P R I D E A N D P A S S I O N

Chris Brown brings a winning mindset to Rainbow Warrior football.

H A W A I ’ I L E I S T A N D

Owners Reece and Jaimie Farinas share their floral journey.

U N I T E D F O R M A U I

When the community needed it most, UH Maui College answered the call.

S U M M E R 2 0 2 4
The campaign for the University of Hawai‘i
IS THE CAMPAIGN FOR HAWAI‘I

The UH Foundation has launched a $1 billion comprehensive campaign – the largest fundraising effort in Hawai‘i history – to fund the university’s highest priorities, which have been carefully vetted to realize our community’s needs.

For education, enrichment and enlightenment.
For economic vitality and cultural preservation.
For our children, our elders, our friends and our neighbors.

The campaign for Hawai‘i’s university is for us. For UH. For Hawai‘i.

Learn more at UHFoundation.org/4UH4HI
Typically, observatories like those on Haleakalā or Mauna Kea spend millions of dollars for equipment upgrades and specialized instruments from industrial labs elsewhere. This center will allow Hawai’i to keep a larger fraction of that business on the island. It also creates more local talent for the state’s growing number of high-tech jobs.

College of Engineering students will be able to complete pre-engineering classes at UH Hilo before continuing at UH Mānoa. “Local students on Hawai’i Island can stay on Hawai’i Island,” says Simons. “We’re fairly confident this model will retain more local students, and certainly attract more local students to the UH engineering program.”

The building is tentatively scheduled to be completed by 2030, but students do not have to wait. UH Hilo is offering pre-engineering courses this fall.

**SPACE TECH CENTER FOR HILO**

**Hilo**

**U**H Hilo is going to be the home of a brand-new space engineering and instrument development center, where students will learn firsthand the process to design, build and operate high-tech instruments for use in space missions and ground-based telescopes.

“IT’S going to be really unique for our local students,” says Doug Simons, director of the University of Hawai’i Institute of Astronomy. He says it’s very unique “to have a state-sponsored program and university dedicated to this sort of technology and instrumentation development.”

“The building we have in mind is something we simply don’t have anywhere in the state, and that is a facility optimized and large enough for providing integration and testing capacity of incoming instruments for use at observatories in Hawai’i,” says Simons.

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**EQUAL PLAY**

**Mānoa**

Female students are sparking a movement toward equality in the gaming industry. Women of UH Esports, an organization founded within UH Mānoa’s esports program, supports women and other marginalized genders. It makes sure they have an equal opportunity to play. Recently, several members of the group competed in a Valorant competition called the Aurora Series. It was the Women of UH Esports first time competing in a national tournament.

**SHOW BUZZ**

**Mānoa**

Hawaii has long been a favorite film and TV location, and UH Mānoa’s Department of Theatre and Dance wants its students to be ready for those casting calls. Recently, it added a new BFA concentration in acting for theater, screen and new media, so students will be prepared to audition for professional roles.

Also, the Hawaiian Theatre program’s increasing enrollment and sold-out ʻōlelo Hawai’i plays are signs that there’s potential to grow. The program is now offering a new PhD theater concentration in Hawaiian and Indigenous performance. It is intended to nurture more performance-related content based on traditional knowledge.

**CERTIFIED TO HELP KŪPUNA**

**LeeWard**

Since 2021, some Oʻahu and Kauaʻi high school students have been training to become certified nurse aides through a partnership with Leeward Community College and the Healthcare Association of Hawaiʻi. The program leads students on a pathway to part-time and full-time jobs at various long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes, right out of high school.

“More and more kūpuna are being placed in long-term care,” says Patrick Leddy, health care program coordinator for the Office of Workforce Development. “The Healthcare Association of Hawaiʻi has been trying to get students interested in CNA, which is actually the most needed, you know.”

The students who successfully complete the program help fill a shortage of certified nurse aides who are urgently needed for long-term care in Hawaiʻi. Participating high schools include Farrington, Wai‘anae, Kaua‘i and Millilani. Students are trained in 27 different skills, such as how to take vitals and how to guide kūpuna around a room.

Out of the nearly 300 students who have participated in the program, Leddy says that about 80% have been certified and many are already employed.

**BIG DAY AT MĀNOA COTTAGE KAIMUKĪ**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF PATRICK LEDDY

Big day at Mānoa Cottage Kaimukī for 15 high school students from Farrington, Kaimuki and McKinley. "More and more kūpuna are being placed in long-term care," says Patrick Leddy, health care program coordinator for the Office of Workforce Development. "The Healthcare Association of Hawaiʻi has been trying to get students interested in CNA, which is actually the most needed, you know."

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For graduations, birthdays and weddings, it can be difficult to find flower lei if you’re not in Hawai‘i. This is why husband-and-wife team Reece and Jaimie Farinas (BA ’12, UH Mānoa) launched Hawai‘i Lei Stand in 2019 as a subsidiary of Beretania Florist. The company ships handcrafted lei to all 50 states.

In this Q&A, Jaimie shares their journey of starting the business, her love for the pikake lei and what’s next for the entrepreneurial couple.

**WHAT INSPIRED YOU AND REECE TO LAUNCH HAWAI‘I LEI STAND?**

When I started dating my husband, Reece, back in the day [at UH Mānoa], I pretty quickly found myself immersed in flowers, jumping in to help with major holidays like Valentine’s and Mother’s Days. His family has been in business with Beretania Florist since 1937, so there was a lot to learn from his grandparents [Howard and June Nakamoto] and mom, Celeste, who currently owns and operates the shop. Long before Reece and I began focusing on lei, Beretania Florist offered lei locally and to the mainland.

We saw shipping lei as an opportunity to share the beautiful flowers we get to enjoy every day in the Islands with loved ones across the country, and so we established Hawai‘i Lei Stand.

We designed Hawai‘i Lei Stand with an emphasis on e-commerce and we’ve also spent a lot of TLC on everything from print collateral, packaging and customer service. A couple of years ago, we developed special packaging that allows us to ship fresh, local floral bouquets, featuring blooms from Maui and the Big Island. We work closely with our farm partners to design the seasonal bouquets, called Best Buds.

