



EUGENE TANNER

Nikki Moreno

Public affairs director, Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa

How did you build your career in tourism? My background is in public relations, and growing up in Southern California, I always dreamed of one day working at Disneyland. That dream came true when I landed a role doing executive communications in the public affairs department at the Disneyland Resort. It's ingrained into our culture that a Disney vacation is something that some families may spend a lifetime saving for. That's why we take every opportunity and go out of our way to help our guests create lasting family memories, in hopes that their Aulani vacation will be something they speak fondly of for years to come.

How do you present an authentic Hawaii experience for visitors? Part of my role is promoting the unique ways Aulani continues to showcase

Hawaiian culture, and how we make it a seamless and entertaining experience for our guests. Aulani Resort's Olelo Room is one of those areas that I'm especially proud to show off because there's really nothing like it. The Olelo Room is not just a bar – it's a place where Hawaiian language is celebrated through all senses. Visually, the room is stunning with Hawaiian words artfully showcased in about 100 wood carvings above the bar. This setting is coupled with a mouth-watering local pupu and drink menu, live local musicians every night – including Makaha Sons, Hema Pa'a, Jerry Santos, Nick Lum, Ben & Mailla, Hoku Zuttermeyer – and bartenders and servers who speak Hawaiian, creating a beautiful local, and truly Hawaiian, experience for anyone who visits.

What was the best career advice you've received?

Treat everyone you come across with respect, because you never know where that business connection might lead someday ... They might even be your next boss!

What do you see as Hawaii's biggest tourism challenge and how would you address it?

Ensuring that we have a viable and educated workforce is critical to Hawaii's future as a whole. At

Aulani, we are lucky that the Disney brand attracts top talent, but we also know that in this highly competitive market, we can't rely on brand recognition alone. That's why we have unique programs in place to help retain and further grow our workforce. For instance, many of our employees – we call them cast members – take part in the Disney Aspire program, which helps with their education goals by paying 100% of tuition costs up front.



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Julie Morikawa

President, ClimbHI

How did you build your career in tourism? By trying as many roles as I could. And there are still so many more to explore ... I'm not done yet.

How do you present an authentic Hawaii experience for visitors? Aunty Pilahi Paki's working philosophy guides us each day as we strive to live by her words that "aloha means to hear what is

not said, to see what cannot be seen and to know the unknowable." We want to mahalo all of the leaders that help us share aloha and inspire Hawaii's keiki across all of our islands to dream big and to know the power they have to shape Hawaii's future.

What was the best career advice you've received? Growing up in the pastures of

Kohala and understanding from my family, in true Hawaiian form, where learning comes from watching and listening (paa ka waha), the importance of good hard work and someone to do it for.

What do you see as Hawaii's biggest tourism challenge and how would you address it?

What moves us at ClimbHI the most are the keiki who will carry the torch of Hawaii's future. We work together with the community to create programs and tools to help ensure Hawaii's place as not only a tourism leader, but also as a model to lead the world to a better place.

Rus Murakami

Vice president, Service Systems Associates

How did you build your career in tourism? I moved back to Hawaii in 1990 to pursue my culinary career. I worked at Halekulani, Hawaii Prince, Ilikai and Sheraton Waikiki, as well as two free-standing restaurants, primarily behind the scenes. I truly feel this is where my career in tourism began, since the restaurants that I worked at catered to many tourists.

During my time in the culinary field in the early '90s, Hawaiian Regional Cuisine was being introduced to the world. This was an exciting time to be working in the kitchen. Years later, I joined Service Sys-

tems Associates, which focuses on providing visitor services (F&B and retail) for zoos, aquariums, museums and cultural attractions. In Hawaii, we partner with the Honolulu Zoo, Bishop Museum, Hanauma Bay and Pearl Harbor. We also operate a free-standing concession on the beach near Duke's statue.

Our goal at each of these varied locations is to enhance the visitor's experience.

Whether it is the Honolulu Zoo's message on animal conservation or

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Nathan goes above and beyond to #SHARETHEALOHA within our company, industry, and community.

Congratulations Nathan!

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