



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, November 1, 2013

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HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER PUBLISHER DENNIS FRANCIS NAMED E&P MAGAZINE'S 'PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR'

Recognition Is Considered Newspaper Publishing Industry's 'Pulitzer Prize'

HONOLULU – Dennis Francis, publisher of the Honolulu Star-Advertiser and president of Oahu Publications Inc., has been named Editor & Publisher (E&P) magazine's "Publisher of the Year."

The prestigious recognition is bestowed on one newspaper publisher nationally each year by E&P, the newspaper industry's authoritative monthly journal, which has been taking the pulse of newspapers across the country for more than 100 years.

"I am deeply touched by this great honor. In fact, it's overwhelming and I want to thank the staff and editors of the Honolulu Star-Advertiser for thinking enough of me to nominate me for this recognition," Francis said. "It's a humbling experience to be recognized at this level by the publishing industry. And while I understand that the nature of this recognition process is that one person, one newspaper publisher from across the country, is chosen, the honor really belongs to the Star-Advertiser's great team of writers, photographers, editors, circulation and advertising managers, backshop workers, our online pros ... our entire publishing ohana."

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The announcement came on the front cover of E&P's November 2013 edition with a photograph of Francis standing in his Honolulu Waterfront Plaza office with framed, signed "Hawaii Five-0" posters on the wall. The accompanying four-page article, written by E&P editor Ed Zintel, describes how Francis merged Hawaii's two competing daily newspapers – the afternoon Honolulu Star-Bulletin and the larger morning paper, The Honolulu Advertiser – into the Honolulu Star-Advertiser in 2010, at a time when many newspapers across the country were struggling to survive. Zintel reports how, under Francis' leadership, the Star-Advertiser is thriving both in print and online and how its parent company, Oahu Publications Inc., has successfully branched out into publishing community and military newspapers, magazines and The Garden Island, the 111-year-old Kauai daily newspaper which Oahu Publications bought in January 2013. The article also describes Francis as an avid golfer and includes a photo of him with the legendary Tiger Woods when the two played together at the Mercedes Pro-Am at Kapalua, Maui, in 2004.

E&P also describes how Francis, without fanfare, has made philanthropy a major part of his business philosophy. Last year, the Star-Advertiser gave more than \$1.6 million to Hawaii charities, organizations and to the arts. Francis' "Subscriber Donation Program" has raised more than \$250,000 for worthy causes, including for the Red Cross Japan Disaster Relief fund following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. For those charitable efforts, E&P honored the Star-Advertiser in 2012 as one of "10 Newspapers That Do It Right."

"On behalf of all of us at the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, I want to express how completely thrilled we are to see Dennis receive this national recognition," said David Kennedy, Star-Advertiser senior vice president of marketing. "E&P's 'Publisher of the Year' is really the Pulitzer Prize of the newspaper publishing industry. It's a well-deserved affirmation of everything Dennis has done to make the Honolulu Star-Advertiser one of the country's great newspaper success stories."

Frank Bridgewater, Star-Advertiser vice president and editor, said Francis has been supportive of the newsroom and its staff, even when mainland newspapers were cutting employees to stay alive.

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"The thing that I admire about Dennis is that he's so supportive of the newsroom," Bridgewater told E&P. "He's not only held the headcount but we've added people ... He picks people who are extremely competent and then lets them do their jobs. He believes that a newspaper has to have an independent voice to make it stronger. And today, this newspaper is strong."

Francis began his newspaper career heading circulation departments and agencies in Ohio, South Carolina, Washington, D.C., and Vermont before coming to Hawaii to work at the Honolulu Advertiser as general manager. In 2004, Honolulu Star-Bulletin publisher David Black lured Francis away from the Advertiser and made him publisher of the Star-Bulletin. Both newspapers were locked in a brutal competition that most observers thought would end in the death of the smaller Star-Bulletin. But Francis surprised Hawaii residents when he engineered the purchase of the Advertiser and then merged the papers into the Honolulu Star-Advertiser in 2010.

Aside from the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, which is distributed statewide, Francis, as Oahu Publications president, oversees the online Star-Advertiser.com; The Garden Island newspaper on Kauai; MidWeek, a weekly distributed on Oahu and Kauai; USA Today Hawaii Edition; four zoned weekly community newspapers; three official military weeklies; a magazine division that produces nine magazines; a special sections department that produces four weekly publications and nine special-occasion publications; and weekly in-season programs for University of Hawaii athletic events.

The Honolulu Star-Advertiser is Oahu's leading provider of in-depth, consistent and credible local news and information. It has an average weekly readership of 537,105 or 72 percent of Oahu adults, according to Scarborough Research. Its website, staradvertiser.com, receives more than 18 million monthly page views worldwide as measured by Google Analytics and is "Liked" by 200,000 Facebook users, ranking eighth in the nation among daily newspapers. The Honolulu Star-Advertiser is the flagship publication of Oahu Publications, Inc., whose portfolio includes MidWeek, the Hawaii Army Weekly, Hawaii Marine, Ho'okele Weekly, HILuxury, and a growing roster of community periodicals and in-room resort magazines.

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