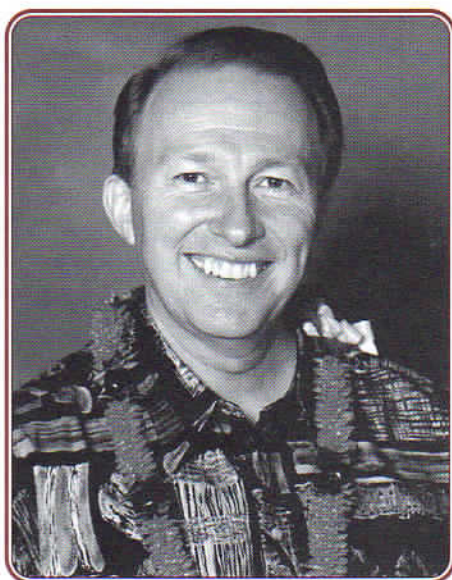
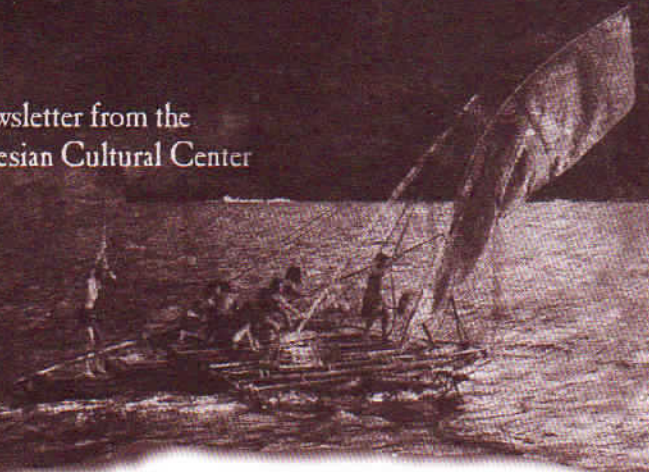


# Imua Polenisia

A Newsletter from the  
Polynesian Cultural Center



## 'It's Always About the People' By President Orgill

*These remarks are partially based on our May 17th PCC presentation in Salt Lake City, Utah, to the First Presidency, Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve, the Presiding Bishopric and others. PCC board chairman Mark H. Willes introduced the presentation and board members. Ira A. Fulton and Donald H. Livingstone also attended the meeting to lend support.*

In the last issue of Imua Polenisia I shared the realities of some of the challenges we face in today's visitor industry, as well as the steps we've taken to address them and some of the successes we've enjoyed so far.

Here we are several months later, and I want all of you to know that we continue to meet

the challenges coming our way. For example, even though visitor arrivals to the state are very high, many of those visitors go straight to the neighbor islands, on cruises, or are involved in conventions — all of which leave them with little or no time to enjoy the Center. Then there was the 46 inches of rain that hit us during 44 days this past spring. Also, PCC traditionally does best with first-time visitors to Hawaii, which now comprise only 38% of total arrivals.

Meanwhile, competition continues to increase while many other challenges are more subtle in nature — and, consequently, are harder to address; but it's important that you know we are systematically attacking all these challenges, making adjustments, and launching new initiatives.

Namely, we are fundamentally restructuring the Center's operations to ensure our long-term financial viability by reformulating our underlying cost structure, creating new revenue opportunities, stimulating additional productivity, and expanding efforts to encourage donations from our daily guests.

Much remains to be done, and we must always be mindful that any changes we make must enhance, not erode or compromise, our guests' experiences. That's no easy task, yet we're making good progress.

For example, we recently modified the menu in the Gateway Restaurant, which

saves us money, and we're doing it in a way that will preserve guest satisfaction.

With our new reservations system we're looking at the possibility of hiring former employees to serve guests on the East Coast or anywhere else in the world during times when our Laie call center is closed.

We are exploring appropriate sponsorship opportunities which would provide additional revenues.

Another story in this issue describes our first-ever appearance in Branson, Missouri, which will be a wonderful marketing opportunity, while providing incremental revenues as well.

These are just some of the things we're pursuing to ensure the success of the Center and being better prepared than we ever have been before for other challenges that may hit us in the future.

