

# Tales of the AFP Fundraising Ohana

by S. Sanae Tokumura, ACFRE, APR



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Some of us work like dogs, inputting donor data, writing case statements/development plans/grant requests, engineering meetings between board members and major prospects, facilitating volunteer meetings, running (literally) signature galas, writing speeches for the CEO, all perhaps while raising a family. Some of us have written books, done all kinds of scholarly things and traveled the world to share this knowledge.

But all of us in the AFP fundraising ohana, or family, also have remarkable lives and stories that co-exist with the professional. This blog will tell those stories. Why? Because the fundraising professionals I've been blessed to have met in my career are not only top-of-the-line professionals, but also great humanitarians and humans. And I want all of us to see this humanity. I'll start with a few stories of my own, but my hope is to publish your stories as we go.

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When I hike the mountains of Oahu with my dog Baloo, I am at peace. No longer do I feel that familiar clenching between my shoulder blades or the sensation of having multiple plates in the air. I leave the world of boardrooms, deadlines, meetings, traffic,

negotiation...behind.

Baloo and I make meaningful eye contact when we know we're in trouble and have to retreat down a slope carefully. She also waits and offers her tail to me when we need to dig deep to top a rise. There is no better partner. Once she may have saved me from a hulking stranger we encountered at the top of a ridge. He emerged from the shadowy, dense tree line to block our path but went his way quickly when she came between us. One normal day as we scrambled up a particularly rocky area, I tumbled about 10 feet and wrenched my knee sideways. Baloo slowed my skid toward a steep drop and then literally pulled me all the way back up the mountain. The view was beautiful. I limped all the way back down the steep trail to our car using Baloo as a crutch and knew I wasn't going to get away with it this time. Sure enough, I was scheduled for knee surgery the following week. Since then I've won my age group in local Olympic triathlons and experienced a few more hair-raising adventures in the hills with Baloo.

Our hiking days together are now over. Tell me, when did she become an older dog?



In reflection: 1) Our framework is finite, all of us, dog or man. Knowing this, I encourage our ohana to explore the heck out of this world of ours with your favorite companion(s). Each moment is so darn precious.

2) Congratulations to foundations that have moved toward providing steadfast partnerships with

organizations. Promising organizations could use encouraging eye contact and a steady, strong tail during sections of unexpected rocky slopes. To win championships, an organization needs protective companions.

Please send me your stories at [solidconcepts@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:solidconcepts@hawaii.rr.com).



Ms. Tokumura is a fund raising and public relations consultant for non-profit organizations. She is known for conducting thorough and accurate capital campaign feasibility studies, and for assisting organizations to conduct and complete first-time capital campaigns. Her infrastructure assessment recommendations have been credited with creating best practice fundraising systems throughout Hawaii. With nearly 35 years of experience in both fund raising and public relations, Sanae is nationally advance-certified (ACFRE) in fund raising, the terminal professional credential offered by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP). She is the only ACFRE in Hawaii and she is also AFP's only designated Master Teacher in the Hawaii and South Pacific region. Tokumura is also nationally accredited (APR) in the practice of public relations through the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).