

KAI ULU

HPU Alumni Currents

A Message from Dean Amy Nguyen-Chyung: Shaping the Future: Entrepreneurial and Globally Minded Education

Aloha HPU Alumni,

It's a true honor to greet you as the new Dean of the College of Business at Hawai'i Pacific University. Since stepping into this role on July 1, I've been energized by the possibilities that lie ahead—not only for the college, but for all HPU students, faculty, and alumni.

Higher education is undergoing significant change. Pressures on institutions, rapid advancements in technology, shifting student needs and global trends are reshaping how we teach and learn. Business education, in particular, is being redefined by new formats and the ever-changing nature of work. Amid all the challenges, there's also an opportunity for us to make strategic choices about where we will rise to meet the evolving needs of the market.

Before my official start, I had the privilege of collaborating with university leadership on a few key initiatives—most notably the launch of the John F. Scarpa Entrepreneurial Pathway, featured in this issue of *Kai Ulu*, and introduced in our recent [press release](#). Coordinated from the College of Business, this university-wide initiative will embed entrepreneurial thinking across all disciplines at HPU.

Our aim is to instill skills such as dealing with ambiguity, creative problem-solving, experimentation, and collaboration in teams—tools essential for navigating a rapidly changing world. It's about preparing future leaders who can innovate, adapt, and thrive in any environment



Amy Nguyen-Chyung Ph.D.,
Dean of the College of Business
at Hawai'i Pacific University

[Full Message](#)

PRESS RELEASE



Hawai'i Pacific University Receives \$700K Gift to Launch the 'John F. Scarpa Entrepreneurial Pathway'

Hawai'i Pacific University (HPU) has received a transformative \$700,000 gift from entrepreneur and broadcast visionary John F. Scarpa to launch the John F. Scarpa Entrepreneurial Pathway. This dynamic new initiative is designed to ignite innovation and entrepreneurship across every field of study at HPU, empowering students to become bold creators and problem-solvers, equipping them with the tools and confidence to turn ideas into impact in a rapidly changing world.



The Scarpa initiative brings together a suite of interconnected programs to engage HPU students and faculty members. Key components include competitive student challenges, faculty innovation grants, an entrepreneurial pathway board, and an entrepreneur-in-residence program, all crafted to infuse entrepreneurial thinking across the University community.



Scarpa is a dedicated philanthropist and visionary entrepreneur who co-founded the American Cellular Network Corporation, the first publicly traded cellular company in the U.S., and UNITEL, where he brought cellular service to rural areas across the U.S. Through the work of the John F. Scarpa Foundation, he has made transformative contributions to education, healthcare, and community development. In 2024, Scarpa was awarded an honorary doctorate at HPU. His support has established key academic and research centers at institutions such as Villanova University, Stockton University, and now HPU.

THE CURRENTS

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[Nursing Students Complete Tokyo Immersion](#)

[Students Investigate Marine Toxins Affecting Hawai'i's Reef Fish](#)

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Join Us as We Celebrate HPU's 60th Anniversary!



“We are incredibly grateful to John Scarpa for his groundbreaking gift, which will leave an indelible mark on HPU and the future of our students and faculty,” said HPU President John Gotanda. “This initiative will bring entrepreneurial thinking to the forefront of HPU, empowering faculty and students to embrace innovation, take risks, and tackle the challenges of the future. Through programs like Faculty Change Makers and student hands-on challenges and competitions, the John F. Scarpa Entrepreneurial Pathway will transform how entrepreneurialism is taught and practiced at HPU.”



