Kurisu to keynote UH Hilo’s fall commencement

by Ken Hupp

Prominent Hawai‘i sportsman and business owner Duane Kurisu delivers the keynote address at UH Hilo’s fall commencement, scheduled for 9 a.m. on Saturday, December 17, at the UH Hilo New Gym.

A total of 256 students representing the College of Arts and Sciences (217), College of Business and Economics (27), College of Agriculture, Forestry & Natural Resource Management (11), and Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikolani College of Hawaiian Language (1) are candidates for various degrees or certificates.

The Big Island-born Kurisu is a modern day Horatio Alger story, having risen from the humble beginnings of a plantation community to attain financial independence by his mid-30s. The owner of over 12 businesses, his empire ranges from shopping centers and office high rises to professional baseball, media and a bakery.

Kurisu graduated from Hilo High School before going on to earn bachelors and masters degrees in business administration from UH Manoa. He later served as a member of the University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents from 2001 to 2004.

In his late 20s, he formed his first company, Kurisu and Fergus, and began developing real estate. In just seven years, he had earned enough to retire and go fishing, but that soon gave way to a new challenge to build community related businesses.

His love of sports led him to establish the Hawai‘i Winter Baseball League (HWBL), which became the first international professional baseball organization with players from around the world. From 1993 through 1997, the league introduced Hawai‘i fans to future major leaguers, including Ichiro Suzuki, Jason Giambi, and A.J. Pierzynski of the World Series Champion Chicago White Sox. The HWBL experience earned Kurisu an invitation to become an owner of the San Francisco Giants.

He then expanded his business holdings by obtaining ownership

Spotlight - continued on page 7.

Former standout student returns to join Biology faculty

by Ken Hupp

Kathi Glauner admits a lot has changed since she attended UH Hilo as a student. More buildings, more students and more faculty are readily apparent to the naked eye. But her fondest memories are about things that haven’t changed. The quality instruction and individualized attention she received from top-notch faculty made a big difference in her life. And now, this new assistant professor of biology is looking forward to making her own contribution to this rich UH Hilo tradition.

Glauner enrolled at UH Hilo in 1989, a year after her Hilo-born mother and father had relocated to the Big Island to work at Hawai‘i Preparatory Academy. Her ticket to UH Hilo was a music scholarship, which may sound strange for someone with such a deep, abiding love for science.

“I played the French horn and had the opportunity to attend the music conservatory at the University of Missouri-Kansas City,” Glauner explained. “But I would have had to give up everything else in my life to do it, and I just wasn’t prepared to make a commitment of that
Commencement
Continued from page 1

in numerous local publications, including Hawai‘i Business Magazine, Honolulu Magazine, the Honolulu Star Bulletin, MidWeek, Downtown Planet and Pacific Magazine. Other businesses include the Punalu‘u Bake Shop, Watermark Publishing and Sports Radio 1420, which carries broadcasts of the Giants and University of Hawai‘i sports.

Those who know him best say Kurisu’s strength is his ability to connect with the community in a special way. Described as a “doer,” whose art is business, Kurisu’s business savvy is matched by his compassion grounded in the belief that truly successful businesses help humanity.

Shelly K.W. Pelfrey, a geography major, will be the student speaker. Pelfrey was born and raised in Kailua, O‘ahu, graduated from Kamehameha Schools in 1988 and moved to Waikoloa in 1993. Pelfrey, who carries a 3.68 GPA, has earned a number of academic honors. She made the Dean’s List in the College of Arts and Sciences for three consecutive semesters between Fall 2003 and Spring 2004, and four times at Hawai‘i Community College before transferring to UH Hilo in 2003. She earned an E ‘Imi Na‘auao and Pacific Asian Tuition waiver in 2004 and 2005, and was selected for inclusion in “Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities & Colleges” in Fall 2004.

Active in campus and community affairs, Pelfrey works with Nā Pua No‘eau students during their Summer Institute and Super Saturday events, services as an alaka‘i for Hālau Hula O Nāpua and initiated and manages a Geography study hall in the Spatial Data Analysis Lab.

Her commencement address will focus on the need to keep life in perspective while pursuing career goals.

