

**University of Hawai'i**  
**Candidate Advisory Council**

L. Thomas Ramsey, Ph.D. Chair  
Joseph Blanco, Vice Chair  
Somerset Wong, Secretary  
Amy Agbayani, Ph.D., Member  
Karl Fujii, Member  
Leonard Oka, Member  
Kathleen Stanley, Member  
Brigitte Yoshino, Member

January 15, 2015

The Honorable David Ige  
Governor, State of Hawai'i  
Executive Chambers  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Governor Ige:

On behalf of the Candidate Advisory Council (CAC) of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents and in conformity with the provisions of Act 72, 2013 Session Laws of Hawai'i, the following candidates are presented to you to fill the following seats for terms to begin July 1, 2015.

City & County of Honolulu seat (currently filled by Regent Chuck Gee, whose term will end on June 30, 2015)

1. Peter S. Adler
2. Maralyn A. Kurshals
3. Michael T. McEnerney
4. Russel S. Nagata

Maui County seat (currently filled by interim Regent Helen Nielsen, whose term, contingent on Hawai'i State Senate confirmation, is through June 30, 2015)

1. Sherrilee K. Dodson
2. Vincent R. Linares
3. Anders F. Lyons
4. Helen F. Nielsen
5. Ernest K. Wilson

Also subject to Hawai'i State Senate confirmation are the interim appointments made by Governor Abercrombie to replace regents who had resigned in July 2014. The regents who currently serve on interim appointments, in addition to Helen Nielsen, are Peter Hoffmann (Hawai'i County); Simeon Acoba (City and County of Honolulu); and Dileep Bal (Kauai County). If they are confirmed by the Hawai'i State Senate, they will serve out the terms of their predecessors (Nielsen through 6/30/15; Hoffmann through 6/30/16; and Acoba and Bal through 6/30/17).

The CAC complied with the statutory requirements and assessed candidates in a fair, independent, and nonpartisan manner. All candidates, as required by law, were asked to disclose any existing or anticipated contracts or financial transactions with the University of Hawai'i. Finally, with the assistance of a nationally-recognized firm, the CAC had background checks performed on each candidate being presented. Based on the background checks, the CAC concluded that there were no findings to indicate that any of the candidates being presented would not be able to discharge the responsibilities as a member of the Board of Regents.

Brief biographies drafted by the candidates are attached. Simultaneous with this presentation of candidates to you, the CAC, as required by law, is making the same information publicly available. The candidates have authorized the public release of their respective biographies to the media.

If you have any questions, please call 692-1218 or email at [borapp@hawaii.edu](mailto:borapp@hawaii.edu).

Sincerely,



L. Thomas Ramsey, Ph.D., Chairman  
Candidate Advisory Council

#### Attachments

- c: Senator Donna Mercado Kim, President, Hawai'i State Senate
- Representative Joseph Souki, Speaker, Hawai'i House of Representatives
- Senator Brian Taniguchi, Chair, Senate Committee on Higher Education
- Representative Isaac Choy, Chair, House Committee on Higher Education
- Regent Randolph Moore, Chair, Board of Regents
- President David Lassner, University of Hawai'i
- Members, Candidate Advisory Council

*University of Hawaii*  
*Candidate Advisory Council*

**PRESENTATION OF  
BOARD OF REGENTS' FINALISTS**

**One (1) City and County of Honolulu Seat  
One (1) Maui County Seat**

January 15, 2015

## **FINALISTS**

### **CITY & COUNTY OF HONOLULU SEAT (currently filled by Chuck Gee)**

- **Peter S. Adler**
- **Maralyn A. Kurshals**
- **Michael T. McEnerney**
- **Russel S. Nagata**

## **Peter S. Adler, PhD**

Peter Adler is a planner, mediator, facilitator and a principal in *ACCORD3.0*, a professional network of people specializing in cooperative foresight, strategy, and trouble-shooting.

