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HTA Release (21-11)

Hawai'i Tourism Authority Welcomes Dylan Ching, Keith “Keone” Downing and Sigmund “Sig” Zane to Serve on its Board of Directors

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is pleased to welcome three new appointees to serve on its Board of Directors – O'ahu and Kaua'i restaurateur Dylan Ching; expert waterman, environmentalist and surf shop owner Keith “Keone” Downing; and renowned co-founder of an iconic apparel brand, cultural practitioner and educator Sigmund “Sig” Zane of Hawai'i Island.

Governor David Ige recently nominated the three individuals to serve on HTA's board, with their appointments confirmed by the Hawai'i State Senate earlier today. Their terms are effective immediately.

“The HTA Board of Directors is diverse, dynamic, visionary and uniquely qualified to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities and guide HTA, as our state's lead tourism agency. This morning, it dawned on me that our three new board members, Sig, Keone, and Dylan, whom I respect and welcome, are all accomplished businessmen and avid surfers – a combination that exemplifies the balance we seek at HTA, between community, culture, and commerce. Mālama pono,” said John De Fries, HTA president and CEO.

A seasoned hospitality veteran with more than 25 years of experience, Dylan Ching is the vice president of operations for TS Restaurants, which includes Duke's Waikīkī and Hula Grill Waikīkī on O'ahu, and Keoki's Paradise in Po'ipū and Duke's Kaua'i on the Garden Island. Ching currently serves as a board member for various organizations, such as the Waikīkī Community Center, Waikīkī Beach Special Improvement District Association, Waikīkī Business Improvement District, and the Bishop Museum Association Council. A graduate of Kamehameha Schools, Ching received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of San Diego.

Keith “Keone” Downing is an expert waterman and operator of Downing Hawai'i, Hawai'i's oldest surf shop. Born and raised in Honolulu, Keone is the son of big-wave pioneer George Downing, a pioneer, competitor, coach, student, innovator, and one of the last Waikīkī Beach Boys mentored by Duke Kahanamoku. Keone is a principal member of the non-profit Surfing Education Association, also known as Save Our Surf, through which he has been dedicated to the preservation of Hawai'i's oceans, coral reefs, waves and beaches. Keone is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools and the California School of Arts and Crafts.

Sigmund “Sig” Zane is a keiki o ka 'āina, a child of Hawai'i, cultural practitioner, educator and one of the founders of iconic fashion apparel brand Sig Zane Designs which he and his wife Nalani Kanaka'ole opened in 1985 in Hilo on the island of Hawai'i. From the earliest years, the ocean was Zane's playground, learning to surf in Waikīkī. Zane graduated from Roosevelt High School on O'ahu and attended Hilo Community College and the University of Hawai'i at Hilo on Hawai'i Island.

Downing's term ends on June 30, 2022. Ching's and Zane's terms end on June 30, 2024. The three replace outgoing HTA board members Rick Fried, Kelly Sanders, and Ku'uipo Kumukahi. Senators

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today also confirmed HTA board members David Arakawa and Sherry Menor-McNamara for another term.

“My gratitude is extended to Ku’uipo, Kelly, and Rick for their service to HTA and to the people of Hawaii; while I’m energized by the extended board terms that have been granted to Sherry and David,” said De Fries.

HTA’s Board of Directors is a policy-making entity comprised of 12 members, who serve as volunteers and meet monthly to guide the agency’s work on behalf of the State of Hawai’i. Board approval is required for key HTA functions and initiatives, including its annual budget and annual marketing plan, which includes funding support of community programs.

The new board members will take part in HTA’s upcoming [Board of Directors meeting](#), which is scheduled for Thursday, April 29.

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Editor’s Note: New board member head shots are available for download at <https://bit.ly/2S1qT1T>

About the Hawai’i Tourism Authority

The [Hawai’i Tourism Authority](#) is the State of Hawai’i agency responsible for strategically managing its support of the tourism industry. Established in 1998 to support Hawai’i’s leading industry and largest employer, HTA continually strives to help ensure tourism’s sustainability and the benefits it brings to residents and communities statewide.

For more information about HTA, please visit www.hawaiitourismauthority.org. Follow updates from HTA (@HawaiiHTA) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and its new [YouTube Channel](#).

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