Serving up energy-saving tips
Heat, noise, sweat, steam
Women & girls in our community
HEI CEO Connie Lau

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Currents

Stepping out of traditional territories, today’s woman juggles her career, her family, her finances, and her future with confidence. The articles presented in this month’s Pink Power issue showcase stories of some of our Hawaiian Electric, Maui Electric, and Hawaii Electric Light Company female co-workers who break barriers and make a difference in our companies and communities.

A mother-daughter perspective

When Cyana Stevens decided to apply for the Process Technology (PTECH) program at Leeward Community College to gain the technical, operational, and analytical skills needed to become a power plant operator, it was no surprise to her mother.

“Cyana has always been ambitious and has had a wide variety of interests since she was a little girl,” said Power Purchase Administrator Susanna Ontai, proud mother of Kahe Power Plant’s only female operator. “When she was a student at Kapolei High School’s Science Academy, she was fascinated with electrical work and dabbled in a few electrical classes, where she was usually the only girl.”

“I don’t think that what I bring to the job differs much from my fellow co-workers. We’re given a job to do and we complete it to the best of our abilities,” said Cyana. “I can see how it could be tough being the only woman in this field, but the men that I work with are really great.”

This mother-daughter team says they enjoy sharing a common workplace, and often talk about their experiences to gain a broader perspective on company projects. Cyana explains how the power plants operate and Susanna speaks to how HECO interconnects independent power producers to the grid, giving them both a better understanding of how the company operates and a greater appreciation of the workers involved in both areas.

When asked what advice she would give to young women thinking about a career in operations, Cyana’s advice is “Just go for it! Don’t be intimidated by the fact that there aren’t many women in this field. I learned that being successful in this trade is not a matter of gender, it is based on the person and his or her work ethic.” Cyana also plans to return to school and complete her bachelor’s degree, but has not yet decided on a major.

Susanna has been with Hawaiian Electric since March 2004, when she joined HECO’s Power Purchase Division. She is currently assigned to the Feed-In Tariff program.

Cyana started with HECO on April 26, 2010, 22 years to the day after another special person in her life. Fuels Infrastructure Engineer Cyril Ontai, Cyana’s father and Susanna’s husband, joined the company on April 26, 1988.

Utility work is a family tradition for this generational team: Susanna Ontai and Cyana Stevens.

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Planning our financial future

Managing the books for a highly regulated business that posted operations expenses of approximately $250 million, maintains huge, costly fixed assets on five islands, and employs more than 2,400 workers is a job for people with a sharp eye for finance, a flair for banking relationships, and the ability to manage spending.

Meet Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Tayne Sekimura, Treasurer and head of Treasury & Financial Services Lorie Ann Nagata, and Controller and head of General Accounting Patsy Nanbu. These three women lead the financial health and well-being of our companies, and are tasked with one of the four cornerstones of our Strategic Plan to “remain a financially successful company for all stakeholders.”

Top financial advisor
With a broad knowledge of finance and how operations can affect our bottom line, one of Tayne’s main functions is to provide financial advice to management.

“I provide advice on the financial implications of business activities and help our management team make the connection between company operations and our financial performance,” Tayne said. “I am often asked to evaluate different options from a financial standpoint. For example: Does it make more sense to lease a generator or buy one?”

Our companies are huge consumers of capital, so Tayne and her staff, along with HEI, must maintain good working relationships with rating agencies that grade our financial health, financial institutions and other investors that provide us with funds to pay for all the infrastructure investments we make in our generating stations, poles and wires and our computer systems, as examples.

“I am also responsible for providing accurate and timely financial information to our shareholders, employees, and regulators,” Tayne said. “People make decisions about their business and personal future based on this information, so it’s important it is accurate.”

Meeting long-term needs
One of Lorie’s many responsibilities includes making sure our companies have money to pay our bills. She must juggle our long-term financing needs as we embark on huge, multiple-year maintenance projects and major upgrades to meet the demands of a clean energy economy, while paying on the debt already accumulated.

