

# Hawaii Betsuin Board Election 2023: Candidate Profiles

\*\*\* LAST UPDATED 11/26/23 \*\*\*

## Officer Candidates

**NOTE: The new President Elect will serve starting in 2026 (or possibly 2028 if incoming President Cynthia Alm -- who was elected President Elect in 2021 -- serves two terms.**

### President Elect (to serve 2026-2028)



#### **2021 profile - Wayne**

**Yoshioka:** Hawaii Betsuin and its members are an important part of my life. I am a minister's lay assistant and a Dharma school teacher. I've served on the Betsuin Board since the mid-1990s and am currently its 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President.

I also serve as the chair of the Board Committee for the Hongwanji Mission School (HMS Board). It is important that the Betsuin Board prioritizes responsiveness to and engagement with Betsuin members as well as nurturing the future growth of the Betsuin.

### 2nd Vice President (Facilities)



**John Toguchi:** Like many in our Hongwanji community, I was born and raised on a neighboring island. My hometown temple is Honomu Hongwanji on Hawaii island's Hamakua coast. My journey

back to the Hongwanji started when my daughter attended Hongwanji Mission School. Becoming a Hawaii Betsuin member allowed me to continue to support HMS. I'm a practicing architect and currently serving as your Vice President for Facilities. Shin Buddhist values are tools to share with everyone in our community and beyond, to build harmonious lives for all.

### 1st Vice President (Education)



#### **Jacqueline Furuta:**

Buddhism, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, and its affiliates have been an integral part of my life. I am an alum of Hongwanji Mission School and in my younger days was a

Junior YBA member and attended Dharma School. In college, I was one of the founding student organizers of YESS Camp along with Christina Shioi, Rev. Alan Urasaki, and many others. I presently serve as an officer of the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin temple, and a co-leader for a Honpa Hongwanji Girl Scouts troop. I would like to continue to support this temple to strengthen what Buddhism and its teachings bring to nurture compassion, harmonious relationships, a way of living, and peace for all.

### 3rd Vice President (Religious Affairs)



**Alan Goto:** For Hawaii Betsuin—Past President; Former Vice President of Religious Affairs; a Certified Minister Lay Assistant; Tokudo ordained in 2003; Former member: Board Committees – Hongwanji Mission School and

21<sup>st</sup> Century Fundraising Committee. For Hawaii Kyodan – Chairperson, Central Research & Planning Committee. Interfaith Activities: Rev Yoshiaki Fujitani Buddhist-Christian Lecture Series (BDK-Chaminade University). From grandparents to current grandchildren—a five generation Hawaii Betsuin family.

## 4th Vice President (Finance) *contested position*



**Dexter Mar:** As Hawaii Betsuin former President (2018-2021), the 2nd Century Capital Campaign was started to provide financial security for both facilities and operations. This has stalled since 2022, as the Board has dealt with

challenges to our financial integrity due to an unfavorable audit of 2018 finances, received in 2021. A re-audit is urgently needed but under our current leadership, the 2020 and 2021 financials have not yet been closed. The Hawaii Kyodan Board (HHMH) is also questioning our financial management. If elected as VP for Finance, I will bring new focus and energy to re-building Hawaii Betsuin's financial integrity and fund-raising capacity. I would be honored to have your vote. Namu Amida Butsu!

\*Education, Experience, & Service: UPacific DrPharmacy, Columbia MBA, Stanford PDF; BRS/Saunders, Intelligent Medicine, Kaiser Permanente, Wellcare; HHHB Auditor, VP, President, HHMH Director, Advisor, BSC Program Chair, certified Minister Lay Assistant (2012), Eagle Scout (1966).

**NOTE:** Fujiko Mutobo's accusations in a November 14 email to BWA members about my taking funds from Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Dharma School children for building meeting rooms are **FALSE**. Betsuin and BWA leadership have issued warning statements to disregard the allegations. These lies hurt Hawaii Betsuin's efforts to ask for donations. The financial integrity of our temple needs to be restored, not further tarnished.



