

HawaiiBusiness
magazine

The

Women Entrepreneurs Conference

...

MAY 17, 2024, 11:30 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.
at PRINCE WAIKIKI

PRESENTED BY

**CENTRAL
PACIFIC
BANK**

Member FDIC

Agenda

FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2024

11:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M. REGISTRATION, LIGHT BITES & RESOURCE EXPO

12:30–1:30 P.M. **OPENING GENERAL SESSION:**
OPENING REMARKS & KEYNOTE ADDRESS PI'INAIO BALLROOMS I-II
Keynote Speaker: Denise Woodard,
Founder & CEO, Partake Foods

1:45–2:45 P.M. **BREAKOUT SESSIONS I:**
• SOURCES OF CAPITAL & HOW TO DRAW ON THEM PI'INAIO BALLROOM II
• MASTERING THE PITCH: LESSONS FROM ABC'S SHARK TANK MAKIKI ROOM
• BALANCING ACT: INSIGHTS FROM MOMPRENEURS PI'INAIO BALLROOM I
• LET'S TALK STORY & CONNECT: ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS PALOLO ROOM

3:00–4:00 P.M. **BREAKOUT SESSIONS II:**
• SOURCES OF CAPITAL PART TWO:
DEEP DIVES VIA ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS PI'INAIO BALLROOM II
• GRIT: THE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT TO ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS MAKIKI ROOM
• EMPOWERING THE MAKERS: HOW TO GROW YOUR
FOOD & BEVERAGE BUSINESS PI'INAIO BALLROOM I
• LET'S TALK STORY & CONNECT: ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS PALOLO ROOM

4:15–5:00 P.M. **CLOSING GENERAL SESSION:**
Keynote Speaker: Chef Robynne Maii,
Chef & Owner, Fête PI'INAIO BALLROOMS I-II

5:15–7:00 P.M. **PAU HANA & POP-UP MARKET** MULIWAI DECK

Map

MULIWADECK

5:15 P.M.
Pau Hana & Pop-Up
Market (5th Floor)

PALOLO ROOM

1:45 P.M.
Let's Talk Story
& Connect:
Roundtable
Discussions 1
3:00 P.M.
Let's Talk Story
& Connect:
Roundtable
Discussions 2

**11:30 A.M. -
4:15 P.M.**
Expo & Networking

MEZZANINE LEVEL

11:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.
Registration

PI'INAIO BALLROOM 2

1:45 P.M.
Sources of Capital & How to
Draw on Them
3:00 P.M.
Sources of Capital Part 2:
Deep Dives via Roundtable
Discussions

PI'INAIO BALLROOM 1-2

12:30 P.M.
Welcome Remarks
Keynote by Denise Woodard
4:15 P.M.
Keynote by Chef Robynne
Mai

PI'INAIO BALLROOM 1

1:45 P.M.
Balancing Act: Insight for
Momprenuers
3:00 P.M.
Empowering the Makers:
How to Grow Your Food &
Beverage Business

PALOLO ROOM

PI'INAIO
BALLROOM 2

PI'INAIO
BALLROOM 1

MAKIKI ROOM

MAKIKI ROOM

1:45 P.M.
Mastering the Pitch: Lessons
from ABC's Shark Tank
3:00 P.M.
Grit: The Essential
Ingredient to
Entrepreneurial Success

KEY:

 - Escalator

 - Restroom

HawaiiBusiness

magazine

The second annual Women Entrepreneurs Conference is all about your personal success and the success of your business. Take advantage of as many opportunities as you can to learn, be inspired, make connections and plan the next steps on your journey.

Hawaii Business Magazine is delighted to partner again this year with Central Pacific Bank, the local experts in helping small businesses like yours to succeed. Today, you can learn about getting access to capital, driving revenue growth, managing finances, mastering a compelling pitch, balancing your work and personal life, and much more.

This conference is also about building bridges and making the personal connections that are essential to entrepreneurial success. Meet, greet and repeat.

Keep daring and creating. Combine your vision and passion with all that you learn today and anything is possible.

Mahalo nui loa,



Steve Petranik
Editor and Executive Publisher
Hawaii Business Magazine

CENTRAL PACIFIC BANK

Member FDIC

Central Pacific Bank (CPB) has a storied legacy that began 70 years ago when courageous World War II veterans returned from fighting for their county, only to be denied mortgages and small business loans. They founded CPB with the vision of helping all of Hawai'i's people with the financial services and resources they need and deserve.

Today, their legacy lives on with a dedicated workforce that is 91% ethnically diverse. We take great pride in the fact that 64% of our employees, 53% of our managers, and 40% of our Executive Committee are strong dynamic women.

