

# Honoring Hawaii tourism professionals: PBN's 2022 Pineapple Awards

Breeani Sumera-Lee  
General Manager of Soul Community Planet Hilo

PACIFIC  
BUSINESS NEWS



Image: Cody-Fay Alameda, Keaukaha, Hawaii

Introducing Breeani Sumera-Lee, general manager of Soul Community Planet Hilo  
CODY-FAY ALAMEDA, KEAUKAHA, HAWAII

Sumera-Lee became general manager in 2021 after the company's acquisition of the Hilo Seaside Hotel. In one year, she oversaw the \$4.6 million renovation of the property and coordinated the hotel's Makai program to aid with the recovery of approximately 2.2 pounds of trash per each guest's stay. The program intends to remove an estimated 15-20 tons of plastics and other marine debris each year.

## **How have you delivered an authentic Hawaii experience in the last year?**

At SCP Hilo we have an opportunity to share cultural knowledge with our guests through the local workshops we host. Being able to provide an authentic exchange for our guests is a gift to witness.

Our Big Island Community is filled with those who have knowledge to share and are wanting and willing to, which makes the delivery, genuine. We are all better for being able to share moments and create an authentic experience for our guests, while honoring our Hawaiian culture through

the connections taking place. **What have been your strategies in overcoming the labor shortage?**

I have done my best to focus on building with the team I do have, rather than focusing on what I am without. Shifting my attention and placing it on our current staff has helped me to explore new opportunities in our company for improvement and growth.

I've also seen team members go above and beyond during this time.

Watching these staff members shine and thrive in adversity, inspires me to maintain a positive work environment for them. In doing so, I hope to retain them. As we add on new team members, we continue to build our team and overcome challenges together. **What is your top business goal for the year?**

SCP Hilo is the first hotel in Hawaii to achieve Earthcheck bronze benchmarked status.

Earthcheck is the world's leading scientific benchmarking, certification and advisory group for travel and tourism.

My business goal is to become a net-zero waste hotel by the end of 2022. ... We can be more than sustainable, we can be regenerative! We have an opportunity to contribute to regenerative travel – travel that leaves a place we visit, better than it was before we came. This is possible and this is attainable.

