Interim Chancellor Marcia Sakai discusses the work ahead

by Ken Hupp

On August 1, 2017, Dr. Marcia Sakai assumed the duties of interim chancellor at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. Sakai joined the UH Hilo faculty in 1991. She was the founding dean of the College of Business and Economics, leading the College through its initial AACSB accreditation, and served as vice chancellor for administrative affairs from 2011 until her appointment as interim chancellor. Here, Sakai discusses her goals and objectives, along with the challenges she faces leading the University.

KL: What will be your primary objective while serving as interim chancellor?

MS: With the change in our campus leadership, including deans, vice chancellors, and chancellor, my role at this point in time is to be a steward of the process, and to create a sense of stability for our community while we move forward together.

We need to focus on how best to implement a new enrollment management plan to help us grow our enrollment over the next five years. To do so, we are reorganizing identified administrative and academic units to become more efficient and effective in how we operate, serve our students and the community.

Change creates opportunities. My goal is to help our students, faculty, staff and other administrators see the opportunities and know we will emerge as a stronger institution where they can continue to be productive and successful in their work.

KL: What do you see as the major challenges you will face during this interim appointment?

UH Hilo Interim Chancellor’s Column

Guest Column by Dr. Farrah-Marie Gomes, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

New strategies gaining momentum at Student Affairs

I am excited about the work that the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Division of Student Affairs has accomplished in the 10 months I have served as vice chancellor for student affairs. While the fall 2017 semester started only a few weeks ago and many units are busy helping students get settled into classes and activities, I’d like to share with you some of our recent successes.

Admissions

For the first time in four years, our admissions team was successful in recruiting the largest incoming class of students this semester. This was due in part to a 19% increase in first-time freshmen accepted to UH Hilo. As indicated in the UH System Enrollment Management Action Plan, two of our UH Hilo strategies include increasing enrollment of first-time students, especially on Hawai‘i Island, and increasing enrollment of transfer students, especially with UH community colleges.

To assist with these strategies, we will soon be searching for a Hawai‘i Island admissions counselor and plan to advertise for a transfer admissions counselor shortly thereafter.

Financial Aid

Refining our financial aid strategy is also included in the plan as a way of ensuring success of our students on their educational journey. This year, the Office of
MS: My major challenges are the same as those faced by chancellors across the country: moving forward in the best way possible given the constraints of budget and resources. We have good people doing amazing things at UH Hilo with teaching, research, community outreach and more. From this strong base, we can overcome the challenges presented and get our work done.

KL: Are there any key decisions that will have to be made or actions that will have to be taken before a permanent chancellor takes office? If so, what are they?

MS: The University will continue to move forward during this time of transition. We’re not in a holding pattern. I will continue the momentum started under the leadership of former Chancellor Don Straney.

We will have budgets to prepare, priorities to identify, funding requests, searches and hiring to do, and are gearing up for the next legislative session. We will continue to move forward as our new chancellor is found.

KL: The reorganization of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) was expected to become effective in spring 2018, prior to news of this latest development. Do you anticipate this change will go forward as scheduled, or would you expect there to be a delay to provide the next chancellor an opportunity to be heard on this?

MS: We anticipate going forward as scheduled with the planning and reorganization of CAS, which was approved by President Lassner in May 2017.

KL: How would you describe your management style and approach to carrying out the day-to-day duties of interim chancellor?

MS: I approach challenges in management by listening and learning about the issue, from as many perspectives as is needed. Solutions have to be balanced, in order to optimize among the institution’s goals and requirements, and with consideration for effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness. I find this approach valuable and effective as an administrator in higher education.

KL: What is the current status of the search for a permanent chancellor?

MS: A search team is in the process of being assembled. President Lassner visited the campus in late August to meet with our stakeholder groups to seek input on the qualities desirable for the next permanent chancellor and to invite nominations for members of the search team. Our Faculty Congress Chair has issued a formal call for nominations of potential faculty members, and I expect that calls to other stakeholder groups will be forthcoming.

KL: Will you be a candidate, or have you given thought to becoming a candidate for the permanent position?

MS: I see my role as helping the University through this time of transition. My focus is currently on that task.