*Continued on next page*

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As we work through these plans of necessity, the Officer Team and Senior Management Team spend a lot of time talking about the numbers; but I want all of us to remember what really matters at the Polynesian Cultural Center. It is never about the numbers, even though we have to pay attention to them. It's always about the people — you, the students, and the people who come and visit here. It's about the spirit we want visitors and employees alike to feel.

I know you feel and radiate this spirit. I am deeply touched when I hear how our employees go far beyond normal business expectations to serve our guests and ensure they have wonderful, lasting memories of this special place. I am touched when I hear you speak of your appreciation and love for the Center.

You are making a big difference in the lives of many. As we recently shared some of your stories, such as the letter about "Big Jimmy" (which is described in this issue), while in Salt Lake City, it brought tears to the eyes of many of those present.

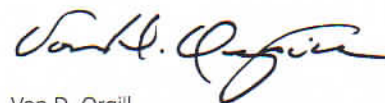
I, too, feel the spirit that is so strong here. How blessed we are to be a part of such a great and important work. Everything we're trying to do is focused on moving forward in a way that would please the Lord.

I want to bear my own testimony to each of you again: I know a lot of things we're in the process of doing at the Center are difficult and affect people's lives. I want you to know that none of it is done lightly, and all of it is done with much prayer, and seeking the guidance and help of the Lord, to ensure that

we are doing the things that He would want us to do, that He would feel good about.

Thank you for your continued efforts to make a difference. It means so much to me that I have the privilege of being connected with you in such a great work.

May our Heavenly Father bless us all as we strive to do His work. Thank you!



Von D. Orgill  
President

## PCC Guests Recognize Performance and Service

Compensation manager Kathy Tolleson recently recognized various PCC departments in PCC Team Meetings for their efforts to keep their respective areas clean and also shared guest feedback on outstanding service.

For example, in March, when the Center was inundated with continuous rain, the first place cleanliness award went to MIS. There was a four-way tie for second place among the Cash Room, Seamstresses, Laundry and Guides; and IMAX™ came in third.

Tied first-place awards in April went to the Hawaii Mission Settlement and Administration — especially Elder Crowley, with Fiji in second place, and Hawaii in third.

"We also received such wonderful accolades for some of our employees that it was hard to choose. Week after week, I read letters about our employees," Tolleson said before sharing these samples:

On March 30th my girlfriend and I visited the PCC. We had no idea that it would be an all-day soaker, but we would not let that ruin our day. The real sunshine...was our personal guide,

Cousin Leon (Yay), from Samoa. He is a valuable asset to PCC. We learned many things from him that day. Thank you, from your cousins.

I just wanted to drop you a line to tell you about the excellent service my family received from one of your staff. (Not too long) ago I broke every bone in my ankle...(and) I didn't expect to be able to do much while (in Hawaii). That was definitely not the case at PCC. This was due in great part to our wonderful Ambassador guide, Dolly (Fuifatu)... She helped me out in so many ways and constantly worked so hard to make sure I had a wonderful time. Most importantly, however, was her wonderful attitude. It was very obvious that she really cared about me and my experience at the PCC. She is a wonderful lady, and I am so glad she is a part of your student program.

My husband and I just can't say enough about the experience we had at the Polynesian Cultural Center... The workers were so hospitable, the grounds were so beautiful, the food was good, and the Horizons show left (us) absolutely speechless... Our guide was an absolute wonder. She took us on a canoe ride (and) on our way, I noticed a group of you standing with heads bowed. We found out later, when we met Big Jimmy (Mapu)... (who) told us they were offering a prayer of thanks to the Lord for the blessings associated with the Polynesian Cultural Center, and that all employees started their work days in similar supplication. How impressive! It's no

wonder...you are able to foster such a beautiful Christian spirit and atmosphere. It seems you have not forgotten that the source of all our blessings is Christ Jesus. Thank you for creating and maintaining this heaven on earth.

Individual service recognition in March also went to Kelii Keanu, Marquesas; Holly Leung, Food & Beverage; and David Loaiza and Elisha Lim, Guest Services.

Individual performance recognition in April went to the Promo Team: Talagu Ah-Hoy, Ellen Gay Dela Rosa, Pumehana Kaawa, Mereketete Smith, Farwyn Sakulsingdusit, Candace Fa'amuli, Keleise Reid, Pewa Dela Rosa, Boyd Lauano, Kurt Fonoimoana, Pulefano Galea'i Jr., David Galea'i, Roland Tupola, Travis Kaka and Milton Kaka.

