This past Wednesday, August 12, was Mildred Courtney Day in the City & County of Honolulu. The proclamation signed by Mayor Kirk Caldwell was just one of the special recognitions that Mildred Courtney received this week when over 100 of her friends and colleagues gathered on the Voyager Club deck at the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort to honor Mildred’s many accomplishments during her 60-year career with our company.

It was a magical night organized by Ruthann Yamanaka, Bitsy Kelley, Nurhan Enustun and a dedicated planning committee (Alan White, Barry Wallace, Bill Comstock, Brent Shiratori, Charlene Luning, Chuck Kelley, Dean Nakasone, Dianne Vicheinrut, Jasmine Tso, Jerry Dolak, Jo Christian Teraoka, Kaipo Ho, Pam Cabrera, and Sheryl Tsugawa), with many Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach hosts graciously welcoming guests on arrival and staffing food stations with delicious offerings. It was a flawless event.

Mildred was honored in many ways.

- One of the beachfront meeting rooms was dedicated in a special ceremony in her honor as “Voyager I – Mildred Courtney Room.”
- Admiral Thomas B. Fargo, USN Retired, former Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, presented Mildred with a koa plaque recognizing her support of military personnel.
- Admiral Harry B. Harris, Jr., the current Commander of the Pacific Command, presented Mildred with a commendation letter and medal from the U.S. Department of Defense for her outstanding service to the United States.
- Many other members of Hawai‘i’s military leadership, such as, Lieutenant General John A. Toolan, USMC, Lieutenant General (retired) Hank Stackpole, USCM, and Captain Stanley Keeve, USN, attended to personally thank Mildred for her many decades of dedicated service.
- President and CEO David Carey, Board Chairman Dr. Chuck Kelley and I presented tributes and gifts from Outrigger Enterprises Group, which included an Outrigger “Challenge Coin.” This beautiful memento was a first for Outrigger Enterprises Group, although it is quite common in military circles. The cast or struck coin or medallion typically bears the logo or emblem of the organization plus a date or title of an occasion. The coin’s origins date as far back as the Roman Empire when each soldier was expected to show such a coin to prove his identity if challenged by a guard.1
• A special 13-minute video was shown, with interviews and photographs that touched on many of Mildred's achievements over the past six decades.
• I said a few words, which are reprinted below, and then Kaipo Ho led the group as we held hands and sang Hawai‘i Aloha.

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Challenge_coin

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**REMARKS BY DR. RICHARD KELLEY**

Good evening and ALOHA!!

What a great gathering! The evening has been alive with memories as we have heard so much about a very special member of our ‘ohana.

Sixty years of service is a record in many ways. My sister Jean and I are proud to have been part of this organization for almost as long as Mildred. In fact, when I introduce Mildred to others, I will often say, “This is Mildred Courtney, our military liaison. She's the only person in our company whose employee number is lower than mine!”

A couple of months ago, I thought it would be a good idea to verify that statement, so I asked Ruthann Yamanaka to look up Mildred’s original employee number, dating back to 1955. Ruthann laughed and said, “Dr. Kelley, back in the days when Mildred was hired, we didn’t have employee numbers!”

Yes, things were quite different in Hawai‘i 60 years ago.

Roy and Estelle Kelley had just completed this property, initially called The REEF. It was the first beachfront hotel that had been built in central Waikīkī since the Royal Hawaiian Hotel was opened in 1927. We didn’t know where the visitors needed to fill the rooms would come from. The total number of visitors to Hawai‘i in the previous year, 1954, had been barely 91,000 with only 15 percent of them international travelers.

Compare those numbers to today’s 8.3 million annual visitor arrivals, of which 30 to 35 percent come from some country other than the United States.

There have been many other changes in Hawai‘i since 1955, and it seems as though Mildred has successfully adapted to all of them. Often, she is ahead of the pack and a leader of change.

She has evolved from …

• Switchboard operator to
• Executive assistant to
• Hotel manager to
• Newspaper publisher to
• Military liaison
• And much more

The famous British scientist and explorer Charles Darwin is credited with developing the theory of evolution. Darwin concluded that, in nature, it is not necessarily the strongest, the fastest, or the biggest that survive. Those that survive are the ones that are able to best adapt and adjust as the world changes around them.

That is the essence of Mildred – “a quick, versatile responder.”

But, there is another important aspect to Mildred’s personality, which is found in her heart. She cares deeply for:
• Her friends and family
• Her co-workers
• Our community
• Our visitors
• Those who serve our country in uniform

This will not change. It is the essence of her soul.

Mildred, thank you for everything you have done for our ‘ohana over the past six decades.

As you enter the next phase of your life, I know that everyone here tonight joins me in wishing you Good health, Love, Respect, Peace and Security.

We all pray that, in the years ahead, you will have many, many opportunities to continue sharing your unique wisdom, spirit and love with countless others, near and far.

MAHALO AND ALOHA!
Mildred Courtney ...

David Carey, ADM Harris and ADM Fargo

Jo Christian Teraoka, Mildred and Lee Davis

Mildred with Coach Bud

Dean Nakasone, Mildred and Bill Comstock

Mildred with LtGen John A. Toolan, USMC and spouse Helen

Jo Christian Teraoka, Jeanine Wiercinski, Mildred, Pam Cabrera, Ruthann Yamanaka and Sheryl Tsugawa