

These are Dennis Kawaharada's notes for his description of the Hawaiian star compass at the General Faculty/Staff Meeting on August 18, 2011.

The KCC compass is a graphic representation of the Hawaiian star compass, which is not a hand-held compass. It's engraved in the navigator's mind and memory and projected out into space.

The navigator is at the center, on his canoe, represented by the bird; the rim of the compass is the horizon.

Nainoa developed his star compass in 1978-1980 to help him navigate Hōkūleʻa without instruments over 2400 miles, from Hawai'i to Tahiti. Hōkūleʻa's successful voyage in 1980 was the first by a Hawaiian navigator in over 500 years.

The Hawaiian compass is based on the Micronesian star compass of Mau Piailug, the navigator from Satawal Micronesia who taught Nainoa to navigate without instruments.

The outer circle of the compass is the horizon, divided into four quadrants, named for winds that blow from those four directions.

To the NE is Ko'olau, upwind or windward, in relationship to our prevailing trade winds.

Standing in the middle of the compass:

when you face Ko'olau, you will feel the trade winds blowing in your face;

facing in the opposite direction, Kona, which is downwind or leeward, you would feel the wind will be at your back.

Malanai, the SE quadrant is named for a southeasterly wind.

Ho'olua is a NW wind that comes on the back storm fronts in the rainy season.

The names in the inner circle of the compass refer to directional houses.

The basic orientation is from east, hikina, where the sun arrives, to west Komohana, where the sun goes down. Facing west along the path of the sun, to your right, is 'akau, which means "right"; to the left south is hema, which means "left."

The other directional houses have names with particular meanings. For example,

- Lā means sun; the two lā houses on either side of east and west are the directions where the sun rises and sets at solstices, north of east and west in summer, south of east and west in winter.

The names are explained at the PVS website, and in Will Kyselka's book, *An Ocean in Mind*.

The bird on the compass can fly in any direction. On the KCC compass, it's flying north.

Facing north, on a clear night, you will see Hokupa'a, the North Star, directly above 'akau – above the entrance to the library.

Metaphorically, the compass represents what our students should acquire while they are here ... knowledge and an inner compass to provide them with a sense of direction in college and in life.

Pointing to the library, it's telling students, "when you are lost or confused, seek out knowledge to help you find your way."

Hokupa'a means "fixed star." It is always there in the northern hemisphere, if you know where to look at night.

The rising and setting stars, visible at different times of the year, live in particular houses and mark directions on the horizon. The belt of Orion, for example, visible **around late fall through winter**, lives in Hikina, where it rises, and Komohana, where it sets.

In Nainoa's mind, the compass also symbolizes what Hawai'i needs: an inner compass to guide our islands and island Earth, toward a safe, healthy, sustainable future.

Nainoa is developing a school of navigation that includes special places from Le'ahi, our pu'u, aka Diamond Head, to Maka-pu'u, the headland at the east end of O'ahu.

This navigation school is both on land and in the ocean. It includes Maunalua Bay and the Kaiwi Channel, between O'ahu and Moloka'i.

In this area are places where Nainoa studied the ocean and sky with Mau, who passed away in 2010.

Nainoa's idea is that learning takes place not only in the classroom, but also on mountain ridges or at sea, or under the night sky.

He wants the compass at KCC to be included in this navigation school. It anchors the west end of this arc of learning that extends from here to Makapu'u.

