Clean energy visionary to keynote UH Hilo spring commencement

by Ken Hupp

Henk B. Rogers, a Dutch-born video game entrepreneur and leading clean energy advocate, delivers the keynote address at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s Spring Commencement Saturday, May 12, 9 a.m. at Edith Kanaka‘ole Stadium.

Students have petitioned for degrees and/or certificates from the colleges of Arts and Sciences (589), Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resource Management (22), Business and Economics (57), Pharmacy (143), Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language (48), and for various post-graduate credentials (19).

Rogers spent his early career as a video game developer and publisher in Japan where he produced the country’s first role-playing game, The Black Onyx. He went on to revolutionize the video game industry by securing the distribution rights for the tile-matching puzzle video game Tetris, which remains a bestseller and global icon of gaming culture. Today, he serves as chairman of Blue Planet Software, the sole agent for the Tetris franchise.

Rogers has dedicated the past decade to the research, development, advocacy and implementation of renewable energy sources in Hawai‘i. He founded Blue Planet Energy Systems in 2015 to advance his mission of ending the use of carbon-based fuel worldwide. He led the development of Blue Ion, a pre-packaged energy storage solution combining industry-leading LiFePO4 battery technology with proprietary system architecture and energy management software. Blue Ion offers a safe, reliable, fully automated renewable energy solution, which he has used to declare his homes in Honolulu and Kailua-Kona completely energy independent.

Blue Planet Foundation, founded by Rogers in 2007, is the state’s leading non-profit clean energy advocate. Blue Planet has worked to make

Spring 2018: An exciting semester of positive learning experiences for our students and community

As UH Hilo heads toward the end of the spring 2018 semester and Commencement, I’d like to share a few highlights with you.

Student accomplishments

Earlier in the semester, three UH Hilo students each received a 2018 UH President’s Green Initiative Award recognizing their initiative, innovation, creativity and civic engagement in campus and community sustainability with cash prizes.

Kasey Buchanan received the Johnson Controls Green Leader Award for a campus waste reduction project. Kara Spaulding received the HEI Charitable Foundation Green Leader Award for developing sustainability curriculum in the arts and perpetuating natural and cultural resources. Zoe Whitney received an honorable mention for producing a UH Hilo Carbon and Nitrogen Report Card.

UH Hilo students excelled at the 13th Annual Health Occupation Students of America–Future Health Professionals State Leadership Confer-
Matthew Ruiz Jr., a Sociology major, represents the graduating class as student speaker. Ruiz was born in Wailuku, Maui and graduated from Maui High School in 2013. He transferred to UH Hilo in fall 2016 after earning an associate degree in liberal arts from Hawai‘i Community College. At UH Hilo, he has maintained a 3.7 GPA, made the College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s List each semester, and was awarded a CAS Dean’s Scholarship in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.

Outside the classroom, Ruiz works with Admissions and New Student Programs in the Division of Student Affairs as well as a paraprofessional tutor at Chiefess Kapi‘olani Elementary School. He currently serves as vice-president of the UH Hilo Education Club and is a member of the UH Hilo Sociology Club.

Ruiz plans to enter UH Hilo’s Master of Arts in Teaching program in Summer 2018. His ultimate goal is to return to Maui and teach at Lihikai Elementary School in Kahului, which he once attended.

Hawai‘i the first state in the nation to target 100 percent renewable energy for electricity and ground transportation sectors. The organization’s signature annual energy report card has become a key marker for assessing the state’s renewable energy efforts and areas for advancement. The organization is now expanding its effort nationwide.

Other clean energy initiatives founded by Rogers include Blue Start-ups, Hawai‘i’s first venture accelerator for local technology entrepreneurs, and Blue Planet Research, which is working on off-grid energy solutions and exploring the hydrogen economy.

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ence held on O‘ahu in February. All 10 UH Hilo delegates competing at the conference placed in their events, with one team taking first place in their category. In the process, students honed public speaking and interpersonal communication skills, gained knowledge, and networked.

