Pride 98 Convocation Celebrates Outstanding Faculty

Regents Medal recipients and other outstanding faculty from throughout the UH system will be honored at a Pride 98 convocation Tuesday, September 1, at 10 a.m. in Kennedy Theatre. Medals and other awards will be presented by UH Senior Vice Presidents Dean Smith, Manoa executive vice chancellor; Rose Tseng, chancellor for UH Hilo; and Joyce S. Tsunoda, chancellor of the UH Community Colleges. John Morton, provost of Kapi‘olani CC, will preside. In addition to the presentation of awards, the ceremony will feature remarks by Governor Benjamin Cayetano and President Kenneth P. Mortimer’s state-of-the-university address.

Regents Medal for Excellence in Teaching

The Regents Medal for Excellence in Teaching recognizes the importance that students, the faculty and the administration place on quality teaching on our campuses. Manoa faculty receiving medals this year are

Kathryn Braun, associate professor of public health and director of the Center on Aging. Braun’s students are assigned "real" projects that they undertake with assistance from University faculty and community resources. Her role in developing the Center on Aging’s videotape telecourse has been nationally recognized.

William Burgwinkle, associate professor, European languages and literature. Burgwinkle’s teaching is guided by imperatives, including: Love what you teach; Keep active in research; Be interdisciplinary; Continue to be a student, at least mentally; Facilitate learning rather than control it.

Grace Fong, assistant professor, human resources. Fong believes her responsibility as an educator is not only to impart knowledge but also to
challenge students to think critically and to hold themselves responsible for their own learning.

**Kathryn Hoffmann**, associate professor, European languages and literature. As a specialist in 17th-century French literature and theater, Hoffmann teaches everything from first-year language classes to graduate courses in literature and theory. Her interdisciplinary, cross-cultural approach to literature emphasizes the connections among literature, history, philosophy and even medicine and business. *(Hal Lum Photo)*

**Craig Howes**, professor of English and director of the Center for Biographical Research. Howes’s emphasis on the process of research, writing and revision, regardless of subject matter, is at least partially responsible for the large number of thesis and dissertation writers he has been asked to advise. Building on his experience with *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly*, he developed new courses on editing and biography.

**Margaret Maaka**, assistant professor, teacher education and curriculum studies. Maaka’s philosophy of learning and teaching has been shaped by her experiences in New Zealand and Hawai’i education systems. She is especially successful at connecting with students who are underrepresented at Manoa and in the teaching profession.

**Regents Medal for Excellence in Research**

The Regents Medal for Excellence in Research recognizes faculty members whose scholarly contributions expand the boundaries of knowledge and enrich the lives of students and the community. This year’s recipients are

**Garry Rechnitz**, UHM professor of chemistry and founder and director of the Hawai’i Biosensor Laboratory, senior-level research award. Rechnitz is acknowledged to be a pioneer of biosensors. In 1995 his work was described by the director of the National
Science Foundation’s chemistry section as "the most continuously creative analytical program in the U.S."

Paul Wessel, UHM associate professor of geology and geophysics, associate-level research award. Wessel has brought extraordinary renown to UH for his work in three areas: the physics, observations and implications of the deformation of the Earth’s lithosphere; production of the graphical and data-analysis software Generic Mapping Tool, used by thousands of researchers throughout the world; and hotspotting, a new method determining plate tectonic motions.

George Roderick, assistant researcher at the Center for Conservation Research and Training, part of the Pacific Biomedical Research Center, assistant-level research award. Roderick’s research is focused on invasion genetics and species interactions. He is developing and using novel molecular genetic and statistical tools, such as DNA sequences from nuclear and mitochondrial genomes, to determine the source of insects that have become major pests in Hawai‘i and elsewhere.

Presidential Citation for Meritorious Teaching

The Presidential Citation recognizes Manoa faculty members who have made significant contributions to teaching and student learning. This year’s honorees are

Hong-Mei Chen, assistant professor, decision sciences. Chen is an expert in database management development for health care, tourism, engineering and marketing applications. To provide students with hands-on experience, she helped to establish the Advanced Information Management Solutions (AIMS) laboratory.

Elizabeth Fisher, assistant professor of theatre and dance. The foundation of Fisher’s teaching philosophy is the principle that creative, technical, and intellectual work are interactive. One innovation she has brought to studio dance courses is the community service event where students present dance events at a community institution.

Dolores Foley, assistant professor of public administration. Foley models the principles she teaches in class, gently demonstrating the art of collaboration and the importance of nurturing relationships, honoring differences, developing trust and respect, resolving conflicts and working toward the common ground and goals.
Violet Harada, associate professor of library and information science. Harada has two major goals: to improve the quality of school librarianship preparation in the state and to promote more effective physical and intellectual access to information through school libraries locally and nationally.

E. Alison Kay, professor of zoology. Kay never really thought she should have a teaching philosophy. She just loves to teach. A world-renowned expert in marine mollusks, Kay says that she has "played with shells all her life." They not only shaped her as a biologist but provided entry into history, anthropology and the arts.

Mehrdad Nejhad, associate professor, mechanical engineering. Nejhad’s strong interdisciplinary background provides him with a great versatility. He teaches his students "to learn how to learn" independently, to function in a team environment; and to communicate ideas in a simple straightforward manner to superiors, colleagues and customers.

Eric Yamamoto, professor of law. Yamamoto has developed two unique seminars. One focuses on understanding race, culture and law in the United States and Hawai‘i; the other demands careful critical analyses of substantive materials and employs an interactive method to teach students to be teachers.

Frances Davis Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

This award memorializes Frances Davis, who taught mathematics at UH Manoa for 19 years. It recognizes a faculty member for dedication to teaching and demonstrated excellence as a teacher of undergraduate students. This year the award goes to Cynthia Franklin, assistant professor of English. Franklin believes in fostering a strong sense of intellectual community, in which students have many opportunities for an open and rigorous exchange of ideas. Early in the semester, she divides her class into groups to work on some aspect of editing, organizing or publishing an anthology. The process brings class members together and gives them a sense of themselves as writers.

Robert W. Clopton Award for Distinguished Community Service

This award recognizes a Manoa faculty member who has accepted a socially significant role as an intellectual leader and exemplar beyond the campus and who has applied academic expertise to the improvement of the community. The award goes to Randall Roth, professor of law. Roth has been instrumental in building bridges between the University and the law school and the broader community. Through his two The Price of Paradise books, radio shows, newspaper articles and presentations to school and community groups, he has led the charge in identifying underlying social, economic and political problems facing Hawai‘i today.

Details about Regents Medal and other award recipients from UH Hilo, UH West O‘ahu and the UH Community Colleges will appear in next week’s Ku Lama.