

East-West Center Oral History Project: Kuldeep Mathur



Kuldeep Mathur

Former EWC grantee **Kuldeep Mathur** became so sick from his 18 hour flight from India to Honolulu in 1966 (his first plane ride) that he slept for nearly 3 days, scaring his roommate. Going to American Jesuit missionary schools in his home town of Jaipur, he was well acquainted with cowboy movies, American slang, and chewing gum but nothing prepared him for Hawaii. He came to get his Ph.D. in political science, specifically public administration, and was excited to work with the well known development administrator, Fred Riggs. Mathur enjoyed the social evenings focused on engendering cultural understanding at EWC, where you not only see a picture of a country, but also taste the food and touch the costumes. He sees EWC as a facilitator for its grantees, creating an empathetic fraternity of people living together. Returning home, Kuldeep worked to change the perspective of the study of public administration (Indian civil service) and has won two awards for his efforts. He has taught at Jawaharlal Nehru University, the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, and recently helped create the Center for Study of Law and Governance at JNU.

Read Mathur's interview narrative (see separate pdf)

- **Personal Background**
- **Life at EWC** - Arrival in '60s - Academic Memories - Cross-Cultural Exchange - Inter-Island Tour - In the Kitchen - Waikiki in the '60s - Married Grantees
- **EWC's Impact** - On Career
- **Life After EWC** - Jawaharlal Nehru University - On Career/India
- **Ties That Last** - South Asia Regional Alumni Conference, New Delhi, 2005

Interview Quotes

"Yes, I learned how to cook – it was a means of creating friendship. That was the East-West Center environment, where the people did get interested in other kinds of food. If I was cooking Indian food, there would be a Japanese friend who would be cooking Japanese food, there would be an American friend who would be cooking American food."

"And most of these social evenings, I think, we all came in our national dresses. It was one of the more memorable parts of the contributions of East-West Center in my life, of creating empathy for other cultures, to be able to talk to people of other cultures and things like that. What I found then, as a contribution of the East-West Center was that East-West Center acted as a facilitator, as a great source of encouragement. The East-West Center advisor, one could talk to for both academic as well as non-academic matters. And secondly, this whole idea of building fraternity was another great contribution. And third, which is, I think, very important, has been the inter-island tour."

These narratives, which reflect interviewees' personal perceptions, opinions and memories, may contain errors of fact. They do not reflect positions or versions of history officially approved by the East-West Center.

LINK (as of 06/05/2020)

<https://www.eastwestcenter.org/research/research-information-services/oral-history-project/kuldeep-mathur>