September 1, 2021

Aloha e nā hoa kākoʻo i ka pono o ka lāhui:

Hulō!! By now you have heard the news that President Biden appointed the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation’s own Summer Sylva as Senior Advisor on Native Hawaiian Affairs to Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. At the end of September, Summer will make the trip from Waimānalo, Oʻahu, to Washington, D.C., where she will continue her advocacy on behalf of the Native Hawaiian community, working at the federal level to support and strengthen the Department of the Interior’s pledged commitment under Secretary Haaland’s leadership to honor and uphold the federal government’s trust relationship with indigenous communities, including Native Hawaiians.

Summer has left an indelible mark on both NHLC and the communities she served during her seven years with the organization, first as a staff attorney and more recently as executive director. Her heart for kānaka maoli and advocacy on their behalf has aided in improving the legal landscape for Native Hawaiians and strengthening their cultural identity. Summer has also helped NHLC reimagine and realize positive changes, strengthening its financial standing and operations, attracting and growing its exceptionally talented team of attorney advocates, elevating NHLC’s profile and reputation in the larger community, and ultimately increasing NHLC’s capacity to address the needs of those who need our services most. While the board, staff, and clients of NHLC will certainly miss Summer’s diligence, leadership, and deep aloha for native rights advocacy, the lāhui will continue to benefit from her proven commitment to serving the Native Hawaiian community faithfully in her new role.

During the next month of her tenure, Summer will work closely with our board and staff to initiate the search for NHLC’s next executive director. Her steadfast commitment to NHLC’s mission and vision will ensure a seamless successorship and the continuation of NHLC’s legacy of service to the Native Hawaiian community for over 47 years.

As proud board members and even prouder Native Hawaiians, please join us in humbly thanking Summer for her dedicated service to and steady leadership at NHLC. While we cannot thank her enough, we can pledge our unwavering commitment to support her important work on behalf of our people and other indigenous people from across the country.

We wish Summer every success as she begins this exciting new chapter in her career and for our lāhui. Hoʻomaikaʻi!!

Me ka haʻahaʻa

Kawika Patterson
President – NHLC Board of Directors

https://www.nativehawaiianlegalcorp.org/uluoa

Niʻolo. Upright, straight, stately, tall and straight as a tree without branches; sharply peaked, as mountains. Fig., righteous, correct