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CULTIVATING PACIFIC STUDIES IN KO‘OLAULOA

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Cultivating Pacific Studies in Ko‘olauloa

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Pacific Studies is an interdisciplinary field that began in the twentieth century in Australia, Aotearoa, and the United States (Mawyer et al., 2020). The field sought to understand the area and region of Oceania, but later, many scholars took more critical approaches to Pacific Studies. These approaches have provided more perspectives from those connected to and in relation to Oceania. The authors provide a historical account of Pacific Studies being introduced into Hawai‘i (first within the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and the University of Hawai‘i-West O‘ahu) to then illustrate how it has become situated within the Ko‘olauloa region of O‘ahu where Brigham Young University-Hawai‘i (BYUH) is located. The purpose of sharing this historical account of Pacific Studies in Hawai‘i, and more specifically BYUH, is to provide invaluable insights into the evolution of the academic discipline. There is a deeper appreciation for the present state of Pacific Studies and its potential future direction when past decisions and outcomes are recognized and understood within institutions and places. The authors look forward to fostering transparency, critical reflection, and informing decision-making processes to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the Pacific Studies field.

Ainsley Aiono, of Samoan heritage, was born and raised in the continental United States. When deciding which college/university to attend, she selected Brigham Young University-Hawai‘i (BYUH) because the university was situated in the Pacific and because she desired to learn more about herself as a Pacific Islander. She began her journey as a double major in Social Work and Anthropology, but after taking a few courses in Pacific Islands Studies¹, she found a program where she could engage and build her knowledge of Oceania. In Aiono’s junior year, she declared Pacific Islands Studies as her major and Social Work, Political Science, and Anthropology as minors. Aiono believes that this major has allowed her to navigate systems and spaces with a Pacific mindset. She has learned to build relations across racial/ethnic identity lines and move with a sense of confidence in her own identity while ensuring she is mindful of the Pacific communities she represents and the cultural spaces she occupies.

¹ In this article, the authors refer to this field of study, specifically at BYUH, as Pacific Islands Studies and Pacific Studies. This differentiation is historic as it was originally named “Pacific Islands Studies” and then renamed “Pacific Studies” following an organizational restructure. This change is also reflected in the Jonathan Nāpela Center for Hawaiian & Pacific Studies, originally known as the Jonathan Nāpela Center for Hawaiian and Pacific Islands Studies, which houses Pacific Studies.

Pacific Studies is an international, interdisciplinary, cross-cultural field of study that draws upon diverse fields (such as anthropology, archaeology, art, creative writing, geography, history, linguistics, literature, performance studies, political science, sociology and more) (Center for Learning and Teaching, 2014; Mawyer et al., 2020). The importance of Pacific Studies allows those within the field to prioritize Pacific cultures and place-based knowledge to better allow Indigenous stories, experiences, and truths to emerge. Aiono recognized that throughout her academic journey, Pacific and Indigenous epistemologies were not readily available to her, and this is/has been the case for many who receive a tertiary education. To have the opportunity to learn and critically articulate one's positionality through a Pacific lens provides ways to magnify Pacific perspectives. It validates Pacific thought and challenges the dominant narratives that have limited Pacific voices without a canon of indigenous Pacific epistemologies, ontologies, and pedagogies in tertiary educational systems.

In this article, we will provide a context of historical knowledge regarding Pacific Studies and its role within O'ahu, Hawai'i, to then better situate the inception of Pacific Studies in the Ko'olauloa region of the island. We will also share how Pacific Studies has grown and the efforts made (and currently being made) to bring the relevance of the field to those within BYUH, the larger community of Ko'olauloa, and beyond the tertiary institution and region. By understanding these nuanced beginnings of Pacific Studies throughout institutions in O'ahu, and especially at BYUH (which is located in Ko'olauloa), we can come to understand better: 1) the need and relevance of the field to connect the Pacific to the larger global community, 2) how to potentially include Pacific Studies in some format (e.g., a course, certificate, minor, major) within other institutions, and 3) how Pacific Studies is vital to the lives of Pacific peoples like building confidence in their identity and culture but also for those seeking to build relations with the Pacific and her peoples.