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

MS: UH Hilo is an incredibly important part of our island and state communities. We are preparing leaders and professionals for the future, giving them the experience, tools, and knowledge to improve the quality of life for themselves, their families and their communities. For example, we are preparing students for careers in growth sectors in Hawai’i’s economy such as conservation, health and sustainability. Our work and curriculum on revitalizing Hawaiian language, literature and culture is internationally recognized.

In these and many other ways, UH Hilo is woven into the fabric of Hawai’i Island and whoever is to lead this University will have the incredible opportunity to strengthen that bond, that responsibility, that *kuleana*, to the people and to the place, moving us all forward into the future of our state.

(Ken Hupp is a public information officer.)

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**Furuli returns to coordinate development strategy for UH Foundation**

Andrea Furuli has returned to the University of Hawai’i Foundation as regional director of development for Hawai’i Island. In her new capacity, Furuli oversees a coordinated development strategy as head of a fundraising team responsible for engaging donors and friends across the island on behalf of the University of Hawai’i at Hilo, Hawai’i Community College and Palamanui campuses. She will also hire a new director of development at UH Hilo to round out her team.

Furuli comes to her position from the Hawai’i Community Foundation where she had been serving as senior philanthropy advancement officer since June of 2015. She previously served at the UH Foundation in the UH Hilo Office of Development as associate director of development for eight years and then director for two years.

“Positively contributing to a place where our families can flourish, parents can age peacefully and communities can thrive are of utmost importance to me,” Furuli said. “I’m humbled to have another opportunity to collaborate with such an amazing team to bring forth the very best for our students, faculty and communities across Hawai’i Island.”
Financial Aid awarded more than $64 million in financial aid and last month unveiled a new micro-scholarship program to Hawai‘i Island high school counselors. This program will allow students, starting from their freshman year in high school, to earn funds toward a scholarship redeemable only upon enrollment at UH Hilo after graduation.

In addition to the financial benefit of micro-scholarships, we believe that by engaging with high school students earlier, they will be better prepared for their transition to college.

New Students

Realizing that the transition to college can be challenging for students, our New Student Programs made adjustments to New Student Orientation this summer. The most significant change was a reduction of the orientation fee, which likely contributed to almost 200 more registrations in this semester’s fall orientation.

Currently, New Student Programs is transitioning to a First-Year Experience Program. To assist with the retention of students in their first year at UH Hilo, transfer students will be provided with access to better coordinated transfer services and first-year students will be eligible to receive the support of a peer mentor through this new program.

Housing

Although there was an increase in the incoming class, UH Hilo experienced an overall decline in enrollment this semester. Despite this decline, there are 740 students living in our residence halls compared to 672 students last fall. This represents an all-time high for occupancy in UH Hilo housing since Hale ‘Alahonua was built in 2013, and is in part due to repricing approved by the Board of Regents in June that significantly reduced the rates for Hale ‘Alahonua by more than $700 each semester.

Living Learning Communities continue to be a highlight within the residence halls where a total of 113 freshmen have chosen a field of interest, are enrolled in a course together and go on off-campus trips that focus on cultural practices, community engagement, and service learning.

Mahalo

Across the rest of Student Affairs, there is excellent work being done by all units and I’d like to recognize and thank all faculty and staff for their continued hard work and dedication to our students. I look forward to many more accomplishments from our team in the future. The Division will soon be embarking on reviewing our mission and vision statements as a way of ensuring that we continue to meaningfully contribute to the wonderful teaching and learning that takes place every day at UH Hilo.

Let’s journey on together!

Kimberly Mikami Svetin

Eighty-two student pharmacists will hear words of inspiration from the president of one of Hawai‘i’s few remaining independent pharmacies at this year’s University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy (DKICP) White Coat Ceremony on October 8 in the UH Hilo Performing Arts Center. The event, which takes place from 2-4 p.m., is open to the public.

Kimberly Mikami Svetin, the third president in the 82-year history of family-run Moloka‘i Drugs, will be the keynote speaker. Svetin will give the student pharmacists her view of “how to get the most out of life.” She also plans to talk about how the pharmacy staff at Hawai‘i’s oldest independent pharmacy focuses on the community and how that benefits their personal and professional lives.

The ceremony, where new student pharmacists recite the Oath of a Pharmacist, signifies a rite of passage for individuals entering their first year in the professional program. Students will be cloaked with a white coat symbolizing their student status and the values of the profession.

