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From: Hawaii Coffee Association

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**HAWAII COFFEE ASSOCIATION NAMES STATEWIDE CUPPING,  
BARISTA WINNERS AT 27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**TAPS MAUI'S DAVID GRIDLEY WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD,  
REP. NICOLE LOWEN AS LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR**

HAWAII— Winners of the Hawaii Coffee Association's 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide Coffee Cupping Competition and the inaugural Café Collective SigBev Competition were announced during the 27<sup>th</sup> Hawaii Coffee Association Conference May 19-21 in Kona. The annual conference and cupping at the Outrigger Kona Resort & Spa returned to an in-person format after going virtual in 2021.

HCA also recognized David Gridley of Maui with the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award and District 6 Rep. Nicole Lowen was named HCA's 2022 Legislator of the Year. Lowen was lauded for her leadership on HB 1517, which sought to amend Hawaii's minimum coffee blending ratio from 10% to 51%, while Gridley was hailed for a long and storied career in Hawaii's coffee industry, dating back to HCA's founding in 1996.

The program featured a full lineup of speakers sharing the latest efforts and progress on combating Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR). HCA has been working closely with multiple agencies, state and federal lawmakers, international partners, industry leaders and other stakeholders since the fall of 2020 to address CLR and acknowledged their response efforts.

"We were able to fast-track the permitting of two trans-lamimar fungicides to help growers manage the disease in the short-term," noted HCA Executive Director Chris Manfredi. "We also have identified rust-resistant coffee varieties already being propagated in Hawaii. We hope to make these varieties available to growers as quickly as possible and identify, source and import other CLR resistant varieties from overseas."

A field grafting workshop was also part of the conference program to help growers implement varietal replacement. Another on soil health underscored the importance of cover crops.

A highlight of the conference was a presentation on HCA's new product traceability partnership with Oritain. The global company is building a statewide "Origin Fingerprint" to verify the origins of Hawaii-grown coffee. Manfredi says the effort is designed to thwart product counterfeiting, build marketability and ensure brand integrity.

"We will work with Oritain in the coming weeks and months to develop and implement a sampling plan with the goal of establishing "Origin Fingerprints" for Hawaii's coffee growing regions," detailed Manfredi. "We can then scientifically verify the origin of green and roasted coffee grown in K'au, Kona, Maui, etc."

The conference schedule also included a keynote by Jennifer “Vern” Long of World Coffee Research; an inaugural Seed-to Brew Roundtable; cupping and roasting workshops; and the election of HCA’s Board of Directors and officers.

### **Statewide Cupping Competition Results**

Ninety-four entries vied in the 13<sup>th</sup> Statewide Hawaii Coffee Association Cupping Competition. Brittany Horn, HCA cupping committee chair and co-owner of Pacific Coffee Research, notes the competition “continues to get tighter and tougher each year,” adding this year’s field boasted a record top score of 87.45. The top three scoring coffees were from different districts on Hawaii Island: Kona, Hawaii (east side) and Ka’u. All of them were fruit-dried coffees (natural process) and inoculated with a specified yeast strain at some point during the drying process.

The top-scoring coffee was a Gesha variety produced by Geisha Kona Coffee. Arakawa Coffee and Tea Plantation of the Hawaii District entered a blend of Typica and Caturra varieties placing second with a score of 87.30. JN Farms of Ka’u received a score of 86.90 with a Red Bourbon variety.

The top 10 highest scoring coffees were recognized and awards were also presented to the top coffees produced in Hawaii Department of Agriculture-recognized growing regions located throughout the islands. Top placing coffees by district included Oahu’s Maunawili Coffee’s Pink, Yellow and Red Bourbon variety earning 86.75, Olinda Organic Farm of Maui earning 83.75 with a Red Catuai variety, Hog Heaven Coffee’s Typica variety of Hamakua earning 83.25, and Kauai Coffee Company’s Mundo Novo variety scoring 81.75.

“We encourage experimentation, testing new varieties, and innovative processing methods, because it is clear that growers who do this, and do it well, are rewarded with consistently elevated scores,” explains Horn. “As they say, rising tides raise all ships. So, my sincerest desire is the growers of these award-winning coffees share in their success by collaborating within our community and working together as we navigate the ever-changing landscape of the coffee value chain.”

Kona-based PCR organized the competition utilizing a judging panel comprised of local licensed Q graders led by Madeleine Longoria Garcia, PCR co-owner. The panel included Alakai Kapanui, head roaster at PCR, Max Maemori, director of Island Liquid, Marc Marquez, coffee director at Savor Brands and Dave Hall, owner of Small Kine Coffee Consulting. Horn served as head competition facilitator and was assisted by PCR’s roaster assistant Meg Duka and production assistant Eric Musil.

The panel employed the standard Specialty Coffee Association’s cupping methodology and scoring format. Coffee cupping is a combination of art and science where coffees are evaluated and scored based on a variety of subtle characteristics: flavor, aroma, acidity, aftertaste, body, balance, overall cup experience, presence of sweetness, lack of defect and uniformity.

### **Six Baristas Vie in Inaugural Competition**

Mack McDonald of Outpost Coffee took first place in the first HCA Café Collective SigBev Competition at HiCO in Kona. Alakai Kapanui of Pacific Coffee Research placed second with Janine Janke of YWAM Ships earning third place. Winners took home barista equipment and coffee.

With a sole requirement of using locally grown coffee, baristas were asked to create a signature beverage to present to a panel of judges and the audience. Six competitors were judged on creativity, taste and presentation by Eric Dong of Merriman’s Restaurant and John Letoto and Kelleigh Stewart, both of Big Island Coffee Roasters.

Madeleine Longoria Garcia, who chaired the inaugural barista showdown, founded The Café Collective, which is a new HCA committee. “Our goal is to create opportunities to engage with the retail end of the

Hawaii coffee supply chain—baristas, café owners and roasters,” explained Longoria Garcia. “We hope to create a more connected and resilient local coffee community.”

### **New Board and Officers Elected**

HCA membership gathered to elect their new board and officers. The HCA’s new president is Fred Cowell of Kauai Coffee with Kona’s Tom Greenwell as vice president; Abigail Munoz of Monarch Coffee will serve as treasurer; and Brittany Horn will continue as secretary. Manfredi stepped down earlier this year after six terms as president to serve as HCA’s executive director.

The HCA Board of Directors features representation spanning a variety of businesses positioned throughout the coffee supply chain including growers, processors, wholesalers, roasters and retailers.

Major sponsors of the HCA Conference included State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Oritain, American AgCredit, FedEx, Honolulu Coffee Company, Kauai Coffee Company, Kona Hills, Monarch Coffee, Satake, Savor Brands, Sustainable Agro Solutions, TricorBraun Flex and UCC Hawaii.

Complete results for the cupping competition are posted at <https://hawaiicoffeeassoc.org/2022-Cupping-Results>. Watch videos of conference presentations at <https://hawaiicoffeeassoc.org/2022-Conference-Presentations> .

The Hawaii Coffee Association’s mission is to represent all sectors of the Hawaii coffee industry, including growers, millers, wholesalers, roasters and retailers. The HCA’s primary objective is to increase awareness and consumption of Hawaiian coffees. A major component of HCA’s work is the continuing education of members and consumers. Its annual conference has continued to grow, gaining international attention.

Learn more about the HCA at [www.hawaiicoffeeassoc.org](http://www.hawaiicoffeeassoc.org)

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