We believe the more diverse the economy, the better it is for the community as a whole. It is what motivated CPB to fund WE by Rising Tide, which is a free 11-session program that helps women entrepreneurs take their business to the next level. Applications for the next session are accepted now at risingtidehawaii.com/women-entrepreneurs.

It is also what sparked the creation of the Women Entrepreneurs Conference. Following the overwhelming success and sell-out of our first event in 2023, we are excited to announce the return of the conference for its second year. Participants can look forward to an invaluable opportunity to network with like-minded business owners, discover new ways to grow their business, and learn from breakout session topics including how to access capital, marketing strategies, overcoming fear, and much more.

We send a sincere mahalo to *Hawaii Business Magazine* for partnering with CPB on this important event. Thank you to all the participants, panelists, and speakers including industry-leading keynote speakers Denise Woodard, Founder and CEO of Partake Foods, and Robynne Maii, Chef and Owner of Fête. The conference is a full day of valuable sessions with many other speakers who will share their knowledge and experience of finding success in the Hawai'i marketplace.

CPB believes in the entrepreneurial spirit of women and is there to help you on your journey to success!

Mahalo,

Catherine Ngo
Board Chair
Central Pacific Financial Corp.

Susan Utsugi
Group Senior Vice President, Business Banking
Central Pacific Bank

Opening General Session

Keynote Address

12:30-1:30 P.M. | PI'INAIO BALLROOMS 1-2

Denise is the Founder and CEO of Partake Foods, a natural food company that was inspired by her daughter's experience with food allergies. Launched in 2017, Partake's first product — delicious, better for you, allergy-friendly cookies — can now be found in more than 14,000 retailers including Target, Kroger, and Whole Foods Market. Partake's offerings have since expanded to include graham crackers, vanilla wafers and pancake & waffle mixes.

Denise is the first Black woman to raise more than \$1 Million publicly for a CPG food startup. To date, the company has raised over \$25M from investors including HER, Rihanna, CircleUp Growth Partners, FF2032 and Marcy Venture Partners. Partake was named #151 on the Inc 5000 list in 2023.



KEYNOTE

Denise Woodard

FOUNDER & CEO,
PARTAKE FOODS

OPENING REMARKS FROM



Steve Petranik
EDITOR &
EXECUTIVE
PUBLISHER,
HAWAII BUSINESS
MAGAZINE



Catherine Ngo
CHAIR,
CENTRAL PACIFIC
BANK

CHECK OUT THE RESOURCE EXPO

ALTRES

BBB GREAT WEST & PACIFIC

BLUE STARTUPS

CENTRAL PACIFIC BANK

CITY AND COUNTY OF
HONOLULU,
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC
REVITALIZATION

GOODMERCH SUPPLY

HAWAII EMPLOYERS COUNCIL

HAWAI'I FOUNDER

HAWAII SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

JPG HAWAII

MANA UP

MAUI ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT BOARD, INC.

PATSY T. MINK CENTER FOR
BUSINESS & LEADERSHIP

PURPLE MAI'A FOUNDATION

SMALL BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION

UH MAUI FOOD INNOVATION
CENTER

VBOC OF THE PACIFIC

WAHIAWĀ VALUE-ADDED
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
CENTER

Breakout Session 1

Let's Talk Story & Connect: Roundtable Discussions

1:45 - 2:45 P.M. | PALOLO ROOM

Join us for an engaging session that breaks away from the traditional lecture format. Our roundtable discussions session will provide a platform for meaningful connections and insights. Each roundtable will feature a different topic allowing attendees to engage in unique, interesting, and thought-provoking conversations with fellow attendees. Whether you are a seasoned business owner or just starting out, we all have something to learn from each other. Topics vary. Seating is open, first-come, first-serve.



TABLE 1:

Christiane Bolosan-Yee

TRANSFORMATIONAL
COACH & FOUNDER, LIFE
AND BIZ BY DESIGN

Topic: Empower Your Network: Cultivating Meaningful Connections for Business Success

Christiane is a transformational coach and founder of 'Life and Biz by Design,' empowering heart-centered entrepreneurs to embrace their unique flow and design lives and businesses they love. As the owner of Magically Rooted and CBY Consulting, she offers personalized consultations, group coaching, and specialized programs to guide clients towards success grounded in love and self-care. With a diverse background as a non-profit executive, multifaceted entrepreneur, and Instructor for Leeward Community College's 'Āina to Mākeke for Food Entrepreneurs 12-Week Education Program, Christiane is committed to fostering abundance, happiness, and meaningful connections.