Pacific Studies on O'ahu, Hawai'i

To recognize how Pacific Studies became visible as an academic pursuit within the Ko'olauloa region, it is vital to understand how Pacific Studies emerged in Hawai'i and primarily on O'ahu, where there are many tertiary institutions that have a history and interest in the field. We will focus on three institutions that have incorporated Pacific Studies: the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (which formed the Center for Pacific Islands Studies [CPIS]), the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, and Brigham Young University – Hawaii.

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Center for Pacific Islands Studies

The Pacific was reimagined in the post-World War II era, when tertiary institutions, governments, and researchers claimed the region needed to be investigated, cataloged, and photographed. This reimagining led to creating the Pacific Islands Studies discipline housed in the president's office of the College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts of the Territory of Hawai'i (CAMA) in 1950. The CAMA was a neglected and disregarded American-Pacific tertiary education institution. Although established as a land grant² agricultural and mechanical arts school, it lacked land, legislative or soft money, staff, faculty, and students. The treatment of the American-

² U.S. President Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act establishing land grant colleges for classroom education, agricultural stations to research data for farmers, and extension services on July 2, 1862 (Milestone Documents, 2022).

Pacific institution mirrored the treatment of Hawai'i by the U.S. Congress in 1950 as simply a pineapple or sugar plantation within the occupied territory of the United States. The CAMA President's Office housed and offered the Pacific Islands Studies program, original coursework focused upon the grants and interests of Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum scientists (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Pacific Islands Studies, n.d.). Colonial occupation was the political backdrop to the creation of tertiary education systems, and on August 21, 1959, Hawai'i became the 50th state and remains an occupied state of the U.S.³

In 1972, CAMA was renamed the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). Soon after, the Pacific Islands Studies program was renamed the Center for Pacific Islands Studies (CPIS) in the Center for Asian and Pacific Studies (Quigg, 1987). As the university gained academic recognition in Hawai'i, funding was injected into this skeleton operations program. Norman Meller, program director, feverishly applied for grants at a critical time when Americans feared falling behind Soviet science and space programs. The timing of urban-centered federally funded programs, such as the Pacific Islands Development program (PIDP) in the East West Center (EWC) and the Pacific Basin Development Council, catapulted Pacific affairs into coordinating bodies of regional significance and international interest to address geopolitics in the Pacific region.

In 1978, Robert Kiste was hired from University of Minnesota to build the program. He was the director for 24 years (Kiste, 2008). Kiste (2008) credits the opportune timing of dedication to Pacific affairs. He writes,

There is no doubt the Pacific was neglected at the UH [University of Hawai'i], and I happened to benefit from the same wave of interest that created the Pacific Basin Development Council, Pacific Telecommunications Council, and PIDP. The relationship between PIDP and CPIS is as strong as it's ever been because there's a good number of students financed here. And a number of them are taking the master's degree in Pacific Islands studies... There are always EWC staff and researchers who are on the graduate student committees throughout the entire UH. That's really an important tie, the UH continually draws up talent at the EWC. (p. 10)

University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu, Hawaiian-Pacific Studies

In the 1960s, the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents believed UHM would exceed its carrying capacity in the urban center of Honolulu. Consequently, UH began a program to build new campuses throughout O'ahu to accommodate the growing student body (Kormondy, 2010). In 1976, West O'ahu College enrolled its first 75 students who attended classes in high school facilities before being relocated to an office building in 'Aiea. Four years later, the "campus" moved near to Leeward Community College (LCC) in Pearl City. Between 1976 and 2007, the UH System included 3 universities, 7

³ In a letter, the deposed Queen Lili'uokalani of Hawai'i protests the U.S. assertion of ownership without due process or just compensation to U.S. House of Representatives. This was the backdrop on July 7, 1898, when the Hawaiian Islands were annexed to the United States by a joint resolution of Congress after American businessmen and Christian leaders imprisoned the sovereign (The Center for Legislative Archives, 2021). This is still recognized as an illegal annexation.

community colleges, and community-based learning centers across Hawai'i (University of Hawai'i, 2024). The practice was to cycle UH community college students through West O'ahu College to complete the last two years of degree requirements at one of the universities.

