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Honoring More of Our Longtime Employees

By Dr. Richard Kelley

As I have written a number of times about how I frequently receive messages from our guests, which in effect say, “You have the nicest employees I’ve ever met.” Guests also tell me that they are impressed with how little employee turnover we have. They see the same smiling faces when they return year after year or even after a gap of five or even ten years.

There are lots of reasons for this. We hire great people, pay them fairly, have excellent benefits and treat everyone as ‘ohana (family).

This week I would like to recognize four members of our ‘ohana who have had a part in our record of success. Each has recently passed a significant milestone of their career with our company.

The honorees are:

**30 Years of Service**
- Hung Da Ngo – Central Maintenance
- Nora Weatherwax – General Manager
- John Wong – General Maintenance

**35 Years of Service**
- Cindy Yip – Housekeeping

Cindy Yip joined our Housekeeping department in 1975, just as we were finishing up the construction of both the OHANA Waikiki East and the OHANA Waikiki West hotels. It was a hectic time. We had simultaneously leased the land for those two properties, plus the land for the Outrigger Waikiki in 1963, along with a commitment to build three hotels. The Outrigger Waikiki was completed first in 1967, but the work at OHANA Waikiki East and Waikiki West continued on. I am almost certain that Cindy found herself in the middle of some of that construction during her days as part of our ‘ohana. Since then, I often see Cindy at work either on the room floors or in the Housekeeping department during morning meetings or lunch breaks.

Hung Da Ngo joined our ‘ohana five years later, and I am sure he has also seen his share of construction too. In Waikiki, there are always construction and renovation projects going on, as we try to keep our many properties in that resort area fresh and up to date. Hung has been putting on the finishing touches with his paintbrush for 30 years.

Nora Weatherwax is one of the five Stillman sisters who have been part of our ‘ohana for many, many years. Nora has steadily acquired new skills along the way, advancing and assuming more and more responsibilities and now carries the title of General Manager at the OHANA Waikiki Malia.

John Wong joined our ‘ohana when we purchased the Prince Kuhio Hotel. He was part of the very hard-working and loyal crew that operated the full-service commercial laundry in the basement. I distinctly recall going into that laundry and shaking the hands of every worker there on the morning of our first day of ownership of that hotel. I am not one hundred percent sure if John Wong was working that day but most likely he was. I’ll be in Waikiki next week, and I hope to be able to shake his hand once again, along with all of the others mentioned in this article.

Congratulations to each of you, Cindy, Hung, Nora, and John on reaching your 30- and 35-year milestones. Mahalo – from the bottom of my heart!