**WHAT IS YOUR EARLIEST MEMORY OF LEI MAKING?**

I remember for my elementary school’s May Day program, we were tasked with creating ti leaf lei to go with our ensemble. After that, I made more at home for fun with ti leaves from Dad’s plants. We also had a plumeria tree in our backyard, and I remember using sewing thread and a small sewing needle to string together a lei.

I always enjoyed discovering creative outlets like that and working with my hands. I always enjoyed discovering creative outlets like that and working with my hands.

**WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?**

We recently launched a new company called Hawai‘i Confectionery [available on the Hawai‘i Lei Stand website], offering some of our favorite local-style snacks to our customers. So far, we’ve been mixing up an assortment of different li hing and lemon peel gummy combinations — and having fun taste-testing it, too. We’re excited to see where it takes us next.

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT UH MANOA OR FROM YOUR TIME WORKING AT THE SCHOOL’S NEWSPAPER, KA LEO O HAWAI‘I, THAT YOU APPLY TODAY?**

Beyond the basic journalistic skills, there was so much that I learned during my time at Ka Leo that I applied to my job both after college as a writer, and now as a business owner. The years I spent at Ka Leo — a little over one as managing editor — strengthened my understanding of what it means to be a team player, tapped into a passion I have for planning for something and seeing it through, and more importantly, instilled a confidence to lead.

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The UH Maui Food Innovation Center has been a game changer for our new business.

KATY TSARK, STUDENT, on how the Maui Food Innovation Center commercial kitchen and instructor assistance has helped with her business. The MFC is the Islands' first college-based business incubator hub, where students can take their start-up business idea from concept to consumer. Some of the top-of-the-line equipment includes a rotating oven and a freeze dehydrator.

[New food innovation center opens at UH Maui College] "UH News, 1/7/23"

YEARS IN THE MAKING

The brand-new Walter Dods, Jr. RISE Center opened at UH Mānoa last fall and will continue to more than 300 students representing every college at UHM. The six-story, mixed-use housing facility and innovation center is UH’s first public-private partnership construction project and the first construction project for UH Foundation. It puts UH on the map as just one of five entrepreneurial learning communities across the U.S. at this scale.

$3.5 MILLION

The UH Mānoa music department received a record gift from the Barbara Barnard Smith Foundation, established to honor the late professor. The grant will fund the department’s first-ever endowed chair and two additional faculty members, revitalizing the ethnomusicology program that Smith founded.

34 ACRES

The UH Maui Food Innovation Center will turn into a film studio at the UH West O‘ahu campus. The university selected the project developer Island Film Group, which will design, build and manage it. Plans include office spaces, lodging and modern sound stages. UH students may also have opportunities to intern or work on film and TV productions. No expected completion data is set yet.

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LAST YEAR, AS THE MAUI COMMUNITY faced a profound crisis following the devastating fires, the University of Hawai‘i Maui College opened its doors. From August to October, the campus was transformed into one of the central hubs for food and disaster relief for fire survivors.

“Responding to the needs of our community has become a part of us. It’s who we are,” says Lui Hokoana (BA ’89, UH Hilo; MA ’91, UH Mānoa), chancellor of UH Maui College. “I think that’s just part of a community and that’s part of how the community is so resilient, in that we respond collectively to crises.”

State and federal organizations, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, American Red Cross, the state unemployment office and Maui United Way, set up offices on campus; and dozens of chefs and hundreds of volunteers arrived to prepare meals for shelters and first responders.

“Like many things in Hawai‘i, it’s not just about the building, it’s about the people,” says Lisa Grove, Maui United Way interim co-director. “Chancellor Lui Hokoana and his entire team have been unbelievable partners. He’s the ultimate problem-solver, and really trying to figure out how to leverage the resources from the campus to the community.”

The nonprofit moved to UH Maui College when its former office space proved insufficient. “Our office was just bulging very quickly, and UHMC said, ‘Come on over,’” says Grove. “It was not just an important workspace, it was an important convening space and also an important public space.”

Maui United Way continues to operate out of UH Maui College. “They have been true community champions,” says Grove.

FEEDING MAUI

ON AUGUST 9, 2023, the day after the fires, Chancellor Hokoana received a call from Jennifer Karaca (BAS ’16, UH Maui), the founding executive director of Common Ground Collective, asking if they could use the campus cafeteria to help feed the thousands of people in need. He swiftly agreed.

“Lui was the whole reason we got the kitchen, so he helped us from the very beginning,” says Karaca. “And then Chef Craig, who runs the program, was super instrumental in making sure everything was running smoothly and that, you know, everyone is being safe and following

WHEN THE COMMUNITY NEEDED IT MOST, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I MAUI COLLEGE ANSWERED THE CALL.

by CHRISTINE HITT
worked really well together. I wouldn’t say there was necessarily a central person in charge. I think it almost operated like a committee of several people,” says Omori. “This senior class lost their entire freshman year. They didn’t go to school because there was COVID. In their sophomore year, they went hybrid, so no extracurricular activities. Their junior year, they had a regular year and then [the Lahaina fire happened during their senior year],” says Le’Ho’ohonua, chancellor of UH Maui College. “We needed to plate everything and we’re talking thousands of meals, so he took all the food that was in large pans and he coordinated all the volunteers to actually serve it,” says Omori.

The next day, they continued cooking, and the number of prepared meals grew to 8,000 to 10,000 per day on average. Soon, other partners joined their efforts, including The Salvation Army, which grew to 8,000 to 10,000 per day on average. “This was a cantankerous, independent guy with a heart of gold once you got past his gruffness,” says Dods, philanthropist and former chairman of First Hawaiian Bank. “He had a little studio in Sand Island. He was always welding some sculpture. We used to go there to spend all afternoon sitting down and talking to him.”

