Chuck Shishido retires
By Dr. Richard Kelley

To put 1972 into perspective, here are a couple of reminders:

- Although the war in Vietnam was still very “hot.” Henry Kissinger, U.S. national security advisor and LeDuc Tho, a member of the North Vietnamese politburo, were negotiating a peace agreement that was finally signed in Paris that January.
- Richard Nixon was elected to a second term as U.S. president.
- Visitor arrivals to Hawai‘i broke the 2 million mark for the first time in history.

Since then, there have been a lot of changes in Hawai‘i and, indeed the world. My hairline has, shall we say, migrated. Our company has gone from a Waikīkī-only operation to a multinational hospitality icon with operations in both the northern and southern hemispheres that extend across 14 time zones and approximately 200 degrees of longitude – more than half the circumference of the globe.

And, along with our company, Chuck has also grown – both professionally and personally.

Chuck’s mother was the one who introduced him to our company, where she had been a housekeeper for almost 20 years. Chuck started on a part-time schedule in the housekeeping department of the Outrigger Reef Towers (now operated as the Wyndham at Waikiki Beach Walk*), while pursuing an accounting degree at the University of Hawai‘i.

Following his graduation, Chuck joined us full-time as a front desk clerk at the Outrigger Reef on the Beach. Taking advantage of the opportunities he found, he steadily took on new responsibilities, rising to assistant hotel manager, hotel manager, group hotel manager,
Chuck Shishido retires ...

Mary Loy, Pam Cabrera, Chuck, Robert McConnell and Bev Fidel

Barry Wallace, Ruthann Yamanaka, Chuck and David Carey

Tom Wakita, Karen Villarmia, Chuck, Czarina Lam, Nora Weatherwax and Alan Naito

general manager of the Outrigger Waikiki, and director of operations.

In 2003, Chuck was promoted to vice president of OHANA Hotels, and in that capacity he played a major role in establishing the OHANA brand as the preferred mid-priced-accommodations choice of travel agents and visitors.

Chuck is a professional who lives The Outrigger Way – Ke ‘Ano Wa’a – every day. Under his leadership, OHANA has become a unique high-performing brand that delights our guests. Launched in 1999, today it delivers attractive, value-priced accommodations to more than a million visitors to our Islands every year.

As the brand has steadily improved its market position from budget to mid-price, Chuck and his team upgraded the OHANA experience in many ways, most notably by adding a package of complimentary amenities for guests, the most popular being free Waikīkī Trolley rides, accessible just by showing an OHANA hotel room card to the driver. No other hotel in Waikīkī offers this amenity, and in light of the large number of monthly riders, it’s clear that our OHANA guests thoroughly enjoy this benefit.

Launching this campaign was a team effort, and true to Chuck’s style, he involved hosts from all parts of the hotel – sales and marketing, human resources, and administration – to brainstorm, fine-tune and introduce this highly successful campaign.

In October 2006, Chuck was asked to serve as the team leader after HTH Corporation selected an affiliate of Outrigger Enterprises Group to manage its 837-room flagship Pacific Beach Hotel, effective January 1, 2007. He assembled a team and began the formidable task of preparing for the transition within a short, two-month timeframe. The tasks included installing updated information systems and technology, establishing new procedures and policies, establishing positive working relationships with hosts, and supporting the negotiating team during difficult labor contract talks.

In August 2007, due to circumstances beyond our control, HTH decided to resume management of the hotel effective December 1. Chuck continued leading the transition team – this time unwinding everything they had so carefully worked to implement. Their goal was to exit professionally and respectfully, in a way that was as minimally disruptive to the hotel’s operations and employees as possible. Accomplishing this challenging task took teamwork, patience, perseverance, attention to detail, and excellent follow-through, all of which Chuck performed with his usual competence and grace. In recognition of this and his many other accomplishments, I had the pleasure of presenting him with our company’s highest recognition, the Chairman’s Award, in 2008.

Since then, Chuck has continued to successfully lead the maturing OHANA brand as vice president of operations.

Known for his quiet effectiveness and humility, Chuck always puts his team before himself. He has a way of bringing out the best in his co-workers. A consummate coach and mentor, Chuck has led many hosts up the responsibility ladder to management positions throughout Outrigger’s operations. In fact, every one of our Waikīkī hotels is staffed with graduates of “CTIM” – the Chuck Shishido School of Travel Industry Management.

Chuck truly cares about our ‘ohana and encourages growth by providing opportunity, counsel and, most admirably, example.

In addition to his bachelor’s degree in accounting from the University of Hawai‘i, Chuck earned his Certified Hotel Administrator (CHA) credential in 1991. He is a member of the Hawai‘i Hotel & Lodging Association.

The luncheon theme, “Viva Las Vegas,” was chosen to reflect Chuck’s well-known love for Hawai‘i’s “ninth island.” There’s no doubt he’ll be racking up the miles and with a little luck, winnings, in retirement. At home he enjoys a quieter life as he maintains an impressive vegetable garden and enjoys early morning walks through his neighborhood.

Chuck, I am very grateful to have had you as a key member of our ‘ohana over the past four-plus decades. Congratulations on your many achievements and mahalo for your inspirational loyalty to our company.

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1 The Outrigger East is currently branded OHANA Waikiki East, and the Outrigger West was branded OHANA Waikiki West for a number of years and is currently undergoing conversion to a Hilton Garden Inn.