STEM program seeks to interest Native Hawaiians in math and science

by John Burnett

Before contact with Westerners, Native Hawaiians were experts in astronomy, marine science and natural science, having used the stars for navigation and the land and sea for the resources they needed to live. Considering that set of circumstances, it is both ironic and unfortunate that Native Hawaiian students, who comprise approximately 18 percent of the student body at UH Hilo, are drastically under represented in these disciplines.

In fact, in the past five years, UH Hilo has not had a single Native Hawaiian astronomy major, and Native Hawaiians comprised only 3.1 percent of the marine science majors and 2 percent of the natural sciences majors. Hawaiians are also under represented in other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, such as biology, chemistry, computer science, geology, mathematics and physics.

UH Hilo Professor of Geography Dr. Sonia Juvik has received a five-year, $2.5 million STEM grant from the National Science Foundation through the Tribal Colleges and Universities Program and as principal investigator will reach out both at the university level and in grades K-12 to recruit, train and retain Native Hawaiian students interested in studying the STEM disciplines. Dr. David Sing, director of Na Pua No’eau, UH Hilo’s Center for Gifted and Talented Native Hawaiian Children, is assisting Juvik in this endeavor, which includes faculty from all the STEM-related disciplines as well as the Education Department and Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke’elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language.

“Hawaiians have a depth in history in disciplines such as star-gazing, the ocean and the land,” Sing said. “Over the years, our educational curriculum and our way of teaching at the University and schools have not allowed that kind of history and background to be a part of it. So we’re hoping that this particular grant will provide us with information so we can better attract Hawaiian students with that kind of history and background.”

New position, new office, new challenge for Pitts

by John Burnett

The accommodations in new Equal Opportunity Employment/Affirmative Action Officer Herb Pitts’ office are sparse, almost spartan: a desk; a couple of chairs; a notebook computer and the start of bookshelves. But that’s the way it is when one is building something.

Pitts is the first person to occupy that position full-time at UH Hilo, so both he and the job are new. And so is his office, in Room 238 of the new University Classroom Building.

But the Baltimore native is both an achiever and someone used to the challenge of building something new. As a civil rights activist in the mid-1960s to early 1970s, he was working to build a new paradigm in human rights and relations in American society.

“When I finished high school I was only 16 and I didn’t feel I was mature enough for college, so I joined what was known as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, pronounced ‘snick’),” he said. “I then worked in Cambridge, Maryland with Gloria Richardson. Then I went with the SNCC Project when it was involved with the COFO effort, which was the Council of Federated (Civil Rights) Organizations, down to Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia.

“Because I was a writer even then, I became the editor of SNCC’s national organ, which was a
STEM Program

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Juvik said that the model of the *ahupua’a*, a land division, generally from the mountains to the ocean that Native Hawaiian “clan groups” depended upon for survival in their traditional subsistence society, is the integrating theme for all elements relating to the STEM program.

“It’s been suggested that the *ahupua’a* is an appropriate model, one that Hawaiians work with and one that’s relatively easy for faculty to comprehend and work with,” Juvik explained. “We have eight specific *ahupua’a*, such as Pepe’ekoe, that we’re going to work with. We haven’t gotten an entire *ahupua’a* yet, but we have people working at different elevations on the island that provide us with an understanding of the distinct ecological relationships along a transect gradient that is representative of an *ahupua’a*. This allows us to see how we can integrate ideas, then we can build an interdisciplinary framework to carry on the study.”

“What it allows us to do is, rather than separate the classes by disciplines, it looks at the areas holistically, as Hawaiians do, in terms of the land division and environmental education, versus separate disciplines,” Sing added. “So it in itself, just using that theme, provides the mind set that we’re going to approach it from a holistic perspective.

“This is also consistent with the strategic plan of the University to use the whole land of the Big Island as a natural laboratory, so this starts to put that into practice, rather than just words. So hopefully, we’ll start providing our faculty with the opportunity to see how the laboratory can be a part of their classroom.”

One way to initiate students into the STEM disciplines is to set up a freshman course that will utilize multi disciplinary learning communities designed for Hawaiian students interested in the designated disciplines. The proposed course would be designated STEM 101.

“I think we can make STEM 101 attractive to Native Hawaiians if we can make it conducive to the way that Hawaiians learn,” Sing said. “This will be a starting point, so to expect Hawaiian college students to automatically want to participate when they haven’t had that experience in the past is unrealistic. So the real work will be with students in grades from K to 12.”