Three students from the Marine Options Program at UH Hilo came home in April with four awards from the statewide MOP Student Symposium held on O‘ahu. The annual event features oral and poster presentations by undergraduate students from around the state. This year’s UH Hilo winners: Wheatley Crawley for best poster presentation (conservation at Wai‘opae), Michelle Nason received the John P. Craven Child of the Sea award (project on a coral nursery), and Julia Stewart won best research project (coral research using bioinformatics) and the Ana Toy Ng MOP Memorial award (for contributions to MOP).

These accomplished students—and many others too many to name here in this column—are already contributing in positive ways to local and global communities. Their research, leadership, sustainability, conservation and community-based projects are making an impact. I look forward to seeing more of their academic accomplishments and their work in the world after graduation.

Community

In April, UH Hilo received official designation as a Blue Zones approved workplace. The Blue Zones project is a nationwide initiative to promote healthy living and long lives. UH Hilo now joins a number of businesses and organizations working together to transform Hilo into a Blue Zones community by adopting healthy practices. As an institution of higher learning, we are already well-versed in developing healthy minds. We can now look forward to taking that next step to promoting overall physical well-being. Activities on campus include walking groups, healthy cooking demonstrations, and many other wellness pursuits.

The iconic Hawaiian double-hulled sailing canoe, Hōkūle‘a, visited Hilo in April as part of its statewide “Mahalo Hawai‘i Sail” as the crew expresses mahalo to numerous communities for their support of the three-year Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage from 2014 to 2017. UH Hilo co-hosted an educational expo in April at Wailoa Pier where hundreds of schoolchildren and others from the East Hawai‘i community enjoyed tours of the Hōkūle‘a and hands-on educational activities to showcase ocean navigation’s connection to science, math, culture and conservation. We’re proud of our very own Pwo Navigator and Captain Kālepa Baybayan and the many other people from the UH Hilo ‘ohana who participated in the worldwide voyage and the recent expo.

A panel discussion on incorporating Hawaiian cultural knowledge with modern western science to meet the sustainability challenges facing Hawai‘i today was held at UH Hilo in February. The discussion was part of the 6th Annual Hawai‘i Sustainability in Higher Education Summit held over the course of three days on Hawai‘i Island. Delegations from all 10 UH campuses gathered to learn from local practitioners, national experts, and each other, and to set the action agenda for upcoming campus initiatives.

Looking forward

On July 1st, the new College of Natural and Health Sciences will be established. It will house the current Division of Natural Sciences, School of Nursing, and
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Department of Kinesiology and Exercise Sciences. Jim Beets, professor of marine science and current chair of the Division of Natural Sciences, has agreed to serve as the interim dean of the new college. A national search for a permanent dean will soon be launched.

And we have a recent update from UH President David Lassner about the search for the next permanent UH Hilo chancellor, now expected to be completed by the end of 2018 with our new leader in place in spring 2019.

These are just a few of the exciting things happening at UH Hilo as we work together to provide positive learning experiences and support to prepare students to thrive, compete, innovate and lead. I wish you all a safe and wonderful summer.

Aloha,

Marcia Sakai

UH Hilo Chancellor’s search extended

University of Hawai‘i President David Lassner recently announced that the search for a permanent chancellor of the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo has been extended due to the unexpected delay of not yet having the search firm in place. The professional search firm will assist in the process of identifying the best possible candidates for the position.

“When we announced the search, we also noted that a professional search firm would be assisting with the process and we were concluding our efforts to competitively select a firm,” Lassner said. “The updated job announcement was posted in January with review to begin at the end of February. We hoped to expeditiously identify the next chancellor, who will play a critical role in strengthening UH Hilo’s unique position in the state and beyond, with my recommendation to the Board of Regents this summer.

“We now expect to conduct campus visits with finalists at the start of the fall 2018 semester to ensure full campus input before a selection is made. This will still allow for a new chancellor to start in the spring 2019 timeframe,” he noted.

Lassner will recommend to the Board of Regents to continue Interim Chancellor Marcia Sakai’s appointment until the new chancellor begins.

A 16-member search committee comprised of faculty, staff, students and community members is co-chaired by Farrah-Marie Gomes, UH Hilo vice chancellor for student affairs, and Vassilis Syrmos, UH System vice president for research and innovation.