### **2021 profile - Wendy**

**Harman:** My family are long time members at different Hongwanji Temples. I have had the honor to serve on many different kinds of Boards and the greatest honor to serve on the Hawaii Betsuin Executive Board and to assist and head

different committees. I am committed to ensuring that the board continues to serve as an open, responsive and respectful forum to share concerns and ideas with the goal of improving our temple and giving back to the community. I have always believed that transparency is so important in positions that are held and things that are done.

## 5th Vice President (Operations)



### **2021 profile - Alan Kubota:**

Born and raised in Hilo, and grew up with Hilo Betsuin Dharma School and Jr. YBA. Involved with Hawaii Betsuin since moving to Oahu from Guam in 1984. As an active member of Hawaii Betsuin, I hope to continue offering my energy and skills to perpetuate the Mission, Temple and Sangha. I am committed to working together with the Board to ensure that the Temple continues to be a place of peace, comfort and inspiration.

## Treasurer



### **2021 profile - Reid**

**Yamamoto:** Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Betsuin. My family has a long history of service to the temple and I would like to carry on the tradition. I currently sit on the Board and hold the position of

Treasurer. While I still have a lot to learn, I see many opportunities to help the Betsuin improve it's financial situation so it can be sustained into the 2nd century and beyond. I would like to support all of the Sangha where I can.

## Secretary



**Steve Lohse:** Thank you for considering me for Secretary of the Betsuin Board! Currently, I serve as Board Secretary, sit on the Board's Bylaw and Social Concerns Committees, and I assist Betsuin ministers with

Project Dana care home services. I also chair the Kyodan's Green Hongwanji Committee and Honolulu District's Committee on Social Concerns, serve as an officer for the 2024 State Federation of Lay Associations, and participate as a Betsuin delegate to the statewide Legislative Assembly. It's a privilege to serve Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii as I am able. My favorite bumper sticker, "Respect Cause & Effect."

## Auditors (2 positions)



**David Atcheson:** I first joined the board as Secretary in 2013 and later served as a vice president. My volunteer roles have centered on technology (e.g. hybrid services and meetings), communications (e.g. website

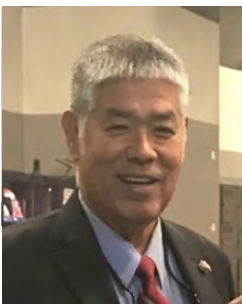
and weekly e-bulletin), and social concerns (e.g. Earth Day and MLK). I have new insights and experience as a staff member, having served as Interim ED and Interim Business Manager. Statewide, I serve on the Committee on Social Concerns and the Green Hongwanji Committee and chair the Archives Committee. I have learned a great deal more about Hawaii Betsuin in the past two years and I feel this will be valuable on the board.



**Joel Determan:** Member of the Betsuin Board since 1999, currently participates on the Fundraising Board Committee (co-chair), facilities, personnel, finance, Planned Giving & Endowment and Executive

Board committees. Member of Kyodan BOD. Served for over 10 years as Chair of Pacific Buddhist Academy Board of Trustees. Retired Clinical Microbiologist, veteran US Army, married to the former Marjorie Kiyoko Maneki, two children, Paul Kenji and Ann Reiko. I wish to help the Hawaii Betsuin continue to grow and thrive as an influential member of Hawaii's rich interfaith community.

## Board Member Candidates (24 positions) contested positions



**Alan Tomita:** The HHHB is a special place for my family and me. Both of my children were raised at the temple through Dharma School, Girl and Boy Scouts, and the Sunbeams. And for the past 37 years, I served in various

temple positions from Bon Dance Chair, to Vice-President of Betsuin Facilities, to HMS School Board Chair, to Chair of the multi-million-dollar Centennial Temple Renovation, to President of HHHB Board and currently serving as Sudhana Fellowship President. As a director, my goal is to help Wendy Harman, who heads the Budget and Finance Committee, to set up a perpetual fund for the Repair and Maintenance of the temple facilities. Monies from this fund will ensure the longevity of the existing temple facilities for decades into the future.



