

KAI ULU

HPU Alumni Currents

A Message from Melissa Matsubara

I love my job, because I wholeheartedly believe that studying abroad is one of the most effective ways to enable students to be successful academically, professionally, and personally.

Students who study abroad gain a comprehensive set of life skills and competencies and expand their world views. When they are pushed out of their comfort zone and forced to navigate another country with different societal norms and culture, different rules and educational systems, different transportation system, and sometimes a different language, they grow in countless ways.

- They learn to be effective problem solvers.
- They learn how to be flexible and adaptable in negotiating unexpected situations, and how to hold their composure in stressful situations when the sky feels like it's falling.
- They develop cross cultural communication skills and learn how to effectively work with people from so many different backgrounds.

Even if they never work internationally in the future, we all must work with people we don't always see eye to eye with. As they uncover the nuances of a foreign country and engage with people from all over the world, students develop a sense of empathy and appreciation for cultural diversity, global perspectives on critical issues impacting our world and realize how interconnected the world really is. This is where diplomacy starts and why studying abroad fosters global security and prosperity.



Melissa Matsubara
Director, Study Abroad &
International Exchange
Program at Hawai'i Pacific
University

[Full Message](#)

Post-Bach Workshop Series Empowers HPU Students



By Kristine Hojnicky

THE CURRENTS

[HPU Designs Rocket for NASA
Student Launch Competition](#)

[HPU Hosts First Peer-Reviewed
Journal in Its 60-Year History](#)



This spring, Hawai'i Pacific University students were offered a powerful resource to support their next steps after graduation: the Post-Bach Workshop Series.

Organized by the Student Government Association (SGA), the four-part professional development initiative provided students with practical tools to explore graduate school, prepare for the job market, and build lasting professional connections.



Held throughout March and April, the series began with a CV/Resume Workshop and continued with sessions on Grad School 101, public speaking and interview strategies, LinkedIn branding, and concluded with the Speed Networking Night held on April 9 at the Aloha Tower Marketplace Sunset Ballroom.



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[Study Reveals Dominant Stranding Threat to Honu](#)

[Discover the Latest at HPU's eSports Arena](#)

[HPU Presents the Hawai'i State Economics Challenge \(HSEC\)](#)

[Championing Ocean Conservation through Community Advocacy](#)

[Alumni Spotlight: Omer Acar '95](#)



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THE CURRENTS



HPU Designs Rocket for NASA Student Launch Competition

HPU's student team "Lewa" will represent Hawai'i in the 2025 NASA Student Launch Competition, designing a rocket to reach 4,600 feet. As the only Hawai'i university selected, the team will launch in Alabama on May 3 after nine months of preparation.

[Learn More](#)



HPU Hosts First Peer-Reviewed Journal in Its 60-Year History

HPU has become the new home of the *International Journal of Telerehabilitation*, a biannual, open-access journal well-respected for advancing research in rehabilitation professions, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and audiology.

[Read This](#)



Study Reveals Dominant Stranding Threat to Honu

New research at HPU reveals that entanglement in monofilament fishing gear is now the leading cause of injury in stranded Hawaiian green sea turtles (honu), a threatened species. The co-authored research article was recently published in the *Marine Pollution Bulletin*.

[More Info](#)



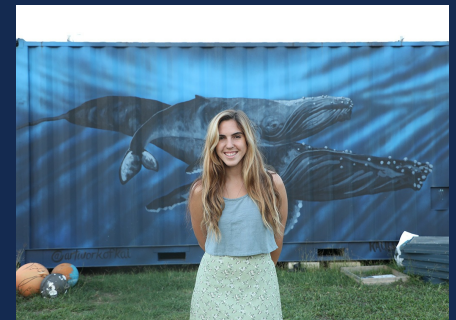
Discover the Latest at HPU's eSports Arena

HPU's state-of-the-art eSports Arena at Aloha Tower Marketplace is the first and only facility of its kind in Hawai'i. This summer, the Arena will host esports and gaming camps for youth aged 9-16.



HPU Presents the Hawai'i State Economics Challenge (HSEC)

For the third year in a row, HPU hosted HSEC at its Aloha Tower Marketplace campus, bringing together top high school economics students from across the islands for an exciting day of competition and academic achievement.



Championing Ocean Conservation through Community Advocacy

Pilina Kanaloa Ocean Day at the Hawai'i State Capitol has become a cornerstone event for Hawai'i's ocean conservation community, and a driving force behind it is HPU alumna Carissa Cabrera '18. Now in its third year, the event focuses on outreach and advocacy.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Alum Omer Acar '95, and his Secret to Success: Joy, Trust, and Service



HPU Alum Omer Acar Stands at the Intersection of Happiness and Success

If there's one thing to know about HPU alumnus Omer Acar, it's that he has spent his entire career at the intersection of happiness and success, helping to shape some of the world's most iconic luxury hotels with a deep understanding of culture, service, and leadership. Acar's life and career are defined by his curiosity, adaptability, and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

Born in Istanbul, Turkey, Acar moved to Switzerland after high school to study hotel management. He trained in kitchen and room service,

Alumni Involvement

The HPU alumni 'ohana is worldwide, all opportunities are available in-person or virtually. We encourage you to consider how you can contribute your time and talents to support our students. Your involvement can have a lasting impact on student personal and professional growth.

HPU Connect

HPU Connect makes it easy to get in touch with fellow alumni and support current students. Every HPU member adds value and prestige to our community.

[Sign Up Today!](#)

Career Connections

Networking, mentorship opportunity, and continued involvement with the HPU campus.

[Learn More Here!](#)

Upcoming Events:

Mindmasters: The Data-Driven Science of Predicting and Changing Human Behavior
Tuesday, May 13
9:00 a.m. PDT
[More Info Here](#)

immersing himself in the foundational aspects of hospitality. His journey led him to Hawai'i, where he pursued a bachelor's degree in business administration at HPU. Acar chose HPU for its rich diversity and unique opportunity to explore the blend of cultures that defines Hawai'i.

"I wanted to understand different cultures at a young age. The U.S. travel culture, the Asian cultural influence, and how important that is in Hawai'i and how beautifully all cultures blend together to create an extraordinary paradise," Acar said. "Hawai'i is a melting pot in the middle of the Pacific. I knew then that I could discover and experience a rainbow of cultures at HPU."

[Full Article](#)

How to Become the Manger You Want to Be (and Others Need)

Tuesday, May 20

9:00 a.m. PDT

[More Info Here](#)

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