“I think the catch words we like to use here are ‘culturally appropriate framework,’” Juvik elaborated. “A simple story I hear from teachers all the time is ‘We’re told that the kids can’t read. But as soon as we give them something to read on a subject that they’re familiar with, they can connect their own knowledge to what is written on the subject, and suddenly, they’re readers. You can hold their attention.’”

Juvik plans on using programs such as Na Pua No’eau and Upward Bound as starting points to stimulate young Hawaiians interested in the STEM disciplines and then, perhaps, those programs can become outreach feeders for the STEM program.

“Why reinvent the wheel when we have the existing infrastructure already?” she said.

Sing added that some fundamental myths and misconceptions have to be overcome to make STEM a success.

“There’s a myth that certain people don’t have the ability in math,” he said. “The reality is that it is the lack of ability in the people who are teaching it who have not designed courses in a way that people can understand.

“We were teaching a class in math and the concepts of sine-cosine came out of lauhala weaving patterns,” he said. “I couldn’t believe it. And true-false concepts came out of a maze that this mathematician created. He was teaching college-level math concepts to seventh and eighth graders, putting the concepts into a type of venue that they can relate to to make them more relevant and easy to understand.

“So by providing them with these kinds of learning situations in math and science, we’re hoping that the elementary school and high school kids start thinking about it and as a result, start taking classes in those areas,” Sing added. “Then in five years, we’ll see STEM 101 with 20 or 30 Hawaiian students.”

Juvik said that with the cooperation of faculty members of Hawaiian ancestry and those involved in Hawaiian education, other faculty in the STEM disciplines can learn to present their lessons in a way that integrates the subject matter into the holistic Hawaiian paradigm exemplified by the *ahupua’a* concept.

“I’m looking forward to strong institutional support for this program and for widespread buy-in by the faculty for the success of this program,” Juvik said. “I believe really strongly in the mission here and because success of this program will benefit the entire student body.”

(EDITOR’S NOTE: John Burnett is a public information officer.)

September 11 book/marine science initiatives highlight November Focus on UH Hilo

A book featuring Hawai’i’s recollections of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and the latest developments in the Marine Science program are featured during the November telecasts of “Focus on UH Hilo” beginning at 8 p.m. on Channel 54.

Dr. Thom Curtis, associate professor of sociology, will appear on the November 6 show. Curtis edited the recently released book Hawai’i Remembers September 11. He will be joined by students from his senior seminar class on family violence who interviewed several of Hawai’i’s most prominent leaders for the book.

The November 20 telecast features Dr. Walt Dudley, professor of marine science/geology, who will discuss the latest developments in UH Hilo’s highly successful marine science program.

Focus on UH Hilo highlights UH Hilo programs, up and coming developments and the University’s partnerships with various community organizations.
Three special mountains

by Bill Stormont

The pu’olo were wrapped on site with care and reverence, with ti leaf as the vessel. There was kukui, and aua, blessed pa’akai and wai, and other offerings of our land. Each was placed at a site that called out. They seemed incongruent, but right and proper. We hugged, shed a tear, and laughed. We grew closer.

For a week in early September, a group of 10 representing Mauna Kea visited the “sky islands” and surrounding deserts of Southern Arizona (Ka Lono Hanakahi, September 2002). Facilitating the trip was Guy Kaulukukui, vice president for cultural studies at the Bishop Museum, who was joined by Arthur Hoke, Mauna Kea Management Board chair, Mauna Kea Ranger Kimo Pihana, Jim Kennedy of the Gemini Observatory, Paul Coleman, UH Institute for Astronomy, myself, and Kahu Ku Mauna members Ululani Sherlock, Kihalani Springer, Larry Kimura, and Ed Stevens.

We went to gain an understanding of the extent to which cultural protocols have been developed and implemented at these sites, and to learn how and to what extent the enterprise of astronomy was interacting with the nations having an interest on the lands of Ioligam (Kitt Peak) and Dzil nchaa si’an (Mt. Graham). We visited each mountain, met with observatory staff, and met with members of the Tohono O’odham and San Carlos Apache nations, on whose traditional lands these facilities now sit.

