

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII' INFORMATIONAL BRIEFING



Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Lower and Higher Education

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David Lassner
President

Chair Woodson and members of the House Committee on Lower and Higher Education, thank you for this opportunity to provide an update about the University of Hawai'i (UH) as we begin the new year and the 2020 Legislative Session.

As the sole provider of public higher education in Hawai'i, UH is committed to improving the social, economic, and environmental well-being of current and future generations. In 2018, the UH reviewed and updated its Strategic Directions to guide priorities through 2021:

- Hawai'i Graduation Initiative (HGI)
- Hawai'i Innovation Initiative (HI2)
- 21st Century Facilities (21CF)
- Mission Focused System (MFS)
- High Performing System (HPS)

Additional information regarding these initiatives, and the productivity and efficiency measures associated with these outcomes can be found on UH's website: <http://blog.hawaii.edu/strategicdirections/>

Some highlights for the past year include:

- As evidenced by the increase in degrees awarded, the on-time graduation rate for UH-Mānoa students has doubled in the last decade. The four-year graduation rate for the class of 2019 was 36.6%, up from 17.5% in 2010. The six-year graduation rate reached 60.5%, which is on par with the national average of 60%. Other UH campuses are also on upward trajectories.
- The Hawai'i Promise Program at the Community Colleges (CC) continues to be a success, enabling economically challenged students to participate in higher education, which is the best path to economic and social advancement. For the 2018-2019 academic year, UH awarded \$1,640,463, assisting 1,378 UHCC students who were eligible for the Hawai'i Promise Scholarship with the average award of \$1,190 per recipient. The positive impacts are clear: on average, Hawai'i Promise students earn more credits with a higher GPA than other students.
- UH extramural funding for FY2019 was the highest ever other than during the boost of the ARRA, when UH contributed to economic recovery by bringing in a substantial amount of federal stimulus dollars.
- The UH Cancer Center received a \$6.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health that matches the \$6.5 million appropriation by the 2019 Legislature to construct a new Clinical Research Center. This first of its kind facility will focus on early phase clinical trials which will represent the

cutting edge of cancer treatment and provide access to advanced care for cancer patients in Hawai'i without the need for travel to the mainland. This will reduce physical and emotional hardship in provision of access to high-quality cancer care for Hawai'i patients who lack substantial wealth and are unable to afford mainland care.

- UH Maui College was designated as an NSA National Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) in cyber defense education for its four-year applied business and information technology program. UH Maui College joins UH West O'ahu, Leeward CC, Honolulu CC and UH Mānoa as NSA Centers of Academic Excellence in a critical area for Hawai'i that provides high-quality jobs for local residents.
- UH's new Hawai'i Data Science Institute (HI-DSI) is already achieving remarkable positive outcomes including a \$1 million Major Research Instrumentation grant from NSF for a new cluster optimized for machines learning/AI, partnering with a local engineering & science firm for a \$1 million Small Business Innovation Research grant, a \$4 million collaboration with UT Austin on developing software gateways for e-science, and a new educational data science project with Chaminade. HI-DSI is also developing curriculum modules (roughly one-credit chunks) that can be incorporated into existing credit and non-credit courses or used for new courses, including to create new curricula for certificates, minors, and degrees.
- As the host and presenting sponsor for this year's Society for Advancement of Chicanos, Hispanics, and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Diversity in STEM Conference, UH welcomed a record-breaking audience of over 5,000 attendees to the Hawai'i Convention Center. The 46-year-old conference is the largest and most diverse gathering of underrepresented minority STEM leaders, professionals, scientists, and students in the nation. SACNAS also provided an estimated \$23 million in positive economic impact for Hawai'i.
- The Institute for Astronomy (IfA) has received a \$30 million contract to continue its operation of the NASA Infrared Telescope Facility on Maunakea for the five-year period from 2019 to 2024. IfA continues to lead the world in the development of the HAWAII family of infrared detectors for astronomy, with the four Megapixel version on the James Webb Space Telescope and the 16 Megapixel array selected for NASA's next major infrared space observatory.
- The Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope (DKIST) on Haleakalā will begin scientific operations later this year; IfA has built two of the five major first-light instruments for DKIST. The Pan-STARRS and ATLAS sky surveys, developed and built by IfA and funded by NASA, are the world

leaders in detected Near-Earth Objects (NEOs), comets, and potentially hazardous asteroids. The UH 2.2-meter telescope on Maunakea is undergoing a major update, with NSF awards to install new mirror technology and roboticize the telescope.

- UH continues to show a proven ability to deliver on-time, on-budget completion of its capital improvement projects through the flexibility provided by lump-sum funding (renew, improve and modernize projects); increased use of the design-build delivery process that maintains a single contract for both the design and construction of a project with a fixed cost and reduces project delivery time up to 66%; and continued implementation of technological and process improvements such as the Hawaii Electronic Procurement System (HePS), an online procurement system, and eBuilder, a web-based construction project management system, that increase operational efficiency by eliminating hard copies and duplication and utilize electronic workflow. These projects are carefully selected to maximize the efficiency of capital and operational funding through strategic integrated capital and academic planning and deliver 21st century facilities that prioritize learning and research environments and foster interdisciplinary collaboration.

Recognizing the challenges presented this Legislative Session, we are appreciative of any support that can be afforded to the UH to further our mission to improve the social, economic, and environmental well-being of current and future generations of Hawai'i. We look forward to working with the Legislature in the coming months to advance our mutual commitment to the people of our islands.