



# Ha'aheo 675

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE PLUMBERS AND FITTERS UNITED ASSOCIATION LOCAL 675, AFL-CIO

## Celebrating Victories as We Welcome the New Year!



Business Manager Valentino Ceria at the victory celebration with Governor Josh Green and Lt. Governor Sylvia Luke.

### Business Manager's Message | Valentino B. Ceria

The year ended with a victorious bang with our Union supported candidates winning the election, Governor for the State of Hawaii, **Josh Green**, and Hawaii Lt. Governor, **Sylvia Luke**. Local 675 was one of the first unions to support **Governor Josh Green** and the first union to support **Lt. Governor Sylvia Luke**. At their campaign headquarters, they both let me know they appreciated Local 675's early support.

I would like to take this time to again thank the membership for participating in the first Union **mail-in voting** for **Local 675 election of officers**. The **mail-in ballots** gave members every opportunity to cast a vote and have a voice, especially those not able to vote in person including neighbor island members. I want to thank you again for your confidence in

allowing me and my fellow officers to continue working for you and moving this Union forward!

Last month, there was an election for various Union board positions – one for the **Executive Board**, one for the **Finance Committee**, and one for the **Examining Board**. Being that only one nomination was received for each position, a **White Ballot** was cast. These positions will be for a **two-year term** as directed by the UA, so that **all** elected positions will expire at the same time in **2024**. I want to extend my congratulations to **Brother Dean Kobashigawa** on the **Executive Board**, **Brother Doug Kekona** on the **Finance Committee**, and **Brother Dean Luna** on the **Examining Board**.

There were leadership changes on the UA level last year. **Brother Derrick Kualapai**, who was the **International**

**Representative for Hawaii and California**, was promoted to the **UA's Administrative Assistant to General President Mark McManus**. **Brother Aaron Stockwell** out of Local 447 Sacramento, California became our new **International Representative**. He and I met several times at UA meetings and most recently in November when he came to visit our local. I feel he will be a good representative for us.

I attended the **Business Manager's Seminar in Maryland** which was held in September. The business managers from all over the U.S. and Canada were in attendance to listen and meet with **UA President Mark McManus** and the **UA Directors** of the various departments. The UA stated there will be 816 billion dollars

(continued on page 2)

## Business Manager's Message

(continued from page 1)



Pres. Matthew Brady on the left, made it official on January 9, 2023, swearing in (l-r) Bro. Dean Kobashigawa, Executive Bd., Bro. Douglas Kekona, Finance Committee, and Bro. Dean Luna, Examining Bd., with Bus. Mgr. Valentino Ceria on the far right.

of work in the industrial sector, with emphasis on **Micro Chip Plants, Pipe Distribution, and Power Plants.** They said we need to organize more skilled workers to accommodate the future manpower needs. That was the number one directive from the UA -- for each union to focus on **Organizing.** I had our business agents attend the Blitz Organizing workshop, which was hands-on organizing in **Seattle.** Recruitment and retention were the main focus and pushing good wages, good benefits and good working conditions are always the selling points. The UA also focused on getting the political pro-labor candidates in to leadership positions and becoming our allies for Union

support. I think we are already ahead of the game.

We organized four new contractors last year: **Nova Mechanical, NFR Plumbing Services, LLC, Nozomi Plumbing, LLC, and Artistic Builders Corporation.** We welcome them aboard!

In November, we had a very informative presentation for the Medicare Retirees at the **Oahu Veterans Center, Sullivan Hall.** The discussion was regarding the switch from **HMSA Akamai Advantage Plan to Humana Medicare Advantage Plan,** which took effect January 1, 2023. (See article on page 6.) This move saves the Funds money as well as each individual medicare retiree under

the new plan.

During the month of December, we were finally able to hold our Holiday dinners on the neighbor islands and on Oahu. It was a time to celebrate but also a time to remember and honor those members who came before us and have recently passed. I gave remembrance and a moment of silence to our great Local 675 leader, **Herbert S. K. Kaopua, Sr.,** a true pioneer who contributed so much to our Union. We were also able to celebrate the service award recipients in attendance and honored their contribution, dedication, and support. It was good to see old friends and comrades.

Looking ahead, we will continue to organize to keep our Union strong and continue to ensure the best working conditions and benefits for you and your family. We will be working hard for you and appreciate the support over the years. Please continue to attend our in-person monthly meetings to keep informed, and join us in celebrating our many family events.

