

**Subject:** This Week at UH West O'ahu - Week of April 27, 2020  
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A BULLETIN FOR UH WEST O'AHU FACULTY AND STAFF  
**This Week at UH West O'ahu**  
Week of April 27, 2020

### How you can help

- **Sew a Mask:** The campus is looking for those who can sew masks for our on-campus workers. Material is being provided and the pattern is simple. Since there is a shortage of elastic, we will be using T-shirts. So please save that old T-shirt that has a stain on it and we can use it as straps for the masks. If you have any questions, please contact Annette Lehano at [al@hawaii.edu](mailto:al@hawaii.edu).
- **Volunteer with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations:** The University of Hawai'i fully supports any employee who wants to assist in this effort. If you are interested in volunteering, please discuss with your supervisor and visit <http://hawaiiworks.org/> for more information.
- **Donate to Hawai'i Foodbank Food Drive:** The Hawai'i Foodbank campaign is ongoing through May 6, 2020. Due to our current COVID-19 situation, online monetary donations are highly encouraged. Please donate at <http://www.hawaiifoodbank.org/donate>

### University of Hawai'i COVID-19 resources

Remember to visit the [UH West O'ahu COVID-19 page](#) and [University of Hawai'i System COVID-19 site](#) for information and updates regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Spring 2020 Quarterly Impact Report

Please see and share the attached report, which this quarter has information from our faculty and staff that may help you and your family cope with the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19, from caring for kūpuna to keeping keiki safe. These reports are distributed to our community members and donors as a way to share our good work.

### Mental Health Moment – Getting a Good Night's Sleep!

Clinical psychologists Dr. Steven Taketa and Dr. Analu Sing, with [UH West O'ahu's Counseling Services](#), will offer weekly mental health tips to students, faculty, and staff to cope through COVID-19 and these trying times:

According to the National Institutes of Health, sleep plays a major part in a person's wellbeing, including their physiological health, safety, and quality of life. Simply stated, a good night's sleep not only allows the brain to prepare for the upcoming day, it is also important for individuals to continue functioning in life.

## COPING THROUGH COVID

How are you maintaining your mental, physical, and emotional well-being while practicing social distancing? We'd like to hear about your coping mechanisms or personal stories of how you are managing as we navigate these unique times. Have unique tips to share? Fun activities? Email [uhwo-comm@hawaii.edu](mailto:uhwo-comm@hawaii.edu) to submit your survival strategies.

Dr. Ric Custodio, Associate Professor of Health Science at UH West O'ahu, shares ways he is able to carry on with patience and gratitude:

Out on the farm, there is no hint of a pandemic. No patients that need to be seen. No papers that have to be graded. No Zoom meetings to wearily slog through. The plants, birds, butterflies and crops don't drone on, whine or complain. They don't worry about staying at home, taking a salary cut or upcoming bills. Being outside with the sun out and hands in the dirt always reminds me that truly, the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness. It is a wonderful way to clear your head. Feeding the chickens and watching the little chicks grow reminds me that life goes on.



*Photo courtesy of Dr. Ric Custodio*

Playing and writing music also does the same thing. Guitar is my first instrument, but drums and percussion are my favorite. There is something about getting lost in the "zone" of becoming one with the beat that is uplifting and magical. There is something about creating new songs that transcends our present human condition. In these two ways I am able to carry on with patience, tolerance and gratitude.

### **2020 FSA, health benefits, and PCP Open Enrollment reminder**

As a friendly reminder, Open Enrollment deadlines for various health benefit programs are as follows:

- Thursday, April 30: Island Flex Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) program

If you are a member of the Employees' Retirement System (ERS) and interested in paying for eligible out-of-pocket health and dependent care expenses with tax free money, consider enrolling in the Island Flex program.

New qualified FSA expenses: In response to COVID-19, a new federal law expands how you can use your flexible spending account (FSA). You can now use your FSA to purchase over-the-counter (OTC) drugs and medicines, without a prescription, as well as menstrual care products. This is a permanent change that is effective immediately and retroactive to January 1, 2020. If you previously purchased OTC medicines or menstrual care products after December 31, 2019, and kept your receipt, you can request reimbursement for these items. Retailers are in the process of updating their systems to accept benefit debit cards for the newly approved items. It is estimated that most major retailers will be ready to accept debit cards as soon as April 15 for OTC medicines and May 15 for menstrual care products. As with any eligible product or service, you always have the option to pay with your personal funds, save your receipt, and submit a reimbursement request.

- Friday, May 15: Hawaii Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund (EUTF), Premium Conversion Plan (PCP) and Part-Time & Temporary Medical & Prescription Drug Plan

For more information and to enroll, visit <https://www.hawaii.edu/ohr/benefits-leave/benefit/2020-open-enrollment/>.

