De Mello to close out long, storied career at year’s end

by Ken Hupp

Going out on top after a long, successful career can be tricky, but the first-rate professionals seem to know when the time is right to ride off into the sunset.

When University Relations Director Gerald De Mello turns off the lights in his office for the final time next month, he’ll leave behind a record of achievement that will be difficult, if not impossible, to match, let alone surpass.

“Gerald has been an indispensible advocate for the University and a major reason for the growth and development UH Hilo has enjoyed while he’s been here,” Chancellor Don Straney said. “His outreach to Big Island legislators, federal and county officials, business, labor and community leaders has created a highly effective partnership with the University that has resulted in some of the most significant capital improvements in UH Hilo’s history.”

De Mello announced earlier this year that he will officially retire on December 31, 2012. After 21 years, he appears to have lost little, if any, of the energy or enthusiasm he displayed when he arrived on January 1, 1991 after spending the previous four years as the East Hawai‘i liaison for then Governor John D. Waihee. So what then made him decide now was the time to go?

“We’ve achieved a lot of our capital improvement goals over the past eight years,” De Mello explained. “I think that these initiatives in addition to those now underway position the University to transition to its next chapter, so now seems like a good time.”

He cited the Student Life Center, College of Pharmacy modules and the Science and Technology Building along with the new Student Services and College of Hawaiian Language Buildings, and University Village Phase I student housing currently under construction as some

Hawai‘i Island’s Veteran to Farmer program is national pilot, community outreach at its best

by Chancellor Don Straney

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo is a partner in an exciting community-based initiative that addresses the agricultural capacity on Hawai‘i Island. The Hawai‘i “Veteran to Farmer” initiative, designed solely for U.S. military veterans and funded by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), is a national pilot program providing certificate level hands-on farming skills training curriculum, classroom-based business training, business start-up support, and health monitoring.

A key goal of the initiative is to enable veterans to develop the necessary skills to farm. UH Hilo College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources is proposing a new undergraduate certificate in agriculture designed especially for participants in the Veteran to Farmer program. Completion of the program can enable veterans to create new farm businesses and to meet requirements to acquire leases and loans needed to start a farm. Some participants who complete the certificate program will be ready to pursue a bachelor’s degree at UH Hilo in addition to becoming farmers.

The initiative is part of one of the 29 projects in the Hawai‘i Island 21st Century Economy Roadmap, a
of the projects that will help complete Hilo’s transformation from a government-centered, plantation-based economy to one built around the University and higher education. Many of those projects were approved while Dr. Rose Tseng served as Chancellor from 1998-2010. She describes De Mello as a master strategist who excelled in building relationships.

“We received funding for seven buildings during my tenure, along with monies for various new programs,” Tseng said. “Gerald’s knowledge in dealing with the legislature, community and other key players was critical to our success and allowed me to focus on the academic merits and justification of each request.”

A review of major projects dating back to 1999 found that the amount of CIP dollars brought to Hilo and Honoka’a, site of the North Hawai‘i Education and Research Center (NHERC), totaled $327.3 million. Those are impressive results by any account, but only part of the story. De Mello says the preceding years were also productive although they garnered far less attention.

“When the state was doing well financially, we focused on the operating budget to fund positions and programs that contributed to our growth. This included a $600,000 legislative add-on engineered by Representative Harvey Tajiri,” De Mello said. “We also invested heavily in infrastructure, which was key to attracting the clientele and investment in the University Park of Science and Technology. When enrollment went up we began to ask for large projects.”

While De Mello’s record has earned him “rock-star” status among his peers, he’s uncomfortable with the credit he receives for these achievements. His colleagues at the University and community-at-large, however, have no such hesitation.

“His unique communication skills and ability to work with academia, the community and elected officials helped UH Hilo develop as an economic engine,” said Dale Tokuuke of the UH Hilo Alumni and Friends Board of Directors.

“Our campus experienced unprecedented growth during Gerald’s tenure,” said Natural Sciences Division Chair and longtime Biology Professor Leon Hallacher. “Many a chancellor relied on his worthy counsel to shepherd this remarkable growth.”

That relationship began under Dr. Edward Kormondy, who served as Chancellor from 1986 to 1993. De Mello was appointed to succeed former state Senator Buddy Soares and build upon the connections he had established at the state capital. Kormondy quickly recognized his new hire was one of those special individuals who came along only once in a while.

“When Buddy left, Gerald became the go-to guy on legislative issues of concern to the University,” Kormondy said. “His savvy, wisdom and insight as well as his gregarious manner made him a superb advisor to me and a priceless gem for UH Hilo, its hopes and wishes.”