As always, be healthy and stay safe and have a Happy New Year!

## Training Calendar for 2023

### APPRENTICESHIP DATES

#### Spring 2023

Start Classes January 9<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>

#### Recruitment Testing -

([Plumbershawaii.com](http://Plumbershawaii.com) to apply)

January 28<sup>th</sup>

#### Graduation (Fall 2022 - Spring 2023)

June 17<sup>th</sup> - Hilton Hawaiian Village

#### Fall 2023

Start Classes August 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>

### MEDICAL GAS CERTIFICATION - IWILEI TRAINING FACILITY

40 HR -

32 HR INSTRUCTIONAL,  
8 HR HANDS ON EXAM

May 27<sup>th</sup>, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>

### BACKFLOW CLASSES - PEARL CITY TRAINING FACILITY

#### BACKFLOW CERTIFICATION - 40HR

February 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>

September 18<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>

#### BACKFLOW RE-CERTIFICATION - 16HR

January 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>

April 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>

July 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>

October 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>

### SECTION 608 TECHNICIAN CERTIFICATION (EPA)

OAHU

February 25<sup>th</sup>

September 30<sup>th</sup>

OUTER ISLAND

\*Please call training for availability

### FIRST AID / CPR CLASS - ALL ISLANDS

OAHU

June / July - Saturday classes

BIG ISLAND

February 18<sup>th</sup> - Hilo (Manono Campus)

MAUI

April 15<sup>th</sup> - Maui College

KAUAI

September 23<sup>rd</sup> - Kauai Community College

**PLEASE CONTACT THE TRAINING OFFICE TO SIGN UP FOR CLASSES AT (808) 456-0585.**

**Space is limited for all classes, so please call early to reserve your spot in the class.**

# Big Island Membership Benefits Conference a Big Success!

The **Membership Benefits Conference** held at the **Mauna Lani Hotel** on the **Big Island** on **Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>** was a huge success with a great turnout. There were about **60** members who attended with a total of **200** members and their families. The health and welfare carriers were there to meet one-on-one with the Big Island members and their ohana: **HMSA**, drug carrier **OptumRx**, **Hawaii Dental Service**, vision carrier **VSP**, as well as the **PAMCAH-UA Local 675 Trust Fund Administrative Office** to discuss the health and welfare benefits, pension and annuity. Each vendor declared that Local 675 had the best coverages for their membership. **Business Manager Val Ceria** stated, "That was good to hear because we expect the best for our members and their families. I also want to thank my fellow **Trustees, Erinn Liu** and her staff, and especially to **Brothers Matt Brady** and **Sam Barrett, Jr.** who handle the Big Island. Everything went well as expected!"



Augie T. entertains the Big Island crowd at the MBC.



VSP Monica Kim discusses vision care with Herbert and Clara Alvarez.



Bus. Agents Sam Barrett, Jr. and Matt Brady congratulate winner of the 70" TV, Aaron Correa.



Big winner of the huge screen TV, Clyde Sakata, with BA Matt Brady, BM Val Ceria, and BA Sam Barrett, Jr.



Kerry Kanbara with Hawaii Dental Service addresses the attentive group before lunch is served.

# Service Awards Recipients Celebrate at the Union's Holiday Events

## Oahu



**30 yrs:** Standing with Pres. Matt Brady and VP Ben Panis on the left are (l-r) Jeffrey Chun, Roger Ganitoe, Patrick Geraghty, Joseph Simpliciano, Rodger Reilly, Shane Pagente, Roddy Saito, and Marshall Tokuda. BM Val Ceria on the far right.



**35 yrs:** (l-r) Tracy Tanouye, Matthew Brady, and Keenan Wilson, with VP Ben Panis and BM Val Ceria.



**45 yrs:** Alan Megia with VP Ben Panis, Pres. Matt Brady, and BM Val Ceria.



**50 yrs:** (l-r) Melvin Gushiken, Joseph Fune, Jr., and Morris Ige, with VP Ben Panis, Pres. Matt Brady, and BM Val Ceria.