Financial Aid launches award-winning GetAnswers online video service

In an effort to better meet the needs of students with questions about financing their education, the Financial Aid Office has launched GetAnswers, which increases access to financial aid related information in an easy to understand video format, a platform that many students prefer. GetAnswers is an online library of over 600 short video clips ranging from 60-90 seconds that are accessible on demand, 24 hours, 7 days a week.

GetAnswers videos communicate complex financial aid information to current and prospective students, parents, and alumni in an easy to understand style. The videos cover a wide array of topics that include financial aid, financial literacy, loans, grants, scholarships and more. GetAnswers allows users to easily find pertinent videos through categorizing similar content together and includes a search feature where users can type in a question they are looking for an answer to.

Users can access UH Hilo’s GetAnswers videos at uhhilo.financialaidtv.com/ or by visiting the UH Hilo financial aid web page at hilo.hawaii.edu/financialaid/. Relevant videos are embedded along side written information within the UH Hilo financial aid web pages.

Since the soft launch of UH Hilo’s GetAnswers on March 19, 2018, the data shows that in just 2 weeks time, close to 400 videos have been viewed! The bulk of videos are being viewed before or after normal business hours indicating that the 24/7 access to financial aid information that GetAnswers provides is being utilized. Videos embedded within the financial aid web pages are most popular with a 58.4% share of the total videos watched. In addition, GetAnswers provides a valuable channel for UH Hilo to communicate to prospective students and parents. Since the March 19 launch, 37.5% of videos viewed have been in the “Future Students” category and 25% of videos viewed have been in the “Parents” category.

We encourage faculty and staff to visit GetAnswers as a way of familiarizing yourself with the content and format, then pass on the information during advising and other discussions that you have with students. Please also provide feedback to the Financial Aid office about quality of the videos or if there are topics that are not covered. Mahalo for helping to share this valuable resource broadly.
A celebration was held last month on campus to mark the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s designation as a Blue Zones Approved™ worksite. The Blue Zones concept of healthy living is modeled on the best practices of places where people not only live longer by reaching the age of 100 at an astonishing rate, but also enjoy a higher quality of life.

“UH Hilo now joins a number of businesses and organizations working together to transform Hilo into a Blue Zones community by adopting healthy best practices,” said Interim Chancellor Marcia Sakai. “As an institution of higher learning, we are already well-versed in developing healthy minds. We can now look forward to taking that next step to promoting overall physical well-being.”

UH Hilo clinched its designation on March 2, 2018 by getting at least 25 percent of its employees to sign the Blue Zones Personal Pledge and implementing the following actions to promote well-being:

- Creation of a wellness committee, and an annual engagement plan outlining wellness program activities and communication strategy
- Formation of a UH Hilo webpage dedicated to Blue Zones Project information
- Designation of parking stalls with signage encouraging people to park further away for added steps
- Hosting Purpose Workshops to help people discover their gifts, talents and purpose
- Organized healthy cooking demonstrations
- Formed Walking Moai groups to connect with others and enjoy walking together

Blue Zones Project Organizational Lead Jana Ortiz-Misiaszek noted that worksite approval isn’t the finish line, but rather, the first of what she hopes will be multiple milestones.

“UH Hilo has been a wonderful partner in well-being and provides opportunities to make the healthy choice the easy choice on campus,” Ortiz-Misiaszek said. “We now look forward to seeing how they evolve.”

Hawai‘i Medical Service Association brought the Blue Zones Project initiative to Hawai‘i to create a healthier, happier Hawai‘i. For more information about the Blue Zones Project, contact the East Hawai‘i team at bluezonesprojectbigisland@sharecare.com or visit http://hawaii.bluezonesproject.com/.

You may view the ribbon cutting at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5aWT2P6HBJM&feature=youtu.be

Blue Zones representatives congratulate the UH Hilo Blue Zones Committee and Interim Chancellor Marcia Sakai.
Hats off to...

Chris Frueh, Professor, Psychology, coauthored “As-sociability-modulated loss learning is increased in post-traumatic stress disorder,” eLife 2018; 7:e30150.