Born on Kaua‘i in 1921, Akaji studied art in Italy after serving in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team in World War II. When he returned to Hawai‘i, he became the first to receive a Master of Fine Arts in sculpture from UH Mānoa. He was also a member of the Metcalf Chateau, a group of accomplished Hawai‘i-born modern artists of Japanese descent, who exhibited their works at a house on Metcalf Street. Akaji died in 2002.

Akaji’s work of art back near Metcalf Street, a place that meant so much to his longtime friend. “He was an artist’s artist,” says Dods.

“Modern Masterpiece

FULL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SENIORS

The University of Hawai‘i offered two-year and four-year scholarships to Lahainaluna High School seniors, thanks to a generous donation from an anonymous donor. The scholarships covered tuition, fees and supplies, and students can choose from any of the 10 UH campuses. “This senior class lost their entire freshman year. They didn’t go to school because there was COVID. In their sophomore year, they went hybrid, so no extracurricular activities. Their junior year, they had a regular year and then [the Lahaina fire happened during their senior year],” says Le’Ho’ohonua, chancellor of UH Maui College. “We needed to plate everything and we’re talking thousands of meals, so he took all the food that was in large pans and he coordinated all the volunteers to actually serve it,” says Omori. After the first two to three weeks, UH Maui College resumed classes, the preparation work shifted to the teaching faculty and culinary students for the next eight weeks. “It was a quick learning curve because many of them had not actually worked in a kitchen before,” says Hokoana. “But they are resilient and they answered the call.” Over the course of the 10 weeks that UH Maui College was utilized as a food preparation hub, more than 75,000 meals were cooked and sent out for delivery.

STAYING NIMBLE

IN OCTOBER, the school’s culinary students pivoted to organizing and distributing produce boxes for community members impacted by the Maui fires. Though the campus is no longer serving as a food hub and disaster relief center, Hokoana says he is working with staff to tailor their curriculum in ways that will continue to help Lahaina.

The UH Athletic Complex and Lahaina athletic complex, Lahainaluna’s athletic complex, is also named “Rise” for its creative use of alternating heights, rising to 14 feet and weighing 1 1/2 tons. It was made by the late artist Bumpei Akaji (MFA ’52, UH Mānoa), and jointly purchased and donated by Jay H. Shidler (BBA ’68, UH Mānoa) and Walter Dods, Jr. (BBA ’67, UH Mānoa), who knew the artist personally. Matson, Royal Contracting and Island Movers helped move the piece from Maui to Mānoa. “He was a cantankerous, independent guy with a heart of gold once you got past his gruffness,” says Dods, philanthropist and former chairman of First Hawaiian Bank. “He had a little studio in Sand Island. He was always welding some sculpture. We used to go there to spend all afternoon sitting down and talking to him.”

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Some of Akaji’s other works can be seen at UH Mānoa’s athletic complex, Lahainaluna’s athletic complex, and at the porte cochere of Mauna Kea Beach Hotel. “The entry of Mauna Kea, those metal birds are an early Bumpei Akaji that Laurance Rock-efeller himself commissioned Bumpei to do. [The Metcalf Chateau] had big-time followers, not just in Hawai‘i.”

Dods says he’s very happy to see Akaji’s work of art back near Metcalf Street, a place that meant so much to his longtime friend. “He was an artist’s artist.”
Across the University of Hawai'i system, new and old murals canvas our campuses' walls. Often involving students and community, these works of art are meaningful, vibrant displays that invoke positivity and a connection to place for everyone to see.

by Tiffany Hill

“Night Hula”

An invitation to create a fresco in Bachman Hall first brought French-born artist Jean Charlot to the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in 1949. Charlot went on to teach art at the university, while studying Hawaiian culture, history and language — he even wrote five plays in 'ōlelo Hawai'i. Today, the Mānoa campus is home to four Charlot works, including “Night Hula.” Originally commissioned for a Waikīkī law office in 2003, the 9 feet by 15 feet mural was donated, restored and placed in its final home in Saunders Hall. “The works created at UH were during the height of his career and we are fortunate to have many examples of his work on public view,” says Jean Charlot Foundation president, Allison Wong.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF © THE JEAN CHARLOT ESTATE LLC. WITH PERMISSION.

**Mauka to Makai**

The University of Hawai'i Maui College began work on the first installment of a 40 feet by 8 feet acrylic-on-canvas mural in September. More than 20 students, faculty and staff gathered to paint 'ulu, kalo and more for the center panel. When complete, the three mural panels will greet student lounge visitors with art symbolizing Hawai'i's intrinsic connection to nature, spanning from mauka to makai. “What I found when watching everyone is that spark of magic that happens when people come together for the greater good, especially after the challenges of recent events on Maui,” says co-coordinator and graphic designer Marc Antosch.

**“Aloha”**

More than 150 people, from keiki at the Leeward Children's Center to students, faculty, staff and community members, convened near Leeward Theatre last fall to paint the “Aloha” mural. “It was joyful to paint together and see the mural come to life,” says project coordinator and assistant professor Kelly Kennedy. “For me, this creative process and the mural’s presence on campus foster a sense of belonging and gratitude.” The public art honors ʻōlelo Hawai‘i as the Indigenous language of Pu‘uloa. Participants painted the word “Aloha” and covered the space with their handprints. Overlaying the handprints are greetings in diverse languages, painted by volunteers who speak them.

