



OPENING REMARKS

By Kamala Nayeli, Hi-Spa President



As we embark on summer, I reflect on the past six months with gratitude—for the daily blessings of life, the sunshine and blue skies, and for our guests who made the journey to vacation in Hawai'i, despite global challenges and future uncertainty.

Many of us have become accustomed to weathering the storm, quite literally, and have gained valuable insight into how we strategize our business, support the staff, boost revenues, and manage the operations. One thing is certain: the spa industry is more essential today than ever before.

On behalf of the Hawai'i Spa Association, I want to thank you for being part of our community of wellness professionals and for your engagement thus far. Stay tuned for more opportunities to connect, collaborate, and grow together in the second half of the year.

A hui hou ~

WHEN COMPETITORS BECOME COLLABORATORS: A SPA TRANSITION DONE RIGHT

by Christi Cano and Darryll Leiman

On April 3, 2026, Spa at Mauna Kea opened its doors at the iconic Mauna Kea Beach Hotel on Hawai'i Island — a stunning 22,000 sq ft spa born from the resort's \$180 million renovation and a genuine desire to create an authentic, culturally grounded and locally focused spa experience. For ownership group Seibu Prince Hotels, who operate 95 properties worldwide including three in Hawai'i, this was a defining moment. They chose to manage the new spa themselves rather than continue with a third-party management contract.



That meant transitioning out Mandara Spa, which had successfully managed both Mauna Kea's spa and the neighboring Westin Hapuna's spa for years. Anyone in hospitality knows what that kind of change can stir up — uncertainty around jobs, benefits, compensation, and management. Stress can run high on both sides.

So how did this one go so smoothly?

The answer is simple, and it's the same answer that drives everything in hospitality in the Hawaiian islands — including within the tightly-knit world of the spa community: strong

...continued on next page

WHEN COMPETITORS... *continued*

relationships and, without a doubt what Hawaii is known for - the aloha spirit.

We have been colleagues for 20 years — Darryll Leiman, Regional VP of Mandara Spa, and Christi Cano, Spa Consultant for Mauna Kea Beach Hotel, both based in Honolulu and both on the Board of the Hawaii Association. Over those many years we have built a warm friendship and deep mutual respect — and that showed up in every layer of this transition, from how we communicated to how we handled the logistical challenges that came our way.

Darryll graciously opened Mandara's treatment rooms so that Spa Director Psalm Quinn and Christi could conduct hands-on interviews with massage therapists and estheticians — many of whom were Mandara's own staff applying for positions at the new spa. With two Mandara spas closing, many would need employment.

Equipment, supplies and retail were sorted — what would move to Mandara's remaining Hawai'i Island, Maui or Oahu location, what would stay. Heavy furniture and equipment were cleared to make way for imminent construction on what would become a new salon. Some of Mandara's equipment was kept to be used for pre-opening staff training.

When a large group fully booked the resort spas on the island — one of the busiest and most profitable weeks of the year — an important question came up: could Mandara staff who were needed for that group stay through that period before transitioning? The answer was yes. Let's work together.

Things weren't always perfect - no spa opening is — but we didn't make it harder than it needed to be. We focused on grace and professionalism and made sure our friendship came out the other side intact.

We showed that it is possible to compete in the same market and choose collaboration over contention — because how we treat each other is just as important as how we treat our guests.

The aloha spirit is a philosophy of life — an awareness of mind and heart where you treat others with care and respect. It embodies kindness, harmony, humility and patience.

This is how we approach our work and all our relationships — and for us, it was never just a philosophy. For us, it was about two friends, always committed to doing the right thing, treating each other with aloha.

WELCOME NEW HI-SPA MEMBERS!

Spa Finder: Jenna Leveille

Head Spa Honolulu: Yoshimi Anderson

Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa- The Spa at

Black Rock: Kat Procell and Brooke Aipa

The Beauty Room: Nicole Meadows

Awazul Wellness Med Spa:

Arianne Schelling

Angelica's Holistic Skin Care:

Angelica Suarez McMillan

TSII: Lei Ishikawa and Landrace Austin

Aesthetics & Cosmetics Maui:

Neide Kirkegaard

Marriott Ocean Club Ka'anapali- Spa By

The Sea: Shasha Aguinaldo and Carin Sarkis

WELCOME... *continued*

Puamana Day Spa: Melissa Rizzolo

The Westin Maui Resort & Spa- Heavenly

Spa by Westin: Charmagne Rayray and
Danielle King

Maui Prana Massage: Sandra Rodriguez and
Ronnie Rosas

1 Hotel Hanalei Bay- Bamford Wellness Spa:

Gena Lopez and Punahele Kualii

Hilton Waikiki Beach- Asana Spa:

Loryn Tuani and Yash Banthia

Lotus Center Spa: Mitesh Banthia

V Beauty Studio: Vilma Loque

808 Wellness Spa and Healing Center:

Ashley Bell

Makena Golf: Jen Thompson

Wailea Healing Center: Rebecca Wilson

Ola Spa Hilo: Atsuko Koi

Fairmont Orchid- Spa Without Walls:

Barbie Nakamura

Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea- Four

Seasons Spa & Wellness: Parker Jackson

Hilton Waikoloa Village- Kohala Spa:

Toni Dean

Massage Maui: Lisa Berthart

Hanalei Day Spa: Darci Frankel

Project Reef: Stevie Walker

Live Love Spa: Samantha Boone

Michelle Miranda

Nova Burnes

Nikki Baysa

Molly Hoffman

Erin Shapiro

ISPA CONFERENCE 2026

by Mary Ronnow and Kamala Nayeli

Attending ISPA, held March 31-April 2, 2026, at The Venetian in Las Vegas, was a privilege for both of us—beyond discovering new products, tools, and equipment, the conference offered valuable time with trusted vendors and inspiring connections with fellow spa professionals who share a passion for innovation and excellence.

A clear theme throughout the conference was that growth requires intention. Key-note Speaker Diana Kander challenged attendees to identify their “zombies” (habits, systems, or uses of time that no longer create value) and warned against operating on autopilot with a “same as last year” mindset. Her message was a reminder that while change is inevitable, growth is a choice that begins by questioning what we assume to be working.



Jeremy McCarthy reinforced that wellness is not a necessity in the guest's mind—it competes with every other leisure option. That means our role is to move beyond

CONFERENCE, Continued...

simply booking services and become true Wellness Advisors, creating rituals and cultural destination experiences that guests feel they must include in their lives. His message, paired with Dan Gingiss's reminder to "do simple better," underscored that exceptional spa experiences come from doing the fundamentals consistently and meaningfully.



The later power sessions brought the focus inward. Jay Shetty emphasized self-care through small, intentional resets during the workday and encouraged "job crafting"—shifting how we relate to our work, not just what we do. During the third and final Power Session, Jon Acuff built on that with a call to finish what we start, avoid over thinking, and replace limiting "soundtracks" with beliefs that support innovation, empathy, and stronger team culture. One of the most powerful reminders was that people do not stay with spas—they stay with people.

Overall, ISPA2026 was a meaningful investment of time—offering fresh ideas, renewed inspiration, and practical strategies for personal leadership,

guest engagement, and team development. We left energized by the opportunity to learn, reconnect, and bring these insights back to our work in a more intentional and impactful way.

Hope to see you there next year!

ISPA 2027: March 3-5
Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, NV, USA