While we learned that there are no formal protocols in place, our interactions were hugely enriching. As Kitt Peak sits on the O’odham reservation, there is a direct relationship with the astronomy enterprise, including a perpetual lease to the National Science Foundation, and mechanisms for tribal employment and handcraft display and sales. At Mt. Graham, the situation differs, as the site is within the Coronado National Forest, and astronomy exists there under permit from the federal government. As of our visit, there was no formal connection between the land managers, astronomy, and the San Carlos Apache. Biologically speaking, Mt. Graham offers a parallel to Mauna Kea, as the area is habitat for the Mt. Graham Red Squirrel, a federally listed endangered species. At Kitt Peak there are no environmental issues of this magnitude.

We shared with our hosts what we were involved in, working toward development of appropriate cultural protocols to be observed on Mauna Kea. We also shared the management structure recently put in place at UH Hilo with the Office of Mauna Kea Management, and the history that brought about its creation.

On our final day, the contingent made a presentation at the UA American Indian Language Development Institute.

Paul Coleman presented work he is doing to research traditional Hawaiian names for stellar objects. Larry Kimura shared the Mauna Kea Astronomy Education Center’s planning effort and the innovative concept of melding the scientific and cultural virtues of Mauna Kea. Kimo Pihana shared his perspective on Mauna Kea as a maka’aainana, practitioner, and Mauna Kea ranger. Each of us spoke, and all shared how Mauna Kea was special to us.

The common thread binding us all, traveler and host, was the deep care and respect for each of these three special mountains. The level of sharing was inspiring, something that struck each of us, looking both within ourselves and beyond. As the week progressed we were comforted by and appreciative of the ease with which our hosts were able to share their knowledge and feelings about these same issues we are grappling with on Mauna Kea. These are not necessarily easy matters to discuss openly.

Which is why the offerings we made, in the form of the pu’olo, ti leaf bundles assembled with care and reverence, felt right — pono — on Kitt Peak, on a rock outcrop, amidst pinyon pine and oak, and on Mt. Graham at the base of spruce and fir trees, near a site long used for traditional gatherings. Incongruous, but not out of place, because of the spirit of the offering, the spirit of sharing.

(Editor’s note: Bill Stormont is director, Office of Mauna Kea Management.)
Hawai‘i’s diversity: a global model for cooperation?

by Ken Hupp

Hawai‘i’s diversity in the midst of an increasingly homogeneous world was a hot topic of discussion during a recent session of the International Graduate College. In fact, UH Hilo Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Steve Worche, found his presentation to be just as popular as the aloha shirts and local tees that he passed out during the session.

The event, which annually attracts the outstanding advanced doctoral students worldwide, who are in their final stages of dissertations, was held September 1-11, 2002 at the Schloss Riesenburger Castle on the outskirts of Gunzburg, Germany. The theme of this year’s gathering was “Human Violence.”

The school is the collective creation of several European universities, including the University of Jena in Germany, Kent University in Canterbury, England, Van Catholic University at Louvain University in Belgium, and the University of Berne in Switzerland. The institutions pooled National Science Foundation (NSF) grants from their respective countries to set up the special school.

From those who apply, a limited number are accepted on the basis of their academic achievements, and are accompanied by the psychology faculty of their respective institutions. The students and faculty are joined by an international guest faculty of five to six professors who receive special invitations from the board of directors.

Joining Worche at this year’s gathering were faculty from Penn State, the University of Montreal, Stanford University, and the University of Michigan. All participants live and learn in the castle during the entire session.

“It’s a unique kind of graduate situation with the best students from the best universities in Europe and other destinations,” Worche said. “Every professor dreams of working with the cream of the crop, and that’s what this gathering was all about.”

During the session, the visiting professors discussed their research, related topics of interest and theories under development. The students then convened into working groups headed by the visiting professors to develop theories or research projects that the students can work on collectively for the rest of the year. They also consulted individually with the guest faculty, who critiqued their projects and discussed various issues.

Worche’s presentation focused on the issues of social identity, development of identity, and how these issues impact the likelihood of violence. These factors are all closely related to the events going on today, but were of particular interest to the students, from predominantly European universities.

“One of the things they talked about is how Europe is slowly dividing into smaller and smaller countries along ethnic lines,” Worche said. “You have the Balkans, which used to be Yugoslavia, as opposed to five or six different countries that are more ethnically homogenous. The Czech Republic and Slovakia is another example, from which used to be Czechoslovakia and of course, the former Soviet Union, now having been divided into multiple ethnic states.”

