

Hawaii Betsuin Board Election 2025: Candidate Profiles

*** LAST UPDATED 11/12/25 ***

Officer Candidates

President Elect (to serve 2028-2029)

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 alumna of Hongwanji Mission School and as a young girl, was a Junior YBA member and attended Dharma School. In college, I was one of the founding organizers of YESS Camp along with Christina Shioi, Rev. Alan Urasaki, and many others. I presently serve as a Vice President of the Board. 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.

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.

3rd Vice President (Religious Affairs)



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.

4th Vice President (Finance)



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)



Steve Lohse: Thank you for considering me for continuing as VP5 – Operations! I have served as VP5 since March 2025 after serving as Board Secretary from January 2022. I chair the Board's Social Concerns and

Internal Affairs Committees and sit on the Personnel Committee. I also chair the Honolulu Hongwanji Council's Committee on Social Concerns and the Kyodan Green Hongwanji Committee, sit on the Kyodan Committee on Social Concerns, and assist Betsuin ministers with monthly care home services. It is a privilege to help this Betsuin vehicle carry Buddhist principles to a world in need.

Treasurer



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! 😊

Secretary



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, a 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, and in 2022 I became an elected director. In mid-2025, I became the Board secretary. I look forward to working with the Board members.

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 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 would like to continue serving on the Executive Committee as an auditor.



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. 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.

Non-Candidate Officers

President



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 1st 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.

Immediate Past President



Cynthia (Cindy) Alm currently serves as Hawaii Betsuin's President. Honpa Hongwanji and Buddhist teachings have been part of her family's lives for generations. Her goal is to build on the Betsuin's 100-year legacy of service to our members and the broader community. She was president of the Buddhist Women's Association. Cindy is an attorney and manages her family's real estate investments.

Board Member Candidates (21 candidates for 24 positions)



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

21st 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.



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.



Alan Tomita: The HHHB is 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.



Arlene Matsubara: Past: My Family has been lifelong members of Hongwanji Mission on the Big Island; Attended Sunday school in Paauilo 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.



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.



Craig Norio Tsutsui: Worked at VA, HI. Served with Hawaii Air National Guard for 29 years, last position as Commander, HI Air Defense Sqn. First jobs: PE teacher, then Vice-Principal at Hongwanji Mission School. Interested in

helping hard-working board members to perpetuate Buddhistic principles and board initiatives to benefit the overall organization and its membership.



Darren Cantrill: I have lived in Nu’uanu for 13 years and became a member of the Hawaii Betsuin in 2024 after volunteering at the Bon Dance, HMS School events, and Sunday Zoom services. I currently serve as the Membership Chair,

helping strengthen connections and engagement within our Sangha. My family has long been active in Scouting, and I continue to serve as an Assistant Scoutmaster with Troop 49, supporting both the boys’ and girls’ troops. I also serve as Vice-Chair of the Nu’uanu Neighborhood Board, where I enjoy working on community initiatives that bring people together. Through my volunteer work and temple involvement, I hope to continue supporting the growth of the Betsuin as a welcoming place of compassion, service, and fellowship for all generations.



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.



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.



Gail Tagashira: Out of all the candidates running for the board of directors, I probably have the shortest history with Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin than anyone else. Although I grew up on O’ahu, my family has deep roots on Maui and I have spent half my years in California, mainly as a journalist. I returned to Hawaii in 2016 to be my Mom’s caregiver and after she and my brother passed away, I joined Mo’ili’ili Hongwanji in 2022. I was the first member at Mo’ili’ili to finish the Passport program. At Mo’ili’ili, I was briefly a member of the board and recording secretary until I became the managing editor of Ka Leo Kahea, our statewide newsletter in 2024. In order to better communicate with headquarters staff and Kyodan leaders, I switched my membership to Hawaii Betsuin where I have far more opportunities to interact with committee chairs, gather valuable information and make contacts with those who work on statewide projects.



Gen Fujitani: The temple has been a part of my life since I was a young child. I have many fond memories of gatherings in the social hall and exploring back rooms with dharma school classmates. Junior YBA and the YBICSE program were formative experiences for me, and I am deeply grateful for the many relationships I built during that time. After high school, I moved to Seattle for university and attended the Seattle Betsuin. Later, I taught English in Gifu Prefecture through the JET Program. I next moved to Washington, D.C. for law school where I attended Ekoji Buddhist Temple for three years. I returned to Hawaii in 2013, and I currently work for the state as a Deputy Attorney General. I live with my wife and two children in Manoa, and my daughter attends Hongwanji Mission School. The temple has given my family so much over the years, and I aspire to have the opportunity to give back to this sangha in some small way.



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.



Jo desMarets: For over one hundred years, the Hawaii Betsuin has been the "footprint of Buddhism" in our community. With your support, and guided by Amida's compassion and light, I will continue to work for the growth and development of the Hawaii Betsuin as our spiritual home and a community resource that welcomes all. Mahalo for your consideration.



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.



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.



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.