TABLE 2:

Poni Askew

CEO, HAWAIIAN VINEGAR &
SPICE COMPANY

Topic: From Off-grade produce to Packaged Goods: Crafting Value from Food Surplus

Poni is a seasoned entrepreneur & founder with extensive experience in entrepreneurship and business development. She is dedicated to fostering community, food, and agriculture, and thrives on exceeding performance goals through innovative strategies. With her husband and co-founder Brandon, Hawaiian Vinegar Co. specializes in crafting tropical vinegars and vinegar-based products from local farmers' off-grade produce, upcycling them into delicious culinary delights. Poni is a pioneer in Hawai'i's food truck movement, founding Street Grindz in 2010 and igniting a culinary revolution. Events like Eat the Street & Honolulu Night Market celebrate rich local cuisine, art, and culture.



TABLE 3:

Alexis Akiona

FOUNDER,
LEXBREEZY HAWAII'

Topic: The Power of Becoming Your Brand

Alexis is a leading local fashion entrepreneur and designer. She launched her line, Lexbreezy Hawai'i, at the Merrie Monarch Craft Fair in 2016 and has since made waves with her unique aloha wear. Drawing on her Hawaiian heritage, Lexbreezy Hawai'i blends classic island style with a modern sophisticated aesthetic. Lexbreezy Hawai'i is a high-demand local fashion brand, revolutionizing the perception of local Hawaiian wear. Most recently, she donated \$50,000 to Honolulu Community College to support 20 scholarships to aspiring fashion and cosmetology students. She generously opens the door for other designers to join her consortium, fostering synergism and creating a platform for them to thrive.



TABLE 4:

Colleen McAluney

DIRECTOR, PATSY T. MINK
CENTER FOR BUSINESS &
LEADERSHIP

Topic: 10 Simple Ways to Increase Revenue

Colleen is the Director of the Patsy T. Mink Center for Business & Leadership Women's Business Center. For the last 8 years she has worked closely with entrepreneurs and women leaders to support and nurture their growth. Colleen brings over 15 years of retail merchandising and management experience having worked at local retailer Reyn's wearing numerous "hats," including store manager, planner, and buyer for multiple locations across the state.

She has volunteered extensively in the nonprofit sector in event development and management. She is an entrepreneur mentor for the American Councils International Professional Fellows Program, a member of the Community Based Economic Development Advisory Council and the AWBC Centers for Excellence Task Force.



TABLE 5:

Kara Kashiwabara

HUMAN RESOURCES
SPECIALIST, ALTRES

Topic: Retaining Your Best Employees

Kara Kashiwabara has been a Human Resources Specialist at ALTRES since 2013, where she assists clients in a wide range of industries with human resources issues, including the retention and cultivation of employees. When she's not providing her professional expertise to Hawai'i employers, Kara contributes actively to our local community through her volunteer work as a member of the Young Leaders Board at the Make-A-Wish Foundation and other nonprofit organizations. Kara was also a cohort in 2018 of the Patsy T. Mink Leadership Alliance and was honored as a member of Pacific Business News' 40 Under 40 in 2021.

Breakout Session 1

Sources of Capital & How to Draw on Them

1:45 - 2:45 P.M. | PI'INAIO BALLROOM 2

Startup capital takes many forms, but determining which option is right for you and your business can be challenging. Join this session for an overview of microloans, CDFI loans, venture capital, angel investors, accelerator programs, crowdfunding, and other possibilities. We'll break them down so you can make an informed decision.



MODERATOR

Heather Warner
VICE PRESIDENT, MX

Heather Warner is a vice president at MX helping financial institutions do more with financial data to improve business and customer outcomes. Heather has more than 20 years of experience leading teams and helping financial institutions drive business growth. Prior to joining MX, she spent 20 years at Discover Financial Services in a variety of leadership positions within customer service, product management, corporate strategy, and operations. She is a strong advocate for financial wellness and empowering the next generation of women in financial services.



Susan Utsugi

GROUP SENIOR
VICE PRESIDENT &
DIVISION MANAGER,
CENTRAL PACIFIC
BANK

Susan has been with Central Pacific Bank for 23 years and has over 30 years of banking experience. Susan has worked with small businesses for most of her career and enjoys helping business owners achieve their dreams. She serves as Second Vice-Chair of the Board for Hale Kipa and Advisory Board Member for Patsy T. Mink Center for Business and Leadership.



Brittany Heyd

CO-FOUNDER,
MANA UP

Brittany Heyd is cofounder of Mana Up. Before Mana Up, Brittany was cofounder and managing director at 1776 where she grew the organization from idea to global business including a \$12.5 million venture fund, five locations, events in 75 cities across the world, and a software platform called Union. Brittany also held positions at the White House Council of Economic Advisers, Latham & Watkins, and Mark IV Capital.