Three pharmacy residents who are continuing their training with DKICP faculty on Kaua‘i and O‘ahu, as well as a new Ph.D. student at DKICP, also will take part in the ceremony.

Ka Haka ‘Ula O Keʻelikōlani College of Hawaiian Language will perform the mele hoʻokipa, or welcoming chant, Ua Ao Hawai‘i.

The students will also be addressed by UH Hilo Interim Chancellor Marcia Sakai and DKICP Dean Carolyn Ma.

The event is sponsored exclusively by Walgreens. Erin Samura, Pharmacy Manager from Hilo, will speak on behalf of Walgreens.
Sodexo chef wins big at Waikoloa poke contest

A Sodexo Dining Services chef at the University of Hawai’i at Hilo walked away with top honors in two professional categories at the 10th Annual Great Waikoloa Poke Contest held last month at the Waikoloa Beach Marriott. The event attracted 20 amateur and professional poke chefs, who showcased 37 different entries featuring the raw fish.

Hale Kehau Sous Chef Peter Kaluna captured top honors in the Traditional Poke category, with ingredients limited to those of Hawaiian origin. His recipe utilized 10 different ingredients to complement the chunks of lean ahi and dried aku (yellowfin and oily) tuna, including he’e (squid), opihi (limpet), wana (sea urchin), ulu (bread fruit), limu kohu (seaweed) and Hawaiian salt. The judges also awarded Kaluna’s entry top prize for Best Presentation.

Kaluna has previously won several poke contests, including top honors in the Traditional Category at the 2015 Sam Choy Poke Contest using only pre-missionary ingredients. His Pake Poke recipe was featured earlier this year in a February 7, 2017 article in the online publication Food Management.

DKICP hosts 9th Annual Health Fair

The University of Hawai’i at Hilo Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy presents its 9th Annual Health Fair on Saturday, October 7, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Prince Kuhio Plaza in Hilo. More than 150 student pharmacists will host education booths, health screenings, and giveaways. There also will be live demonstrations, entertainment, and a keiki poster contest for elementary and middle school students.

Participating organizations include The Food Basket, HMSA, Hawai’i Island HIV and Aids Foundation, NAMI-National Alliance of Mental Illness-Big Island, Center for the Study of Active Volcanoes, Partners in Developments, Senior Medicare Patrol, Aloha Care, Hawai’i Island Diabetes Coalition, Medical Reserve Corps, Civil Defense, Med QUEST, Hawai’i Island Family Dental, Hilo Vet Center, Project Vision Hawai’i, United Healthcare, Legal Aid Society of Hawai’i – Hawai’i Island and East Hawai’i Al-Anon Family Group.

For more information, contact Tracey Niimi at 932-7139 or tniimi@hawaii.edu.

UH Hilo Clothesline Project marks Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The University of Hawai’i at Hilo Women’s Center will commemorate Domestic Violence Awareness Month by hosting the annual Clothesline Project on Wednesday, October 18, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on the Campus Center Plaza. The event is free and open to the public.

The Clothesline Project aims to raise awareness about domestic violence by inviting participants to decorate a t-shirt with messages that will serve as testimony to the problem of interpersonal violence and let those who may suffer in silence know that they are not alone. The t-shirts will be displayed on the Campus Center Plaza October 18 –25.

The event is sponsored by the UH Hilo Women’s Center, LGBTQ+ Center, Office of Equal Opportunity, and Child and Family Service Hilo.

For more information, contact Lehua Haissoun at 932-7380 or email lmclung@hawaii.edu.
Hats off to...


**Li Tao**, Assistant Professor, Biology, coauthored “Polo kinase mediates the phosphorylation and cellular localization of Nuf/FIP3, a Rab11 effector,” *Molecular Biology of the Cell* 2017; 28:11, 1435-1443.

**Jiren Feng**, Associate Professor, Chinese, was invited as a guest lecturer by Okayama University, Japan, and taught several intensive courses on Chinese architecture and gardens for its general cultural education program. He was also invited by Henan University, China, to present “Song Culture in the Building Standards” for its graduate students and faculty in the School of Civil Engineering and Architecture.


**Su-Mi Lee**, Assistant Professor, Political Science, was one of 16 college educators nationwide selected to participate in the Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program that took place in Chile over the summer. The program was organized by the U.S. Department of Education that worked with the U.S. State Department and the Fulbright Commission of Chile.