De Mello’s greatest asset may be his unwavering commitment and dedication that drive him to work long hours, nights and on weekends to advance the interests of UH Hilo — a quality he says he acquired from his father.

“Dad worked from sun up to sun down seven days a week and I just picked up his work ethic,” De Mello explained. “He had a love affair with Hilo that he passed on to me and together we felt we needed to create more opportunities for people.”

De Mello describes his time at UH Hilo as “an extraordinary opportunity” to fulfill his father’s vision and a community vision for what Hilo could become. Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs Marcia Sakai said that that commitment to community goes to the heart of who De Mello is.

“Gerald is all about the community — Hilo, the Big Island, and North Hawai‘i, which he calls home,” Sakai said. “You never have to guess where his commitment lies.”

De Mello readily admits that he leaves with some unfinished business that he plans to work on in an unofficial capacity. Topping that list will be securing funding at the state legislature for a building to house the College of Pharmacy.

“That building is critical to maintaining the College’s accreditation, producing the next generation of pharmacists and continuing the cutting-edge research that is taking place,” De Mello said. “I look forward to working with Chancellor Straney, Dean John Pezzuto and my successor to try and get this building approved during the next session.”

Overall, De Mello’s outlook for what UH Hilo might look like over the next 10-15 years is bullish. For starters, he expects the University’s thriving scientific community to create even more employment and work force training opportunities for the local population. He also sees a special role for UH Hilo as Hawai‘i becomes a bigger player in the Asia-Pacific region.

“You don’t often find a University along with its related assets and the seat of government conveniently located in a town as open and uncluttered as Hilo,” De Mello explained. “I think that is a huge advantage which will make Hilo an attractive destination for world leaders to come and deliver policy speeches, convene international conferences or even establish an international think tank.”

Likewise, the new student housing coming on line next year will make it possible to admit more students from the Asia-Pacific region who already consider UH Hilo an attractive destination for world leaders to come and deliver policy speeches, convene international conferences or even establish an international think tank.

“I see more satellite operations like NHERC and distance learning being utilized to bring UH Hilo to underserved areas like Puna, Ka’u and West Hawai‘i. But completion of the Saddle Road could be a real game changer by reducing travel time between East and West Hawai‘i, which might make attending UH Hilo more attractive to students from West Hawai‘i and from the island’s rural areas,” De Mello
said. “The University may want to explore a special rate for students to live on campus during the week and go home on the weekends.”

De Mello also sees the University’s undeveloped acreage as an “ace in the hole” for developing various niche programs like physical and occupational therapy, a general engineering degree with tracks in areas like agriculture, instrumentation and renewable energy, flight aviation, heritage management and historic preservation. He says the Chancellor will make the call when it comes to facilities to complete the University’s build-out, but admits having to hold spring commencement off-campus shows the need for a multi-purpose facility.

“There is currently no facility on campus or in the community that can serve as that one venue for graduation, athletic events, conferences, etc.,” De Mello said. “Cost is an obvious consideration. But the County’s new Panaewa covered play courts was built for $3.1 million and spans 26,000 square feet, so that could provide us with an affordable working model.”

What De Mello says he’ll miss most when he leaves will be the interaction with students. Over the years, he has enjoyed a close working relationship with student leaders who became key partners in promoting various UH Hilo initiatives at the legislature.

“Their testimony on behalf of proposals like the Student Life Center and the Student Services Building played a big role in winning legislative approval,” De Mello said. “I’m hesitant to name names because there were so many who made major contributions, but one that really stood out was the late UH Hilo Student Association President Louisa “Aunty Luika” Pereira, who was the major catalyst for energizing the student role in advancing UH Hilo.”

Students who have worked with him have been deeply touched by their experience. Tania Kehau Cortez-Camero, who served on UHHSAs’s legislative committee, said De Mello has a genuine love for UH Hilo and constantly encouraged them to fight for the students. Their combined efforts helped secure $20 million for construction of the new Student Services building.

“The first time I testified in front of a legislative committee I was terrified and unsure of myself. But Gerald gave me the confidence to effectively advocate for what I believed in,” Cortez-Camero said. “I later relocated to Honolulu and was able to work at the State Capitol during the legislative session using the knowledge I gained from him to help others.”

As for what he’ll do with the rest of his life, De Mello says he can’t even think about it until his voluntary community efforts are done at the 2013 legislature. But he does plan to take the advice of his close friend Delbert Nishimoto, who now serves as Big Island field representative for U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye.

“Around April I’ll step back, relax and take about six months or so to think about what I’m going to do next,” De Mello said. “I don’t know if that’s what Delbert did, or whether it’s a lesson that he learned, but it sounds like pretty good advice to me, and I intend to follow it.”