Mr. Adler has worked in the government, business and the NGO sectors and teaches advanced negotiation courses in the Department of Urban and Planning at the University of Hawaii. He holds a Ph.D. in interdisciplinary social science from the Union Institute and a Masters degree in sociology and community development from the University of Missouri.

Prior executive experience includes nine years as President and CEO of The Keystone Center ([www.keystone.org](http://www.keystone.org)), Executive Director of the Hawaii Justice Foundation, and founding Director of the Hawaii Supreme Court's Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution. He is currently working on projects in Hawai'i and Asia, one dealing with GMO and pesticides on the Island of Kauai, the other for the United Nations and the Montreal Protocol on ozone depleting substances.

He is the author of three books and numerous academic and popular articles and he and his family live and work in Hawaii.

## **Maralyn Kurshals**

Maralyn Kurshals is an advocate for lifelong learning and supports innovative institutional change that strengthens the quality of education in Hawai'i. Her career in the public and private sector has spanned over 40 years in Hawai'i. She has been an active community volunteer with a diverse professional background that currently includes serving as a long term substitute special education inclusion teacher. She was elected to the Hawai'i State Board of Education in 2010 as the Leeward Oahu representative.

As a retired quality assurance specialist from the Department of Health, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Division, she understands the value of evaluation, data collection and reliable policy implementation. Her diverse professional career includes working with homeless/houseless persons, people with disabilities and early childhood education. She was a Department of Education service tester for the Felix consent decree and investigated the systemic quality of education/care issues. Education was also her focus with the Good Beginnings Alliance "Partnership for Hawaii's Keiki" and the INPEACE SPARK initiative. Ms. Kurshals lived and worked on the Wai'anae Coast since 1999. As a board member of the Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, Kurshals contributed toward complex institutional policy making. She was a grant maker with the Hawai'i Community Foundation, and is currently a member of the Hawai'i People's Fund grant making committee and scholarship chair for the Wai'anae Native Hawaiian Civic Club. Her college career began in a community college in Oakland, California and she completed her bachelor's degree at the University of Delaware. She continues to expand her education and thoroughly enjoyed participating in a political philosophy course at the University of Hawai'i, West Oahu campus.

Her two daughters were born and raised in Palolo Valley on Oahu and attended public schools. Both began their higher education in the community college system. Her youngest is a graduate of the University of Hawai'i School of Journalism, and is a reporter/writer in New York City. Her oldest daughter is a professional photographer and event organizer for Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in Austin, Texas.

Ms. Kurshals is dedicated to community-based engagement and ownership. She knows the value of community colleges and believes that U.H. West Oahu is an integral part of the University system. Institutions of learning are complex systems that need authentic partnerships, and must operate with trust and integrity at all levels. She believes that all people in the State of Hawai'i deserve to have equal educational opportunities that will allow them to have self-sufficient, fulfilled and joyful lives.

