

SMALL BUSINESS RESEARCH ADVOCATES OF THE YEAR

The belief that “success starts with research” drives **Ruth Corn** to provide custom research assistance to existing and aspiring small business owners. In 1992, Ruth was instrumental in developing the Hawaii Business Research Library on Maui. Since that time, it has become a “one-of-a-kind” resource facility in the state. HBRL, a speciality center of the Hawaii Small Business Development Center Network, provides resources and search engines for small business owners who need assistance in strategic and business planning that employ current economic indicators and trends. Ruth has presented small business issues through research at numerous conferences and training classes, contributing to the curriculum of MEOBDC and SBDC’s entrepreneurial training islandwide. Sought for her expertise for supporting business strategies, Ruth has contributed to such publications as “Starting a Business in Maui County-Building a Better Community,” “State of Small Business Hawaii,” and the “Hawaii SmallBiz E-News,” a free monthly electronic newsletter. Ruth also oversees the HBRL’s website (www.hbri-sbdc.org). HBRL has become a vital contributor to the economic growth of small businesses statewide. Accessing information like “the number of cars passing an intersection in Paia” to “masters and doctorate theses held at universities nationally and internationally” – you can find it all at the HBRL. *Nominated by: Greg Knue, Bank of Hawaii & Sonia Isotov King, Hawaii BRL.*

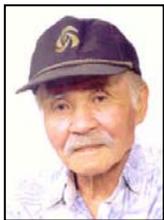


Ruth Corn
Hawaii Business
Research Library
State of Hawaii

As the State’s official Economist, **Dr. Pearl Imada-Iboshi** plays a leading role in identifying the trends that impact Hawaii’s economy and drive the planning for the State of Hawaii. During her tenure at DBEDT’s Research Economic Analysis Division, Dr. Iboshi has made a difference in creating useful information on a consistent basis with regular availability to both policy makers and the public. With her hard work and vision, she has generated a systematic process in the collection of credible data and has established her agency as a key provider of economic information for the state. Using the internet to distribute data, Iboshi and her research team produce over 30 reports and publications on topics ranging from tourism and hospitality to construction and employment to the State Data Book. Visitor industry reports are in great demand for their specific details on satisfaction, spending, activities, responses and recommendations from visitors from different locations. Other reports are developed with the other State departments that can be utilized by small businesses to forecast other business activity. Along with many presentations on the state of our economy, Iboshi is a popular speaker on workforce development, the diversification and sustainability of our tourism based economy, the new cruise industry opportunities and more, making presentations at approximately 20 conferences and 30 speeches in the last three years. *Nominated by: Naomi Masuno, Central Pacific Bank.*



Pearl Imada Iboshi
State of Hawaii DBEDT
City & County of Honolulu



George Yokoyama
Hawaii County EOC
County of Hawaii

George Yokoyama has brought renewed economic life to East Hawaii and Hamakua after the closure of the major sugar plantations in the 90’s. As the executive director of Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council, Yokoyama has transformed this non-profit community action agency into a successful, real world “research lab” for community economic development. His first incubator kitchen has grown to a manufacturing and marketing network of food and gift products, seamstress training, bee keeping, honey and wax production, skilled wood carving and even candlemaking. Step by step, these successful ventures provided data and statistics to encourage duplicate programs in other locations and to justify the continued funding to expand these programs across the big island. The incubator project has grown into four facilities in Hakalau, Honoka’a, Pa’auilo, and Hilo and has created 72 new jobs and twelve new businesses. Another \$760,000 grant was designed to develop three computer centers with 48 jobs to provide technical skills training for higher paying jobs and was based again on local research and statistics. Congratulations, George! *Nominated by: Marcella Stroh, Central Pacific Bank.*