For more information on commencement, contact Jackie Pualani Johnson at 974-7304 or email jpjohnso@hawaii.edu. For special accommodations, contact Susan Shirachi at 933-0816 (V) or 974-7335 (TTY). Requests for special accommodations should be made at least 10 business days prior to the event.

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

West’s new book: science done artfully

by John Burnett

In the Walt Whitman poem, “When I Heard the Learnt’ Astronomer,” the poet soon tires of the passionless prattle of the astronomer’s lecture, replete with charts and diagrams, and in an ironic twist, goes outside “in the mystical-moist night air” to look up “in perfect silence at the stars.”

It’s too bad the 19th century American poet could not be around for the recent publication by Island Heritage of Dr. Michael J. West’s A Gentle Rain of Starlight: The Story of Astronomy on Mauna Kea. The 108-page book on Mauna Kea astronomy has no passionless prattle or professorial pontification.

“This book was truly a labor of love,” said West, professor of astronomy at UH Hilo. “There was currently no book in print about astronomy on Mauna Kea. I was really surprised by that, and thought it was a pity. There’s a great public fascination with astronomy and with Mauna Kea -- the mountain gets over 100,000 visitors per year -- and so I decided to write a book to help satisfy the desire for information about astronomy on Mauna Kea.

“This book is intended for people of all ages, anyone from eight to 80 years old and up. You don’t need to have any prior knowledge of astronomy to read this book. I made a real effort to avoid using any technical jargon -- for example, it’s probably one of the few astronomy books that doesn’t mention ‘wavelengths’ when discussing different kinds of light. My wife and the book’s two editors, all non-scientists, gave me lots of feedback and helped ensure that it was accessible to general readers. I’m a firm believer that astronomers must be able to explain what we do in a way that can be understood by all, and the book tries to do that.”

The good, grey poet would have loved that. The curious stargazer and beauty-seeking esthete in him would also have loved the fact that the 108-page tome is chock full of photographs -- with most taken by the author.

“I don’t pretend to be a professional photographer, but if you shoot enough photos occasionally you get a good one, and I’ve shot a lot of photos on Mauna Kea over the years,” West noted. “Additional photos were generously provided by the Mauna Kea observatories, the Hawai‘i State Archives, NASA and other photographers.”

While the book is mostly about astronomy on Mauna Kea, it also includes information about the cultural significance and natural history of the mountain, including the ongoing controversy over the future of Mauna Kea and astronomy on the summit.

“I didn’t want to shy away from the controversy surrounding Mauna Kea, but I also didn’t want to dwell on it, as it’s a complex issue that goes beyond the scope of this book,” West explained. “Throughout the
New book
Continued from page 2

book I discuss the cultural significance of the mountain to the Hawaiian people -- the first chapter is titled ‘A Sacred Mountain’ -- and the book does acknowledge the controversy, albeit briefly. I have tried hard to be respectful of native Hawaiian concerns throughout the book (in fact, each chapter begins with a Hawaiian proverb) and to also be respectful of the concerns of scientists.

“I truly believe that much of the controversy surrounding Mauna Kea, like many controversies, originates from a lack of understanding and an inability or unwillingness to see things through someone else’s eyes. For many years, the astronomy community was, through ignorance or arrogance, insensitive to the sanctity of Mauna Kea to some Hawaiians. Mauna Kea was a sacred site to the Hawaiian people long before there were ever telescopes there, and so astronomers have a moral obligation to help preserve the dignity of this holy place.

“But sensitivity to other cultures is a two-way street,” he added. “Science too is a culture, an ancient one whose roots go back to the dawn of human civilization. Calls from some Native Hawaiian and environmental groups for the dismantling of telescopes on Mauna Kea or banning future development there are also insensitive because they ignore the kinship that astronomers feel with the mountain as they explore the cosmos in what is ultimately a spiritual quest for them too. I hope that my book can, in some small way, help increase awareness and understanding of the importance of Mauna Kea to different people for different reasons.”

West’s own spiritual quest was motivated by the words of a learned astronomer. Fortunately, there was no passionless prattle, as the astronomer was Carl Sagan, the late host of the PBS series *Cosmos*.

