Modernizing UH Hilo facilities for the 21st century

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo is committed to providing our students and faculty with the labs and equipment needed to move our Island and State into the future. Last month, we celebrated the groundbreaking of the new home for the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy. This building establishes the pharmacy college as an integral part of the state of Hawai‘i and is symbolic of the direction UH Hilo is going.

The $33 million, 35,000-square-foot Pharmacy building is an example of the progress the UH System is making with its 21st Century Facilities initiative to modernize facilities and campus environments across the State to be safe, sustainable and supportive of modern practices in teaching, learning and research.

Facilities and campus environments must support 21st century higher education expectations and practices. Students, faculty and staff need and deserve well-maintained and up-to-date facilities that support modern teaching, learning, innovation and scholarship. We need to be sure our students are learning in the same type of modern environments in which they will be working. The University’s facilities must be fully digitally-enabled, flexible in use, and be efficient with energy, water and waste.

Estrella returns as interim athletic director

by Ken Hupp

The New Year has returned a familiar figure to UH Hilo Intercollegiate Athletics, with Joey Estrella assuming the duties of interim athletic director on January 1. Estrella, who retired in 2013 after heading the baseball program he founded for 37 years, is no stranger to the position. He held the job of permanent athletic director from 1980-1989 and later served as an assistant athletic director from 2009 until his retirement. In this Ka Lono Hanakahi spotlight, Estrella discusses his goals and objectives, along with the challenges of heading up a college athletic program.

KL: Why did you decide to interrupt a well-deserved retirement to accept this assignment?

JE: Although I was enjoying the life of a retiree, I still have a special passion for the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. So when Chancellor Straney asked if I would consider serving as Interim Director of Athletics, I was humbled by his faith in me and was glad to again be a part of Vulcan Athletics.

KL: What do you believe you can contribute to this position as interim director and to the search for a successor?

JE: One of Dr. Straney’s goals for Athletics is to increase our engagement with the Hawai‘i Island community. I believe this is one of my strengths, since I was born and raised in Hilo and began my undergraduate work at UH Hilo.

KL: What would you list as your top 3 priorities?

JE: First, to ensure that our department has a strong academic program that enables our student-athletes to achieve their goal of graduation; secondly, to make sure that our program is compliant with all NCAA, Pac West Conference, and UH Hilo rules and regulations; and lastly, to improve our community engagement.

KL: Are there any important or key decisions that will have to
be made or actions that will have to be taken before a permanent athletic director is hired?

JE: It is my understanding that we will be actively searching for three staff/administrative positions that should enhance our day-to-day operations. This will be my initial area of focus. The coaches will also be out recruiting and will need a proposed scholarship/operating budget. I also plan to assist Dr. Straney in the search for a permanent Director of Athletics, which will begin immediately.

KL: How would you describe your administrative style? Will it differ from your previous approach when you served as athletic director?

JE: My administrative style from when I first served as Director of Athletics and now has not changed. I believe in the consensus approach to problem solving and decision making. The more information I can gather, the better I believe I will able to make those tough decisions that are required in this position.

KL: How has the role of intercollegiate athletics evolved from when you first got involved, and does that present any new or special challenges? For example, do you see the BYU-Hawai‘i phase out of athletics as an isolated incident, or a symptom of some emerging new normal?

JE: When I first served in this position we had nine sports and a $500,000 budget. Our current budget of $2.8 million administers 12 sports teams but places UH Hilo near the bottom of the Pac West conference. Obviously, there are more fiscal responsibilities which force us to run the program like a business and require our coaches to be very creative fiscal officers.

I do not believe the BYU-H situation is emerging as a new norm for institutions evaluating their athletic programs since there are other reasons that the Seasiders are phasing out athletics. What is real is the fact that all institutions of our size are evaluating their programs that are underachieving in the academic and athletic areas.

KL: Will you be a candidate for the permanent position?

JE: At this time, I do not plan to be a candidate for the job and don’t think that anything soon will change my mind.