## Michael T. McEnerney

M.B.A., J.D., C.P.A./A.B.V./C.F.F., A.S.A., C.V.A

Michael T. McEnerney is President of McEnerney Shimabukuro Okazaki & Fujita CPAs AAC. He was awarded a B.S. degree *cum laude* of the University of Wisconsin-Platteville with a double major in accounting and in business administration (finance); a M.B.A. degree from the University of Hawaii at Manoa; and, a J.D. *cum laude* degree from Northwestern University. Mr. McEnerney holds a C.P.A. certificate and is registered in Illinois and a C.P.A. license/permit and certificate in Hawaii. He is admitted to the bar in Illinois, Hawaii, select federal districts, the Tax Court of the US, the US 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals and the US Supreme Court. He holds the following business appraisal designations: ABV – Accredited in Business Valuation and CFF – Certified in Financial Forensics, both from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants; ASA – Accredited Senior Appraiser from the American Society of Appraisers; and, CVA – Certified Valuation Analysis from the National Association of Certified Valuation Analysts. Mr. McEnerney's publications and presentations include divorce tax and valuation sections of the Hawai'i Divorce Manual, 10 annual tax update programs for the Hawaii Association of Public Accountants; various tax articles published in the Hawaii CPA and HSCPA news letters; author and presenter of tax and valuation programs in Hawaii to accountants, trust officers and attorneys; author and presenter with the Office of Disciplinary Counsel of the update for rules for Client Trust Funds; and, teacher undergraduate and graduate courses University of Hawaii and Chaminade University. Mr. McEnerney has testified, presented reports, been a master or joint expert in over 110 cases in Hawaii and federal court. Mr. McEnerney was a director of the HSCPA (1994-2000); has been a member of several of Child Support Guideline Committees; the recent Tax Review Commission for the State of Hawaii; and, currently serves on the advisory committee for the Regulated Industries Complaints Office (RICO) for the State of Hawaii. He has also served as the President, Vice President and Director of the Hawaii Chapter of the American Society of Appraisers.

He was a founding member of the Collaborative Divorce Hawaii Practice Group (CDHPG). He has had both local and national training in Collaborative Law in support of this area and is a member of the International Academy of Collaborative Professional (IACP), an international organization promoting standards and training in this area. He is a mediator with the Mediation Center of the Pacific (MCP) having gone through their training in both divorce law in Hawaii and basic mediation. His work with MCP is limited to financial and tax issues in mediation of any kind. He is a trained arbitrator working with Dispute Prevention & Resolution of Hawaii in the area of Family/Matrimonial issues. He has been trained as a voluntary settlement master for Family Court and has been appointed a special master and joint expert dealing with financial, tax and valuation issues.

He is married to the former Irene Yanamura (42 years). They had four sons and have 8 grandchildren.

## **Russel S. Nagata**

Russel Nagata graduated from Iolani School in 1969. He spent his freshman year at Occidental College in beautiful Eaglerock, California; then transferred to Tokyo to study in a year-abroad program at Waseda University. He returned home and graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1972.

From 1971-1974, he was a member of the Third Arm Community Center, which was an activist multi-services organization serving the needs of the residents in downtown Chinatown. Perhaps the most significant action he participated in was the organizing of immigrant and indigent residents to fight for their rights during the various urban redevelopment projects. This eventually resulted in the construction of low income and elderly housing for them.

In May, 1976, Mr. Nagata graduated as a member of the inaugural class of the William S. Richardson School of Law despite the dust and traffic surrounding the portable classrooms of Lower Campus Road. He then went on to work as a deputy attorney general until 1979.

From 1979 until 1986, he worked for the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. He started off as the youngest state civil service chief heading the Business Registration Division. From there, he headed various divisions within the department until Governor George Ariyoshi appointed him to become Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs in 1982.

In 1986, Governor John Waihee appointed him as the State Comptroller (Director of the Department of Accounting and General Services). His most rewarding experiences there were overseeing all state capital improvement projects and the repair and maintenance of state facilities including the Department of Education and the University of Hawaii.

From late 1970-1990, he served as a member of the Family Services Center in Kalihi. This preschool specialized in early childhood education for children of needy families. During the 1990's, he served as a board member and past president of Palama Settlement. His early childhood education experiences expanded to those of teenagers and sub-teens.

In 1992, he was sworn in as a District Judge of the District Court of the First Circuit. During his nineteen years in District Court, he also served in a dual administrative capacity as chief Deputy Administrative Judge. During those years, he also served as District Court legislative liaison because of his executive department legislative experience.

Mr. Nagata retired at the end of December 2011. During 2012, he served two days a week as a pro bono judge and presently serves as a regular per diem judge.



## **FINALISTS**

### **MAUI COUNTY SEAT (currently filled by Helen Nielsen)**

- **Sherrilee K. Dodson**
- **Vincent R. Linares**
- **Andres F. Lyons**
- **Helen F. Nielsen**
- **Ernest K. Wilson**

## **Sherrilee (Sherri) K. Dodson**

Sherri K. Dodson is the Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity Maui. She was the first executive director hired and has helped guide the organization to completing 86 homes in 11 years.

