

GOV. MSG. NO. 636

Denise Iseri-Matsubara

## Professional Experience

**December 2024-present**

## **Executive Director, Catholic Charities Housing Development Corp.**

Oversee and direct operation of the non-profit corporation's affairs, including executing contracts, oversee financial accounts, staff, and consultant activities. Work to expand the visibility of the organization as a leading non-profit developer of affordable housing, especially for those with the greatest need. Key areas of responsibilities include: 1) strategic and organizational planning; 2) management of operating procedures, staff/consultants, funding, and budget; 3) board meeting preparation and participation; 4) active communication with the CCHDC board on finances, organizational issues and planning; 5) external relation ensuring that the organization meets the needs of the economically and socially disadvantaged in our community; and 6) advocating for social justice and policy work throughout the community.

April 2023 – November 2024

## **Executive Director, Office of Housing, City & County of Honolulu**

Oversee, direct and coordinate plans and programs related to housing for the benefit of island residents. Created the city administration's first housing plan which established a mission and vision for housing at the city, set a production goal of 18,000 units during the Mayor's two terms, and laid foundational strategies to address the shortage of housing. Act as the Administration's lead on housing policy – advocating and working with housing stakeholders as well as internal department heads -- to plan for and implement changes that allows the city to better facilitate the delivery of housing for its community. Manage the Office of Housing staff and collaborate with other departments to achieve housing goals of the city.

January 2020 – March 2023

## Executive Director, Hawaii Housing Finance & Development Corporation

Oversee daily operations and manage the state's housing finance agency charged with providing housing financing and development programs to facilitate the delivery of workforce and affordable housing throughout the state. Responsible for providing leadership and direction to approximately 65 staff while managing approximately \$1.5 billion in assets and facilitating the delivery of roughly 1,500 housing units per year over the past two years. Production nearly doubled shortly after assuming leadership at HHFDC. Successfully worked with both the administration and the legislature to secure a record amount of funding during my second year at the agency – nearly \$370 million in funding for various housing financing programs, including \$1.6 million for new computer hardware, software systems, and digitization to improve operating efficiencies of the corporation. While at HHFDC, helped transform the organization's culture to embrace collaboration and coordination among the different branches as well as foster positive relationships with the development community.

**April 2018 – December 2019**

## **Executive Director, State Office of Community Services**

Provide oversight and direction to program administrators and staff in the granting arm of the state that is administratively attached to the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. Statutorily charged with coordinating and delivering human service programs through grant administration to assist Hawaii's low-income, refugees, and immigrant population. Responsible for managing approximately \$40 - \$50 million in state and federal grant contracts. As the lead contract administrator, responsible for overall procurement, contract negotiation, preparation, and execution to ensure programs are funded; payments are disbursed in accordance with contract terms and government regulations; and programs are monitored and evaluated based on performance-based outcomes. Develop and maintain a working rapport with non-profit organizations to improve collaboration and service delivery to target groups within the community.

**December 2014 – April 2018**

**Sr. Special Assistant, Office of the Governor, Hawaii**

Primary responsibilities included working directly with the Governor to develop strategic priorities for the State, formulate and implement the Governor's housing plan, and serve as the Governor's lead for housing matters and other

policy issues. Appointed by the Governor to the Housing and Finance Development Corporation Board, the Chief of Staff's designee on the State Transit-Oriented Development Council and the State's Affordable Housing Task Force. Convened regular meetings with housing developers, the Land Use Research Foundation, the Building Industry Association, housing advocates and non-profits to address the state's housing crisis. Through a collective effort, the administration was successful in securing over \$150 million from the state legislature to support the development of affordable rental projects which financed more than 2,600 units during the first two fiscal years of the Governor's term. Through coordinating efforts of the various state housing agencies, making targeted policy changes, and working through regulatory barriers, the administration was successful in facilitating the delivery of more than 5,300 units and over 5,000 more units in the pipeline.

**May 2013 – December 2014**

**Senior Advisor to the Lt. Governor, Hawaii**

Lead for directing and overseeing development of Lt. Governor's policy agenda. Developed conceptual framework and strategic action plan for creating, executing, and maintaining all program elements for the Lt. Governor's middle-school after-school program initiative called R.E.A.C.H. Established a non-profit entity to support this initiative and laid the granting framework for administering this program through the state. Led collaboration efforts with the Department of Education and Department of Human Services to statutorily establish this program under the state Office of Youth Services and secured programmatic funding. Interfaced with key public officials, potential funders, non-profit organizations, and community-based service providers to promote and maintain the program.

