



UNIVERSITY
of HAWAII®
WEST O'AHU

NEWS RELEASE
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**COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY FOR UH WEST O'AHU THIS FRIDAY, DEC. 18,
6:30 P.M., LEEWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE THEATRE
University's Elementary Education Program Graduates Inaugural Class**

PEARL CITY --- This Friday, Dec. 18, is a special day for 109 UH West O'ahu graduates who will receive their degrees and certificates during commencement ceremonies at the Leeward Community College Theatre.

Fifty-two students will receive their baccalaureate in Business Administration, eight in Humanities, 17 in Public Administration, 36 in Social Sciences, one in Applied Science and six in Education. Graduates will also receive certificates in various programs including Applied Forensic Anthropology, Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management, Health Care Administration and Substance Abuse and Addictions Studies.

The ceremony has special significance as UH West O'ahu will graduate its first-ever students earning a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree in Elementary Education.

"The graduates from our Elementary Education Program are a source of pride for all of us at UH West O'ahu," said Chancellor Gene Awakuni. "Their success shows their commitment to educating future generations. Their success also demonstrates our university's fulfillment of our ongoing commitment to meeting the workforce needs of our communities and our State, in line with our mission."

The University's B.Ed program prepares highly qualified K-6 teachers, with particular emphasis on serving the needs of schools in Leeward O'ahu. Since implementation in fall 2007, the program has grown to 157 Elementary Education majors and a staff of eight professional teacher educators.

During the commencement ceremony, University of Hawaii System Vice President for the Community Colleges John Morton and Regent Mark Fukunaga (UH Board of Regents) will congratulate the class, and keynote speaker, Nanakuli High and Intermediate School Principal and UH West O'ahu alum Darin Pili'alo'ha will address the graduates.

Tracy Takazono, one of this Friday's outstanding graduates, will also speak on behalf of the graduating class. With a 3.98 GPA, Takazono returned to college after a 10-year break and is a member of UH West O'ahu's inaugural graduating class of students earning a B.Ed degree in Elementary Education. She resides in Kapolei with her husband and three children. Takazono will teach elementary school on the Leeward side following graduation with future plans to pursue a master's degree in Education.



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Doors will open at 5:45 p.m. to ticket holders and promptly close at 6:25 p.m. before the ceremony begins at 6:30 p.m. Latecomers and those without tickets may view the live ceremony from an outdoor screen. Graduates are expected to greet friends and family members outside of the theatre at 7:30 p.m.

The commencement ceremony will be streamed live on the UH West O'ahu website at uhwo.hawaii.edu/commencement.

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UH West O'ahu became a four-year, comprehensive university when it served its first class of freshmen in fall 2007. The University offers quality education, small classes and personalized attention at convenient locations. UH West O'ahu held a ground blessing ceremony in January in anticipation of the start of construction for a state-of-the art, new campus in the City of Kapolei. For more information, visit uhwo.hawaii.edu, twitter.com/uhwestoahu, facebook.com/uhwestoahu or call 454-4700 or toll-free (866) 299-8656.