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# Prince Kuhio was a model for the ‘global MBA’

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In 1871, when King Kamehameha V declared a new holiday to commemorate the Hawaiian kingdom’s unifier Kamehameha the Great, Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalaniana‘ole Pi‘ikoi was born.

He was later named in the line of succession to become king of Hawaii.

Unfortunately, when Prince Kuhio was 22 years old, American sugar planters and businessmen with U.S. military assistance overthrew the kingdom.

After spending half his life outside Hawaii, Prince Kuhio is best-remembered as an elected delegate from the Territory of Hawaii to Congress – first elected in 1903 and serving until his death in 1922, winning 10 straight elections.

Three years before his passing, Kuhio introduced in Congress the Hawaii Statehood Act, exemplifying his "forward-looking" mindset.

Before Prince Kuhio became a 20th-century Hawaii political leader, though, he was groomed to become king of the Hawaiian kingdom.

Delving into the prince’s education and training, what was the vision of King Kalakaua – his hanai father, as Prince Kuhio tragically lost both parents when a teenager – for the future direction of Hawaii into the late 19th century and beyond?

The prince spent his childhood at innovative St. Alban's College and Punahou School in Honolulu. In his classes – Latin, mathematics and history – he would sit beside children of missionary-business families. He became as fluent in English as any educated New Englander. He was also "techno-savvy," as he and King Kalakaua knew the latest technology trends--'Iolani Palace was lit up with electric lights powered by a generator for the 1883 coronation, before the White House, which was still using whale oil lamps.

Then King Kalakaua sent Prince Kuhio for four years at Saint Matthew's School, a private Episcopal military school in California.

Armed with a military science and engineering background (to establish a modernized kingdom defense force), Prince Kuhio sailed to England, where he studied at the Royal Agricultural College, an experimental institution barely 40 years old, launching early "sustainability" programs: organic farming, animal herd management and woodlands conservation.

He may have also studied law, but more likely he completed finance and contracts courses.

From his combination of subjects, Prince Kuhio gained a deep appreciation of what we now call STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

But King Kalakaua still wanted to add to Prince Kuhio's "core competencies": globalization.

Prince Kuhio spent a year in Tokyo, the capital of the emerging Japanese nation-state. While studying the Japanese language, he gained insights into an independent Asian country embarking on industrial modernization without being colonized by a Western power— in addition to learning about the Japanese market for Hawaiian exports.

King Kalakaua's design for Prince Kuhio's education resulted in a "global MBA," with an overseas internship and emphasis on sustainable economic development, along with technological innovation.

Were it not for the kingdom's overthrow, the prince would have brought global "best practices" to Hawaii from North America, Europe and Asia – ultimately transforming Hawaii to become a trade center bridging East and West and an agriculturally self-sufficient archipelago.

While in 2014 Hawaii leaders are still searching for sustainable economic models, diversified agriculture and exports to Asian markets, Prince Kuhio's multidisciplinary education looks uncannily "modern" for Honolulu Bishop Street firms.

Today on Kuhio Day, named in his honor, Prince Kuhio should be seen in a new light: a well-traveled, multilingual member of Hawaiian royalty with a STEM background, and we should recognize that a similar education is still relevant today to create Hawaii leaders for the 21st century.