University of Hawai‘i

A Magazine for Alumni and Friends

United For Maui
When the community needed it most, UH Maui College answered the call.
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Hawai‘i Lei Stand
Owners Reece and Jaimie Farinas share their floral journey.
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Pride and Passion
Chris Brown brings a winning mindset to Rainbow Warrior football.
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Summer 2024
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
FOOD
Chef Jason Peel on Nami Kaze, plus a recipe.

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**SPACE TECH CENTER FOR HILO**

**HILO**

**SUMMER 2024**

Hi 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.

Typically, observatories like those on Haleakalā or Maunakea, 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.

**MĀNOA**

**EQUAL PLAY**

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.
Since 2021, some O‘ahu and Kaua‘i high school students have been training to become certified nurse aides through a partnership with Leeward Community College and the Healthcare Association of Hawai‘i. 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 Hawai‘i 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 Hawai‘i. Participating high schools include Farrington, Wai‘anae, Kaua‘i and Mililani. 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 for 15 high school students from Farrington, Kaimuki and McKinley.

Certified to Help Kūpuna
Lee Ward
Hawai‘i Lei Stand

Interview by MARIA KANAI
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 ARE SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR LEI THAT YOU SELL?**

Local people still love fragrant lei with flowers, like pikake, pakalana, tuberose and ginger. Mainland people do, as well, but because we’re shipping the lei and have to take factors like transit time and temperature into consideration, orchid lei varieties are among the most popular that we sell because of their hardiness and reliability in shipping. We carry everything from classic single-style orchid lei to fancier varieties, some of which feature hundreds of orchid petals sewn into intricate patterns.

**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.

**DO YOU MAKE THE LEI FOR HAWAI‘I LEI STAND?**

We leave the true lei artistry to our lei aunties, some of whom we have 25-plus years relationships with. Sometimes, though, things get busy and I jump in to make some of the more basic lei styles. Other times, when some of my favorite flowers are in season, I like to try my hand at coming up with new creations that we sell in the store only. Everything I learned is thanks to watching lei aunties, and even from Reece’s grandma, who occasionally makes specialty lei like double carnation and the Song of India lei.

**DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE LEI?**

I, like most people in Hawai‘i, love anything that has pikake — pikake by itself, pikake twisted with pakalana, strands of pikake wrapped together with another flower lei. It doesn’t matter how many pikake lei I see. I haven’t gotten tired of its fragrance, and it’s such a classic and elegant lei.

**WHAT DID YOU LEARN AT UH MĀNOA 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.

**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.
YEARS IN THE MAKING
The brand-new Walter Dods, Jr. RISE Center opened at UH Mānoa last fall 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 living 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.

“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 MIFIC 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, 11/7/23]

“After long-awaited anticipation of the Kaua‘i Performing Arts Center’s reopening, we are incredibly excited to welcome our KCC ‘Ohana and our community to enjoy the many talents that our theater will host here on our campus.”

— CHERYL LUM, LEAD TRAINING COORDINATOR FOR THE OFFICE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In April, the performing arts center at Kaua‘i Community College reopened after being closed for four years. It was closed during COVID for repairs and is ready to welcome the community once more. “We are extremely grateful to again be able to provide a state-of-the-art facility for our campus and community,” says Kaua‘i Community College Interim Chancellor Margaret Sanchez.

34 ACRES
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 date is set yet.
ASERS, ASTEROIDS, ZOMBIES — Chris McKinney’s sci-fi noir “The Water City Trilogy” finds its satisfying and powerful conclusion with the 2023 release of “Sunset, Water City.” If you’ve been following the nameless antihero-slash-former detective from the first book “Midnight, Water City,” you already know that you’re set for a weird, page-turning adventure.

In this final installment, the detective and his cynical daughter, Ascalon, navigate through a post-apocalyptic world dominated by a supervillain. In many instances, the perspective shifts to the daughter.

“Sunset” was a joy to write,” says McKinney. “Sharing point of view between father and daughter felt natural because it’s personal. My older daughter was 18 when I wrote it (she’s 20 now), and I found myself imagining her POV throughout her life — especially during those teen years when she developed her own strong opinions, concerning, well, everything.” He adds, “Among other things, I learned to acknowledge that my jaded worldview shouldn’t infect her youthful idealism. However, in a post-apocalyptic world, would this approach to parenting hold up? I don’t know. I have sympathy for this father character even though I know the daughter character is right.”