(Editor’s note: Ken Hupp is a public information officer.)

Chancellor Don Straney last month announced the name change of UH Hilo’s Education Department to the School of Education. The change reflects the School’s comprehensive operations of recruitment, advising, admission, assessment checkpoints, and national accreditation.

“UH Hilo’s Education program was already a school in everything but name,” Straney said. “This designation will raise its profile by acknowledging that status along with its significant role in educating future generations of teachers in the state of Hawai’i.”

The School of Education currently offers three distinct programs: an undergraduate Academic Certificate in Educational Studies (already with 125 students after its first year of implementation); a Master of Education for experienced teachers (with 95 graduates and 20 more scheduled to graduate in fall 2013); and the new Master of Arts in Teaching (beginning in July 2013), which also leads to initial state licensure.

“The School has a strong relationship and excellent reputation in the broader educational community,” said Dr. Jan Zulich, chair, School of Education. “Through a number of grants and professional development opportunities, we have supported local schools and teachers toward improved teaching and learning, and in particular, higher student achievement.” In the past decade, the School has graduated over 350 new teachers who completed their student teaching in 47 schools across Hawai’i Island.

“The name change underscores the professionalism and continuing pursuit of excellence that the School is known for across the state of Hawai’i,” noted Sharyn Hirata, co-chair of the UH Hilo School of Education Advisory and Advocacy Council.
Partnership
Continued from page 1

comprehensive plan for a self-sufficient economy for the island developed by Rivertop Energy Solutions, LLC. Rivertop, headed by CEO David Ruf, is a project planning firm assisting rural communities and federal agencies with the development of sustainable and economically viable business models built on a foundation of indigenous and renewable resources.

With the participation of key community and government stakeholders on the island, Ruf and his team at Rivertop are designing the Hawai‘i Veteran to Farmer program. In addition to Rivertop and UH Hilo, partners include Hawai‘i Community College, the State Department of Agriculture, the Hawai‘i Island Economic Development Board, the Department of Hawaiian Homelands, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Mealani Research Station, the Pu‘ukapu Agricultural Community Facility, Native Hawaiian leaders and organizations, several community-based groups, and local farmers in Waimea on Hawai‘i Island.

The certificate program supports UH Hilo’s goal of enhanced outreach to under-represented groups in the communities of North Hāmākua and Waimea. The required courses presently exist within CAFNRMM and will be taught at the North Hawai‘i Education Research Center in Honoka‘a, and at WOW Farm, the Mealani Experiment Station, and other agricultural facilities in Waimea with no cost to the University.

We are also working with the VA on the certification for the Veteran to Farmer program, also known as “Farming for the Working Class,” to allow veterans to use their GI Bill funding to cover tuition for the program. The VA will pay for a coordinator, UH Hilo lecturers teaching the courses, other instructional costs, and the participant’s tuition.

The pilot program is now underway with 12 students with the goal of 12 working farms at the end of the pilot. The participants have committed to continuing as instructors beyond their certification so the model can flourish. If each participant helps just two additional veteran homesteaders with practical hands-on training, there could be 24 additional working farms within the next two years in the rural homestead community of Waimea.

While the pilot focuses on participation by Native Hawaiian veterans, non-native veterans are eligible to participate. This is truly a community empowerment and community economic development model that can grow exponentially in a relatively short period to address our food security and economic development challenges while serving as a model for the country.

For more information about the Veteran to Farmer program and other news from the Office of the Chancellor, visit my blog at http://hilo.hawaii.edu/blog/chancellor/.

Aloha,
Donald C. Shaney

College of Pharmacy reaches new milestone: accreditation for residency program

A residency program in community pharmacy, giving licensed pharmacists opportunities for further training through Hawai‘i’s College of Pharmacy (CoP) at UH Hilo, has been awarded national accreditation.

“Pharmacy residency programs are similar to training that allows medical doctors to gain postgraduate training,” noted Anita Ciarleglio, assistant professor in CoP’s Department of Pharmacy Practice. Accreditation by both the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) and the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) is necessary for the program to be considered a validated educational experience.

The UH Hilo pharmacy residency program has been conducted on the island of Maui where Ciarleglio is the project’s program director. She began compiling data that met standards for accreditation more than two years ago with assistance from Bill Jones, a pharmacist who was the pharmacy residency director for 23 years at the Southern Arizona Veterans Affairs Health Care System in Tucson, Arizona.

“Receiving a three-year accreditation was a coup for us because we’re so new,” Ciarleglio said. “It means we can continue to concentrate on patient care while giving licensed pharmacists from all over the country the experience they need to get on with their careers and gives them credentials to compete for jobs.”

