



Emma Kam Shin Lau

AUG 6, 1926 - AUG 17, 2024



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DIAMOND HEAD MORTUARY
WILLIAMS FUNERAL SERVICES

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Our beloved mother, EMMA KAM SHIN (HEE) LAU, passed away peacefully on the morning of August 17, 2024, at her residence at Hi'iolani at Kahala Nui, Honolulu, Hawaii. In her last few weeks, she celebrated her 98th birthday and was surrounded by her family and the caring staff at Kahala Nui where she resided. She was our mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Emma was born on August 6, 1926, to Tai Tong Hee (father) and Wong Yee (mother), the 5th of 10 children. Growing up in Kaimuki, she was a graduate of Kaimuki HS, the Queen's Hospital School of Nursing, the University of Hawaii system and the University of Virginia where she obtained her degree as a Nurse Practitioner. Her degrees and studies included: RN, Public Health, MEd, & NP. She eventually ended her career as a Home Health Care administrator.

Upon graduating with her Nursing degree, Emma moved to Hilo with other nursing classmates to work at Hilo Hospital. She said they paid the best in the state at the time! She eventually moved to the Department of Public Health which included servicing the families in the Puna district on the island of Hawaii, in her green state issued Rambler. She finished her time with the DPH as the administrator for the Keaukaha Maternity Clinic. She then joined the Hilo Community College staff as a Nursing instructor, working alongside one of her longtime friends. Upon retiring from the State of Hawaii, she then pursued a degree as a Nurse Practitioner, taking as many courses as possible through the UH system and completing her degree at the University of Virginia. Her career then shifted into home health care, as the Director for Medical Personnel Pool (MPP) in Hilo. She expanded from a few clients to 3 offices on the Big Island of Hawaii. Eventually retiring as a VP, she contracted with MPP (eventually becoming Interim Health Care) to assist with their outer island offices. At age 73 (1999), after retiring again, Emma joined Catholic Charities of Hawaii, to head their Quality Living Choices program (Adult Foster Care Program), the first on Hawaii Island. During these years, she trained many of her staff that included nurses, aides, therapists and office staff. She also served time as the President of the Hawaii Nurses Association.



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After moving to Hilo, she met and married a Hilo boy, Karn Song Lau (8.16.1926-3.22.1999) and raised 3 children while maintaining and growing her own career and serving as the neighborhood and family “nurse”. She was active in the Chinese United Community Church, assisting with Sunday School and as their treasurer in her final retirement. She was a Cub Scout Den Mother as well as helping with the Hilo Aquatics Swim Club and other community organizations. Her home life included cooking and baking but her passion was Arts and Crafts. A master seamstress, she taught many of the children how to sew. At Kahala Nui she helped many residents with alterations. She loved art and music and learned to do tile mosaics, leatherwork, painting, glass etching, sand painting, sewing Hawaiian quilts, searching for and recording Hawaiian petroglyphs, studying Hawaiian Feather Lei making and more. Mom also studied Tai Chi, Qigong and Healing Hands. She had decorated our Hilo house with many of her tile and sand paintings, including our shower wall and front door. She loved traveling, taking trips and cruises to the continental USA and Asia. She loved her orchids, collecting them from all over Hawaii island. The last of her generation, Emma was truly our matriarch as she supported everyone in her family, both immediate and extended, her neighbors, friends and community. She really did it all. She is survived by her 3 children and their families. Rian M.S. Lau (son) & wife Pamela and grandsons David and Brandon. Anne T. Meis (daughter) & husband Chuck. Their children Chad (grandson) & Desiree & Max & Melody (great grandchildren), Rachel Darr (granddaughter) & Ben. Jon (grandson) & Kaylie & Cooper (greatgrandchild). Randal M.C. Lau (son) & Yvonne Chin & her 3 sons ((David (Shelly), Matthew (Cheryl), Michael & 4 grandchildren (Bailey, Brady, Calyssa, Kaia)). A special Mahalo Nui to all the staff at Kahala Nui, especially the 3rd floor staff, who loved and tirelessly cared for our mother in her final years, providing care, comfort and companionship.

There will be private receptions at Kahala Nui and in Hilo between August 19-21. The family requests no flowers or monetary gifts be given. We do invite you to make donations to the University School of Nursing on behalf of Emma’s Legacy (<https://nursing.hawaii.edu/giving/>)

As we recognize that Emma touched so many lives over her lifetime, you may also contact me at randal.mc.lau@gmail.com for more information.



Tribute Wall

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Terrence K. H. Wong lit a candle in honor of Emma.

October 13 at 10:11 AM



Anonymous lit a candle in honor of Emma.

October 6 at 7:25 PM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Emma by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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