Lama Chang

LOAN OFFICER
AND BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT
SPECIALIST, FEED
THE HUNGER FUND

Lama, grounded in her family motto, "I Maika'i I Ke Kalo I Ka 'Ohā" translates to the goodness of the kalo is judged by the young plant it produces. The kaona, hidden meaning loosely translates to the parents are judged by the behavior of their children. She serves as a Loan Officer and Business Development Specialist at Feed The Hunger Fund, where she facilitates access to capital for low-income, BIPOC, women, and immigrant small businesses.



Louie Rios III

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR,
LEI HO'OLAHA

Louie is a certified Native CDFI Practitioner and Executive Director at Lei Ho'olaha. With a background in small business ownership, he holds Nonprofit leadership certifications from Stanford University Graduate School of Business and Oweesta Corp. During his time at Lei Ho'olaha, over \$500,000 has been invested directly in the Native-Hawaiian community through small business and nonprofit lending. Louie is passionate about indigenous community finance and native-focused initiatives.



Paulette Jencks

FOUNDER, FUTURE
OF PARENT

Paulette Jencks is the founder of Future of Parent, where she provides marketing, strategy and advisory services to start-ups focused in the family tech sector. She played a pivotal role in building and launching Kidstir, a subscription cooking box company for kids, and then went on to lead partnerships at a parent wellness company that was later acquired by Spring Health. The majority of her current work is dedicated to creating better workplaces for working parents and caregivers.



Keoni Lee

CEO, HAWAII
INVESTMENT READY

Keoni Lee is the Chief Executive Officer of Hawai'i Investment Ready, a 501(c)3 nonprofit impact investing intermediary working at the nexus of purpose, business, and culture to restore regenerative abundance to Hawai'i's economy. Prior to joining HIR in 2019, Keoni was a successful social entrepreneur having co-founded Waiwai Collective and 'Oiwai TV where he spent over a decade producing stories in and about native communities throughout Hawai'i and around the world.



Noah Williams

ANALYST, ALPACA VC

Noah covers commerce, vertical SaaS and marketplaces. Prior to joining Alpaca VC, he managed the investment process and program at Blue Startups, a venture accelerator based in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Much of his early career was spent in and around early-stage startups, often in product and engineering roles. He graduated with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Arizona State University, where he focused on semiconductor physics and machine learning.

Breakout Session 1

Mastering the Pitch: Lessons from ABC's Shark Tank

1:45 - 2:45 P.M. | MAKIKI ROOM

Local entrepreneurs will share how they prepared to pitch their business idea to some of the country's most renowned investors as well as millions of viewers on ABC's Shark Tank. Hear firsthand accounts about their experience on the show and the lessons learned in crafting and delivering the right message to secure funding for their big idea.



MODERATOR

Kolby Moser

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, ARIA STUDIOS

Kolby Moser is a Native Hawaiian Filmmaker, Business Owner and Podcast Host. She began her career as a TV News Producer at KGMB9 News before starting ARIA Studios, in 2008. She has worked with companies such as Microsoft, Four Seasons and Hawaii Pacific Health to craft captivating stories that drive results. She was recognized as one of Pacific Business New's 40 under 40 in 2021 and Hawaii Wedding Style's "Industry Icon" in 2024. Kolby also co-hosts the podcast "Uncut Hawaii," and co-directed the feature documentary "Hometown Legends" that has been featured in film festivals around the world.



Paige Brattin

FOUNDER, SEE WORTHY

Paige Brattin is the owner of Worthy Brands, a company that makes medical products to make difficult journeys better. It began in 2018 with See Worthy, adhesive eye patches, which help treat children fighting the leading cause of childhood blindness. The success of her patented materials and adhesives lead to her second product. Port Worthy, helps those with medical/chemo ports find comfort and protection for their port site. She just launched Wound Worthy this year, which are bandages with ultra gentle adhesives for those with delicate skin. Paige was recognized as a "Woman who means business" by Pacific Business News 2022. See Worthy Patches were featured on Shark Tank this year. Paige donates a portion of proceeds to Project Vision, Hawaii, and has worked closely with them to make Hawaii only the second state in the country to provide eye patches for families who need them.



Cassidy Crowley

OWNER & INVENTOR, THE BABY TOON

Cassidy Crowley is a 15-year-old student at Punahou School. She is the owner and inventor of The Baby Toon, a fun and unique baby spoon that she developed at the age of 7. Her entrepreneurial journey led her to showcase The Baby Toon on ABC's Shark Tank. She continues to pursue her passion for creativity, innovation, and leadership by actively engaging in design projects at Vivistop Honolulu and the Haumana Foundation, a student-led initiative to ignite philanthropy. Beyond her entrepreneurial endeavors, she loves to surf, skate, and hang out with family and friends.

