

Rotarians from our club joined others from Downtown Honolulu, Kaneohe, Metro, Hilo and Waikiki Rotary Clubs at YWCA's Fuller Hall Tuesday, 6/21, for a Lt. Governor Candidates' Forum luncheon meeting via Zoom and in person. What a great opportunity we had to gather as Ohana and jog our undecided minds with information earnestly shared by candidates Keith Amemiya, Ikaika Anderson, Sylvia Luke, Sherry Menor-McNamara, and Seaula Jr. Tupa'i.

**President Gwen Yamamoto Lau** and her team worked tirelessly to ensure our unique joint meeting would succeed, and it did...from the call to order, to Waikiki Club's **Janet Kelly's** inspiration, to Kaneohe's PE **Barry Harris'** Pledge of Allegiance, and to our own **Kent Reinker** leading us in God Bless America. Our District 5000 **Governor Sandy Matsui** welcomed the Forum Moderator **Beth-Ann Kozlovich** to the stage...congratulating her on her new V.P. role at COMPAC! First things first: Beth-Ann welcomed the Lt. Governor Candidates to the stage, where they were seated on pre-drawn chairs facing the audience. Each would have 3-minutes to answer the same randomly selected questions...also in a pre-selected random order for each new question.

Aside from defending the pros & cons of their specific elective experiences and lack there of, skill sets and collaborative efforts, and outreach successes with communities throughout the state, the Lt. Governor hopefuls were united on several fronts. The journalist in me captured a few notable comments:

Seaula Jr. Tupa'i'a: We must be vigilant, transparent and accountable. I am not a politician, I am a bridge for the people to the Governor. We need more transparency, and statewide town halls. The economy, the Jones Act, Income Tax, less government and more fresh perspectives in office are important issues. More beds, revamped system empowering community groups and better response time in mental health challenges.

Sherry Menor-McNamara: As Chamber of Commerce chair, I have a relationship with businesses and their supply chains, and I want to focus on economic and educational development. I want to bring their voices to the Governor. We need more learning opportunities that can lead to more young residents staying here...or returning to work. We must do more to bring stakeholders together to address mental health and other issues.

Sylvia Luke: Serving 24 years in state government is hard...those coming in without experience are fooling themselves. Many of the State Legislators will be returning. The Lt. Gov. needs to know the skill sets of the Legislature. I have pulled together all the stakeholders to address issues such as affordable housing and tax equity. We need to provide additional funding to the medical service providers and open more state hospital beds.

Ikaika Anderson: Serving three different City Council Chairs, as Vice Chair, I understand our job...not as QB, but as Running Back getting the ball to the QB to score. The Lt. Governor needs to be ready to step in and represent the Governor, when he/she not there. I can do that. Paralysis by analysis doesn't work...do the work, and stop talking! We must go to affected communities to create health outreach services, homeless projects and rally the right people to bring change.

Keith Anemiya: I am not a career politician, but I have led large organizations and got to work with the communities I've met via the Hawaii State Athletic Association and other groups. Political experience, they say, comes in last place...they want new people and new leaders and new hope, so I am advocating or term limits and sunshine laws, etc. We need to understand the needs of working families...their financial and housing concerns. It shouldn't have taken a pandemic to be aware of the treatment needs of those with mental health issues.

After the enlightening Forum participants accepted our applause, Downtown Rotary member **Valerie Wang** led us in reciting Rotary's 4-Way Test, and **Dan Kim** Metro PE, closed our meeting with our traditional Hawaii Aloha. The candidates took a few questions from attendees before exiting the stage.

Mahalo to all, who worked to make this a meaningful meeting!

With Aloha,

PP, DG Linda Coble, Scribe

P.S.

I appreciate Star Advertiser's 6/22 coverage of our Forum, but I am disgusted by reporter Dan Nakaso's sub-headline assessment that "audio and video glitches wreck havoc on the meeting". His focus on what turned out to be a computer glitch was a distracting slam on the candidates and Rotarians in the audience and behind the scenes.