



## Prince Resorts Hawaii

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### **MAUNA KEA RESORT LOOKS BEYOND THE MINT ON THE PILLOW** *Reinstating Mauna Kea's Tradition of Service Excellence*

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MAUNA KEA RESORT, HI – The legendary Mauna Kea Beach Hotel is on schedule to complete a \$150 million makeover in time for its December 2008 reopening, and efforts are already underway to reinstate its exceptional levels of service to AAA Five-Diamond standards.

Prince Resorts Hawaii (PRH) senior vice president/COO Paul Yokota is passionate about Mauna Kea's tradition of service. "Service of the highest caliber is an essential part of the character of Mauna Kea Beach Hotel," he said.

"Many of our former employees will be returning to Mauna Kea and long time guests will be greeted by the warmth of familiar faces," he said. "Our staff have always been motivated by a genuine interest in the well-being of our guests and by their personal pride in the resort. We are going to take this devotion to service to a new level by combining Hawaiian values of hospitality with modern day efficiencies that will further enhance the guest experience."

Yokota has enlisted the expert help of hospitality industry consultants, Texas-based FreemanGroup, to jointly develop and implement a new signature training initiative he conceived: a Hawaiian concept called "lokomaiika'i" (loh-koh-mye-kah-ee), "sharing goodness from within."

"I was inspired by the Hawaiian word and the value it represents, because it's not just about *doing things*. It's about where those things come from," Yokota stated. "I believe that our investment in our staff is more important than any other element of our resort's renovation," says Yokota. "Their willingness to share of themselves is where the personality and warmth of Mauna Kea lies."

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One way to achieve *lokomaiika'i* is based on the basic, grounded concept of sharing food, particularly the Hawaiian staple *poi*, made from the corm of the *kalo* (taro) plant, cooked and mashed with special *poi* pounders into smooth paste. *Poi* and *kalo* were so important to Hawaiian culture that legend says men and plants are actually brothers.

In this case "POI" is an acronym for *Points of Interaction*, *Points of Impression* and *Points of Impact*. Far beyond any traditional service standards, POI is based on positive thinking, genuine human interaction, finding opportunities to leave a lasting impression and encouraging employees to develop an intuition for perfect timing and making people happy.

"It's not easy at first, but by providing structure but not limitations, and encouraging people to express their personality, then everything shifts," says Yokota. "We start seeing work as sharing, and service becomes more second-nature, more engaging for our employees and guests."

Based on *lokomaiika'i* and POI, this new concept and hands-on training extends to every employee from top-level management to front-line staff.

The training program will also incorporate staff from Mauna Kea's sister hotel, the Hapuna Beach Prince Resort which is also located at the Mauna Kea Beach Resort. According to PRH training director Seng Berkoff, approximately 1,200 employees from the two hotels and resort golf courses will be put through the program. Training begins this month with Hapuna's team, and then progresses through the hiring process for Mauna Kea with eyes on the AAA Five-Diamond designation.

Founded in 1985 by Bill Freeman, the Texas-based FreemanGroup has offices in Dallas, New York, San Juan, Costa Rica, London and Dublin. The company offers a comprehensive range of service solutions and quality support to the hospitality / travel industry. FreemanGroup has worked for some of the world's finest hotels and resorts including Four Seasons and RockResorts.

The 258-room Mauna Kea Beach Hotel is currently closed for a yearlong restoration that includes rooms, restaurants, shops and other facilities. The adjoining Mauna Kea Golf Course is also closed for an extensive overhaul under the guidance of Rees Jones, son of Robert Trent Jones, Sr. who originally designed the course. It will reopen in December this year in conjunction with the hotel reopening.

The nearby Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel and Golf Course continues to welcome guests to the sunny Kohala Coast.

The Mauna Kea Beach Hotel opened in 1965. It was the brainchild of renowned hotelier Laurance S. Rockefeller who personally oversaw every detail of its perfection. Fabled for a remarkable sense of place that enhances without intruding on dramatic natural surroundings, the hotel is situated on 60-acres overlooking Kauna'oa Bay, one of the finest natural white sand beaches in Hawaii. In 2007, the American Institute of Architects recognized the hotel as one of the 150 best works of architecture nationwide.

Prince Resorts Hawaii, Inc. operates four hotels in Hawaii under the ownership of: Hawaii Prince Hotel Waikiki LLC (Hawaii Prince Hotel Waikiki and Golf Club); Makena Hotel LLC (Maui Prince Hotel, Makena Resort) and Mauna Kea Resort LLC (Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel and Mauna Kea Beach Hotel). For information on Prince Resorts Hawaii, Inc. properties, please call toll-free 1-866-PRINCE-6 or visit [www.PrinceResortsHawaii.com](http://www.PrinceResortsHawaii.com).

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