**Aunty Edith**

For eight years, Edith Kanaka'ole, known fondly as Aunty Edith, worked as an educator at Hawai'i Community College and later the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. She created curricula on 'ōlelo Hawai'i, history, ethnobotany, genealogy, chant and mythology. To honor her legacy, a photo-realistic mural was painted outside of her namesake building by muralist Kamea Har-dar alongside Kūha'o Zane, who is Edith Kanaka'ole’s grandson and creative director of Sig Zane Designs. The mural was unveiled May 6, 2023, in conjunction with the campus celebration of Kanaka'ole’s U.S. Mint quarter.
Setting the Stage

WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS HOME TO HAWAI‘I’S FIRST AND ONLY PROFESSIONAL ACTING CONSERVATORY.

by TIFFANY HILL

AURIE KINOSHITA AND NICOLAS LOGUE have been in the performing arts industry together for more than a decade. The pair, also married, are directors, playwrights, actors and educators. While they share similar passions and professions, their backgrounds couldn’t be more different. A self-described “privileged white guy” from the East Coast, Logue says he was offered opportunities to thrive as a performing artist. Kinoshita, however, was denied roles and jobs, so much so that the Hawai‘i-raised artistic director created — and funded — her own projects. In 2022, those inequities inspired the two to establish the Hawai‘i Conservatory of Performing Arts at Windward Community College. It’s Hawai‘i’s first and only professional acting conservatory, which means that during one academic year, students train in all aspects: audition techniques, acting methods, writing, stagecraft and even the business side of the profession.

HCPA’s mission is to ensure that the next generation of local artists don’t have to work against as many barriers as Kinoshita did, says Logue. “We provide a safe space where artists can train to produce their best work, tell stories about these islands and take on roles in stellar projects that help them launch their careers,” he adds.

With recent productions, like “Magnum, P.I.”, “NCIS: Hawai‘i” and several feature films, Hawai‘i is firmly rooted as a filming destination. Yet, according to a 2022 Hawai‘i state report, only 28% of actors in major roles in island productions were Hawai‘i residents.

Logue says he and Kinoshita want participants to receive the same quality training as students from top-tier conservatories. Instrumental to the conservatory’s success is support from WCC Chancellor Ardis Eckenberg, established and emerging professionals like Lee Cataluna, Lee Tongiguchi and Noa Helelā, and funding from Chris Lee, founder and director of the Academy for Creative Media at UH.

“One of the way to become great in the theater world is to spend a lot of time in a theater doing the work,” says playwright and author Lee Cataluna. “For students from Hawai‘i to do that work within the context of a story that takes place in Hawai‘i is very empowering for everyone in the show and everyone who gets to see the performance.” HCPA performed two of Cataluna’s plays, “Aloha Attire” and “Kimo the Waiter.”

Logue says one of his biggest goals for the conservatory’s future is to secure additional funding because “art is for everyone,” he says, “and Native Hawaiian and local performing artists and stories matter.”

Increased sponsorship also means increased access for students. Renowned programs at Julliard and Yale recently made parts of their acting programs tuition free, something the conservatory already does. “Without equal access to education, performance will remain solely the domain of those with money, privilege and leisure time,” says Logue. “Seeing stories about different people increases identification and empathy.”

By age 15, Nguyen earned his bachelor of science degree at UH Mānoa. When he was 16, he became a first-year medical student at the John A. Burns School of Medicine. Nguyen is currently conducting research with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, and is scheduled to graduate from JABSOM in May 2024. His ultimate goal is to practice orthopedic surgery. Nguyen didn’t mind. “I’ve never seen the show before,” Nguyen says. “Though I really probably should at this point.” His teachers and fellow classmates don’t seem to mind either. “JABSOM has been very welcoming,” he says. “They gave me an opportunity and I’m striving to live up to it.”

Bright Future

AT 18 YEARS OLD, RYAN NGUYEN IS YOUNGER THAN MOST OTHER JABSOM STUDENTS. BUT HE’S EARNED IT.

by JAMES CHARISMA

TAKING OFF AS A FRESHMAN in college can be a daunting experience for anyone. Imagine being at a new school with new teachers, surrounded by students you don’t know. Now imagine being 11 years old.

That was what college was like for Ryan Nguyen, whose passion for biology and math in middle school led him to take early college placement tests. Nguyen enrolled at Kapi‘olani Community College and attended classes with students twice his age.

“At first, I was worried about people wondering, ‘Who’s that little kid sitting in the corner?’” Nguyen says. “But everyone was really kind and inviting. We all attended campus events and I made a lot of friends within those first couple years.”

PHOTO BY AARON K. YOSHINO
Called to the Hall

Two Former Rainbow Wahine Are Honored as USA Volleyball’s All-Time Greats.

by LANCE TOMINAGA

The two former Rainbow Wahine – Ah Mow played for UH from 1993 to 1996, while Bown was at Mānoa in 1995 – still remembers Team USA competing in an international volleyball tournament at the Stan Sheriff Center in 1995.

“I thought, ‘Wow, this is crazy,’” she says. “ ‘There’s no way I’m ever going to play at this level.’”

Likewise, when Heather Bown (BA ’96, UH Mānoa) found out that she would be inducted into the USA Volleyball Hall of Fame, she couldn’t believe it.

“I was waiting for them to call me back and say ‘Just kidding!’” she says, laughing. “But it was no joke.” The two former UH Mānoa women’s volleyball All-Americans were officially inducted on May 22, 2024 at the USA Volleyball Hall of Fame, she couldn’t believe it.

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“I was waiting for them to call me back and say ‘Just kidding!’” she says, laughing. “But it was no joke.”

The stuff I loved the most was the camaraderie we built,” she says. “There was kind of an unspoken rhythm that we had. An added bonus was having a fellow UH alum as her teammate.

“For Bowen, her favorite memories with Team USA were beyond winning medals.

“They stuff I loved the most was the camaraderie we built,” she says. “We also got to travel to other countries and experience different cultures, places I would never have gone to on my own.”

“Playing with Robyn was just amazing,” she continues. “There was kind of an unspoken rhythm that we had. We just always knew where each other was on the court.”

Bown is now the diligence and integrity director for a company that owns and operates veterinary hospitals. She also coaches volleyball at the junior level. Ah Mow admits that the experience wasn’t easy. In addition to the thousands of training hours and having to battle through injuries, she also had her first child in 2003 while her then-husband was serving in Iraq.

“I was missing my son and wondering if my husband was going to make it back home,” says Ah Mow, who is now in her seventh season as the UH women’s volleyball head coach. “But it was all worth it in the end. This was bigger than me. I was representing my family, my university and the state. I’m very proud about that.”