West O'ahu College was renamed to University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu (UHWO) in 1989. While still housed in prefabricated structures next to LCC, and in anticipation of moving to the new westside campus in Kapolei⁴, UHWO secured several tenure track positions to meet the expected high student enrollment in the degree programs (Kormondy, 2010). Eventually, in 2012, UHWO built its own campus on former sugarcane land on the west side of Kapolei (Kormondy, 2010). During the mid-2000s, Ross Cordy, Branch Chief of Archaeology, was hired from the Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Division (Archaeology Branch), Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiaava-Doktor was hired from the Department of Geography at UHM, and Leilani Basham was hired after she completed her doctorate studies in Political Science at UHM. They worked tirelessly to establish the only combined Hawaiian-Pacific Studies program in Hawai'i. Cordy and Lilomaiaava-Doktor created the foundations of the Pacific Islands Studies curriculum, while Basham created the foundations of Hawaiian Studies. Basham wholeheartedly supported the Pacific Islands Studies program, which is very important to an Indigenous-serving institution that prioritizes the needs of the communities of the Leeward Coast. UHWO confers a bachelor's degree in Humanities with a concentration in Hawaiian-Pacific studies (University of Hawai'i West O'ahu, n.d.).

Genealogical Roots of Pacific Studies in Ko'olauloa, O'ahu

Ko'olauloa district is located in the northeastern district of O'ahu, stretching from Waimea Bay in the north to Ka'a'awa on the windward (east) coast. The genealogical oral traditions, as recorded in the Kumulipo chant, present the time of pō, when deities lived before the eighth era, which then ushered in ao and human life (Lili'uokalani, 2021). Among these deities were Kāne and Kanaloa, who lived in Kalaiokahipa (now known as Kahuku). Hawaiian deities possess kino lau, or many body forms. One of Kāne's kino lau is a freshwater (or a freshwater spring) for drinking and mixing 'awa⁵. Other Kāne kino lau are sunlight, coral, pōhaku o Kāne⁶, lightning, thunder, and rainbows, while Kanaloa provides the kino lau of the ocean and an abundance of marine life to Ko'olauloa (Revilla, 2016).

The geological creation of O'ahu in Hawaiian folklore derives from the powers of Pelehonuamea, the deity of the volcano and fire and whose kino lau is lava.⁷ The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Volcanology identifies the two volcanoes that

⁴ At this time, Kapolei was developed as a "second city" to primarily serve residents of West O'ahu (i.e., the Wai'anae Coast, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, Makakilo, and Waipahu) as these communities were among the fastest growing on O'ahu.

⁵ 'Awa (*Piper methysticum*), or kava, is used in sacred, formal ceremonies. It's used to welcome visitors, resolve disputes, and reinforce social norms. In informal ceremonies, it's used to develop and reinforce social ties among peers.

⁶ Pōhaku o Kāne is a slab-shaped or pointed stone which stands upright. It is considered to be a male entity.

⁷ These knowledges were first told to author Kruse as a young girl in hula by her kumu hula, Aunty Sunday Kamauoha Mariteragi in Napuananionapalionakoolau hālau (dance group). Aunty Sunday also told us these knowledges of Kāne and Kanaloa when we would pick flowers and leaves in Hau'ula for Lā'ie Elementary School's May Day. Protocol during the collection of flowers and leaves were important for our hālau. We were told to pick with gratitude and little noise and never to leave rubbish.

birthed the island of O‘ahu (Rubin, 2018). The Ko‘olau caldera in the northeastern district formed about 1.8 to 2.7 million years ago, and the Waianae caldera in the southeastern district formed about 2.9 to 2.9 million years ago (Rubin, 2018). Ko‘olauloa is the cradle of fresh water (life) and the partial birthplace of the island of O‘ahu. The Ko‘olauloa district is the birthplace of land creation and water, which makes it a fitting home for a Pacific Islands Studies program.

