

Acknowledgements

A special *Mahalo* is extended to the HAMS Special Events Committee chaired by **COL (Ret) Walter M. Ozawa** and to **Gerry Silva** for his work with **Don Kozono of the University of Hawaii Journalism Department** who produced the video honoring Mildred M. Courtney.

We also extend our thanks to **Lynn Reyes, Susan Smith** & the staff of the **Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa** for their continuing support and excellent service.

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2011 The Award



Mildred M. Courtney

Hawai'i Army Museum Society:
Officers & Trustees

The
The Award

In ancient Hawai'i, the warrior who was honored by service to the Chief kept himself in readiness to meet every challenge. Perfect physical condition and mental alertness allowed him to respond quickly to any demand. One symbol of this readiness was the spear, or **Ihe**, which was always at the warrior's side.

In the creation of this *The Award*, artist Umi Kai has enhanced the concept of preparedness by adding the essence of the 'o'o, the tool utilized by ancient farmers, symbolizing the care and nurturing of the 'aina, the land and its people.

The **Ihe** is constructed of koa wood, and is supported by a block of 'ohi'a wood, both unique to Hawai'i. They are strong and solid, and appropriate for the recognition of Hawai'i's warriors, also known as **koa**. The base is of specially selected rock to indicate the solid foundation of the ever-ready warrior.

The Hawai'i Army Museum Society presents this award to Mildred M. Courtney for her outstanding contributions to the military and civilian communities and continued dedicated service to the people of Hawai'i.



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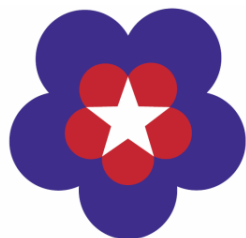
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About the Hawaii Army Museum Society

The Hawai'i Army Museum Society (HAMS) was chartered as a non-profit corporation in 1976 to provide support for the development of the U.S. Army Museum of Hawai'i at Fort DeRussy. The support includes the preservation of military history and the education of the public on the honor, values, valor, & sacrifice of America's men and women serving in the defense of freedom. Its paramount goal is the enlightenment of children and young adults on the lessons of history and the role the military has played in the Pacific to ensure the survival of democracy and the American way of life.

The Society was established under the auspices of the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) and leading local businessmen in 1976 for the purpose of saving Battery Randolph and establishing the U.S. Army Museum of Hawai'i to preserve this historic site. HAMS has raised large sums in private contributions to develop displays and exhibits in the Museum and to build and operate the Museum Store. The Store sells a wide range of military-related merchandise, and net proceeds from the Society's activities are used for the benefit of the Museum.

HAMS membership includes businessmen and women, active, reserve component, retired military personnel of all branches of service, families of veterans and the general public. Membership in the Society is open to any individual who believes in the preservation of military tradition and history in our country by honoring those who have served and helping those who currently serve our nation.



Previous Recipients of the *The Award*

- 1998** Hawaii National Guard
Hawaii Army National Guard
Hawaii Air National Guard
- 1999** Reserve Forces of the Pacific
U.S. Army Reserve
U.S. Navy Reserve
U.S. Marine Corps Reserve
U.S. Air Force Reserve
U.S. Coast Guard Reserve
- 2000** Dr. Richard Kelley
Outrigger Hotels
- 2001** Mr. Peter Schall
Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel
- 2002** Mr. William W. Paty
Civilian Aide to the Secretary of
the Army, Pacific Region
- 2003** GEN Fred C. Weyand, USA, Ret.
Former Chief of Staff of the Army
- 2004** Governor Linda L. Lingle
Governor, State of Hawaii
- 2005** Mr. Michael J. Fisch
President & Publisher,
Honolulu Advertiser
- 2006** MG Herbert E. Wolff, USA, Ret.
President Emeritus,
Hawaii Army Museum Society
- 2007** Ms. Christina Kemmer
Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Hawaii
- 2008** COL David M. Peters
USA, Retired
- 2009** Dr. Lawrence K.W. Tseu
DDS, FADG
- 2010** Linda Coble & Kirk Matthews

Program

6:50 am - Prelude to Breakfast

7:00 am - Call to Breakfast

Welcome Remarks &

Introduction of Special Guests

COL Walter M. Ozawa, USAR Ret.

Chair, The Award Committee

**Oli – Traditional Hawaiian
Greeting**

Soo Whan Pumehana Cullen

National Anthem & Hawai'i Pono'i

SSG Samuel L. Hesch, 111th Army Band,

Hawaii Army National Guard

Invocation

Chaplain Steve Jensen



Among the many organizations and committees that Mildred M. Courtney supports are:

Hawaii Army Museum Society, VP for Resource Development
Friends of Hickam
Air Force Association
Organization of Women Leaders
Pacific & Asian Affairs Council
Navy League of the United States
Hawaii USO Board of Advisors (Military Appreciation Month)
Armed Services YMCA
Friends of Honolulu City Lights
Military Youth Advisory Council (MYAC)
Girl Scouts of America
Operation Paperback
Hale Malama at MCBK
Airmen's Attic and the Sailor's Attic
Outrigger's Thanksgiving Turkeys for Enlisted Service Families
Outrigger's Family Snow Fight at MCBH
Outstanding Airmen of the Year, Outstanding Soldier of the Year, & Outstanding Sailor of the Year.



