

Thirty-eight years ago, when my husband Al and I were returning from our honeymoon, we encountered my favorite high school teacher Dr. Betty Moore Bullard in the Haneda Airport. As luck would have it, she was enroute to Hawai'i! We asked if we could take her to lunch and she in turn asked if she could bring a friend. Little did we know that her "friend" would change our lives forever, and for the better!

Dean Sumi Makey was the additional lunch guest. I knew a little about the East-West Center, thanks to Dr. Bullard, but Sumi introduced us to the host family program. We immediately agreed to be a host family and met our first student, Mau Sheng Lin from Taiwan, an agronomy student who became part of our 'family.' Being that we knew little or nothing about agronomy, we added a second student (also an agronomist), Fazal Rahimi to the family, and the rest as they say is history. Dean Makey was on the nominating committee for the Friends, and before I could give it another thought, I found myself on the board of the Friends of the East-West Center. Dean Makey continued to be part of our lives, helping to select the perfect additions to our 'ohana. We were honored to host the first student from Bhutan, Kunzang Dechen who of course was recruited to come to the Center by none other than Dean Makey.

Sumi has been a part of our lives for 38 years. Her love of the Center and her support of the Friends have spanned far before our meeting and remains a major part of our lives. Sumi encouraged us to start a scholarship at the Center, but one needs to know that she leads by example. She never asks anyone to do anything that she herself wouldn't do, so it was more like taking us by the hand and leading us through the magic of the Center.

My family is forever indented to Sumi, but the Friends also are a part of that debt owed to her, she has done so much for so many. While I brag about the number of students we have has the honor of hosting, Sumi was the ultimate 'family' to every student who walked across the threshold of Burns Hall as a participant.

It is long overdue, but with great joy that I am allowed to introduce the Friends recipient of the Friends for Life Award to Dean Sumi Makey. Please join me in honoring her with your smiles and your standing ovation. Sumi, this one is for YOU!!