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AN OPEN LETTER / PUBLIC STATEMENT NOVEMBER 17, 2026

IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN SHANE GRACE.

I was the photo editor of *Ka Leo O Hawai'i* at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Shane Grace was my associate.

Today, looking back at the history of our newspaper, the personalities who shaped it, and the careers that followed, I want to make a statement that may surprise some people: **It should have been Shane Grace.**

Not because I regret having served as photo editor. Not because I disown the work I did. And certainly not because Shane and I could not have accomplished what we accomplished with our responsibilities reversed.

But because I believe that putting Shane Grace in that position would have served his professional development, his relationship with Hawai'i, and his future in photography extraordinarily well.

I was a writer who became a photo editor. Shane was someone I believe had a future worth investing in through that position.

He could have held the title. I could have served as associate photo editor, managed substantial portions of our production and computer work, and helped coordinate the editorial responsibilities that made the newspaper function. **I would have been proud to do it.**

The history of how I succeeded Lyle Amine, the circumstances surrounding that transition, and the professional relationships involved belong to a larger story—one that I addressed in my 2016 memoir, *Once I Was a Reporter*.

Ten years after that book appeared, I am revisiting its history and the people whose contributions deserve another look.

There is something important about the willingness of a former editor to say that somebody else should have had his job.

And I will say this about Shane Grace for as long as I have a voice:

SHANE GRACE SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE PHOTO EDITOR OF KA LEO O HAWAI'I.



Mathew Ursua
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