

Puongpun and Thanh-Lo Sananikone

The Power of Two

Puongpun Sananikone
Laos
1964, B.A.

Thanh-Lo LeKhac Sananikone
Vietnam
1964, B.A.

In July 2008 Puongpun Sananikone became the first EWC alumnus to be elected chairman of the EWC Board of Governors (and was re-elected in 2009). It's just the latest in a long list of achievements for Puongpun and his wife, Thanh-Lo, who met as

grantees at the Center in 1964.

While their work has taken them all over the world, the Sananikones' hearts have remained in Hawai'i and at the EWC, where they met one fall day soon after arriving from Southeast Asia. Thanh-Lo LeKhac had come from Hue, Vietnam, to pursue a degree in microbiology and chemistry; Puongpun Sananikone, from Vientiane, Laos, to seek a degree in economics.

Fluent in six languages, Puongpun has worked on every continent in a range of high-profile positions as an international development economist. Since 1987, he has headed his own Honolulu-based consulting firm, PacMar, Inc., which provides economic and technical advisory services throughout the Asia Pacific region.

While Puongpun jets regularly to China, ASEAN countries and Pacific Island nations on PacMar business, Thanh-Lo is busy as a business and management consultant in the public and private sectors in Hawai'i, Asia and the Pacific. She's also Hawai'i's unofficial ambassador to Vietnam, promoting sister city relations,

organizing and leading trade, medical, educational and humanitarian missions. Locally she can't say no to non-profit organizations, especially those dedicated to helping immigrants and minorities.

Both Sananikones have been saluted with various awards for their public service. Thanh-Lo was named 2003 Minority Small Business Advocate of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Puongpun received the 2003 University of Hawai'i Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award. In 2005, he was named to the EWC Board of Governors, becoming the first EWC alumnus to serve on the board.

Since their return to Hawai'i from New York in 1984, they've been ardent supporters of the EWC Foundation, the EWC Alumni Association and the Friends of the East-West Center. They mentor students in the EWC's Asia Pacific Leadership Program. And graciously welcome students and EWC visitors into their home for Thanh-Lo's curry dinners.

"In many ways, my East-West Center experience prepared me well for the diverse multi-national work and cross-cultural challenges I have had to deal with all over the world," says Puongpun. "The East-West Center equipped us with the ability to look at things from the other person's perspective, across ethnicity, across cultural divides. The Center, as envisioned by its founders, was about creating human agents of change, making long-term change for a better world, by promoting mutual understanding.

"Today, given the unstable state of the world," he adds, "the East-West Center is more relevant than ever." ♦



Hao Ping

In China and Abroad, Bridging East and West

Hao Ping
China
1993, Intern

In 1998, Hao Ping coordinated President Bill Clinton's visit to Peking University. He made such an impression on the U.S. president that five years later, when Clinton returned to China, he recognized Hao and said, "You're Hao Ping, aren't you? You were at Bei Da." (Peking University is known colloquially in China as Bei Da.)

None of this is surprising to those who've known Hao since his East-West Center days. As a graduate student in the early '90s, he naturally put strangers at ease with a smile that could warm the chilliest room. He was so popular with fellow students at Hale Mānoa, they tapped him as floor leader.

At the Center, he learned about the American higher education system and how to raise funds to support programs and research. "In China much of academic study is lectures," he said. "Here at the East-West Center, they let you do your own research work and methodology."

The Center was initiating the Asian Studies Development Program, enabling American college faculty to expand their knowledge of Asia. The personable Hao provided the director of the EWC Education Program valuable contacts throughout China and offered creative ideas on how to develop the program in which American educators learn about China.

After returning to China in the mid-'90s, Hao was regularly tasked with overseeing state visits of foreign dignitaries, leaders such as Russian President Putin and Egypt's President Mubarek.

Hao was vice president at Peking University, often referred to as the Harvard of China, when he was named president of Beijing Foreign Studies University in 2005. China's most prestigious school for language studies offers 43 foreign languages and boasts some 1,500 graduates in China's foreign ministry. In 2007, more than 8,500 Chinese students were enrolled at the university and more than 2,300 international students from 67 countries were studying Chinese.

