

Speakers

KEVIN ADANIYA has been practicing family law since 1996. He's been involved in child welfare law as court-appointed Guardian Ad Litem, counsel for parents and intervenors, a facilitator for EPIC 'Ohana, a member of the Child Protective Act Task Force, a member of the Child Welfare Law Update Planning Committee, and a mediator with the Oahu Child Welfare Mediation Program.

NICOLE K. CUMMINGS was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. She completed her Juris Doctor degree in 1999 at Loyola University Chicago in Illinois. Nicole began her legal work as an AmeriCorps Attorney for the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii. She then worked as a Deputy Attorney General, representing the State's Departments of Education, Health, and Human Services in Child Welfare hearings and trials. After a brief departure to tort law in the private sector, Nicole returned to work with families at EPIC Ohana Conferencing as a managing attorney and facilitator. Nicole began her private practice in 2006 and has been a Parents' attorney and GAL in CWS cases and she was one of the initial members of the Hawaii Zero to Three Court. Currently, Nicole continues as a GAL in CWS and adult guardianship cases; she also focuses on child related issues in private custody matters as a Best Interest Fact Finder, Guardian ad Litem, Parenting Coordinator, and Volunteer Settlement Master in mediations. and participant with various court committees. In addition, Nicole is a member of the Child Law Section, the Association of Family and Conciliation Court, the American Bar Association, and serves on various committees within family law.

DOMINGO DEGRAZIA is the ICWA supervising attorney for the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. He has been practicing child welfare law for 20 years in trial court and appellate court. Prior to joining the Pascua Yaqui Tribe he served 4 years in the Arizona Legislature. Domingo holds a Juris Doctorate in law, a Master's in Aeronautical Science, a bachelor's degree in Aerospace Studies and has special training in data privacy. He is a licensed pilot and former concert guitarist.

JAMIE L. DEMELLO is a Senior Staff Attorney at the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii – Windward Oahu Branch. Jamie practices in all areas of poverty law and is a Guardian Ad Litem for youth in foster care. Jamie received her J.D. from Gonzaga University School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Hawaii Pacific University. Jamie is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools and a lifelong resident of Kaneohe.

HONORABLE JESSI L.K. HALL has been a District Family Court Judge of the First Circuit, State of Hawai'i since December 2017. She has been the lead judge in all divisions in the Family Court, as well as the presiding judge of the Nā Kama Lei child welfare specialty court working with families involved in the child welfare system with children from birth to the age of five years. Currently Judge Hall is the lead judge and sits in the Juvenile division, which addresses juvenile criminal cases as well as child welfare cases.

HONORABLE JILL M. HASEGAWA has been a District Family Court Judge in the Third Circuit, State of Hawai'i since July 2022, and also served as a Per Diem District Family Court Judge in the Third Circuit from October 2020. Judge Hasegawa currently presides over all types of family law cases, including: child welfare, divorce, paternity, criminal, juvenile, protective order (TRO), adoptions, guardianships and involuntary hospitalizations. She also presides over district court matters, including criminal, traffic and civil matters. Prior to her appointment to the bench, Judge Hasegawa worked for a law firm on Oahu, focusing her practice primarily in the area of family law, before relocating back to the Island of Hawaii.

JULIO HERRERA has been a Deputy Attorney General with the Family Law Division (FLD) of the Department of the Attorney General for over 26 years, and the Supervising Deputy Attorney General for FLD since 2016. He is a 1994 graduate of the University of Hawai‘i-Manoa, and a 1997 graduate of the Santa Clara University School of Law. Julio has spent most of his professional career representing state agencies in family court handling matters related to child welfare, juvenile offenders, adult protection, adult guardianship, and involuntary hospitalizations.

KURT HUMPHREY is Medical Director of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division, State of Hawai‘i Department of Health. Kurt is originally from Colorado and received his M.D. from the University of Colorado – Denver. He stayed in Colorado for his residency and fellowship training in adult and child and adolescent psychiatry. After moving to Hawai‘i in 2014, Kurt joined the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division’s Family Court Liaison Branch before transitioning into the Medical Director role. Kurt’s clinical interests include trauma and related disorders, telepsychiatry and mental health issues in the LGBTQ+ population.

TONIA MAHI is Assistant Child Welfare Services Branch Administrator for Department of Human Services. She graduated from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa with a bachelor’s degree in Social Work and from the University of Southern California with a master’s degree in Social Work. She has been with Department of Human Services since 1991, working as an assessment worker, supervisor, trainer, and section administrator until assuming her current position in May 2019.

