Christine A. Kubota
President

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Practice

- Business & Commercial Law
- Employment
- Immigration & Naturalization Law
- Real Estate
- Wills, Trusts & Estates

Education

- University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law (J.D. 1988)
- Chaminade University, International Relations and Asian Studies(B.A. 1977)

Christine was born and reared in Japan. She is the President of Damon Key Leong Kupchak Hastert, and practices in the firm's Corporate, Commercial, and Real Estate Law practice groups, primarily with Japanese-speaking clients. To address the needs of her Japanese clients, her practice also encompasses Immigration Law, Estate Planning and Employment matters. She is a past Director of Meritas, a worldwide affiliation of commercial law firms, which has members in over 254 global markets. Damon Key is the exclusive Hawaii affiliate of Meritas.

Christine is one of 187 individuals worldwide who received a special award from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. She is among the recipients of the Foreign Minister's Commendations for Fiscal Year 2023. The commendation was bestowed for her wide-ranging efforts in the promotion of mutual understanding between Japan and the United States. Christine received her award certificate and commemorative gift at the Foreign Minister's Commendation Conferment Ceremony held at the Consulate-General of Japan in Honolulu, on November 21, 2023.

Chris once again was selected by her peers for inclusion in the 2027 Edition of The Best Lawyers in America® for her work in Business Organizations (including LLCs and Partnerships), Commercial Litigation, Corporate Law, Employment Law-Management, and Real Estate.

Chris was the first woman elected to serve on the Board of Directors at the Waialae Country Club. She was also selected to serve on the Board of Kristi Yamaguchi's Always Dream Foundation focusing on early literacy and family engagement here in Hawaii and served for three years.

In October of 2019, Christine was one of 2,000 distinguished guests from around the world to personally witness the Sokuirei-Seiden-No-Gi, the official enthronement proclamation ceremony for His Majesty Emperor Naruhito. She sat among kings, queens and foreign dignitaries in Japan's Imperial Palace to watch history in the making. She was one of two people from Hawaii selected to attend the festivities and one of seven representatives of Japanese-American ancestry from the U.S.

Chris' leadership in the Japanese community in Hawaii spans decades and includes serving as past board chair of the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce, United Japanese Society of Hawaii, Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii, and co-chair of the 150th Anniversary of the Gannenmono

Celebration. She currently serves as Director of the Pan Pacific Festival Foundation; Hiroshima Kenjinkai; Hawaii Aloha Life Enrichment Association; United Japanese Society of Hawaii; and Honorary Member of the Shufu Society of Hawaii.

She practices in the following areas:

- Business and Commercial Transactions: Assist clients with business transactions; formation of corporations and limited liability companies; negotiation of contracts; purchase and sale transactions; business planning; loan agreements; and other commercial transactions to include retail, restaurant, distributorships, service, tour/travel, internet, real estate and non-profit business organizations.
- Immigration: Assist clients with non-immigrant business visa applications (to include E-2 Treaty Investor; E-2 Treaty Trader; L-1 intra-company transfer; and H-1B Specialty Occupation); coordinate immigrant visa applications; fiance visas; business/tourist visas; R-1 religious worker visas; E-B category filings; Family-based petitions; Transitional Diversity (Lottery) applications; Re-entry Permits; Consular Processing and general immigration consultation.
- Employment: Counsel and assist employers (corporations, non-profits, supervisors, human resource specialists) regarding employment issues; provide advice regarding employment agreements and employee handbooks/policies; and counsel clients with issues arising from termination, discipline, non-compete agreements, discrimination, harassment, etc.
- Real Estate: Assist clients with the purchase and sale of real property; purchase and sale of leasehold interests; review of commercial lease agreements (shopping centers, hotels, warehouses, offices, retail space, etc.); coordinate purchase and sale of hotels, golf courses, resorts and shopping centers; assist landowners with disputes related to water, boundary, title, nuisance and other issues; and other general consultation.
- Estate Planning: Assist clients with their estate plans (wills, trusts (revocable/irrevocable), power of attorney, advance health care directives, family limited partnerships, qualified domestic trusts, etc.) with focus on non-resident and resident alien planning; and matters related to probate and ancillary probate filings.

Professional and Community Affiliations

- Always Dream Foundation (2021-2023)
- American Bar Association (Real Estate Section)
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (2005- 2017)
- American Heart Association (Volunteer, 34th Annual Golf Classic Committee (2008)
- Hawaii American Immigration Lawyers Association (2005-2017)
- Hawaii Aloha Life Enrichment Association (Member/Director, 2007-present; Executive Committee, 2015-present)
- Hawaii State Bar Association (Member, 1988-present; Director, 2010-2011); Mentor/Mentee Committee (2010); Awards Committee (2012)
- Hiroshima Kenjikai (Member, 1996-present; Director, 1997-present)
- U.S. Japan Council (Member, 2012-present)
- Honolulu Japanese Chamber Charitable Corporation (Director, 2014-2019)
- Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce (Member, 2005-present; Chair, 2011-2012; Vice Chair, 2007-2010; Board of Directors, 2005-2024; International Business Development Committee Chair, 2006-2010)

- Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii (Member, 2013-present; Chair, 2016-2018; Co-Chair, Fundraising and Membership Committee/Facilities Committee)
- Pan Pacific Festival Foundation (Chair, Advisory Committee, 2014-2021; Board of Directors, 2021-present)
- Japan-America Society of Honolulu (Member, 1992-present)
- Japanese Women's Society Foundation (Member, 2013-present; Co-Chair, Women's Leadership Summit, Feb 2014; Fashion Show Co-Chair, 2024)
- Kizuna Group-Gannenmono Committee Co-chair (2018)
- Meritas, Board of Directors (1998-2000)
- Mid Pacific Country Club (1992-2007, By-Laws Committee 1996-2003; Legal Committee 2001)
- National Association of College and University Attorneys (2000-2001)
- Office of International Affairs Advisory Council (2009)
- Pacific Asian Affairs Council (1998-2003)
- Pacific Business News, Women Who Mean Business (Finalist, 2010)
- Royal Iolani Condominium Association (Board of Directors, 1996-2005)
- Seiwa Juku (2011-2014)
- Shufu Society of Hawaii (Honorary Director, 2020-present)
- Supreme Court Committee on Court Interpreters & Language Access (Member, 2000-2018; Co-Chair, June 2011-August 2018)
- Tau Productions (Director, 2019-2022)
- United Japanese Society (Member, 1996-present; Chair, 2012-2013; Board of Directors, 2013-present)
- Waialae Country Club (Member, 1997-present; Board of Directors, 2020-2022, Membership Committee, present)

Merits

- Award of Merit, City & County of Honolulu (July 18, 2008)
- Certificate of Appreciation, Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu (December 28, 2018)
- Certificate of Appreciation, Supreme Court Committee on Court Interpreters & Language Access (October 16, 2018)
- Congratulations Message, Councilwoman Ann Kobayashi (May 1, 2020)

Representative Clients

- B-R 31 Icecream K.K.
- Hawaii Tokai International College
- Honbushin International Center
- Ito-en Hawaii
- Kibun Foods
- Kintetsu Hawaii, Co., Ltd.
- List Sothebys International Realty
- Minamoto Kitchoan
- Restaurant Tsukeneya
- Sendai Ikuei Gakuen
- Triis Inc.
- Toell USA
- Upfront Group