**55 yrs:** (l-r) Andrew Arakawa and Robert Mattos, with VP Ben Panis, Pres. Matt Brady, and BM Val Ceria.



**60 yrs:** Ernest Shimodoi with VP Ben Panis, Pres. Matt Brady, and BM Val Ceria.



**65 yrs:** Minoru Tamura with VP Ben Panis, Pres. Matt Brady, and BM Val Ceria.

## Neighbor Islands



**Kona - 25 yrs:** Barron Bertelmann with VP Benji Panis and BM Val Ceria.



**Kona - 50 yrs:** Albert Langsi, Jr. with VP Benji Panis and BM Val Ceria.



**Hilo - 30 yrs:** Eleot Kaipo and Christopher Motoda with VP Benji Panis and BM Val Ceria.



**Kauai - 25 yrs:** Teddi Kashima and Renwick Santiago with Pres. Matt Brady and BM Val Ceria.



**Maui - 35 yrs:** Maurice Shimabukuro celebrate with BM Val Ceria and Pres. Matt Brady.



**Maui - 50 yrs:** Dennis Ikeda with BM Val Ceria and Pres. Matt Brady.

# Honoring the 2022 Service Awards Recipients

### 25 YEARS

BARRON B BERTELMANN  
ELLIOT C FAASOA  
TEDDI KASHIMA  
PHILLIP N PRICE  
BRANDON TONAKI

### 30 YEARS

EDWARD A AU  
WARREN M CABICO  
JEFFREY YF CHUN  
JAMES ERNSDORF  
ROGER D GANITOEN  
PATRICK V GERAGHTY  
KYLE M HARA  
RONNIE S HARA  
ELEOT KM KAIPO  
DAVID K KAMAHEA, III  
CHRISTOPHER B MOTODA  
KYLE S NISHIMURA  
SHANE V PAGENTE  
RODGER J REILLY  
GUY E REYES  
RODDY DM SAITO  
STEVE L SILVA  
JOSEPH SIMPLICIANO  
SCOTT TAMASHIRO  
MARSHALL TOKUDA

### 35 YEARS

RYAN ASATO  
MATTHEW BRADY

WENDELL LK DOMINGO  
JOSEPH G DUARTE, SR.  
FREDERICK ELI, JR  
BRUCE EZAKI  
CARL FERREIRA  
ALTON FUJIMOTO  
JOHN FUKUMOTO  
STANLEY GOMES  
KEITH GOUVEIA  
RYAN R HIGAKI  
MARK KAGAMI  
CHRIS KAKIGI  
JOHNNY LIN  
JONI MOOR  
RANDALL MURASHIGE  
DWIGHT NAGO  
SCOTT A NISHIMURA  
REID A NITAHARA  
CHAD OGATA  
TY S OHARA  
SHELDON SAITO  
RENWICK G SANTIAGO  
MAURICE A SHIMABUKURO  
ANTHONY A SOUZA  
TERENCE A TADANI  
GRANT S TAKAHASHI  
JODY K TAMAYOSE  
JASON TANAKA  
TRACY TANOUYE  
DANIEL TENGAN  
KEENAN WILSON  
MARK YOKOYAMA

### 40 YEARS

DARRELL OMORI

### 45 YEARS

CLYDE CHINEN  
RAYMOND HASEGAWA  
MYRON KIM  
STEVEN KUWANA  
STEVE MATSUMOTO  
ALAN J MEGIA  
RICKY SUGANUMA

### 50 YEARS

JOSEPH E FUNE, JR.  
MELVIN J GUSHIKEN  
MASON K HASEGAWA  
KATSUMI HIRAKI  
MORRIS T IGE  
DENNIS M IKEDA  
MALCOLM T INOUYE  
BENTON J KAMIMOTO  
STANLEY KURASHIGE  
ALBERT LANGSI, JR.  
MICHAEL S SHIMAMOTO  
ALLEN TICALA  
RANDALL USHIRODA  
TAD YOSHIKAWA  
LARRY YOSHIYAMA

### 55 YEARS

ANDREW ARAKAWA  
WAYNE K MATSUNAGA  
ROBERT C MATTOS  
VERNON K MURAKAMI  
JOSEPH H MURAMOTO  
CLYDE M SASAMURA  
BARRY K SUDA  
NAOHIRO TAKAHASHI  
RUSSELL TETSUTANI, SR.  
GLENN F TOKUDA  
WALLACE J WATANABE  
SADAO YABUNO  
GLENN M YAMANE

