

Sig Kagawa
Community Philanthropist and Business Leader

A strong leader with a lasting mission – getting others involved and invested.

Siegfried "Sig" Kagawa devoted his life to philanthropy and to helping others. A long-time supporter of Japanese American causes, he energetically promoted lasting education to keep the story of his community alive. To him, it was vital *American* history for all future generations.

Sig was one of six children, and the only son of life insurance pioneer Lawrence "L.T." Kagawa. The elder Kagawa was the first insurance salesman for Transamerica Life Companies in Hawaii to sell equal and affordable insurance to all, regardless of race. Previously, people of color usually had to purchase insurance plans at higher rates.



Sig continued his father's tradition of providing access to affordable insurance. Like his father, he excelled at business. Sig was named Hawaii Insurance Professional of the Year, served as the President of the Hawaii State Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, and was recognized by the Life Insurance Master Agency Builder Awards.

But Sig's passion for helping others extended to his personal life as well. For decades, he contributed to countless humanitarian, cultural, and social causes both nationally and in his native Hawaii. He was instrumental in the formative years of the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, and he was the first Asian American chair of the Bishop Museum in Hawaii. Sig was also the first Asian American to serve on the National Board of the Boy Scouts of America, and he received the Silver Buffalo Award for his many contributions to the organization. With his wife Betsy, Sig formed the Kagawa Foundation to support these causes and countless others.

Sig was a man with strong character and a clear vision. He dreamed big and made things happen. He made his community – and his country – a much better place for all future generations. Yet at all points he remained humble. He ignited passion in others, getting them invested and involved in helping out humanity.

Sig passed away in 2009 at the age of 77. But his lasting contributions and legacy live on.

Again this year, Pacific Global Investment Management Company is sponsoring the GFBNEC Student Essay, Performance & Visual Arts Contest in honor of Sig and fellow philanthropist Manabi Hirasaki. True to Sig's vision for lasting education, hundreds of high school and college students nationwide will get the chance to research and write about the Japanese American soldiers of World War II. Many will even take up their cameras and film short videos, all in the effort to sustain this important legacy. Thanks to Sig's lasting efforts and the continuing efforts of Pacific Global Investment Management Company, Sig's impact continues to make this world a better place.

2018 High School and College Essay, Performance & Visual Arts Contest – Honorees

The contest has been made possible by the generous support of two Supporting Sponsors: Ken and June Shimabukuro, and an anonymous donor in memory of World War II Veteran Masao Takahashi.