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Three Top Executives Depart Bishop Museum

Departures follow investigation into workplace concerns

Honolulu, Hawai‘i — The Board of Directors of Bishop Museum today announced the departures of chief executive officer Melanie Ide; general counsel Barron Oda; and vice president of operations, planning, and program management Kaiwi Yoon following the completion of an independent investigation into the Museum’s work environment. The departures, effective immediately, were approved by a unanimous vote of the full Board of Directors.

The three executives have been on administrative leave with pay since July 1, on the advice of seasoned outside counsel, pending the completion of an independent investigation into multiple staff complaints about the workplace environment at the Museum.

The investigator, an attorney with 40 years of experience in labor law, interviewed 43 current and former members of the Museum staff. More than half of those interviewed were individuals whom Ide, Oda and/or Yoon requested the investigator speak with. Honoring the requests of Ide, Yoon and Oda as well as scheduling issues, significantly extended the length of the investigation.

The report will not be made public to honor the confidentiality of the employees who provided information to the investigator, as well as the right to privacy of the affected executives.

“Our kuleana as a board is to ensure a healthy and safe work environment for the staff whose work provides the foundation for the success and longevity of Bishop Museum,” said board chairman Wayne Pitluck, on behalf of the full board. “After thorough review and discussion, the full board feels separation of the three executives from Bishop Museum is required to provide the proper work environment for our engaged and dedicated staff.”

“The board will now act quickly to appoint an interim CEO with experience in organizational leadership. The interim CEO’s immediate task will be to identify and implement HR policies that reflect best practices for large organizations. The board will also begin a search for a new CEO with demonstrated experience at the highest levels of organizational leadership,” Pitluck explained.

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About Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum:

Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum’s mission is to inspire our community and visitors through the exploration, celebration and perpetuation of the extraordinary history, culture, and environment of Hawai‘i and the Pacific. The Museum was founded in 1889 by Charles Reed Bishop in memory of his wife Bernice Pauahi Bishop, a royal descendant of King Kamehameha I. Today, the Museum thrives as an educational center for the community and is widely regarded as the world’s premier institution for Hawaiian and Pacific content.

Bishop Museum’s vast collections of more than 25 million objects and specimens represent nine disciplines and include more than 22 million biological specimens, over two million cultural objects, 115,000 historical publications, and one million photographs, films, works of art, audio recordings, and manuscripts. These collections tell the stories of the cultures and biodiversity of Hawai‘i and the Pacific as well as the proud legacy of scholarly research spanning 130 years.

Bishop Museum proudly serves more than 200,000 visitors each year, including 20,000 children on school visits.

To learn more about the Museum’s research, collections, exhibits, and programs, visit BishopMuseum.org, follow @BishopMuseum on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), become a fan of Bishop Museum on [Facebook](#), visit Bishop Museum’s [YouTube](#) channel, or call (808) 847-3511. Bishop Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Bishop Museum is proud to be an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer, and welcomes applicants from the military, veterans, and those with disabilities. Learn about careers at Bishop Museum at BishopMuseum.org/Careers and on its [LinkedIn](#) page.

[Bishop Museum Press](#) is Hawai‘i’s oldest book publisher and one of the first scholarly publishers in the Western Hemisphere, and has published over 1200 titles and distributed over 1,000,000 books in 72 countries worldwide.

Past news releases can be viewed and downloaded at BishopMuseum.org/NewsRoom.