### 60 YEARS

KENNETH K ARASATO  
JOHN M FRIAS, III  
JEFFREY J FUKUSHIMA  
STANLEY M GINOZA  
ISAMU KANESHIRO  
BRADLEY K LEE  
MYRON S SHIMAMOTO  
ERNEST S SHIMODOI  
MORIO TAMAYOSE

### 65 YEARS

ANDREW FUJISAKI  
ROBERT HIGA  
DANIEL H RODRIGUES  
MINORU TAMURA  
PAUL YEDA

# Humana Medicare Advantage Plan Replaces HMSA Akamai Advantage Plan

Our **Retiree Health & Welfare plan** offers generously subsidized benefits that are some of the richest health care benefits in the construction industry. With health care cost rising each year, Plan cost must be constantly monitored and managed to continue offering these rich benefits. A change to your Medicare-eligible retiree benefits enabled us to maintain affordable Retiree Health & Welfare contribution rates for the upcoming year. Effective **January 1, 2023**, the **Humana Medicare Advantage Plan** will fully replace the Fund's current **Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) Akamai Advantage Plan** and will cover medical costs for the Fund's enrolled **Medicare-eligible participants**.

**With the Humana MA Plan:**

- You can choose any Medicare provider but you will save money by using providers from our large network.
- You don't need a referral to see any doctor.
- You will have access to **Humana's** well-being tools and resources to help you reach your personal health goals.

**What to expect next:**

- If you are currently covered by the HMSA Plan, you will automatically be transferred to the **Humana Medicare Advantage Plan** effective for services on **January 1, 2023**, unless you make alternative arrangements through **Humana** or by contacting the Plan Administrator.
- You were sent your **Humana** enrollment packet in the mail in **November 2022**. Review the materials carefully.
- For more information about the **Humana Medicare Advantage Plan**, please call Humana Group Customer Care to speak to a licensed sales agent. **Humana Group Medicare Customer Care 1-800-824-8242 (TTY: 711)**, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m., Eastern time.

Please note that the switch to Humana only relates to your medical plan for Medicare-eligible participants under our retiree plan. This change does not affect your existing prescription, drug, vision, or dental plan coverage.

On **November 8, 2022**, we hosted a **Humana** meeting for all Medicare Retirees to discuss the switch to the **Humana Medicare Advantage Plan** and what to expect going forward. It allowed our members to meet our **Humana** representatives and address any concerns they had. Our Health & Welfare plan has experienced significant premium increases from **HMSA** over the past decade. If a switch was not made soon, these increases would have been passed to our retirees. Our switch to **Humana** has allowed us to significantly decrease our retiree contribution rates for all **Medicare-Retiree** members effective **January 1, 2023**. For those of you who could not attend the November meeting, **Humana** will be hosting a webinar for all **Medicare Retirees** on **January 26, 2023** to share important information and answer questions about your **Humana** plan. An invitation will be sent to you providing further information on how to register for this virtual event.



*Erin Dey, Humana Account Executive, Group Medicare, speaks to the Retirees on the Humana Medicare Advantage Plan.*



*Medicare retirees and their spouses discuss the changes from HMSA Akamai Advantage Plan to the Humana Medicare Advantage Plan.*



*(l-r) Humana Group: Herman Hoi-Broker Relationship Mgr, Hawaii, Erin Dey-Account Executive, Group Medicare, Joselyn Li-Provider Engagement, and Justin Puckett-Market Leader.*

# Medical Coverage When Traveling to a Foreign Country

Before leaving home, the member may call the **BCBS Global Core Service Center** at **+1-800-810-BLUE (2583)** or collect at **+1-804-673-1177** and have a representative provide names of participating hospitals and providers where they'll be visiting.

Or, if the member would prefer, they can take a look at providers on the **Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) Global Core** website: [bcbsglobalcore.com](http://bcbsglobalcore.com)

- They'd have to enter the first three letters of their Member ID number from their card and then select the Provider Type. Then they would select the Country and City.
- If the provider has a Network Provider icon, then that provider is contracted to accept direct payment for medical services.

Before leaving Hawaii, members should confirm with their primary care provider or **HMSA** if they would need a prior authorization (precertification) for services outside of Hawaii.

If the member is in another country and needs non-emergency medical services, they should call the **BSBS Global Core Service Center** collect at **+1-804-673-1177**. They can help the member find and make an appointment with a participating provider and help coordinate payment for hospital and inpatient facility care.