HONORABLE DYAN M. MEDEIROS is the current Senior Family Court Judge of the First Circuit. Prior to serving as Senior Family Court Judge, Judge Medeiros served as a Family Court Judge during which time, she served in all three divisions of the First Circuit Family Court: Domestic Division, Juvenile Division, and Special Division. Judge Medeiros has also presided over the First Circuit’s Girls’ Court since July 2019.

Judge Medeiros was born and raised in Honolulu and received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Hawai‘i in 1993 and her law degree from the William S. Richardson School of Law in 1996.

EMIKO MEYERS has been a family law practitioner on Kauai for almost twenty years. Her practice focuses primarily on divorce and custody, as well as parent’s counsel in Child Welfare cases. She has also served as a Guardian Ad Litem in private matters and Child Welfare matters. Prior to entering private practice in 2014, Emiko was an AmeriCorps Attorney, Staff Attorney, and Managing Attorney of the Kauai Legal Aid of Society of Hawaii office from 2004 to 2013. Emiko graduated from the Seattle University School of Law in 2003 and moved to Kauai, Hawaii shortly thereafter.

DEREK D. PETERSON is a deputy attorney general in the Family Law Division of the Department of the Attorney General where he handles primarily child welfare cases. Prior to his current role, Derek served in other public interest capacities, including serving as: a deputy prosecuting attorney with the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney for the City & County of Honolulu; a staff attorney and guardian ad litem with the Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i; and a staff attorney with the Northwest Justice Project, Washington State’s statewide civil legal aid organization. Derek proudly serves on the Board of Directors for the Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i and was selected as a fellow for the 17th Annual Hawaii State Bar Association Leadership Institute. Derek earned his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Washington and is licensed to practice law in Washington State and Hawai‘i.

TRISTA SPEER is a Deputy Director at the Hawaii Department of Human Services. She has more than a decade of experience in a variety of critical public service and legal roles and combines this expertise to make a difference for people and communities, leveraging innovative strategies and driving meaningful change. Prior her current role, Trista served as a Deputy Attorney General for the Department of the Attorney General, where she advised multiple state agencies on various legal and policy matters and represented the state in both state and federal litigation cases. Before serving at the department to the Attorney General, Trista gained extensive experience in complex civil litigation in the private sector and spent nearly a decade serving as a prosecutor specializing in a trauma-informed approach in handling child welfare matters, as well as major crimes, including human trafficking and sexual assault cases. She also serves as a lecturer at the University of Hawaii William S. Richardson School of Law.

ERIN K. S. TORRES received her Juris Doctor degree from the William S. Richardson School of Law in 2006. She has been a Deputy Attorney General at the Department of the Attorney General, Family Law Division (FLD) for 18 years, advising and representing state agencies in Family Court matters including child protection, adoption, minor guardianship, juvenile offender, truancy, adult protection, adult guardianship, and involuntary hospitalization cases. Erin has been a FLD lead deputy since 2016.

PUAFISI “PUA” TUPOLA is Section Administrator for Oahu Child Welfare Services Section 4 (East Oahu) for Department of Human Services. She graduated from Brigham Young University of Hawaii with a bachelor’s degree in Political Science and from the University of Hawaii Manoa with a master’s degree in Social Work. She has been with Department of Human Services since 2006 to 2009 and returned in 2011, working as a youth service/adoption worker, case manager/permanency worker, supervisor, and section administrator. She assumed her current position in February 2019.

JESSICA “JAYCEE” UCHIDA is a Senior Staff Attorney for Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i’s Hilo Office, where she has worked since 2018. She practices primarily in Family Law (divorce, child custody, post-decree enforcement/modifications, and guardianships of incapacitated adults and minors) and Child Welfare Law (parents’ counsel and guardian ad litem). Jaycee is currently spearheading the Rural Paternity Advocate Pilot Project which aims to train qualified non-lawyer advocates to provide full representation to indigent litigants in Family Court child custody matters. Prior to her career at Legal Aid, she served as a Judicial Assistant to the Honorable Greg K. Nakamura (ret.) on Hawai‘i Island and a Law Clerk to the Honorable Colette Y. Garibaldi (ret.) on O‘ahu. Jaycee graduated from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, William S. Richardson School of Law (J.D.) and International Christian University (B.A., Tokyo, Japan).

LYNNE M. YOUMANS is a Deputy Attorney General for the Department of the Attorney General, focusing her work on representing the Department of Human Services (DHS) and providing policy advice for DHS. Prior to working as a Deputy Attorney General, Ms. Youmans worked for fourteen years in private family law practice representing individual clients in divorce and custody cases. Ms. Youmans started her career as a family law attorney for the Legal Aid Society of Hawai‘i specializing in representing children in child abuse and neglect cases as a Guardian Ad Litem. Ms. Youmans moved to Hawai‘i in 1998 after completing her law degree at the University of Michigan.