Also to Alan Walker in the Waikiki Sales Office; and the following people from Guest Services: Tipa Galea'i, Takayuki Takegawa, Khasherdene Bold, Albert Traill, Filia Fidow, Haitelenisai Uhila, Boriania Balakchieva, Wiremu Howe, Josephine Brown, Audrey Nonoa, Lolofi Mataaafa, Terina Oto and Wai-Ling Lui.

"Thanks to all of you for all that you do," Tolleson said.



## Over 50 PCC IWES Students Graduate from BYU-Hawaii

At any given time, over 500 of the approximately 700-plus student employees at the Polynesian Cultural Center are beneficiaries of the International Work Experience Scholarship or IWES program that is fully funded by the PCC.

Under the terms of this truly unique program, the selected students agree to work 19 hours at the Center during school terms while they're enrolled full-time at BYU-Hawaii (and up to 40 hours during summer and other breaks), and their families agree to provide partial support. In exchange, unlike many other university graduates, IWES students graduate debt-free.

Two former PCC employees are good examples of the more than 50 IWES students who graduated from BYU-Hawaii on June 24:

### Yasmin Soloa'i Lauaki

Night show performer Yasmin Lauaki - a Samoan from Auckland, New Zealand, who spent three years living in the Australian Gold Coast before coming to Laie - just received her degree in international business management, and the week before also got her "Mrs. degree" when she married Lopeti Lauaki of Laie.

"When I was first selected, I thought it was a really good program and opportunity for me, because my family didn't have the finances for me to go to school," recalled Yasmin, the oldest of six children whose younger sister, Kylie Soloa'i, is also an IWES student.

Since coming in 2002, Yasmin has worked in the Samoan village, the Islands Office, the canoe pageant, as a luau setter, and currently dances in the Samoan, Fijian and Tongan sections. "I've enjoyed all the jobs I've worked in. My co-workers were very nice; but I think dancing has been my favorite," said the young newlywed, who hopes to enroll soon in a graduate business program at the University of Hawaii.

"I learned a lot about my own culture working in the Samoan village; and I've made a lot of friends from different cultures, which is really easy because there are a lot who come to school here. I've enjoyed forming lasting friendships," Yasmin said, adding she also enjoys the spirit of aloha in the community.

"The people in the community are also really



Yasmin Soloa'i Lauaki

welcoming to the students, because they know we're away from home. I have friends in the night show from here who always welcome us to their homes for the holidays."

"I'll miss the interaction with the people and students. With night show, it was the excitement of dancing initially, but what kept me going is being able to socialize with all my co-workers."

"I am grateful for the IWES program. Through being here I've been able to not only get a degree because of the financial support PCC provides, but I've also been able to find a husband, make friends with people from other cultures, gain work experience and learn about my own culture." Good luck, Yasmin.

### Mike Yap

Mike Yap came to the PCC as an IWES student worker four years ago from Faaa, Tahiti, graduated from BYU-Hawaii on June 24 in two-dimensional art, has started an OPT (optional practical training) program as a fulltime PCC carver, and is finishing four beautiful carvings he started as a student that will soon become part of the Tahiti Temple.

Yap, who had been studying architecture in Tahiti before completing a mission in French Polynesia and then serving in the military, said his PCC work-scholarship "was a great blessing for me. After my mission and my military service, I didn't have enough time to save money, otherwise I wouldn't have been able to come to school."

Once in Laie, Yap worked first as a canoe pageant and night show dancer, then in the Tahitian village, and ended up being a carver. "I like how our crew of seven comes from different cultures. I've learned from all of them. It's been a

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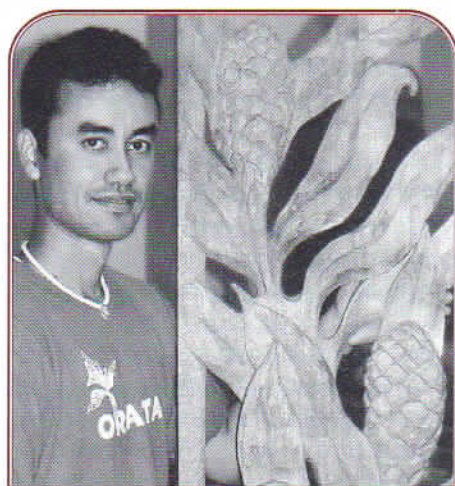
rich learning experience. Also, just by doing a piece, you have to do deep research, so I've also ended up learning things about my own culture in Tahiti."