- Members can find more information on Accessing Care Outside the United States at: [HMSA.com](http://HMSA.com), click on the [Help Center](#), then type in [Accessing Care Outside the United States](#).

## DUES PAYMENT REMINDER

As a reminder, member's monthly dues shall be payable by the first of each month. You must pay your monthly dues in order to maintain membership in Local 675 and the United Association (UA). Failure to pay the monthly dues will result in a Suspension and an eventual Expulsion from the Local. The rules for suspension and expulsion from membership for non-payment of dues are set forth in the UA Constitution. SEC. 156 states, "A member owing over three (3) months' dues shall automatically be suspended from membership without notice of any kind..." SEC. 157. (a) states "A suspended member becomes in good standing and his suspension is lifted by the payment of a \$50.00 reinstatement fee together with all back dues through the current month. A suspended member must pay his \$50.00 reinstatement fee before his back dues can be paid." SEC. 158 states, "Any member in arrears for dues for a period of six (6) months shall stand expelled..." If you have any questions, please contact the Union Office at 1-808-536-5454.



Your new membership card for 2023-2025 is in the mail.

## NEW PENSIONERS

*Congratulations and happy retirement to the following pensioners:*

- Robert Ayonon Sr. ....5/1/2022
- Myles Takano.....5/1/2022
- Edward Wong.....5/1/2022
- Christopher Ano..... 8/1/2022
- Antonio Domingo .....9/1/2022
- Dean Luna .....9/1/2022
- Edward Quon .....9/1/2022
- Kil Sok Chae ..... 10/1/2022
- Clifford Freitas.....10/1/2022
- Eric Okino.....10/1/2022
- Mark Yokoyama ..... 10/1/2022
- Jayson Mitsunaga ..... 11/1/2022
- Scot Nishikawa ..... 11/1/2022

## *In Memoriam*

*Heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the families of deceased members:*

- Wayne Horio..... 8/27/2022
- William Brink.....9/19/2022
- Clifford Freitas..... 11/10/2022
- Katsumi Hiraki..... 11/27/2022
- Harry S. Hara Jr. .... 12/05/2022



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**VALENTINO CERIA**

*Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary-Treasurer*

**MATTHEW BRADY**

*President*

**BENJAMIN PANIS**

*Vice President*

**LANCE HAYASHI**

*Recording Secretary*

**SAMUEL BARRETT, JR.**

*Sentry*

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**CHUCK SHIMA (Secretary)**

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**CHAD KAMIBAYASHI**

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*Send contributions or questions regarding  
Ha'aheo 675 to the editor (808) 536-5454*

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**News from Local 675 Retiree Club**

Local 675 Retiree Club elected the following new Officers for two-year terms:

Re-elected 1st Vice President – Derek Hirao

Re-elected Board Member – Donovan Lewis

Newly-elected Secretary – Natalie Castanares

The next Retiree Club Meeting will be on **Tuesday, February 14, 2023**, at 8:30 a.m. at the Mililani Golf Clubhouse.

Local 675 retirees who retain Local 675 membership are welcome to join the Local 675 Retiree Club. Annual club dues of \$20 include all breakfasts for that calendar year. For more information, call **Jonathan Lee** at (808) 892-0099.

**CALENDAR  
OF EVENTS**

**JANUARY**

Monday, January 9, 2023  
**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
Washington Middle School Cafeteria

Tuesday, January 10, 2023  
**MAUI RAP SESSION**  
Maui Community College

Wednesday, January 11, 2023  
**KAUAI RAP SESSION**  
Kauai Community College

**FEBRUARY**

Monday, February 6, 2023  
**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
Washington Middle School Cafeteria

Tuesday, February 7, 2023  
**KONA RAP SESSION**  
UH Palamanui Campus

Wednesday, February 8, 2023  
**HILO RAP SESSION**  
Waiakea Intermediate School

**MARCH**

Monday, March 6, 2023  
**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
Washington Middle School Cafeteria

Tuesday, March 7, 2023  
**MAUI RAP SESSION**  
Maui Community College

Wednesday, March 8, 2023  
**KAUAI RAP SESSION**  
Kauai Community College

**CONNECT  
WITH US**

[www.plumbershawaii.com](http://www.plumbershawaii.com)

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