FIVE NEWCOMERS TO WATCH

The new college sports season always brings fresh faces. Here are five Rainbow Warrior and Rainbow Wahine newcomers to watch.

MICAH ALEJADO
Football (Freshman Quarterback)

The top-rated quarterback from Nevada threw for 125 touchdowns and just four interceptions in his career at Bishop Gorman High School.

ADRIANNA ARQUETTE
Women’s Volleyball (Freshman Setter)

The Hawaii Gatorade Player of the Year led Kamahulu to the state championship last fall.

NALANI DAMACION
Women’s Soccer (Freshman Midfielder)

This prolific scorer led California’s Sierra Foothill League in goals in 2023.

AARON HUNKIN-CLAYTOR
Men’s Basketball (Freshman Point Guard)

Former Iolani School standout returns home after being named the Bay Area boys basketball Player of the Year in Northern California.

RITORYA TAMIO
Women’s Basketball (Freshman Center)

The 6-foot 5-inch center was the youngest member of the New Zealand National Team last year—L.T.

called to the hall: two former rainbow wahine are honored as usa volleyball’s all-time greats.

by lance tominaga

orbyn ah mow (ba ’96, uh manoa) still remembers team usa competing in an international volleyball tournament at the stan sheriff center in 1995. “i thought, ‘wow, this is crazy,’” she says. “‘there’s no way i’m ever going to play at this level.’”

likewise, when heather bown (ba ’96, uh manoa) found out that she would be inducted into the usa volleyball hall of fame, she couldn’t believe it.

“i was waiting for them to call me back and say ‘just kidding!’” she says, laughing. “but it was no joke.” the two former uh manoa women’s volleyball all-americans were officially inducted on may 22, 2024 at the usa volleyball hall of fame. ah mow couldn’t believe it.

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the stuff i loved the most was the camaraderie we built,” she says. “there was kind of an unspoken rhythm that we had. an added bonus was having a fellow uh alum as her teammate.

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adrianna arquette
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this prolific scorer led california’s sierra foothill league in goals in 2023.

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Pride and Passion

CHRIS BROWN BRINGS A WINNING MINDSET TO RAINBOW WARRIOR FOOTBALL.

by LANCE TOMINAGA

Chris Brown had hit the proverbial jackpot in Las Vegas. Not only was he the former University of Hawai‘i linebacker coaching a national prep football power, he was also relishing the glitz and glamor of the city while still enjoying the familiar comforts of Hawai‘i’s “Ninth Island.” “I had a really good gig there,” he says. Still, when newly hired UH football head coach Timmy Chang came calling in January of 2022, Brown knew what he had to do. It was time to come home. Today, Brown is entering his third season as the Rainbow Warriors’ linebackers coach. This past January, he took on the additional title of associate head coach. “Coach [Chang] knows that he can trust me in guiding the players the right way,” says Brown, a three-time All-WAC standout who played with Chang from 2000 through 2002. “We’re two guys who played here, have been part of great teams and know what it takes to win.” Although he was a three-time All-ILH performer at Damien Memorial School, only Hawai‘i offered him a scholarship. Brown joined the program in 1999 — June Jones’ first season as the school’s head coach. The Rainbow Warriors went 9-4 that year, a record-setting turnaround from the 0-12 losses in 1998. After UH, Brown had a brief stint with the NFL’s Baltimore Ravens before turning his focus to coaching. “I needed something when my playing career was over,” he says. “And I knew that I could teach young men.” Brown spent seven years as an assistant coach at Saint Louis School, then coached at Damien for two seasons. In 2015, he joined the coaching staff at Bishop Gorman High School in Las Vegas. There, he helped the Gaels claim national championships in 2015 and 2016. In 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brown followed through on a promise he made to his father: He got his college degree. “When I left school early to prepare for the NFL, my dad was really proud about it,” says Brown. “He told me, ‘You can do this, but promise me you’ll get your degree one day. It was hard work, but I got it done.’” Brown received a BA in sociology from UH Mānoa in 2020. “And you know what? I did something I never did before in my life,” he says, smiling. “I got all A’s!” Brown’s linebackers unit is known as the “Lion’s Den.” “It’s a mindset,” he explains. “It’s living a life of constantly striving for greatness. It’s about having pride and passion, and never settling for anything other than being great.” Brown believes the Rainbow Warriors are on their way to being just that. “I believe in Timmy’s vision,” he says, “and I wanted to come back to Hawai‘i and help him build the program to what it used to be. This is my dream job. I love doing this program with everything I have.”

Under the Sea

A HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL PROJECT EXAMINES THE ENDANGERED SPECIES’ SOUND.

by CHRISTINE HITT

It’s well known that whales sing over long distances and dolphins whistle and click, but the vocal behavior of wild Hawaiian monk seals underwater has never been studied before until now. “I think they’re just unique in that the sounds they produce underwater are very different from whales and dolphins and even from other seal species,” says Kirby Parnell, a PhD candidate in the Marine Mammal Research Program at the Hawai‘i Institute of Marine Biology. She had formerly studied the vocalizations of Kekoa, a housed Hawaiian monk seal in California, and wanted to apply what she learned to wild Hawaiian monk seal vocalizations.

In collaboration with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NMFS Permit No. 22677), Parnell started the Hawaiian monk seal underwater acoustic communication project at the Marine Mammal Research Program five years ago and began acoustic recordings with sound traps — a hydrophone and recording equipment attached to a concrete block. These were placed at Mānana (aka Rabbit Island), Le‘hua Island and the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, where the majority of the monk seal population lives.

The team collected data from three summers and the amount of data is massive. “I’m sitting on about 25 terabytes of data at this point,” she says. They are analyzing small portions of it on a spectrogram, a visualized representation of sound, and comparing them to Kekoa’s six different call types — croaks, groans, growls, moans, rumbles and whoops — and classifying them. So far, they’ve been able to detect and classify over 20,000 vocalizations. “We’ve actually found three new call types. One is the foraging call, one is a moan-growl; and the other one’s a moan-foraging call. Those are three call types that Kekoa didn’t produce in human care,” Parnell says.

