



## Afterglow: In Memory of Patty M. Kawaoka By Shelly Awaya

On Oct. 22, the Hawaii chapter of the International Executive Housekeepers Association lost a former leader, an innovative mentor, but most of all, a wonderful friend.

Patty M. Kawaoka was the housekeeping supervisor at the Miramar at Waikiki when this writer met her almost 10 years ago. In 2004 when she was chapter president, Kawaoka discovered that my college degree was in journalism. She introduced me to Susan Sunderland, the former editor of Hawaii Hospitality magazine, who said they were starting a column for IEHA Hawaii and wanted me to write the stories. From that day emerged what you read here every other month.

Kawaoka always encouraged others and gave tremendous support to help people thrive. She tapped into their "hidden talents" and never took "no" for an answer!



Patty Kawaoka

John Yamamoto, our former chapter president, remembered that his main reason for running for office was because of Kawaoka. "Had Patty not convinced me to take the lead while offering her guidance and support, I probably would not have thought to run. I will miss her dearly," he said.

At Kawaoka's funeral service on Nov. 10, a thank you card was given to everyone who attended. The card read: "I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one. I'd like to leave an afterglow of smiles when the day is done. I'd like to leave an echo whispering softly down the ways; of happy times and laughing times and bright and sunny days. I'd like the tears of those who grieve to dry before the sun; of happy memories that I leave behind when the day is done."

This writer can say that Kawaoka's passing leaves a huge void in the Hawaii chapter. Yet she would still want everyone to press on and make every day a great one. Thank you, Patty, for always believing in me. A hui hou, until we meet again! 🍻