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Community Partnerships

Community connections, partnerships, and collaboration are central to the mission of the College. Hawai'i Community College is responsive to the needs of the community and works proactively with the community on workforce training and economic development. Advisory councils in each of our training areas advise faculty of training needs and new developments in the field. These councils are listed under "Curricula and Programs." In addition, the Chancellor of the College seeks advice from community and business leaders on ways the College can assist in economic development for the community. The College's federally-funded programs focusing on workforce development/training also have community-based advisory committees that guide the development of those projects.

Chancellor's Community Advisory Committee

D.N. Kaimana Barcarse, West Hawai'i Regional Director for Community Engagement and Resources, Kamehameha Schools
Diane Chadwick, Director of Community Philanthropy, Hawai'i Community Foundation
Gerald De Mello, Community Liaison and Capital Improvement, University of Hawai'i at Hilo
Margaret "Peggy" Farias, W.H. Shipman, Ltd.
Lee-Ann Heely, West Hawai'i Community Health Center
Kirstin Kahaloa, President, Hawaii Island Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce; and Portfolio Manager, Kamehameha Schools
Wendy Laros, Executive Director, Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce
Dwayne Mukai, Investment Professional, Mukai Investment Group, LLC
Audrey Takamine, Takamine Construction
Dwight Takamine
Toby Taniguchi, President and COO, KTA Superstores
Eric Tanouye, President, Green Point Nurseries
Ross Wilson, Owner, Current Events
Kuhao Zane, Creative Director and COO, Sig Zane Designs and SZKAIAO, LLC

Alumni of the Year Award

The 2023 Hawai'i Community College Alumni of the Year is **Sally Ancheta**, a Liberal Arts and Accounting graduate.

Sally credits her Hawai'i CC experience with being a major turning point that put her life on a positive trajectory. She thrived at Hawai'i CC, earning associate degrees in accounting and liberal arts in 1995 and 1997, and was a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. She later earned her bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo.

Sally has built a career in public service to the Hawai'i Island community, working at Goodwill Industries of Hawai'i, the American Lung Association of Hawai'i, and the Hawai'i Public Health Institute (formerly the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i).

She is currently the coordinator for the East Hawai'i Drug-Free Coalition working anti-vaping, anti-underage drinking, and anti-fentanyl programs in local schools. Sally has also volunteered many hours as a member of community boards, and has maintained her connection to Hawai'i CC over the years as a guest speaker in our Human Services program.

Mahalo Award

Fulfilling our mission to provide high-quality, accessible education to the residents of Hawai'i Island would not be possible without the support of the many partner organizations and advocates who generously offer their time, talent and treasures with us. To formally recognize community-based organizations and advocates for their support, Hawai'i Community College established the Mahalo Award in 1995.

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In 2023, Hawai‘i CC recognized two Mahalo Award Recipients: Janice Ikeda, Executive Director of Vibrant Hawai‘i; and the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) in the Department of Land and Natural resources.

Janice Ikeda is a Hawai‘i CC alum who credits her enrollment and success at Hawai‘i CC with being a major part of turning her life around and putting her on a higher education and career path that has led her to where she is today.

After graduating from Hawai‘i CC, she earned her bachelor’s degree from UH Hilo and Master’s degree from Gonzaga University.

She has spent her career at Hawai‘i Island community organizations’ Aha Pūnana Leo; Hawai‘i Island United Way; County of Hawai‘i; and Hope Services Hawai‘i, working to make Hawai‘i Island a better place.

Since 2018, she has been executive director of Vibrant Hawai‘i, a nonprofit collective impact organization that has been convening Hawai‘i Island communities through resilience hubs, supporting digital literacy, distributing grants and micro-investments, and many more. This includes supporting Hawai‘i CC and its students through grants that have benefited the Ēlama scholarship program; the Dragon Den and Learning to Thrive programs at the Kō Education Center; Pālanui reforestation; and trauma informed care, mental health first aid, digital literacy, and food and computer distribution during COVID that helped Hawai‘i CC students.

In 2015-2016, the **Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW)** was interested in adding the land division parcels above the Hawai‘i Community College - Pālanui campus to the forest reserve system. However, DOFAW lacked the capacity to expand its operations to include these parcels. Meanwhile, Hawai‘i CC - Pālanui had recently moved to its current location and there was interest in having a collaborative management system where DOFAW, in partnership with Hawai‘i CC - Pālanui, could appropriately manage the remnant forest behind the campus.

As a result of these mutual interests, DOFAW and Hawai‘i CC - Pālanui entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish a framework for their partnership in restoring and managing the Pālanui Forest Preserve. The MOU allowed both parties to acquire funds and support for the project, and outlined the responsibilities for the restoration and management of this forest.

Since the establishment of the MOU, DOFAW and Hawai‘i CC - Pālanui have worked closely together to restore and manage the 706-acre forest reserve. Their collaboration has resulted in the construction of a temporary fence to protect Wiliwili trees from goats and conducting aerial surveys to assist in planning of the preserve. This partnership has served as a model for successful collaboration between government agencies and educational institutions in the management of natural resources and created a living laboratory for students and the community.



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