Brigham Young University--Hawaii (BYUH) in Lā‘ie is a tertiary educational institution nestled in the shadows of the Ko‘olauloa mountain range.⁸ The Pacific Studies program at BYUH has a complex history of seen and unseen battlefields, with advocates in support and those who felt uncertain about the discipline. The political and ideological battles ensued over the perceived value of “cultural area” studies as needful disciplines within a small liberal arts institution. Native Hawaiian advocates and non-Native Hawaiian allies fought and successfully established the Hawaiian Studies program. In their struggle to create a Hawaiian Studies program, their efforts to achieve academic sovereignty and a place for Native Hawaiians to learn about Native Hawaiian history and language led to the support and autonomy of a Pacific Islands Studies program.

Brigham Young University--Hawaii⁹, Pacific Islands Studies

Lā‘ie is named after the mo‘olelo of Lā‘ieikawai and Lā‘ielohelohe, the beautiful twin daughters of Malaekahana and Kahauokapaka. Their births were announced by two loud claps of thunder (Aikau, 2008). Malaekahana hid Lā‘ielohelohe at Kūkaniloko in Wahiawā, and Lā‘ieikawai hid at Wai‘āpuka out of fear that Kahauokapa’s desire for a male heir may threaten their survival.

Lā‘ie and the Church College of Hawaii is believed by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to be a blessed land, “divinely chosen by God as a gathering place for the Saints in the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands” (Davis, 1993, p. 94). In January 1865, Lā‘ie was bought for USD \$14,000 from former American consul Thomas T. Dougherty and has since been described as the gathering place for the Saints (Monson, 2011; Pack, 1896; Spurrier, 1981; Wallace, 2002).^{10 11} The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Church) built the Lā‘ie Plantation Sugar Mill (sugar and molasses), plantation store, homes, roads, two artesian wells, and a religious meetinghouse close to two Hawaiian cultural sites (Berge, 1986). In 1955, the Church opened the Church College of Hawaii (CCH) as a two-year tertiary institution. Six years later, it became a four-year university. The Polynesian Cultural Center built by the Church on Church land opened on October 12, 1963. Church College of Hawaii was renamed Brigham Young University--Hawaii (BYUH) in 1974. The Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC) has proven significant to the sustainability and financial operations of BYUH and the Church

⁸ Francis A. Hammond bought 6,000 acres of the Lā‘ie ahupua‘a (land division). In December 1864, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints leaders, George Nebecker and Francis Hammond, arrived on O‘ahu to buy land suitable for growing crops such as cotton, sugarcane, rice, and other grains. Nebecker and Hammond also arrived to teach the gospel in Lā‘ie.

⁹ BYUH University Communications requires the name brand of the school to be spelled, Brigham Young University-Hawaii. The University does not use diacritical marks or permit diacritical marks in the Hawaiian language (BYU-Hawaii University Communications, n.d.).

¹⁰ Saints is short form that members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints call themselves.

¹¹ 1,000 acres was used for woodland and pasture for 25 horses, 200 goats, 500 sheep, 500 cattle (Berge, 1986).

because of the work-study program for international students sponsored by BYUH.¹² BYUH and PCC are the largest employers in Koʻolauloa. The economic sustainability to execute mission 13 of BYUH is intertwined with PCC through the work-study program that sponsors students from Pacific and Asian countries, territories, and affiliated states for all IWORk students.

In 1967, Jerry K. Loveland was instrumental in creating the Institute for Polynesian Studies. Later, he was renamed The Pacific Institute and was its first director. Between 1994 and 2007, Eric Shumway became the BYUH President. He secured resources from PCC for the Pacific Institute to strengthen the educational, cultural, and spiritual missions of both PCC and BYUH (McArthur, personal communication, March 14, 2024). Moreover, the Pacific Institute not only established BYUH's only scholarly journal, *Pacific Studies*, but it was also responsible for manuscript publications, special projects, guest speakers, and funding faculty research. The Pacific Institute was led by a full-time director and administrative assistant tasked to create networks, alliances, and a research agenda in Hawai'i and the Pacific region (Brigham Young University Bulletin, 2003).