**2021 profile -**

**Alexandrianna Harman:** I am a graduate of Moiliili Hongwanji Preschool, Hongwanji Mission School and Pacific Buddhist Academy. I was born and raised in a strong Buddhist family. While growing

up I was active in sports and community work. I was the President of Jr. Young Buddhist Association- Honolulu, Buddhist Club and was given the honor of attending YBICSE. Also, a member of the HHHB Girl Scouts. I would like to give back to the temple for all of their support throughout the years. If I am elected I promise to serve the Board to the best of my ability and to uphold the beliefs and standards of the Betsuin.



**Arlene Matsubara:** Past: My Family has been life long members of Hongwanji Mission on the Big Island; Attended Sunday school in Paaulo Hongwanji, Honokaa Hongwanji; Hilo Hongwanji and Kona Hongwanji. Member

of Honpa Hongwanji since 1970. Past HHHB Dharma School PTO President; HHHB Board member during 1990's. BWA Recording Secretary. Corresponding Secretary of Sudhana, Member of Planned Giving Committee; Participated in sewing 3,000 masks (Mottainai group) during Covid Pandemic for Kuakini Hospital, Hawaii Pacific, Hongwanji Mission School, Kahala Nui. Present: BWA Secretary 2 yrs; BWA Corresponding Secretary; member of Green Team; Living Treasures Co Chair. Retired DOH Speech -Language Pathologist.



**Ben Bruch:** My family and I are grateful to be part of the Betsuin 'ohana, and it has been an honor to serve on the Board. As a parent and a teacher at Pacific Buddhist Academy, I value the Betsuin

as a place that promotes peace, compassion, service to others, and stewardship of the environment. I humbly ask for your support so that I can continue working to help our sangha grow.



**Charlyne Tom:** I am seeking re-election for the Betsuin Board of Directors. My family has a long history with Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin. I have worked at Hongwanji Mission School for 20 years and am currently serving as a director on the executive

board of the Buddhist Women's Association. I would like to continue to serve our Temple as part of the Betsuin Board. Thank you, and I look forward to continuing to serve the Betsuin.



**Dana Ishibashi:** I am a recently retired attorney, who has worked to solve people's legal issues. I have represented a very diverse clientele, from doctors, lawyers, architects, health care workers,

contractors, students, state and city workers, and other working and unemployed people. I believe in open governance and transparency in how we conduct ourselves, especially when working on behalf of other people and their interests. I have previously served in the United States Navy on board 2 nuclear submarines and went on one mission in Vietnam during the war. My wife has been a Betsuin member since the '80s, and her children have all attended Dharma School and were involved in many temple activities. I would be honored to assist the Betsuin in bringing common sense and stability to the decision-making process of the Board consistent with the Bylaws of the Betsuin.



**Daniel Kawamoto:** Hello, my name is Daniel Kawamoto. When I was in the 8th grade in 1993-1994, I began attending services regularly and became active in the Jr. YBA. I moved to California for college and law school in 1998, and returned to Hawaii in 2006. I work as an attorney with my own private practice. The temple sangha has long been an important part of my family. My late granduncle, Arthur Marutani, was a reverend, and was a big influence in my spiritual growth. My father, Randall Kawamoto, is also a member and served on the board for several years.



**Debbie Kubota:** I am honored to be considered for a position on the Betsuin Board. Because of my involvement in Buddhist Education, Dharma School and thinking of my own family, I look forward to being a part of the discussions and planning process to ensure that we continue to perpetuate the Dharma and to be a prominent gathering place in the community for all generations in the years to come.



**David Miyamoto:** I am a consulting engineer and currently serve on the Betsuin Board. I have served on the Betsuin Board for over 10 years and had served on the Hongwanji Mission School Board for 8 years. I would like to continue my service on the Board and ask for your support and endorsement as a Betsuin Board member for the upcoming year. Aloha.



