

Report of the HDA Executive Director - 2020

2020 is, hands down, an extraordinary year. I am proud that we started off 2020 with a successful Annual Convention, having returned to our usual model after the mini convention in 2019; and that a high percentage of our members renewed with us. The timing of these two bodies of work – the Convention and dues renewal – occurred before COVID-19 hit; in that sense, HDA did not face some of the challenges that our fellow states did in 2020.

Nevertheless, we continue to learn from and to support each other, to share best practices and challenges, and “to build that plane as we fly it.” The pandemic brought us various waves and phases – from Stay at Home (and confusing) orders, to the supply chain shortage, from economic struggles and relief options, to changing employment laws. Our members had (and still have) many questions and scenarios that keep us on our toes. We continue to do our best to research and bring accurate information forward but there are times where we will share answers that members may not want to hear. But if I’ve learned anything from 2020, it’s that working within the gray and unknown is a must, that today’s answers will not be the same as tomorrow’s, and that we are working with forces beyond our control.

So, what can we control? We are faced with pivoting our House of Delegates meeting to a virtual one, but fortunately, we are learning from our fellow states who have already held their virtual Houses. This is a steep learning curve, but we are up to the challenge. In addition, our leadership is working hard to develop a realistic budget and a revised Convention for 2021; and will resume our efforts to refresh our Strategic Plan. All needed tasks, and as with every task, we will endeavor to do our best.

Despite the havoc that COVID-19 wreaked on our home, practice, and social lives, I very much – and I hope you do, too – appreciated the amount of hard work that our parent organization put in. While working remotely, ADA staff members have stepped up to do more than what their typical position entails. I continue to lean on them – as we are stronger together. Sounds cliché, but it’s true. And if there’s ever a time to be a part of the tripartite Ohana, this is it!

While we will continue to live with COVID-19 heading into 2021, I look forward to brighter days when an effective vaccine, treatment regimens, and continued preventative measures, will once again allow us to visit in person.

A special shout out to President Dr. Wayne Leong, President-Elect Dr. Patsy Fujimoto, and Vice-President Dr. Scott Kanamori for serving on the HDA COVID-19 Rapid Response Team (RRT) – which entailed many countless hours and last minute meetings, to discuss and execute immediate and behind the scenes decisions on behalf of our membership. My thanks to our legislative consultant Hawaii Public Policy Advocates for the additional support to navigate government regulations, and to our staff Ms. Toni Perez and Ms. Rachelle Teruya for maintaining strong and individualized customer service. And my sincerest appreciation to our leadership and membership, for working through the most challenging year.

Respectively Submitted,

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