McKinney’s favorite scenes are when the character’s plans go horrifically wrong. “These moments don’t just reveal character, but they can be opportunities for surprise and dark comedy. In this book, my favorite moment to write may have been when it was time to let Ascalon take the reins, not just of the plot, but the narrative. It felt good. It felt like inheritance.”

With the conclusion of the series, McKinney is eyeing the fantasy genre as he thinks about what to tackle next. Hawai‘i is “steeped in legend, not just Native Hawaiian, but the mythology of other cultures as well,” he says. “Hawai‘i will always be a vibe in my writing, even if it’s not the actual setting. I also wouldn’t mind trying to dabble in horror. Perhaps blending both genres would be fun.”
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...
That evening, Karaca was joined by Chef Sheldon Simeon (AAS ’03, UH Maui), owner of Tin Roof Maui, and Chef Craig Omori (AS ’94, UH Maui), culinary arts instructor at UH Maui College, along with around five volunteers. They all started cooking, making about 400 to 600 meals out of the campus’s culinary building for the many people stranded at the airport.

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, World Central Kitchen and Chef Hui, during those first two weeks.

“You know, typically in a restaurant hotel, there’s one executive chef. We had, what I would estimate, eight to 10 executive chefs in the building, so there were a lot of chiefs,” says Omori. “But everybody 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.”

Omori says Karaca played a large part in securing the produce. Simeon took the lead creating menus, based on the products they had. Chef Taylor Ponte (AAS ’15, UH Maui) of Kamado Maui led the service coordination. “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, and 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 175,000 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 trades program is looking at ways to assist in the rebuild, he says, and the school is reaching out to Lahaina residents who are looking for new career pathways.

UH Maui College wants to help in whatever way it can. “It’s just part of our philosophy that we will work with our community in service to our community,” Hokoana says.

**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 scholarship covers tuition, fees and supplies, and students can choose from any of the 10 UH campuses.

“This senior class lost their entire freshman year, 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 Lui Hokoana, chancellor of UH Maui College.

“We are able to say that the number of applications from Lahainaluna is at an all-time high, so we know they are interested in coming to one of the campuses,” Hokoana says.

**PHOTOS: COURTESY OF UH MAUI COLLEGE**
Modern Masterpiece

by CHRISTINE HITT

DORNING THE FRONT LAWN of the newly opened Walter Dods, Jr. RISE Center at UH Mānoa is a magnificent sculpture, recently installed in April. The striking piece, made of copper and bronze, 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.”

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.

Some of Akaji’s other works can be seen at UH Mānoa’s athletic complex, Kaua‘i Community College, UH Hilo, Ala Moana Center, Fort DeRussy, the Eternal Flame War Memorial across from the Hawai‘i State Capitol, 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 Rockefeller 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 extremely creative,” he says. “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 invite positivity and a connection to place for everyone to see.

by TIFFANY HILL
“Night Hula”

**UH MĀNOA**

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.

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 Ha‘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.

PHOTO: CKELA KILLAM
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”

LEEWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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 ‘ōlelo 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.
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, these 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, PI,” “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 Eschenberg, established and emerging professionals like Lee Cataluna, Lee Tonouchi and Noa Helelā, and funding from Chris Lee, founder and director of the Academy for Creative Media at UH.

“The only 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 invites identification and empathy.”


PHOTO: BRAD GODA, COURTESY OF HCPA AT WCC
Bright Future

AT 19 YEARS OLD, RYAN NGUYEN IS YOUNGER THAN MOST OTHER JABSOM STUDENTS. BUT HE’S EARNED IT.

by JAMES CHARISMA

STARTING 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.”

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 2026. His ultimate goal is to practice orthopedic surgery.

Now 19, Nguyen is closing the age gap between himself and his peers. However, being called a real-life “Doogie Howser, M.D.,” isn’t likely to change soon, especially since a remake of the ’90s show — Disney’s “Doogie Kamealoha, M.D.” — debuted at the same time Nguyen started medical school.