**Feb 2012 – May 2013**

**Executive Assistant to the Chancellor, University of Hawaii**

Managed a wide range of administrative, policy, and executive matters impacting the chancellor's office. Acted as the Chancellor's liaison for constituencies within the University system as well as externally with the business and non-profit community. Established and maintained networks and relationships with various educational institutions, government offices, and community associations. Led special projects and task forces aimed at improving programs, systems, and services. Performed government relations work including interacting with legislators, drafting testimony, and monitoring proceedings. Assisted with preparing the institution for Board of Regents meetings including coordinating submissions to the Board. Coordinated efforts between the various offices on campus to explore granting opportunities. Was successful in securing a \$2.26M U.S. Department of Education grant for the campus to improve retention and performance of Native Hawaiian students.

**Dec 2009 – Jan 2012**

**Community Relations Director, Office of Hawaiian Affairs**

Provide oversight and manage the Communications, Media Relations, Grants, and Loans departments. Responsible for 21 staff including 4 line managers and receptionist. Developed, implemented, and managed OHA's comprehensive communication and marketing plan. Responsible for advertising and general promotion of OHA programs and initiatives, production of annual reports, press releases, media advisories, and social media outlets. Overhauled the agency's website to improve its appeal, user navigation ability, and put in a tracking system to provide the agency with feedback. Using managing for results principles, conducted performance-based evaluations of programs and employees. Redesigned the \$4.5 million grants program to better align with OHA's strategic plan, streamlined procedures and reduced processing time to provide critically needed funding to community-based service providers. Employed contract monitoring to ensure compliance with contract provisions. Enhanced the appeal, organization, and cross marketing of the agency's monthly Ka Wai Ola newspaper. Resurrected a monthly internal newsletter to keep employees informed on the latest news and events impacting the agency as well as promote participation in community events. Instituted a media monitoring program to keep leadership informed on the latest news and information affecting OHA as well as the Native Hawaiian community.

**Aug 2007 – Aug 2008  
Company**

**Director of Government Relations, Hawaiian Electric**

Established and maintained relationships with key legislators and administrative staff at the State Capitol and State and County government offices to foster a favorable attitude toward the electric utility and positive outlook on issues that impact the Hawaiian Electric Company. Responsible for tracking hundreds of bills, coordinating responses, and drafting testimony on behalf of various company officials.

**Special Assistant and Legislative Analyst**

**Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, State of Hawaii**

**Oct 2005 – Jul 2007, Sept 2008 – Nov 2009**

Director's lead in coordinating events related to regional plans. Interfaced with consultants to coordinate presentations to various homestead associations and neighborhood boards in order to raise awareness and build support for the plans. Established the schedule for these plans to be completed and adopted by the Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC) and beneficiary community. Through the regional planning process, priority infrastructure projects (roads, water, sewer, drainage, and public facilities) were identified along with community-based projects in order to move development forward in a one to three-year period. Also assisted with spearheading legislative matters. Through persuasive lobbying efforts and support from various unions, community leaders, and developers, DHHL (through DOT) was successful in acquiring approximately \$27 million in CIP funding during the 2007 legislative session for the East-West Road in Kapolei. Equally successful was the work done to pass a bill (Act 141) that promoted private-public partnerships to increase development of affordable homes by allowing imposed affordable requirements to be satisfied on DHHL lands.

**Education**

Master's Degree in Public Administration, University of Hawaii, Manoa

Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration – University of Hawaii, Manoa

Highschool Diploma -- Kamehameha Schools, Honolulu, Hawaii

**Public/ Professional /Community - Based Affiliations**

Hawaii Public Housing Authority – Board of Directors - (December 2018 – November 2019)

Hawaii Housing and Finance Development Corporation - Board of Directors (2015 – 2018)

Hawaii Interagency Transit Oriented Development Council - (2016 – 2022)

Kamehameha Schools Alumni Association – Board of Directors - (2014 – 2018)

Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce - Board of Directors - (2010 – 2020)

REACH Out Hawaii (non-profit corporation) – Executive Director - (2013 – 2014)