JABSOM Students Recognized During UH President’s Address

University of Hawai‘i President M.R.C. Greenwood delivered the first “State of the University” address to a joint session of the Hawai‘i State Legislature on Feb. 3. During her remarks, President Greenwood recognized JABSOM’s student volunteers who provide medical services to the homeless community.

“Three times a week, students from the UH John A. Burns School of Medicine’s Homeless Outreach and Medical Education (H.O.M.E.) Project load up their van and head out to provide free medical care at O‘ahu shelters,” said President Greenwood. “On holidays, special events are planned to ensure that homeless children enjoy festivities, and they are not excluded from conversations at school about how they celebrated Halloween and Christmas.”

JABSOM’s student volunteers run and manage clinics at homeless shelters in Kaka‘ako, Wai‘anae and Kalaeloa, under the supervision of H.O.M.E. program founder, Associate Professor Dr. Jill Omori of the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. Medical student volunteers Taryn Park, Scott Harvey, Kate Pettigrew, Brad Tokeshi and Brandon Au stood to be recognized by President Greenwood during her address, prompting warm applause from members of the House and Senate.

For the full text of the President’s speech, see: www.hawaii.edu/offices/op/2010/0203-address.html

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JABSOM TO INCREASE CLASS SIZE
A Message from Dean Jerris Hedges

Aloha kākou,

We start the 2010 New Year with much hope and awareness of the challenges we collectively face. The ALOHA (Attain Lasting Optimal Health for All) vision for the John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) requires that our faculty, staff, and administration work closely together toward a common purpose. Our ability to meet today’s challenges also requires strengthening the partnerships we have developed with many local, state and federal entities.

Collaboration is vital

In the past year, the school’s administration dialedogged with the hospital leadership of our partner institutions – including Kuakini Medical Center, The Queen’s Medical Center, Kapi‘olani Medical Center for Women & Children (Hawai‘i Pacific Health), Wahiawa Medical Center, Hilo Medical Center, Tripler Army Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, the Veterans Administration Medical Center and the Castle Medical Center. Our shared purpose is to strengthen JABSOM’s educational programs while contributing both to future workforce needs and treating current patients.

Only by partnering and aligning with our affiliated teaching hospitals can we expand our vital training and service contributions. Federal and state funds for medical education are insufficient to provide the faculty and trainee support that the medical school needs to address the physician workforce shortage we already are facing in this state.

Increasing class without new state funding

Although other educational systems have estimated that the marginal cost to educate one additional medical student in a rigorous allopathic (M.D.) educational program is roughly $90,000 per year (state support plus tuition), we have made a commitment this July to increase our class size from the current 62 students per class to 64. The increase is modest but it comes at a time when the school’s budget during this academic/fiscal year (FY 2010) was reduced by about $3.5M. This will take commitment from our faculty, staff, and administrators. Given an existing physician workforce deficit in Hawai‘i and strong indicators that the deficit will grow over the next decade, we must work with our partners. In so doing, the people of our state will benefit from our initiative to train more providers and ensure that further growth can occur.

Mahalo for your cooperation and commitment.

Your efforts on behalf of the school are appreciated and will help us succeed in this ALOHA challenge.
NIH Recognizes Dr. Mau in National Video Resource

by Tina Shelton

Dr. Marjorie Mau, Professor and longtime former chair of the Department of Native Hawaiian Health (DNHH), is being featured in the "Biomedical Faces of Science" program by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). She is only one of nine NIH-funded scientists across the US selected for this honor.

A film crew from Washington, D.C. traveled to Hawai‘i to follow her for two days last fall. They accompanied her to some of the places where she treats patients, including The Queen’s Medical Center and all the way to Moloka‘i. Dr. Mau’s film will help inspire students in middle and high school to consider a career in health sciences and will be available at the NIH Welcome Center and website.

A major focus of Dr. Mau’s career continues to be the prevention and control of diabetes mellitus and associated health disparities in Native Hawaiians and other ethnic populations.

She is the Principal Investigator and Director of the Center for Native and Pacific Health Disparities Research. The Center’s long-term goal is to eliminate health disparities experienced by Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Peoples and to promote health equity for all. Native Hawaiians, for example, are twice as likely to have diabetes and nearly 5.7 times more likely to die from diabetes or its complications than Caucasians in Hawai‘i.

DNHH is the only department in a U.S.-accredited medical school dedicated to the health of a native population. The department’s major contributions to the JABSOM include educating students from diverse backgrounds to become physicians who will work with medically underserved communities; conducting health disparities research studies and programs; providing community outreach of health care services; and teaching in Native Hawaiian and medically underserved communities in Hawai‘i and the Pacific region.

$3 Million for Native Hawaiian Center of Excellence
At least nine jobs to be created

The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM) has received more than $3 million to fund the Native Hawaiian Center of Excellence (NHCOE) through June 2012.

The new funding creates at least six faculty and three staff positions this year to carry out initiatives aimed at recruiting and retaining Native Hawaiian students in medicine and other health professions in Hawai‘i.

Native Hawaiians under-represented

"Native Hawaiians are highly underrepresented in health professions careers, particularly in medicine," said Dr. Nanette Judd, Director for JABSOM’s NHCOE and Director for JABSOM’s Imi Hō‘ola Post-Baccalaureate Program. "The vision of the Center of Excellence is to promote the physical and mental health of all Native Hawaiians by improving the recruitment and retention of health professionals of Native Hawaiian ancestry."

Judd explained NHCOE will link with partners which help prepare students to enter health professional schools. The partners included in the affiliation agreements include ‘Ahaulu O Na Kaua (the Association of Native Hawaiian Physicians); Kipuka, the Native Hawaiian Student Center at UH Hilo; the Office of Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity at UH Mānoa; Papa Ola Lokahi’s Native Hawaiian Health Organization and Native Hawaiian Scholarship Program and the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at UH Mānoa.

Part of the Department of Native Hawaiian Health

The NHCOE, established more than 15 years ago, is part of the UH medical school’s Department of Native Hawaiian Health. The new funding, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions, will support research, faculty and student development, cultural competency training, informational resources and networking. The NHCOE also allows the medical school to pursue endowment funds which may spin-off additional projects and funding.

Dr. Judd recognized the assistance of former NHCOE Director Benjamin Young, MD, in seeking the new grant. "We couldn’t have done it without him," said Judd.

National HRSA Administrator Visits JABSOM
Agency provides millions in Hawai‘i for health care

The Administrator of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) visited the John A. Burns School of Medicine recently. Mary Wakefield, PhD, RN, met with Vice Dean Satoru Iizutsu, Associate Dean Roy Magnusson, Dean of Nursing and Dental Hygiene at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Mary Boland and staff.

HRSA is the primary federal agency dedicated to improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated in rural communities or medically vulnerable.

Last year, HRSA distributed more than $66 million to Hawai‘i in 27 awards. Among them, the nearly $1 million grant to the Department of Native Hawaiian Health’s Native Hawaiian Center of Excellence, along with other JABSOM programs supporting education and training through the Department of Medicine and Complementary and Alternative Medicine. Nursing programs at UH Mānoa and UH Hilo receive major support as well.