“When I was in high school, I read one of Carl Sagan’s first books, *Cosmic Connection*, and it just blew me away. It was the most fascinating thing I’d ever read in my life at that point, and it inspired me to become an astronomer,” he said. “I’d always thought about writing a letter to Sagan to tell him about the effect that his book had on my life. But I never did; I felt too awkward. I regret it now, as I’m sure he would have enjoyed knowing how much his writing had influenced me -- and probably countless other astronomers too -- but Sagan passed away in 1996. If my book can help inspire readers to want to know more about astronomy and our place in the cosmos, then for me all the effort that went into creating this book will have been worthwhile.”

(Editor’s note: John Burnett is a public information officer.)

Come one, come all!

UH Hilo faculty and staff and their immediate families are invited to UH Hilo’s annual Holiday Celebration, scheduled for Thursday, December 8, from 3-5 p.m. in the Campus Center Dining Room.

The festivities are hosted by Chancellor Rose Tseng, and include songs by the University Chorus, refreshments, a visit by Santa, a favor for adult guests, and candy for the keikis.

Call x47643 or x47642 with any questions.
Hats off to...

Anneliese Worster, Assistant Professor of Education, had her paper on “Sense of place among New England fishermen and organic farmers: implications for socially constructed environmental education” published in the November issue of *Environmental Education Research*, a peer-reviewed journal from the UK.

Eric Im, Professor of Economics, had a paper on “Hessian Sufficiency for Bordered Hessian” published in a special issue of *Research Letters in the Information and Mathematical Sciences* on matrices (vol. 8, July 2005). The paper was previously presented at the 14th International Workshop on Matrices and Statistics in Auckland, New Zealand.

Harald Barkhoff, Assistant Professor of Health and Physical Education, received an invitation last month from the German National Artistic Roller Skating Federation (DRIV) to serve as the sport psychologist and scientific consultant of the German National Team during the World Artistic Roller Skating Championship in Rome, Italy.

Yoshitaka Miike, Assistant Professor of Communication, presented last month “The Conceptual Significance of Centricity in Intercultural Communication Research: Lessons from the Metatheory of Afrocentricity” and “Culture as Text and Culture as Theory: An Asiacentric Agenda for Communication Studies” at the National Communication Association in Boston, MA. He was also a speaker on the memorial panel, “Spotlight on Scholarship: Everett M. Rogers and the Diffusion of Innovations” and chaired the panel, “Finding, Constructing, and Managing the Cultural Self.”

Michael Marshall, Associate Professor of Art, last month had two recent works on paper selected for inclusion in the 2005 Fall All Hawai‘i Juried Art Exhibition, organized by the East Hawai‘i Cultural Center.

Douglas Mikkelson, Professor of Religious Studies, had his article “Aquinas and Dogen on Entrance into the Religious Life” appear in the journal *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, vol. 25, 2005.

Debra Weeks, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, is listed in the 2006 *Who’s Who in America’s Teachers*.

Wayne Miyamoto, Professor of Art, participated in the 2005 Mid America National Print Exhibition at the University Art Gallery, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, MI. The exhibition was presented by the Mid America Print Council from October 21-November 23, 2005.

Patti Urso, Assistant Professor of Nursing, received a $75,000 grant with an associate PI Cara Sadira, from the Hawaii Community Foundation for “Smoking Cessation Health Care Provider Education in East Hawai‘i.” She was also awarded a $1000 diversity mini grant for “Culturally Tailored Lifestyle Change Before and After Smoking Cessation.”

Hats off - continued on page 5.
Two UH Hilo faculty and one UH Hilo alumna have received an $11,000 grant to continue oral history research with former leprosy patients residing at Kalaupapa, Moloka‘i from January 2006 to June 2007.

Dr. Charles Langlas, affiliate professor of anthropology, Dr. Sonia Juvik, professor of geography and environmental studies and Ka’ohulani McGuire, a private consultant who assesses project impacts on Hawaiian culture, are conducting the research on subjects ranging in age from their 60s to their 80s, who have chose to stay in Kalaupapa since 1969, when advances in medication lowered the contagion rate of leprosy to a level that allowed the State to end its policy of patient segregation. The OHA grant, administered through Pili Productions, a Hilo-based non-profit corporation, will allow the investigators to continue their ongoing work of documenting the lives of these subjects with the goal of producing a book of their life histories.

