

CIS Pacific Welcomes New Faces, Fresh Ideas

The Cancer Information Service, Pacific Region is excited to have new staff members on board, further expanding the range of assistance available to partners in cancer control in Hawai'i and throughout the U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Island territories and jurisdictions. Here's some information on the new faces at our Honolulu office, based at the University of Hawai'i Cancer Research Center of Hawai'i.

Crissy Terawaki Kawamoto (Partnership Program Coordinator)

In her position as a Partnership Program Coordinator, Crissy is responsible for coordinating CIS partnerships on the neighbor islands while facilitating CIS efforts to disseminate the latest science and evidence-based health promotion messages to partner organizations and medically underserved audiences in Hawai'i and the U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI). As our liaison to the neighbor islands, Crissy will be providing capacity building assistance to cancer control organizations in Kauai, Maui, and Hawai'i counties in an effort to improve cancer-related outcomes and reduce cancer health disparities in Hawai'i. CIS Pacific's monthly e-bulletin and annual report are among the regular communications you'll be receiving from Crissy.

While Crissy's educational background includes journalism and a degree in speech pathology and audiology, she is no stranger to CIS, having worked at the Cancer Research Center of Hawai'i (CRCH) for the past nine years. Having worked under Drs. Karen Glanz and Carolyn Gotay, both formerly of the CRCH Prevention & Control Department, Crissy brings an understanding of the research process, behavioral interventions, and survivorship issues to the CIS research program, especially with regard to breast and cervical cancer. Crissy is a long-time member of Hawai'i's Clinical Trials Education Coalition, a project of the CIS, where she has served as co-chair of the advocacy committee.

Crissy is also an active volunteer with the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF), having recently returned from the LAF's 2008 Summit in Columbus, Ohio, where she learned about health policy and participated in training sessions designed to build skills in grassroots advocacy. In 2007, Crissy served as one of two delegates from Hawai'i to advocate for increased funding for the National Institutes of Health, the National Cancer Institute, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at LIVESTRONG Day in Washington, D.C.

In her spare time, Crissy enjoys photography, traveling (favorite destinations are Chicago and Tokyo), the TV show "Lost" (on which she appeared as an extra), and Chicago Cubs baseball. While Crissy has been a Honolulu resident since birth, her father hails from Captain Cook, and her mother was born in Wailuku.



From left: Julie Oki, Doris Segal Matsunaga, and Crissy Terawaki Kawamoto.

Doris Segal Matsunaga (Pacific Project Manager)

As CIS Project Manager, Doris is charged with managing CIS partnership activities in collaboration with and supported by the Pacific Center of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities (CEED). CEED is a five year, CDC-funded project under the direction of Dr. Neal Palafox, member of CRCH and Chair of the UH John A. Burns School of Medicine's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. Supported in part by the Pacific CEED project, Doris is a member of the Pacific CEED project team responsible for providing technical assistance and training designed to reduce the health disparities of citizens of the USAPI, both in their home countries and among those living in Hawai'i and the continental U.S., with a special emphasis on breast and cervical cancer.

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., Doris moved to Hawai'i 35 years ago to finish up her bachelor's degree in women's health care and earn her master's in public health. It was during this time that she became active in advocating for women's health, including improved access to information on basic cancer prevention and early detection and in creating one of the first "professional patient" programs in the nation for training medical students specializing in gynecology. Demonstrated cultural competence and over two decades of experience in community health education, program administration, and research make Doris an invaluable asset to the CIS Pacific team.

Doris comes to us from the Kalihi-Palama Health Center, where she served as Director of Health Education and Community Relations. Prior to that, she was Co-Project Manager for the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center's Malama Kekahi I Kekahi, the NCI-funded Waianae Cancer Research Project developed and conducted by the Waianae community in collaboration with faculty at CRCH.

In her spare time, Doris enjoys yoga, tai chi, snorkeling, writing creative non-fiction, traveling, and coffee shops. She has two children, ages 18 and 23.

Julie Oki (Administrative Assistant)

Julie, who just started working with us in July, was born and raised in Honolulu, where she graduated from McKinley High School. She earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Prior to her arrival at CIS, Julie worked as a corporate trainer for Louis Vuitton Hawai'i and C.S. Wo & Sons, Ltd. At both places, she was responsible for curriculum development and facilitating training sessions, covering such topics as customer service, product knowledge, sales, and new hire orientation.

When she's not busy being a mom to her 4-year-old daughter and 19-month-old son, Julie enjoys watching cooking shows on Food Network and interior design shows on HGTV, although she confesses that she neither cooks nor decorates. She is also a big Oprah fan.