Worche noted the issue of ethnic identity in the world and how it will define future international relations has become very critical. Germany, for example, is paying people of German ancestry residing in Russia to return to their homeland. He says some fear that Germany may want to claim a portion of Poland, because there is a German concentration in the western part of the country.

“Against this trend, the U.S. remains one country with an ethnically diverse population, with Hawai‘i the poster child of ethnic diversity,” Worche said. “The students were fascinated by this and wanted to know why ethnic diversity works in Hawai‘i, but not other places.”

The discussion of this issue kept Worche busy as eight of the approximately 30 graduate students chose to network with him. “Let’s say I was joyfully overburdened,” Worche said.

Worche sees some fascinating research questions being explored as a result of the dialogue that was initiated by his presentation and subsequent discussions with students. Among them are the issues of defining ethnicity and the importance of homeland to an ethnic group.

“When you look at the conflict in the Middle East involving Israel, the homeland issue is very relevant,” Worche said. “It’s a different story on the U.S. mainland where the indigenous people have essentially been wiped out and nearly everyone is an immigrant whose first generation in the U.S. often dates back less than 200 years.”

Homeland becomes a critical issue in Hawai‘i because of...
The UH Hilo campaign for HIUW; how you can help and support the Big Island community

by Dr. Margaret Haig

Faculty, students and staff are encouraged to give generously to the Hawai‘i Island United Way (HIUW) campaign for 2002. Why? Because we all benefit and this is a tangible way to support our community — our neighbors and our families.

Hawai‘i island has some amazing statistics, if you believe the newspaper: highest amount of crystal meth usage in the state; high number of families living in poverty; rates of unemployment that are higher than the state average; high incidences of alcohol and drug abuse reported; high incidences of domestic and family violence; numbers of schools cited for “low performing” schools under the Federal “No Child Left Behind” act. The list goes on.

On the bright side, what is it about the Big Island community that attracts people to live here? Its pristine beauty, the quality of life in a small town, the learning laboratory and the many microclimates of the island, our many cultures and our diversity, the arts, the music, the dance and ‘ohana of our land, and our caring for our neighbors and our community are the many reasons.

What is common among us all is that there is an enduring sense of community that exists here, to nurture and support us all. The community is larger than the UH Hilo community; it is our island and our love and respect for the land and the people.

How can we support this Big Island community?

The answer is simple: by donating to the Hawai‘i Island United Way. Every penny of the money raised on this island stays here. Ninety-eight percent of the money raised goes directly into programs that benefit you, your family and neighbors. One out of every two people benefit directly from programs supported by HIUW.

What if you can only donate a little?

Every little bit helps. Even a small donation can feed a homeless family, can provide needed health services, can support families in their time of need.

Please bring your donation card to your Unit Secretary or directly to Margaret Haig, HIUW chair, at CCECS, Campus Center 313.

(Editor’s note: Dr. Margaret Haig is dean, CCECS, and 2002 UH Hilo HIUW chair.)

Hawai‘i diversity
Continued from page 4

its people’s connection to the land. Worchel notes that those who consider themselves protectors of the land are concerned with passing it on to the family’s next generation. Those who have no homeland tend to view it as more of a commodity to be bought and sold.

“The students were totally fascinated with the differences between their own situation, as opposed to the U.S. and Hawai‘i,” Worchel said. “This has generated interest in looking at models of inter-group relations to see if creating one group of diverse people facilitates them getting along, or whether this is better accomplished through smaller groups with recognizable boundaries and increased relationships between these groups.”

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

Ka Lono Hanakahi is published by the Office of University Relations on the first of the month during the academic year for the faculty and staff of the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. News and submissions are welcome. Deadlines are on the fifteenth of each month for the following first of the month publication. Contact Alyson Kakugawa-Leong, Director Media Relations, College Hall 9; (808) 974-7642 or email alyson@hawaii.edu.
**Hats off to...**

**Manu Aluli Meyer**, Assistant Professor of Education, was a visiting scholar at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Australia this summer working with aboriginal educators and scholars where she lectured extensively on indigenous epistemology. Additionally, Meyer served as keynote speaker at the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement conference held in Waikiki. She spoke on “The Status of Native Hawaiian Education.”

