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KEONI KAILIMAI

Senior Director Level Documentary & Film Executive

- *Senior film, television and brand storytelling experience across the BBC, NBCUniversal and Sony*
- *Led production teams across strategy, filming, design, programming and coordination*
- *Directed and produced long- and short-form films*
- *Feature film development experience with BBC Storyville and Factual Acquisitions*
- *Used weekly data to guide content strategy*

PROFILE

Growing up in a big, indigenous (and fabulous!) family in Hawai'i, we always loved being near the ocean where we told stories, swam, and in a way passed down our Hawaiian traditions. It got to the point where my grandma packed up our stuff and set up camp at the beach for six weeks every summer. Then I somehow found myself on another island, where I spent eleven years setting down roots in the UK and bringing stories from concept to screens across Europe and North America. Previously I honed my skills as a developer and creative executive for the American broadcasters WBD as well as NBCUniversal and then continued nurturing my expertise in the European media landscape when I joined Mandy Chang (Fremantle), Rose Garnett (A24) and Eva Yates (BBC Film) as an Executive Producer to grow the British broadcaster's feature documentary film strategy. Finally, I moved to the BBC iPlayer team working across the unscripted acquisition strategy to incorporate international partners into the BBc's output, acquiring award-wining hits as well as forging successful partnerships with co-pro partners including Warner Bros, The Montreux Jazz Festival, The Olympics, Paramount and many more. In 2024 I returned to my native homeland, where I served as Director of Programs at Pacific Islanders in Communications, commissioning the PBS documentary strand Pacific Heartbeat and the digital strand Pacific Pulse.

RECENT EXPERIENCE

Director of Programs — Nov 2024 - Aug 2026

Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) – Honolulu, Hawai'i

My work at PIC involved running the development and production of PIC's more than 75-title slate as well as maintaining global relationships with North American, European, Pacific and LATAM festival directors. We premiered titles at all major North American festivals, Berlinale and Visions du Reel. I maintained close relations especially with indigenous contacts at festivals (i.e. Adam at Sundance, Jason at TIFF). I also sit on the central committee of the Indigenous Cinema Alliance (ICA).

Commissioner / Executive Producer — Mar 2021 - Oct 2024

BBC Storyville * BBC Unscripted

I first served as an Executive Producer and Commissioner for BBC Storyville, the British Public Broadcaster's international feature documentary strand. I nurtured content relationships with external producers, particularly agents, co-broadcasters, cultural institutions, brands and tech platforms. I went on to serve as Senior Programme Executive for BBC iPlayer and Unscripted, where I secured media partnerships with Montreux Jazz Festival, Showtime Networks, 2023 World Cup and other unscripted projects.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Development Executive	**NBCUniversal**	2019
Development Producer	**Untold Studios, Original Content Division**	2021
Development Producer	**Electric Ray TV, Sony Pictures Entertainment**	2017
Digital Producer	**Discovery Networks International**	2015

BEFORE MY MEDIA CAREER

Before Film and TV, I volunteered on political debates in Rio de Janeiro and used my background in Portuguese to help produce impartial programming in a highly divided Latin American country. And before any of that, I lived in and completed my studies in the United States, where I studied International Comparative Literature and Portuguese at Duke University and Brown University.