



**CLASS OF '62**

## An 'Iolani Story: Class of '62 Celebrates Golden Reunion

Members of the Class of '62, in honor of their 50th reunion, were recognized at the Commencement Ceremony for the Class of 2012.

### HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Their stories began as boys in the lush valley of Nu'uaniu and on the near-virgin parcel of land near the Ala Wai.

As a kindergartener, **John Ishikawa** recalls "being in the car as older siblings were dropped off at the Nu'uaniu campus and St. Andrew's Priory before [he] was dropped off at the La'au Place Quonset huts."

Fast-forward to the spring of 1962 and these boys are now men, venturing off to college to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, self-discovery, and success. Many depart for the mainland. Over the years, the Class of 1962 reunites in various ways, some for their landmark reunions all over the map, and others as a part of **Patrick Tom's** weekly Thursday

lunches in Honolulu. Suddenly, an announcement of 50th Reunion events is made concurrent with alerts of a brand new class website. The men of 1962 then begin to ready themselves for a fun time. Before long, it's June 1, 2012, the eve of 50 years since they first became alumni. While much has changed, much has stayed the same, and that is what the Class of 1962 warmly realizes throughout their three-month-long 50th reunion.

### A MONUMENTAL OCCASION

Kicking off the celebration, 28 alumni gathered for the Pre-Commencement Kick-Off Dinner on Thursday, March 31, at Tsukiji Restaurant. **Rodney Asada,**

**Alvin and Dicki Chong, Conroy Chow, Kenneal and Lucille Chun, James and Patrica-Gale Hayakawa, John Ishikawa, Mark Kaneshiro, Nils Katahara, Miles Kawatachi, Creighton Kudo, Richard Lau, Colin Leong, Leighton Liu, Alan and Jennifer Maii, Samuel and Linda Mayeda, Walter Muraoka, Calvin and Karen Nakagawa, Patrick and Patsy Tom, Milton Tsuda, and Nathan and Sandra Wong** enjoyed an evening of storytelling, laughter, and memories that was highlighted by Alan's uncanny ability to call upon the most embarrassing stories about each of the attendees, and Leighton's slideshow, which beckoned an encore. Alan reprised the searing roast at **Roland and Janis Chun's** home on June 22, focusing on attendees who were

not present at the Tsukiji dinner and evoking similar roars of laughter from everyone there. These stories never seem to lose their edge or entertainment value.

On June 2, classmates convened for a second time to celebrate the Commencement of the Class of 2012, which was quickly dubbed 'Commencement2', honoring the occasion of their second graduation experience. Classmates and their wives enjoyed the event in the shade of a magnificent 'Iolani tree. On this occasion, **Myrna Kawatachi**, **Dwight Kealoha**, and **Alfred Tanaka's** widow, **Leonora**, son **Brett '84**, and mother joined the festivities.

Remarked Leighton Liu, "The whole commencement was quite beautiful. When we were introduced as a class, I was both surprised and touched by the seniors who greeted us with lei. The achievements of the 18 valedictorians were mind boggling!"

Following a program-free Sunday, Monday brought a full schedule of on-campus activities. It began with an extended campus tour led by **Chris Shimabukuro '85**, Development Director, during which classmates saw the campus through the eyes of a modern student. Highlights included viewing the Edward K. Hamada Track and Field and Kozuki Stadium from the press box.

Remarked Kenneal Chun, "The visit of the campus was spectacular, to say the least. It showed me how far 'Iolani has come from the humble beginnings it had at Ala Wai when our class began our journey through 'Iolani in 1949."

While walking through the Lower Gym and admiring the banners, Al and John reminisced about being the last class to play in the old barn. Before 1959, their class had anticipated being

"People don't change very much. They may look a little worse off for wear but they're all the same great guys!"

MILT TSUDA

the Centennial class capped off with a new gym to end their careers.

Fun fact: Before 1959, it was believed that 'Iolani School was established in 1862, thus making the Class of 1962 the Centennial class. However, as an intermediate-aged student, Leighton Liu conducted a research project and discovered that 'Iolani School was actually established in 1863.

The tour concluded in St. Alban's Chapel, where Rev. **Daniel Leatherman** honored the memories of classmates who have passed away.

"It was good to remember those who have passed on and were not able to enjoy some of the things we had and, for us, having come "full circle," to reflect on our own personal good fortunes since leaving 'Iolani School so many years ago," said Kenneal Chun.

School archivist **Rosemarie Panko** and her assistant, **Lyn Vi Sumimoto**, shared larger-than-life images of the Class of 1962's senior yearbook pages, senior edition of the *Imua*, and other high school memorabilia, thus evoking

strong and happy memories of the classmates' schoolboy days. The celebration continued at the Headmaster's residence with a luncheon hosted by Dr. **Val '67** and **Cynthia Iwashita**. To the delight of the reunion group, **Dennis Ching**, **Paul Chun**, and **David** and **Sylvia Shiraishi** joined the class celebration.