Bryan Kim, Professor, Psychology, was recently selected as editor of The Counseling Psychologist, the official journal of the Society of Counseling Psychology. He is the journal’s first Asian American editor and the only person from Hawai‘i in its editorial and other leadership positions.

Jiren Feng, Associate Professor, Chinese, has been invited by Virginia Tech to participate in “The Architectural History Video Timeline,” a new initiative to build a digital video resource for students studying world architectural history in American universities. As one of a few specialists in traditional Chinese architecture, Feng will give two talks, which will be incorporated into the films and distributed worldwide.

UH Hilo Jazz Orchestra presents All You Need is Love May 3

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Jazz Orchestra presents a Beatles tribute concert, All You Need Is Love, Thursday, May 3, at 7:30 p.m. in the UH Hilo Performing Arts Center.

As a follow-up to December’s Frank Zappa tribute concert, which had the UH Hilo Jazz Orchestra performing alongside Frank Zappa’s son and accomplished musician, Dweezil Zappa, comes a concert dedicated to the music of the Beatles. The show will feature some of the Beatles best-loved songs with selections from Revolver, Abbey Road, Magical Mystery Tour and the White Album. The band will also perform several songs from the groundbreaking album, Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band.

Musical Director Trever Veilleux: “The impact the Beatles had on popular music cannot be overstated. Their songs have become ingrained in our collective culture and continue to be loved by younger generations.

“We’ve had so much fun putting this show together,” he added. “We’ll be playing everything from hard rocking songs like Helter Skelter, to beautiful ballads like Yesterday. Lennon and McCartney were master songwriters and learning this music has been a real treat. The musicians in the UH Hilo Jazz Orchestra do an amazing job injecting youthful energy into this great music.”

Joining the UH Hilo group on select numbers will be the Orchid Isle Orchestra (OIO). OIO is a project of the East Hawai‘i Cultural Center, founded by Cathy Young in 2006, for violin-family players/students in the community. OIO’s Assistant Conductor, Walter Greenwood, will conduct She’s Leaving Home, a Lennon/McCartney piece arranged by Young for string orchestra.

“Orchid Isle Orchestra players are excited to collaborate with the UH Hilo Jazz Orchestra and to play music many of us grew up hearing on the radio,” Young said.

The show also features dancing and choreography by Dori Yamada and the 5,6,7,8s.

“The Beatles are in a category all by themselves,” Yamada noted. “The mark that they left on music, fashion, and pop culture can still be felt and seen today. To celebrate their music with Trever and the Jazz Orchestra is a fun way to pay tribute to one of the greatest bands of all time. We hope we can bring some of their irreverence, joy and passion to the show in our own way.”

Tickets are open seating and priced at $12 General, $10 Discount, $5 Students w/ Valid ID & Children 17 & under.

For more information, or to order tickets, contact the UH Hilo Performing Arts Center Box Office at 932-7490 or artscenter.uhh.hawaii.edu.
Program Spotlight

Program Spotlight is a presentation of Ka Lono Hanakahi that highlights the work of various units by following a program throughout the entire academic year and providing monthly updates. This month’s update from the Division of Student Affairs (DSA) highlights Disability Services.

‘A‘ohe pau ka ‘ike I ka halau ho‘okahi. One learns from many sources.

The term disability as a social paradigm has gained an entirely new perspective over the years. Once thought of as an inability to learn, disability has evolved to now represent an ability to achieve. This new perspective, viewed through the universal lens of inclusivity and social justice, is designed to broaden opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in all aspects of society.

Disability Services views each day as an opportunity to help our students achieve their full and limitless potential. The office provides a wide range of services, which include a review of assessments, and providing reasonable accommodations designed to promote student success in pursuit of their educational and life experiences.

The number of students identified with disabilities at UH Hilo has remained steady at around 220 over the past three years. But the nature of our clientele has changed. Data reveals that the percentage of students with learning disabilities served by Disability Services rose from 12 percent in 2012 to 15 percent in 2017. More striking is the increase in the percentage of students with psychiatric disabilities, which rose from 29 percent in 2012 to 50 percent in 2017.

