

# Reflection

In 1968, the Hawaii Chapter of IEHA was founded and its inaugural Bosses' Night was held. Four decades later, as my second and final term as Hawaii Chapter President comes to an end, I cannot help but feel a sense of pride and humbleness to have been given this opportunity to serve as President of the largest Chapter in our organization. It has been an honor to work with and receive support from all the members who are so dedicated to the housekeeping industry.

As I transition out of my presidency, it gives me time to reflect on the past. I was fortunate to be a part of so many great activities and events, take part in presenting new educational topics, and participate in various community service projects, for example:

- **Bosses' Night:** Our Chapter's annual gala recognizes those who have allowed the members to get together to share ideas, exchange common challenges in our industry and brainstorm solutions, and form long-term friendships.

- **Vendor Appreciation Day:** This annual event allows us to thank our vendor members for their support and allow them to present their goods and services to the Chapter in a mini-trade show format.

- **Educational Topics and Workshops:** We were fortunate to have presentations by Pat Gable, of United Laundry, on laundry management, and a motivational discussion of embracing change by

Annabel Chotzen, as well as Rose Galera's many informative workshops, including "A Life's Portfolio/Personal and Professional Planning." Second Vice President John Yamamoto also took a proactive approach by thinking "outside-the-box" and lined up guest speakers on topics that not only helped improve our professional outlook, but our personal lives as well.



**Gary Nushida**  
Hawaii Chapter President

- **Environmental Concerns and Green Programs:**

Key community entities, such as the Board of Water Supply, Hawaiian Electric Company, Honolulu Recovery Systems, and the Mayor's Office were guest

speakers at our meetings to discuss ways to cut down on waste, conserve our precious water resources, and emphasize how some hotels are doing more to reduce electricity usage to decrease our carbon footprint on the environment.

- **Community Service Projects:** The Hawaii Chapter has sustained our biannual cleaning of the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans' Clubhouse, along with a biannual donation drive of various goods such as towels, sheets, and other personal hygiene items that were distributed to local homeless shelters, veteran centers, and organizations that service the needy. Our donation drive was even recognized by the Governor's office during a grand opening/ dedication of the Next Step Shelter in Kakaako.

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tal Design).

One example to site in the *EBOM* publication is the expanded section on "Materials and Resources" that gives specific methods for creating a "sustainable purchasing policy." By definition, this means "the preferential purchasing of products that meet sustainability standards." Simply put, the materials purchased for a facility have a direct impact environmentally. What type of cleaning products we bring into the building affects everyone in the building and, moreover, affects the outdoor environment when the end product leaves the building (i.e., landfills). The guide points out, "Products containing recycled content expand markets for recycled materials, slow the consumption of raw materials, and reduce the amount of waste entering landfills." Remember, source reduction is the top priority of the EPA and the number-one way to reduce waste.

Consider all items that are purchased for the custodial closet and question each procurement, asking, "Does this purchase help to promote source reduction?" When the purchasing department partners with the waste management team on behalf of this initiative, change will happen.

Here is a simple tip for source reduction: If you are presently using cloth or paper cleaning wipers, change to microfiber. All microfibers cloths can be washed, some up to 700 times. Do the math on that purchase! Also, color code your microfiber rags (i.e., red for bathroom, blue for eating areas). Help win the fight against cross contamination!

The USGBC Resource Guide has also expanded the section of "Indoor Environmental Quality" (IEQ) to include a prerequisite for a Green cleaning policy. The intent of the section is "to reduce the exposure of building occupants

and maintenance personnel to potentially hazardous chemical, biological, and particulate contaminants, which adversely affect air quality, human health, building finishes, building systems, and the environment." The Reference Guide is available to everyone and a very handy tool for today's executive housekeeper. You can find the guide at [www.USGBC.org](http://www.USGBC.org).

I'll conclude with a story that I recently heard: One day, two beachcombers were walking along the ocean shore where thousands of starfish had been washed up by the sea and were dying. Every few steps, the woman reached down, picked up a starfish and tossed it back into the water. Her companion asked, "Why are you doing that? What difference will that make?" The woman replied "Well, it will make a difference to me." So, whether you are just beginning a program for environmental sustainability or have one up and running in your facility, know that you are making a difference.

Please send questions, comments, or stories to [thejanitorcloset@yahoo.com](mailto:thejanitorcloset@yahoo.com). ♦

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## EXECUTIVE CORNER

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• **Web site Upgrade and Quarterly Chapter Newsletter:** Thanks to the direction from our Public Relations Chair Elaine Terry, of *Hawaii Hospitality* magazine, and the writing/graphic layout assistance by Shelly Awaya, of Sysco Guest Supply, we upgraded our Web site, [www.hawaii-ieha.org](http://www.hawaii-ieha.org). We are now able to provide more up-to-date information to our members who are unable to attend meetings or events. It is also used as a recruiting tool to encourage prospective members to join our Chapter. Additionally, we are also e-mailing a quarterly newsletter to not only Chapter members, but to hotel general managers and industry leaders.

On March 11, 2009, my term as President will come to a close, along with a great supporting group of individuals: 1st Vice President Ivy Kwok, 2nd Vice President John Yamamoto, Treasurer Janice Ng, and Secretary Jo-Ann Yonamine. I have learned that in order to run a successful term, one needs exceptional leaders to support you and advisors who can help guide you in the right direction. Without the encouragement and assistance from individuals such as Rose Galera, of Clean Plus Systems II; Madeline Chang, of Aston Waikiki Sunset; and Patty Kawaoka, of Miramar at Waikiki, the Hawaii Chapter would not be where it is today.

IEHA must continue to focus on increasing certification of members, furthering education, and continuing community service projects. Strengthening these areas will not only be beneficial to our members, but it will positively impact everyone who comes in contact with our organization. I hope by emphasizing some of the things that we have successfully accomplished in our Chapter will give other Chapters of IEHA some ideas as well. [gnushida@hiprince.com](mailto:gnushida@hiprince.com) ♦