During this time, the Political Science Department hired the late Jon Tikivanotau Jonassen from the Cook Islands, former secretary general of the South Pacific Commission and secretary for the Ministry of Cultural Development and Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a faculty member (George, 2023). Jonassen taught the first Pacific Islands Studies courses out of the Political Science Department. These courses were Introduction to Pacific Islands Studies, Oceanic Governments, and Regionalism. However, most Pacific Islands Studies classes came from across several academic disciplines offering courses centered on the Pacific. Combined with Jonassen's courses, these classes counted towards completing both majors and minors in Pacific Islands Studies. Originally, Pacific Islands Studies was only offered as a minor, creating a seamless pathway for Pacific Islanders into the Political Science department as majors. Growth in the numbers of Pacific Islanders as both majors in Political Science and minors in Pacific Islands Studies. This pathway was favorable to the growth of the Political Science program within BYUH's mission to educate students from the Pacific region.

To expand the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands Studies programs, BYUH needed more funding to operate the programs and hire faculty. The administration took to raising endowment funds to achieve this need. During this time, BYUH applied for and received a Kellogg Foundation grant of USD \$619,000 to launch Hawaiian Studies and

¹² BYUH Financial Aid and Scholarships website states, "IWORk is a work-study program sponsored by BYU-Hawaii that enables international students to access tertiary education, with an emphasis on students of Oceania and the Asian Rim. Its purpose is to provide financial support to qualified students, enabling them to graduate without debt and be well-prepared to serve and lead in their families, communities, chosen fields, and in building the Kingdom of God. The program is based on the principle of self-reliance, where students take on personal responsibility and accountability by working and contributing a portion of their own educational costs. A student participating in the IWORk program works for 19 hours a week at BYU-Hawaii or the Polynesian Cultural Center. A portion of the income from that job is contributed to pay the student's tuition and fees, housing, and meal plan. An additional contribution, determined by assessment of financial need, is provided by the student and their family. The remaining costs for schooling are covered by funds from BYU-Hawaii" (BYU-Hawaii Financial Aid & Scholarships, n.d.).

to build the traditional sailing canoe, *Iosepa*. Later, after years of determined solicitation, BYUH was able to land upwards of two million dollars from donors (McArthur, personal communication, March 14, 2024). These monies were earmarked for the Pacific Institute and not for the Pacific Islands Studies program housed within the Political Science Department. While the fundraising was in full swing, Jonassen retired and returned home to the Cook Islands. After making initial headway, the Pacific Institute lost much of its funding to a new incoming administration who questioned the value of institutes at the university and sought to redirect the focus away from The Pacific Institute. The endowment became restricted, the director's portfolio was slashed, and the administrative assistant post was eliminated. Similarly, the new administration made overtures to reconsider the value of a Hawaiian Studies program, too. This was a time of great concern about the future viability of both the Pacific Institute and the Pacific Islands Studies program.

BYUH academic colleges changed in 2008, ushering in a new College of Language, Culture & Arts, with Phillip McArthur as dean. McArthur proposed to the new administration folding The Pacific Institute into the Jonathan Nāpela Center for Hawaiian and Pacific Islands Studies, saving Hawaiian Studies and creating a new full-time faculty line for Pacific Islands Studies.

The proposal was to use the Kellogg Foundation grant to build *Iosepa*, fund two Hawaiian Studies faculty positions, and one staff member in Hawaiian Studies with canoe expertise to build the canoe.¹³ William Wallace, the key figure in securing the Kellogg Foundation grant and developing the Hawaiian Studies program, had been teaching in the History program in the Social Science Department. He was moved to Hawaiian Studies to become the first faculty member and appointed its lead. The Kellogg Foundation paid half of Wallace's salary for three years, after which the endowment needed to cover his salary through other soft money. Eventually, a second faculty position was added to provide Hawaiian language instruction. The Kellogg Foundation grant provided the funding to establish the Hawaiian Studies program, but with restrictions that it was not to be used to fund other programs such as Pacific Islands Studies. It was to operate independently using only endowment funding without any additional institutional resources. The Pacific Islands Studies program would have to be operated out of institutional funding.