**Terrance Jalbert**, Associate Professor of Finance, recently had the following published: “Controlling Strategy Implementation: A Balanced Scorecard for Multinational Organizations,” Journal of Corporate Accounting and Finance; “The Hawai‘i Cruise Company,” The Journal of the International Academy for Case Studies; and “Hawai‘i’s American Trading Company, Ltd,” The Journal of Case Studies. Additionally, he was honored with the Distinguished Research Award by the Allied Academies Association.

**Peter Mills**, Associate Professor of Anthropology, had an article on “Neo in Oceania: Foreign Vessels Owned by Hawaiian Chiefs before 1830” accepted to the peer review series Journal of Pacific History. Last month, he presented a paper on “The Search for Ned Gurney, Botany Bay Man” at the annual meetings of the Society for Hawaiian Archaeology. Mills also participated in two other symposia, one dealing with the establishment of standards for Cultural Impact Studies in Hawai‘i, and the other with establishing an archaeological collection facility for the Island of Kaua‘i.

**Catherine Becker**, Assistant Professor of Communication, and **Steve Worchel**, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, were invited to serve three-year terms on the Healing Island Roundtable, a group comprised of concerned citizens and leaders from a cross section of segments of the Island of Hawai‘i committed to supporting efforts to improve health and the quality of life on the island. Becker is a founding member of the roundtable, which is an operating body of Five Mountains Hawai‘i, Inc. whose mission is to “promote and sustain the natural, social, and economic assets of our Healing Island Community.”

**Hirokuni Masuda**, Assistant Professor of Japanese, had his paper on “Narrative Representation Theory: The Macrostructure in I-Language” published in Discourse Processes: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 34 (1), from Lawrence Earbaum, London. The paper discusses that the faculty of human language contains a specific linguistic module for narrative superstructure, which has been universally attested in world languages.

**Kenith Simmons**, Professor of English, had her poems “B’rei Sheit” and “Every Bush Burns With a Flame that Consumes Not” accepted for publication in the South African journal Jewish Affairs.

**Linda Marie Golian-Lui**, Director, Library, has been appointed the American Library Association Councilor for the Hawaiian Library Association. She will be responsible for representing and communicating Hawaiian school, public and academic library concerns and issues at the national American Library Association meetings.

**Thom Curtis**, Associate Professor of Sociology, last month presented a workshop on “The Therapist’s Role in Educating Ecclesiastic Leaders: Appropriate and Inappropriate Responses to Child Abuse” in Salt Lake City, Utah, to the annual conference of the Asso-
Hats off
Continued from page 6

Ron Gordon, Professor of Communication, had his paper “The Question of Media Violence in the USA” published in the Summer 2002 issue of Human Communication. The paper was originally presented at a communication convention in the summer of 2001 in Tokyo, Japan.

Shuguang Li, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, had a paper on “Primitive Roots for Composite Numbers” published in New Aspects of Analytic Number Theory, RIMS Kokyuroku 1274, which is a book of research papers collected from an international conference on analytic number theory. The paper was co-authored by Carl Pomerance.

Richard Crowe, Professor of Astronomy, and Alice Kawakami, Associate Professor of Education, attended the second annual Minority University Initiative Partnership Conference hosted by NASA’s Office of Space Science, and held in Washington, D.C. in September. Each gave an oral presentation detailing progress and highlights of the New Opportunities Through Minority Initiatives in Space Science (NOMISS) project. Kawakami’s presentation, focusing on the cultural aspects and perspectives of NOMISS, was delivered to senior administrators at NASA headquarters.

Raina Ivanova, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, had her paper “On the skew-symmetric curvature operator and its applications to both the Riemannian and Information geometrics” published in Review Bulletin of Calcutta Mathematical Society. The Calcutta Mathematical Society is the oldest mathematical society in Asia.

Wayne Miyamoto, Professor of Art, received a grant from the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts for 2002-03 for the 2002 Pacific States Biennial National Print Exhibition, which is currently on display in the Campus Center Gallery. Additionally, he is participating in the Global Matrix International traveling exhibition originating at Purdue University. The 78 works in the exhibition represent 19 countries and were selected from over 1,500 works representing 33 countries.

Michael Marshall, Associate Professor of Art, is currently participating in a group show at the Wailoa Art Center in Hilo.

