

# Ho‘Ola

WORKING TO FIND THE CURE

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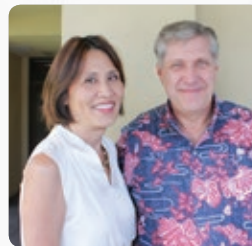
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## President’s Message

**T**his year marks 20 years since our three-year-old daughter Alana lost her battle with cancer in 1997, and not a day goes by that I don’t think of her. Indeed Alana is the reason I am dedicated to helping to keep the spotlight on the research being done at the UH Cancer Center. During the past 20 years, the researchers at the UH Cancer Center have been engaged in new studies and clinical breakthroughs. Scientific and medical advances continue.

In April, Dr. James Turkson, a UH Cancer Center researcher, received a grant of \$3 million in federal funds to further his research on how the ironweed plant that grows wild in Hawai‘i may offer new ways to combat brain and breast cancers.

UH Cancer Center Director, Dr. Randall Holcombe, is leading the effort to renew the P30 Cancer Center Support Grant for National Cancer Institute (NCI) designated centers. Hawai‘i has the opportunity to increase its clinical trials as Dr. Holcombe has worked as the principal investigator of more than 140 clinical trials.



Adelia Chung and Dr. Randall Holcombe

These wonderful advances and opportunities can only happen with the support and investment of private funding. Private support helps research move faster toward cures and treatments. Government funding is limited and as it continues to shrink, folks like you and me are more valuable than ever.

The mission of the Friends of the UH Cancer Center is to support and promote the efforts of the Center. As Friends, we would like to invite you to join us in supporting the work of this valuable community resource. Consider becoming an advocate, a donor, a volunteer and help support the brilliant researchers and the work of the UH Cancer Center.

As a community, we want the UH Cancer Center to continue to thrive over the next 20 years and beyond.

With gratitude,

Adelia Chung  
President  
Friends of the UH Cancer Center

## New Talent Reinvigorates Friends’ Board

**M**egan Hackett is a tax manager at Ernst & Young in its tax services practice. Hackett’s family has been touched by cancer, and she hopes her involvement with the Friends’ Board will make a difference in generating awareness about the UH Cancer Center.

**Dale Kobayashi** retired from a career in finance last year to run for the House of Representatives seat in Mānoa. He is currently the Chairman of the Mānoa Neighborhood Board. Dale said, “My support and gratitude for the UH Cancer

Center stems from my family’s direct experience benefiting from clinical trials offered through the UH Cancer Center. My wife is Dawn Kobayashi, and you can read her story in this issue of Innovations.”

**Ryan MacLaughlin** is the Vice President of Island Sotheby’s International Realty and the director of sales. Ryan said, “I joined the Friends’ board because my mother battled cancer twice and my father once. Being on Maui, we ventured to the mainland for all three bouts of

cancer. Traveling that far was not what we wanted to do. Thankfully, this was years ago, but if this were to happen today, I know that I have a resource in the UH Cancer Center. Knowing that the UH Cancer Center is an authority in the Pacific sets my mind at ease. I want to do anything I can to support the Center— it is right here in our backyard.”

**Christopher M. Yasuma** is an Assistant Vice President and Commercial Banking Officer at Central Pacific Bank.

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## Friends Support Clinical Trial Participants in a Big Way

The Friends of the UH Cancer Center proudly stepped forward at the Lani level sponsorship for the 2017 H.E.R.O. (Helping Enhance Research in Oncology) Appreciation Event. We are the event's title sponsor at the \$7,500 level as we were for last year's inaugural event.

As Friends, we believe that the ultimate and only purpose for cancer research is to find the best treatment in order to cure cancer in patients. Patients who so willingly and bravely participate in clinical trials are the reason physicians and researchers know that certain therapies are successful in treating patients with cancer.

Through the UH Cancer Center's National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation, Hawai'i cancer patients have available to them a huge panoply of clinical trials administered through partner medical centers in the Hawai'i Cancer Consortium. Participants have the ability to remain at home for treatment and care. This allows a patient to be surrounded by family and friends who make up one's important and necessary support system.

### Clinical Trials Cure Cancer and Save Lives

Cancers such as childhood leukemia, once thought of as a death sentence only a generation ago, are now curable in 90 percent of the children contracting the disease. This remarkable turnaround was made possible by decades of clinical trials using various complex combinations of treatments.

Today, we have seen and can expect more of these astounding advances in cancer research through the many clinical trials made available by the UH Cancer Center. The clinical trials and study participants like all of those who are honored at the H.E.R.O. Appreciation Event are imperative to the successful fruition and translation of years of laboratory research.

### Friends Thank Clinical Trial Participants in Hawai'i

The Friends of the UH Cancer Center join in thanking and honoring all of the Hawai'i cancer patients who have participated in clinical trials. You are indeed the real heroes.



Former summer intern Andrea Jurado working on a lab experiment.

## Five Undergraduate Students Intern This Summer, Thanks to the Friends

The Friends of the UH Cancer Center is sponsoring five interns who will join some 20 other high school and undergraduate students for an in-depth summer research and mentorship experience at the Center—an extraordinary opportunity.

“On behalf of the Cancer Center, I want to thank the Friends for this significant contribution that fosters the educational mission of the Center. This is very important for continuing our longstanding and highly successful Undergraduate Summer Research Program and will be highlighted in our upcoming application for renewal of our National Cancer Institute designation,” said Deputy Director, Dr. Joe Ramos.

Having students engage in these learning and mentorship summer opportunities is an integral part of the work of the UH Cancer Center. The support from the Friends also provides funds for supplies for the research projects this summer.

Since 2005, the highly competitive program has received a total of 770 applications. Of these, 185 were admitted to the program. The interns all had an average GPA of 3.89.

Each student is paired with a faculty mentor to work on population or laboratory-based research. Projects will focus on topics such as quality of life in cancer survivors, bioinformatics, and cancer prevention methods. The program runs from June 1 through August 12, 2017.



## New Talent Reinvigorates Friends' Board

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Chris joined the Friends' Board “because cancer has affected my grandparents and father. I think it's great that the UH Cancer Center emphasizes research based on the ethnicities that are prominent in Hawai'i. I am grateful that we have a state-of-the-art research facility here on the islands, which gives locals the opportunity to be part of clinical trials.”

**Board members front row from left to right:** Jason Nagai, Mary Worrall, Dale Kobayashi, Anne Marie Rizzo, Penny Rogers, and Diane Ono. **Back row from left to right:** Ryan MacLaughlin, Howard Stephenson, Jim Wriston, Adelia Chung, Virginia Weinman, and Chris Yasuma.