

PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS



PACIFICINNO

INNO FIRE AWARDS

2026

Eight local companies that
spark innovation and fuel
growth for Hawaii's economy

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GETTY IMAGES

T H E L I S T LARGEST PUBLIC COMPANIES, BOARD DIRECTORS 17-19

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ECONOMIC RECOVERY

\$8M milestone for Maui

Lahaina marks its first major
commercial development since the
wildfires in 2023.

ALEXANDER LUGO, 4



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INNO FIRE AWARDS

Pacific Business News has named eight Hawaii companies as honorees for the 2026 Fire Awards, which recognize excellence and leadership in technology and innovation. The honorees were selected from nominations from the community.

- Janis Magin

2026 HONOREES

- 12 Care For Aina Now
Coral Crater Adventure Park
- 13 Hawaii Off Grid Architecture & Engineering
Oceanit
- 14 Pacific Impact Zone
Pear Suite
- 15 Pono Pacific
Sun Noodle

NOTE TO READERS

Honorees are chosen through an independent editorial review, with selections based entirely on their merits, achievements and contributions to their organizations and local community. Commercial interests with *Pacific Business News* are not considered. Review panels may be comprised entirely of *Pacific Business News* leadership, or in combination with outside judges determined by the news department. The *Pacific Business News* editorial leadership has final say and approval for all awards and honorees.

PONO PACIFIC

Within the last 12 months, Pono Pacific Land Management has reached significant milestones in protecting endangered species and ecosystems and developing renewable diesel and sustainable aviation fuels on the islands.

In partnership with the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, Pono Pacific completed construction of the largest predator-exclusion fence in the nation: a 14,785-foot barrier at Kanaha Pond Wildlife Sanctuary that provides endangered waterbirds with a secure nesting habitat by preventing deer, cats, dogs, mongoose, mice and rats from entering and damaging the fragile ecosystems. Pono Pacific has constructed the majority of the predator-exclusion fencing across Hawaii, protecting about 4,180 acres across the state, with 26,407 linear feet of fencing completed in 2025 alone.

"Innovation isn't about chasing the next big idea – it's about creating meaningful solutions," said Pono Pacific President Jonathan Marstaller. "We aren't resting on a legacy of 25 years in business, we are using that knowledge to create scalable solutions that help Hawaii thrive for

generations to come by bringing together technology, partnerships, and local expertise to solve Hawaii's most pressing energy, food, and climate challenges."

On the renewable energy side of the company, Pono Pacific launched a sister company called Pono Energy in early 2026 to focus on the production of camelina-based renewable fuels. Field trials to produce sustainable aviation fuel with camelina sativa, a fast-growing oilseed crop, are being conducted through a partnership between Pono Pacific and the Hawaii Agriculture Research Center, with the first of five camelina trials harvested at the beginning of June.

The ultimate goal of the camelina trials is "reducing emissions on Hawaii's grid with renewable diesel and powering Hawaiian and Alaska flights with sustainable aviation fuel," Marstaller said.

Pono Pacific has also partnered with Par Hawaii since 2023 to develop a supply of locally grown biofuel feedstocks.

—Nichole Villegas



PONO PACIFIC

The team at Pono Pacific Land Management

PONO PACIFIC

Top executives: John Leong, CEO; Jonathan Marstaller, president

Industry: Environmental services, natural resource conservation and land management

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SUN NOODLE

Sun Noodle began in 1981 when Hidehito Uki arrived in Honolulu from Tochigi, Japan, with a suitcase and a noodle machine. He introduced fresh noodles to neighbors, door-to-door, before moving production into a Kalihi warehouse. He later expanded into making saimin, Okinawan soba, chow mein and chow fun to match Hawaii's diverse palate.

He and his wife, Keiko, grew Sun Noodle into a global operation, opening a California location in 2004, New Jersey in 2011 and the Netherlands in 2023. Today, the company employs more than 300 people worldwide.

It remains family run. Keiko is treasurer and secretary; their daughter, Hisae, is chief operating officer, and son, Kenshiro, is president of North America and Europe.

Sun Noodle supplies independent ramen shops, major retailers, nationally recognized chefs and food service customers. Its New Jersey facility alone produces more than 150,000 servings of ramen each day.

In November 2025, Sun Noodle partnered with Hawaii designer Sig Zane to launch the Kalo

Noodle Kit, a limited edition collaboration that transformed an Indigenous crop into an air-dried, shelf-stable noodle.

Sun Noodle's research and development team spent months crafting a formula that protects the flavor and texture of fresh kalo, merging food innovation with cultural responsibility.

To align with cultural and culinary values, Sun Noodle worked with the Hawaii Executive Collaborative, Chef Mark Noguchi and Reppun Farm to ensure that the kits reflected local agriculture, community values and the traditions surrounding kalo.

The project also supported a broader initiative called "Kalo: Nourishing Hawaii and Sharing It with the World," to promote taro across the world.

"Every element of the kit reflects our core Hawaiian values," said Ian Coloma Suniga, marketing coordinator for Sun Noodle. "The ancestry, culture and guiding principles of respect for the aina and aloha for the community are present in every detail."

—Cathy Cruz-George



SUN NOODLE

Sun Noodle's leadership, from left: Hisae Uki, COO; Hidehito Uki, CEO; Keiko Uki, treasurer and secretary; and Kenshiro Uki, president of North America and Europe

SUN NOODLE

Top executive: Hidehito Uki, CEO

Industry: Food manufacturing and distribution

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