Nguyen doesn’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.”
Called to the Hall

TWO FORMER RAINBOW WAHINE ARE HONORED AS USA VOLLEYBALL’S ALL-TIME GREATS.

by LANCE TOMINAGA

OBYN AH MOW (BA ’11, UH Mānoa) 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 ’06, 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 banquet in Columbus, Ohio.

The two were never teammates for the Rainbow Wahine — Ah Mow played for UH from 1993 to 1996, while Bown was at Mānoa in 1998 and ’99 — but together they represented the U.S. in numerous top-level international competitions, including three Olympic Games: 2000 in Sydney, 2004 in Athens and 2008 in Beijing. They were starters on the ‘08 squad that captured the silver medal.

For Bown, her favorite memories with Team USA went beyond winning medals.

“The 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.”

An added bonus was having a fellow UH alum as her teammate.

“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 integration 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 new 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 Hawai‘i Gatorade Player of the Year led Kamehameha Schools 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 TAMISO
Women’s Basketball (Freshman Center)
The 6-foot 5-inch center was the youngest member of the New Zealand National Team last year.—LT

MAKING THE GRADE

UH HILO STUDENT-ATHLETES SCORE WINS IN THE CLASSROOM.

by LANCE TOMINAGA

On April 9, 2024, 112 Student-Athletes were recognized at UH Hilo’s sixth annual Student-Athlete Academic Honors Reception at the ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center’s Moanahoku Hall.

Representing all 12 of Hilo’s sports programs, the honorees maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.30 or better.

“I first get to see these young men and women at orientation,” Melanie Brokaw says. “Then, after working with them throughout their time with us, to see them graduating with their diplomas, that is just so rewarding to me.”

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Athletics Department hired Brokaw in the summer of 2018 as its first academic advisor. Since then, she has strived to raise the academic profile of Vulcan student-athletes — and the work is paying off.

“I just try to fill any needs here and there,” she explains. “Our department really works well as a unit. We always have our eyes on our student-athletes.”

Grade checks, orientations, study hall sessions and counseling are all part of a day’s work for Brokaw, who since 2023, also doubles as the Athletic Department’s senior woman administrator.

“We always emphasize the student in ‘student-athlete,’” Brokaw says. “While some might go on to have professional sports careers, our focus is on giving them the tools they need to become contributing members of society. We want to help them any way we can.”
Chris Brown brings a winning mindset to Rainbow Warrior football.

by Lance Tominaga

Pride and Passion

CHRIS BROWN HAD HIT THE proverbial jackpot in Las Vegas. Not only was 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 pretty sad 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 this program with everything I have.”
Under
the
Sea
A HAWAIIAN MONK SEAL PROJECT EXAMINES THE ENDANGERED SPECIES’ SOUND.

by CHRISTINE HITT

T’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), Lehua 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 Ray, 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 “sweatainer,” it was recognized by IN-PART as one of the world’s top health care innovations in 2023.
(Cookin’ on) the Dock of the Bay

CHEF JASON PEEL IS WINNING AWARDS FOR HIS RESTAURANT, NAMI KAZE.

by JAMES CHARISMA

IF YOU TOLD A YOUNG JASON PEEL (AS ’99, Kapi‘olani Community College) that cooking was in his future, he would have said you were crazy. Yet after nearly 30 years wearing every hat imaginable in the food industry — from serving as an executive chef to becoming a culinary arts professor to opening his own award-winning restaurant — Peel is grateful for the journey.

“I was lucky to see so many sides of the industry. And fortunate 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.

A RECIPE FROM CHEF JASON PEEL

MRS. CHENG’S TOFU AND SMOKED TOMATO SALAD

INGREDIENTS:
- Mrs. Cheng’s Tofu, soft, 24 ounce block of tofu
- Smoked tomato, grape, 4 to 6 tomatoes
- Hijiki, braised, 2 teaspoons
- Sizzle scallion, 2 teaspoons
- Red shiso, micro, 8 pieces
- House ponzu, 2 tablespoons

INSTRUCTIONS:
Cut tofu into desired shapes, and place on a plate or bowl. Toss the tomato, hijiki and scallion, and season with salt and pepper.