She graduated from the University of Hawaii with a B.A. in Political Science with an emphasis in Hawaiian Studies. She then continued her education at Western State Law School and graduated with a J.D. in 1986.

In 1990 she was appointed Vice Chairman of the 1990 Maui County Charter Commission and in 2003 she was appointed Vice Chairman of the State Salary Commission. She was also a member of the Governor's Task Force on Affordable Housing. She continues to volunteer for the National Kidney Foundation and Hawaii Organ Donor Center. She was a board member for five years on the Hawaii Public Housing Authority and is currently the Treasurer for the Maui Non-Profit Director's Association. She currently is a director for Housing Hawaii and advocates for affordable housing for the residents of Hawaii.

Prior to joining Habitat for Humanity Maui, Ms. Dodson worked with the Law Offices of Jan K. Apo for 12 years and then practiced Immigration Law as a sole practitioner.

She is a graduate of the Weinberg Fellows Program and the Hawaii Community Foundation's PONO program. She received, on behalf of her affiliate, the Pioneer in Excellence Award from Habitat for Humanity International. In 2009 she was voted Maui's Executive Director of the Year and in 2011 was a finalist for Outstanding Women Leaders in the Business and the Community by the Pacific Business News. In 2013 Habitat was named the Maui Nonprofit of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce and Maui United Way's Partner of the Year.

Personal: Born on Oahu and raised on Maui.

## **Vincent R. Linares**

Professor Emeritus Vincent Ryan Linares, known to family, friends, and colleagues as Vinnie, was born and raised in Connecticut. He moved to Hawaii in 1973, attending graduate school at the University of Hawaii after having served in the Peace Corps in Micronesia from 1968-71 and working two years for the Trust Territories of the Pacific. He was hired at Maui Community College in 1975 where he worked until retirement in 2010. He taught all academic levels of English composition and literature as well as introductory linguistics. From 1975-2014, he taught in the United States, Sri Lanka, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Mexico, and China. His teaching included training classroom teachers as well as developing, staffing and directing language programs for Hawaii's sugar industry, Maui County, and Choate Rosemary Hall-a private high school in Connecticut.

During Professor Linares' 44 years of professional life he served as Academic Senate Chair of Maui Community College, Chair of the Language Arts Department, a Union Director for the University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) for three terms, and a language consultant for the Hawaii hospitality industry as well as State and County agencies. He was twice recognized as a Fulbright Scholar to teach in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Thailand and was also the recipient of the University of Hawaii Francis David Award for excellence in teaching. During his time at Maui College, he worked extensively at the UH system level on issues of curricula articulation, distance education policies, governance, diversity, staff development, and faculty contract negotiations. He also served on numerous committees that researched, implemented, and evaluated University academic policies and procedures.

In addition, he has served on numerous non-profit Maui boards and currently serves on the Kula Community Association Board, working closely with Maui's governmental agencies. He has served as Board President for the Maui Academy of Performing Arts, Hui Malama, Maui on Stage, and Big Brothers, Big Sisters. Professor Linares has also served on the County of Maui Ethics Commission and from 1992-93 was a legislative aide and speech writer for Congresswoman Patsy Mink in Washington, DC.

When not teaching, Professor Linares is actively involved statewide in the performing arts as an actor, director, and producer. In April 2015, he will celebrate the 15th anniversary of his nationally acclaimed, one person performance as Father Damien, a play originally performed at UH Manoa in 1979. The play has been performed over 100 times in Hawaii, the US mainland, Europe, and Asia.

Professor Linares has lived on Maui for 40 years and currently resides in Kula. Since retirement, he has traveled extensively throughout Europe and Asia and has taught English composition courses to business students in 2012 and 2013 at Shanghai Normal University in China, a sister college to the University of Hawaii Maui College.

