



Kika Bukoski '83

Hermina Morita '72

J. Kalani English '84

# Representing

*"The survival of the Hawaiian identity, our natural resources and culture makes it necessary for Hawaiians to become involved in the political process and become a political force."*

— REP. HERMINA MORITA '72

*Serving as role models for all Hawaiians, eight Kamehameha Schools graduates are members of the 2003 Hawai'i state Legislature*

**A**lthough they may be generations apart in age, adhere to different political ideologies and even be members of rival political parties, there is one common bond between eight members of the 2003 Hawai'i state Legislature.

Their roots are colored in blue and white.

Along with Sen. **J. Kalani English '84**, seven members of the 51-person House of Representatives are graduates of the Kamehameha Schools. The alumni roll call includes Reps. **Kika Bukoski '83**, **Sol Kahooalahala '69**, **Ezra Kanofo '45**, **Bertha Kawakami '49**, **Hermina Morita '72**, **Guy Ontai '74** and **Tommy Waters '83**.

"I'm glad that people are finally recognizing the growing number of legislators from Kamehameha," Morita said. Along with political veterans Kanofo and Kawakami, Morita gives Kaua'i a clean sweep of House representation by KS graduates.

Morita said it's vital that Hawaiians as a people participate in the political process. "The survival of the Hawaiian identity, our natural resources and culture makes it necessary for Hawaiians to become involved in the political process and become a political force," she said.

"Until Hawaiians put their collective voting power together, much like unions and other advocacy groups, we will continue to be on the fringe. We must vote and cultivate leadership and cooperation within our organizations and communities."

Bukoski agrees. "It is absolutely essential for every Hawaiian to become involved in government and in the voting process," he said. "Hawaiians will continue to struggle for self-determination until we realize that in order to make positive change we must participate in the process and not hinder it.

"Unless the Hawaiians would like to see themselves get passed over once again, they need to ensure that their voices are heard – and in a constructive and proactive manner, not in a destructive and negative way."

Both Morita and Bukoski said protection of Hawaiian entitlements is the most pressing issue facing the Hawaiian people today.

"The U.S. Supreme Court decision in Rice vs. Cayetano has



Sol Kahoohalahala '69

Ezra Kanoho '45

Bertha Kawakami '49

Guy Ontai '74

Tommy Waters '83

# the People

made the need for federal recognition the priority of all Hawaiian issues to preserve Hawaiian entitlements," Morita said.

"The most important issue facing Hawaiians today is the preservation and protection of our inherent rights as the native people of these islands," Bukoski said. "In order to do that, Hawaiians must come together as one people. There must be a unified voice calling on government to recognize the rights of Hawaiians. As Hawaiian leaders, we need to advance this call for recognition and justice."

As community leaders, all of these Hawaiian legislators recognize their role model status, especially for the Kamehameha Schools students of today hoping to emulate their path.

"It's so interesting to note the number of legislators who participated in student government when they were teens," Morita said. "One way I meet students is when they become involved with issues. I worked with a class from Kualapu'u School on Moloka'i. Students researched solid waste programs and concluded the state needed a bottle deposit or redemption program."

"The students provided me with information, came to testify and helped pass Act 176, the 'bottle bill' which is now law. Students learn the legislative process by becoming active participants in the process. I can't emphasize enough the importance of civics courses and the need for more education on representative democracy."

"My advice to anyone aspiring to someday run for public office is to continue to educate your mind and your soul," Bukoski said. "Understand the history of America and Hawai'i, keep an open and objective mind and be willing to accept new ideas and philosophies."

Freshman legislator Waters has not forgotten his Kamehameha beginnings. "I encourage all members of the Kamehameha 'ohana who are interested in politics to please stop by or give me a call. And be sure to let the Kamehameha teachers know that if they ever want me to come up and speak with the kids, I'd be very happy to do that."

Bukoski, now in his second term, was reflective on his past as well. "I didn't have much faith in our government, so I decided to become involved and seek the changes I felt were necessary from the inside out," he said. "I'm looking forward to making Bernice Pauahi Bishop proud."

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<p>Sen. <b>J. Kalani English '84</b> Democrat – 6th District E. Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i Chair, Energy and Environment</p>	<p>Rep. <b>Bertha Kawakami '49</b> Democrat – 16th District Po'ipū, Waimea, Ni'ihau Majority Whip; Vice-Chair, Finance</p>
<p>Rep. <b>Kika Bukoski '83</b> Republican – 12th District Upcountry Maui Minority Whip</p>	<p>Rep. <b>Hermina Morita '72</b> Democrat – 14th District Kapa'a, Hanalei Chair, Energy and Environmental Protection</p>
<p>Rep. <b>Sol Kahoohalahala '69</b> Democrat – 13th District E. Maui, Lāna'i, Moloka'i Vice-Chair, Water, Land Use and Hawaiian Affairs</p>	<p>Rep. <b>Guy Ontai '74</b> Republican – 37th District Mililani, Waipi'o Minority Whip</p>
<p>Rep. <b>Ezra Kanoho '45</b> Democrat – 15th District Līhu'e, Kōloa Chair, Water, Land Use and Hawaiian Affairs</p>	<p>Rep. <b>Tommy Waters '83</b> Democrat – 51st District Waimānalo, Lanikai Vice-Chair, Energy and Environmental Protection</p>

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