



# Kāwili Lā‘au

(To mix ingredients, drugs or medicine; pharmacist)

Volume 1, Issue 1 Spring 2009

## A Message from the Dean

# Mahalo nui loa

The vision of the UH Hilo College of Pharmacy is to improve the quality of health care in Hawaii and throughout the Pacific. Since my arrival at UH Hilo in 2006, I have had the privilege of assembling and leading an outstanding group of colleagues who are dedicated to the success of the College of Pharmacy and our students.

The past two years has been a whirlwind of milestones and growth for the program. We have welcomed two classes of 90 students into the college, and our 'ohana of faculty and staff has grown to 37.

Because of their remarkable work and commitment, the college has reached candidate status in the accreditation process from the Accrediting Council of Pharmacy Education with excellent remarks about the progress that has been made.

The College of Pharmacy has built strong relationships on the Big Island and in the statewide pharmacy community. The support our college and our students have been receiving is an extraordinary



**JOHN M. PEZZUTO**  
Ph.D., Professor and Dean

illustration of the aloha that the community and the state has for our College and our mission.

The College of Pharmacy's presence is intended to help improve health care for local populations. We have spent the past two years actively searching for ways in which our involvement will contribute to the

improvement of health care. We have identified several areas in which we can make strides to accomplish our mission.

I hope our inaugural newsletter will celebrate the College of Pharmacy's accomplishments as well as introduce our successes to potential supporters.

I am sure you will be as proud of our accomplishments as I am. I am confident that we will succeed and become a significant player in the field of pharmacy as we accomplish our mission to improve health care in Hawaii and throughout the Pacific.

## Highlights

- The Class of 2011 advanced 88 students into their second year.
- The Class of 2012 has enrolled 90 students, divided almost equally between Hawai'i residents and out-of-state residents.
- The distinguished College of Pharmacy faculty and staff has grown to 37.
- The college was awarded Candidate Accreditation Status by the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education (ACPE).
- Construction has begun on facilities to help meet accreditation requirements.

## Inside



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## History

# A successful progression

The UH Hilo College of Pharmacy has been growing at an astounding pace as it moves toward graduating its first class in 2011.

The university Board of Regents in 2004 approved the establishment of the only school in the Pacific Rim to offer a doctorate in pharmacy. The degree, also called a Pharm.D., is a professional degree requiring four years of study after completion of at least two years in a pre-pharmacy program in an accredited college or university.

The college admitted its first class of 90 students in 2007, and another class in fall 2008. Current plans call for the addition of 90 students per year as the college grows to its full four-year size. The College is interviewing students for acceptance in the class that begins in fall 2009.

Staff size also is growing, with faculty and staff now numbering 37. The goal is to have about 70 people on staff when the college is complete.

Accreditation also is an ongoing process. The college was awarded Candidate Accreditation Status during the June 2008 executive board meeting of the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education. The College's founding dean, Dr. John M. Pezzuto, Ph.D., said that is an important step to help the program address a nationwide shortage of pharmacists.

ACPE accredits all pharmacy programs in the United States through a three-step process: precandidate status for programs that haven't enrolled students, which was awarded to UH Hilo's program in 2007; candidate status, awarded to a program with students enrolled pending graduating its first class; and full accreditation, for which the College of Pharmacy is eligible and on track to attain in May 2011 when the first class of Pharm.D. students will graduate.

The college received high marks in virtually every aspect of its candidate status evaluation report in 2008, and demonstrated progress in every area since the first ACPE inspection in 2007.



Dr. Tony Wright, associate professor and chairman of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, instructs students in the Pharmaceutics laboratory.

"The College has a dynamic, long-term mission with broad coverage that was created through group processes that include faculty endorsement," the report said.

Dr. Pezzuto is proud of the College's accomplishments.

"With our growing cadre of outstanding faculty and the high-quality students who are earning acceptance here, there's no doubt in my mind that we will continue to be successful," he said.

Dr. Pezzuto assumed his duties at UH Hilo on June 1, 2006. His background includes service as an administrator and researcher for many years in the areas of pharmacy, drug discovery and natural products. Prior to settling in Hawaii, he served as dean of the College of Pharmacy, Nursing and Health Sciences at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

The College offers a unique educational experience for students, who have the opportunity to work with populations from every socio-economic class and people from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds.



## Blueprint for growth

Ground has been broken at the site of classrooms, offices, research and teaching laboratories for the College of Pharmacy.

Plans for Phase 1 call for as many as four modular buildings on a four-acre parcel in the University Park of Science and Technology near Imiloa Astronomy Center next to the College of Tropical Agriculture

and Human Resources on South Aohoku Place.