Should you have any questions, please contact your designated HR Representative (<http://go.hawaii.edu/Aiz>) for assistance.

### **Spring 2020 Virtual Retreat on April 30, May 1, May 2**

The UH Office of Sustainability has invited students, staff, faculty, and administrators from across our campuses to participate in its Spring 2020 Virtual Retreat – April 30, May 1, and May 2 – to think about the future of the university in a post-COVID reality and to consider together the following question: “How might the University of Hawai‘i transform to meet these times?”

Participants will work together toward these outcomes:

- Gain a shared understanding of the current crisis and its long-range repercussions for the university
- Provide input on updates to UH System Sustainability policies [RP 4.208](#) / [EP 4.202](#)
- Establish Working Groups for ongoing action in AY 2020-2021 and beyond
- Provide recommendations to senior leadership

Please [visit this link to register your attendance](#). Explore the event website (which will be updated frequently) to preview the agenda and access read-ahead materials: <http://ike.green/spring-2020-virtual-retreat>.

### **Welcome to the newest employee on our campus**

Please extend a warm welcome to Cyrus (Pōki‘i) Seto, Assistant Specialist (Program Coordinator - Ho‘opuliko Kumu Hou Title III Project), who joined our campus earlier this month!

### **PIKO Outdoor Learning Space construction deliveries**

There will be multiple construction deliveries occurring for the PIKO Outdoor Learning Space project. When there are deliveries, please expect temporary disruptions to pedestrian access at the roundabout and entry ramp. All persons in the vicinity of this project are advised to respect all construction barricades and all posted safety/detour signs. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the UH West O‘ahu Project Manager at 689-2546.

### **Kualaka‘i (East Kapolei) Station update**

Here’s an up-close look at the Kualaka‘i (East Kapolei) rail station, with photos courtesy of Nan, Inc.:





### Distance Learning Tip of the Week – April Theme: Tools for Online Learning

Sharing your screen with students? Want to use online content while avoiding flashing animated ads? Mercury Reader is a Chrome extension that removes advertising clutter from online articles. Once installed, simply click the rocket icon to disable surrounding webpage noise and distractors. The resulting content is clean, easy-to-read text on a white background. Find Mercury Reader in the [Chrome Web Store](#).

### News from [E Kamakani Hou](#)



[Mental Health Moment – Use Social Distance as an Opportunity to Connect](#) - Clinical psychologists Dr. Steven Taketa and Dr. Analu Sing, with [UH West O’ahu's Counseling Services](#), will offer weekly mental health tips to students, faculty, and staff to cope through COVID-19 and these trying times.

[Virtual celebration of Earth Day on April 21](#) - UH West O’ahu students, faculty, and staff are welcome to celebrate and commemorate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, 1 to 3 p.m. April 21 via Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/6444400453>. Attendees will watch films and presentations, and discuss taking care of Hawai’i and Earth.

[Future teachers: Learn about Summer Academy opportunity, April 24](#) - Teacher candidates who participate in UH West O’ahu's [Ho’opūliko Kumu Hou Summer Program](#) are eligible to receive up to nine free college credits that focus on introduction to teaching as a career, Hawaiian ways of Knowing in education, and student development.

[Honoring UH West O’ahu Veteran graduates](#) - The University of Hawai’i–West O’ahu [Veterans Empowered Through Stem](#) (V.E.T.S.), in partnership with the UH West O’ahu Alumni Association, is offering free honor cords for UH West O’ahu student veterans graduating this semester.

*The deadline to include your item in the next This Week is Thursday night. Please submit your item using the Communication Department's [Communications Request Form](#).*

WESTOAHU.HAWAII.EDU



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## Aloha mai kākou!

The purpose of our Quarterly Impact Reports is to provide you with information about the vital work we do that builds leadership and community. Indeed, compiling these reports is a joyful endeavor for our communications team as they are able to showcase the quantity and maturity of our educational programs that are driven by knowledge, experience, and unbridled imagination. Our report this quarter is different. We are sharing information from our faculty and staff that may help you and your family cope with the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19.

Like you, we cherish the relationships, collaborative efforts, and special experiences that our campus life offers. We miss welcoming you to campus, especially the hugs and laughter that fill our courtyard! And so in this time of "social distancing" we encourage you to treat this crisis as an opportunity to be with loved ones, to reach out and reconnect through Zoom and phone, and meet the uncertainties of these times with compassion and humanity.

Just a brief note that since all our programs went online after spring break, our students, faculty, and staff have met the challenges of this learning platform with creativity and commitment. Every day our dedicated staff members work hard on campus and remotely to meet the dilemmas of this perplexing time.

