



Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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MAY 2021

BISHOP'S CORNER



Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

Bishop Eric Matsumoto

It's Graduation Season! A hearty "Congratulations" to all Graduates from pre-school to college, but especially the Seniors at Pacific Buddhist Academy. As is the tradition, on the Thursday evening before Commencement Exercises, a special Baccalaureate Service by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii officiated by Bishop Eric Matsumoto, planned by Executive Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Kazunori Takahashi and PBA Head of Schools Mr. Josh Hernandez Morse who also emceed, and further assisted by PBA School Chaplain Rev. Sol Kalu, was held for PBA's Graduating Class of 2021 at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin. Also, participating was Dr. Warren Tamamoto, HHMH State President who gave a congratulatory message on behalf of the Hawaii Kyodan.

Then, on Saturday, May 8, 2021, a Commencement Ceremony honoring the 17 Graduates of PBA's Class of 2021 was held on the PBA Campus. Needless to say, both the Baccalaureate Service and Commencement Ceremony had to be improvised in the name of safety because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Regardless, we hope that it was still memorable for our Graduates and their families. The following is the Aspiration given by Bishop Eric Matsumoto for the 2021 PBA Commencement Ceremony.

Pacific Buddhist Academy's Commencement Ceremony Aspiration for the Class of 2021

As we gather for the Pacific Buddhist Academy's 15th Commencement Ceremony in honor of the Graduating Class of 2021, in the presence of Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light, let us reflect.

As we begin this ceremony, let us contemplate the question "Is there a difference between knowledge and wisdom?" A basic emphasis in the Buddhist Tradition is that all life, all existence is interconnected and interrelated. This is the Truth of Interdependence shared by the Historic Buddha close to 2,600 years ago and captured in the beautiful metaphor of Indra's Net which is described as a jeweled net spreading across the universe in which all the connected jewels reflect all the other jewels while shining in its own unique brilliance.

In more recent times science in its pursuit of knowledge has confirmed this truth about our connectedness through our relationship with all around us. Science has provided us with the intellectual rational of why we should respect and care more for each other. But, “Why is it that we do not show more respect to our natural environment?” and during this COVID Pandemic “Why are there challenges to implementing some of the safety measures?” The content of knowledge and wisdom may be similar, but there is a fundamental difference between the two in that knowledge cannot make a difference unless applied. Whereas, wisdom by its nature always makes a difference as it is never separate from those who significantly understand.

At Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii and PBA, we hope that our Graduates have learned not only the academic knowledge necessary to continue their education in pursuit of their dreams and careers, but also that they will be guided by the Wisdom of Enlightenment especially interdependence which gives rise to virtues like mutual respect, appreciation and caring for each other with courage, thoughtfulness, equality, humility, non-violence and peace, and inspired by Great Compassion. We would like to, one last time tonight, emphasize the special gift of PBA as a Buddhist based school which is to share the Enlightened perspective which seeks the well-being, and peace and happiness of all forms of life, all existence. This is the aspiration of Amida Buddha.

Tonight, as we extend our congratulations to our Graduates and their Families, let us all express our acknowledgment and gratitude to all others for the part they played in each of our lives and embrace the aspiration for the peace and happiness of one and all. May All-Inclusive Wisdom and All-Embracing Compassion inspire and guide us.

Finally, please join me in gassho/anjali, a gesture of reverence and respect in Buddhism, to recite Amida Buddha’s Honored Name in awareness, joy and gratitude of Great Wisdom and Compassion, Namo Amida Butsu.



Pacific Buddhist Academy Class of 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF JODO SHINSHU HONGWANJI-HA BISHOP CHIKO IWAGAMI FOR 2021 PBA BACCALAUREATE

First, congratulations to this year's graduates! As we share this moment, you may be looking back on the many memories of your time spent here at PBA.

Graduation marks the end of one of many chapters in one's lifetime, and at the same time, it is also the starting point as you embark on a new goal. As you set off from Pacific Buddhist Academy, you will carry the memories of your days here at PBA together with your hopes and dreams in the next phase of your life.

