

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT WEST OAHU TO OPEN

August 20 is an exciting day for higher education in Hawaii. The long-awaited campus of the University of Hawaii at West Oahu is opening its doors, admitting its first students in the Fall 2012 semester. That's great news for students on the leeward coast and central Oahu. Having a college on this side means a much shorter commute, saving money and time for students.

If location, location, location is key, UWHO scores. Conveniently set just off the Kualakai Parkway on the Ewa plain, commuters can get on or off the freeway in just minutes. The new Kroc Center is across the way, offering a world class fitness and recreational facility to go to before or after classes. Shops, restaurants, service stations, and other facilities are nearby. Tokai University, a Japanese institution of higher learning, will share the UWHO's 7,500-bed dormitory. This international collaboration will give students from both universities a prime opportunity to start and build friendships that will be personally and professionally rewarding.

Innovation is a hallmark of the UH West Oahu. In the true spirit of making education accessible, distance learning is a key component of its offerings. Nearly 35% of its courses are taught online over the internet, on interactive television, or off-site in the community. Through these non-traditional modalities, neighbor island students can live at home, work at home, and still earn their bachelor's degrees without uprooting their families to Oahu. Those already in the workforce can also take advantage of this convenience to further their professional goals. Five degrees and three certificates are offered through distance learning. If Business Administration, Social Sciences, Political Science, Early Childhood Education, Health Care Administration, Substance Abuse and Addictions Studies, and Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management are areas that you want to make your life's work, UHWO is the institution for you.

The inventiveness doesn't stop there. Like to solve detective stories? The UHWO offers a certificate in Applied Forensic Anthropology. Able to keep calm and organize and carry out tactical planning in situations outside the norm? The UHWO's Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management program may be for you. Have a heart for helping those who have gotten in over their heads and want to get straight again? The UHWO has a certificate in Substance Abuse and Addictions Studies. Three other certificate programs are also available, in Health Care Administration, Environmental Studies, and Risk Management and Insurance. The UHWO's Center for Labor Education and Research gives those with an interest in personnel management a meeting place to learn and to share information on trends and best practices.

UH West Oahu is not just a second UH Manoa on the west side. While the Honolulu campus offers a traditional curriculum, the Kapolei campus is focused on career preparation for students who are ready to jump in the field that interests them. That's what draws learners to UHWO. Collaborative in nature, its faculty work in partnership with the excellent technical education provided in the UH community colleges' associate's degree programs.

UHWO's Bachelor of Applied Science degree educates students in business to supplement their skills training. Courses provide instruction in areas that students need as managers, for example,

how technology affects all levels of an organization; developing business policy; analysis of external and internal forces that influence action; project management; consumer behavior; human resources; administration; and others. These classes prepare those with technical training to progress to the next level as professionals. Three majors are offered: Computing, Electronics and Networking Technology; Culinary Management; and Respiratory Care. For students seeking a traditional education closer to home, UHWO offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in four majors: Business Administration, Humanities, Public Administration, and Social Sciences.

Four new Centers of Excellence will get their start on the Kapolei campus: Creative Media, Sustainability, Health Sciences, and Teacher Education. The hub of the Center for Creative Media is the Digital Media Production Facility. Set to be the premiere media school of the Pacific Rim, the facility includes classrooms, collaborative space for students, computer labs, sound stages, set building, storage, and post production facilities. The state's first digital media storage center, the Henry Giugni Archives, will be housed in the Kapolei campus.

In a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified campus, the UHWO is an appropriate site for its new Center for Sustainability. A photovoltaic array will produce approximately 435 kilowatts of electricity that is expected to supply about 15% of the campus' needs. Its buildings have low energy consumption and environmentally sound features, such as certified wood; low V.O.C. paints and carpets; low-emitting composite wood cabinetry; naturally ventilated corridors; and north-facing clerestory windows for natural lighting.

The Center for Sustainability will be a pioneer program that melds natural sciences, social sciences, and business to offer students education in sustainability, green technologies, policy, and management. One of its collaborative efforts, a partnership with MA'O Organic Farms on a working, 10-acre farm, will literally break new ground in the area of sustainability and agroecology. MA'O is a leader in this field. First Lady Michelle Obama toured MA'O Organic Farms' 25-acre farm and visited with students in its Kauhale Youth Leadership Training. The three-year, \$4 million Kauhale Youth Education & Entrepreneurship Initiative is funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. High school graduates sign up for 2-1/2 year terms during which they act as mentors for younger students, assist in organic agriculture, and attend college full-time.

The Centers for Health Sciences and for Teacher Education will train students to meet current workforce needs and the expanding demand for health care professionals and educators.

The new University of Hawaii at West Oahu is blazing trails with its innovative spirit and programs. Its convenient, open-access, distance learning modalities, and its forward-looking, collaborative, applied knowledge philosophy, enable it to ignite the excitement in students on their journey of career preparation and life-long learning.

With several of the state's largest public high schools nearby – James Campbell, Kapolei, Waipahu, Mililani, Nanakuli and Waianae – lack of students will not be a problem for UHWO. For more information on the school, go to www.westoahu.hawaii.edu.