One of those projects consists of four carvings he designed and is creating for the Tahiti Temple, including two torch ginger panels and two with an ulu or breadfruit motif. "My boss, Jared Pere, has a connection with a person in Salt Lake City who asked him to find a tropical plant design for the temple. Jared asked me to draw the designs, which were approved. I've finished two and I'm working on the other two."

Yap said being in Laie so far has been "four years of great education, spiritual learning, and friendship with people from many different countries. If I had to do it again and choose between this school or a very good school in, say, France, I would choose here because of the balance between spiritual and temporal things."

"I encourage all the students who come here to really use your years here to gain as much education as you can. Have fun and enjoy your stay here, but focus on school and the things you can learn here."

Yap, who is single, added he plans to return to Tahiti after his OPT, probably work as a high school teacher, and eventually seek a master's degree in New Zealand. Bonne chance!



Mike Yap





Pulefano Galea'i (Event Founder) and Delsa Moe of the PCC Congratulate the Three Champions



Two-time Champion, Mikaele Oloa

## 2006 SPECIAL EVENTS CONTINUE

### Champions Turn in Repeat Performances During World Fireknife Competition, Samoan Festival

All of last year's champions in the PCC's World Fireknife Dance and Samoan Festival competitions, held from May 18-20, 2006, successfully defended their titles, including:

16-year-old Mikaele Oloa of Orlando, Florida, came in ahead of Joseph Cadousteau of Tahiti, who placed as first runner-up in his first-ever trip to Hawaii; and our own David Galea'i came in as second runner-up. According to competition rules, Oloa must now sit out next year's event.

14-year-old Via Tiumalu, also of Orlando, Florida, won the junior division, and indicated he might compete as a senior next year — at 15, the same age Oloa was when he decided to go up against the seniors. Tiumalu's little brother, Rex, won the boy's division (6-11) title.

Kahuku High beat out six other Oahu schools to win the overall Samoa Festival competition that includes a variety of traditional skills such as oratory, peeling green bananas, weaving coconut leaf baskets, husking coconuts, making fire and, of course, lively Samoan dancing. Farrington High came in second, and Moanalua placed third.

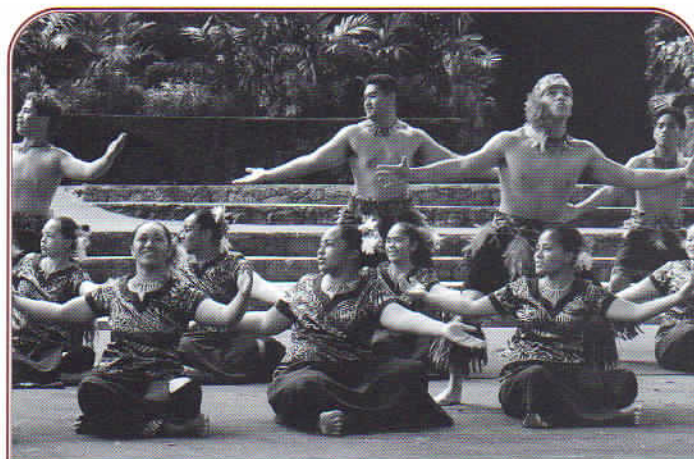
Pulefano Galea'i, Director of Cultural Islands who founded the World Fireknife competition 14 years ago, said this year's events were outstanding, "and the champion had balance all the way around and Samoan motions. I'm very happy with what we have, thus far."

"I remember when we first started, people asked me who's going to want to see more than one knife dancer a night; but when you put it into a

competition, and the boys continue to improve themselves, it climbs to the next level, and the next," he added.

Kap Te'o-Tafiti, PCC's Samoan ambassador and a semi-finalist competitor this year, said he's committed to keeping the traditional form of Samoan knife dancing alive. "There are a lot of baton twirling techniques that are entering into the dance, and it's very exciting, but I think we should draw the lines between the traditional and creative forms."

