

HUI OKINAWA

PATTI TAIRA-TOKUUKU AND JON TOKUUKU

Patti Taira-Tokuuku was President of Hui Okinawa from 2007-2008 during which the club sponsored the Haari Boat Festival. The Nago City Mayor brought his champion all-girl Haari team who were a big hit here. Patti was so excited after the 2008 Festival's success that she started planning to take a Haari Boat team to Nago City's Mayor's Cup Race this year. She gathered a team, organized fundraising events, held paddling practices and got a large travel group including her ukulele group to help entertain in Okinawa. She has been a young, vibrant member of the club chairing the major functions at least once prior to being our President.



Jon Tokuuku is Patti's strongest supporter plus has been Membership Chair for the last three years, keeping track of over 700 members. He and Patti became parents for the first time while doing all of this work for Hui Okinawa plus other community activities. Thank you to Patti and Jon (and son, Jake)!

HUI URUMA

SHINKICHI OSHIRO

Shinkichi has been a member of the Honokaa Okinawan Club, later renamed the Hui Uruma Club, for over 45 years. Proud of their heritage roots, Shinkichi and his wife, June (Gushiken), had always wanted to forge a connection with their Okinawan "roots". In 2005, Shinkichi and June made a trip to Okinawa where they met with his parents' clan. Both his parents were from Tamagusuku, a fishing village. They visited the home where Shinkichi's father was born and grew up until he immigrated to Hawaii. Still in solid condition after 118 years and weathering many typhoons ... much like the Uchinanchu.



Shinkichi and June have tried to instill in their four children what it means to be Okinawan and the history behind the culture. For Shinkichi, a Nisei, it's easy to recall the stories told by parents, the hardships they went through both in Okinawa and later in Hawaii. With the hectic lifestyles of the third and fourth generation, culture takes a back seat but they hope that what little they have been exposed to will be remembered and passed on.

ITOMAN SHIJIN KAI

DENNIS HIROKI TAMASHIRO

Itoman Shijin Kai would like to honor Dennis Hiroki Tamashiro as our 2009 Uchinanchu of the Year. Dennis is the son of Hiroaki and Hiromi Tamashiro who are both issei's from Aza-Itoman and are long time club members.

Currently, Dennis serves as Vice president and is active in club activities. He is employed with the Federal Government as an Environmental Protection Specialist at Pearl Harbor and says that he owes it to God to have been blessed with a good career.

Dennis is very proud of being "Uchinanchu". He says that "being surrounded with people who have the same mindset makes me feel like we are united as a big family". His hope is that more young people get involved with the clubs and believes there is a growing interest in the Okinawan music and culture that will generate more involvement of the younger generation. When time permits, Dennis enjoys spending time with his niece Tia, with fellow church members, watching and playing sports, surfing the internet and strumming on his guitar.

We thank you Dennis for being a very dedicated club member.



KIN CHOJIN KAI

ELAINE SATO

Elaine Sato is our Uchinanchu of the Year for Kin Chojin Kai. She has been our secretary for many years, taking on all types of assignments that needs to be taken care of. Along with vice president Edwin Toyama, she has planned our annual picnics.

In the year 2000, Elaine was one of the representatives on the Voyage of Re-Discovery. The voyage traced the roots of the first Okinawan immigrants to Hawaii. Elaine escorted students from Hawaii and also discovered her roots.

For many years, Elaine was a cart driver for the Okinawan Festival. She would be at the park early Saturday morning escorting her mother before starting her all day deliveries to the various food booths. Congratulations Elaine for being our Uchinanchu of the Year.