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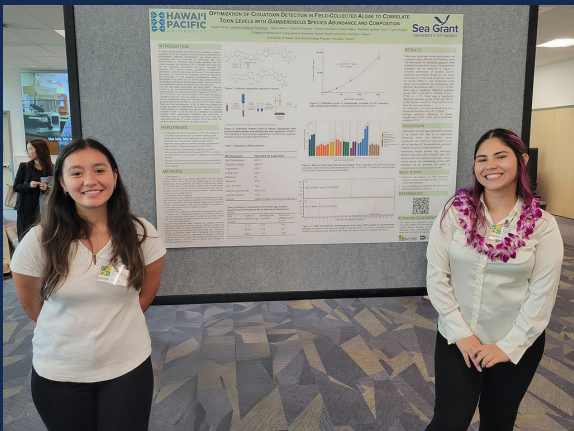
THE CURRENTS



Nursing Students Complete Tokyo Immersion

Six HPU nursing students explored Japan’s healthcare system and engaged in interprofessional learning during a cultural immersion at Tokyo Women’s Medical University. They were joined by faculty members Joy Bliss, Ph.D., RN, and Jo Wakayama, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC.

[Learn More](#)



Students Investigate Marine Toxins Affecting Hawai‘i’s Reef Fish

HPU student researchers are studying marine toxins linked to ciguatera poisoning in Hawai‘i’s reef fish. Led by natural science faculty member Matthew Iacchei, Ph.D., in collaboration with F. David Horgen, Ph.D., the project aims to better understand the underreported illness and support future monitoring and prevention efforts.

[Read This](#)



Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) Team Serves in St. Lucia

HPU OTD students traveled to St. Lucia for a service-learning trip focused on supporting children with developmental delays. Guided by faculty members Emerson Hart, Ph.D., OTR/L, BCP, and Patty Coker-Bolt, Ph.D., OTR/L, FNAP/FAOTA, the team collaborated with two of the island’s keystone institutions for therapeutic education.



Doctor of Clinical Psychology (PsyD) Program Granted Accreditation

HPU’s PsyD program has been granted accreditation, on contingency, from the American Psychological Association (APA)—becoming the second APA-accredited PsyD program in Hawai‘i. Directed by Vincent Tsushima, Ph.D., the program reflects HPU’s commitment to academic excellence and training future clinical psychologists.

[Learn More](#)

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

HPU Alumnus Brian Harrell ‘02,‘03 Defends the Grid and Shapes National Security



As Hawai‘i Pacific University celebrates its 60th anniversary and the collective impact of its alumni around the world, Brian Harrell ’02, ’03 stands out as a powerful example of that legacy in action.

When Harrell thinks back on his time at HPU, he sees it as the bedrock of his decades-long career in national security and energy resilience. “It’s been the foundation of everything I’ve done,” he said. “Whether it was the class sizes, the personal attention, or the instructors’ subject matter expertise, the quality of education at HPU continues to surpass peer institutions, which creates an excellent return on investment.”

Harrell earned both an AA in 2002 and a BA in 2003 both in Justice Administration. He was serving in the Marine Corps in Kaneohe Bay at the time and credits the programs’ intimate format for setting him up for success.

“The availability of in-person classes allowed me to work full-time while having plenty of options to engage with fellow students, study, and complete my degrees,” he said. “HPU is a leader in national security education given its strategic Pacific location, access to military and policy experts, and its powerful alumni network all over the globe. Its influence will continue to grow as conflicts and technologies shape our future.”

Harrell also emphasized how his HPU experience prepared him for the real-world challenges of operating in such a dynamic industry. “National security, and specifically energy security, is central to our way of life. Living in a first-world country, we have an expectation that when we hit the light switch, the lights come on every time, uninterrupted,” he said.

“Yet, we have hackers and nation-state adversaries who would love to attack our way of life and cause major disruptions to local systems and the larger power grid for the United States. I’m happy to report that we have groups in government and industry that work hard every single day to keep the lights on, keep attackers at bay, and invest in the safety and security of our critical infrastructure.”

[Full Article](#)

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:

Enhancing Managerial Skills and Promoting Neurodiversity in the Workplace
Wednesday, August 13th
9:00 a.m. PDT
[More Info Here](#)

Stop Networking, Start Thriving: Building Career-Propelling Circles of Collaboration
Tuesday, August 19th
9:00 a.m. PDT
[More Info Here](#)

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*Celebrating **60 Years**
of Innovation*

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