Byron "Pailogi" Tenney, a student worker in the Samoan village, admitted he was nervous before entering his first knife dance competition this year. "They tried to get me to dance for a while, and I kept saying I'm not ready, but then I figured I would try it and see what happened." He did well.



Kahuku High School Wins the Overall Samoa Festival Competition



## Te Hokioi Wins PCC's 2006 Whakataetae

The PCC's seventh annual Whakataetae Maori Competition (April 28-29) was built on a growing tradition of spectacular performances, stirring chants, hauntingly beautiful music and fierce haka. It concluded with Te Hokioi — a group comprised of PCC employees and community members — taking first place. Te Hokioi was led by PCC Maori cultural ambassador Seamus Fitzgerald.

In fact, they were so good that one of the judges from New Zealand said after the event, "Your winning group would be able to stand on the stage of Te Matatini (the biannual national competition in Aotearoa) with great pride."

Second place this year went to the mostly Honolulu-based Te Roopu o Ratapu, led by Hawaka Jeremiah and his mom, Aunty Valetta Jeremiah of the Maori village; and Ngati Hiona, a widespread group of Maori and



Members of Te Hokioi Stun the Crowd with Their Performance



Robert Ruha Decides on a Score as He Judges this Year's Whakataetae



Howaka Howard Jeremiah Competes as Part of Te Ropu Ratapu

others — some of whom are PCC alumni — that is based in Utah but come from all over the western U.S., took third place.

"We never came in to win competitions, it was more for our families and to preserve the culture," said Fitzgerald, who has returned to New Zealand to work on a Ph.D. in anthropology.

Marcia Rangimarie Perret, one of the Te Hokioi members and a Maori village worker who just graduated from BYU-Hawaii, said she incorporated part of their preparation into her senior project. "I composed a waiata ringa that talks about the waka taua [canoe] here in the village and the journey it and all the sacred canoes the people descend from went through.

"At the end, the canoe is living in Hawaii and is recognized as having an important purpose for the Maoris here; but on a deeper level it's talking about us as vehicles for our Maori culture in Hawaii," she said.



## Yee-haw! PCC Troupe Heads to Branson, MO

For the first-time ever, a team of 15 performers from throughout the Center will be appearing in a long-run production on the mainland. They will replace the normal country music format at the 3,800-seat Grand Palace Theater in Branson, Missouri, from June 29 through August 12, with a fiery island show.

For 40 performances spread over more than six weeks, the team - under the creative direction of Senior PCC Manager Ellen Gay Dela Rosa and Director of Marketing Raymond Magalei - will convert the Grand Palace into a mini-PCC. Guests will enjoy typical PCC activities on the grounds and in the lobby...before the curtain goes up on Fire - The Hawaiian Experience. This new 90-minute show combines various elements of the PCC, and includes a spectacular multimedia backdrop on a very large video screen.

"We have looked at bringing our cultural experience to the mainland for a long time, and when we heard about the positive family values of Branson, we felt this to be a perfect fit," Dela Rosa said.

Senior Vice President of Marketing and Sales P. Alfred Grace explained further, "To support the overall mission of the Polynesian Cultural Center and to generate incremental funding for our student programs, we're broadening our efforts to promote more visitation to the PCC."

"One of the goals of the Center is to build up a reserve fund to help us in difficult economic times, so we can be self-sustaining," he continued. "This is one of the efforts we're making to generate those funds."

Grace added that the Center has partnered with CORE, a mainland enterprise, to put on the new road show. "Our hope, with a successful run, is that we'll be expanding this program. There are lots of opportunities on the mainland, and we can envision ourselves going back to Branson on an annual basis during the summer, when the students have an opportunity to work longer hours."

If you or anyone you know is going to be in Branson this summer, call the Grand Palace at 800-884-4536 for tickets and more information. The shows will be presented daily (except Wednesday and Sunday) at 8 p.m.

## New Senior Missionaries Serve at the Center

Three new senior missionary couples and a sister missionary have recently joined the PCC 'ohana:

### Elder Steve and Sister Joan Shoemaker

...arrived in mid-March from El Cajon, California (near San Diego), on a 12-month service mission. He is assigned to Physical Facilities maintenance, and she works with Kathy Tolleson in Human Resources.