In response to the Novel Coronavirus pandemic this past year, in-person learning, as well as extracurricular activities and events have been limited. As a result, your senior year of high school may not have gone as you had hoped, and many may have found this very disappointing. But perhaps, these unprecedented circumstances gave us an opportunity to stop and carefully think about our lifestyle and future that we had been taking for granted.

Bulletin boards at schools are often used for making announcements and sometimes displays a motto or slogan. Buddhist temples also have this kind of bulletin board on which inspirational words or a short phrase filled with Buddhist wisdom are shared. Maybe you have seen one of these. A few years ago, a Japan-based Buddhist organization called Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai held a contest of inspirational phrases shared by Buddhist temples through their bulletin boards. This contest, which is called "Let it Shine! Temple Bulletin Board Project" has been gaining attention in Japan. The Grand Prize winner for 2020, which was selected from a total of 1,677 entries, was a remark made by a salesperson of a drugstore in Kanagawa prefecture, which was displayed at a temple in Kumamoto prefecture. It read, "The thing that scared me the most was not COVID, but humans."

We were faced with many challenges last April and May when the first state of emergency was declared in Japan. The media reported that a healthy person with no underlying health conditions had died of COVID-19 within a couple of days. People were panic buying face masks and hand sanitizers. Customers were lashing out at store employees because of the empty shelves. Some were even engaging in the reselling of medical masks and price gouging. In learning that we become infected through contact with others, we have become suspicious of people around us. Sadly, this has led to stigma and discrimination against frontline medical workers and COVID-19 patients. Everyone is scared in the same way, but the feeling of fear has driven us into an egocentric shell. The phrase, "the most terrifying are humans," is a description of the reality of us humans, which was revealed in the circumstance of the pandemic.

The phrase that took second place in the contest was one that was displayed on the bulletin board of Tsukiji Hongwanji in Tokyo, a Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha branch temple. The phrase is, "Even if you hurt me, I would not hurt you back. This is Buddhism."

In fact, Sakyamuni Buddha taught us that if you take revenge on someone, in turn, that person will take revenge on you, and so in this way, the hatred would never end. You may feel you have the upper hand when you take revenge on someone whom you hate, but it only puts that person in the same position as you were in and that individual would plot vengeance against you. Thus, hatred between the two of you would never diminish.

The only way out of this sad circle of hate is through sharing feelings with each other. Let us try to rid ourselves of our own egoistic mind and feel the joy and sorrow of others.

Just as no one could have ever predicted this pandemic, what awaits us in the future is also unknown. There may be happy occasions, as well as some sad ones too. Please continue learning more about Buddhism, which is the spiritual legacy of this school's foundation, and Buddhism will surely provide you with the guidance you need whenever you are feeling lost in your own fear or hatred.

Our lives are all interrelated and interconnected. It is important that we keep in mind this feeling of gratitude for one another, as we continue to practice the spirit of placing our hands in gassho, and make every effort to respect and uphold the dignity of all life. In today's world, we are too often only concerned with the results. Although you may endeavor, it may not always pay off. However, try to not feel distressed in such situations, and try not to boast when your efforts are rewarded. All you need to do is just continue in your efforts. When this naturally comes to you, you are then a truly respectful and beautiful human.

It is my hope that you will face things you encounter with a feeling of gratitude that "thanks to you, I am enabled to dedicate myself to this." Then, I am confident that a bright future will await you.

In closing, I would like to extend my congratulations once again. Thank you.

May 6, 2021
Governor General IWAGAMI Chiko
Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR 2021 PBA BACCALAUREATE



Congratulatory message to the Pacific Buddhist Academy Class of 2021 on behalf of Hawaii Kyodan

Bishop Matsumoto, Head of School Josh Morse, ministers, teachers, parents and most importantly, the Pacific Buddhist Academy graduating class of 2021, GOOD EVENING. It is my privilege to offer congratulations on behalf of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to you, the class of 2021. What a great ring that year has, 2021! This has been an extraordinary Senior year for you with "new experiences" that you could not have predicted. You will always be remembered as a special class! With the help of your friends, family and school faculty, you successfully met the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic presented and today you have

completed a major milestone in your life.