“As Treasurer, I handle a mixed bag of duties, including risk management and the administration of our enterprise computer system, Ellipse,” said Lorie. “But really it all boils down to making sure we have enough cash in the bank to handle today’s needs and a plan to handle for our financial needs for the future.”

Lorie joined Hawaiian Electric shortly after we sold our first revenue bonds in 1982. “It was a big deal for us, a new source of stable, long-term funding that is less costly for our customers,” Lorie said. “And who knew that I would still be with the company, 30 years later, when those first bonds mature in 2012.”

Saying no sometimes
As Controller, Patsy is responsible for our companies’ financial reporting, procurement and disbursement processes and maintaining a system of internal controls.

“That means sometimes you won’t like my answers, as I need to say ‘no’ to the way people want to do things,” said Patsy.

With more than 25 years of service, Patsy ensures that we maintain the highest standard in accounting principles so we remain in good standing with our many regulating agencies, such as the Securities Exchange Commission, Internal Revenue Service, Public Utilities Commission, and others.

We’ve come a long way
Although today our companies’ three top financial employees are women, it wasn’t always the case.

“At my former employer I was afraid to tell my boss that I was pregnant because I thought it would limit my chances of promotion,” said Tayne. “So I held out until I was almost seven months pregnant before I ‘fessed up. It ended up not limiting my upward ability, but with few women in the profession, it was difficult to figure out the impact.”

All three women agreed that a strong foundation of financial education is crucial for any employee today. “Even if you are not a ‘math-person’ or plan to pursue a career in banking, you should understand how to manage your personal finances to get ahead,” said Patsy. Collaborative skills were also high on the list of requirements for the next generation of women leaders.

Tayne, Lorie, and Patsy also agreed that the best parts of their jobs are the ever-changing nature of their duties and teaming with co-workers from across the companies to solve problems and move forward.
Reaching our customers with tasty, energy saving tips

By Tandy Tabata

Before the modern convenience of the Internet, where could a customer go to find delicious, never-fail recipes, determine the best substitute for eggs, or learn how to operate a new appliance when in a pinch? For nearly 100 years, our customers could simply pick up the phone and call the Hawaiian Electric Home Services department to speak with one of our professional home economists.

Now known as Education and Consumer Affairs (E&CA), the department’s professionals currently focus on supporting our companies’ clean energy goals by providing energy conservation tips and information about renewable energy technologies, managing community service events, and compiling and publishing important facts about emergency preparedness. Happily, customers can also still count on weekly recipes in the newspaper and monthly bill newsletters.

Experts in the home
The Hawaiian Electric Home Services department dates back to the 1920s when our companies actually sold electric appliances. Our home economists quickly became the go-to experts on the newest technologies, visiting customers in their homes or holding large cooking classes in the King Street Auditorium to demonstrate the proper use of the appliance and, of course, share new recipes.

Our home economists, affectionately known as the Cookie Ladies, carried the clout of today’s Food Network and HGTV experts. The position was a well-regarded and rare career opportunity for local women outside of nursing and teaching. In many ways, our home economists were our companies’ first outreach specialists, becoming a welcome part of every household.

Changing priorities
As our companies’ priorities began to change, so did E&CA’s mission. Tapping into the home economists’ legacy — hundreds of carefully tested recipes — E&CA created a cooking show that shared cooking tips with a cup of energy conservation and electrical safety folded in. “Mahele” began broadcasting in 1987, transitioning to “The Electric Kitchen” in 1994, hosting a variety of guest celebrities and local organizations until its last show in 2005.

With an eye to our companies’ future, the department kept ahead of the curve with innovative and educational activities. While the company premiered early electric vehicles in the 90’s, the E&CA staff brought the concept to classrooms by starting the popular school-based electric vehicle program called the Electron Marathon, which ran for eleven years.

E&CA today
Those who remember our home economists are surprised to find that the women (and even a few men along the way) of today’s E&CA are a blend of advertising and marketing, business administration, nonprofit management, and public service professionals. While customers still inquire about appliances and recipes, many questions stem from an interest in understanding energy policy and new technologies.