He traveled widely, forging cross-cultural partnerships between his university and educational institutions in Europe, the U.S. and Asia. In spring 2009, Hao Ping assumed new duties in the Ministry of Education as vice minister in charge of International Education — recognition of his commitment to cross-cultural learning, enriched by his East-West Center experience. ♦

"I think the East-West Center is such a good place for young people to train, pursue their thinking, and, with innovation and hard work, experience American philosophy and psychology."



Nasti Reksodiputro

Spreading the Joy of Reading in Indonesia

Nasti Reksodiputro
Indonesia
1962, TESL

When she retired from the University of Indonesia at age 55, Nasti Bachtiar Reksodiputro

was ready for something new and thought, “Wouldn’t it be nice if children could read as much as I did as a child?”

Reksodiputro’s mother, father and grandfather all were teachers, and she grew up in a home filled with books. An EWC grantee in the pioneer class of 1962, she returned to Indonesia in 1964 with a degree in Teaching English as a Second Language. During her years at the Center, she experienced the sharing, support and cooperation among grantees and decided to utilize those elements to create a library on wheels for children. She enlisted a sister-in-law with administrative skills and a friend who was an English teacher. The three women recruited another volunteer knowledgeable in children’s literature to join them in assembling a collection of Indonesian and English books.



They worked on the assumption that “doors will open.” And they did. The head librarian at the British Consulate offered books from their junior section. And Yayasan Pustaka Kelana (the Wandering Books Foundation) was created with the help of Nasti’s lawyer husband. Family and friends pitched in. A van was donated as a mobile library. Parking for that first van was in Reksodiputro’s garage; when a driver was needed, she drove.

A second van was donated, and then a third. With increasing support, the library continues to expand and branch out.

Yayasan Pustaka Kelana offers four programs:

- The Mobile Library.
- The Book Box Lending program, which lends boxes of books to more than 30 schools in Jakarta monthly.
- The Book Bag program, which lends books to street vendors who make them available to children in their community on a monthly basis.
- A small community library in a lower middle class community.

Workshops encourage the writing of children’s books, improving the quality of the writing and increasing the number of Indonesian language books. Out of these workshops, books in Indonesian and English have been written and published.

Today the program truly “wanders” throughout the country in a variety of ways. Reksodiputro has no idea how many children and youths have been able to read books since the foundation got started in 1995, but you can be sure the numbers are vast. ♦



“My East-West Center years have definitely had a strong influence on what I became and have done since then. It has made me pay more attention to matters outside the teaching of English and has made me feel comfortable communicating internationally.”

Victor Yano

Revolutionizing Health Care in the Pacific

Victor Yano
Belau
1971, B.S.

You might say Victor Yano was destined from birth for a career in medicine. His mother named him after one of the first Belauan

physicians, who attended Yano's mother in the delivery room.

"He was a role model at an early age," says Yano, who through an EWC scholarship came to the University of Hawai'i in the early '70s from Belau. Upon receiving a bachelor of science degree in 1974, he attended the John A. Burns School of Medicine in Hawai'i, graduating in 1978.

After completing post-graduate residency, Yano returned to Koror to practice medicine at the lone hospital in Belau, in a government-run health care system that relied on dispensaries to provide the bulk of medical care. In Belau, ailing patients first went to a dispensary; if additional treatment was needed, they were referred to the hospital.

Shortly after his return, Yano found himself tending a critically injured visitor. Her husband had been killed in a boating accident and the woman's condition was deteriorating. There was no specialist to turn to for a second opinion. Yano got on the phone to Queen's Medical Center in Honolulu, consulted with a neurosurgeon who advised a surgical procedure that Yano assisted in — and saved the woman's life. She was eventually medivaced to the United States, where she recovered.

"Through the East-West Center, we begin to appreciate the diversity of the world and validate the real need to strengthen local cultural practices — dances, chants, folklore, sports, literature, language. That is how we stand out as individuals among equally important peoples of the world."



A few months later, the grateful family sent a donation to Koror that was used to purchase neurosurgical equipment for the local hospital. That was the beginning of Yano's career-long commitment to revolutionize and dramatically improve health care in Belau.