I would like to share with you one of my favorite stories. You probably know it. I have enjoyed reading this story again and again to my children and grandchildren. It is Momotaro, the Peach Boy-one of the best loved folk stories of Japan. It is the story of an old couple who dream of having a child of their own. Their dream comes true in the form of a giant golden peach floating down the river into the arms of Obaa-

san. Planning to feast on the peach, they are surprised when the enormous peach bursts open and inside the peach is a tiny baby boy. Their dreams of having a child are fulfilled and they named him MOMOTARO, the Peach Boy. Momotaro grows up to be smart, strong and brave. He helps with the work of the village and he learns the skills of a samurai.

As he grows into a young man, Momotaro learns that for many years, evil ogres (oni) would arrive at the village to rob, kill and plunder. Momotaro announces that he will go to the Inland Sea and defeat the ogres so that they would never return to the village. At once his parents prepare him for his journey. They prepare kibi-dango, a special Warrior's food. Ojii-san laid out Momotaro's knife, sword, sash and tessen-iron fan, the garb of a samurai. ***Then, armed with all that he knew and all that he was, Momotaro set out.*** This line from the story has always been particularly meaningful to me, and I think for your parents as we see you attain this milestone in life and move forward to a future that is still unwritten. Notice the careful choice of words. "Then, armed with all that he knew and all that he was, Momotaro set out."

On his journey, Momotaro encounters a giant dog, a monkey and a pheasant. These animals become his friends and allies in the battle against the evil oni. Momotaro crosses the Inland Sea to arrive at the home of the evil oni. With the help of his brave companions, Momotaro defeats the ogres. He recovers stolen treasure and returns home. Along the way, Momotaro returns stolen treasure to all of the villages. He finally arrives at his home village with the unclaimed treasure and he is able to care for his parents for the rest of their lives.

This story is much more exciting than this abbreviated summary that I've shared with you today. It is a good metaphor for this occasion. Momotaro had parents who cared for him and loved him. They were concerned for his future, but they prepared him the best way that they knew. Your parents are always thinking about you. Hopefully none of you will be headed for real battle, but we know that this journey of life doesn't always go exactly the way that we think it will. You will have your own battles. Your "weapons" and your armor are the skills, knowledge and values that you have gained through your hard work, nurtured by your parents and your school community. You will meet new people along the way. Choose your close friends wisely. You will face difficult choices in your life. I suggest that you ask yourself a few questions. Did you do your best? Did you do what is right? Did you care for and help others?

Finally, Momotaro returns to his home village. Returning home in this context means maintaining connections-with your friends, family and school community. Remember the Buddhist teaching of interdependence.

In closing, I'd like share that special line from the story of Momotaro with minor changes: ***Then, armed with all that they knew and all that they were, the Class of 2021 set out.***

Aloha and Best Wishes,
Namo Amida Butsu.

May 6, 2021
Dr. Warren Tamamoto
President, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

PBA's Baccalaureate Service was held on Thursday, May 6 at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, and the Commencement Ceremony was held on Saturday, May 8 at PBA. Please visit PBA's Website and social media for further information.

- Website: <https://www.pacificbuddhistacademy.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PacificBuddhistAcademy>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/pacificbuddhistacademy/>

CONDOLENCES

Mr. Earl Iwao Mukai, a member of Puna Hongwanji Mission, passed away on April 19, 2021. Mr. Mukai served as the President of Puna Hongwanji Mission for 4 years. He served as the Puna Hongwanji Board of Directors, Sr. YBA, Pahoa Nikkei Jin Kai, KYU Pahoa Kumiai, Pahoa Shibu and the HHMH Board of Directors. The Ingo of MON-SHIN-IN 聞信院 which means “One who genuinely heard and entrusted” in recognition of his life of nembutsu was conferred by Bishop Eric Matsumoto on May 22, 2021.