Breakout Session 1

Balancing Act: Insights from Mompreneurs

1:45 - 2:45 P.M. | PI'INAIO BALLROOM 1

Juggling motherhood and entrepreneurship is akin to managing two full-time roles, demanding considerable time, energy, and commitment. Statistics indicate that a significant portion of women-owned businesses—approximately 1 in 3, totaling 4 million—are spearheaded by mothers. But how do they navigate this delicate balance? Join us as local mompreneurs candidly share their experiences, offering valuable insights into the realities of blending family life with entrepreneurial endeavors. In addition, they will illuminate how they leverage their skills to drive business success. What you can expect to gain from this session: practical advice, community, connection.



MODERATOR

Dr. Dana Arakawa

ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST, THRIVE808

Dr. Dana Arakawa is an organizational psychologist who takes a research-guided approach to creating wellbeing and resilience within individuals, teams, and organizations. She has worked in a variety of industries with organizations of different sizes—from local small businesses to Federal and State government agencies—to operationalize strategic priorities and create meaningful change.

For her own wellbeing, Dana strives to return to a more consistent practice of Ashtanga yoga, swimming, travel, and meditation as she and her husband try to find their groove parenting a toddler, dog, and cat.



April Hail

FOUNDER, KEIKI KAUKAU

April is the founder of Keiki Kaukau, Hawai'i's Toy Company, which designs original toys, books, and games that celebrate the diverse cultures of our islands. Prior to launching the business out of her bedroom in 2019, April was a high school French and Math teacher at Punahou. She has a BA in Visual Studies from The University of Pennsylvania and an MA in English Teaching from Columbia University, and lived abroad in Paris and Shanghai before returning home to Honolulu. She is grateful that running her own small business has allowed for a flexible schedule and more time to raise her three children who are 7, 5, and 11 months.



Semira Nikou

CO-FOUNDER & CEO, BETTER SOUR

Semira Nikou is the co-founder and CEO of Better Sour, a new sour candy startup celebrating global, heritage rich flavors with a commitment to healthier, low-sugar ingredients. Better Sour's flavors are inspired by the tart flavors the co-founders grew up eating as the daughters of Iranian immigrants raised in Hawai'i. Since launching in retail in May 2023, Better Sour can now be found in more than 1,500 retail stores across the country.



Yasmin Dar

PRESIDENT & COO, RTK MEDIA

Yasmin Dar, a proud graduate of Aiea High School, wears many vibrant hats with flair – she's not just a full-time businesswoman, but also a mom of four and an Emmy award-winning producer. With a colorful academic background that includes a B.A. in biology and an M.A. in communications from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Yasmin now serves as the President and Chief Operating Officer of RKT Media, where she infuses local businesses and nonprofits with splashes of creativity through captivating video narratives. Beyond her career, she lends her energy to causes close to her heart, serving on the board for Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies and as a luminary on the Board of Governors for the San Francisco/Northern California Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.



Chenise Kanemoto

PRINCIPAL ATTORNEY & OWNER, ZIVA LAW

Chenise S. Kanemoto is a Commercial Leasing Attorney and founder of Ziva Law. Her practice focuses on helping small business owners negotiate better leases and navigate lease issues. A productivity nerd and systems girl, Chenise founded Ziva Law with a vision of developing a client-centered, micro-niche law practice dedicated to serving small businesses in Hawaii.

Born and raised in Honolulu, Chenise is an alum of Punahou School and the University of Washington and earned her law degree from the William S. Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She has been recognized by Best Lawyers and Honolulu Magazine's Best Lawyers in Hawaii in real estate law. Additionally, Chenise has been named as one of Pacific Business News' Forty Under 40 and Women Who Mean Business.

Breakout Session 2

Let's Talk Story & Connect: Roundtable Discussions

3:00 - 4:00 P.M. | PALOLO ROOM

Join us for an engaging session that breaks away from the traditional lecture format. Our roundtable discussions session will provide a platform for meaningful connections and insights. Each roundtable will feature a different topic allowing attendees to engage in unique, interesting, and thought-provoking conversations with fellow attendees. Whether you are a seasoned business owner or just starting out, we all have something to learn from each other. Topics vary. Seating is open, first-come, first-serve.



