

## **FINALISTS**

### **HONOLULU COUNTY SEAT**

- William M. Kaneko
- Gabriel S.H. Lee
- William C. Melohn
- Diane S.L. Paloma
- Laurie A. Tochiki

## **William M. Kaneko**

William Kaneko is a Partner at the Honolulu law office of Dentons, where he advises clients on corporate strategy, administrative law, public policy, government relations, and community relations; and represents them before government agencies at the federal, state and county levels. Previously, Mr. Kaneko was a Partner, Of Counsel and an Associate at the law offices of Alston Hunt Floyd & Ing. Since 2009, he was selected amongst his peers and listed in *Best Lawyers in America* for government relations law in Hawaii. In 2014, 2017, 2021, he was named Hawaii Lawyer of the Year for Government Relations.

Mr. Kaneko was also the founder, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs (“HIPA”), Hawaii’s first nonprofit, nonpartisan and independent research and educational organization whose mission is to provide research, analysis and recommendations on public policy issues facing Hawaii.

Mr. Kaneko has served in various public affairs and government positions. In 1987, he was a national recipient of the CORO Foundation Fellowship in Public Affairs. From 1988 to 1993, he served on the professional staff of Governor John D. Waihee III, where he developed land use and housing policies in the Office of State Planning. In 1996, Mr. Kaneko was appointed Director of Asian Pacific Affairs for the Democratic National Committee in Washington, D.C. Mr. Kaneko also served as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where he taught research and public policy in the Honors Program.

Mr. Kaneko served on the boards of `Olelo Community Television, Mental Health Association of Hawaii, Hawai`i Institute for Public Affairs, Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai`i, Japanese American Citizens League, and the Hawai`i Board of Public Accountancy. He also served on the American Bar Association’s Council on Individual Rights & Responsibilities, and the national boards of Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (“LEAP”), Asian Pacific Islander American Vote, and the University of Puget Sound National Alumni Board.

Mr. Kaneko received the Award for Public Service from the U.S. Department of Justice for his work with the Department on redress for Japanese Americans interned during World War II. He also received the Trailblazer Award from the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association; the Alan Saunders Award for Achievements in Civil Liberties from the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii; the Three Outstanding Young Persons of Hawaii Award from the Junior Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii; and the National JACLer of the Biennium Award and the Distinguished Service Award (Hawaii Chapter) from the Japanese American Citizens League.

Mr. Kaneko received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Puget Sound, his Juris Doctor degree from the Catholic University of America, and an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Puget Sound.

## **Gabriel S.H. Lee**

Gabriel Lee is the EVP Commercial Markets of American Savings Bank, overseeing Corporate Banking, Commercial Banking, Commercial Real Estate, Cash Management and International Services.

Prior to joining American Savings Bank in 1998, Gabe was a Vice President in commercial banking at First Hawaiian Bank. Between 1985 and 1996, he was with Bank of Hawaii primarily in corporate banking, and leaving as Vice President & Pacific Marketing Director of the Leasing Division.

Gabe is on the Board of Directors of Waialae Country Club (2020 as President), 'Ahahui Koa Ānuenue (2020 & 2021 as Chairman), Boy Scouts of America - Aloha Council, and Diamond Head Theatre (2005 to 2008 as Chairman; 2019 to 2021 Treasurer).

Prior Boards include Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (2015 to 2017 as Chairman), Saint Louis School (2012 to 2013 as Chairman), Hawaii Dental Service (2004 to 2008 as Chairman), Catholic Charities Family Services (2003 to 2004 as President), Hawaii Symphony Orchestra (Founding Board Member), Pacific Links Hawaii Foundation and Hawaii State Board of Public Accountancy.

He is a graduate of Saint Louis School, University of Hawaii (BA in Economics), and Dartmouth College, The Amos Tuck School of Business, Graduate School of Credit and Financial Management.

## **William C. Melohn**

Bill Melohn has led the design and engineering of key aspects of Internet protocols, software, and network security for over 30 years. His teams produced the first commercial IPSec VPN, a technology that has been widely used to enable secure teleworking over the Internet.

Bill has worked as an engineering executive in a number of technology companies in Silicon Valley, most recently as Vice President/Chief Technology Officer for Network Systems at a Dow 30 company. He currently serves as a technology and strategy adviser for a number of early stage tech companies, not for profit groups, and public institutions.

