
Michael Nakasone

Hermann, Joseph <JWHermann@tnitech.edu>
To: "bor.testimony@hawaii.edu" <bor.testimony@hawaii.edu>

Mon, Mar 18, 2024 at 1:12 PM

Dear Members of the Hawai'i Board of Regents,

I am delighted to hear you are considering my honored colleague and long-time friend, Michael Nakasone, for an honorary doctorate at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa on Thursday, March 21.

Please accept this email as encouragement for well-deserved, academic distinction for a proud alumnus of UH. What is more, Mr. Nakasone has spent his entire life immersed in the advocacy of music education for all students throughout the islands. But remarkably, his efforts have extended to an entire country and other countries as well.

In my letter I sent to support his candidacy earlier, I highlighted the contributions made by one who has been truly motivated and selfless throughout his career. His work at Pearl City awakened an entire profession when his band performed at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra clinic in Chicago, an event attended by the educators and professional performers from across the globe. Further, his involvement in performances in New York City, Pasadena, California, and Tokyo, Japan, moved the profession to seek greater insight into his techniques and philosophy for the purpose of developing greater success in their communities. Most important, Mr. Nakasone's effects, in my opinion, created greater opportunities for students throughout Hawai'i, and evidence shows his influence reached much further. He is a gift for our entire profession.

I am proud to call Michael Nakasone friend. What is more important is that the remainder of the USA agrees. He is among the inductees of the National Band Association Hall of Fame of Distinguished Conductors and remains a model for an entire profession.

His roots remain in the islands. As a native of Hilo, he was educated at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa. He spent his career teaching on Oahu. After his retirement, he assumed the responsibilities of leading the historic Royal Hawaiian Band. Afterward, he returned to education at the Punahou School. Most recently, his work as Band Director and chair of Arts Education at Pearl City resulted in the school's performing arts auditorium adopting his name as the Nakasone Performing Arts Center.

I had the good fortune of attending ceremony and conducting the ensemble assembled for the event. Never have I ever seen such an outpouring of tributes by state educational leaders and, at least, three former governors of the State of Hawai'i.

I support your work and urge you to recognize his life's efforts as an advocate for young people, for music and the arts, and for the very best for the citizens of Hawai'i. This esteemed alumnus of the University of Hawai'i is simply unmatched.

With great respect,

Joseph Hermann

Joseph W. Hermann
Director of Bands Emeritus, Professor of Music
Tennessee Tech University

Past President, The American Bandmasters Association
Chair, the ABA Foundation

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Testimony in strong support of Consent Agenda Item V.B. Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters for Bandmaster Michael D. Nakasone

Brandon Marc Higa <higabran@hawaii.edu>

Tue, Mar 19, 2024 at 8:00 AM

To: BOR.testimony@hawaii.edu

Good morning Board Secretary Lau,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Consent Agenda Item V.B., Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters for Bandmaster Michael D. Nakasone. Please share the attached testimony with the Regents and my thanks for their continued service to the University.

With gratitude,
Brandon



Brandon Marc Higa, J.D.

Doctoral Candidate

Doctor of Juridical Sciences (S.J.D.)

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

William S. Richardson School of Law



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**Testimony to the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents
Strong Support for Consent Agenda V.B. Approval of the Honorary Doctorate of
Humane Letters Degree Upon Bandmaster Michael D. Nakasone**

Hearing Date:

10:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 21, 2024

**Information Technology Building Room 105 A/B & Videoconference
The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

Submitted by:

Brandon Marc T. Higa

Chair Lee, Vice-Chair Wilson, and Members of the Board of Regents:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of Consent Agenda Item V.B., Approval of the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters Degree Upon Bandmaster Michael D. Nakasone. Bandmaster Nakasone's career as a music educator, performer, and public servant exceeds the qualifications required pursuant to Board of Regents Policy RP 5.209, and further affirms his contributions to perpetuating music education and access to public music performances in the State of Hawai'i to improve the quality of lives for our communities. In my testimony, I will personally attest to Bandmaster Nakasone's accomplishments stated in the nomination package as a youth and professional musician who performed under Bandmaster Nakasone's baton in Pearl City High School's Wind Ensemble One, the world-renowned Charger Marching Band, Hawai'i Youth Symphony I, and the Royal Hawaiian Band.

Bandmaster Nakasone's impact on the expectations for marching band performances at professional football halftime shows are legendary. In high school, he produced marching band halftime shows beyond our imagination. We shared the Pro Bowl halftime stage with some of the most renowned performing artists, including 'NSYNC, Salt n' Pepa, and Janet Jackson. He commemorated one of the most iconic local performers in a halftime show featuring Israel Kamakawiwo'ole, who sang "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" with the entire Charger Marching Band accompanying him. The performances predate the times when everyone had the ability to record live performances and will live on as the "greatest of all times" for the students and performers who were part of these halftime shows.

As Bandmaster Nakasone's principal clarinetist, I had the opportunity to audition to perform among the state's best musicians in the Hawai'i Youth Symphony I & II ensembles. These experiences were particularly impactful as it exposed me to a new level of competition beyond my own school. Bandmaster Nakasone inspired hard work and

dedication to music, which led me to audition for the Interlochen Arts Academy and further hone my musical abilities among the best youth musicians in the world. His mentorship was integral to my decision to attend the University of Southern California, and while I ultimately did not major in music performance, he encouraged me to think broadly about the right career path that would ensure a bright and stable future. Although I had hoped to follow in his footsteps and become a music teacher, I would later learn how committed he was to ensuring that his students would thrive as future members of society (while keeping the door open for us to reprise our roles in performing with him at the UH West O‘ahu wind ensemble).

Bandmaster Nakasone’s accomplishments as a conductor and performer earned him the honor of an appointment as the Bandmaster of Royal Hawaiian Band under Mayor Mufi Hannemann. In this role, his impact on music education and perpetuating music appreciation among the community was amplified. His showmanship and affinity for transpositions of world renowned orchestral and wind ensemble pieces raised the expectations for the RHB concerts. Under his leadership, I had the pleasure of performing for two years in the clarinet section, during which time I experienced first-hand his legacy in this unique and special capacity.

This Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters commemorates the tremendous accomplishments and contributions Bandmaster Nakasone has made to the Royal Hawaiian Band, Hawai‘i State Department of Education music programs, Kamehameha Schools, Hawai‘i Youth Symphony, and so much more. Furthermore, this honorary doctorate further affirms the academic contributions Bandmaster Nakasone has made in close partnership with the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, including through world premier performances of compositions by our talented music department faculty.

Thank you for the opportunity to honor the legacy of Bandmaster Michael D. Nakasone by supporting this request for the Honorary Doctorate of Human Letters.