TABLE 1:
April Hail

FOUNDER, KEIKI KAUKAU

Topic: Leveraging our talents and resources to benefit the keiki of Hawai'i

April is the founder of Keiki Kaukau, Hawai'i's Toy Company, which designs original toys, books, and games that celebrate the diverse cultures of our islands. Prior to launching the business out of her bedroom in 2019, April was a high school French and Math teacher at Punahou. She has a BA in Visual Studies from The University of Pennsylvania and an MA in English Teaching from Columbia University, and lived abroad in Paris and Shanghai before returning home to Honolulu. She is grateful that running her own small business has allowed for a flexible schedule and more time to raise her three children who are 7, 5, and 11 months.



TABLE 2:
Semira Nikou
CO-FOUNDER & CEO,
BETTER SOUR

Topic: Taking the leap to change careers

Semira Nikou is the co-founder and CEO of Better Sour, a new sour candy startup celebrating global, heritage rich flavors with a commitment to healthier, low-sugar ingredients. Better Sour's flavors are inspired by the tart flavors the co-founders grew up eating as the daughters of Iranian immigrants raised in Hawai'i. Since launching in retail in May 2023, Better Sour can now be found in more than 1,500 retail stores across the country.



TABLE 3:
Cynthia Yamasaki
O'AHU CENTER DIRECTOR,
HAWAII SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT CENTER
(HISBDC)

Topic: Creating a business plan

Cynthia Yamasaki has four decades of business and leadership experience, working in a variety of senior management roles for global corporations, Hawai'i companies, non-profit organizations, and as a small business owner. Her multi-faceted background, extensive training, and local values provide her with an unparalleled perspective on leadership, entrepreneurship, and business success.

Cynthia was a Better Business Bureau Hawaii Torch Awards for Ethics Nominee in 2017 and was named the Women in Business Champion by the U.S. Small Business Administration in 2014. She holds a master's degree in business administration and a bachelor's degree in business administration specializing in finance.



TABLE 4:
Darien Siguenza
PROGRAM DIRECTOR,
HAWAII FOUNDHER

Topic: The power of being the only woman in the room

Darien Siguenza is a business development professional with a deep passion for supporting ventures founded by women and people of color. She currently leads the Hawai'i FoundHer program, which focuses on uplifting wāhine entrepreneurs who are grounded in Hawai'i. Additionally, she has supported over 100 startup companies while working at LA Cleantech Incubator (LACI), and Elemental Excelsior. Darien earned her MA in Global Leadership and Sustainable Development at Hawai'i Pacific University. She is originally from Los Angeles.



TABLE 5:
Shaolin Low
PRINCIPAL, STUDIO SHAOLIN

Topic: Manifesting the Career of Your Dreams

Shaolin is a multi-hyphenate type of gal, doing all the things, all at once. She's running a full-service Interior Design Firm, Studio Shaolin. While also managing a boutique home decor and gift store, WOVEN by Shaolin. You can also catch her weekly podcast episodes on Begin with Shaolin, featuring a wide-variety of guests who share their stories and life lessons. Last but not least, you can catch her working with her family on her Magnolia Network show, Home in Hawaii. She's also a twin mom, homeowner and married to a craftsman who's always working on something.

Breakout Session 2

Sources of Capital Part Two: Deep Dives via Roundtable Discussions

3:00 - 4:00 P.M. | PI'INAIO BALLROOM 2

Building upon the Sources of Capital overview session, this Part Two installment offers attendees a deeper dive into the diverse landscape of startup funding. Join us for intimate roundtable discussions, where you'll have an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the specific financing options. Each table will feature a funding option expert.



TABLE 1:

Susan Utsugi

GROUP SENIOR VICE
PRESIDENT AND
DIVISION MANAGER,
CENTRAL PACIFIC BANK



TABLE 2:

Austin Anderson

FINANCE ASSOCIATE,
MANA UP CAPITAL



TABLE 3:

David Holt

PROGRAM MANAGER,
BLUE STARTUPS



TABLE 4:

Paulette Jencks

FOUNDER,
FUTURE OF PARENT



TABLE 5:

Lama Chang

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
SPECIALIST &
LENDING OFFICER,
FEED THE HUNGER FUND



TABLE 6:

Louie Rios III

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
LEI HO'OLAHA



TABLE 7:

Sherrie Totoki

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
ELEMENTAL EXCELEATOR



TABLE 8:

Keoni Lee

CEO, HAWAII INVESTMENT
READY



TABLE 9:

Noah Williams

ANALYST, ALPACA VC

Breakout Session 2

Grit: The Essential Ingredient to Entrepreneurial Success

3:00 - 4:00 | MAKIKI ROOM

Entrepreneurship is often romanticized as a thrilling adventure, fueled by passion and innovation. However, the reality is far from glamorous. Building a business is a rollercoaster ride with exhilarating highs and daunting lows. It is during these moments that unwavering grit emerges as the essential ingredient for success. This panel of inspiring female founders will peel back the layers of their entrepreneurial journey, sharing candid insights and revealing the unfiltered truths of forging their own path.