As the “faces” of Hawaiian Electric in our communities, the E&CA team coordinates programs such as:

- **STEM** (science, technology, engineering and math) education, robotics programs, and educator workshops to encourage technical knowledge in the workforce of tomorrow.

- **The Corporate Sustainability Report**, providing information about new technology and services as well as details about our companies’ progress towards our HCEI goals.

- **Grow Hawaiian and Arbor Day** events to encourage native planting and conservation in partnership with our environment.

- **People Power** work days to promote employee volunteerism and community partnerships.

Equipped with a watt meter in one hand and a handout on solar technology in the other, the outreach professionals of the E&CA department continue to support the companies’ conservation and clean energy goals while bringing customers the kind of advice and service they’d expect from a friendly neighbor. And if you are looking for a recipe — they can probably give you that, too.
Heat, Noise, Sweat, Steam

By Kristen Okinaka

Heat. Noise. Sweat. Steam. It’s work most people would prefer to avoid. But four women in HELCO’s Production Department will tell you that working in operating areas is interesting, challenging, and rewarding. Carlena Barroga-Astrande, Alexandria “Tiki” Kanui, Patricia Dally, and Michele Kukahiwa love their jobs.

With a combined 65 years of service, these women help ensure the production and delivery of electricity from various generating facilities to 80,000 Hawaii Island customers.

From the Kanoelehua Operations Control Center, System Operators Carlena Barroga-Astrande and Tiki Kanui carefully monitor the system’s generation to maintain grid frequency and voltage within established parameters. When disturbances occur, whether from a tree branch falling on power lines or the loss of a major generator, they remain calm and respond quickly to restore the grid to safe operating conditions.

Trailblazer:
Jackie Mahi Erickson

In 1981, when Jackie Mahi Erickson became Hawaiian Electric’s Corporate Counsel (and later, Vice-President General Counsel), women executives and women attorneys who were partners in law firms were rare.

“At that time, women lawyers in Hawaii were suffering indignities, such as being called ‘girlie’ or ‘sweetheart’ and not being treated equally with male lawyers,” Jackie said. “Thankfully, though slowly, treatment of women in law firms and corporate positions did improve.”

Under newly appointed President C. Dudley Pratt, Jackie was hired to develop a legal office for our companies.

“With increasing oil prices and expanding infrastructure needs, there was a need for more regulatory expertise,” said Jackie.

An industry first
Besides being the first female general counsel of Hawaiian Electric, Jackie was also the first woman to join the Legal Committee of the Edison Electric Institute (EEI), the national electric utility investor-owned organization.

“When I joined EEI, no other electric utility in the country had a woman general counsel,” Jackie said. “The EEI Legal Chairman’s opening address to its national meeting was ‘Welcome gentlemen and Jackie.’”

Mentoring others
During her tenure at our company, Jackie was known for hiring and developing future company leaders, both women and men.

“Employees used to call my department ‘Erickson U,’” joked Jackie. She especially placed a high value on employees who were dedicated to both customer service and community involvement.

One of Jackie’s most notable hires was a young Connie Lau, our current president and CEO of Hawaiian Electric Industries.

Women leaders of tomorrow
“When I was first approached about the job at Hawaiian Electric, I worried that working for a company that was managed by mostly men was a bad idea for a local, native Hawaiian woman,” Jackie said. “My anxieties were unnecessary. Although there were exceptions, I was treated well and thoroughly enjoyed work.”

Jackie encourages young women to take advantage of the many opportunities a large corporation like Hawaiian Electric can offer and to consider even non-traditional roles and opportunities outside of their areas of expertise. Jackie’s appointment to the executive level of a large Hawaii corporation was a source of pride and inspiration to our employees, native Hawaiians, and women throughout Hawaii’s business community.

