

# LEGAL ALERT

Providing clients worldwide access to sophisticated legal advice and exceptional service.



DAMON KEY LEONG KUPCHAK HASTERT | hawaii**lawyer.com**<sup>®</sup>  
A LAW CORPORATION

MURAKAMI  
U.S. COAST GUARD



## Captain Mark M. Murakami Retires From the U.S. Coast Guard After 30 Years of Distinguished Service

*"Do a good job."*

With almost every new assignment and promotion he received over the course of his thirty year career in the United States Coast Guard, Mark Murakami received the same piece of advice: "Do a good job." This simple refrain, repeated to Mark by so many of his supervisors and mentors throughout his military service, might seem to most people too simple, lacking any real guidance or direction. But for Mark, it was perfect, and it was also reflective of the type of person that he is and always has been: an autonomous, creative problem solver; a diligent and conscientious leader; and someone with sound, thoughtful, and decisive judgment.



2013 – 2017 Reserve Chief of Staff, Fourth Coast Guard District Honolulu, Hawaii  
2017 – 2019 Reserve Chief of Staff, Coast Guard Pacific Area Alameda, California

*Continued on page 2*

**Inside this Issue:**

Local Expertise With Worldwide Reach

R. Charles "Charlie" Bocken – A Celebration of Life

2022 Legislative Update for Condominium and Community Associations

Kristi Yamaguchi's Always Dream Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Entering the United States to Direct and Develop a Business as a Foreign National: How Hard Can It Be?



We want to congratulate Captain Murakami (ret.) – our colleague, partner, and friend – on his recent retirement from the U.S. Coast Guard, effective July 1, 2022, after a distinguished military career that spanned three decades. At his retirement ceremony at Coast Guard Base Honolulu, he was awarded the Legion of Merit medal for his leadership, professionalism, and performance of duties.

After graduating from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut in 1992, Mark spent thirteen years on active duty, first as Operations Officer of the USCG Cutter Iris, then as the Commanding Officer of USCG Cutter Point Heyer. He then enrolled in law school at the University of Hawaii's William S. Richardson School of Law, ultimately graduating with his law degree in 1999 as valedictorian of his class. After law school, Mark served for four years as the Assistant District Legal Officer for the Fourteenth Coast Guard District, followed by two years as the Executive Officer of the USCG Cutter Confidence stationed in Port Canaveral, Florida. During his time on the Confidence, Mark oversaw the rescue and interdiction of more than 1,000 migrants from Haiti, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic.

In 2005, Mark was ready for a change. After much contemplation, he decided to resign his active duty commission, join the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, and move back home to Hawaii. A hot commodity in the local legal talent pool at the time, Mark (thankfully) decided to join Damon Key as a lateral Associate; he was promoted to a Director/Shareholder of the firm less than three years later. But his involvement with the U.S. Coast Guard continued, albeit as a reservist. As if maintaining a full caseload as an attorney in private practice wasn't enough, Mark has, for the last 17 years, simultaneously served in various capacities and assignments as a Coast Guard Reserve Officer. During that time, he was promoted to Commander, and then Captain, and he ultimately retired as the Senior Reserve Officer for the Coast Guard's Legal Service Command West. How he practiced law full time and honorably served our country all these years, most of us will never know or fully understand.



1988 Cadet Murakami

Mark and Captain, then-Commander John Fitzgerald, overseeing operations from the bridge of the ship Confidence in 2005.



In the summer of 1989, the U.S. Coast Guard's training ship Eagle was invited to visit Leningrad, Soviet Union, as the Iron Curtain was falling. It was very high visibility and Walter Cronkite was invited to sail on the ship. This is the summer after Mark's first year.



1995 Mark boarding a fishing boat in distress in Estero Bay while fellow coastie Michel Martin mans the boat.



In 2005, several hundred Haitian migrants were rescued from a derelict sailing vessel in the Bahamas by Mark and crew. They were cared for and fed while navigating back to Port Au Prince for repatriation.



By all accounts, Mark had a decorated military career. While a member of the Coast Guard, Mark received the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, and four Coast Guard Achievement Medals, among other recognitions. His achievements as a lawyer in private practice have been equally impressive: Mark has been selected as one of The *Best Lawyers in America* for the last ten years in a number of different practice areas and, in 2013, was named Lawyer of the Year in the Hawaii market in the area of Eminent Domain and Condemnation Law. Mark also previously served on the Board of Directors of the Hawaii State Bar Association.

This is all to say that the U.S. Coast Guard's loss is Damon Key's gain. To say we have been proud to call Mark our partner all of these years would be a massive understatement. The selfless example of service to a greater cause that he displayed was, and is, something to be championed. But we would be lying if we didn't admit, somewhat selfishly, that we are excited about Mark's future with the firm following his retirement from the Coast Guard. Mark's entire adult life has been about service: first to his country, and then (and now) to his clients and community.

The U.S. Coast Guard's motto is "*semper paratus*," translated from Latin as meaning "always ready." Even after his military retirement, we have no doubt that Mark intends on abiding by this virtue every day in his legal practice, just as he has for the last 17 years at Damon Key. We and our clients can rest assured that Captain Murakami is and will be always ready to "do a good job."



*Thank you Mark, for your service, and for everything you have done for your entire Damon Key 'ohana.*



Murakami Family; Mark, Kim, Kyra, Tyler receiving awards from Rear Admiral Nathan Moore



Presentation of Colors



Damon Key family