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## HTA Welcomes Two New Members to its Board of Directors

**HONOLULU** – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is pleased to announce the appointments of two new members to serve on its Board of Directors – airline industry veteran and community leader Blaine Miyasato and long-time public servant James Kunane Tokioka. The new members were sworn in at today's special board meeting.

**Blaine Miyasato** is the Managing Director, State Government Affairs at Hawaiian Airlines with nearly 40 years of experience in the airline industry. He was Hawaiian Airlines' first Vice President of In-Flight Services and the first rank-and-file employee on its executive team. Miyasato brings a breadth of experience across multiple disciplines including marketing, advertising, promotions, brand management, product development, and business process improvement. Born and raised in Hawai'i, he began his career at Hawaiian Airlines as a flight attendant in 1985 and thereafter was appointed to key management positions of increasing responsibility.

**James Kunane Tokioka** is the Director of the Hawai'i State Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Most recently, he served as the Deputy Director for the Hawai'i State Department of Transportation's Airports Division. Tokioka began his political career as a member of the Kaua'i County Council in 1996, where he served for 10 years. He then went on to serve for 16 years as a member of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives. Prior to his public service, Tokioka worked his way through the hospitality industry, both in Hawai'i and across the United States, doing everything from bussing tables to managing hotels and owning restaurants.

"We are excited to welcome Blaine and James, two highly respected individuals, who bring a great deal of knowledge, experience, and a personal passion for elevating communities statewide to our diverse board of directors," said Daniel Nāho'opi'i, HTA's Chief Administrative Officer. "We are grateful for their commitment to helping HTA balance the well-being of all residents and place with meaningful economic, environmental and cultural benefits that are essential in our pursuit for a regenerative tourism model for Hawai'i."

HTA's Board of Directors is a policy-making entity comprised of 12 members appointed by the Governor of Hawai'i. Board members serve as volunteers, guiding HTA's work in holistically managing tourism and fulfilling HTA's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and interacting pillars – community, natural resources, Hawaiian culture, and branding.

The new HTA board members' terms commenced on July 7, 2023. They replace outgoing board members George Kam who served on the board since 2015 and as board chair since 2021, and Keone Downing, an expert waterman and operator of Downing Hawai'i, who served on the board since 2021.

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“On behalf of our HTA ‘ohana, we extend a warm mahalo nui to George and Keone for the countless hours they invested in steering our organization and Hawai‘i’s tourism industry through the COVID-19 pandemic and the recovery that followed,” said Mike White, vice chair of the board. “We appreciate and thank them for their service to the people of Hawai‘i and their valuable contributions to our work ensuring the Hawai‘i brand held strong in our key markets, while driving forth the Destination Management Action Plans that are benefiting each island today.”

For more information, visit [www.hawaii tourism authority.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/](http://www.hawaii tourism authority.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/).

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#### **New Board Member Head Shots:**

- Blaine Miyasato (Credit: Hawaiian Airlines) – [Click here to download](#)
- James Tokioka (Credit: DBEDT) – [Click here to download](#)

#### **About the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority**

The Hawai‘i Tourism Authority is the state agency responsible for representing The Hawaiian Islands around the world, and for holistically managing tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with community desires, economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, and visitor industry needs. HTA works with the community and industry to Mālama Ku‘u Home – care for our beloved home. For more information about HTA, visit [www.hawaii tourism authority.org](http://www.hawaii tourism authority.org) or follow @HawaiiHTA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

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