KL: How would you assess the opportunity this position presents for the person who is ultimately selected for the job?

JE: The next AD will definitely have many challenges facing him or her and will need to have a diverse resume that includes fund raising and program consensus building along with a strong, diverse background.

(Ken Hupp is a public information officer.)

Modernizing UH Hilo
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Our labs, offices, and equipment must be able to support cutting edge research. New facilities like the upcoming Pharmacy building open up possibilities for our students and faculty. The ability to do more pharmacy research will have a great impact on the State. Students will be ready to step into the health care jobs of the future because they will know what it’s like to work in a modern lab.

Moving our University fully into the 21st century also requires us to be supportive of deep collaborations with partners across the State, nation and the world.

For example, UH is currently updating the teaching telescopes on Maunakea to improve key facilities for training undergraduate and graduate students in astronomy.

In a historic collaboration, UH Mānoa, though the Institute for Astronomy, and UH Hilo, through our Department of Physics and Astronomy, are combining efforts to modernize the UH 2.2m and the UH Hilo Hoku Ke’a observatories on Maunakea. These projects are State supported through capital improvement project funds and will result in stronger astronomy programs for both institutions.

In addition, having modernized equipment and labs means we can respond better to the needs of our community.

For example, when disaster strikes such as Tropical Storm Iselle, marine science researchers can respond better, do their analyses faster, and help a community in need more efficiently. The same goes for the UH Hilo geologists and geographers currently providing critical information about the Puna lava flow to Hawai‘i County Civil Defense.

The UH 21st Century Facilities initiative focuses on providing critical infrastructure for the University System. UH Hilo is committed to the task. It’s what a good university can and should do for its community, state and region.

I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Aloha,
After nearly eight years in existence, the UH Hilo Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) celebrated a groundbreaking and bilingual blessing on Dec. 12 for a permanent facility on campus.

The event was held at the construction site on South A’hoku Street next to the College’s temporary modular buildings. University of Hawai’i President David Lassner and Hawai’i County Mayor Billy Kenoi were featured speakers along with Jennifer Sabas, former chief of staff to the late Senator Daniel K. Inouye. UH Hilo Chancellor Don Straney provided the welcome.

“This building is symbolic of the direction UH Hilo is going, and establishes the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy as an integral part of the State of Hawai’i,” Straney said. “While we are extremely grateful, we are also reminded of the responsibility this trust entails.”

Founding Dean John M. Pezzuto honored several guests who were instrumental in beginning the only College of Pharmacy in the Pacific region, and recognized two student speakers, Inaugural Class of 2011 President Jessica Toyama, and current student Sean Lasky, president of the class of 2017.

“Groundbreaking ceremonies are always emotional, but this one is particularly profound not only for the faculty who have worked painstakingly to get to this point, but for the four groups of PharmD graduates and current students who have believed in us,” Pezzuto said. “We are honored to welcome today many other people who put their own sweat equity in the College from the beginning, several of our winners of the coveted Advancedment of Pharmacy Excellence awards: Chancellor Emerita Rose Tseng, former director of university relations Gerald De Mello, and Pat DeLeon, who served as chief of staff to Senator Daniel K. Inouye when the College was conceived and built. Without them, there may not have ever been a College of Pharmacy.”

The ceremony was punctuated with a simple prayer in Hawaiian combined with a “pikai” with salt water, provided by Dr. Larry Kimura, who is recognized as the grandfather of the movement to perpetuate the use of Hawaiian language in modern Hawai’i.
Nature Conservancy, Hawai‘i Conference Foundation partner to preserve native forest near Hilo

The Nature Conservancy recently acquired a 922-acre conservation easement along the Saddle Road above Hilo, a site that includes a 200-acre kīpuka with a disappearing stream and a diverse ancient forest.

The Conservancy is partnering with UH Hilo, Hawai‘i Island watershed partnerships and the parcel’s landowner, The Hawai‘i Conference Foundation, to conserve, manage and interpret the site. It will continue to serve as an outdoor ecology laboratory for students at the University.

