



# Michael Inouye

**Floriculturist  
Class of 1987**

**By Josh Arizumi**

Michael Inouye is the Sales Manager for Pacific Floral Exchange which owns and operates over 20 acres of anthuriums and markets flowers and foliage from over 80 independent farms. Pacific floral is one of the largest exporters in our state. They sell and ship anthuriums, orchids, protea, gingers, heliconia, foliage, potted plants and other nursery items all grown in Hawaii. Their products get shipped all over the world, targeting areas that have direct flights from Hawaii, including such places as Japan, Chicago, California, and Denver, Colorado.

Michael graduated from Waiakea High in 1987, then went on to study Sales and Marketing at Cannon's Business College. He also studied culinary arts at Kapiolani Community College and found that he enjoyed working as a waiter, cook and bartender at such restaurants as the Side Street Inn and Nicholas Nicholas.

He said that the best part of his job is meeting and talking with new people from all over the world. He helps promote Hawaiian grown products through his involvement by serving as the President of the Hawaii Tropical Flower Council, which lobbies for funds for research and development and marketing floriculture grown in Hawaii. He says that agriculture is a \$2.2 billion industry in Hawaii, with \$100 million from floriculture. The Big Island grows about 50% of all floriculture in the State. The Inouye family is in its third generation in the nursery business. Michael says that the field of agriculture offers endless dreams.

His biggest challenge as sales manager is managing the cost of doing business, especially with the challenges of the poor economy, and Global competition.

At Waiakea, Michael participated in the band playing the saxophone and also played baseball. He said academic study wasn't for him but he was

really good at taking tests. At Waiakea, his favorite teachers were Ms. Penny Tomiyama, Mrs. Thelma Wegner, and Mr. Harris Asahara.

