

## **FINALISTS**

### **MAUI COUNTY SEAT**

- **Sheri-Ann P. Daniels**
- **Leslee D. Matthews**
- **Ernest K. Wilson**

## **Sheri-Ann Daniels, EdD, CSAC**

Sheri has been leading Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board since 2016. Papa Ola Lōkahi (POL) is the organization charged by the United States Congress with administrative oversight of the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act [Public Law 102-396]. In this role, she leads efforts to improve the overall health and well-being of Native Hawaiians and their families, through strategic partnerships, programs and public policy.

Born, raised, and currently residing on Maui, she has over two decades of experience in social service programs along with years of supervisory experience, including both government and non-profit management. It is through these capacities that Dr. Daniels has worked closely with Hawai'i's unique and diverse population to overcome inequities.

Sheri is actively involved in various community and civic organizations locally, nationally and internationally. She was recently added to the International Indigenous Council for Healing Our Spirit Worldwide in 2018. In 2019, Dr. Daniels was added to both the Advisory Council on Minority Health (Office on Minority Health) and the Department of Health's Tobacco Prevention & Control Advisory Board.

A graduate of Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, Dr. Daniels received her bachelor's in family resources from the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She carries a master's in counseling psychology from Chaminade University of Honolulu, in addition to a doctorate from Argosy University, and currently holds several license certifications.

She is married with 4 children who are students in the Kula Kaiapuni program.

## **Leslee D. Matthews**

Leslee Matthews is an advocate for social justice and passionate about connecting the community with resources and resources with the community. Leslee is a Licensed Master Social Worker and attorney who has dedicated her life's work to serving underserved people, marginalized communities, and elevating the voices of those who have been silenced. Leslee is so thankful to have been raised on Maui and to be rooted in valuing education, diversity, family, community, resources, and the land.

Leslee earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Texas Woman's University. She then served in the Special Victims Section of the Fort Worth Police Department as the Family Violence Specialist. She became a certified Domestic Violence Instructor trained by the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. As an Executive Board Member of the Tarrant County Council on Family Violence, Leslee was an inaugural member of the working group to form the Tarrant County Family Justice Center, One Safe Place.

Leslee earned her Master of Science in Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington, graduating Magna Cum Laude. Leslee was inducted into the Phi Alpha Honor Society for Social Work, Iota Omega Chapter for her achievement in academic excellence in Graduate School. With a desire to reach young people before they became justice involved, Leslee went on to serve as an Academic Counselor for a nationally ranked college preparatory school where she worked with a diverse group of scholars to help them succeed academically, overcome obstacles, graduate high school and attend college.

Leslee drew inspiration to go to law school from many things, especially the youth, families, and victims of violent personal crime with whom she worked. As a Social Worker, she knew more needed to be done to protect vulnerable communities and bring diverse communities together. Leslee took on the challenge of law school with the specific purpose of enhancing her skills to better advocate and serve communities in need.

Leslee considers returning home to Hawai'i to attend the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa an honor and a blessing to earn her Juris Doctor as a proud Ulu Lehua Scholar. While attending law school, Leslee was able to clerk with esteemed judges, serve as Vice-President of the Lambda Law Student Association, and serve as Senator for the Student Bar Association. Leslee also served as Western Regional Chair of the National Black Law Students Association, which was twice recognized as Region of the Year for their role in fulfilling the mission of increasing the number of culturally responsible Black and minority attorneys who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community.

Leslee worked for the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Office of Undergraduate Education with the Learning Assistance Center ("LAC"). As a Program Assistant with the LAC, she worked with a great staff to address students' needs and development in relation to achieving academic goals. Alongside the other Program Assistant, they created the first Academic Coaching program written and designed specifically for University of Hawai'i students.

Leslee has focused her research and work on social justice, human and civil rights, anti-discrimination and using education to overcome barriers to success. Following law school, Leslee served as Legislative Attorney for the Maui County Council. She is currently serving as Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the County of Maui, State of Hawai'i. She brings her expertise to the department to increase the department's community engagement initiatives and to further the Maui County Children's Peace Center to better serve victims of child abuse and child sexual assault.

From time spent working in and for communities here and abroad, Leslee is so thankful for all of the lessons life, friends, new friends along the way and 'ohana have taught her. As the daughter of a mother with disabilities, she understands the complex challenges of life and chooses joy daily. She is a proud Anake to two precious nieces.

## **Ernest K. Wilson**

A seasoned executive with over 58 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 leadership/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 achieved the rank of Lt. Colonel leading several large complex organizations. These included serving two Vietnam tours; the first tour as the staff officer in charge of the US Army Vietnam food service operations, and the second tour as Director US Army Vietnam Club System. Also served as Director of the US Army Hawaii Club System, and Director of the US Military Academy Club System at West Point.

Spent the last 27 years in academia teaching, developing new curriculum/degree programs, and in leadership/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 Resort Mgmt. program, Director USM Culinary Arts, and as Dean of the School of Hospitality Resort & Culinary Mgmt. at Paul Smith's College in New York. At USM, developed & gained State Board (Regents) approval for a new Casino Resort Mgmt. BSBA degree. At Paul Smith's led the development of and gained NY State DOE approval for a BS degree in Food Service Mgmt. and an Associate of Arts & Science in Baking/Pastry Arts. Currently a member of the University of Hawaii System Board of Regents (BOR) serving as Chair of the Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) committee and the Liaison to the All Campus Council of Faculty Senate Chairs. Previously served as Chair of the Personnel Affairs and Board Governance committee.

As a senior military officer, corporate executive and academic administrator had responsibility for leading and managing both the financial and people resources of organizations to achieve the business or mission objectives. Responsibilities included strategic planning, budgeting, marketing and sales, financial review, program development, 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 both director and chair positions on the boards and/or committees of national and state industry organizations. These included the American Hotel & Lodging Assn., Hotel Sales & Marketing Assn. Intl., Intl. Food Service Executives Assn., International Military Club Executives Assn., 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). In addition to being a UH Regent, currently serves the Kula Maui Catholic Community Parish as a Lector and previously as the Chair for the 2014 and 2015 Annual Holy Ghost Feast/Festival (major fundraiser), and the Building and Maintenance committee from 2013 -2016.

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