This week, I joined other members of the Kelley family in expressing our deepest appreciation to Nurhan Enustun, director of catering, as she leaves our ‘ohana and embarks on a new phase of life. Some say she is retiring, but knowing Nurhan for over three decades, I predict she will continue to lead a very active life, but structure it so she is more in control of its scope, pace and schedule.

Nurhan was born in Istanbul, Turkey, where her father was a civil engineer. When she was 12 years old, her family moved to Michigan. I first met Nurhan in 1982 when Outrigger Enterprises purchased the 630-room Prince Kuhio Hotel in Waikīkī. The hotel had a fine dining restaurant, coffee shop and large ballroom with kitchen facilities capable of handling a wide range of banquets. Nurhan was part of the team that kept the food and beverage department humming and, as things moved forward, I gave her more and wider responsibilities, which she graciously accepted and gracefully fulfilled.

In 1993, David Carey assumed Outrigger’s CEO responsibilities and, when we sold the Prince Kuhio in 1999, he asked Nurhan to remain with Outrigger as coordinator of the wide range of meeting and banquet events in our various Waikīkī properties, particularly at our two beachfront hotels and the OHANA Waikiki East.

Nurhan has also coordinated a number of outdoor events away from Waikīkī, many of which involved setting up tents, providing electric power and arranging for lighting, field kitchens, portable restrooms, etc.

Activities like these must be coordinated much in the way a maestro coordinates a symphony orchestra playing for a big theatrical production like the Nutcracker ballet. Everything must be perfect and exquisitely timed. The musicians, dancers and stagehands must work like one. At an Outrigger banquet or event, our guests expect warm steaks, crisp salads and cold ice cream.

In her 33-plus years at Outrigger, Nurhan never failed our ‘ohana or fell short of guest expectations! What an enviable record she has compiled!

This week, you might say we “turned the tables” on Nurhan. Dr. Chuck and his wife Jenny invited members of the Kelley family to their home for a dinner honoring her. The theme of the evening recognized Nurhan’s roots in Turkey. Each guest was asked to bring a dish of popular Eastern Mediterranean fare. Nurhan did not have to lift anything other than a fork holding a bite of tasty kebab or baklava or a glass of wine in response to a cheerful toast. And there were many of those throughout the evening.

Nurhan, thanks for all you have done for Outrigger, our guests and ‘ohana. We wish you good health, long life and lots of fun in the years to come.