John Gersting, Professor of Computer Science, attended a training session at the invitation of Microsoft Corporation in August on C# and Microsoft.NET, a new Microsoft software development language and framework. The “C# BOOT Camp,” held on the Microsoft campus in Redmond, Washington, brought together a number of industry and research personnel, including a small group of academics for intensive exposure to new technologies.

Larry Kimura, Assistant Professor of Hawaiian/Hawaiian Studies and Research Planner, MKAEC, served as keynote speaker at the Hake Mele Queen Lili‘uokalani Hawaiian Composition Workshop held in September at the Naniloa Hotel in Hilo. He also participated in the panels, “What Makes a Composition Hawaiian; Where is Hawaiian Composition Going?” Addi-
Hats off
Continued from page 7

Bill Stormont, Director, Office of Mauna Kea Management, and Larry Kimura recently returned from a visit to Kitt Peak and Mount Graham, Arizona as participants in the Bishop Museum/OMKM Hawaiian Culture Protocol Project for Mauna Kea. The trip’s purpose was to learn the extent to which cultural protocols have been developed and employed where astronomy facilities have been developed, and to learn first-hand the issues and challenges being faced by the administrative bodies of the two observatory sites and the respective Indian nations. The Mauna Kea contingent made a group presentation at the American Indian Language Development Institute of the University of Arizona’s Department of Linguistics, Stormont discussed the role and function of OMKM, and Kimura made a presentation on the Mauna Kea Astronomy Education Center. (see related story on page 3)

Michael West, Associate Professor of Astronomy and Research Planner, MKAEC, has been invited to serve as a reviewer on the upcoming NASA Theory Grants Program Review, which will convene in Washington, D.C., November 5-7, 2002.

Celebrity study rooms promote learning at UH Hilo Library

by Ken Hupp

As academic libraries accelerate their expansion into virtual space, providing cutting edge technology and access to increasingly sophisticated on-line resources, they continue to offer a physical and social environment where students can explore the world of knowledge, find inspiration and share their ideas.

Meeting these dual challenges is no small task for library staff, especially during a period of lean budgets. The staff at the UH Hilo Mookini Library has taken a proactive approach this fall to creating a learning environment that is supportive of the diversified student learner, and dedicated to meeting the student’s needs as its first priority.

Students visiting the Mookini Library can now meet in one of the six “Celebrity Study Rooms.” The Library staff, utilizing American Library Association (ALA) READ posters, has created six student-friendly study rooms to help facilitate the collaborative learning process. These include: the Tara Dakides Room; Yo-Yo Ma Room; Marion Jones Room; Rob Schneider Room; Ani di Franco Room; and Shaquille O’Neal Room.

Each room is equipped with a chalkboard, table with up to eight chairs, and a brightly colored poster featuring the celebrity for whom the room is named. Rooms can be reserved in advance or on a walk-in basis, to provide students with a meeting place for study groups or to work on projects.

The ALA READ posters have inspired the Library’s Reading Promotion Team and the Graphics Department to produce a series of local READ posters. They include Hilo professional surfer Noah Johnson who is depicted reading a book of his choosing in front of Honoli’i, the popular Hilo surf break. These locally made READ posters remind library users that reading inspires great people from all fields and contributes to their life-long success and well-being.
Spotlight
Continued from page 1

newspaper, and I also assisted quite a bit in the development of what was called the Lowndes County Freedom Democratic Party.

“Being in SNCC, I ran into a lot of people who were a part of the UAW, the United Auto Workers,” he added. “There was also an old lady who was a sharecropper. She used to ask me the same question every day, ‘What college did you come from?’ And I didn’t come from one. So then, talking to the UAW workers, they said, ‘Well, you know, Herb, this voter registration of sharecroppers that you’re doing, it’s just like organizing unions. And you really should think of going to the Industrial and Labor Relations School at Cornell.

“I applied, I got a scholarship and I went.”

Maturity was not a problem when Pitts entered the Ivy League school in Ithaca, New York. He was 23 then, and finished the ambitious curriculum in industrial and labor relations with a focus on labor economics and a creative writing minor in two years. He immediately went to work in higher education at the Polytechnic Institute of New York. While in the Big Apple, he pursued his masters degree at the Graduate Faculty Center for the New School for Social Research.