Jackie Mahi Erickson retired in October of 2007, and is currently pursuing her interests of golf, travel, reading, music, culture, and art with her husband, Bruce. Supporting charitable causes, especially for educational purposes and in aid of native Hawaiians, remains her high priority.
“I became interested in this job because it keeps me on my toes and it offers many challenges,” said Carlena. “Being an operator tests your mechanical skills and your ability to think on your feet as well.”

Patricia Dally and Michele Kukahiwa operate the boilers and steam turbines that generate electricity, direct fellow employees on their shift, ensure proper safety procedures are followed and make sure repair work orders when it doesn’t. Patricia and Michele are control operators at the Hill and Shipman Power Plants.

Most of the women started their careers in Dispatch. They trained as boiler operators, progressing to control operators, and ultimately as system operators.

“When they expressed interest in the jobs, we told them what they would need to do and they followed through,” said Norman Verbanic, production manager. “They were rigorously trained in the manner as any of our operators.”

The nature of the job itself poses many challenges that can test mental and physical abilities. They overcome those challenges by working smarter.

“I was told at my interview that boiler operators are self-starters, and I really took that to heart,” said Michele. “Ask questions and do the research. Look for answers in the manuals we have, check the Internet, and ask those who are experts on the topic.”

“We learn a lot about the boilers through experience and observation,” said Patricia. “I am always looking online for new information and continue to learn about generation and the future of energy production.”

Power plant rotating shift work schedules can also affect families. An understanding spouse, effective planning, and having a backup plan are important. “Be strong and flexible at the same time. Don’t sweat the small stuff,” Carlena said. “It’s a very fulfilling job, and you and your family can live a little more comfortably because of it. But there are sacrifices to be made by everyone.”

Despite these challenges, Carlena, Tiki, Patricia, and Michele are passionate about their jobs. Skill, determination, hard work, and resilience have gotten them to where they are today.

“Don’t be intimidated by the dirt, oil, sweat, or rotating shifts,” Patricia said. “If you enjoy physical work, using your analytical skills, work well with others, and have a pretty good memory, this is a good field to work in.”

Know your job and do it well

By Lynndee Gomes

On the day after Christmas, 1990, Sherri Taketa became the first woman to work at the Maalaea Power Plant.

“My first day, they gave me a pair of coveralls that was so big, the crotch hung down to my knees,” said Sherri, laughing to herself. “I kept thinking to myself ‘Don’t mess up!’”

Sherri began at Maui Electric as an operator helper, and was soon promoted to operator, where she worked for six years. She took a brief detour to the T & D department as a truck-driving vehicle attendant, but soon returned to Maalaea as a plant aide.

In her current position as a material coordinator, Sherri has a responsibility to care for $8 million dollars of inventory with a rotating supply of $2 million annually.

Maalaea Power Plant has the largest inventory of all three companies because of the many different generators they use and must maintain. Her scheduled shift begins at 7 a.m., but you can always find her at her desk earlier due to the time differences she faces when contacting vendors from around the world.

“I always get three or more price quotes when shopping for materials, depending on what I’m purchasing. Even something as little as lightbulbs deserve the extra effort,” Sherri said. “It’s never a dull moment; you always need to continue juggling to keep things running smoothly.”

With delivery trucks that come and go at least every 15 minutes, Sherri is always on the run at work. And during her lunch break, you can usually find her running around the power plant, literally, to get some exercise. After work, as a mother of three, most of her free time is spent running around with her kids to their sports and activities. When she eventually has time to herself, she enjoys reading and doing puzzles.

Critical thinking, knowledge of the material and equipment needs of her plant, and determination are just a few traits that Sherri demonstrates daily. She is a woman who knows her job and does it well.

From our files: Liberated women in a man’s world

“Liberated Women in a Man’s World” was the title of an article published in the Fall 1970 edition of Load Builder, our company employee magazine - the precursor to Currents, featuring Carol Coops, Hawaiian Electric’s first woman engineer. See the full article about Carol and Elizabeth Lee, our second female engineer, and read about Donna Kawakami and Dorothy Lee, two female draftsmen, on the intranet.
Since 2005, more than 40 young women have had the opportunity to discover the art and science of engineering through the Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day (IGED) event at Maui Electric.

