



DANIEL K. INOUYE
INSTITUTE

December 17, 2020

Aloha Friends and Colleagues,

It is particularly fitting and poignant on the eve of the anniversary of Senator Inouye's passing - December 17, 2012 - that DDG 118, *USS Daniel Inouye* left the Bath Iron Works shipyard and entered the water, heading down Kennebec River to the open ocean to begin her sea trials. What a beautiful sight! To watch a short video, please use this link <https://youtu.be/xRIVERPI74I>.



Photos and Videos courtesy of General Dynamics Bath Iron Works

Extra care and protocols were instituted to protect all riders against the transmission of COVID while on board. The crew is composed of shipyard workers focused on ensuring that all the hull, mechanical and electrical systems are working properly. The Navy crew will soon take over the ship for training and acceptance trials in the coming months.



Armed with a 75ft ti-leaf lei, 4 dozen flower lei, beautiful Hawaii anthuriums and orchids, Big Island Candies and chocolate covered macadamia nuts, the DKI Ohana arrived in Bath, Maine for a "once in a lifetime" experience - to christen DDG 118, the future *USS Daniel Inouye* on June 21 - 22, 2019. We shared flowers and candies, presented gifts to the crew and the ship, and welded a special box filled with priceless and sentimental treasures to the mast of the ship as a part of an age-old Navy tradition. And, of course the christening ceremony culminated with ship sponsor, Irene Hirano Inouye breaking a bottle of champagne on the bow of the ship. We are so happy that Irene was on hand to do the honors — We miss her dearly.

DANIEL K. INOUYE INSTITUTE FUND

Hawai'i Community Foundation • 827 Fort Street Mall • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 • 808.537.6333
www.danielkinouyeinstitute.org



Fingers crossed, upon completion of the acceptance trials and formal delivery to the Navy, the *USS Daniel Inouye* will depart Maine for Hawaii, and its homeport at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. A commissioning ceremony is being “penciled” for Fall of 2021. Stay tuned for more details as we happily turn the corner into 2021.

2020 has been a heck of a year - even that is probably an understatement! COVID, Black Lives Matter and a Presidential Election battle for the history books. During the lowest of moments - locally and nationally, I would often think about what Senator would have said, or would have done. Simple words, steady hand, followed by clear actions forward. Could have used “Dan Inouye” in 2020 - As he would say, “This too shall pass” or “Das’ why hard!” I combine those quotes with one of my favorites: “History is a remarkable teacher, provided you heed the lessons learned, otherwise, you’re likely to repeat it.”



I close our newsletter on the 8th anniversary of our Senator’s passing with a wonderful tribute from a former colleague, U.S. Senator Jon Tester of Montana who Inouye mentored as a young senator. They were also neighbors in the Senate Hart building, 7th floor. What follows is an excerpt from his book, “Grounded: A Senator’s Lesson on Winning Back Rural America.” www.harpercollins.com/products/grounded-jon-tester

When I returned to the Senate in November 2012 following my first reelection victory, Senator Inouye had lost his vigor. He was eighty-eight years old, and his health had taken a turn for the worse in the weeks we’d been away from Washington. Senator Inouye relied on a wheelchair, and he had just started using an oxygen tank. But soon after I returned he sent me a handwritten note:

*Congratulations, Jon.
I can rest now.
—Dan*

A few weeks later, the senator passed away. He was the thirty-second American to lie in repose in the rotunda of the US Capitol. And on Sunday, December 23, I brought a borrowed trumpet with me to Honolulu. I had offered to play “Taps” for my friend and mentor, and Senator Inouye’s family graciously accepted. The military organizers tasked with planning the senator’s funeral weren’t so sure.

“Senator, exactly how many seconds will your performance be?” asked a young man in a crisp uniform as we rode in a government van to the service at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, commonly called “the Punchbowl.”

“Thirty-six? Thirty-seven?” I replied. “Maybe thirty-eight?”

“Exactly, sir?”

“I can make it exactly thirty-seven seconds. Why do you ask?”

“We have four F-22s flying over, and we need them to be directly overhead as you sound your final note. So we’ll need that exact time.”

It was the young man’s polite way of telling me to keep my performance of “Taps” to exactly thirty-seven seconds, because he was about to formalize it, with military precision, with the flight commander.

Another uniformed honor guardsman with a bugle joined me as I made my way up to the stage with my trumpet.

“I’ll be standing next to you just in case you need any assistance,” he whispered. “If you need me to come in, I’ll pick it up right where you leave off.”

“Got it, thanks,” I told him, feeling a little bad for taking the bugler’s job. “But you don’t need to worry about this.” Apparently the military was just as concerned about a single missed note as I was. My first, off-key performance of “Taps” on Memorial Day 1969 was also the last time I messed it up.

After the twenty-one-rifle salute, and overlooking thousands of mourners under shade tents in the Punchbowl, including Mrs. Irene Inouye, most of my Senate colleagues, and the president of the United States, I played “Taps” for my friend, trying my best to keep my own emotions in check. I kept my eyes closed until the end. As I sounded the twenty-fourth note, four F-22 Raptors from the Hawaii National Guard’s 199th Fighter Squadron screamed over us in tribute, flying in the asymmetrical “missing man” formation.



A heartfelt tribute indeed! Yes, it is all true - as the staff who assisted with the planning and execution of the Memorial services at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl, we were touched but very worried about Senator’s request to play “Taps” as the “practice sessions” we heard through the Senate Hart wall weren’t going so good. The military leadership was even more concerned about the possible “choking” from a well-meaning, emotional U.S. Senator. An Army bugler in the wings was an elegant solution. Jon Tester executed perfectly - with an audible sigh and “phew” drowned out by the F22s flying overhead to cap out an emotional, beautiful service eight years ago.

Til we can gather safely, lets pause for a moment to remember an amazing leader - Say a prayer, hoist a glass or do a virtual hug! Be safe during this holiday season -- wear a mask, social distance, and wash your hands! Looking forward with optimism to a brighter 2021.

Aloha,
Jennifer, Sara & DKII Ohana