How to make the smoked grape tomato:
Torch the grape tomatoes to blister the skins. Season with oil, yukari, pepper and salt. Heat preferred smoker to 225 degrees. Add tomatoes. Add wood chips to the smoker and smoke for 30 minutes. Cool completely.
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 become so 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 on Kaua‘i. “I went for a year and hated it. I didn’t even finish my core classes,” he says. Though he had initially been inspired by the space race growing up, Peel wasn’t interested in crunching numbers for a living. “Also, I get motion sickness like crazy.”

Instead, Peel moved to O‘ahu and enrolled in Kapi‘olani Community College’s Culinary Arts program. There he met Ian Russo, who was the executive chef of Michel’s at the Colony Surf Hotel at the time. Russo invited Peel to work for him, and within a year and a half, Peel became Michel’s sous chef at age 23. A few years later, Peel began working for Roy Yamaguchi; first at Roy’s Hawai‘i Kai, then at Roy’s Waikīkī, which Peel helped open and where he served as executive chef for eight years. In 2014, he returned to KCC — this time as an instructor in the Culinary Institute of the Pacific program.

“My parents were teachers and now I have a son. I wanted to teach and give back just like the previous generation helped me,” says Peel, who prides himself on his ability to listen to students and encourage them to try new things. “You can’t be afraid to make mistakes.”

Peel is no longer teaching at 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.”

### How to make the hijiki braise:
- Hijiki (dry), soaked overnight, 1,000 grams
- Sesame oil, 300 grams
- Soy sauce, 900 grams
- Sugar, 400 grams
- Sake, 600 grams
- Mirin, 280 grams
- Water, 1,200 grams
- Mushroom powder, 2 teaspoons
- Drin hijiki. Put all ingredients into a pot except the sesame oil. Simmer for two hours. Add sesame oil and chill.

### How to make the sizzle scallion:
- Cut scallion into fine rounds, sizzle with hot oil in a metal pan. Season with salt and chill on ice.
Community

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 co-ordinator 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 ethos, 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.”
Historic Goal

“FOR UH • FOR HAWAI‘I” CAMPAIGN AIMS TO RAISE $1 BILLION FOR UH

The University of Hawai‘i Foundation last fall launched the public phase of FOR UH • FOR HAWAI‘I, the most ambitious comprehensive fundraising effort in Hawai‘i’s history. The campaign aims to raise $1 billion funds that will benefit current and future students, faculty and researchers across all 10 UH System campuses.

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. That includes $593,538 raised on the first-ever UH Giving Day held in April.

“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.
AFTER MORE THAN FOUR MONTHS AT SEA, in the early morning hours on March 7, Cole Brauer stepped off her 40-foot boat, First Light, and onto land in A Coruña, Spain. While being 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.

“My reaction, as is most people’s, is one of amazement,” says UH Mānoa women’s head sailing coach Andy Johnson. “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 program,” 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 Intercollegiate 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 successes, her academic endeavors are also noteworthy. Brauer holds a degree in food science and human nutrition. In her little 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 Johnson, adding the two are still in touch. “She made a commitment and did it!” —Tiffany Hill

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

HISTORIC

AROUND THE WORLD IN 130 DAYS
MILESTONES

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 kūpuna 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 unwavering 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 graduated with a degree in communications. In 1987, she was hired as a tour guide at The Honolulu Advertiser in the newspaper’s marketing and promotions department, when it operated out of the beaux arts building on Kapi‘olani Boulevard.

“I would give tours of the news building and showcase the highlights of the Contemporary Museum of Art that was there and the fine architecture,” she says. Over the course of 23 years with The Honolulu Advertiser, she moved into several different departments, including classified advertising and retail advertising.

She first joined PBN in 2010 as marketing 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 presence. 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 opportunity to give back to my own community that raised me, where we can incorporate Hawaiian cultural values and traditions while providing outstanding business news, information and intelligence,” she says.—Christine Hitt
HOMETOWN
I grew up here in Hilo. I am a graduate of Hilo High School. 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 going off on my own after that, and had horses kind of all through high school and college.