MODERATOR

Mary Fastenau

SENIOR PARTNER, ANTHOLOGY FINN PARTNERS

Mary knows time flies when she realizes she has spent 30+ years in the Hawai'i marketing, advertising, and digital world, but she loves every day and challenge. Her teammates and clients make sure she is always learning and growing. She has taken big chances and dares to keep dreaming as she works with some of the state's largest companies to help them navigate the ever-changing media and marketing landscapes. She has been recognized with a Silver Medal for Lifetime Achievement by the Hawai'i Chapter of the American Advertising Federation, inducted into Shidler College of Business Hall of Honor, and received the American Marketing Association Hawai'i Chapter's Lifetime Achievement Award.



Jan Hori

CO-FOUNDER & OWNER,
HAWAIIAN PIE COMPANY

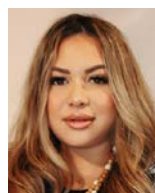
Jan Hori is the Co-founder and Co-Owner of the Hawaiian Pie Company, a family-run bakery that specializes in artisan fruit pies and baked goods. She is a James Beard Foundation Woman's Entrepreneurial Leadership Fellow. Prior, Hori had a successful career in event management, promotions, and marketing. She also worked for the National Football League in the local sponsorship and on-location divisions for the Pro Bowl. She spent several years as the Marketing & Promotions Director at the Honolulu Star-Bulletin & Midweek. In 2008, she founded and managed Isle Concierge, a lifestyle management and concierge company for individuals, corporate buildings, and properties. When she's not making pies, you can find her at home playing with her one-year-old grandbabies.



Mahina Paishon Duarte

CO-FOUNDER & CEO,
WAIWAI COLLECTIVE

Mahina is co-founder and CEO of Waiwai Collective, a regenerative urban oasis, a kipuka, for weaving community, culture, and commerce. As a social entrepreneur who has also led several educational and cultural organizations, her vision and mission are one and the same—to catalyze positive, lasting change for Hawai'i in one generation. Most notably, Mahina is the founding executive director of Paepae o He'eia, the first modern Hawaiian fishpond that created ground-breaking 'āina-based education programming for students from preschool through post-doctoral levels. She gained public sector experience as a policy program manager with NOAA's Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, advancing the integration of both indigenous and western scientific methodologies.



Alexis Akiona

FOUNDER, LEXBREEZY HAWAII

Alexis is a leading local fashion entrepreneur and designer. She launched her line, Lexbreezy Hawai'i, at the Merrie Monarch Craft Fair in 2016 and has since made waves with her unique aloha wear. Drawing on her Hawaiian heritage, LexbreezyHawai'i blends classic island style with a modern sophisticated aesthetic. Lexbreezy Hawai'i is a high-demand local fashion brand, revolutionizing the perception of local Hawaiian wear. Most recently, she donated \$50,000 to Honolulu Community College to support 20 scholarships to aspiring fashion and cosmetology students. She generously opens the door for other designers to join her consortium, fostering synergism and creating a platform for them to thrive.



Rose Wong

FOUNDER, KOLOHE JEWELRY

Rose Wong is the founder of Kolohe, Hawai'i's original Custom Jewelry Bar experience. She founded her business in 2014 at 16 years old and at 21 years old, became the youngest store owner in Waikiki opening her first store at the 'Alohilani Resort. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, she expanded with a second location at Waikiki Beach Walk. Kolohe now has 15 employees and an office in Downtown Honolulu. After receiving a high demand for wedding rings and fine jewelry, Rose is about to open her third location, a Rose Wong Fine Jewelry Showroom. Rose has received various awards for her entrepreneurial success and has been featured in prestigious magazines such as, Hawaii Business Magazine, Pacific Business News, and Ka Wai Ola Magazine.

Breakout Session 2

Empowering the Makers: How to Grow Your Food & Beverage Business

3:00 - 4:00 P.M. | PI'INAIO BALLROOM 1

Learn more about the companies and programs that support Hawaii's food entrepreneurs, producers, processors, and farmers. These companies and programs offer the support and tools to help you streamline and scale up. Plus, hear firsthand experience from a local wahine entrepreneur.