These changes have required us to adjust the types of services offered. Although services are uniquely tailored to each student, these patterns reflect a growing need for accommodations that allow for periodic absences and provide alternative options to group presentations.

Disability Services has increasingly turned to technology to modernize its operations and support the University’s effort to reduce UH Hilo’s carbon footprint. Some of the steps we have taken include digital storage of confidential data using highly secured software systems and disseminating notices via the UH file drop system. Approximately 90 percent of our operations have been digitized, and plans are underway to work with the Information Technology department to reach our goal of 98 percent by 2020.

We are also collaborating with Computer Science faculty and students to develop a Student Success and Wellness app. A Student Success and Wellness survey was sent out via SurveyShare in April 2018 to gauge...
how levels of resilience, ability to set goals, perceptions of peer relationships and positive behaviors impact student success. Those findings will be used for program review purposes.

Finally, we continue to work with other departments to achieve common goals, such as students with disabilities desiring to travel abroad and providing students in our residence halls with animals for emotional support. Through technological advancements, a global mindset and multi-modal communication, Disability Services is working to support our students’ academic journey at UH Hilo and beyond.
Now in its 7th year, the Adopt-A-Beehive with Alan Wong program has awarded over $20,000 in scholarships to beekeeping students at UH Hilo. This year’s recipients are Daniel Lunnom, Batina Grossett and David Russell, who each received a $1,000 scholarship on April 14 at the Ag Farm in Panaewa.

“The program is unique because it allows the community to engage in student learning,” said Dr. Lorna Tsutsumi, professor of entomology and program lead of the Adopt-A-Beehive with Alan Wong program. “The students enrolled in the beekeeping courses care for the ‘adopted’ hives on the UH Hilo Ag Farm and write periodic updates to the adopters on the health and status of the hive. Once a season the adopters are invited to the Farm to see their hive, meet the student that cares for their hive, tour the bee grounds, learn about student projects and enjoy honey food samples.

“Every season Chef Alan Wong greets the adopters and personally thanks them for their support of the program and their commitment to bee awareness and sustainability.”

The good work of the program is spreading beyond campus and the local community. This June, the program will be showcased in Washington D. C. for Congresswoman Maize Hirono’s “Hawaii on the Hill.” And most recently, Yamada Bee Company from Japan visited the bees on the Farm to see “Hawaiian” bees and documented their experience. The first of several parts of their visit can be seen at https://youtu.be/_BkGZT-XE0.

“There is no doubt that this program is a special experiential learning opportunity for UH Hilo students and helps to promote the importance that bees play in local and global sustainability,” Tsutsumi said. “Blending a celebrity chef with UH Hilo beekeeping students and a good cause supported by the community is a recipe for success!”
Chef Alan Wong shares a moment with some fans.

Advanced beekeeping student Chloe Martins-Keliihoomalu shares vegan ice cream with a donor.

DOA Stacey Chun answers questions about his observation hive.

Sodexo’s assortment of butters and vegan bread made with Ag Farm honey.

Photo credit: Dean Ishimoto
Aloha: Until we meet again

by Ken Hupp

I was in third grade when I read in front of the class for the first time. I don’t remember what I read, but I do remember that I was pretty good at it, and that I loved telling stories. That experience ignited the spark that turned to passion during high school in Honolulu, when I landed a job as a news and sports anchor on a cable television channel.

From there, the die was cast and I decided to pursue a career in journalism that has spanned more than 40 years. My work eventually led me to UH Hilo. Now, nearly two decades later, I have one last story to write for this publication and one last deadline to meet.

I feel like it was only yesterday when I arrived in February 1999 as a student with a full-time job in radio. I was originally hired as a five-month maternity leave replacement to publish three editions of Ka Lono Hanakahi and send out news releases. But things don’t always go according to plan. The people who hired me saw something in me that they liked, and that five month assignment became a career within a career. How fortunate I was.

Today, I look back with many fond memories of the stories this job has given me the opportunity to write, which included:

- The establishment of new colleges of Business and Economics and Pharmacy.
- The awarding of the University’s first doctorate degrees (Hawaiian and Indigenous Language and Culture Revitalization).
- Expansion of UH Hilo’s outreach with the opening of the North Hawai‘i Education and Research Center in Honoka’a.
- The story of students working alongside established scientists to conduct research at the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

I also had the good fortune to write about the numerous developments that have transformed the main campus through the physical landscape that now defines it.

