

Diane J. Plotts

Diane Plotts has been a pioneer and role model for women in Hawaii through her work as a business executive and adviser to many and diverse boards.

Most notably, she was a general partner in developer Christopher Hemmeter's Hemmeter Investment Co. for 30 years, and a Kamehameha Schools trustee for more than a decade.

When Hemmeter was making news and grabbing headlines for his innovative approaches to development in Hawaii, Plotts was widely regarded as the person who made his ideas work.

But it wasn't that easy. In previous interviews with PBN, Plotts reflected on the difficulty a "haole woman" had breaking into a male-dominated business world in the early 1960s. But she persevered and went on to create her own niche. She became an adviser and member of the boards of Hawaiian Electric Industries, Hawaiian Electric Co. and Hawaii Health Systems Corp. She sat on the boards of the Hawaii Community Foundation, University of Hawaii Foundation and the Plaza Club and was president of Oahu Country Club, where fellow members were envious of her golf game.

In November 2000, in a shakeup of the board of Kamehameha Schools, formerly the Bishop Estate, Plotts was named a trustee, along with HEI's Constance Lau. It marked the first time in the board's history that it had two women members. Plotts would go on to chair the board before retiring in 2011, when her term expired.

Asked in an earlier interview with PBN what she had learned in her years in business and community service, she replied: "To think big, to know that nothing is impossible. Problems to be solved are just opportunities because there are so many ways to do things."