# Anders F. Lyons

## Principal, Kapalaea Consultants LLC

---



Anders Lyons is Principal at Kapalaea Consultants LLC, a statewide consulting company. Lyons' focus is on partnering with clients to provide high-level capacity to meet their government relations, fundraising, and business development needs.

Lyons currently serves as a board member of the Maui Economic Development Board and the J.W. Cameron Center. Other recent community activities include organizing candidate forums, collaborating with Bank of Hawai'i in their support of nonprofits in Maui County, and funding scholarships for local high school students. Lyons also serves on the Maui County Board of Water Supply. He is the co-president of the Rotary Club of Kahului.

Lyons has worked for businesses and nonprofits in Hawai'i and abroad. Native ecosystem conservation in Hawai'i and the Pacific has been central to Lyons' career. Early on he was an employee of the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i under the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit. Working for The Nature Conservancy on

Maui as Natural Resource Manager and as Maui Director he was responsible for supervising conservation programs covering 150,000 acres of native forested watersheds. Later Lyons led the newly-formed Palmyra Atoll Program for four years. A highlight of this experience was resolving long-held disputes and establishing trust and cooperation as he led the nine-member Palmyra Atoll Research Consortium and US Fish & Wildlife service in developing operating protocols and establishing conservation and science priorities. During this time he also operated a major-gifts fundraising program – raising over two million dollars to support global conservation efforts. After leaving The Nature Conservancy Lyons served as Interim Executive Director at the Maui Nui Botanical Gardens, and first as Associate Director and then as Interim Executive Director for the Hawaiian Islands Land Trust, before founding Kapalaea Consultants LLC.

Born and raised in Makawao, Maui, Lyons attended high school at Seabury Hall and received a B.A. in Sociology from the University of Puget Sound. After graduation Lyons worked in Tacoma, Washington for several years before traveling extensively in the Pacific and Asia. In addition to studying in Copenhagen at Denmark's International Study program during college, he later lived and worked in Denmark for several years before returning home to work on Maui. Lyons' mother was born and raised in Denmark and his father's family has been part of the Maui community for seven generations.

Lyons lives in Makawao with his wife Kiera Strohman-Herman and their two young daughters. In his spare time he enjoys family activities, hiking, Crossfit and SCUBA diving.

## HELEN NIELSEN

A resident of Maui for close to thirty years, Helen Nielsen has a passion for community service and environmental sustainability. A homeowner in remote Kaupo in the Hana District of Maui, her home has been off the grid for decades, with 100% independent infrastructure, utilizing solar power with rainwater catchment. Helen grows fruit trees and vegetables, and raises honeybees and chickens.

Helen is co-owner/manager of commercial properties in Wailuku, Maui and Waimea, Hawaii, and is actively working with her husband Jonathan Starr to build affordable workforce rental apartment housing in Wailuku. She has worked as a reports analyst for WR Grace & Co. headquarters in NY City, as Military Spec Sales Administrator at EG&G Rotron Corporation, and as administrative manager for the Artkraft Strauss Group of communications, advertising and construction companies in New York.

Until Helen's appointment as a UH Regent, she was employed by the United States Senate as a Field Representative for Hawaii's US Senator Brian Schatz.

Taking land conservation to a new level in Hawaii, in 2001 Helen founded the Maui Coastal Land Trust (MCLT) and served on its board for 14 years. MCLT protected over 14,000 acres in Maui County and garnered nationwide recognition as a leader in land conservation.

Due to the success of the MCLT, major funders, governmental and land conservation groups requested that MCLT, under Helen's leadership as President, spearhead efforts to merge similar local organizations into a statewide non-profit. The Hawaiian Islands Land Trust (HILT) was thereby formed in 2011, merging non-profits from Kauai, Oahu, Maui and Hawaii Island. Helen served as the transition leader and first board president of HILT. The purpose of HILT is to preserve iconic lands by identifying and creating sustainable partnerships to protect unique and endangered resources in Hawaii.