“Our main goal is to give the girls a little preview of what an engineer might do and also make them feel that they, too, can become engineers,” said Fred Oshiro, one of the coordinators of the annual event. “It’s important that we do a good job, as their brief experience at MECO may play a big role in their future.”

After a short presentation about the career of engineering, the girls build a hands-on project where they gain knowledge of electronic circuit components and construction techniques. They start by using the Microstation CAD (Computer Aided Drawing) program to draw an electronic circuit which they later use to construct a three-note toy organ. This year, they also soldered wires onto their speakers.

Fred said he hopes that these experiences encourage more young women to take part in robotics and enroll in more math and science classes as they continue their education.

The team that hosts the IGED students is comprised of men and women from Engineering, GIS, Power Supply, Renewables, and Transmission & Distribution, with support from Administration, Information Services, Purchasing, and Trades and Crafts.

Helping others is always in fashion

Fashion: It’s more than just the latest in haute couture. It’s about feeling good about yourself and making a new start in life. For disadvantaged women trying to join or return to the workforce there are many bumps along the road to economic independence, including for some finding appropriate attire to wear to a job interview.

Since 1997, Dress for Success, an international not-for-profit organization offering services designed to help women find jobs and remain employed, has assisted more than 550,000 women gain confidence and professionalism by providing appropriate attire, career counseling, and job training.

For the last two years, a group of employees from HECO has set out to help, collecting bags and boxes stuffed full of gently used professional clothing, shoes, and accessories. HECO’s Dress for Success donation this year was the largest corporate donation ever received by the non-profit.

“This was a fun and rewarding project. People got to free up closet space and give women in need a fresh start at the same time,” said Sherri Loo, clothing drive coordinator and manager of HR Strategies & Programs. “As we unpacked the clothing, we were tickled to see so many beautiful items, including many brand new ones, and imagined the recipient seeing herself in it for the first time. Now, that’s a wonderful thought.”

Be on the lookout for the next Dress for Success clothing drive, scheduled for this fall.

HELCO men go the distance for women

How do HELCO men support the women of their community? By donning pink, flowered slippers and walking a mile through downtown Hilo.

Represented by President Jay Ignacio and Educational Services Coordinator Kenyan Beals, HELCO sponsored and participated in the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes fundraising walk benefiting the YWCA’s Sexual Assault Support Services, the only 24-hour, 7-day-a-week, rape crisis center on Hawaii Island.

“HELCO proudly supports an organization like the YWCA, whose primary function is to fulfill the local community’s needs,” said Jay. “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes seeks to improve lives by providing an array of services and referrals for women and men, families, and significant others as they work through the trauma of sexual assault.”

The next Hawaii Island YWCA Walk a Mile in Her Shoes fundraising walk will be later this year, in October. We hear Jay and Kenyan have been out practicing in their pretty slippers!

Mahalo to Jay and Kenyan, who walked alongside Mayor Billy Kenoi, Police Chief Harry Kubojiri, and Prosecuting Attorney Jay Kimura, from all of the mothers, daughters, and sisters of our company ohana.
Welcome to our world

MECO keiki
Davin (Customer Service) and Tammi-lyn Hashimoto welcomed son, Taylor, 6/21.

Jeffrey (Engineering) and Carrie Larita welcomed daughter, Tiana, 7/14.

Retirements
7/2  Carol Igarashi, General Accounting, 20 yrs.
7/6  Vicente Agsalda, Generation, 16 yrs.
7/6  Paul Kawahakui, Workforce Services, 17 yrs.
7/9  Glenn Murata, Generation, 10 yrs.
7/16 Edward Apo, Jr., Generation, 33 yrs.
7/16 Alma Freitas, Workforce Services, 36 yrs.
7/19 Karen Horiuchi, Customer Installation, 6 yrs.