**Todd Belt**, Professor, Political Science, presented “Lessons of the 2016 Election” at Wellesley College and was invited on WGBH-TV’s “Greater Boston with Jim Braude” to discuss President Trump’s issue of Twitter.

**Zheng An**, Assistant Professor, Communication, authored a book chapter, “Social support, social control, and dietary acculturation among Asian immigrants living in the United States,” published in *Culture, Migration, and Health Communication in a Global Context*. She also coauthored “Bridging mechanisms in multiethnic communities: Place-based communication, neighborhood belonging, and intergroup relations,” accepted for publication in *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*. 
UH Hilo Performing Arts Center announces 2017-18 season

The University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Performing Arts Center (PAC) has unveiled its schedule of performances for the 2017-18 season, which begins on Wednesday, October 4 at 7:30 p.m. with the Yara Arts Group’s production of Shank’s Mare.

The Okareka Dance Company from New Zealand will present MANA WAHINE on Tuesday, October 24 at 7:30 p.m. The all-female work utilizes dance, theatre and film to honor the essence of being a woman.

Abe Lagrimas Jr. will serve up his blend of jazz stylings on ukulele, vibes and drums accompanied by Dean Taba on bass and Noel Okimoto on drums and vibes on Wednesday, November 15 at 7:30 p.m.

Holiday Card to Hilo: Welcome to the Season will be presented on Sunday, November 19 at 2 p.m. Performers include the UH Hilo Kapili Choir and University Chorus under the direction of Amy Horst, the Orchid Isle Orchestra directed by Cathy Young and the Hilo Community Chorus under the direction of Tom McAlexander.

Closing the fall portion of the season will be the son of the late legendary Frank Zappa and Grammy® Award winning artist Dweezil Zappa. Zappa will perform with the UH Hilo Jazz Orchestra under the direction of Trever Veilleux Friday and Saturday, December 8 and 9, at 7:30 p.m.

The spring season begins on Thursday, February 15 at 7:30 p.m. with a traditional Japanese arts concert by Shamisen Master Goshiro Kineya featuring melodies and the theatrical music of Kabuki traditions performed on traditional instruments by more than 60 artists from Japan.

Lead artists Ova Saopeng and Leilani Chan will explore the plight and challenges of immigrants and refugees and open a dialog to promote healing when TeAda Productions presents Masters of the Currents on Thursday, March 8 at 7:30 p.m.

The Alt., comprised of renowned guitarist and songwriter John Doyle, noted flautist, singer and songwriter Nuala Kennedy, and Eamon O’Leary, who is one-half of the critically acclaimed Murphy Beds, will perform Irish ballads and freshly discovered songs of the rich Irish tradition on Thursday, March 22 at 7:30 p.m.

The season closes with the ‘local style’ comedy Aloha Las Vegas, directed by newly-appointed UH Hilo Drama Assistant Professor Justina Mattos. Performance dates are Thursday, Friday and Saturday, April 12, 13 and 14, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 15, at 2 p.m.

Season subscription packages ranging in price from $70 to $156 are currently available by calling the PAC Box Office at 932-7490 or by ordering online at artscenter.uhh.hawaii.edu.
Shank’s Mare coming to UH Hilo PAC

Shank’s Mare, the Yara Arts Group production featuring traditional Japanese kuruma ningyō puppetry, comes to the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Performing Arts Center (PAC) on Wednesday, October 4, at 7:30 p.m.

The venerable art of Japanese kuruma ningyō (cart puppetry) takes its name from the unique performance style in which a puppeteer sits on a three-wheeled cart. During a performance, the black-clad puppeteers roll about the stage on their carts, steering them by shifting their weight and using their hands and feet to manipulate each puppet’s arms, legs and head.

Created by Tom Lee and Japanese Master Puppeteer Koryu Nishikawa V, Shank’s Mare tells the story of two wandering travelers whose paths intersect in time and space as they wander up mountains, into snowstorms and eventually, through time. The production combines the traditional puppetry with live video projection of miniature sets and an original score performed live on hammered dulcimer, Japanese shamisen and flute to explore themes of life and death and how tradition is passed on.