Consultants for the project are Hawaii-based KYA Design Group. The contractor is GW Construction.

The new facilities will help the college meet its accreditation requirements, while turning its attention to the next phase, which is a permanent home on the campus.

## Community support



Dr. John M. Pezzuto, center, dean of the University of Hawaii at Hilo College of Pharmacy, accepts a \$10,000 donation from Dana Psomas, left, regional manager for Walgreens' Hawaii District, and Clark Fujihara, pharmacy manager for Walgreens' Hawaii District, on Jan. 20 during a gathering of first-year pharmacy students on the campus.

## Walgreens' help adds up

Several of the College of Pharmacy's friends from Walgreens recently joined first-year pharmacy students for a casual pizza meet & greet that included significant financial announcements.

Dana Psomas, the regional manager of Walgreens Hawaii District, and Clark Fujihara, Walgreens Hawaii District pharmacy supervisor, presented a \$10,000 donation to aid efforts in increasing diversity among student pharmacists. Walgreens requires that \$2,000 of the money be given directly to a single

student in the form of a Walgreens Diversity Scholarship. The rest of the money will be used to develop, implement and support diversity programs.

Walgreens, the nation's largest pharmacy chain, has already provided \$31,500 in scholarship money to seven UH Hilo pharmacy students through the 2007-08 academic year.

The company also gave Dr. John M. Pezzuto, the College's dean, a \$20,000 installment of a \$50,000 pledge to the school's building fund.

### A special mahalo

During 2006 and 2007, a steering committee composed of pharmacist members from the Hawaii Pharmacists Association provided support to Dr. Dyanne Affonso in the College of Pharmacy's drive to attain precandidate status from the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education. The extraordinary commitment and contributions of Joy Matsuyama, Kathy Hirano, Roy Yamauchi and Ron Taniguchi helped lead to the approval of precandidate status in June 2007.

## HMSA Foundation funds technological tools

The College of Pharmacy received a \$75,506 grant from the HMSA Foundation to get the latest technology into students' hands during their first three years of study.

Students will be able to use their handheld personal digital assistants, or PDAs, to load clinical software tools that can assist with diagnostic and therapeutic questions.

"As the scope and depth of information required by pharmacy students increases, technology is more than ever a necessary tool to develop and refine their clinical skills," said Dr. Ed Fisher, the College's associate dean for academic affairs. "This generous grant from the HMSA Foundation will play a significant role in this development."

Cliff K. Cisco, HMSA senior vice president, agreed.

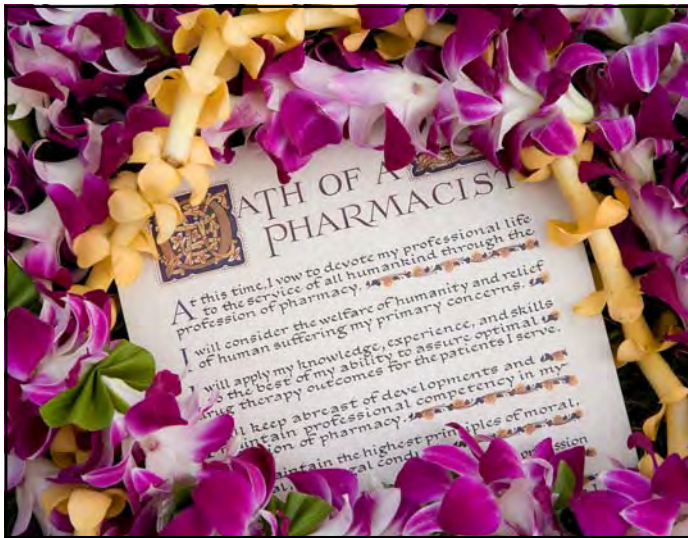
"We're very pleased to support the College of Pharmacy at UH Hilo," he said. "These PDAs will put valuable information at the fingertips of pharmacy students and will help advance the quality of health care in the community. The HMSA Foundation is proud to be supporting this effort."



The College of Pharmacy's inaugural Class of 2011 celebrates at its White Coat Ceremony in October 2007.

# The start of something BIG

A celebration of UH Hilo College of Pharmacy's first two years.



Words that mean so much to us.

Students line up to march in the Merrie Monarch Parade in downtown Hilo in April 2008.





The Class of 2012's White Coat Ceremony took place in October 2008.



Dean Pezzuto carves a turkey during a Thanksgiving gathering for students and staff at his Hilo home.



Dr. Anita Ciarleglio, assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacy Practice, leads students in a lab lesson.



First-year students enjoy pizza at a meet & greet sponsored by Walgreens in January.



