

Message from EWC President and Board of Governors Chairman

For the East-West Center, 2009 was especially notable for the preparations that began for the Center's 50th anniversary the following year, and for the selection of Hawai'i as the primary venue for the U.S. year of hosting the 2011 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the Asia Pacific's region's premier institution for multilateral cooperation.

As the Center prepared to mark the important milestone of its 50th year, it recommitted itself to its core values of collaboration, expertise, and leadership. These values, and the ideals behind them that gave birth to the Center half a century ago, are needed more than ever in the globalized 21st century world, and we intend to continue setting the pace.

Each year, the East-West Center creates new business. In fact, a very significant portion of the Center's current activities didn't even exist a decade ago. These activities include, for example, programs in Washington, D.C. such as the annual Asia policy meetings under the auspices of the U.S. Asia Pacific Council, frequent topical seminars, and the Asia Matters for America project, which provides data and graphic analysis of how Asia and the United States interact economically and at the grassroots level.

Other recent East-West Center programs include the Asia Pacific Leadership Program, the Senior Journalists Seminar focusing on exchange between Asian Muslim and American journalists, the International Media Conference, the International Graduate Student Conference, the Changing Faces exchange for women leaders, the Asian International Justice Initiative, and a variety of programs in support of the ASEAN organization. Proven traditional programs, such as the Jefferson Fellowships, the Summer Population Seminars, and the AsiaPacificEd for K-12 teachers and schools have been transformed or reformatted to address new concerns and meet changing needs.

This year's annual report features two examples of new business begun in 2009 — election monitoring and an environmental leadership program. The monitoring of democratic elections in the Pacific has grown out of the longstanding relationships built with the Pacific island nations through the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders and the Pacific Islands Development Program.

In 2009, under the auspices of the Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership, the EWC established an election observation mission for federal and state elections in the Federated States of Micronesia, and in 2010, it will be monitoring elections in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. What is distinctive about the Center's election monitoring teams is that they are particularly diverse, composed of other islanders as well as Americans and Asians. Most of the observers are drawn from the Center's extended family of alumni, friends, and professional colleagues.

The Asia Pacific Leadership Program staff organized an environmental leadership program for the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, drawing upon the Center's partnerships, networks and long experience in leadership development and environment issues. Developed largely for undergraduate students from Asia and the Pacific islands, the program provided a rich introduction in how U.S. society grapples at the national and local level with the complex issues related to environmental stewardship.



EWC President
Charles E. Morrison



EWC Board of Governors Chairman
Puongpun Sananikone

Major funding for both programs came from competed contracts through the U.S. Department of State, but neither would have been possible without the continuing investments in expertise made to the East-West Center through the general appropriated funding from Congress. These investments continue to bear fruit in a wide variety of activities that bring together Americans and their counterparts from the Asia and Pacific region in cooperative and meaningful study, research, exchange, and dialogue settings. Virtually all these activities are conducted through partnership arrangements that pool expertise, earn goodwill and defray costs. In FY2009, the Center recorded almost 4,000 participants in several hundred activities, its most active year ever.

Helping to open the Center's 50th year in January 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton remarked in her policy speech at the Center on the dramatic developments in the Asia Pacific. Secretary Clinton noted that "the East-West Center has been part of this sea change, helping to shape ideas and train experts."

Under-Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Judith McHale recently said the Center "embodies the President's vision of how in this new era we must interact with people from other countries, on the basis of respect and dialogue, seeking to listen and understand before we speak and would be understood. The rest of us have finally caught up to you, 50 years later."