



MidWeek

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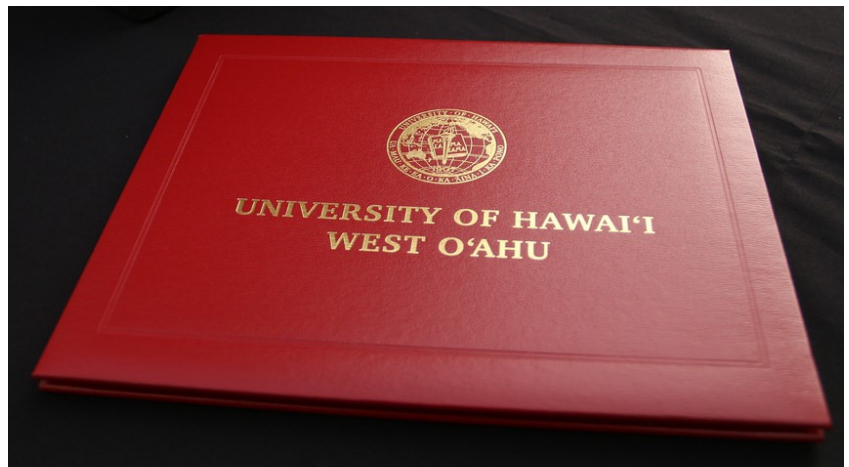
Mahalo, Dr. Doris Ching, Interim Chancellor UHWO

I was honored to be a guest at the fall semester graduation at UH West Oahu earlier this month. These ceremonies are always inspiring, and this one was a milestone for the University. Longtime senior UH administrator **Dr. Doris Ching** presided and assisted with presentation of diplomas, and it is likely the very last time that she will participate in this highlight of the academic year.



Dr. Ching was happily retired following an exceptional career in teaching and education administration over many years with UH Manoa and the UH system. Then former UHWO Chancellor Rockne Freitas persuaded her to “unretire” to serve as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Chancellor Freitas himself then retired, and Dr. Ching has spent all of 2016 as Interim Chancellor. She will officially retire – again – in a few days before newly-appointed Chancellor Manette Benham takes office. Our best wishes to Dr. Ching,

with deep gratitude for her wisdom and good counsel that have served the University and thousands of students so well over many, many years. She will be missed.



And, of course, congratulations to the nearly 300 new grads from UH West Oahu – most ever as this wonderful campus continues to grow!

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Legislative session on the horizon

After last month's elections, the Senate met to discuss leadership responsibilities for the coming legislative session. I accepted an appointment to be Senate Vice President in addition to my ongoing role as Chair of the Senate Committee on Education. I will also be Vice Chair of the Higher Education Committee and continue as a member of the important Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health Committee.

Our 60-day session begins in just three weeks, on Wednesday, January 18, with mostly ceremonial events on the agenda – including swearing in of newly-elected Senators and entertainment. You are welcome to visit the Capitol and stop by my office in room 228 to meet and greet me and my staff – on opening day or any time to share your ideas.



Hauoli Makahiki Hou!

How quickly the “old” year has passed! For many weeks following our legislative session, I worked with the Governor's team to develop a framework our public schools can use to implement the federal government Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). That exercise was a constant reminder of how important our schools are to our communities. Looking back at the past twelve months I am reminded of so many highlights that center on our wonderful teachers and students. Here are a few:

Congratulating Waipahu High's extraordinary science teacher **Michael Sana** for being chosen Hawaii's Milken Educator . . . welcoming students from Waipahu's **Culinary Academy and the Academy of Hospitality and Tourism** for Tourism Day at the Capitol . . . celebrating the Golden Anniversary of **Waipahu Intermediate School** . . . and congratulating Waipahu High senior **Andrea Lyn Mateo** for serving as the student representative on the State Board of Education.

In 2017, we will see the beginning of major reconstruction improvements to the Kipapa Gulch Bridge early in the year. Then sometime in late spring or early summer, we will dedicate the new Emergency Services Ambulance Station in Waipio that has been under construction for the last few months. These are among the projects I have supported to improve the safety, health and well-being of our communities for years to come.

My hope is that this Year of the Monkey has been a happy and productive time for you and that the coming Year of the Rooster will provide opportunities for good times and much success for you and your families.

