



UNIVERSITY
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WEST O'AHU

NEWS RELEASE

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UH WEST O'AHU AWARDED \$2.5 MILLION TITLE III GRANT
University to develop interactive, high-tech learning environment
and new academic programs with grant funding from U.S. Department of Education

PEARL CITY --- UH West O'ahu (UHWO) was recently awarded \$2.5 million in Title III grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education to support the development of a highly interactive, interpersonal learning environment and the expansion of its academic curriculum following the transition to a four-year baccalaureate institution. The money will be awarded over the next five years, with the university receiving \$500,000 each year to develop programs to promote academic and psychosocial engagement and increase student participation in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) disciplines.

U.S. Department of Education Title III programs are designed to strengthen universities and help institutions of higher education to better serve low-income students by providing funds to improve academic quality, institutional management and fiscal stability.

With these funds, UH West O'ahu will develop a comprehensive First-Year Experience program designed to increase the first-year students' sense of belonging and enhance their belief in the ability to succeed at the university. In addition, the program involves the delivery of tutorial and other learning services to assist students in overcoming academic challenges.

"A program like this is very beneficial for first-year students," said UHWO elementary education major and sophomore Jamie Perry. "I truly enjoyed my freshmen year and additional support services like this will really make a difference in helping students succeed at the university."

Title III funds will also be used to

- promote the use of high-tech equipment in STEM related courses and across the curriculum
- develop new courses and academic programs in STEM fields
- encourage student interest in enrollment and completion of STEM classes and
- promote faculty development to use technology more extensively in teaching methods.

"This grant allows us to further develop programs that provide necessary support services and relevant, technology-driven coursework for UH West O'ahu students," said UH West O'ahu Chancellor Gene Awakuni. "It represents the university's commitment to providing our students with a solid academic foundation so they are well-prepared to enter the workforce upon graduation."

Other leaders at UH West Oahu noted the importance of the grant. "This grant will go extremely far toward establishing a 'high-tech, high-touch' emphasis on learning," said Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Linda Randall. "I am excited that we will be helping our students to have the academic support that will strengthen their ability to succeed at the university. The programs planned as part of this grant should go far toward attracting and retaining students who might otherwise

have chosen to discontinue their pursuit of a degree.” Other departments at UHWO will also benefit from the grant, such as that managed by Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Lori Ideta. “Increasing our student enrollment and success rates is fundamental to my mission at UHWO,” she said. “This additional funding will allow us to not only better equip our students with higher skill-sets, but will also enable our students to feel more of a sense of belonging with the confidence to excel. It is our hope that this will be attractive to other students, their families, and communities. This grant supports our collaborative work toward brighter futures for all involved.”

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Last Fall, UH West O’ahu became a four-year, comprehensive university when it served its first class of freshmen. The University offers quality education, small classes and personalized attention at convenient locations. A new campus in the City of Kapolei is scheduled to serve students in fall 2010. For more information about UH West O’ahu, visit uhwo.hawaii.edu or call 454-4700 or toll-free (866) 299-8656.