Tickets are reserved seating and priced at $25 General, $20 Discount and $12 UH Hilo/Hawai‘i CC students (with a valid student ID) and children, up to age 17, pre-sale, and $30, $25 and $17 at the door. Tickets are available by calling the UH Hilo Box Office at 932-7490, Tuesday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., or ordering online at artscenter.uhh.hawaii.edu.

Vulcan Volleyball featured on October 11 Voices of UH Hilo

Vulcan Volleyball will be the topic of discussion on the next Voices of UH Hilo, which airs on Wednesday, October 11 at 7:53 a.m. on AM 670 KPUA.

First-year head coach Gene Krieger will talk about this year’s squad, his plan for turning the program around, and preview key upcoming home matches.

Voices of UH Hilo features University administrators, faculty and staff discussing programs and initiatives on the second Wednesday of the month throughout the calendar year.
Program Spotlight

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

Enrollment Services at UH Hilo is comprised of four offices within DSA: Admissions; Office of the Registrar; Financial Aid; and Student Employment. This update features three of these offices that provide support in the application, registration and financial aid processes for students.

This semester, UH Hilo experienced the first increase in new incoming students in four years. This was largely due to an increase of over 19% in first-time freshmen who were accepted. Those who enrolled represented a 13% increase over last year’s registered students. Admissions has created an Entering Class Profile to assist the campus in understanding the characteristics of our incoming class, including transfer, returning and exchange students.

With the fall 2017 semester well underway, Admissions staff has already begun the recruiting cycle for the next academic year. Applications opened on September 1, and students are encouraged to apply early. To kick off this year’s recruiting cycle, Admissions counselors have already made 65 of more than 120 visits to high schools and community colleges scheduled for the fall semester. On September 14, a high school counselor workshop was held for more than 30 high school counselors from around Hawai‘i Island. While high school counselors are an important source for student referrals, anyone can refer prospective students to our Request Information webpage.

Current and prospective students are also encouraged to submit their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is now open as well. To date, UH Hilo has offered more than $64 million in financial aid to over 3,400 students, representing an increase of more than 4% over the number of students offered aid last year. In addition to federal, state and institutional aid, students can apply for scholarships and grants. Over $37 million is available in scholarships to UH students through the UH System Common Scholarship Application. This scholarship is opening a month earlier this year on November 1.

Once accepted and funding is secured, the next critical step is getting students registered for the classes they need. The Office of the Registrar has built pathways in STAR that allows students to see at a glance what classes count toward their degree completion. As a resource for faculty and staff, this office is also the campus lead for providing information about compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Last month, with support from the Chancellor’s Professional Development Fund, the Office of the Registrar brought in LeRoy Rooker, who is known as the nation’s leading authority on the federal law that provides privacy protections for student education records. Many faculty and staff attended a session over the two days that Mr. Rooker was on campus.

Over the next few months, Enrollment Services will announce the launch of several initiatives aimed at supporting the overarching student success strategies for our campus. This includes a program to communicate with our students via text messaging and a micro-scholarship program that will enable high school students to earn funds toward a scholarship redeemable upon enrollment at UH Hilo after graduation. More details will be shared as they become available.
UH Hilo Briefs

October

3  Vulcan Women’s Soccer vs. Holy Names, 4:30 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field
    Vulcan Men’s Soccer vs. Holy Names, 7 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field

7  DKICP presents 9th Annual Health Fair, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Prince Kuhio Plaza

8  DKICP White Coat Ceremony, 2-4 p.m., PAC

11 Senate and House Higher Education Committee visit to UH Hilo, 3:30-4:15 p.m., UCB 127

12 “Making a Difference: Careers in International Development” by Dennis Flemming, 6 p.m., STB #108

18 UH Hilo Women’s Center presents Clothesline Project, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., CC Plaza

24 Vulcan Women’s Soccer vs. Notre Dame de Namur, 4:30 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field
    Vulcan Men’s Soccer vs. Notre Dame de Namur, 7 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field
    The Okareka Dance Company presents MANA WAHINE, 7:30 p.m., PAC, Admission

26 Sodexo’s Food Festival, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., CC Plaza

28 Vulcan Women’s Soccer vs. Dominican, 12:30 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field
    Vulcan Men’s Soccer vs. Dominican, 3 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field

30 Vulcan Women’s Soccer vs. Fresno Pacific, 4:30 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field
    Vulcan Men’s Soccer vs. Fresno Pacific, 7 p.m., Kamehameha Schools Field