“Basically, I started out in human resources,” he said. “The Cornell curriculum included an extensive amount of law courses, including constitutional law, labor law, equal employment opportunity law, which from my perspective, is a part of labor law. Because of that, certain positions opened because of [Lyndon] Johnson’s signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964. And it was hard for schools to find people who had a civil rights background who were the right fit for that kind of job. So because I had a civil rights background and a college degree from a program that dealt with some of these issues, opportunities were open to me.”

One opportunity that opened was at Fordham University, a prestigious Jesuit institution in New York City.

“It was a great first job because it was the first job where I was strictly dealing with AA instead of HR,” Pitts said. “Every position before I was an HR analyst and AA was a part of the job. I also got to teach political science there.”

Pitts’ last position before accepting his post at UH Hilo was at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

“We won all kinds of awards there,” he said. “It wasn’t easy in the beginning, but in time, I think people felt more comfortable with me. Then, when I was ready to leave, they didn’t want me to go. And that’s a good feeling. And I’m pretty sure I can develop that kind of feeling here.”

Pitts, who writes poetry and short stories when he can find the time, is the single father of two daughters, both gifted. The elder daughter, Alexandria, is 16-years-old and a freshman at Cal State-Northridge. She designed UWP’s EEO/AA Web page, which is both beautifully and sensibly organized. The younger daughter, Zulekha, 14, is a freshman at a music magnet high school in New Jersey where Pitts’ sister is vice principal.

As for his new job and locale, Pitts is generally positive, with one understandable caveat considering the unseasonably wet summer and early fall.

“I like it here,” he said. “I don’t like the rain (laughs). It wakes me up in the morning. But I like the people. I like the friendliness. It’s been a lot of work since I’ve been on board, but I’ve been expecting that.

“I feel like I will be able to create something here,” he added. “In that sense, it sort of reminds me of Fordham because I was the first full-time (EEO/AA) person there and I’m the first full-time person here. I can really mold something here, basically under the design that the chancellor wants.”

In 1957, six local high school students pair up for a school dance, and experience a variety of adventures before they graduate and head off to college. Some go away to the mainland, and some remain in Hawai’i. So is the beginning of “Stew Rice,” a play written by Ed Sakamoto and guest directed by UH Hilo and UH Manoa graduate Dr. Justina Mattos. The UH Hilo Drama production runs November 15, 16, 22, and 23 at 7:30 p.m., and on November 17 at 2 p.m. in the UH Hilo Theatre.

The six characters are reunited in 1978. How have they changed during their 20 years apart? Can they still relate? Are they still “local,” and do they want to be? Poignant and funny, this two-act comedy examines what happens to friendship when time and distance have their way — and more importantly, what happens when someone moves away and can no longer relate to “home” in the same way.

Tickets are $12 general, $8 faculty/staff/youth, and free to UH Hilo/HawCC students.
Approximately 50 members of the Hawai’i Island Palm Society met at UH Hilo in September to tour the palm and cycad gardens. A special attraction this fall is that a number of rare cycads from China, Australia and Central America has produced male and female cones, an event that occurs only once every few years.

The UH Hilo botanical gardens are recognized as having one of the most extensive public displays of cycads in the State of Hawai’i with nearly 57 species on display.

Helen Thomas visits UH Hilo!

Chancellor Tseng presents Journalist Helen Thomas with UH Hilo gifts at a media luncheon held in her honor on September 25.

A crowd of more than 500 fans turn out for Thomas’ public talk on the Library lanai.

Approximately 50 members of the Hawai’i Island Palm Society met at UH Hilo in September to tour the palm and cycad gardens. A special attraction this fall is that a number of rare cycads from China, Australia and Central America has produced male and female cones, an event that occurs only once every few years. The UH Hilo botanical gardens are recognized as having one of the most extensive public displays of cycads in the State of Hawai’i with nearly 57 species on display.
Vulcans receive top *USA Today* honors

by Kelly Leong

Completing a college degree while participating in athletics is a monumental, if not difficult task. But the UH Hilo Athletic program is proving that challenge can be met.

