



## REPRESENTATIVE MARK M. NAKASHIMA

Hawaii State Capitol, Room 406  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



**Happy New Year!**

### **Neal Honda, Legislative Aide:**

Neal was enjoying life as a recent retiree from the Department of Education, after thirty years of service. For Neal, life is a journey that brought him back to the State Capital where he was a Legislative Aide some thirty years ago. He loves a good challenge and looks forward to a great session. His passion is in education and sports which has carried him through his career. He has coached and guided students in wrestling, volleyball, softball, soccer, basketball and track.

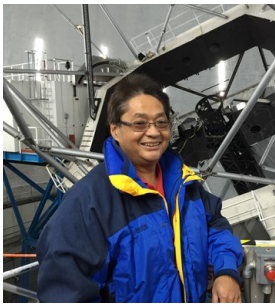
### **Elton Fukumoto, Committee Clerk:**

Elton taught legal research and writing at the Syracuse University College of Law. Before that he taught English at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Elton received a Ph.D. in English from UCLA and a J.D. from the University of Washington, School of Law. Between teaching at the UH and Syracuse, Elton worked for the late Senator Richard Matsuura of Hilo in the 1993 to 1995 sessions. Elton has Big Island roots as his father, Tadashi, was born and raised in Pa'auhau and went to Honoka'a High School.



**2016 Session Staff** Top L to R : Neal, Elton, Ronie  
Bottom L to R: Lori , Rep. Mark

**Ronie Agustin, Legislative Intern** -University of Hawaii West Oahu: Ronie is working on his undergraduate degree in mathematics. As a recent graduate of Damien Memorial High School his technological background is an additional benefit that will complement our team. Ronie comes to us with youth and passion and is excited to participate in the legislative process.



Hau'oli Makahiki Hou! May your New Year be filled with much opportunity!

In the coming year, I plan to build upon the foundations from the previous years. As chair of the House Labor and Public Employment Committee, my goal has always been to continuously improve the function and accountability of government.

At the Keck Observatory

I will continue to work on fixing our broken Workers Compensation Program. Workers comp is supposed to provide protection for both employers and employees who were injured on the job. However, the system has been plagued by delays, on-going litigation between injured employees and insurance companies, and a general unwillingness by the medical profession to deal with these problems. This has resulted in an annual battle between both sides over the selection of Independent Medical Examination (IME) doctors. These IME's are anything but independent, and from my perspective, really is just a symptom of the larger problem in the workers compensation system.

A study commissioned by the legislature found that procedural inefficiency could result in a wait of up to two months after an injury to see a doctor. This is unacceptable. The Department of Labor is already taking steps to fix this, and in the coming legislative session we will be looking at changes to the workers compensation law to further streamline the process to avoid unnecessary delays.

I will also be proposing the creation of a Lean Office which has been successful in New York State. New York has developed a cadre of state employees who have been training in this method of looking at systems and identifying small changes that can result in greater efficiencies. I hope that by creating this opportunity we will be able to address a number of other state processes that seem to take much longer than necessary.

Another issue that I will continue to work on is the development of a training process for new employees. Too often state employees are hired and then left on their own with inadequate mentoring and performance measurement.

It is the responsibility of the employer, in both public and private sectors, to ensure that employees are not only qualified for their positions, but that they also received the proper instruction and training to be successful at their jobs. In the coming legislative session, we will be looking at creating a training period for employees so that they can have the benefit of working with experienced

employees and not just be left on their own to figure it out.

Last year, the federal government reauthorized the Workforce Development Act creating the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This groundbreaking legislation changes how different state departments interact with each other and "forces" them to work together and demonstrate continued improvement. Training will no longer be focused on entry level abilities only, but will also include teaching skills necessary to compete for higher paying jobs.

In preparation for this I convened the Workforce Development Working Group which brings together officials from the Department of Labor, Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Department of Business and Economic Development, and the University of Hawaii to discuss how the State of Hawaii would be coordinating its efforts to meet the goals of the WIOA. The initial state plan is due to the U.S. Department of Labor this coming March 2016. A meeting of the working group as well as additional stakeholders was held last month to provide an update to Governor Ige regarding the state's progress with the plan.



Rep. Nakashima with Deputy Secretary of Labor Chris Loo and staff on his recent trip to Washington DC

I would like to again extend my gratitude for the opportunity to serve as your district representative. I will continue to work towards addressing the needs of our community and making Hawaii a better place to live. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call my office at (808) 586-6680 or toll free 974-4000, ext 6-6680 or you can send me an email at [repnakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:repnakashima@capitol.hawaii.gov)

*Mark Nakashima*