



Jehu Fuller

OWNER

Kahukai Pacific and Seven Valleys Design/Build

LOFTY AMBITIONS AND FIRM FOUNDATIONS

• Jehu Fuller •

Two years ago, the city was about to condemn

the Manoa home of an elderly, wheelchair-bound woman. The six-bedroom, two-bath house had been poorly constructed from the start by a scammer posing as a contractor. Now it was crumbling. But then came Jehu Fuller to the rescue. He and his crew took the house down to its foundation and built it anew—in just twenty-three days. It was an almost unheard-of teardown and rebuild.

“When I see something like that, it’s my fear of failure that drives me,” says the 34-year-old owner of two landscaping, design, construction and consulting companies in Honolulu—Kahukai Pacific and Seven Valleys Design/Build. “So I look at a problem, and I’ll challenge myself to see if I can do it. I won’t ever say, ‘Oh, that’s too big for me.’ It’s never too big.”

As a pre-teen go-getter growing up in a small neighborhood of Po’ipu, Kaua’i, Jehu honed the skills that have led to his business success. When he was 12 years old, he would go diving along Kaua’i’s south shore with his younger brother. They’d spear as many fish as they could and sell their catch door to door. For over six years, Jehu and his brother haggled and bargained their way to a few bucks.

But it was there that Jehu developed the business savvy that today has earned him more than just a few bucks. He learned the value of hard work and the pride of earning his own money. He learned the importance of maintaining a good reputation in a small community, and he learned to communicate with diverse people. “I love people,” Jehu says. “I love getting to know them, their likes, dislikes, what they’re interested in. Once you understand a person, then you know how to go into a business relationship with them. Forget the project. Forget the money. If you understand the person, then you’ll know how to go about the project.”

While working as an assistant pro at the Ko Olina Golf Club shortly after the birth of his first child, Jehu planted the seeds for his first company, Kahukai Pacific. He knew he needed a better way to provide for his growing family. His clients on the course kept urging him to take advantage of his talent for connecting with people.

In November 2006, Jehu got his chance. One of his friends was working for every bank in the nation, providing two types of mortgage services for properties under their care. But he decided to retire and he handed Jehu all of his clients. Jehu soon realized that the banks needed construction services for their properties—and they needed a go-to person who could handle them all. Jehu obtained a general contractor’s license and formed a company that could cover all of the banks’ construction needs—from ground-up construction to renovations of kitchens and bathrooms that would increase the value of their properties.

Jehu interviewed experts in each trade, recruited a team of workers and waited for the work to pour in. Within its first year, Kahukai Pacific entered the residential market for realtors and homeowners, and also began taking on commercial projects. It was rapid growth for a young business owner, but Jehu thrived under the pressure.

No project seemed too daunting, and no opportunity was let by. Last July, Jehu acquired his second company, Seven Valleys Design/Build which has been designing, remodeling and constructing homes in Hawai’i for over twenty years, and when the previous owner moved to the Mainland to open a sister office, Jehu gladly took on the challenge of managing another business.

Now the two companies and their combined forty-five employees work as a team. Kahukai Pacific handles residential and commercial projects, while Seven Valleys Design/Build focuses on high-end residential construction. A third company, Dickinson Cameron (with which Jehu partners but doesn’t own), takes on luxury retail projects.

Jehu’s ever-expanding reach in the Hawai’i construction world belies his modest, unconventional start. He never attended college; life has been his classroom, and the lessons he’s learned have driven his success.

“That’s one thing about being young: You’re constantly striving to prove yourself,” Jehu says. To all hopeful young entrepreneurs, he advises, “Be unique. Be yourself. Don’t be afraid. Go for it.”

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