

# GRAY • HONG • NOJIMA & ASSOCIATES, INC.

## Consulting Civil Engineers Woman-Owned Small Business

Sitting across from Sheryl Nojima, it's easy to see the passion she holds for what she does. President and owner of Gray, Hong, Nojima and Associates, Inc. (GHN), Nojima speaks proudly of her company.

Founded in 1970 by Brian Gray, GHN serves the Hawaii and Pacific Basin community providing engineering consulting services. Fulfilling a diverse set of needs such as site development, drainage, water, sewer and roads, GHN has worked on countless noteworthy projects throughout the state. To name a few: Kahiwelo at Makakilo, Ocean Pointe/Hoakalei in Ewa Beach, and the Airport Sewer Rehabilitation/Reconstruction.

Nojima earned her BS and MBA at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UH Manoa) and her MS in civil engineering at the University of California at Berkeley. She returned to UH Manoa and served as assistant dean at the College of Engineering. While she was there, she earned her PhD in education.

Shortly after, in 2001, Nojima joined GHN, where her husband had been working since 1981. She worked her way from project engineer to principal, to vice president and finally to president. She makes relationships a big part of her daily life, with affiliations with the American Council of Engineering Companies of Hawaii, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the Water Environment Federation, and she also keeps up appearances at UH Manoa through advisory committees and guest lectures.

When it comes to life at GHN, Nojima takes part in every aspect of her firm's work. She is the principal-in-charge for regulatory/permitting assistance, preparation of environmental impact statements (EIS) and assessments (EA), hydrologic and drainage studies and civil state work projects. She's also managing partner, which means she is responsible for the firm's overall operation and strategic planning.

Nojima also handles the professional development within the company. Perhaps reflective of her experience in higher education, Nojima implemented a mentoring system in the company, pairing the younger engineers with more senior ones.

She also makes a point to push her team members in situations she knows they can handle but might be weary of pursuing. "People don't realize their capabilities unless they're given the opportunity to explore them," she says.



Gray, Hong, Nojima & Associates 'Ohana



Sheryl E. Nojima, PhD, PE-President  
of Gray, Hong, Nojima & Associates, Inc.

This focus on development shows what Nojima hopes will carry the company forward in the future. Breaching the usual practice of setting goals to get more business, Nojima hopes instead to strengthen the relationships GHN already has.

"Obviously we are not a big firm with a marketing department. We are a very service-oriented firm relying heavily on our reputation with our clients," Nojima says. "In a sense we continue to operate like a family in the same way the company started out back in the 70s, which allows us to adapt or react quickly to meet our client's needs."



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