Elder Shoemaker retired after teaching high school industrial arts - primarily metal shop - for 31 years. In addition to her homemaking responsibilities for their six children and 13 grandchildren, Sister Shoemaker served as mayor of El Cajon with its population of about 95,000 for eight-and-a-half years. Prior to that, she also served for eight years on the city council and another year on the planning commission. This is the couple's first mission together, but Elder Shoemaker served in Peru as a young man.

"We were here about a year ago when my husband started talking to the service missionaries. They told us they love former shop teachers over here and suggested we call Les Steward (who oversees the PCC service missionaries)," she recounted. "It's challenging learning computer skills, there's a lot going on."

"I love my assignment," he added, noting he has been called to the BYU-Hawaii 3rd Stake High Council, and she's the education counselor in the stake Relief Society. They have also been assigned to the BYU-Hawaii 7th Ward as mentors.

### Elder Howard and Sister Jean Okimoto

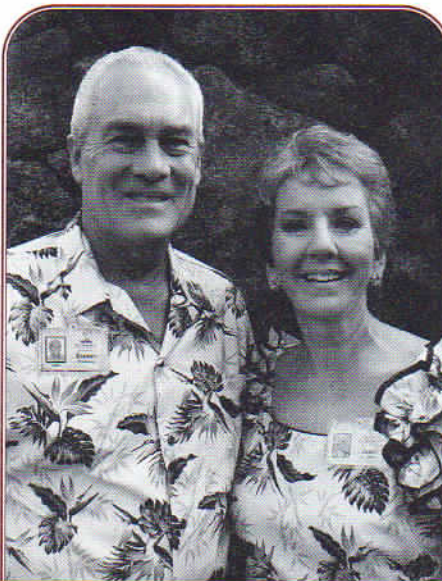
If the name seems familiar, it's because the Okimotos lived in Laie for 20 years right across from the Temple. He was a school principal in Kahuku and Kailua, and more recently worked with BYU-Hawaii student teachers for six years. She taught for 30 years at Hauula and Laie Elementary Schools. Their three children - Cary, Kurt and Carlene - grew up in Laie and all worked at the Center when they were BYU-Hawaii students.

Now the couple lives in Kaneohe and started their part-time mission in the Hawaiian Mission Settlement in March. They're considering whether to serve for six or 12 months.

"We've always wondered what it would be like to be part of the PCC," he said. "Now I can say, it's wonderful."

"It's been very uplifting to see so many guests from all over the world, and to work with the BYU-Hawaii students," she added. "It's also nice to be with the other missionaries who are working so hard and contributing so much."

The couple has four grandchildren.



Elder & Sister Shoemaker from California



Elder & Sister Okimoto from Kaneohe



## Elder Jerry and Sister Kay Grover

...arrived in mid-March from Spanish Fork, Utah. He is assigned to the Carpentry Shop and she serves in the Business Office. The couple previously served a proselyting/leadership mission in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

This is a homecoming, of sorts, for Elder Grover who taught industrial arts at Church College of Hawaii from 1960-68. "PCC hadn't started when we first came," he recalled, "but we saw it taking shape."

He went on to become a professor of technology at BYU in Provo - teacher training for junior high and high school industrial education teachers, and mostly automotive for graduate students - and retired in '97 after 30 years there. Sister Grover has been a homemaker for their blended family of 14 children and 41 grandchildren, with another on the way.

When Sister Grover first visited PCC, she said, "I was extremely impressed and wrote my two sons - one was in New Zealand and the other in Tahiti on their missions - that they should come to school here. Chase [Grover], our youngest son, graduated from BYU-Hawaii last year and still lives in Laie; so we love the place."

"I think the people I'm working with are great, and I get along very well with them," Elder Grover said. He added he's currently working on reorganizing the carpentry shop, trying to maintain the equipment, and installing new ohia log railing in various places. There's always something to do."

## Sister Helen Bateman

Our newest missionary at the Center, Sister Helen Bateman, arrived May 8 from Provo, Utah, and has been assigned to serve in the Islands Office and the Hawaiian Mission Settlement for at least 12 months.

This is Sister Bateman's fourth senior mission: She and her late husband of almost 60 years, a retired BYU speech and communications professor, previously served a public affairs mission based in Sydney, Australia; in Hanoi, Viet Nam, where they taught English to doctors and government officials; and public affairs again in Honolulu. She was also a part-time missionary hostess for nine years at the Joseph Smith Memorial Building in Salt Lake City.