In memoriam
6/10 Chiung Ying Lau, General Accounting, retired 1983
6/18 Laura Pang, Treasury, retired 1984
6/24 Mitsuru Okada, Production, retired 1993
7/14 Melvin Higashi, Operating Dispatch, retired 2003

HECO employees take leadership roles in Toastmasters
Congratulations to Frank Vargo of System Operation, newly elected Toastmasters District 49 Governor for the State of Hawaii! He is the second employee from HECO who has held this position. The first was Kevin Doyle of Information Technology & Services, who last August went on to become International Director for Toastmasters. Congratulations to both of you!

HECO

Setting out to make a difference
Ruth Matsumoto of Support Services is on a mission to spread the message “Who I am makes a difference!”

Inspired by Difference Makers International, Ruth believes that by showing our appreciation to our coworkers in simple ways every day, we can cheer each other on to greater success and reinforce our value to the company.

“The process is very simple,” says Ruth:
• Find co-workers to acknowledge and focus on the good.
• Present them with a Blue Ribbon which says “Who I Am Makes A Difference.”
• Express your appreciation by telling them how they make a difference to you and/or your team.
• Ask them to put the ribbon in a place where they will be able to see it and always be reminded that who they are makes a difference.
• Connect heart-to-heart - either with a hand shake, a hug, or a smile.
• Give them two extra Blue Ribbons so they can pass them on to others to spread the message and the cheer.

For anyone interested in participating, you can find more information or order the Blue Ribbons online at www.blueribbons.org.

HELCO

Sign up today for the 12th Annual Tee Off for Tots golf tournament to be held on October 8, at Mauna Lani Resort South Golf Course. Enjoy a great round of golf, terrific prizes, and a delicious lunch, with all proceeds benefiting the less-fortunate keiki of Hawaii Island and the HELCO Employee’s Toys for Tots program. Space is limited, so call Paul Fujikawa at 808-969-0123 or Jon Arizumi at 808-969-0143, by no later than September 19, to get in the game. Mahalo to our title sponsors, IBEW Local 1186 and EnXco/Hawi Renewable Development.
Our companies’ mission is to provide secure, clean energy for Hawaii.

Our 2010-2013 Strategic Plan has been developed to help us achieve our mission, with goals and measurable outcomes in the four key areas: Customer service; operational excellence; learning and growth; and financial stability.

Stories in Currents reflect how our coworkers are achieving these goals every day.

Customer Service
We will deliver affordable energy services to all customers in an exceptional manner.

Operational Excellence
We will excel at our core business of producing, transmitting and distributing reliable electric energy and integrating clean energy technologies.

Learning and Growth
We will be viewed as one of Hawaii’s best places to work.

Financial
We will achieve financial stability and build long-term shareholder value.

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HEI President and CEO Connie Lau

From local roots growing up on Kaneohe Bay, Hawaiian Electric Industries President & CEO Connie Lau has risen to the top, as one of only 20 women presidents of Fortune 1,000 companies.

“I want to encourage young women to believe that they can do anything they want to do,” Connie said. “I believe that the next generation of women leaders will play a vital role in the fabric of our economy, government, and community.”

A recipient of many local and national honors, Connie has received additional recognition in 2011 for her business acumen and leadership, including:

- Named Woman of the Year by the Women’s Council on Energy and the Environment (WCEE) in Washington, D.C. for her commitment to the pursuit of clean energy in Hawaii.
- Appointed by President Obama to serve as a member of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIAC), advising the President on the security of the nation’s infrastructure.
- Appointed to the newly formed Federal Reserve Bank Twelfth District Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council (CDIAC), representing small banks in the Western U.S., including Guam and Hawaii.
- Appointed by President Obama to serve as a member of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council (NIAC), advising the President on the security of the nation’s infrastructure.

Connie is also a board member of Punahou School, the Hawaii Business Roundtable, and the Consuelo Zobel Alger Foundation. She holds a B.S. from Yale University, a J.D. from the University of California’s Hastings College of Law, and an M.B.A. from Stanford University.