“The team (of researchers) has previously done a good deal of interviewing at Kalaupapa in a study for Kalaupapa National Historical Park, which described the Kalaupapa community during the years 1970 to the present,” Langlas said. “The present work aims to deal with the whole lives of the patients, from the time they were diagnosed with leprosy, to their life of segregation at Kalaupapa, to their present life there as a matter of choice. In particular, we want to show that their lives at Kalaupapa were not just lives of suffering, but that they lived a life like other people: they worked maintaining the settlement, they fished, played, married and divorced, just like people on the outside.”

According to Langlas, there are about 30 residents left in Kalaupapa. The book project will detail the lives of 10 to 15 of those residents.
Holiday music with an astronomical twist

by Margaret Shiba

The Performing Arts program at UH Hilo is the recent beneficiary of a generous gift of $9,000 from the Subaru Telescope and the Japan Promotion of Astronomy Foundation. The gift will be used to help support a series of holiday orchestral concerts on the UH Hilo campus December 3-5, 2005.

Maestro Ken Staton will conduct a full orchestra comprised of musicians from around the island and the state, who will join UH Hilo students and faculty and the Kamehameha High School chorus to perform two public concerts in the UH Hilo Performing Arts Center, on Saturday, December 3 at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, December 4 at 2 p.m. A third concert will be offered on the Campus Center Plaza on Monday, December 5 at 7 p.m. for the UH Hilo campus community. Supplementing each of the concerts will be a special display focused on the scientific explanations of the “Star of Bethlehem” phenomenon which occurred around the time of the birth of Christ.

Ever since the launch of its operations by the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan in 1999, Subaru Telescope has been a generous benefactor to several different programs and projects at UH Hilo. Along with the students, faculty, and staff at the University, the entire Hilo community benefits greatly from Subaru’s support for these initiatives.

Don’t miss this season’s unique opportunity to enjoy an unforgettable holiday concert, with an astronomical twist! 🎩

(Editor’s note: Margaret Shiba is director of development.)

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UH Hilo Performing Arts Department presents

A Happy Holiday Concert and campus sing-a-long!

When: Monday, December 5, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.
Where: The “Plaza”
Who: The 125-voice University Chorus
      The University Chamber Singers
      Kamehameha High School Chorus
      The UH Hilo Orchestra
What: A great “Pops” concert of holiday favorites!

How much??
FREE!

This concert is open to our University community of students, faculty and staff...
a Holiday gift from the Chancellor’s Office and the Performing Arts Department

Come enjoy the music as we finish up the last week of classes

AND

Join in the ‘sing-a-long’ with the choruses and orchestra!!

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Dr. Hiroshi Karoji, Director, Subaru Telescope, presents 2005 donation to Chancellor Rose Tseng. Looking on are Maestro Ken Staton, Chair of the UH Hilo Performing Arts Department, and Margaret Shiba, UH Hilo Director of Development.
Spotlight
Continued from page 1

Scholarship for academic excellence and enrolled at the University of Missouri-Columbia where she studied physics for the next year. No one knew for certain at the time, but that experience probably helped cement her plans to pursue a major in science, despite the music scholarship.

“I’d been in love with science since the sixth grade when I was captivated by the study of atoms,” Glauner recalled. “I even went so far as to write a physicist to ask him why atoms have to slow down to collide, and I still remember how excited I was when he wrote back and answered my question.”

Glauner wasted no time in displaying her scientific talents, winning the Big Island Science Conference Best Student Presentation Award in 1990. She graduated in 1993 with a bachelor of arts degrees in biology and chemistry with a minor in music. Glauner participated as a student in the Minority Biomedical Research Support (MBRS) Program researching DNA replication and cell cycle control in yeast. She also conducted research in the Chemistry department on the design and function of toxin-specific electrodes for detection of environmental chemicals. That experience turned out to be an important point in her life, and one that would weigh heavily in a career decision more than a decade later.

“The MBRS program really made a difference in my life,” Glauner explained. “It gave us options and ways to achieve our goals by providing opportunities to do research, obtain summer fellowships and meet important people by presenting our work at national conferences. Without it, I would not have gotten into the institution I selected for my graduate work.”