Thus far, five pharmacists have gone through the program at Maui Clinic Pharmacy and are able to get retroactive credit for being part of an accredited program. All have since left the program to attain gainful employment as pharmacists. They include Sheena Jolson (University of Arizona Class of 2010), Amy Baker (University of New Mexico Class of 2010), Tehane Ornellas (UH Hilo CoP Class of 2011), Erika Miyahira (UH Hilo Class of 2011) and Christina Mnatzaganian (University of Arizona CoP 2011). Mnatzaganian has joined the CoP faculty.

Ciarleglio referred to these women as “true trailblazers” for believing in the program while it was still being accredited.

“These women are redefining community pharmacy,” Ciarleglio said. “They primarily act as the liaison between the community, the hospital and the physician, and provide a continuity of care that just wasn’t there before.”

Accreditation for the residency program mirrored the accreditation process for the College, which was awarded last year after the inaugural class graduated from UH Hilo, Ciarleglio said.
Terrance Jalbert, Professor, Finance, recently had “The Performance of Currency Value Adjusted Stock Indices” accepted for publication in Journal of Index Investing.

Adam Pack, Associate Professor, Psychology, Biology, was senior author on “Size-assortative pairing and discrimination of potential mates by humpback whales in the Hawaiian breeding grounds,” which appeared in the October 2012 issue of Animal Behaviour. He is also co-author of “Predictive modeling of spinner dolphin (Stenella longirostris) resting habitat in the main Hawaiian Islands,” published in the August 2012 issue of PLoS ONE.

Seri Luangphinith, Professor, English, was invited by Umalusi, the South African Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training, to give a workshop at their 2012 conference in Johannesburg in the spring. Her talk on “(De)colonizing Education: Rethinking the Way We Do ‘Business’ in Learning and Assessment” featured an analysis of first-world dominance in information technology and assessment and the cultural biases prevalent in standardized tests. She also led a session that analyzed a sample text question against the individual backgrounds of the participants from South Africa, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Kenya, the U.S., and Great Britain.

Chris Frueh, Professor, Psychology, and Jeffrey Smith, Assistant Professor, History, co-authored “Suicide, alcoholism, and psychiatric illness among Union Forces during the U.S. Civil War,” published in Journal of Anxiety Disorders 2012; 769-775.

Jean Ippolito, Associate Professor, Art, published The Search for New Media: Late 20th Century Art and Technology in Japan through Common Ground Publishing in Champaign, IL. The book documents the pioneers of the digital media art movement and their avant-garde precedents in Japan in the second half of the 20th century. The final color copy of the book was released in August 2012.


Jackie Pualani Johnson, Professor, Drama, wrote and directed a one-woman show, Vespers at Hanaikamalama, in celebration of the Sesquicentennial of the Episcopal Church in Hawai’i. Queen Emma’s life was brought to the stage to honor her role in establishing the Anglican Church in Hawai’i in the late 1880s, the precursor to the present-day Episcopal Church. The show premiered last month at The Holy Apostles Church with the Rt. Reverend Robert Keali’ikoaokekua Fitzpatrick, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese, in attendance.

Ka Lono Hanakaht is published by the Office of University Relations during the academic year for faculty and staff of the University of Hawai’i at Hilo. News and submissions are welcome with priority given to current faculty and staff members. Deadlines are on the fifteenth of each month for the following first of the month publication. Contact Alyson Kakugawa-Leong, Director Media Relations, (808) 974-7642 or alyson@hawaii.edu.
‘Eke ‘Aina bags further promote Local First program

by Bridget Awong

What started as a trend a few years ago has quickly evolved into a way of life, and a way of doing business. Today, nowhere is Local First more apparent than in the food service industry.

Surrounded by fertile soil and a pristine ocean, Hawai‘i produces some of the highest quality produce, seafood, and meats. Key advantages to having and utilizing local products include higher nutrition content, less waste due to quality issues, supporting our local economy, and reducing our carbon footprint on our island’s environment.

Buying local instantly makes one think of farmer’s markets and roadside stands. However, access to locally grown produce is steadily increasing, which presents a boon for the farmers and a huge plus for consumers. University Dining Services by Sodexo has been utilizing local products for several years now. On a daily basis, up to 60% of the produce used is grown in-state, with the majority from on-island. Every first Wednesday of each month, Campus Center dining features specials that are crafted out of 100% (center of the plate) local products. Everything from Kona Kampachi and Keahole lobsters to Wailea hearts of palm and broccoli from Kula have been incorporated into the dishes. To further bolster UH Hilo’s Local First program, ‘Eke ‘Aina bags were introduced over the summer.