EDUCATION
• BA in kinesiology and exercise sciences, ’12, UH Hilo
• PhD in pharmaceutical sciences, ’17, UH Hilo

WORK
• Assistant professor, Applied Agricultural Sciences; Advisor, Animal Health and Management and Equine Science at UH Hilo

The labs are on the multidisciplinary UH Hilo farm. 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 110 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 greenhous-
es, 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 for 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 keeps up 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.

Ryuzo Yanagimachi
(1928–2023) Cloning pioneer and professor. Yanagimachi was renowned for cloning the world’s first mouse in 1997. He began at UH as an assistant professor at JABSOM’s Department of Anatomy and Reproductive Biology in 1966 and founded UH’s Institute of Biogenesis Research in 2000. Over his career, he won many awards and was inducted into the National Academy of Sciences in 2001.

James “Jimmy” Toshio Yagi
(1935–2023) (BBA ’57, UH Mānoa) UH Hilo basketball coach. With a 218-87 record, Yagi had the most wins as a men’s basketball coach in UH Hilo history, taking the Vulcans to the national tournament three times. He was inducted into the UH Hilo Athletics Hall of Fame.

Murli Manghnani

Loren Kroenke
(1938–2023) (MS ’68, PhD ’72, UH Mānoa) Oceangoing researcher and geophysicist. Given the title “iron man of UH expeditionary marine research,” Kroenke was a scientist who served on many ocean expeditions aboard UH research vessels. He studied volcanism, the Pacific Plate and the Ontong Java Plateau.

Bob “Wags” Wagner
(1947–2023) UH Mānoa head football coach. Wagner started as an assistant coach for the Rainbow Warriors in 1977, was promoted to defensive coordinator in 1983, then became head coach in 1987. He led the program to its first bowl game in 1989 and first WAC title in 1992. He was a two-time Western Athletic Conference Coach of the Year.

Jim Kauahikaua
(1951–2023) (MA ’79, PhD ’82, UH Mānoa) Volcano scientist. A geophysicist, Kauahikaua joined the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory in 1988 and later became scientist-in-charge. He was the first Native Hawaiian to hold the position. In 2004, he published the book “Volcano: Creation in Motion.”

Nick Kaiser
(1954–2023) Astronomer and professor. Kaiser was an astronomer for UH’s Institute for Astronomy for nearly two decades and his work impacted the fields of cosmology. Kaiser also proposed the Panoramic Survey Telescope and Rapid Response System (Pan-STARRS) sky survey that is currently operating.

Catherine “Kitty” Yannone
(1954–2023) (BA ’81, UH Mānoa) UH regent and entrepreneur. For six years, Yannone served on the UH Board of Regents, including the positions of chair and vice chair. Under her leadership, the board voted for the development of the UH West O‘ahu campus and the UH Hilo College of Pharmacy. She purchased the public relations firm Communications Pacific in 1998 and provided services to Hawaii’s top companies.

Nadine Kam
(1959–2023) (BA ’82, UH Mānoa) Food and restaurant columnist. For decades, Kam worked for the Honolulu Star-Bulletin and later at the Honolulu Star-Advertiser as a copy editor, page designer, writer and features editor. She wrote dining reviews in the column “The Weekly Eater” and covered the restaurant industry in the “Crave” section of the Star-Advertiser.
GLENN TEVES (BS ’77, UH Mānoa) was appointed to the new USDA Tribal Advisory Committee by U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz. Teves formerly worked as a county extension agent on Moloka‘i for UH Mānoa’s College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. He will help guide the USDA on initiatives to support Native-led agriculture across the country.

KANOE NĀONE (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 ’91, UH Mānoa) is the new president and CEO of St. Francis Healthcare System. For-merly, she was a vice president at HMSA and she has worked in leadership roles at The Queen’s Health System and The Queen’s Medical Center.

HAILAMA FARDEN (BA ’92, UH Hilo) was named the senior director of Hawaiian Cultural Affairs at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. In this newly created position, Farden will ensure that the organization utilizes a Hawaiian worldview in all lines of business. He brings with him a long work history at Kamehameha Schools, where he served most recently as community strategist.

