

Jayson M. Watts

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Mahi Pono, LLC, Kahului, HI

Director of Environmental Health and Safety, November 2019 – Present

Currently serves as Director of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) for a 41,000-acre diversified agricultural operation on Maui, overseeing EHS programs for over 600 employees. Responsible for developing and implementing company-wide EHS policies, ensuring compliance with HIOSH, HDOA, HDOH, EPA, and USDA regulations. Leads efforts to maintain a safe working environment through proactive risk assessments, injury and illness prevention plans, and emergency preparedness strategies. Manages safety protocols for handling chemicals, pesticides, and hazardous materials, while fostering a culture of safety and accountability. Also manages local, state, and federal relations for the company, working with regulatory agencies, government officials, and elected officials to ensure alignment with evolving policies and industry standards. Additionally, oversees the company's 100-acre community farm, which provides local residents with the opportunity to lease plots for subsistence farming or to establish and grow their own agricultural enterprises.

Office of the Director, Hawaii State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), Honolulu, HI

Special Assistant to the Director, January 2019 – November 2019

Served as special assistant to the executive department head and member of the Governor's Cabinet, responsible for Hawaii's economic safety net and ensuring the safety, productivity, and well-being of Hawaii's labor force. Assisted the Director in carrying out his responsibilities by coordinating administrative matters and departmental budget activities, assisted the departmental legislative coordinator and public information officer with matters between the Department, Governor's office, Legislature, members of Congress and the federal government, and the public. Drafted and reviewed legislation and administrative rules, assisted with the development and execution of the department's legislative strategy and other assignments, such as special studies of departmental programs and operations, and made recommendations on policies and procedures, budget, organization and staffing, and personnel activities.

The DLIR enforces Hawaii's labor laws through the direct administration of 6 divisions, including Hawaii's Unemployment Insurance, Disability Compensation, Wage Standards, Hawaii Occupational Safety and Health, Workforce Development, and Research and Statistics Divisions and administratively attached agencies, including the Hawaii Civil Rights Commission, Labor and Industrial Relations Appeals Board, Hawaii Labor Relations Board, Employment Security Appeals Referee's Office, Office of Community Services, Workforce Development Council, and State Fire Council.

Office of the Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawaii, State Capitol, Honolulu, HI

Senior Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, January 2014 – December 2018

Primary responsibilities included coordinating and managing the Lieutenant Governor's statewide strategic initiatives. This required the active engagement and coordination of state legislators, members of Congress, and multiple state departments to promote, advance, and secure those initiatives while building public-private partnerships to support the government's work. Two significant initiatives overseen were the creation and program management of (1) the state's 'Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program to increase the purchase and consumption of local agriculture in Hawaii schools and to reform the Hawaii State Department of Education's (HIDOE) \$108 million-plus School Food Services Branch budget including the education and retraining of over 1,000 cafeteria employees statewide and (2) the state's Resources for Enrichment, Athletics, Culture, and Health (R.E.A.C.H.) Initiative to develop a framework and funding base for state-subsidized high-quality after-school programming in HIDOE middle and intermediate schools throughout the state. Additional duties included drafting Hawaii Administrative Rules and staffing the Lieutenant Governor in his role as Secretary of State.

Office of the Senate Sergeant at Arms, State of Hawaii, State Capitol, Honolulu, HI

Assistant Senate Sergeant at Arms, January 2007 – January 2014

Appointed by the Hawaii State Senate as the Assistant Sergeant at Arms of the Senate and served from 2007-2014. Assisted the Sergeant at Arms in all duties charged to the Sergeant at Arms. Under the supervision of the President, the Sergeant at Arms is responsible for property control and the custodial, messenger, security, and postal services of the Senate. Coordinates the assignment of office space, purchase of office supplies, and inventory control systems; establishes and maintains an inventory control report; establishes and maintains an operational manual for the Sergeant at Arms office; periodically completes certified law enforcement training provided by the Department of Public Safety or other appropriate organization that is appropriate for the Sergeant at Arms to satisfy his or her duty of maintaining order in the Senate Chamber during session, including training on the arrest and removal of disorderly non-members through non-physical means; seek other educational opportunities to assist in achieving the duties of the Sergeant at Arms; performs other related duties specified in the Rules of the Senate and Administrative and Financial Manual of the Senate; and performs other duties as requested by the President.

Office of the Senate Majority Caucus Leader, State of Hawaii, State Capitol, Honolulu, HI

Legislative Director, December 2003 – January 2007

Responsible for the daily management of the Majority Caucus Leaders' legislative agenda and leadership assignments, including his membership on the Senate Ways and Means Committee as the Committee Vice-Chair and Chair of Capital Improvement Projects. Oversaw legislative and project research, data and budget analysis, constituent services and communications with elected, senior executive, and non-governmental leaders, and legislative oversight of Capital Improvement Project planning, budgeting, and execution.

Office of Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC, and Honolulu, HI

Congressional Intern and Staff Assistant, May 2000 – September 2002

Served as a congressional intern and later staff assistant in the late Congresswoman Mink's Washington, DC, and Honolulu offices. Responsibilities included administrative duties, greeting constituents, Capitol tours, research on issues and legislation, drafting memos and other written documents, assisting on special projects, and other duties as assigned by the Congresswoman, Administrative Assistant, and Legislative Director.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science
University of Hawaii at Manoa
Honolulu, Hawaii

High School Diploma
H. P. Baldwin High School
Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2010 Graduate, NCSL Legislative Staff Management Institute (LSMI)
the University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public
Policy California State University Sacramento School of California
Studies

2015 Fellow, Asia-Pacific Orientation Course (APOC 15-2)
Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies
Honolulu, Hawaii

2023 Graduate
Management and Leadership Skills Course for Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Professionals
Harvard University, Massachusetts

2023 Ka Ipu Kukui Fellow
A Decisions Maui and Focus Maui Nui initiative, the Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows program is a year-long program conceived to promote and develop community-identified future leaders through a non-profit community-based program designed to address planning for Maui Nui's future.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Life Member, National Eagle Scout Association
National Legislative Services and Security Association, NCSL
Member, Public Relations Society of America

CURRENT COMMUNITY BOARD SERVICE

Member, Hawaii Community Advisory Board
Alaska Airlines

Member and Secretary, Board of Directors
Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation

Member and Former Secretary, Board of Directors
Maui County Farm Bureau

Member, Board of Directors
The University of Hawaii Alumni Association

Member and Secretary-Treasurer, Board of Directors
Hawaii Food Industry Association

Member, Board of Directors
U.S. Department of Commerce Hawaii-Pacific Export Council

Former Member, Board of Directors
Maui United Way