

CONCLUSION: Reflection and Plans for Improvement

*Noho ana i Hilo, ka 'āina kawaū o Kulukulu'ā
'O Hilo, 'āina ho'olūlū lehua, nā lehua makanoē o uka.
Hao mai ka ua kilihune o ka nahele
Pū 'ia me ke 'ala o ka maile o Pana'ewa ē
Kūnou mai nā wai mo'o o Wailuku, he lua luku e nā kānaka.
I Kaipalaoa e 'uwā ana i Haili ka leo mūkīkī o nā manu.
Ho'olono a i Waiolama me Kawailepo,
I Ho'okahi me Wailoa ā pae i ke kula o Hanakahi.
'Akahi ka mana'o a ke aloha i noho alo ai i Mokuola.
I ola e nā kini ē.*

Living in Hilo, the damp land of Kulukulu'ā,
Hilo, land of *lehua* showers, the *lehua makanoē* of the uplands.
Forcefully strikes the wind-blown rain of the forests
Together with the scent of *the maile* of Pana'ewa.
The mo'o waters of Wailuku beckon, watery grave of
slaughtered men.
At Kaipalaoa all the way to Haili, the chirping, sipping sounds of
the birds.
Waiolama and Kawailepo streams comply,
Merge with Wailoa and wash the open lands of Hanakahi.
At last, the thoughts of shared love dwell at Mokuola.
May the people be granted life.

—Chant by Edith Kanaka'ole (1979)¹

This older place-naming chant specific to Hilo best encapsulates the overall spirit and nature of the Island of Hawai'i. This has historically been a land of both beauty (forests laden with *lehua* blossom) and tragedy (the Wailuku River that is known as a “maneater”), of the sparkling sands of the Waiolama (translated to “River of the Torch”) to the murkier waters of the Kawailepo (“River of Silt”). This dichotomy best explains the geographic environment as well the enduring people who live here. On the one hand, this is a community that trails in economic development and urbanization compared to

¹ Edith Kanaka'ole, “Noho Ana i Hilo,” trans. Kalani Meinecke, *Talk Story: Big Island Anthology* (Honolulu: Bamboo Ridge Press, 1979), 5.

O‘ahu, but on the other hand, this very difference is what makes this locale unique. So, too, is UH Hilo a part of this duality.

One of our greatest strengths is diversity. Just as there are many types of streams that feed into Hilo, there is a wide range of people on this Island. They contribute to the ethnic and cultural mix of the community along with the different educational and economic attainment levels that are dynamic and keep evolving. UH Hilo adds to that by serving as a particular magnet for other populations—younger students from the U.S. Continent, foreign exchange students, veterans, first-generation college seekers, and non-traditional students, such as single-parent women and returning older students.

And therein lies both an opportunity and one of our biggest challenges. As captured in student feedback featured in Section Four, we need to look at “diversity” as a strength of the campus that is celebrated and incorporated into more purposeful operations and planning. As the campus continues to address this challenge, it must also continue to respectfully honor its Native Hawaiian people, language, and culture—a distinct historic strength—while also serving its diverse and sometimes divergent populations to grow as an engaged partner.

And while we build better purpose in diversity, the campus will continue to improve upon current program review processes in academic affairs and in co-curricular programs based on student learning assessment vis-à-vis enrollment management and strategic budgeting. The Long-Range Budget Committee will work to further bring together all three units—academic affairs, student affairs, and administrative affairs—to shift towards integrated planning, enrollment and retention programming, and strategic resource allocation across the university. To do so means we may need to build upon our data gathering capacity (IRO) to ensure data dashboards are regularly updated.

So it is with this resolve and fortitude that we shall continue our quest to provide our students and this community with our very best.

Authors of this concluding statement:

Seri I. Luangphinit, Accreditation Liaison Officer and

Chair of Assessment Support Committee

Keiki Kawai‘ae‘a, Director of Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani

(College of Hawaiian Language, KH‘UOK)

February 2021