

315 Sand Island Access Road
Honolulu, HI 96819-2295

ph: 808.462.5000
pbshawaii.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT

Jody Shiroma

PBS Hawai'i

jshiroma@pbshawaii.org

808.462.5026

Friday, December 4, 2020

**PBS Hawai'i Names New President and CEO:
Nonprofit Leader and Former Newsman Ron Mizutani**

(HONOLULU, HI) – PBS Hawai'i has named Ron Mizutani as its new President and Chief Executive Officer, effective February 22, 2021. Mizutani currently heads Hawaii Food Bank and was a longtime television journalist.

He is to succeed the longest-serving PBS Hawai'i President and CEO, Leslie Wilcox, who is stepping down after 14 years to be with an ailing family member.

Mizutani, a Kauai native, has been a strong, caring Food Bank leader during the pandemic. He has 33 years of news media experience at KHON News, as an award-winning reporter, anchor and producer. He is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools and the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

He was selected after PBS Hawaii's Board of Directors conducted a national search.

"We value Ron's Hawaii sensibilities, experience, and his global perspectives," said Board Chair Joanne Lo Grimes. "We have every confidence in his talent for convening island voices, building community, and advancing education through storytelling."

Said Mizutani: "I truly believe it is our responsibility to make a difference in people's lives, open minds and strengthen our diverse communities."

"I am excited about the many opportunities before us and humbled by the opportunity to be part of this rich legacy," he said.

Pg. 2

Wilcox said, “This beloved organization will be in good hands. I know Ron’s tremendous work ethic, his passion for community, and his ability to bring people together to uplift others.”

Board Chair Grimes said Wilcox developed a seasoned, cohesive team and an extraordinary operation.

“We are deeply appreciative of Leslie’s transformational leadership and the trust and respect she has earned locally and nationally,” Grimes said.

Wilcox served as a Trustee of the America’s Public Television Stations. On her watch, PBS Hawai‘i earned perfect scores from national nonprofit analysts in transparency and accountability; relocated across town and built a new \$30 million multimedia facility on time and debt-free; created **HIKI NŌ** (Hawaiian for “can do”), an innovative statewide student learning and storytelling initiative; convened diverse adult and youth voices in live on-air/online **KĀKOU Town Halls** and **What’s It Going to Take?** events; added a new **PBS KIDS 24-7** educational channel; developed short-form programming such as **GET CAUGHT READING** and **aloha&grit**; and is expanding Pacific Islands offerings. Wilcox has interviewed notable individuals in 330 episodes of the weekly program, **Long Story Short with Leslie Wilcox**.

ABOUT PBS HAWAI‘I

Dedicated to universal access to education, nonprofit PBS Hawai‘i is the home of **HIKI NO**, a 90-school digital learning program that continues uninterrupted during the pandemic.

Before the pandemic struck, PBS Hawai‘i strengthened its statewide over-the-air broadcast relay system so that many homes in under-resourced areas across the Islands can better receive its programming, without the household cost of wi-fi, cable, or satellite dishes. In addition to its main channel, it operates a separate 24-hour TV/online educational channel for children.

And the organization makes available a vast free online archive, PBS LearningMedia, with separate, easy-to-use tracks for teachers, parents and students from Pre-K to Grade 12, containing video lessons and activity plans.

###