The ‘Eke ‘Aina bags are reusable bags stocked full of locally grown produce and products, most of which are farmed here on Hawai‘i Island. Each month, a different farm is highlighted by using select products from that farm. In addition to an assortment of fruits and vegetables from other local farms, the bag also contains a made-from-scratch salad dressing with recipe, and a homemade bakery item. We also include a list of each product and where it came from. Each bag is $25 plus tax and when you place a new order and use the same bag, you will save 5%. Orders are taken weekly, with pick up on Fridays between 2-6 p.m. With the holidays around the corner, bags for November and December will be tailored to reflect the holiday season.

For more information on the ‘Eke ‘Aina bags or University Dining Services at UH Hilo, visit http://www.uhhcampusdining.com or like us on Facebook: uhhcampusdining. Feel free to also call us at 974-7303.

(Editor’s note: Bridget Awong is general manager, Sodexo Dining Services.)

Mookini Library hosting Kalaupapa and the Royal Family of Hawai‘i exhibit

A historical exhibit that emphasizes the strong relationship between the people of Kalaupapa and the Royal Family of Hawai‘i is currently on display in the Mookini Library until November 16, 2012.

Titled “A Source of Light, Constant and Never-Fading,” the exhibit was developed by Ka ‘Ohana O Kalaupapa, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the value and dignity of every individual who was sent to Kalaupapa because of government policies regarding leprosy (also called Hansen’s disease). The ‘Ohana is made up of Kalaupapa residents, family members/descendants, longtime friends, students, clergy and others who have been working to preserve the history of Kalaupapa.

Clarence “Boogie” Kahilihiwa, who spent his early childhood in Kalapana before being taken from his family at the age of 9 in 1950 when he was diagnosed with the disease, is president of the ‘Ohana. Kahilihiwa was among those who attended the blessing of the exhibit when it debuted at ‘Iolani Palace earlier this year.

“We often don’t hear about how our Hawaiian monarchy was concerned about the people sent to Kalaupapa and the conditions of the settlement,” said Kahilihiwa. “The ‘Ohana greatly appreciates the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo partnering with us to bring this exhibit to the Big Island.”

The exhibit contains historical photographs, excerpts from letters originally written in Hawaiian, quotes, petitions and lyrics of songs composed by Kalaupapa residents as well as photos and quotes of current or recent residents.
UH Hilo Professional Development Awards announced

The Chancellor’s Professional Development Committee (PDC) announces the funding of 10 projects that support UH Hilo’s strategic goal of organizational excellence by promoting employee professional development.

In total, $35,588 with amounts ranging from $700 to $9,887 was awarded to projects serving all employment groups on campus:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Name of Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kristi Kaniho</td>
<td>College of Pharmacy</td>
<td>Understanding Workstyle Differences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nancy Lombard</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>FISH! for Supervisors</td>
<td>$2,910</td>
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<td>Sulma Gandhi</td>
<td>Student Health &amp; Wellness Programs</td>
<td>Guest Speaker - Ka’ala Souza: Pono: A Hawaiian-Style Approach to Balance and Well-Being</td>
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<td>Security</td>
<td>Workplace Violence Training</td>
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<td>Susan Yamada</td>
<td>Na Laulima</td>
<td>Clerical Workshop</td>
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<td>Alice Davis</td>
<td>School of Nursing</td>
<td>Faculty workshop for advising DNP students on the Practice Inquiry Project</td>
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<td>Jodi Kunimoto</td>
<td>Advising Center</td>
<td>Advisor Training Sessions</td>
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<td>Jeff Scofield</td>
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<td>Steven Lundblad/Tracy Wieger</td>
<td>Geology/Marine Sci</td>
<td>STEM Seminar Series</td>
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<td>Faculty Congress Executive Committee</td>
<td>Spring Faculty Forum</td>
<td>$4,141</td>
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A second round of funding for this academic year will be announced soon.
Campus Events

November

1  “I” removal deadline: Student to Instructor
   Last day to apply for credit-by-exam for fall
6  Holiday: Election Day
9  Graduate thesis/dissertation to committee deadline
12 Holiday: Veteran’s Day
15 “I” removal and Change of Grade deadline: Instructor to Ofc of the Registrar
   Last day to submit credit-by-exam results to Ofc of the Registrar
17  *On Ensemble*, 7:30 p.m., PAC, Admission
22 Holiday: Thanksgiving Day
23 Non-instructional day
26 Graduate thesis defense/dissertation deadline
30 Graduate Form 3: thesis/dissertation to Library & Ofc of the Registrar deadline