But she says, overall, the wild seals’ sounds are similar to Kekoa’s. Once these sounds are analyzed, she says the next step is to figure out what they mean. “It’s cool knowing that this has never been done before and that we’re, you know, discovering things that these animals are doing that are potentially really important for their livelihood.”

HEALTH CARE INNOVATION

Technology developed at UH Mānoa can help monitor health in real time. Created by Tyler Pay, an assistant professor in the College of Engineering, it is a wearable sweat sensor with 3D printing that can detect hydration and blood sugar levels, as well as diabetes and heart failure. Called a “sweatmeter,” it was recognized by IN-PART as one of the world’s top health care innovations in 2023.

PHOTO OF MONK SEAL: FABIEN VIVIER; PHOTO OF SOUND TRAP: GRIFFIN HOINS; PHOTO OF SWEAT SENSOR: TYLER RAY AND ROXANNE KATE BALANAY
Peel opened Nami Kaze, an izakaya and sushi bar at Pier 38, two years ago. In 2023, it received two prestigious honors: It was named Hawai‘i’s Best New Restaurant by Honolulu Magazine and was a James Beard Award semifinalist for Best New Restaurant. These successes are a tribute to Peel’s talents in the kitchen as well as his skill in nurturing others.

Named for the Japanese terms for “wave” and “wind” as a nod to the restaurant’s location on the water, Nami Kaze serves a fusion brunch during the day (think shrimp toast benedicts, tomato miso butterfish, and chawanmushi-style steamed egg omelets) and small plates of fresh seafood and farm-to-table greens at night.

“My goal was to showcase what Hawai‘i has to offer, which is not only fish but also locally grown vegetables,” Peel says. “I like to get to know my farmers and ranchers. Some of them, I’ll take whatever they might be growing that season and we’ll adapt our menu to celebrate those ingredients.”

Peel has been synonymous with local cuisine, it’s strange to think he was once on a completely different career path. Originally, Peel studied aeronautical engineering at the University of Arizona after graduating from high school and working for “wave” and “wind.” Peek loved the space race growing up, Peel went for a year and hated it. I didn’t even finish my core classes,” he says. “So I decided to try something new. I thought that I could really apply my engineering background to solving problems in the culinary industry.”

KCC, but enjoys mentoring his cooks at Nami Kaze. “This is a tough industry and everybody’s just trying to survive. But we have to be able to reach out and support each other,” says Peel. “Whether my team and I are working with the schools or working with farmers, we’re all trying to create a better community here in Hawai‘i.”

Peel’s success has not been without challenges, but he has always been determined. “I was lucky to see so many sides of the industry. And feel enough to be able to learn from people, learn how they react to food, and then have the freedom to create a vision of what I think they would enjoy,” he says.

“Peel has become so synonymous with Hawai‘i’s culinary landscape that it’s hard for anyone to even finish my core classes,” he says. “I like to get to know my farmers and ranchers. Some of them, I’ll take whatever they might be growing that season and we’ll adapt our menu to celebrate those ingredients.”

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The heart of the campaign lies in seven strategic priorities that illustrate the University of Hawai‘i’s commitment to advancing education, research and community engagement through such things as scholarships, research that matters, innovation and entrepreneurship, and building Hawai‘i’s workforce. Alumni and other donors, who personally select the campuses and programs where they want to make the largest impact, have already committed more than $645 million toward the $1 billion goal.

“Private support is critical to helping students and families for whom higher education is the bridge to a thriving future, as well as to ensure we can recruit and retain top-tier faculty and graduate students, who are addressing some of the most important challenges and opportunities facing Hawai‘i and the planet,” says UH President David Lassner, (PhD ’98, UH Mānoa).

Walter Dods, Jr., longtime donor to UH, is the campaign’s chair. He previously chaired the 1998 UH Campaign for Hawai‘i that raised $116 million for the university.

“We believe this historic campaign will elevate UH to its greater potential as a world-class university and provide a solid foundation for Hawai‘i’s future,” says Dods, (BBA ’67, UH Mānoa). “There is no better investment than investing in Hawai‘i’s future leaders.”

Visit the FOR UH • FOR HAWAI‘I website at uhfoundation.org/4UH4HI to learn more and to watch a campaign video produced by the UHF staff with contributions from UH faculty and students from across the Islands.

**Home Sweet Home**

**HAWAI‘I COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE BUILDING THEIR 56TH HOME.**

by CHRISTINE HITT

**T’S THE ONLY PROJECT OF ITS KIND IN HAWAI‘I AND THE NATION.**

At Hawai‘i Community College, students in its construction trades programs are gaining real-world skills by building a home for a Native Hawaiian family, selected by the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. The Model Home Project, which was established in 1965, is working on its 56th home and it will be completed next spring. The approximately 1,700-square-foot home has three bedrooms, two and a half baths and a garage.

“We’re basically building a house as a construction company normally would,” says Grant Ka‘au’a, associate professor of carpentry and the carpentry program coordinator at Hawai‘i Community College. The two-year carpentry program is open to anyone and no experience is necessary. “Their first semester is from the ground up, teaching them hand tools, work ethics, proper PPE [personal protective equipment], construction math, knowledge of fasteners, and species of wood and tools.” Ka‘au’a says. In the second semester, students are pouring a concrete driveway for the model home, and in the third and fourth semesters, they are framing a house, then learning drywall, finishing and cabinet-making.

The project also has help from other HCC programs, such as diesel mechanics, Hawaiian studies, electrical installation and maintenance technologies, and agriculture. “The only [subcontractors] that we hire are the plumbers, painters, and drywall tape and mud. Everything else is done by Hawai‘i Community College programs,” he says.