Last month, UH Hilo displayed the uniqueness of its campus environment by receiving top honors in graduation rates for student-athletes from USA Today. The Vulcan athletes finished among the top two in three of the categories used to measure athletes’ success in the classroom for the 1995 freshmen class. The Vulcans were first in graduation rate (100 percent) and in the difference between athletes and the overall student enrollment (plus 70 percent), and second in improvement from 1994 (57 percent increase). UH Hilo received a $25,000 award from USA Today through the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

“This award demonstrates our commitment to making sure our student-athletes achieve their educational goals, while competing in intercollegiate athletics,” said Chancellor Rose Tseng. “Although athletics is an important component of this University, our student-athletes must always be students first.”

Athletic Director Kathleen McNally added that it is a combination of factors that has given the University this distinguished honor.

“A strong supportive faculty, a quiet and peaceful community as well as an environment that is conducive to learning, the living, learning laboratories that are unique to our University, and wonderful support services throughout the campus are the critical components needed to assist in a student’s academic career,” McNally said. “UH Hilo offers all of this, and more.”

Besides classes and study halls, athletes face year-round training, daily practices, competition and travel. Lost class time can quickly add up. A contest on O‘ahu, for instance, typically takes up a minimum of two class days, while a mainland trip requires four days of travel, not to mention the event.

“That alone speaks volumes about the type of student-athletes we have in our programs and the commitment they make to their education,” McNally said.

An important component of the graduation equation is the availability of additional academic assistance for student-athletes once they complete their eligibility. The existence of a strong fifth-year completion of degree program has also assisted the Vulcan athlete in completing his degree.

“We recognize the importance of an education and stand ready to help our student-athletes earn their college degrees,” McNally said. “Our fifth-year program offers that assistance.”

Fifth-year students not only benefit from the academic assistance, but they in turn assist the Athletic Department in various capacities. They remain an integral part of the office by serving on coaching staffs, assisting at events and working in various offices.

“A total team effort made this recognition possible,” Tseng said. “This is a great example of student athletes, coaches and faculty working together as a team, and their combined efforts produced a national championship in the classroom.”

(Editor’s note: Kelly Leong is sports information director.)

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Masaoka, Miller added to baseball coaching staff

by Kelly Leong

A former major league pitcher, a top draft selection and two former UH Hilo baseball players have joined Head Coach Joey Estrella’s staff.

“Their experience and knowledge will be a welcome addition to our program,” Estrella said.

Heading the list is Onan Masaoka. A third-round pick of the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1995, the left-handed pitcher from Waiakea High School spent two years in the major leagues as a relief pitcher and five years in the minor league system.

David Miller, the 1995 first-round draft pick of the Cleveland Indians, was an outfielder/first baseman in the minor league programs of the Cleveland Indians (1995-2000), Atlanta Braves (2000-01) and Cincinnati Reds (2001-02).

A collegian at Clemson University, 1995 was a banner year in which Miller was selected to five all-American teams and the all-Atlantic Coast Conference team. He was also the South Carolina Athlete of the Year and a Smith Finalist for College Player of the Year.

Miller’s coaching experience includes Clemson’s hitting coach and the Chestnut Hill Academy program’s pitching, hitting and fielding coach.

Returning to coach at their alma mater are Darin Miyake (1998-2001) and Horace Gray (1981-82).

The Vulcan baseball team opens its season against Arizona State University on January 16, 2003 at Wong Stadium, 6 p.m. For season tickets information, please call x47606.
# Campus Events

## November

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Holiday: Election Day</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Cuarteto Xallapan, 9 a.m., PB8A Rehearsal Room</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Thom Curtis on “Focus on UH Hilo,” 8 p.m., Channel 54</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Vulcan basketball vs. Alumni, 7 p.m., Civic, Admission</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Holiday: Veterans’ Day</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>“I” removal deadline: instructor to Records Office</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Last day to apply for credit-by-exam for fall</td>
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<tr>
<td>15, 16</td>
<td>“Stew Rice,” 7:30 p.m., Theatre, Admission</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>“Stew Rice,” 2 p.m., Theatre, Admission</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Dr. Walt Dudley on “Focus on UH Hilo,” 8 p.m., Channel 54</td>
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<tr>
<td>22, 23</td>
<td>“Stew Rice,” 7:30 p.m., Theatre, Admission</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Last day to submit credit-by-exam results to Records Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Holiday: Thanksgiving</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Non-instructional day</td>
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<tr>
<td>29, 30</td>
<td>Vulcan basketball in Hilo Shootout, 7:30 p.m., Civic, Admission</td>
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