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### **Regina Maka'ika'i Igarashi Joins The Hawaii Group**

Former Miss Aloha Hula and cancer survivor Gina Igarashi will become the executive assistant to Matthew S. Delaney, Chairman of The Hawaii Group (The HiGroup), marking yet another new hire in the expanding family of local companies. Igarashi brings 18 years of experience to her new position. Most recently, she served as the private secretary to the deputy superintendent at the Department of Education after working for three years as the executive assistant to the President and CEO of the Hawaii Superferry, Inc.

But her noteworthy skills were not the only reason Delaney wanted her to join the team. “I interviewed half a dozen very capable and qualified candidates, and I kept coming back to Gina,” said Delaney, who has endured cancer as well. “I feel a bond with her and appreciate that we are able to talk about our past battles with cancer in an effort to educate people about early detection and prevention.”

The connection also inspired Igarashi. “You never really understand the challenges unless you’ve walked in that person’s shoes,” she said. “As survivors, Matt and I understand how precious life and family are. We understand that we can never lose focus from what truly matters. And as far as business goes, we attack it like we did when we experienced chemotherapy and radiation — head on!”

Beyond the strength she gained from fighting illness, Igarashi believes that her cultural knowledge is one of her greatest assets as an employee. “Because of my background in hula, my employers benefit from having an individual within the company who is able to identify Hawaiian cultural protocols as well as culturally sensitive issues, and help others understand them,” she said.

This is important to Delaney, who constantly strives to learn about Hawaiian culture as a trustee of the Queen Emma Land Company and give back to our community by serving King Kamehameha IV and Queen Emma's legacy to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all the people of Hawaii. Yet Igarashi's hula expertise is just the beginning, he added. "She also possesses wonderful family values, a great work ethic, and a level of calmness that is missing in my business world."

The Hawaii Group (The HiGroup) consists of a family of companies that provide complementary services to businesses of all sizes in Hawaii. It encompasses marketing (HiMRK), accounting (HiAccounting), employment and staffing solutions (HiEmployment), and human resource administration (HiHR). Learn more at [www.TheHawaiiGroup.com](http://www.TheHawaiiGroup.com).

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