Current second-year student Garret Hand works in the Pharmaceutics lab.

## Class notes

### Scholarships

- The **Hawaii Pharmacists Association** sponsored the Edmund Elhke Scholarship for 2008. Jessica Toyama was selected for the \$1,500 award.
- Quinn Taira, Rochelle Oledzki, and Jessica Toyama were selected for the **Wal-Mart** Scholarship for College of Pharmacy Students for the 2007-2008 academic year. Each student received a \$1,000 scholarship.
- Amber Duncan, Lisa Hagiwara and Veneta Tsonev were selected for the **Wal-Mart** Scholarship for College of Pharmacy Students for the 2008-2009 academic year. Each student will receive a \$1,000 scholarship.
- Ellen (aka: Annie) Loney was selected for the **Longs Drugstores** Scholarship for UH Hilo College of Pharmacy students. She will receive a \$5,000 scholarship for 2008-09 academic year.

### Available scholarships

- Native Hawaiian Health Scholarship: To apply, visit [nhhsp.org](http://nhhsp.org), call (808) 585-8944 or e-mail [lei@nhhsp.org](mailto:lei@nhhsp.org).

## Students form professional chapter

Students from the UH Hilo College of Pharmacy have created the first professional organization for pharmacy students to be based at the university. The group has formed a chapter of the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists, which represents the largest number of pharmacy students in the United States.

"Recognition from the American Pharmacists Association, which is the oldest professional pharmacists organization in America, brings us one step closer to being established as one of the top pharmacy educators in the country," said Mimi Pezzuto, faculty adviser and instructor in pharmacy. "It will help our students embrace the seriousness of their profession."

Students will be able to network with peers at other schools, educate legislators and become leaders in the community, she said.

The chapter's president is one of its founding students, Lisa Hagiwara. She is a second-year pharmacy student from Mililani on Oahu. Hagiwara received a bachelor's



"We liked APhA because we felt it would not only help us as students but also allow us to work within the community."

**Lisa Hagiwara**, UH Hilo chapter president

degree in chemistry from the University of Washington and returned to Hawai'i to get her Pharm.D. degree.

"We liked APhA because we felt it would not only help us as students but also allow us to work within the community," Hagiwara said. "We plan to start off with their suggested programs and then expand to more Hawaii-specific projects."

The new group has about 150 members. Hagiwara said she expects almost 100 percent participation as an awareness campaign continues through T-shirt sales and membership drives, under guidance from APhA.

Students can compete for scholarships from the chapter's national foundation.

Graduates can become members of other branches of the APhA, which includes more than 63,000 practicing pharmacists, pharmaceutical scientists, pharmacy students, pharmacy technicians and others interested in advancing the profession.

### Class of 2011

The inaugural Class of 2011 completed its first year in the Pharm.D. program, and produced 38 Dean's List honorees for the spring 2008 semester. They are: Adrienne Au, Tess Blankenship, Cherie Chu, Natalie Codianne, Amber Duncan, Anh Van Duong, Angelina Eustaquio, Ceslee Fukuhara, Ashley Ann Fukumae, Rovigel Gelviro, Lisa Hagiwara, Garret Hand, Amy Eiko Harvey, Ashley Hori, Elissa-Marie Kahahane, Sarah Kaufman, Oh Young Kim, Ellen Loney, Annie Mar, Ryan Mashiyama, Mandy Medina, Erika Miyahira, Nelson Nakatsu, Akemi Naruoka, Daniel Navas, Hong Phuc Ngo, Cari Niimi, Casey Ogata, Rochelle Oledzki, Mark Reeves, Enoch John Ronduen, Tiffany Santore, Rajesh Shrestha, Curtis Start, Quinn Taira, Jonathan Tam, Jessica Toyama and Veneta Tsonev.

### Class of 2012

The fall 2008 application cycle had 1,200 PharmCAS applicants. A total of 259 interviews were conducted in Hilo, Honolulu, Las Vegas and Los Angeles from December 2007 to March 2008. The Class of 2012 has seated 90 students, with about 50 percent Hawaii residents and 50 percent from other states.

Class officers have been selected to help facilitate student activities and integrate a mentoring program with first-year students.

<b>President</b>	Jessica Toyama
<b>Vice President</b>	Adrienne Au
<b>Secretary</b>	Amber Duncan
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ceslee Fukuhara
<b>Webmaster</b>	Jennifer Thoma
<b>Historians</b>	Sarah Kaufman, Trenton Teruya
<b>Delegate</b>	Curtis Start
<b>Activity Coordinators</b>	Cherie Chu Marisa Schroeder
<b>Class Liaisons</b>	Jason Braithwaite, Narmrata Trivedi

## Faculty spotlight



**Dr. Ed Fisher**

Ph.D., R.Ph.  
Professor and Associate Dean,  
Academic Affairs

Where were you born?  
Philadelphia, PA

Tell us a little about yourself and your family.

