MJ Stancil Bio:



As a second-generation member of a family of immigrants who came to Kauai through the sugar industry, my connection to this island runs deep. Raised in Koloa, I grew up surrounded by special places like the Koloa Sugar Mill, Waita, and Māhā ulepū. My years in hula hālau with Charlene Steuri and Kamaka Harrod shaped my appreciation for culture, community, teamwork, and aloha.

Today, I serve as Hotel Manager at 1 Hotel Hanalei Bay, with experience across Hawaii's luxury hospitality industry, including The Ritz-Carlton Residences in Kapalua and Waikiki and Sheraton-branded hotels.

As a mother and people-first leader, I lead with empathy, purpose, and a commitment to service excellence. I am passionate about developing teams and creating authentic experiences that connect guests to Kauai's culture and sense of place, while celebrating what makes this island such a special place to live, work, and visit.

2026 PHCA Election Candidate Questions:

Why do you want to serve on the PHCA Board of Directors, and what motivates you to dedicate your time and energy to the Princeville community?

As a local girl who grew up on Kauaʻi, it is important to me to show the younger generation that hard work, perseverance, and a willingness to learn, grow, and evolve can open doors and create meaningful opportunities. Serving on the PHCA Board of Directors would allow me to lead by example while giving back to the people and community that have shaped who I am. I would be honored to contribute my time, energy, and local perspective to help guide Princeville's future in a way the supports thoughtful progress and growth while remaining grounded in the values of Kauaʻi.

Describe your approach to leadership in a group or community setting. How have you brought people together to work through differences or resolve issues in the past?

My approach to leadership is rooted in listening, respect, open communication, and a clear understanding of the facts. When perspectives differ, I ensure everyone has an opportunity to be heard while focusing on common ground and practical solutions. Growing up on Kauaʻi has taught me the importance of relationships and humility. I would bring those values to the Board while remaining fair, thoughtful, and willing to make difficult decisions, even when they may not be the most popular.

Please share any prior volunteer, community involvement, or leadership experiences (e.g. other boards, committees, nonprofits, events, or activities inside or outside Princeville). How would these help you serve PHCA effectively?

I have served as a USA Swimming official for more than five years, officiating high school and state-level meets across Hawaiʻi and volunteering hundreds of hours to support our swimming community. I have also contributed time and resources to the Visitor Industry Charity Walk on Oʻahu, Maui, and Kauaʻi.

Following the Lahaina wildfires, I led a team on Oʻahu to help gather essential resources for our Hospitality community and later during the rebuilding of Lahaina, created opportunities to feature local artists and artisans who lost their shops in the fires. While I have not served on a board, my roles at The Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua Residences and The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikīkī Beach gave me experience working directly with boards. These experiences strengthened my ability to collaborate, consider different perspectives, and serve the PHCA community effectively.

How much time are you realistically able and willing to commit to board service each month (e.g. attending meetings, reviewing materials, responding to owner concerns)? What steps will you take to ensure you can meet that commitment consistently?

I am willing to commit the time reasonably required for Board service, including attending meetings, reviewing materials, and responding to owner concerns. While raising two sons, maintaining a career, and volunteering extensively in the sport they later competed in at the collegiate level, I learned to balance responsibilities through organization and clear priorities. I will bring that same commitment, time management, and consistency to the PHCA Board.

How would you approach balancing the diverse interests of PHCA's membership (e.g. full-time residents, second-home owners, vacation rental operators, timeshare/hotel representatives) on issues like tourism impacts, community amenities, or development proposals? Provide an example from your experience if possible.

While each group has its own interests, every decision should ultimately support the long-term well-being of the Princeville community. This means protecting its natural beauty, respecting the rights and perspectives of all owners, and honoring what was originally envisioned and approved for the community. No single group should supersede another or fundamentally change Princeville's intended character.

I would listen to all perspectives, review the facts, and focus on solutions that keep Princeville relevant and forward-looking while remaining authentically Kauaʻi. Through my experience working with residence boards at The Ritz-Carlton properties, I learned how to balance the needs of owners, residents, visitors, and hotel operations.

It is also important that our decisions create opportunities for local youth so they do not feel they must leave the island to build successful lives. Future generations should have the opportunity to remain on Kauaʻi, raise their families here, and flourish while experiencing the same sense of community that shaped us.

What experience or perspective do you bring regarding property maintenance, infrastructure, or sustainability challenges in a coastal community like Princeville (e.g. erosion control, open space preservation, capital projects)? How would you prioritize long-term planning?

My experience working with luxury properties and residential communities on Maui, Oʻahu, and Kauaʻi has given me a strong operational understanding of property maintenance, infrastructure, and sustainability in coastal environments. I have personally managed property improvement and infrastructure projects, including the remediation of a building affected by its coastal environment, and have led multimillion-dollar capital projects.

I strongly believe in preventive maintenance rather than deferred maintenance. Long-term planning should prioritize safety, urgency, environmental impact, community benefit, and financial responsibility. Decisions should be based on accurate information, expert guidance, and regular property assessments to protect community assets, avoid greater future costs, and preserve Princeville for future generations.

How important is it to incorporate Hawaiian traditions and cultural values (e.g. aloha 'āina, respect for ancestral lands, or cultural stewardship) into PHCA's decisions and governance? How would you promote this on the board?

Incorporating Hawaiian traditions and cultural values into PHCA's decisions is essential. Princeville itself was built on ancestral lands, which gives us a responsibility to acknowledge that history and care for the land with respect. Aloha ʻāina and cultural stewardship should be reflected in how we maintain the community and plan for its future.

Princeville must also continue to evolve, and thoughtful development can support the community's long-term needs. Progress should be approached responsibly, with consideration for the land, local culture, and future generations. On the Board, I would encourage informed decisions, seek local and cultural perspectives when appropriate, and work toward a balance that allows Princeville to move forward while remaining authentically rooted in Kauaʻi.

Describe your familiarity with financial oversight, budgeting, risk management, or compliance (e.g. HRS 421J, PHCA governing documents). If your experience is limited, how would you approach learning and contributing in these areas?

As a senior leader in hotels and residential communities, I am very familiar with financial oversight, budgeting, risk management, compliance, and multimillion-dollar capital projects. My experience includes reviewing financial performance, managing budgets, planning property improvements, and ensuring responsible use of resources.

How would you handle a situation where the board or community is divided on a contentious issue (e.g. open space/development or environmental concerns)? Walk us through your process for reaching fair, collaborative decisions.

I would begin by clearly defining the issue, gathering accurate information, and reviewing PHCA's governing documents and any applicable requirements. I would listen to all perspectives, seek guidance from qualified experts when needed, and evaluate the short-term and long-term effects on the land, owners, and broader Princeville community.

What is your vision for the future of Princeville over the next 5–10 years? What key changes or improvements would you like to see, and how would you work to achieve them while protecting our community's unique character, open spaces, and quality of life?

My approach would begin with understanding the full scope of the matter before reaching any conclusions. I would verify the facts, ensure alignment with PHCA's responsibilities and established guidelines, and seek input from those who may be affected. When specialized knowledge is needed, I would seek the appropriate expertise to help inform the decision.

From there, I would carefully consider the potential consequences of each option, balancing immediate needs with the long-term interests of the community.

At the same time, I believe Princeville should continue to evolve rather than simply maintain the status quo. I would remain open to thoughtful improvements, new ideas, and responsible change that enhance the community while respecting the character, beauty, and qualities that make Princeville such a special place to live, work, and visit.