Bill is a member of the Dean's Advisory Council for the UH College of Engineering, and a board member and mentor for XLR8UH, the award winning venture program. He also serves on the Director's council for the UH Cancer Center.

Bill is a Flight Examiner/Aircraft Commander in the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, which has delivered PPE and supplies to first responders throughout the islands. He and his wife Trudi, who works in the performing and media arts, have lived full time in Hawaii since 2012.

Bill is a graduate of Iolani school and the University of Southern California. While he's travelled the world, Hawaii has always been his home.

## **Diane S.L. Paloma, MBA, PhD**

Diane Paloma is the CEO for the King Lunalilo Trust and Home. She oversees the Trust and the operations of the residential care home and its programs for kupuna. She is the former Director of The Queen's Health Systems, Native Hawaiian Health Program. She worked at the John A. Burns School of Medicine as faculty, HMSA and its subsidiaries, and started her career as a medical assistant for a private physician.

She received her undergraduate degree from UCLA, MBA from the UH Mānoa, and PhD from Capella University. She currently serves as 'alaka'i (halau leader) for Ka Pā Hula O Ka Lei Lehua. Dr. Paloma serves on the boards of the Partners in Development Foundation, UH Foundation, the Asian-Pacific Islander American Health Forum, and the Bishop Museum Association Council. She recently was selected as an Omidyar Fellow in its eighth cohort.

## **Laurie A. Tochiki, JD, Ph.D**

As a student, graduate, professor, administrator and parent Laurie Ariel Tochiki has both a professional and a personal commitment to the University of Hawai'i System and a deep appreciation of its important role in promoting social and economic prosperity and social justice. From 1999 to 2011, Dr. Tochiki served as Assistant and Associate Dean for Student Services at the William S. Richardson School of Law. As Associate Dean, she was responsible for all aspects of student life from recruitment, admissions, academic support, disciplinary matters, financial aid and career services. Laurie Tochiki taught briefly at Kapi'olani Community College, and as Assistant Professor from 1994 to 1997 she developed a live family law clinic at the law school. Over the years, she also served as lecturer and has taught Children and the Law, Family Law, Higher Education Law, Second Year Seminar and Lawyering Skills.

Laurie Tochiki is a proud recipient of public education in Hawai'i. She grew up in Waipahu and graduated from Waipahu High School. She graduated from Whitman College with a double major of Sociology and Psychology. After receiving her BA she returned to Hawai'i and was a member of the 5<sup>th</sup> graduating class of the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai'i. While working at the University she studied higher education administration and policy through the University of Hawai'i College of Education earning a Ph.D in Education Policy in 2015. Her dissertation described the Ulu Lehua program and in particular the work of Chris Iijima, a professor who led the program in many exemplary ways in the early 2000's. She studied the program through a race equity lens examining the program's foundation of providing opportunity for under-represented individuals. Dr. Tochiki also earned a Masters in Administration, with an emphasis on Public Administration from the Hawai'i campus of Central Michigan University.

With a goal of breaking down silos in the complex child welfare system, and to have people partner and communicate, Laurie Tochiki co-founded EPIC 'Ohana in 1998. Currently the president and CEO, EPIC 'Ohana is a nonprofit organization serving families in the child welfare system and vulnerable transitioning youth. EPIC, which stands for Effective Planning and Innovative Communication, reflects the organization's goal of breaking down barriers between social workers, families, government systems and others to make better connections. EPIC's programs are national models for giving voice to birth parents, families and young people. EPIC 'Ohana currently has 90 employees and an annual budget of \$5.5 million dollars. EPIC is the backbone organization for an innovative and collaborative network of agencies and foundations called Na Kama a Hāloa, which seeks to improve outcomes for native Hawaiian children touched by the child welfare system.

She is a co-founder of the Kids First program at the First Circuit's Family Court. She is a co-recipient of the Hawaii State Bar Association's "Golden Gavel" award, recipient of the Volunteer Legal Services of Hawaii Niu Award, the Hawai'i Women Lawyers Distinguished Service Award, the Hawai'i Women's Legal Foundation's Rhoda Lewis Community Service Award and the William S. Richardson School of Law Alumni Association Service Award. Laurie Tochiki is a volunteer mediator with the Mediation Center of the Pacific.