“It is an awesome piece of property, and we did what was necessary to make this possible because it is our church’s kuleana,” said Sherman S. Hee, executive director of the Foundation.

“It is in good enough shape that we can remove the invasives and make a quick, significant difference,” said Jody Kaulukukui, The Nature Conservancy’s director of land protection.

“It is low, rugged and mossy. It has a majestic stand of native loulu palms and other ancient forest trees. Our hope is that it will serve as one of the few easily accessible sites where school and community groups can reconnect with a Hawaiian forest,” Kaulukukui added.

The site, part of Hilo’s watershed, will continue to serve UH Hilo as an educational platform in conservation.

“This area is a great example of lowland wet forest,” noted Patrick Hart, UH Hilo associate professor of biology. “For many years, we have taken ecology and avian biology classes there to study the birds and native insect communities.”

The forested part of the parcel is referred to as a kīpuka in reference to the 400- to 700-year-old forest that was bypassed and left standing by the 1855 Mauna Loa lava flow. Kīpuka is the term for a natural area that has been surrounded by newer lava.

In addition to loulu palms, ‘ohi’a lehua and ‘ōlapa trees, ‘ie‘ie vines, ‘akala bushes and numerous other native trees and shrubs, it is home to rare Clermontia parviflora, the curved flowers of which fit the beaks of native birds. Some of those birds in the kīpuka include ‘ōma‘o, ‘elepaio, ‘apapāne and ‘amakihi. ‘Io, the native hawk that is associated with Hawaiian royalty, often soars overhead.

“What’s special about this parcel is that it’s such beautiful forest, so full of native species, and so accessible. We’re viewing this as a real opportunity to protect native forest in partnership with the landowner, the University, the watershed partnerships and the people of East Hawai‘i,” said Suzanne Case, the Conservancy’s Hawai‘i executive director. “It is a partnership that will leave a legacy for future generations.”

The kīpuka was acquired by Titus Coan through the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions during The Great Mahele in 1849. Fifty years later his widow granted title to the Hawaiian Evangelical Association, now the Hawai‘i Conference UCC and Hawai‘i Conference Foundation.

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**2015 UH Hilo Distinguished Alumni Awards Banquet is Feb 28**

The UH Hilo Alumni and Friends Association announces the recipients for the 2015 Distinguished Alumni Awards:

- Dr. Boyd Castro (‘61), Veterinarian and Owner, Hilo Veterinary Clinic
- Dr. Patsy Fujimoto (‘72), Dentist and Assistant Professor, UH Manoa
- Mr. Ramon Goya (‘89), Retired Associate Professor, UH Hilo

Faculty and staff are invited to attend the celebration on Saturday, February 28 at Nani Mau Gardens beginning at 5 pm. Tickets are $85.

For additional information, call the UH Hilo Marketing and Alumni Office at 932-7670.
Hats off to...


Helen Wong Smith, Resource Coordinator, Pharmacy & Health Sciences Information, was appointed as one of three representatives of the Society of American Archivists (SAA) to serve on the Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries, and Museums. The SAA is the oldest and largest national archival professional association with over 6,000 members.

Jiren Feng, Assistant Professor, Chinese, is lead author of the book Roof, published as one in a series of 15 Elements of Architecture books. The series was published in association with the 14th International Architectural Exhibition in Venice, Italy, June-November 2014.

Todd Belt, Professor, Political Science, served on a panel on “Revisiting Hawai’i’s Primary Election,” sponsored by the Big Island Press Club last fall.

Jon Goebel, Assistant Professor, Art, was recently selected to exhibit his artwork in Printwork 2014, a national juried exhibition on display until February 2, 2015 at the Artists Image Resource (AIR) Gallery in Pittsburgh, PA. Details at: http://www.artistimagesresource.org/event/printwork-2014-opening/.

Ka Lono Hanakahi 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) 932-7669 or alyson@hawaii.edu.