Helen's exemplary work with land conservation, as well as her consensus-driven and inclusive leadership style, has been widely lauded and she has been honored by the Hawaii Legislature, the Maui County Council, the Rotary Club, and Maui County's Commission on the Status of Women. On her retirement from the HILT Board, Governor Neil Abercrombie proclaimed November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014 as Helen Nielsen Day throughout Hawaii, in recognition of her accomplishments through 14 years of effective service

In addition, Helen is a long-time volunteer with several other local non-profits. She has served as President of the Maui Japanese Chamber of Commerce, participating in community-building projects in Fukuyama and Hiroshima Japan. Currently Helen serves on the Maui Japanese Cultural Society Board of Directors.

Helen is a 30-year member of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (Ham Radio Operator Extra Class license KH6T). She holds an FAA private pilot license. Helen has also served on the Maui County Salary Commission and the Maui Economic Development Board's (MEDB) committee on Economic Development, and as communications and logistics officer on the Hawaii Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) HI-1.

She attended Kingsborough Community College and Pace University in New York City, studying business while working corporate administrative jobs to pay her tuition.

## **Ernest Wilson**

A seasoned executive with over 50 plus years of experience within the fields of travel, hospitality, food service, military logistics, and higher education. In the civilian arena, served in numerous positions (starting as a dishwasher progressing up to executive management and senior staff assignments) for hospitality organizations including Holiday Inns Inc., Embassy Suites, Sheraton Hotels, and Outrigger Hotels and Resorts. The management positions included Sous-Chef, Restaurant Manager, Assistant F & B Manager, Hotel General Manager, Area Hotel Manager, and Director of Hotel Operations. Senior staff positions included Worldwide Director of Training and Management Education, Director of Human Resources, Director of Holiday Inn University, and Director of Quality Care and Ke Ano Wa'a.

Serving in the military, he achieved the rank of Lt. Colonel leading several large complex organizations. These included serving two Vietnam tours as the staff officer in charge of the US Army food service operations and as Director US Army Vietnam Club System respectively. Also served as Director of the US Army Hawaii Club System, and Director of the US Military Academy Club System at West Point.

The last 15 years was spent in academia teaching, developing new curriculum and degree programs, and in management roles. Served as Assistant Dean and Dean of the Hawaii Pacific University TIM program, Program Director for the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) Casino Management program, Director USM Culinary Arts, and most recently as the Dean of the School of Hospitality Resort and Culinary Management at Paul Smith's College in New York. At USM, developed and gained approval from the State of Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning Board (Regents) for the new Casino Resort Management BSBA degree program. At Paul Smith's led the development of and gained NY State DOE approval for a BS degree in Food Service Management and an Associate of Arts & Science in Baking/Pastry Arts.

As a senior manager and/or military officer had responsibility for managing both the financial and people resources of the organization to achieve the business or mission objectives. Responsibilities included strategic planning, budgeting, marketing and sales, financial review, operational control, and most importantly customer and employee relations. Served as a principal in a consulting partnership focused on organizational culture and change management.

Held director or chair positions on the boards and/or committees of national and state industry organizations. These included the American Hotel & Lodging Association, International Food Service Executives Association, Hotel Sales & Marketing Association International, International Military Club Executives Association, Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce, Long Beach (CA) Hotel/Motel Association, Mississippi Hotel & Lodging Association, and Mississippi Tourism Association. Served on the Walt Disney World College Program Advisory Board and the Board of the Pacific Gateway Center (an Oahu non-profit foundation providing health/human services to refugees, immigrants and others needing these services). Currently serving the Kula Maui Catholic Community Parish as a Lector and Chair for the annual fundraising Holy Ghost Feast/Festival.

Education: Kamehamcha Schools, Cornell University (BS), Florida International University (MS), California International Business University (Honorary Doctorate of Business).