

China is famous for their "Overseas Chinese" and India for their "Overseas Indians". Both groups have a worldwide population base of over one billion. About 2% for the Indians live outside the their ancestral country and 4.4 % for the Chinese. The Jews with their smaller population base of 13 million have more people (60%) living outside of Israel. These Diasporas are some of the outstanding ethnic networks we have today.

*(The term "Uchinanchu" is used to describe people from Okinawa and with Okinawan heritage worldwide. Okinawans is used for "Uchinanchu", who live in Okinawa.)*

By contrast, the worldwide Uchinanchu population is less than 2 million. Of this two million 670,000 live outside Okinawa. 32% of the Uchinanchu population does not live in Okinawa. Can such a small group have a meaningful and effective network?

Uchinanchu worldwide networking on an informal basis started with the government approved emigration from Okinawa to Hawaii in 1900 and then to South America. In the beginning the networking was limited to their family, relatives and their "home town". Money was sent "home" to their families in Okinawa. Their culture of music, songs and dance was maintained.

After the War, Okinawa was devastated by the "Battle of Okinawa" and needed help to rebuild their community. In particular the Hawaii Uchinanchu community, united to provide help by sending clothes, food, toys, medical and school supplies. Pigs and goats were also sent to restock their livestock. This was joint project of assistance, was a major factor in establishing the Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA).

In the 80's Okinawa, after Okinawa's economy normalized, Okinawa invited some young Uchinanchu leaders in Hawaii for a study tour to Okinawa to rediscover their roots. Annual study tours to Okinawa continue even today, to strengthen this networking.

In 1990 the Hawaii Okinawa (Cultural) Center was built by strong support from Okinawa, who remembered the assistance from Hawaii after the war. Also in 1990, Okinawa government held the 1<sup>st</sup> Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival" and again the 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1995 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2001. Hawaii held the 1<sup>st</sup> Worldwide Uchinanchu Conference. This first gathering of Uchinanchu outside Okinawa in 2003 was sponsored by WUB (Worldwide Uchinanchu Business association) and HUOA. In 1995, it was suggested that Uchinanchu Business network be formed.

HUB (Hawaii Uchinanchu Business Network) was established in 1993. To start a worldwide Uchinanchu network, HUB became WUB in 1997. WUB now has 21 chapters worldwide, representing 15 countries. WUB hold conferences each year rotating location among the chapters. WUB conferences have expanded its topics beyond business. The past, present and future to create a Worldwide Uchinanchu Network (WUN) will be discussed.

The Chinese, Indians and Jews have a long history of their successful networks. Uchinanchu are smaller in number and "we have just begun".