



## ***William A. Patterson***

*William A. Patterson was born in Waipahu in 1899 when sugar was king and air travel was an unimaginable dream. He left the islands, moving to San Francisco to work for Wells Fargo Bank where he began to take an interest in the future of air travel. His interest eventually led him to leave the bank to work for a small regional airline that later merged with others to become United Airlines. His natural talent for management and his passion for the airline business propelled his career and in 1934 he became president of United.*

*During World War II, the government took over operation of the airlines, ferrying thousands of GIs to the islands—and proving that large scale air transportation to Hawai‘i was possible. After the war, William worked diligently to get approval from the Civil Aeronautics Board to obtain permission for a Hawai‘i route. With CAB approval in 1947, United launched its Hawai‘i service ... but it did so under the direction of a kama‘āina, who made sure that United’s employees learned about the destination, its culture and language, and the Hawai‘i tourism industry. United’s Hawai‘i service prompted the airline to develop strong marketing programs for the state, promoting the islands as “Our Little Corner of the World.” Flight attendants on Hawai‘i routes wore aloha prints and Hawaiian menu items and tropical drinks were part of the in-flight service.*

*Although his career took him to great heights, William never forgot his Hawai‘i roots. He personally funded four year college scholarships to graduates of Waipahu High School. In recognition of his contributions to the Waipahu community, Patterson bridge is named in his honor.*