**Dennis Sekine:** I am a graduate of Aiea High School and spent my younger years at Aiea Hongwanji. A lifelong member of the Jodo Shinshu sect of the Hongwanji, I have been actively involved in Hawaii Betsuin activities for over 40 years. I currently serve on the Betsuin Board, the Hongwanji Mission School Board Committee and on the Fundraising Committee.



**Dawn Kakuni:** Thank you for considering me for the HHHB Board of Directors. For the past 27 years, I have been fortunate to be part of the Hongwanji community in various capacities. First, I worked as the school secretary, and now, as the Accounts Director for the Hongwanji Mission School. Also, I currently serve on the Betsuin's Budget and Finance Committee, I am a member of Sudhana, and I have worked on the bon dance committee for the last 15 years. The HHHB and its community is a very special place, and I am truly grateful to be part of it. Thank you! 😊



**Dianne Ida:** Hawaii Betsuin has been part of my life since elementary school. I assisted the Sunbeams and Teens in Motion and was a chaperone for YBICSE. I am an organist, Living Treasures' Luncheon Co-chair, Scholarship Committee member, and I help with the Goji and services at one of the care facilities. Careerwise, I taught at Kapi'olani Community College for almost 40 years. In January 2019, as President of Hawaii Betsuin's BWA, I became a BWA representative on the Betsuin Board of Directors, and in 2022 I became an elected director. I would like to continue to serve on the Hawaii Betsuin Board and ask for your vote. With a grateful gassho...



**Herb Yasukochi:** PTO president HMS, cubmaster 4 years Pack 49. scoutmaster 14 Yeats troop 49, Wednesday gang, bon dance chair 4 years, HHHB 38 years, board 34 years. Retired from Hawaii Gas as Customer Service Manager

after 43 years.



**2021 profile - Irene**

**Nohara:** I have volunteered for events at the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin since 2003 when my son joined

the Cub Scouts. The temple, the affiliate organizations and the people of the Betsuin have continued to impress me such that I wanted to assist in a higher capacity to show my heartfelt appreciation for what the Betsuin represents to me. Therefore, I would like to continue as a board member.



**Jason Furuta:** Hello, I am Jason Furuta and have been actively supporting the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin all my life. I am a graduate of Hongwanji Mission School (“HMS”), and as a student, I was involved with the scouting

program, Dharma School, and Jr. YBA. As a Cub Scout in Pack 49, I earned my Arrow of Light Award, then became a Boy Scout with Troop 49, where I earned my Eagle Scout Award. My Eagle Scout project was painting the HMS pool and landscaping the surrounding area. My father, Jack Furuta, was our Cub Master when my younger brother and I were Cub Scouts, and he was the Committee Chairperson for our Boy Scouts Troop. When I became a father of two sons, I had my sons join as Cub Scouts, who then became Boy Scouts and proudly earned their respective Arrow of Light and Eagle Scout Awards. Even though my sons are now grown and are in college, I continue to be

active with Boy Scouts Troop 49 and serve on the Committee for Troop 49. I would like to continue to support the Betsuin temple and would be honored to serve as a Director on the board of Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin.



**Joel Ganotisi:** I am honored to be considered on the Betsuin Board. Currently, I serve on the Facilities and Safety Committee. My family became Temple members in 2010 when our daughter was born. Right now, we are grateful for being part of the

HMS Ohana through our daughter’s middle school years. We have made many new connections and friendships. This would be my second term as a board member, and I look forward to contributing to the Temple with continued dialogue for the future.



**Joyce Tomita:** I have been a member of HHHB for over 40 years. I was married at HHHB in 1978 and served as the HHHB bookkeeper from 1995 to 2019. As a director I hope to use my past experience as

the temple bookkeeper to assist with the changes presently being anticipated in the financial operation of the temple.