I enjoy reading science fiction and, recently, alternate history, I enjoy photography and I have a black belt in karate. My wife's name is Austin and she is a veterinarian.

What is your current position at UH Hilo College of Pharmacy?  
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of Pharmacology and Toxicology

What are your pharmaceutical interests and what is your personal research in?  
My interests include substance abuse, addiction, nutrition and CNS disorders. My personal research is in Behavioral Pharmacology.

How long have you been living on Big Island?  
Since June 2007

What you do for fun here?  
Snorkeling!

What was the oddest summer job or high school job that you had growing up?  
Karate counselor at a boys day camp, attendant at a mental hospital, accident ward clerk, shoe salesman.

How can students contact you?  
E-mail: [fishere@hawaii.edu](mailto:fishere@hawaii.edu)



**Dr. Bob Borris,**

Ph.D., FLS  
Associate Dean for Research  
and Associate Professor

Where were you born?  
Chicago

Where is your favorite place you've traveled to?

Some of my favorites over the years have been Costa Rica (especially the rainforests of the Osa Peninsula and the cloud forests at Monteverde), New Zealand (the "Southern Alps" on the South Island), and the fringe of the Kalahari Desert in South Africa.

What is your favorite color?  
Unfortunately I have very poor color vision (color blind).

What are your pharmaceutical interests and what is your personal research in?  
I am a discovery junkie who lives for research. My career has centered around the discovery of new biologically active natural products with potential for development into drugs. One of my main interests right now is to try to get our students involved in research in the college, either as volunteers or in an elective setting when the new building is ready. This will give students the opportunity to try doing research, to see if it is really something they want. The areas that I am trying to establish involve the discovery of compounds from higher plants with potential application to the chemotherapy of infectious diseases, such as drug-resistant bacteria and fungi.

What was the oddest summer job or high school job that you had growing up?  
I spent part of one summer during high school as a gravedigger's assistant.

How can students contact you?  
E-mail ([borris@hawaii.edu](mailto:borris@hawaii.edu)) always works. Response may be slow at times, but I always try to respond. My office is always open whenever I am around. If you need to see me, I will make time.

## College of Pharmacy faculty and staff

### OFFICE OF THE DEAN

- **John M. Pezzuto**, Ph.D., Dean and Professor
- **Robert Borris**, Ph.D., FLS, Associate Dean for Research and Associate Professor
- **Edward Fisher**, Ph.D., R.Ph., Professor and Associate Dean, Academic Affairs
- **Avi Fhima**, Information Technology Specialist/Webmaster
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- **Daniela Gundisch**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
- **Eugene A. Konorev**, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor
- **Ghee T. Tan**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
- **Mimi F. Pezzuto**, R.Ph., B.S., Instructor
- **Tamara Kondratyuk**, Ph.D., Research Scientist, Laboratory Manager

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- **R. Scott Holuby**, Pharm. D., BCPS, BC-ADM, Assistant Professor
- **Mark Litzinger**, R.Ph., Clinical Education Coordinator
- **Mimi F. Pezzuto**, R.Ph., B.S., Instructor
- **Erica Bernstein**, Ph.D., Instructor

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- **Donna Ohora**, B.A., Advising Specialist

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- **Amy Knehans**, MLIS, AHIP, Pharmacy/Health Sciences Librarian

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- **Sarot Cheenparacha**, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Associate, Chang Laboratory
- **Laura Marler**, B.S., Research Technician, Pezzuto Laboratory
- **Shantha Amarasinghe**, Postdoctoral Associate, Morris Laboratory
- **Beau Rostana**, Research Technician, Pezzuto Laboratory
- **Suaib Luqman**, Postdoctoral Associate, Pezzuto Laboratory

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- **Tammy Tanaka**, Secretary to Associate Dean of Research
- **Char Awa-Cockett**, Secretary to Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
- **Jean Cruz**, Secretary to Chair for Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences
- **Kristy Nakamura**, Secretary to Chair for Department of Pharmacy Practice
- **Lily Pua-Kaipo**, Office Assistant



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**Kāwili Lā'au** (To mix ingredients, drugs or medicine; pharmacist) is published four times a year by the University of Hawaii at Hilo College of Pharmacy. It is distributed to staff, donors and other friends of the College. Comments should be addressed to: **Kāwili Lā'au**, UH Hilo College of Pharmacy, 200 W. Kawili St., Hilo, HI 96720.

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