On Thanksgiving Day in 1981, the Belau Medical Clinic opened its doors, operating on private funds, including \$200,000 raised by the Belau community. With leadership skills and vision, the determined young doctor continued his efforts to raise the level of medical care in the Pacific. Soon patients were coming from neighboring Pacific Island countries to be treated by Yano, as word spread of his skill and compassion.

In 1995, Yano was the motivating force behind the establishment of the Pacific Basin Medical Association, which provides professional development and support to medical practitioners throughout the region. Ten years later, the president of Belau appointed Yano to head the nation's Ministry of Health, where he continued efforts to enhance patient care, fiscal accountability and community participation. Recently, the doctor raised more than \$40,000 to assist the hemodialysis center at Belau National Hospital.

In April 2010, Yano won easy confirmation as Minister of State, a reflection of the esteem with which he's held in the island nation. Over three decades, he's also mentored every local physician now practicing in Belau. One of them, Dr. Stevenson J. Kuartei, just succeeded his mentor as Belau's Minister of Health. The transformation of the archipelago's health care system, which Dr. Yano began, continues. ♦

Kathleen Hall Jamieson

Making Sense of the Media and Politics

Kathleen Hall Jamieson
United States
1985, Fellow

During the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign, a reporter interviewing Kathleen Hall

Jamieson posed a question about Hawai'i-born Barack Obama. Jamieson replied, "If you really want to understand who Barack Obama is, you have to understand the culture of inclusivity. You need to go to Hawai'i."

Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, where she is also a professor of communications, Jamieson is a leading expert on the media and politics, particularly U.S. presidential campaigns. She's written, co-authored or edited 15 books, among them, "Everything You Think You Know About Politics ... and Why You're Wrong," published in 2000 and in its 7th printing. She's also won numerous awards for teaching and for her scholarship.

Every election season, she offers analysis on the influential PBS programs "NewsHour" with Jim Lehrer and "Bill Moyers Journal." She's sought out for commentary in national publications and on National Public Radio. She continues to bring valuable insight into the 44th president to these discussions — a perspective informed and enriched by her ties to Hawai'i, which began with a six-month fellowship at the East-West Center in 1985.

Jamieson came to the Center to explore the contrast between classical Eastern and classical Western rhetoric, particularly in Chinese literature. "Specifically in the advice given to the emperor," she explains. She was fascinated by politics in relationship to authority, an interest that continues to the present.

Jamieson returned several years later to run an EWC conference that brought together scholars from Asia and the United States. "I thought the scholars from the West had a lot to learn from the scholars from the East. An alternative tradition enables you to see things differently about your own tradition."

She was especially interested in metaphor — differences in the way East and West communicate. In Western tradition, Jamieson explains, metaphors

of force are often used to bend an audience to its will. In the East this may be more nuanced, which brings us to Barack Obama and his skills as a communicator. She sees Obama influenced by the Eastern tradition of rhetoric, the implicit rather than the explicit.

Such analysis is evidence of how Jamieson's East-West Center experience continues to inform her efforts to make sense of the media and politics and educate the electorate for the public good. ♦



"The East-West Center offered you an existing community of individuals very open to new ideas and very willing to help. It was an ideal community — truly a community."

PHOTO: ROBIN HOLLAND

Jose Turquel

Nation-Building in Timor-Leste

Jose Turquel
Timor-Leste
2002, B.A.

Jose Turquel was a standout graduate student in public policy and international relations at the East-West Center when he returned to Timor-Leste (East Timor) on vacation. That vacation changed his life, opening a door to represent his country in ways beyond his expectations.

In Dili, he participated in a panel discussion on leadership and nation-building. Impressed with his presentation, Timor-Leste President and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Jose Ramos-Horta invited Turquel to meet with him. As a result of their conversation, the newly elected president asked Turquel to join his cabinet as chief of staff.

It was an offer Turquel couldn't decline, and he agreed to take a six-month break from EWC studies toward a master's degree. He set to work reorganizing and restructuring the Office of the

Jose Turquel with former U.S. President Bill Clinton.



President of the world's newest nation. "After six months, I thought that my 'tour of duty' had come to an end," Turquel recalls, "but reality dictated differently."

