

High School Students Graduate with College Credit

By Leslie Lang

When three senior high school students graduate from Hawai'i Island's Kanu o ka 'Aina New Century Public Charter School in Waimea on May 27th, it will be their second graduation ceremony in a month. Two weeks before, the three marched in the Hawai'i Community College (HCC) commencement, where each received a Hawai'i Life Styles academic subject certificate.

Ka'ihikapu Maiku'i, Marché Matsumura and Jetamio Henshaw all completed HCC's Early College "Running Start" program, which allows students to earn the academic certificate by successfully completing at least four courses and 13 college credits while still in high school.

Five students from Ke Kula 'o 'Ehunuikaimalino in Kealahou and one from West Hawai'i Explorations Academy in Kailua-Kona also received the certificate.

The Kanu o ka 'Aina students took some of their HCC courses online, and others were taught by HCC instructors right on the Kanu o ka 'Aina campus. Part of the charter school's mission is to serve the community, and it opened the

HCC classes held on its campus to college students in the area.

Blossom Pualani Lincoln Maileua, a Hawai'i Life Styles instructor at HCC's Pālanui campus, taught some of the courses. She says the Kanu o ka 'Aina students brought to class a knowledge of Hawaiian culture and a deep understanding of place.

"The traditional college students raise the bar as far as the expectation of work," she says, "and the Kanu students raise the bar as far as the understanding and acknowledgment of culture. They are actually more competent [in that] than some of the students that have been in college for a few years now.

"It's an interesting dynamic," she says. "It's actually one of my favorite situations to teach in. It's really an awesome package that only happens at Kanu, because Kanu's the only school that allows the community to sit in on these classes."

She commends the high school students for meeting college-level expectations. "On the high school level, for the most part – and not in a bad way – there's a lot of babying

and coddling of the students. But on the college level, it's very different."

HCC's Pālanui Campus Counselor Raynette Halemau-Kam agrees, saying Running Start students get the whole college experience from beginning to end. "They have to apply like everybody else," she says, "and take various assessments, and get all their immunizations. They are treated like a regular college student."

Students that continue in the University of Hawai'i system can apply their Hawai'i Life Styles credits toward their college degree. At other schools, most of the credits will likely transfer as an elective

or a humanities credit, says Lincoln.

Seventeen-year-old Kanu o ka 'Aina student Marché Matsumura will study criminology and criminal justice at Chaminade University in the fall, and says she is more comfortable now about what to expect. "You can't mess around as much as in high school," she says. "Deadlines are important in college. I'm a little more at peace with

going now, because I know I have some background."

Jetamio Henshaw, 18, will attend UH Hilo in the fall to study marine science. "Last semester I took two online courses on top of my schooling and work," she says, "and it was hard, but those classes really helped me get motivated."

"I totally recommend the program. It was really helpful. The classes all pertained to Hawai'i and Hawai'i mo'olelo, and it helped me decide to stay here and continue to find out about those mo'olelo."

Ka'ihikapu Maiku'i, 17, will start in the fall at Hawai'i Pacific University, where she plans to study pre-health, human science and

biology with the goal of becoming a doctor. "I thought it would be a great opportunity to get a feel of what college would be like at a young age," she says, "and to learn skills of how to balance work.

"In college you're kind of on your own, so you learn independence and self-discipline. I did about three classes online, and I needed to find motivation to get online, watch lectures and do the homework. At first it was pretty scary. But I ended up liking doing online classes because I can learn at my own pace."

She says she would tell any student to take advantage of the opportunity to get college credits while still in high school. "If you're planning to stay in the UH system," she says, "these class will count as an elective, so you're actually saving money while being educated in our Hawaiian culture."

Halemau-Kam says she too encourages high school students to take college courses. "It gives students a head start," she says. "They're that much further ahead in graduating from college. I see only positive things coming out of it." ■

Leslie Lang is a freelance writer/editor who often writes about Hawai'i's culture, business and travel.



From left to right, Ka'ihikapu Maiku'i, Jetamio Hokulani Henshaw, and Marche Kamaleipilalo Matsumura - Photo: Courtesy of Kanu o ka 'Aina

College students build new home for DHHL beneficiaries

By Ka Wai Ola staff

The Sukanuma 'ohana has a new custom-built home in Keaukaha, thanks to students from Hawai'i Community College.

The Sukanuma home is the 49th built through the Hawai'i Community College Model Home Program, which provides instruction in drafting, welding, carpentry, electrical and landscaping while helping the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands meet its mission of returning beneficiaries to the land.

Thanks to the decades-old partnership between DHHL and HawCC, the Sukanuma



Po'ai Sukanuma

mas were able to afford a three-bedroom, two-bath home in the Hawaiian homestead community of Keaukaha. The house, which cost the family \$192,250, includes energy-efficient features, such as a solar water heater system, a four-kilowatt photovoltaic system and Energy Star qualified appliances.

New homeowners Elton "Tui" and Patricia Sukanuma and their son Po'ai attended the dedication for their new home last month. "We didn't think we could afford

it, let alone a home this beautiful," Po'ai said. "If this is what you guys do as students, what you guys do after is going to be something else."

HawCC students did more than build the home. The traditional dedication ceremony, called moku ka piko (cutting of the umbilical cord) was performed by students in the Hawaiian Lifestyles Program at the college. Agriculture students used native plants to landscape the home.

Since the Model Home program was launched in 1965, nearly 4,000 students have acquired on-the-job training in drafting, welding, carpentry, electrical, agricultural and diesel mechanics. ■



Students from the Hawaiian Lifestyles Program at Hawai'i Community College performed a traditional Hawaiian ceremony at the dedication of the Sukanuma's new home. - Photos: Courtesy of DHHL