MODERATOR

Meli James
CO-FOUNDER, MANA UP

Meli James is the co-founder of Mana Up, a Hawai'i-based business accelerator program, venture fund and retail initiative designed to diversify the local economy and build the state's next generation of consumer brands. She is also the president of the Hawaii Venture Capital Association. Born and raised in Honolulu, Meli lived in Silicon Valley for more than 10 years where she co-founded numerous startups. Meli has been recognized by Entrepreneur Magazine as one of five Women to Watch and as one of eight Women Leaders Who Are Disrupting Entrepreneurship. She serves on the board of UHA Health Insurance, board of regents for Chaminade University and is a 2020 Omidyar Fellow. Meli is a graduate of Cornell University Nolan School of Hotel Administration.



Naomi Bluesummers
OPERATIONS COORDINATOR,
WAHIAWĀ VALUE-ADDED
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
CENTER

Naomi Bluesummers is the Operations Coordinator of the Wahiawā Value-Added Product Development Center. Naomi's past experience includes managing the sensory program for a major grocery retailer's private label, coordinating consumer studies to validate new products prior to market launch. Most recently she oversaw quality assurance for Hāmākua Macadamia Nut Company, an agricultural processor and value-added product manufacturer. Naomi is a graduate of UH-Mānoa with a B.S. in Food Science.



Joe DiCondina
FOUNDER,
HANA KITCHENS HAWAII

As the founder and proprietor of Hana Kitchens, Joe brings a blend of culinary expertise and business acumen to empower food entrepreneurs. Hana Kitchens is a culinary incubator with fully certified commercial kitchen facilities. With a fervent dedication to fostering culinary innovation and automation, Joe provides a dynamic space where aspiring chefs and food artisans can thrive. Hana Kitchens' commitment to supporting local businesses is evident in the collaborative environment they cultivate, facilitating growth and success within their vibrant food community.



T. Karen Hanada
DIRECTOR OF EXTENDED
LEARNING AND WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT, UH MAUI
COLLEGE - MAUI FOOD
INNOVATION CENTER

Karen serves as Director of Extended Learning and Workforce Development at UH Maui College. She oversees the Maui Food Innovation Center and is Co-Principal Investigator for the MBDA Pa'Oihana Grant serving women and minorities. She has worked at the Pacific Biosciences Research Center, Kapi'olani CC's Office of Continuing Education, and in a variety of staff and administrative positions at UH Maui College. As part of her graduate studies, she has written on globalization, innovation in higher ed, and multicultural perspectives.



Jennifer Luck
CEO, COMMON GROUND

Committed to driving lasting community impact, Jennifer Luck brings more than 20 years of operations experience in budget oversight and operations management, including multi-million-dollar capital projects, multi-stakeholder negotiations, fundraising and land management to Common Ground. She previously served as Chief Operating Officer from 2021-2023. She sits on the boards of the Kaua'i Land Trust, Nāmāhāna Charter School and Kipuka Kuleana and holds a master's in business administration from the University of Southern California.



Talia Bongolan-Schwartz
OWNER, TALI'S BAGELS

Talia was born and raised in New York before she moved to Oahu for graduate school. Trained in psychology and self-taught in business, Talia is the co-owner of Tali's Bagels & Schmear with her wife, Kelly. The pair make Jewish comfort food and specialize in hand-rolled bagels and locally inspired spreads. Tali's is opening their second brick & mortar location this month.

Closing General Session

Keynote Address

4:15 - 5:00 P.M. | PI'INAIO BALLROOMS 1-2

Born and raised in Honolulu, Robynne Maii is the chef and owner of award-winning restaurant Fête in Honolulu's Chinatown. A proud alumna of Punahou and 'Iolani School, Robynne pursued modern dance and English at Middlebury College before obtaining culinary and pastry arts degrees at Kapi'olani Community College. She began her culinary adventure at Kaimuki's 3660 on the Rise, cooking under Chef Russell Siu and Padovani's Bistro and Wine Bar, in Waikiki where she transitioned to full-time pastry cook under Chef Pierre Padovani before leaving to New York for graduate school. After earning her master's degree in food studies from New York University, Chef Robynne went on to work at Union Pacific and the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. Robynne has also worked for Gourmet Magazine, Kitchen Arts & Letters Bookstore and played an integral role in developing and teaching the culinary program at The Art Institute of New York City and CUNY's Kingsborough Community College. She was named the 2022 James Beard Award Foundation Best Chef



KEYNOTE

Chef Robynne Maii

CHEF & OWNER, FÊTE

for the Northwest and Pacific Region on her first nomination. Robynne is the first Hawai'i-born recipient to win this award in 19 years and is the first Native Hawaiian woman to win a James Beard Foundation award.

Pau Hana & Pop-up Market

5:15 - 7:00 P.M. | MULIWAI DECK (5TH FLOOR)



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