Typical construction inspections are done each step of the way. Ka‘au’a says that if something doesn’t pass, then it’s a good learning opportunity for students. “That’s what makes it, you know, very valuable for us to be doing this real-world type of project,” says Ka‘au’a. “It’s almost like a dress rehearsal for them to enter the real world. They’ve seen it, they’ve done it, and that’s one of the things that will put them into the workforce as job ready.”
MILESTONES

Tiffany Hill

in the ear

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TO SAIL AROUND THE

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COLE BRAUER (BS ’17, UH MĀNOA) IS THE FIRST AMERICAN WOMAN TO SAIL AROUND THE WORLD ALONE.

FTER MORE THAN FOUR

MONTHS AT SEA, in the ear

ly morning hours on March 7, Cole Brauer stepped off her 40-foot boat, First Light, and onto land in A Coruña, Spain. While be

ing offshore for months is a challenge in and of itself, Brauer’s story is even more remarkable: The 29-year-old UH Mānoa graduate is the first American woman to sail around the world nonstop and solo. Fewer than 200 people have sailed nonstop around the world by them-

selves. Brauer’s 130-day, 30,000-mile journey made history when she placed second in the grueling Global Solo Chal-

lenge, one of only 16 sailors who com-

peted in the race. Racers set sail from A

Coruña, sailing south around Africa, to

Australia and crossing the Pacific before returning to Spain.

“My reaction, as is most people’s, is one of amazement,” says UH Mānoa women’s head sailing coach Andy John-

son. “It is a remarkable story.” Johnson was Brauer’s sailing coach for four years. Her tenacity and talent were evident to

her former teammates and coaches. Raised in East Hampton, New York, Brauer came to Hawai’i with sailing experience, later fine-tuned at UH. “She hadn’t had much skippering [time at the helm] when she came to the UH pro-

gram,” he says. (The skipper acts as the head or captain of the crew and steers.) But by the time she graduated in 2017,

Brauer was a member of the university’s three national championship qualifying teams and was a two-time Intercol-

legiate Sailing Association Academic All-American Team member. In her senior year, she was also given the Jack

Bonham Award, considered the most prestigious athletic award at UH, thanks to Johnson’s nomination. Brauer took the public

along with her during her months at sea during frequent, sometimes humorous, Instagram content. She documented it all — from challenges with her boat, becoming dehydrated and injuring herself, to painting her nails and setting up holiday decor — for her now approximately 500,000 followers.

While her meteoric fame is largely thanks to her sailing suc-

cesses, her academic endeavors are also noteworthy: Brauer holds a degree in food science and human nutrition. In her lit-

tle free time, she was a teaching assistant, on-campus tutor and helped feed O’ahu’s homeless as a member of the Food Science and Human Nutrition Club. “Cole has the personality to accomplish anything she puts her mind to,” says John-

son, adding the two are still in touch. “She made a commit-

ment and did it!” —Tiffany Hill

SELEcTED

MEDIA MAVEN

LEIANNE PEDRO IS THE FIRST NATIVE HAWAIIAN TO BECOME THE HAWAII PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER OF PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS.

LONGTIME LEADER IN THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY, Leianne Pedro (BA ’89, UH Mānoa) is the new market president and publisher of Pacific Business News, an American City Business Journals publication. She was formerly its vice president of sales.

“It is a great privilege,” says Pedro, who is the first Native Hawaiian to be in this role at PBN. Born and raised on O’ahu, she has familial roots on Hawai’i Island, Maui and Kaua’i.

“I do think it’s extra special. I’m really proud of my heritage and the kupuna that came before me,” she says. “I really want PBN to be known as a name that they can trust in the community, providing terrific business reporting and un-

wavering editorial integrity.”

Pedro’s media career began right out of high school, when she traveled to Alaska at the age of 17 to work at a daily newspaper. After three years, she attended the University of Oregon, working at the college newspaper there, and then transferred to the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa, where she gradu-

ated with a degree in communications. In 1987, she was hired as a tour guide at The Honolulu Advertiser, she moved into several different departments, including classified advertising and retail advertising.

She first joined PBN in 2010 as mar-

keting and circulation director, then again in 2020 as advertising account manager, before a series of promotions led her to where she is today.

Pedro says one of her goals is to

increase PBN’s neighbor island pres-

ence. The company has already been hosting events on O’ahu, Maui and West Hawai’i, but now the company is going to Kaua’i and East Hawai’i for the first time this year.

“I am most excited about the oppor-

tunity to give back to my own commu-

nity that raised me, where we can in-

corporate Hawaiian cultural values and traditions while providing outstanding business news, information and intelli-

gence,” she says.—Christine Hitt
I went through the UH Hilo system completely and ended up getting hired at the [College of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Management] originally. It was more so to teach some of the pre-vet courses because my doctorate was in the pharmaceutical area, kind of the chemistry area. So I was initially hired to teach pre-vet courses that were related to that, more of the anatomy, physiology, pharmacology areas. But then, I also grew up with a background in horses, so then that ended up being why we expanded into the equine certificate program.

We also just made a wildlife science certificate. It will be offered for the first time this fall.

**WORK**


The labs are on the multidisciplinary UH Hilo campus. The horse side is one component of it. It’s a separate satellite location from our UH Hilo campus. It’s in Pana’ewa. It’s 18 acres so it supports all of our classes. There’s some areas dedicated to the horses, but then there’s also, you know, other livestock areas. There’s cattle, goats, there’s greenhouses, research plots. There’s the bee garden where all the bees are.

The degree itself is a bachelor of science in agriculture, but then there is a specialty within that, so that’s animal health and management. So those are students who are either interested in the livestock field or in going to veterinary programs. The equine certificate is kind of a side certification; I also teach in that area.

Most of our students want to apply for vet programs, so a lot of my position is teaching those classes, making sure the curriculum kind of comes together with giving them the best chance at getting into those programs. And then the other part of my job, other than teaching, is advising students.

**PROUDEST MOMENT**

I’m definitely proud of my students. I’ve had ones that have gone on to vet school and are doing really well there, but then I also have ones that I have enjoyed working with because, I think, through taking some of the horse classes, they have kind of come out of their shell a lot in college.

