



# **TEAM KIKA MANA – TEAM 368**

## **2011 HAWAII REGIONAL WOODIE FLOWERS ESSAY SUBMISSION**

### **Ms. Elaine Owens**

To the TKM family, Elaine Owens is special because of her contributions to the team, starting back in 2000 when TKM was inaugurated as a FIRST team. Elaine helped start the robotics team in McKinley High School, and served as the team captain for the first two years. Working with Mr. Milton Lau and Mr. Alan Ing, 2008 Woodie Flowers Finalist, she found her passion for electrical engineering. Upon graduating from our FIRST team and McKinley High School, Elaine continued her education at Rochester Institute of Technology where she received her Bachelors in Electrical Engineering. After getting her degree, she came back to Hawaii, and began her career at Hawaiian Electric Company, also our sponsor, working alongside Mr. Ing, the same person who inspired her to become an electrical engineer.

Beginning as an older sister to our team, she offered numerous support, soon going beyond to a greater role of being a parent. During the 05-06' season, Elaine became a lead electrical/programming mentor. According to E. Lei, former TKM captain and current engineering student, "[Elaine] took the inspiration FIRST gave her years ago to a higher level by returning to inspire the next generation." Of course, she succeeded in this. All of the students under her supervision plan to major in Electrical Engineering. Elaine inspires the young generation in various ways, communicating and interacting with them, like how an older sister treats her siblings, teaching thinking skills, gracious professionalism, teamwork, and enforcing safety. She ignores no one and helps those with difficulty understanding by being patient and finding those connections. First year member J. Li states, "Labview was such a foreign program to me, but Elaine walked me through it, now I'm almost up to speed." and Junior J. Lee recalls "[Elaine] encourages us to work as a team by group work. She assigned us to get in a pair and to write two autonomous codes. Coming up with strategies would have been harder if one were to work alone. But with her methods, it became easier for our team to finish the task."

Our team is not the only one Elaine helps, she had always been a valuable resource for other FIRST teams that needs guidance in the State of Hawaii. Even though she may be building a stronger opponent, she is no less enthusiastic with helping others throughout the season. Back in 07', Elaine, Mr. Ing, and Mr. Tui, our advisers, met with Gov. Lingle to discuss building a robotics program across the state of Hawaii. Hereafter, Elaine took a step further and partook in the Regional Planning Committee and several formal committees for the FRC Hawaii, taking the initiative in making the first FRC Hawaii Regional a reality. She remains active in these committees inspiring further generations.

Her dedication was recognized when she received volunteer of the year award for the past few years and also by her company and community leaders for her remarkable efforts. Her outreach consists of editorials in the newspaper and magazine informing students interested in a career in electrical engineering.

"Elaine is nice and observative like a big sister but at the same time serious with professionalism when she works. Everything she does with dedication, professionalism, quality, and passion. Her work ethics and passion for Engineering made me admire her with great awe." says L. Liu, alumna majoring in engineering. Elaine is more than a mentor to us; she is our older sister and parent whom gives back to the community and passes her experience, guiding younger generations who dream to become science and technology leaders.