I am grateful to our UH West O'ahu 'ohana who, in a spirit of community and care, have taken responsibility to work around the clock to make and implement difficult decisions to protect the health and well-being of our campus community.

E mālama pono!

Maenette K.P. Ah Nee-Benham  
Chancellor, UH West O'ahu

Spring 2020

# Kūkulu Kaiāulu *Building Community*

## Hō'ike Hapahā Makahiki

### Quarterly Impact Report



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII  
WEST O'AHU



Members of the UH West O'ahu Student Affairs team remind students of their ongoing services.

## Education at Home

Dr. Mary Heller and the UH West O'ahu Education Division faculty came up with a list of basic tips based on Baristanet.com for school children of all ages:

- ∅ Keeping regular sleep routines in place supports children's and adolescents' sense of security and well-being. A good night's rest reduces stress, improves memory, makes us more alert, and will put you in a better mood. Don't forget daytime naps!
- ∅ Create a "learning area" away from bedrooms and playrooms that is comfortable, well-lit, and has access to learning materials and IT resources.
- ∅ Intersperse 30-45 minute blocks of learning time with relaxation and

recreation time. Make sure to get outside. Feel the sun on your face, the wind at your back, and the air in your lungs. Don't forget to play!

- ∅ Be patient! These stressful times will certainly test everyone's patience. Create a personal, quiet space for every family member to "get away" and be calm.
- ∅ Be flexible: bend, but don't break the schedule. Involve your children in creating the daily schedule. Reward your children with incentives, such as staying up later or sleeping in on weekends.

<https://baristanet.com/2020/03/learning-in-the-time-of-covid19-montclair-teachers-and-parents-offer-ideas/>

## Kūpuna Care

Dr. Lisa Spencer, of the Public Administration Division, notes that approximately 25 percent of the population is older than 65 years. "Social distancing" does not mean "social isolation," which can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. Here are some tips\*:

- ∅ Learn and/or use online options such as FaceTime, Zoom, Skype, Twitter, Snapchat to talk to friends and family. If these options are new to you (kupuna), ask a friend or family member for help and a quick "how to".
- ∅ Stay active in the community from home. Are there any community-based activities you can do from home?
- ∅ Stay informed, know what's going on, but don't get inundated with hours and hours of news watching. This might cause unneeded anxiety.
- ∅ Reach out to family and friends. Check in with each other, young or old.

\* From Dr. Laurie Archbald-Pannone, geriatrician and associate professor at the University of Virginia in geriatric medicine.



Photo by Tristan Le from Pexels

## Mental Health Moments

Clinical psychologists Drs. Steven Taketa and Analu Sing, with UH West O'ahu's Counseling Services, offer these mental health tips:

- ∅ For some, the fear of illness can be overwhelming. Many with illness anxiety report that underlying their fear is a deeper sense of having to live a less-than-fulfilling life. Mental health treatment can be effective in helping people to focus on life.
- ∅ Physical activity reduces symptoms including excessive worry, irritability, difficulty concentrating, and sleep disturbance. Find a physical activity that you enjoy and if possible, exercise (safely and responsibly) with someone you care about.
- ∅ Studies show that adhering to a healthy diet appears to offer protection against mental illness, such as depression. Add inexpensive and convenient health foods to your diet, rather than simply avoiding junk food.
- ∅ Connect with others via FaceTime, Skype, or other online resources (not social media). Authentically connecting with positive people can boost your immunity and help you to manage stress.
- ∅ Sleep plays a major part in a person's wellbeing. A good night's sleep allows the brain to prepare for the upcoming day and is important for individuals to continue functioning.



Photo by Kha Ruxury from Pexels

## Keeping Children Safe

Clinical psychologist and mental health counselor Dr. Steven Taketa with UH West O'ahu's Counseling Services offers the following tips:

- ∅ Set clear guidelines and expectations for children. For example, prior to leaving the house, a mother might instruct her child to avoid touching things at a doctor's office and to wash his or her hands before getting back into the car.
- ∅ Children tend to be most receptive to information when they are not in a state of emotional distress.
- ∅ Children will inadvertently make mistakes. When that occurs, it is important for parents to be consistent in redirecting their children and to explain in language they can understand about the consequences for rule breaking.
- ∅ The most important part of discipline in these instances is to remind children that once they complete a punishment, they are no longer in trouble and are good in nature. Youngsters may be more concerned about disappointing their parents than contracting an illness.
- ∅ Help children thrive by providing frequent and consistent reminders that they are special, important members of the family, and are unconditionally loved in the midst of this crisis.