Reverend Yoshiaki Fujitani, the 11th Bishop of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, passed away peacefully at the Kuakini Medical Center in Honolulu on May 17, 2021, at the age of 97. More detailed information regarding the funeral service will be shared at a later date. Rev. Fujitani became a Kaikyoshi Minister in February 1956 and served the following temples;

February 1956 – August 1960	Wailuku Hongwanji Mission
September 1960 – February 1961	Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin
February 1961 – July 1963	Headquarters (Executive Secretary)
September 1964 – July 1974	Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin 1967-1974 Fuku-rimban
August 1974 – February 1975	Acting Bishop
February 1975 – February 1987	11 th Bishop of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii
February 1987 – February 1993	Headquarters (Director of Office of Buddhist Education and Buddhist Study Center)
March 1, 1993	Retired

Reverend Fujitani is one of five past Living Treasures of Hawai'i™ honorees interviewed in an upcoming special Living Treasures TV program airing on May 27 and May 30, 2021.

LIVING TREASURES OF HAWAI'I SPECIAL PROGRAM

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii produced a special one-hour program, “**Life and Light: Wisdom of Hawai'i's Treasures**” featuring interviews with five past honorees (Robert Cazimero, Puanani Burgess, Lillian Yajima, Rev. Yoshiaki Fujitani, and Nainoa Thompson) in lieu of our traditional luncheon program recognizing new honorees.

The program will air on:

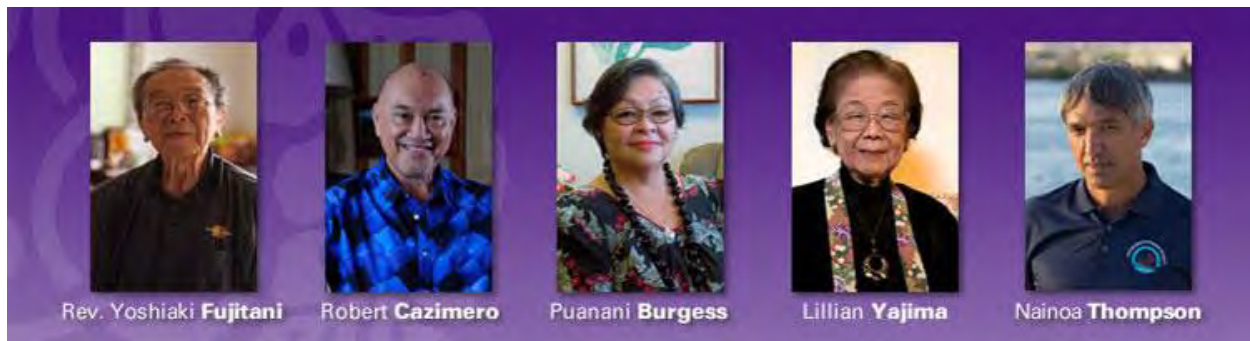
- May 27, 2021, at 7:00 pm (K5 and live stream on Facebook)
- May 30, 2021, at 8:00 pm (KHNL)

The following page is the Hawaii News Now website where the show will be livestreamed:

<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/livingtreasures/>

The following link is the promo airing on HNN and K5:

<https://vimeo.com/547760049/72941ec994>



KAHUKU HONGWANJI SCHOLARSHIP

The Kahuku Hongwanji Mission closed its doors in February 2013 after serving its membership for 111 years. To maintain the legacy of the Kahuku Hongwanji Mission and to develop the future generations of the Hongwanji, Kahuku Hongwanji Mission established a scholarship to support students at the college level.

Eligibility:

- The applicant must be a member of the BSC Fellowship Club or an active member of a Hawaii Kyodan organization.
- The applicant must be a full-time student of an accredited college, university, or a post-high school program in the State of Hawaii, and earn a minimum of 12 college credits per semester.
- The applicant must have a required minimum college GPA of 2.5.
- The applicant must be of college age up to 35 years old.
- The applicant must submit the application form with an essay on “Dharma and My Life”.

Application Deadline: July 31, 2021

Scholarship Amount: \$2,000.00 each / two recipients

For more information of this scholarship, please contact the HHMH Headquarters at (808) 522-9200 or email at hqs@honpahi.org