



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

**Media Kit**

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GOVERNOR

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**FEATURE #1**

**Hawaii Woman Moves up in the Elevator Industry**

Grace Keahi was a small-town girl with big dreams. Born and raised on the island of Molokai, Grace had plans to leave her steady gas station job and the little town where she grew up for the opportunity to enter the military to learn a vocation and gain new experiences. Instead, opportunity came knocking in a way she never imagined. Earlier this year, the Molokai native happened to see an ad for an apprenticeship program with the International Union of Elevator Constructors ("IUEC"). She applied, took the aptitude test, interviewed on Maui and never looked back. Among the men and women throughout the state who took the aptitude test, Grace had one of the highest scores.

She moved to Oahu to start the program with financial support from the federally funded Hawaii's Women In Technology Project operated by the Maui Economic Development Board, which not only spearheaded the recruitment process but helped find her an apartment, car and provided the initial tools she needed. Currently, Grace

is working full-time for Otis as an apprentice during the day and going to apprenticeship school at night. So far, she has placed in the top tier of three apprenticeship levels.

The apprenticeship program runs for four years.

For the first time in the history of the Hawaii chapter of the IUEC, women are being recruited to fill top-paying apprenticeship positions in the elevator industry. This is a big commitment for Otis, and IUEC. Grace will likely be close to making a six-figure income once she's done and represents the new trend of women who are part of a highly-trained and dedicated workforce for the construction industry.

"Dreams do come true," Grace says, "if you're not afraid to leave what's comfortable and safe and work hard for what you believe in."

The Construction Career Expo to be held October 20, 2004 at the Blaisdell Center Exhibition Hall will help individuals find out more about the career opportunities available in the construction industry. They will be able to speak to construction professionals, including the Elevators Construction Apprenticeship Program in which Grace is enrolled, and view demonstrations. Attendees will also be able to speak with training program providers, including the Women in Technology program which helped Grace, about assistance with meeting apprenticeship entrance requirements. Women, in particular, may discover that their dream profession is in an unlikely place—the construction industry.

For more information about the Women in Technology Program, go to [www.womenintech.com](http://www.womenintech.com) or email [info@womenintech.com](mailto:info@womenintech.com). You may also contact Isla Yap at the Maui Economic Development Board, phone (808) 875-2307, [isla@medb.org](mailto:isla@medb.org).

## FEATURE #2

### **RICHARD VIEIRA**

Training Administrator for Painter's Trust Fund  
(Union and Management)

Richard Vieira, the Training Administrator for the Painters' Apprenticeship Training Program, said:

"The Painters Apprenticeship Program takes 4 years or 8,000 hours. It's a terrific opportunity for any individual who wants painting as a career. It's like a scholarship-- no tuition fee. They are taught everything they need to know. They get paid while learning on the job. Pay rates range between \$9.29 per hour for a 1<sup>st</sup> year apprentice to \$26.55 per hour for a journey worker. It's a good opportunity to get a good standard of living. In addition, the benefits are very good— vacation fund, annuity, life insurance, and the best health coverage I've seen, including for family."

Richard was one of the partners of Honolulu Painting Company for 22 years, eventually serving as Executive Vice President of the company. He went on to become Executive Director of the Painting and Decorating Contractors' Association for a few years. Since 1995, he has been the Training Administrator for the Painters' Apprenticeship Training Program. Currently, Richard also serves as Vice President of the Apprenticeship and Training Coordinators' Association of Hawaii, one of the co-sponsors of the **Construction Career Expo**, and is the program chairperson for the event.

According to Mr. Vieira, "Many of our apprentices want to excel. They have the focus, drive, and desire to compete among others. This is where the Construction

Career Expo will be helpful to show individuals what painting and other trades are about. A trade teaches you something you can use the rest of your life."

Rodney Pascua, foreman for Aloha Painting Company and Brian Robertson, lead foreman for Zelinsky Company, Painting & Finishing Contractors are excellent examples of apprentices who completed the program.



"As a painter, I achieved my goal of being one of the lead painters in the company I work for," said Rodney Pascua. "Thanks to the training and apprenticeship the Painters Union has provided me, I have been able to improve the various skills and techniques which have helped me in my career."



"I am very Appreciative and thankful that I am a member of the Painters Union. I completed the Painters Union Apprenticeship Program early in my career, and am now a certified Journeyman painter," said Brian Robertson. "Being a union painter really made me successful in achieving my goals in life."

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