STACY KEALOHALANI FERREIRA (BA ’93, UH Manoa; MEd ’01, UH Manoa) was selected as CEO of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. She is responsible for imple-menting the agency’s strategic plan and ensuring it’s bettering the lives of Native Hawaiians. Prior to this position, she served as budget chief of the Hawai‘i State Senate.

SHANLYN PARK (JD ’95, UH Mānoa) was confirmed as a U.S. District Court judge by the U.S. Senate. This will make Park the first Native Hawaiian woman to serve as a federal district court judge. She has been a First Circuit judge on O‘ahu since 2021 and also served as adjunct professor at the UH Mānoa William S. Richardson School of Law.

JEANINE DEFRIES (BA ’00, UH Mānoa) is the president and CEO of The Hawaii Pacific Foundation. She is responsible for making decisions and carrying out plans to further its mission of empowering Native Hawaiian communities. Prior to this role, she was a procurement manager at Hawaiian Host Group.

DANIEL CHUN (BS ’02, UH Mānoa) was promoted to regional vice president at Alaska Airlines in Hawai‘i. He was formerly the airline’s Hawai‘i director of sales, community and public relations. He is responsible for long-term strategy in Hawai‘i and will be part of the team working to integrate Alaska Airlines with Hawaiian Airlines.

AJ HALAGAO (MBA ’04, UH Mānoa) was named board pres-ident of the Hawai‘i Leadership Forum, a part of The Omidyar Group. He will oversee the nonprofit, including its Omidyar Fellows program. Previously, Halagao worked as vice presi-dent of corporate and commu-nity 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 Educa-tion 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.

KA‘ŌNOHIKAUMAKAAKEAWE LOPE (BA ’23, UH Mānoa) was crowned Miss Aloha Hula 2024 at the 61st annual Merrie Monarch Festival. Lopes, who is fluent in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, also won the competition’s Hawai-i-an language award. She was dancing for Hālau Ka Lā ‘Ōnohi Mai O Ha‘eha’e.
KEEPING UP WITH UH ALUMNI

WITH MORE THAN 330,000 UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI`I ALUMNI spread around the globe, we often find ourselves traveling to meet them where they are, in hopes of bringing a bit of the “Aloha State” to their town. We love meeting our alumni and hearing stories about their time at UH and what they are doing now. We also love watching the connections made between our different alumni, who relive old memories together and also make new friends. This is how we build and keep our alumni network strong. Learn more at uhalumni.org.

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

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 Ganbatte Aloha Tour around Japan, which started off with a game against the Osaka Sakai Blazers featuring volleyball alumnus, Cole Watanabe ’23.

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 Maui). Motooka was at the Tommy Bahama Maui location, when it burned down in the Aug. 8 fires. He returned to New York and offered the space for a pau hana, where UH Alumni and friends in New York had the special opportunity to connect with their peers and hear from UH Mānoa Provost Michael Bruno.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
While in Arizona for an alumni event and admissions student send off, we had the privilege of meeting Sai Tummala (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 Hawai`i businesses, as well as UH alumni owners and operators, is exciting and makes us proud to be part of this wonderful community,” say Chris Iwamura (MBA ’18, UH Mānoa) and Crystine Ito, (BA ’11, UH Mānoa), of Rainbow Drive-In.

STAY CONNECTED
Interested in attending an alumni event, participating in a volunteer program, or keeping up-to-date on UH news and discounts? Update your contact information to ensure you stay in the know! Scan the QR code or visit uhalumni.org/contact/update.
The guaranteed lifetime care was a key consideration in deciding to move to 15 Craigside. After caring for our own parents, the continuum of care under one roof provides peace of mind and ensures we remain together. And that includes Viva, our Havanese, because 15 Craigside allows pets.

Technological innovations at 15 Craigside enhance our quality of life and keep us connected. With Voice Technology in our Smart Apartment, we can ask about 15 Craigside community events, dining and activities. There’s always something fun to do. From our personal experience, what we would say to anyone considering moving into 15 Craigside, is don’t wait because the window of opportunity might not be there when you’re ready.

Call Chanel at 808-533-5437 to schedule a tour.
ʻĀina 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.