That institution turned out to be at the University of California-Berkeley, after turning down a graduate scholarship to the same music conservatory she had passed on years earlier. At UC-Berkeley, she earned a Ph.D in cell and molecular biology, and specialized in neuroscience doing research on the structure/function relationship of neuronal potassium channels. Along the way, she added another honor to her trophy case by winning the Best Graduate Teaching Assistant award. Glauner admits she loved her work at Berkeley, but knew she wouldn’t be settling down there.

“The work was exciting and I was very lucky to be there with a scientist who was just getting his lab up and going,” Glauner said. “But like the music conservatory, the work would be all consuming and there would be no life for me outside of the lab.”

It quickly became evident that part of the life she desired away from her job involved charitable work. Glauner began volunteering with a local charity, working with children in shelters and with families who were out on the street.

“I got a lucky break because my scholarships helped me get into good schools, and gave me a chance to improve my life,” Glauner said. “That made me want to give back, and what better way to do it than by helping those who are less fortunate?”

Once she got a taste of charity work, Glauner was hooked and embarked on a mission to Guatemala working for the God Child project. The program provided, among other things, food, medical care and educational assistance to poor families provided the children stayed in school. For a year and a half she worked with 72 families as a volunteer social worker and taught English. And along the way she met her future husband. Like her own UH Hilo experience, Glauner’s time in Guatemala would mark an important chapter in her life.

“That experience illustrated just how hard it is to change someone’s circumstances,” Glauner said. “But we did have a few success stories where children actually ended up going to college, and those are the kind of things that give you hope and keep you going.”

Glauner spent the next three years completing her post-doctoral work at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, before going to work as a research assistant professor at the University of Kansas Medical Center where she conducted research on the molecular genetics of kidney disease.

The story could have ended. On the surface, the position seemed ideal. The money was good, which provided stability, enabled them to help out family in Guatemala, and the work was a natural extension of what she had been doing. But something was missing.

“I was teaching future doctors, which is comparable to tutoring honor students. Their outcome was never really in doubt,” Glauner said. “What I wanted to do was work with people whose futures were less certain, but might succeed if given a helping hand.”

As luck would have it, UH Hilo was advertising a temporary vacancy in its Biology faculty, which she discovered while searching the Chronicle of Higher Education Website in August. Recalling her own experience, Glauner emailed an application CD and heard back from the University within a week. But she already knew what her answer would be.

“My experience here, especially with the MBRS program, showed me they understand that giving someone a helping hand can change their life,” Glauner said. “That’s the kind of place I want to be.”

UH Hilo has changed a great deal since Glauner was here as a student. She recalled that none of the Biology classes she took ever had more than 20 students. Her Biology 125 class alone has four times that amount with 89 students. She also teaches two sections of Biology 101.

The University’s level of research activity and funding has also exploded in recent years, with the Biology department a particular hotbed of activity. That leaves its newest faculty member with several options in deciding where to concentrate her research.

“Kidney research would be a natural choice as an extension of my work at KU,” Glauner said. “But for me the most important thing is to focus my efforts on something that will fit in with what we are trying to accomplish here.”

If history is any guide, Glauner will excel in whatever area she chooses. And more importantly, the biggest beneficiaries will be her students.
# Campus Events

## December

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Last day to apply for spring 2006 semester classified admission</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>“A Happy Holidays Concert,” 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>“A Happy Holidays Concert,” 2 p.m., Performing Arts Center</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>“A Happy Holidays Concert” and campus sing-a-long, 7 p.m., CC Plaza</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Focus on UH Hilo, 8 p.m., Channel 55</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Last day of instruction</td>
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<td>UH Hilo Holiday Party, 3 p.m., CC Dining Room</td>
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<td>Last day to completely withdraw with a “W”</td>
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<td>12-16</td>
<td>Final examinations</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>UH Hilo Commencement, 9 a.m., New Gym</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Final grades due in MyUH, noon</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Fall semester ends</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Vulcans basketball vs. Cal State Monterey Bay, 7:15 p.m., Civic, Admission</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Vulcans basketball vs. Cheyney State, 7:30 p.m., Civic, Admission</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Vulcans basketball vs. Fontbonne, 7:15 p.m., Civic, Admission</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Vulcans basketball vs. Cal State Monterey Bay, 7:15 p.m., Civic, Admission</td>
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