Later that month, the Class of 1962 congregated for the inaugural 50th Anniversary Memorial Golf Tournament at Mililani Golf Club in which they honored the memories of **Urban Nishiki**, **Douglas Matsumoto**, **Arthur Koga**, and Alfred Tanaka. Fourteen alumni enjoyed a round of golf with notable performances by **John Ozaki** and Cal Nakagawa, both of whom shot low nets of 67. Alan won the Jackpot drawing, Colin Leong won the consolation drawing, and Cal earned the distinction of being the only winner of a greenie. They chose to honor the school with their victories by contributing their winnings to the class gift. The day culminated in a festive dinner hosted by Roland and Janis Chun. By popular

RIGHT: Alan Maii '62 and Dwight Kealoha '62 attended their 50th 'Iolani reunion.

BELOW: Samuel '62 and Linda Mayeda travelled to O'ahu for the festivities.



## Class of 1962

demand, masa sushi was brought back, as was Roland's famous Portuguese bean soup and grilled steaks, Janis's tofu watercress salad, Alan's roast (this time bolstered by Kenneal Chun's masterful "recollections," and Leighton's updated slideshow, later to be published in a commemorative DVD.

Later in the summer, many members of the class returned to continue their celebration during a Kick-Off Dinner on August 2, where they joined other classes in reunions (years ending in 2 or 7) for a buffet under the stars complete with alumni entertainment. On this occasion, several new faces were seen, including **Clifford You**, **Karen Chun** (Paul's wife), **Sheryl Tashima** (Leighton's guest), and **Beryl Lau** (Richard's wife). The Class of 1962's 50th reunion activities officially culminated on August 4 at the 17th annual A Touch of 'Iolani, where they joined 1,000 members of the school community at a celebration hosted by the following year's 20th Reunion class, the Class of 1993. The event was symbolic since two of the Touch committee members were children of 1962 alumni (**Chrysti Lu** '93, daughter of Roland Chun; and **Megan Kawatachi** '93, daughter of Miles Kawatachi) and the Class of 1993 reserved a special table for the 50th reunion class.

### CLASS GIFT

Throughout the year leading up to the reunion itself, the class mounted an effort to advance 'Iolani by raising money for a 50th Reunion gift, a tradition that has been honored for decades. Alumni giving is beyond monetary value. It conveys a powerful message of class pride and helps ensure that 'Iolani's teachings and opportunities are available for generations to come. The Class of 1962 wanted to show that even after 50 years of evolution, 'Iolani remains the same wonderful school that shaped their lives in so many powerful and lasting ways. Miles Kawatachi and John Ishikawa worked tirelessly to rally their classmates to reach a giving participation goal of 62% and a class gift goal of \$62,000, both numbers chosen to commemorate the year in which they became alumni.

### THANK YOU

Now months since the Class of 1962 gathered in celebration, memories of their days on campus as schoolboys and 50th year "reunioners" live on through these spectacular gentlemen and their significant others that have shaped 'Iolani for the last 50 years. Thanks to the contributions of each and every individual and to the monumental leadership

"The older [I've become] the more I've come to realize that like parents, family and friends, 'Iolani is one of the foundations of who I am. The school and its educators help mold me into the person I have become."

MILT TSUDA



Brett Tanaka '84 represented his father, the late Alfred Tanaka '62.

of John Ishikawa, Miles Kawatachi, Leighton Liu, Milt Tsuda, and Pat Tom, the spectacular extravaganza to honor their very special milestone was among the most celebrated in the school's history.

Thank you, Class of 1962, for embracing the idea of a 50th reunion and for bringing life to a very special and most memorable occasion. Congratulations on realizing an unprecedented level of participation (69%) and on surpassing your class gift goal by raising over \$75,000 for the school. You are an inspiration to all of the classes that have come before you and to those that will work hard to emulate your collegiality, loyalty, and 'Iolani pride.

# Q&A

CLASS OF 1962

What does 'Iolani School mean to you?

**MILT TSUDA:** The older [I've become] the more I've come to realize that like parents, family and friends, 'Iolani is one of the foundations of who I am. The school and its educators help mold me into the person I have become.

**LEIGHTON LIU:** Although we did not have the perspective to properly evaluate or appreciate the school while we were still there, when I attended college, it became quite evident that 'Iolani had prepared me well, such that several of my university classes seemed to be easier than those I had experienced in high school. We may not have had much in the way of facilities (like the school has now), but we did have good teachers who taught us well.

“Just get off your duffs and [attend the reunion], as those who don't will miss out on something very worthwhile.”



What does your 50th reunion mean to you?

**LEIGHTON LIU:** The 50th reunion is quite a significant milestone. Since most of us are retired and all of us are now “senior citizens,” one cannot help but wonder about how many more reunions we may be around to experience, especially when we think about the 12 classmates who have already left us. It's pretty sobering to realize this.

What would you say to a 50th reunion alumnus who is sitting on the fence whether to attend or not?

**LEIGHTON LIU:** Just get off your duffs and participate, as those who don't will miss out on something very worthwhile. Plus, to me it's just human instinct to want to give back to the school in some way.

Name one thing you learned about a classmate that you didn't know for the past 50 years.

**MILT TSUDA:** People don't change very much. They may look a little worse off for wear but they're all the same great guys!

**LEIGHTON LIU:** I learned so many sundry facts about the early days of elementary school (I didn't start at 'Iolani until the 7th grade), primarily due to the astounding acuity of Kenneal Chun's incredible memory. His recall and stories really blew me away!

Members of the Class of '62 and their spouses gathered together for several milestone events.