

Preface

The undergraduate Social Work Department at Brigham Young University–Hawaii is unique for its high concentration of international students from Asia and the Pacific, a characteristic that is reflected in the overall university population. In 2011, of the total population of university students, 60 percent were from the United States; 23 percent were from Asia (predominantly South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region [SAR], the Philippines, Taiwan, and China but also Mongolia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Singapore, Vietnam, Macao SAR, Myanmar, Laos, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Pakistan); 12 percent were from the Pacific (predominantly Tonga, Fiji, Samoa, New Zealand, and Australia but also American Samoa, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, French Polynesia, Federated States of Micronesia, Cook Islands, New Caledonia, Northern Mariana Islands, Tuvalu, Niue, Palau, and Vanuatu); and 5 percent were from other nations.

It is not surprising, then, that social work majors are required to pass courses in International Social Welfare in Asia and the Pacific and Social Work Practice with Asians and Pacific Islanders. Perhaps the most difficult aspect of teaching these courses is locating a textbook that provides the needed content. For a while, we used international textbooks that focused on Europe from a U.S. perspective along with journal articles specific to Asian and Pacific Island nations. About two years ago I finally decided to do what was right: to edit a book about social welfare in Asian and Pacific Island states. Everyone I talked with—academicians, publishers, students, practitioners—strongly encouraged me to fill this void in the social work literature.

As I began to conceptualize the book, I knew I wanted to make it somewhat broad so that it could be used not only in social policy, social work practice, and diversity courses on the baccalaureate and master's levels but also for practitioners living in Asia and the Pacific or living anywhere and practicing with Asians and Pacific Islanders. It seemed logical to start each chapter with the history of social welfare, values and culture, current social issues, government and not-for-profit social welfare programs, the social work profession, and education, and to end with a look at future challenges.

In contemplating contributors for this book, several thoughts were at the forefront: my gratitude to Kenji Murase for helping me, as a junior faculty member, edit my first book and my desire to help others publish also; a preference for contributors from Asia and the Pacific who understand not only the profession but also the people and programs; and my intention to tap the knowledge and expertise of my own BSW Asian and Pacific Island graduates, many of whom have become academicians or practitioners themselves.

The result is this book, *Social Welfare in East Asia and the Pacific*—ten chapters that focus on political entities that are not usually visible in the social work professional literature—Cambodia, China, Hong Kong SAR, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Micronesian region, Samoa and American Samoa, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand—preceded by an introduction and ending with a chapter that contrasts social welfare in that part of the world.

The contributors are all from the countries they write about or have lived and practiced or interned there. Some contributors are well-published academicians while others are practitioners publishing for the first time. Five have attended or graduated from BYU Hawaii. All contributors are highly regarded by their peers and are very familiar with social welfare in their respective political entities.

My support system over the past two years has been my husband, David, and our children, Linda, Matthew (and his wife Leah), Michael (and his wife Solaen), and Daniel; John Reeves, my social work colleague who has been a knowledgeable Pacific Islander consultant; and John Bailey, the College of Human Development dean, who has been instrumental in fiscal support. My *mahalo* (thank you) and *aloha* to all.

Social Welfare in East Asia and the Pacific

