make a difference in this state that he loved. In 1958, he founded the American Trust Company of Hawai‘i against the advice of many. At American Trust, he specialized in custodial accounts for small businesses who did their own investing, he created provisions for profit sharing and employee ownership, and he championed the concerns of his predominantly female staff by initiating the Hawai‘i Business Roundtable involvement in the establishment of a child care center, an absolutely new concept during its time. He also put together downtown’s first commercial condominium, the Financial Plaza of the Pacific, and co-chaired the State Capitol development.

Previously, he served as President of American Security Bank where he started the Trust Division specializing in small business. As Vice President of Amfac, he was in charge of the Kaanapali Resort, a multi-hotel, golf course resort, the first such development on a neighbor island.

Born on September 24, 1920, Robert Richard Midkiff attended Hanahauoli and Punahou School and graduated as a proud member of the Class of ’38. He received a baccalaureate degree, Phi Beta Kappa, in 1942 from Yale University, and later earned an AMP degree from Harvard. At Yale, he was the winner of the Harvard Book Prize and served as Business Editor of the Yearbook. During the war, he was assigned to General MacArthur’s staff in Japan.

Like his family before him, Bob Midkiff is also very active in the community where he is well recognized for his many philanthropic and community efforts. He is a member of the Hawai‘i Business Roundtable, founding board member of the Hawai‘i Community Foundation, President of the Atherton Family Foundation, President of the Good Beginnings Alliance, a state-wide nonprofit umbrella association for all state programs for children from birth to five, a strong supporter of the Humane Society, and chairman of the board of the Hawai‘i Theatre. He is a former trustee of the Samuel N. & Mary Castle Foundation, a founding board member of the Hawai‘i Community Foundation, and the former president of the Lahaina Restoration Foundation. He helped form the Downtown Improvement Association as well as the Waikīkī Improvement Association.

When asked in a Pacific Business News interview what his most rewarding accomplishments were, he replied that he hopes to be remembered for three things: 1) helping the more than 30,000 employees of Hawai‘i companies get their start toward financial independence through a profit-sharing plan that he encouraged owners to fund; 2) serving as a catalyst for the Downtown Improvement Association, which led to the design and construction of the Hawai‘i State Capitol, the Financial Plaza of the Pacific, and the restoration of the Hawai‘i Theatre Center; and 3) working toward meeting the needs of his 200 female employees, and others like them, through early childhood education and care and the establishment by the Hawai‘i State Legislature of the Good Beginnings Alliance.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Iha, Secretary

Dated: May 14, 2002

a: Chairperson Allan K. Ikawa
Members, Committee on University and External Affairs
President Evan S. Dobelle
Associate Vice President Joanne E. Clark