**Keith Lee:** I am a current board member--I serve on the Board's Bylaws and Propagation Committees. I support strategic planning, capital campaign fundraising efforts with the wider community, and diversification

of the Betsuin's composition and governance. I am concerned that the Betsuin is in serious trouble--its facilities are in disrepair, its membership is shrinking, and the Board is divided as to what to do next. If we work together, we can fashion a sustainable future. I graduated from Iolani School, live in Makiki, and am presently a practicing healthcare lawyer servicing nonprofit organizations.



**Mike Inouye:** My family has enjoyed our time at Hongwanji Mission School and so thankful for the entire community. I had the privilege to serve on the HMS PTO Board and have

met a lot of great people and leaders from the HHHB and would be humbled to serve along with them. I am willing to serve as a director for another term and provide support to the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin and Board.



**Ranelle Omura:** The temple has always played an important role in my family's life. All three of my children attended services and Dharma School, sang with the Sunbeams /TIM, and participated in scouting and Jr.

YBA. I took a temporary break after they graduated from high school, but I have always remained a Gojikai member since the '80s. I would be honored to continue as a Director for another two years to assist the temple with its goals of sustainability and membership building.



**Rene Kimura:** The Hongwanji has been a significant part of my life since growing up in Wailuku, teaching for 24 years at

Hongwanji Mission School (HMS) and being a member of the Hawaii Betsuin for decades. After retiring from HMS, I worked another 27 years at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, NASA Hawaii Space Grant Consortium, and received the Living Treasures recognition with my husband, in 2014. All of my work has involved the teaching of values, ethics, and skills to youth, our future generations. The role of Hawaii Betsuin and Jodo Shinshu is at a pivotal point. With gratitude for those who came before us, I wish to see the goodness of the Three Treasures and Eightfold Path strengthen the future of our community. If given the opportunity to serve on the Hawaii Betsuin Board, I hope to be mindful in perpetuating these Buddhist values to strengthen the Hawaii Betsuin for generations to come.



**Rick Tabor:** I have a background in the mental health field that spans back to 1976 when I was a petty officer in charge of Kaneohe Marine Corps' Mental Health Clinic. Some say I turned my retirement into a full time job,

serving on ten boards and a number of task forces. My mission is to promote self-care while enhancing and protecting the civil rights of Hawaii's aging population through the provision of culturally sensitive advocacy. My mother-in-law, Elsie Hashimoto was a longtime member of Honpa Hongwanji. Susan (my wife) and I returned home, from Seattle, in 2017 and recently joined the temple with hopes of helping as needed. Serving on the board would be an honor. Mahalo Nui Loa.





**2021 profile - Roy**

**Miyamoto:** Roosevelt HS, UH, UMichigan and UWisconsin Law School alumni. Prior Hawaii attorney licensing board administrator. Retired attorney and Ala Moana Center retailer. Retired

teacher/retailer wife Charlotte. Civil engineer son (and pharmacologist wife with 2 children). Attorney daughter residing in Portland. Served in military at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. Hawaii Kyodan director/advisor, and President (1992 – 1998). Hawaii Betsuin director for decades.



**Sharyn Sekine:** After being a Dharma School teacher for 15+ years and being actively involved in the BWA on all three levels (temple, district, state) in various capacities, I felt like being involved in general temple matters. By doing so, it would enable me

to be a part of the decision making in moving our temple forward in the 21st century and creating a legacy for the future. I have had the honor of serving on the Betsuin Board for 10+ years and would like to continue serving for as long as I am able.



**Wendie Yumori:** I've been honored to serve on the Hawaii Betsuin Board of Directors for 15 years. Music has always been a wonderful part of my Hawaii Betsuin temple life and I'd like to continue to serve on the Board

as Music Committee Chair. With music, we share the joy of fellowship and with music, we resonate deeply with Dharma themes. As an active BWA member, I find it very rewarding to support partnership efforts between our BWA and temple youth organizations and between our BWA and community organizations for the benefit of our temple ohana and for the welfare of our community. I wish to see the compassionate reach of Hawaii Betsuin extend far into the future.