It’s always good to see students who realize, you know, I can pick up other interests later on in life. I can change my major and change what I thought my career path was going to be. So I’ve really liked working with those students as well, who have come in just taking one of the equine classes just for fun and then they have come out of it knowing what they want to do in life.

**EDUCATION**

- BA in kinesiology and exercise sciences, 12, UH Hilo
- PhD in pharmaceutical sciences, 17, UH Hilo

**PROUD MOMENT**

When she was 8 years old my mom was faculty. I just got to initially started up with some horse activities at the UH Hilo farm. I had always loved horses when I was younger, and my family didn’t come from a horse background. I started out actually getting the opportunity to work with horses at UH Hilo because my mom was faculty. I was 9 or 10 years old when [UH Hilo] initially started up with some horse activity at the UH Hilo farm. I just got to tag along with her when she was doing her own projects on the farm and there just happened to be horses, so I could go. Some of the professors, who were in the animal program, would let me just sit in on their classes. Then I ended up giving off on my own after that, and had horses kind of all through high school and college.

**HOMETOWN**

Lissa Tsutsumi began working with horses when she was 8 years old. I was 9 or 10 years old when [UH Hilo] initially started up with some horse activity at the UH Hilo farm. I just got to tag along with her when she was doing her own projects on the farm and there just happened to be horses, so I could go. Some of the professors, who were in the animal program, would let me just sit in on their classes. Then I ended up giving off on my own after that, and had horses kind of all through high school and college.

**ANIMAL EDUCATOR**

Lissa Tsutsumi

**EDUCATION**

- PhD in pharmaceutical sciences, 17, UH Hilo
- BA in kinesiology and exercise sciences, 12, UH Hilo
GLENN TEVES (BS ’77, UH Mānoa) was appointed as the new USDA Tribal Advisory Committee by U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz. Teves formerly served as a country extension agent on Molokai for UH Mānoa’s College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. He will help guide the USDA’s initiatives in support of Native-led agriculture across the country.

KANOÉ NÁONE (BA ’91, MA ’92, PhD ’08, UH Mānoa) was selected as the new CEO for Girls Scouts of Hawai‘i. She previously served as CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Conejo Valley and as CEO of the Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture.

KATHLEEN MORIMOTO (BBA ’77, MA ’91, PhD ’98, UH Mānoa) was named board president of the Hawai‘i Leadership Forum, a part of The Omidyar Group. He will oversee the nonprofit, including its Omidyar Fellows program. Previously, Morimoto worked as CEO of corporate and community advancement at Hawaiian Electric Industries.

MARY HATTORI (BEd ’89, MEd ’93, EdD ’14, UH Mānoa) was appointed as a member of the Hawai‘i State Board of Education by Gov. Josh Green. As part of the board, her role will be to create policies that advance the public school system. Hattori is also the director of the Pacific Islands Development Program at the East-West Center.

JAPAN ALUMNI MEET & GREET

This past November brought together over 100 alumni from around Tokyo. In partnership with our UH Alumni Association-Japan chapter, we have been working together to rebuild the Japan alumni network. At the event, alumni connected with one another and heard updates from Provost Michael Bruno. To add to the excitement of the evening, attendees had the opportunity to meet and take photos with the UH men’s volleyball team and coaches. The team was on a recent tour of Japan, featuring games against the Osaka Sakai Blazers featuring volleyball alumni, Cole Watanabe ’23.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

While in Arizona for an alumni event and admissions student send-off, we had the privilege of meeting San Tummatu (MD ’20, Mānoa). A John A. Burns School of Medicine graduate and orthopedic surgery resident, he finds fulfillment in serving patients and emphasizes the importance of community and mentorship for incoming UH students. “The things I valued most about my time at UH were the community, the culture, and the sincere investment in my education by the faculty,” he says.

SAVE THE DATE!

3RD ANNUAL MAKERS MARKET August 7, 2024 | The Royal Hawaiian

The Makers Market brings together alumni chefs and alumni-owned restaurants or small businesses for a day of food, drinks and friendship. ‘Being a part of events like these that celebrate Hawaii businesses, as well as UH alumni owners and operators, is exciting and makes us proud to be part of this wonderful community,” says Chris Iwamura (MBA ’18, UH Mānoa) and Cristy Ito, (BA ’11, UH Mānoa) of Rainbow Drive-In.

THE NEW YORK CITY ALUMNI AND FRIENDS PAU HANA

Tommy Bahama restaurant hosted our alumni event in the “Big Apple.” Thanks to manager Travis Motooka (AA ’13, UH Mānoa), Motooka was at the Tommy Bahama Hawaii location, when it burned down in the Aug. 8 fires. He returned to New York and offered the space for a pau hana, where alumni and friends in New York had the special opportunity to connect with their peers and hear from UH Mānoa Provost Michael Bruno.

UC HONOLULU TOY DRIVE

Each year, the UH Mānoa Department of Public Safety hosts a toy drive to benefit local kids. We were compelled to assist in those efforts. In November, alumni gathered for the inaugural Young Alumni Mixer and Toy Drive event at Lokahi’s Brewing Company. It is one of many ways we want to support and give back to the community.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF UH FOUNDATION ALUMNI RELATIONS
‘Āina to Mākeke

Leeward Community College is guiding food entrepreneurs on how to scale-up a recipe and turn it into a commercial product that’s ready to market. Since January 2023, three cohorts, totaling 44 people, have already completed the 12-week ‘Āina to Mākeke program, workshopping a variety of products, including popsicles, seaweed crunchies, high-protein butters, hot sauces, bottled drinks, salami, sausages and more.

“At the end of the 12-week program, we have a student showcase where they show their product that they’re bringing to market,” says Christiane Bolosan-Yee (BA ’02, UH Mānoa), business instructor for Leeward Community College’s Office of Workforce Development. Food industry and small business professionals attend the showcase, along with buyers and distributors.