This week we are honoring members of our ‘ohana who have recently marked significant anniversaries in their careers with Outrigger. I am looking at a list of 72 individuals who have been with the Hawai‘i division of our company from five to 40 years. Each deserves thanks and praise for their loyal service to our company, our community and the global Travel & Tourism industry. Without wishing to diminish the accomplishments of the other 71 individuals on the list, I want to tell our readers a little more about one person in particular – Outrigger’s Chief Executive Officer David Carey, who is celebrating his 30th year with our company!

As most of our ‘ohana knows, David is married to my eldest daughter, Kathy. However, many may not know that David and Kathy just celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary!

While students at Stanford University, the two met through their mutual interest in soccer. The game has remained a very big part of their lives, so they celebrated three and a half decades of marital bliss by taking a trip to Los Angeles to – guess what? – watch some soccer!

After graduating from Stanford, David enrolled in the Law/Business joint degree program at Santa Clara University and earned his law degree cum laude (with honors) and an MBA with distinction. Kathy also earned her MBA from Santa Clara. In addition, David was elected to membership in the Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society, the highest recognition a business student anywhere in the world can receive in a business program accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International).

David and Kathy moved to Honolulu in 1982 when David signed on as an attorney specializing in corporate and real estate law at Carlsmith Wichman Case Mukai and Ichiki. One of his first jobs with that firm was to provide legal services in connection with Outrigger’s acquisition of the 541-room Prince Kuhio Hotel in Waikiki (now known as Hilton Waikiki Beach).

After the Prince Kuhio transaction closed, there was a lot more work to do. From 1951 to 1982, our company had grown tremendously in Waikiki. The Outrigger Prince Kuhio was our 17th hotel, each just a block or less from the next. Then, Hurricane ‘Iwa hit the Hawaiian Islands on November 23, 1982. This and more sent a great deal of additional work to David and his associates at Carlsmith.
Finally, David and I agreed that he should join the Outrigger ‘ohana. Our Department of Human Resources lists his first day as a regular employee as June 1, 1984. In 1988 he was promoted, becoming president of our company. He was named chief executive officer in 1993.

In the two decades since then, David has led the transformation of Outrigger from a local hotel company operating only in the Hawaiian Islands to a significant global hospitality group with 44 properties operating or under development in eight countries scattered across the Pacific and Indian oceans, spanning 10 time zones!

David has done many other things in the past 30 years. He is a strong community leader who has played an active role on a variety of nonprofit boards and government task forces. He is a director or trustee for Punahou School, the Foundation for the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Hawaii Business Roundtable and Honolulu Festival. His service as chair of the Chamber of Commerce of Hawai‘i’s Military Affairs Council has involved a great deal of time and travel.

David and Kathy are also great parents who have raised four wonderful children.

Much has been written about the characteristics of individuals who become successful leaders. The traits may vary somewhat from industry to industry, but there is a great deal of overlap no matter what kind of a business one is in.

- Warren Bennis, chairman of the Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California has said: “Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”
- Bill Gates, well-known co-founder of Microsoft, investor and philanthropist, predicts: “As we look into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.”
- Tim Millett, author, trainer and business coach, believes that “leadership is moving people to a common goal.”

No matter how one looks at, over the past 30 years, David Carey has been an inspiring and wonderful leader of our company and our community. David, please accept our thanks and congratulations for everything you have accomplished.