



2011 Kokua Awardee:

Claudia de Leon Guerrero Fajardo Kaercher

Claudia is Chamorro, born on the island of Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Micronesia, a region in the Pacific. She spent the first 10 years of her life growing up on the tiny atolls of the Marshall Islands.

Claudia is an active and positive contributor to her community. While never letting those around her forget about South Pacific Islanders and their contributions, she works to strengthen the community as a whole.

Claudia has served in many and various community leadership positions and organizations. She has been a member of the Pacific Rim Advisory Council for the city of Phoenix, and is active in the JACL and Lau Kanaka No Hawaii.



She is also active with the LEADS Academy, a scholarship and leadership development program for youth, particularly Asian and Pacific Islanders. Claudia has written a column for the Asian Chamber of Commerce newspaper and served on their committees.

Claudia's considerable knowledge and expertise was put to tremendous service to the community while working with the US Census, which provides numbers to substantiate the size of the South Pacific Islanders community in Arizona and brings attention to their needs and interests in Arizona.

Claudia credits her kumu hula, Hazel Po'okalani Soares of Halau Po'okalani, for inspiring her efforts to teach the History of the Hula and the Uses of the Hula Implements in cultural education presentations.

**For her dedication to the community
and leadership on behalf of Pacific Islanders,
we salute Claudia Kaercher.**