"We traveled a lot and lived in many places in the world," she said, listing in addition Guam, London, the Virgin Islands, Germany and even Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, when they were first married. "We loved the adventure and learning new things."

Of her latest new home in Laie she says, "I didn't put in for PCC, but I love it here. The people are so kind. It's wonderful." Sister Bateman, who has five children, 17 grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren, added that her biggest challenge has been learning everybody's name.



Elder & Sister Grover from Utah



Sister Bateman from Utah

# Immua Polenisia

## Congratulations to...

### Miss Tonga U.S.A

PCC Promo Team performer Sina Nauahi captured the Miss Tonga U.S.A. title on May 26 in San Francisco, California.

As part of her prize, Sina - the daughter of Gabriel and Eleni Kaufusi Nauahi, both of whom previously worked at the Center - left for Tonga with her mother to compete in the Miss Heilala beauty contest. If she prevails there, she will also compete in the Miss South Pacific competition, which will be held later this year in the Solomon Islands.

Asked her plans, Sina said after she returns from a Promo Team tour to Japan in August, she intends to register at BYU-Hawaii as a psychology major. She graduated from Kahuku High this year.

### A legal Langi

Speaking of graduation, Laurie Langi, another PCC Promo Team member, recently graduated from the University of Hawaii Law School with her juris doctorate degree and plans to take the bar exam in July.

Langi, the daughter of Samuelu and Dori Langi - also both former PCC employees - grew up in Laie, graduated from Kahuku High in 1996, joined the Promo Team two years later, and earned her bachelor's degree from BYU-Hawaii in political science in 2002.

"I've wanted to be an attorney since I was little. Judge ("Uncle Bill") Wallace is my hero," Langi said. "I'm applying for jobs, but I hope to get a position with the Public Defender's Office."



## A Fond Farewell...

President Orgill announced June 6 that PCC Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer Jim Hopkinson has accepted a new position as Regional Controller with the Church's Financial Reporting and Controls Department, working with the Asia and Pacific areas.

"In his new role, Jim will be working to ensure appropriate financial controls with Area Controllers and Directors of Temporal Affairs, and is anxious to be an advocate for the PCC in his new duties," President Orgill said. "We are saddened at the prospects of saying 'Aloha' to someone who has contributed so much to the success and

progress of the Center and to all who are associated with this special place. We will truly miss him as a regular member of our team."

Hopkinson, who joined the Center in 1998, and his family will be relocating to Salt Lake City, Utah, in August.

Also, Janice Morgan, who served as an administrative assistant for the past 10 years in the executive office, retired in May and has returned to her home in West Valley, Utah.

Morgan first came to Laie as a child with her father, a labor missionary who helped build the PCC and Church College.



Janice Morgan Says Goodbye at Team Meeting

## In Memoriam: "Colonel" Vernon R. Hardisty

Retired Air Force Lt. Col. Vernon R. Hardisty, 81, who served as managing director for the PCC from 1969-75, passed away June 5 at his home in Windsor, California. His wife, Bernice, their five children, 21 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren, survive him.

Oldest son Rob reports Colonel Hardisty referred to "his years at the Center 'as the greatest time in my life.' He often said thereafter that 'working at the Center made everything I did in the service before and in business afterwards pale by comparison.'"

"The Polynesian Cultural Center and the peoples of Polynesia deeply influenced my dad's life from that first day on the job until his passing," Rob continued. "Words cannot express the depth of his love for the people he worked with there and for the Center as a whole."

After leaving PCC, Hardisty held management positions in Suma Corporation and other enterprises. He and his wife also served as ordinance workers in the Oakland Temple for 10 years and filled an 18-month mission at the Winter Quarters Visitors Center in Nebraska.

## Check Out Our New Website

The URL address is still [www.polynesia.com](http://www.polynesia.com) but the look is all-new, with some great Flash™ animation and embedded videos. If you haven't done so already, check it out.

"The Cultural Center is committed to providing people around the world with a wealth of online information and services," said Kealii Haverly, PCC Director of Hawaii Sales who oversees the web site content. "The Center has actually had a web site for about 15 years, which is a very long time for this medium, but this latest version is our best — so far."

The Center's mainland advertising agency, Richter7 in Salt Lake City, Utah, did the new web design work.



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