Ramos-Horta then appointed his chief of staff to an even more influential position as Director of the International Relations Department and Foreign Policy Advisor to the President. Turquel organizes and coordinates external policy for the Office of the President, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defense and Security, the National Parliament, Timor-Leste embassies and diplomatic corps. He manages the official visits of the president and represents Timor-Leste at international conclaves, essentially in the role of a senior diplomat at an ambassadorial level.

He's traveled widely, attending high-level meetings of the United Nations General Assembly, Security Council, as well as the Clinton Millennial Conference. He's engaged in conversations with world leaders, from U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and former U.S. President Bill Clinton to prime ministers and foreign ministers, including U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

"The East-West Center gave me the credentials and the ticket to go global," Turquel says. "Through the East-West Center I found the true meaning of act locally and think globally. Nation-building is a process and action, and I always try to dedicate my efforts to serve the community, and forge cooperation and understanding ... to achieve mutual benefit for all of us." ♦



Albert Wendt

Master Storyteller of the Pacific

Albert Wendt
Samoa
1973, Culture Learning

From his grandmother, young Albert Wendt learned the power of storytelling. Born and raised in Apia, Samoa, he was enchanted by the myths and legends, chants and poems she told him as a child. Now in his seventh decade, Wendt is a master storyteller himself, probably the best-known writer in the Pacific.

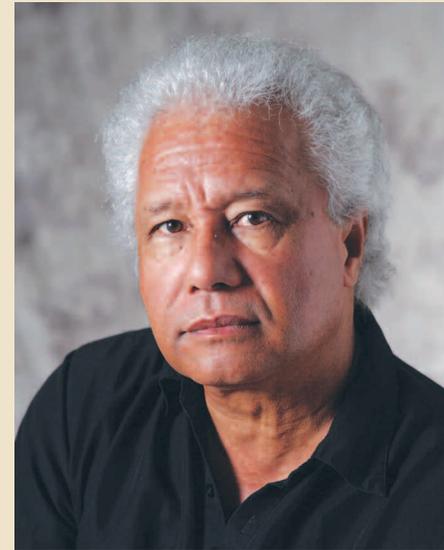
Wendt's novels, poetry, essays and plays reflect his Samoan and Pacific roots, address issues of racism, sexism, materialism and colonialism, as well as universal contradictions and experiences. From the beginning, his literature countered the romanticized images of Polynesians popularized by Western writers. In the 1970s, the publication of his novels gave voice to indigenous cultures and fostered a dynamic period in intellectual and literary life in the Pacific.

In 1980, *Leaves of the Banyan Tree*, a saga of Samoan life now considered a classic, won the prestigious Wattie Book of the Year award in New Zealand. Since then Wendt's writing has brought him numerous literary awards for capturing what's been described as "the rhythms of life and language," while tackling emerging cultural concerns.

"All of my novels are to some extent autobiographical," he said in a 1992 interview at the University of Hawai'i. Wendt has had a long association with the university, most recently in 2004 as the Citizen's Chair at the UH Mānoa Department of English. Many of those visits were sponsored by the East-West Center, where he was a magnetic presence at seminars and workshops.

Of German and Samoan ancestry, Wendt grew up in a household where two languages, Samoan and English, were spoken. His father was the sole English speaker. At 13, Albert received a government scholarship to attend school in New Zealand. By the time he entered college he was already pursuing a passion for writing. In tandem with a career as an academic and administrator at the University of the South Pacific at Fiji and Auckland University came success as a novelist.

Over the years, as teacher, writer and editor, Wendt has shaped Pacific literature and influenced generations of writers across Oceania. In an introduction to an anthology, Wendt wrote of the literature being produced by Pacific writers as "a fabulous storehouse of anthropology, sociology, art, religion, history, dance and music." As the New Zealand Book Council so aptly pointed out, "Wendt's own work has made a leading and lasting contribution." ♦



"Many of my early visits to Hawai'i and my participation in the affairs of the University of Hawai'i were sponsored and organized by EWC. I was able to meet other academics and writers from all round the Pacific and the world, and learn much from them. So, mahalo, fa'afetai lava, EWC!"

