



## Hawaii United Okinawa Association

July 10, 2018

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Courtney Takara, HUOA President  
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Jane Fujie Serikaku, executive director of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA) and retired educator, passed away peacefully on July 6, 2018, surrounded by close family and friends. She was 79 years old. A longtime leader in the Okinawan community, Serikaku was the HUOA's first female president in 1993-1994. She was born on Maui, attended Maui High School and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa where she graduated with a degree in education and also obtained a master's degree in educational administration. Serikaku received the prestigious Milken Educator Award in 1998 while principal at Iliahi Elementary School for her exemplary work in collaborating with teachers, parents, and students and also establishing a free preschool. She retired after 30 years as an educator and was appointed the executive director of the HUOA in 2006. Always a staunch supporter of education, she believed that the future of HUOA is dependent upon the youth and helped coordinate the Hawaii-Okinawa High School Student Exchange program for over 25 years. She also initiated the HUOA Leadership Study Tour giving young Okinawans from Hawaii an opportunity to visit their ancestral homeland and learn about Okinawan culture. Serikaku was a second generation (*Nisei*) Okinawan with ancestral ties to Nakagusuku Village. She was designated as a new "Uchina Goodwill Ambassador" by the Okinawa Prefectural Government in 2006.

Serikaku is survived by daughter Michelle (Steven) Whaley, sisters Betsy Sato, Pattye Eastland, Nancy Miura, sister-in-law Miyoko Miyashiro, brother-in-law Koki Tamashiro, and many nieces and nephews.

Service will be held on Thursday, August 9, 2018 at the Hawaii Okinawa Center. Visitation begins at 4:00 p.m. with memorial service at 6:00 p.m.

#### References:

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