Mildred with fellow USO Board member,
Karl Kiyokawa

Mildred's special touch can be seen in her pu'olo program. In a truly Hawaiian tradition, a lei wrapped in a ti leaf is given to young servicemen for presentation to his new bride upon arrival on island. One Marine pilot was so touched by this, he sent over a bouquet so huge, it took almost two people to carry it into the office.

Mildred has concurrently reached out to the larger civilian community to promote a better appreciation for those who serve and their families. She has also worked to develop venues for those in uniform to have the opportunity to better understand their role within the expanded communities of our island and state.

She has touched literally thousands in the military community through her work as an Outrigger Enterprises Group executive, through her volunteer work on several boards dedicated to the support of the military, and through her personal leadership of so many projects designed to improve the quality of life for the military in Hawaii.

Today, the Hawaii Army Museum Society hopes to have given you a sample of the larger body of generous contributions to the community in many forms from Mildred Courtney.

David Carey said, "Her greatest contribution is having good instincts about what makes a difference for the military. She's a wonderful lady. The world needs more Mildred's."

Congratulations, Mildred, for receiving the 2011 Ihe Award. You are an outstanding example of dedication, compassion, tenacity, and commitment to those in uniform and their families and the extended community.



Mildred with fellow Ihe recipients,
Dr. Larry Tseu and Bill Paty

7:30 am - Breakfast is served

8:15 am -

Remarks and Introduction of the *Ihe Award* Video Presentation:

"Mildred M. Courtney"

GEN David A. Bramlett, USA Ret.

President, Hawai'i Army Museum Society

Presentation – The *Ihe Award*

Acceptance of the *Ihe Award* & Remarks

Mildred M. Courtney

9:00 am - Closing Remarks



Mildred M. Courtney

Mildred M. Courtney was brought up in the country, raised on the sugar plantation, Union Mill, in Kohala on the island of Hawaii. After high school, she went to the University of Hawaii, where she met and married her husband, George “Scotchy” Courtney. Mildred worked for the Hawaiian Telephone Co. prior to becoming a housewife and raising three children, Edie Trujillo, Diane Cho, & George Courtney.

One day, in the mid-1950’s, the general manager of the Edgewater invited her to join Roy Kelley and his family at their small but bustling and rapidly expanding Waikiki lodging business --known today as Outrigger Enterprises, Inc., Hawaii’s largest hotel company. Mildred wasn’t interested.

However, the general manager, who rivaled Mrs. Courtney in persistence, called back three times, and Mildred finally relented. It was May 29, 1955, when Mildred joined Outrigger Enterprises, Inc. Starting as a telephone switchboard operator in the Reef Hotel, Mildred quickly rose in rank to become the Chief Operator.

She was so dedicated to her job that she refused to abandon her post as operator in 1959 when 9” of rain fell in less than 24 hours. As water backed up into her basement post, Mildred, struggling to hold her head above the rising water level, refused to “abandon ship”. Only after the switchboard shorted out, did the intrepid Mildred, seek refuge. Paddling to her rescue on a surfboard, Chuck Rolles, found Mildred wedged between the top of the switchboard and the ceiling.

Knowing the value of a good employee, Outrigger continued to rapidly promote Mildred. She spent many years in hotel management becoming the general manager of the Reef Lanai and later opening the Waikiki Surf, the Waikiki Surf East and the West, as well as the Outrigger Malia.

It was in those early days that she first realized that the hotel’s military clientele needed special handling. “The thing about the military is attention to detail,” she explains. “And being flexible as their mission changes. They don’t give you the notice you’d like. If the weather gets bad, they might not be on time, or if the plane breaks down they may not be here on schedule. I think you really need to know what makes them “tick”. You can’t just go out and solicit on base. I had to network. It wasn’t easy.”

In the late 1980’s, Mildred Courtney was given the specialized position of overseeing military sales and as the overall liaison with the military. Now in her 56th year with Outrigger Enterprises, Inc., Mildred handles everything from room sales, to responding to client concerns, while always keeping open lines of communication with the military community on behalf of the Outrigger and Ohana Hotels.

Her military commitments go above & beyond her daily on-the-job duties. Mildred joined the Honolulu Council Navy League in 1990 and subsequently the Bridge in 1994. “Pretty soon, they elevated me to the board,” she says in her matter-of-fact way. Her familiarity with the military sector combined with her knowledge of the hospitality business, plus her dedication to community service, have made her instrumental in the Honolulu Council Navy League’s many successful programs that benefit active duty personnel. Mildred initiated Operation Paperback to provide reading material such as best sellers, science fiction, adventure, and etc. to sailors.

“When a ship is going out on deployment, nothing is more important than putting good reading material in the hands of our young sailors,” Courtney explains. “We’ve collected thousands of paperbacks, all donated from hotel guests, Outrigger employees, and members of the Navy League.”

Mildred has been involved in Hale Malama or House of Caring at the Marine Corp Base Hawaii in Kaneohe. She helped organize the collection of children and adult clothing, house wares, small appliances, toys and just about anything a family in need could possibly use.

Mildred has come up with many other creative ways to cater to military customers. “I took a great interest in them and made sure our people knew them by rank and addressed them properly,” she says.

As her daughter, Diane says, “My mother grew up in very humble surroundings which I believe led her to be ambitious and tenacious. It was not easy for a Hawaiian woman to be successful in the business world when she entered it. But, she believed that if you worked hard and did not worry about the rest, you could prevail and be successful. My mother always saw the big picture, and she is a visionary. I believe that her humble beginnings allowed her to empathize with service men and women and their families. Her challenges made her want to help others.”