Meeting with lawmakers: Chancellor Don Straney and Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs Marcia Sakai brief members of the House Higher Education Committee on UH Hilo initiatives and other priorities. The 2015 legislative session convenes January 21.
Rescued turtle released back into the ocean

An injured Hawaiian green sea turtle completed a successful journey of recovery this month when it was released back into the ocean thanks to the coordinated efforts of numerous volunteers, students and government agencies.

The 200-plus pound turtle was recovered at Chock’s Beach in Hilo on October 14, 2014 after its flipper had become severely entangled in fishing line. Students from Jennifer Turner’s UH Hilo marine science class and UH Hilo turtle team members assisted with the initial recovery of the animal, along with members of the University’s Marine Option Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The turtle was transported to rehabilitation facilities on O‘ahu where its flipper was amputated. Following a period of healing and recovery, the animal was brought back to Hawai‘i Island where it was released in Keaukaha on December 3rd.

Turner, who heads the UH Hilo Turtle Response Team, worked with Zoologist George Balazs of the NOAA fisheries Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center and Biological Science Technician Shandel Brunson of NOAA fisheries to ship the turtle back to Hawai‘i Island. Cultural practitioners Roxanne Stewart, Kealoha Pisciotta, and Leimanana Abenes also partnered with the UH Hilo Turtle Response Team to coordinate the animal’s release.

Turtles that become entangled in fishing line often fail to survive because they are not seen, not properly reported, or the entanglement is too severe. If anyone sees a sick, injured or entangled turtle on Hawai‘i Island, contact the Turtle Response Team at 327-7780.

Come celebrate!

HO'O LAULE'A
KULIA I KA NU'U

SATURDAY
JANUARY 17, 2015
NOON - 8:00 PM

20TH ANNUAL

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT HILO
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
PARKING LOT

RYAN HIRAOKA
KIMIE PATHOLOGY
GRAVES
AND

FREE TO THE PUBLIC!
FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT!
COME RAIN OR SHINE!

LAVA Rebel
Souljahs
GIRLS NIGHT OUT

FOOD! CRAFTS! ACTIVITIES!
CARNIVAL STYLE GAMES!
WATER SLIDE! & MORE!

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS: CONTACT MATTHEW KALAHIKI (808) 932-7365, MMKK@HAWAII.EDU BY JAN 2, 2015
Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem at PAC Jan. 22

Touted by the Boston Globe as having, “…a rare gift for fashioning hip, sleek sounds from the solid cloth of vintage American music,” Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem performs at the Performing Arts Center on Thursday, January 22 at 7:30 p.m.

“Their shows sparkle with songs and stories that celebrate and tackle the human condition and are crafted to build bridges between musicians and listeners and performance and life,” said Lee Dombroski, PAC manager.

Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem write lyrics for an Irish fiddle tune and underpin it with an Afro-Cuban cajon. Their original songs range from blues to bluegrass, Unitarian funk gospel to crooner swing and spooky folk-pop. With influences from Doc Watson to Django Reinhardt, from Fiddlin’ John Carson to the funky Meters, Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem celebrate America’s past and takes it into the present.

Pre-sale tickets are reserved seating and priced at $25 General, $20 Discount and $12 UH Hilo/HawCC students (with a valid student ID) and children, up to age 17. On the day of the performance, tickets are $30 General, $25 Discount and $17 UH Hilo/HawCC 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 or ordering online at artscenter.uhh.hawaii.edu.

Campus Events

January

7-9 Orientation, Advising & Registration
11 Last day to withdraw from classes without owing tuition and fees
11 Last day to register without $30 late fee
12 FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION
16 Last day to register or add a class
17 20th Annual Ho’olaule’a, Noon-9 p.m., PAC lower parking lot
17-23 Late add with permission only
19 Holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
22 Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem, 7:30 p.m., PAC, Admission
30 Final deadline to apply for 2015 Spring Graduation
30 Last day to exercise Credit/No Credit
30 Last day to submit Auditors Form