Today, a prominently signed entry and signature University Classroom Building (UCB) welcomes visitors to the campus. A covered plaza complements UCB’s connection to the Campus Center, which now houses a modern, state-of-the-art bookstore. Meanwhile, new buildings emerged to house Marine Science, Science and Technology, the Student Services Center, a Student Life Center, the ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center, Ka Haka Ula O Ke‘elikolani College of Hawaiian Language, and the Hale Alahonua student housing. None of these existed when I first arrived.

By any reasonable analysis, this has been a remarkable period in UH Hilo’s history and it has been a privilege to be here to experience it and write about it. To all my co-workers in University Relations and everyone who suggested ideas for stories, answered my questions, helped me gather information, edited my work and prepared it for publication, I offer my sincere thanks. You have all touched my life and I hope I have touched yours as well.

I am also grateful to the three chancellors I have served

Receiving BA in Political Science from Chancellor Rose Tseng in 2002.

Another birthday celebration with the staff from University Relations.

Aloha - continued on page 11.
under as well as the faculty and staff who have come and gone, to be replaced by a new generation of educators and staffers. Your passion and dedication to preparing our students to become tomorrow’s leaders has inspired me, and I’d like to think that inspiration has elevated the quality of my own work, as both a student, and a staff member. Last, but not least, my heart is filled with joy as I remember all the students who became my extended ‘ohana through the activities we took part in and the holidays we celebrated together. Happily, we remain in touch to this very day through social media.

My job has been a labor of love. Not every day has been easy, and not every story has been easy to write. But as President Theodore Roosevelt once wrote, “far and away, the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”

After 19 years, I leave with a degree in political science, gratitude for the opportunity to work with the best of colleagues, the countless friendships made along the way, and without missing a deadline. Although my time at UH Hilo is ending, I am not completely retiring. I can still be heard on the radio weekday mornings on KPUA, KWXX-FM and B97. But for now, I bid you all aloha, until we meet again.
UH Hilo Briefs

May

2  Last day of instruction
   “Diversity and its Discontents: How Multiculturalism Failed Us” by Gary Okihiro, Ph.D., 5-6 p.m., UCB Room 100

3  UH Hilo End of the Year Celebration and 2018 Awards and Recognition Celebration, 3-4:30 p.m., Ray and Rose Tseng Terrace
   All You Need is Love by UH Hilo Jazz Orchestra, 7:30 p.m., PAC, Admission

6  We Sing the Spring, 2 p.m., PAC, Admission

7-11 Final examinations

11 Spring semester ends

12 UH Hilo Commencement, 9 a.m., Edith Kanakaʻole Stadium

14 Final grades due in MyUH portal, Noon

UH Hilo spring concert to feature John Rutter’s “Requiem”

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s Kapili Choir and University Chorus join the Hilo Community Chorus to present We Sing the Spring Sunday, May 6 at 2 pm in the Performing Arts Center.

The first half of the concert features a performance of John Rutter’s composition, “Requiem.” The seven-movement work builds on traditional Catholic and Anglican liturgy for a service of mourning while incorporating more contemporary idioms.

The second half showcases each of the choirs in their own set of songs, with styles ranging from the Baroque to popular melodies of Hawai‘i, including selections arranged by island musicians Michael Springer and Rodney Wong.

We Sing the Spring is conducted jointly by Amy Horst and Tom McAlexander and accompanied by Walter Greenwood on piano. Featured performers include Performing Arts major Adrianna Zablan as soprano soloist, Kamehameha Schools teacher and composer Herb Mahelona on cello, and local musician Merry Kay Kiyan on oboe.

Tickets are $10 General, $7 Discount and $5 UH Hilo/Hawai‘i CC students (with a valid student ID) and children, up to age 17. Tickets are available by calling the UH Hilo Box Office at 932-7490, Tuesday – Friday, 10 am – 2 pm, or ordering online at artscenter.uhh.hawaii.edu.