Hiagi Wesley, a faculty member in the School of Education, was appointed to the first faculty line position in the newly repositioned Pacific Islands Studies program. He would also become the director of the Jonathan Nāpela Center for Hawaiian and Pacific Islands Studies. The new administration approved the newly created Nāpela Center and the faculty reallocation but only allocated to the Pacific Studies program \$2,000 for a supplies budget without any funding for research, conferences, or student activities.

¹³ Master carver and CCH alumnus, Sione Tuione Pulotu (Tongan), carved *Iosepa*, a 57-foot twin-hulled traditional Hawaiian sailing canoe. Kāwika Eskaran was the Hawaiian Studies staff assisting Pulotu in building *Iosepa*. Honored as a "living treasure" in 2005, Pulotu is also known for building other sailing canoes such as the 105-foot Tongan kalia-style sailing canoe, *Mileniume* (Miller, 2005).

Figure 1. The statue of Jonathan Napela and George Q. Cannon is located on the *Brigham Young University-Hawai'i campus*. The *Jonathan Napela Center for Hawaiian and Pacific Studies* is named for Napela. He was an influential Kanaka Māoli who shared cultural aspects, such as language, as ways to be incorporated within a religious context (Kruger, 2020). Photo credit: Chad Hsieh



Over time, the relationship between the new administration and the Hawaiian Studies program became intensely strained over the sailing of the *Iosepa*. Coupling this battle with the fact that the Kellogg Foundation grant and interests paid to the endowment could not cover the cost of all the salaries, the staff position assigned to maintain and sail the canoe would need to be eliminated. Fortunately, this staff member was hired at the PCC, where the canoe was now housed. It came to the point when the endowment could not support the two faculty members as their salary increases were greater than the interest paid, and the principal was being steadily eaten away. The attitude of the succeeding BYUH administration provided a welcome relief when they finally institutionalized the Hawaiian Studies faculty positions.

After being hired as the first-line faculty in Pacific Islands Studies, Wesley created a “pathway” curriculum, mostly continuing to draw across disciplines to satisfy credit requirements for major and minor degrees. As part of the Nāpela Center, Pacific Studies gained visibility and recognition instead of being tucked away in the Political Science Department, albeit still receiving minimal resources and lacked staff and funding. In 2021, Wesley retired, and the new administration hired Michael Lialiga to replace him. Lialiga taught at the University of Otago in Aotearoa. The new administration also decided to allocate a second full-time faculty position to Pacific Islands Studies when they hired at the same time Inoke Hafoka, recent doctoral graduate from the University of California, Los Angeles. They also secured resources to

hire Line-Noue Memea Kruse into a position that would contribute to teaching in the Pacific Islands Studies program and managing editorial responsibilities for the Nāpela Center publications. Still without administrative staff and limited program funding, Hawaiian Studies faculty in Culture, Language, & Performing Arts, Alohalani Housman, became the dean. Housman is a committed advocate for both the Hawaiian Studies and Pacific Islands Studies programs.

In their first year after being hired, these three new members of Pacific Islands Studies restructured the entire academic program. They changed the name of the program from Pacific Islands Studies to Pacific Studies in alignment with other Pacific Studies programs around the world and created a new curriculum.¹⁴ This new curriculum program was highly praised in a self-study report in 2022 and, subsequently, implemented in Fall 2023. It provided a set of core and elective requirements housed and taught within the program itself. This program of study included courses in Recognizing Place, Purpose & Positionality on Native Lands; Indigenous Research Methodologies; Pacific Social Development; Anti-Racism and Belonging: Pacific Dialogue; Peace & Conflict in the Pacific; Sovereignty and Self Governance in Oceania; Women in Oceania. The culmination of these courses led to the internal creation of three clusters in Education, International Law & Policy in Oceania, and Pacific Social Development. These clusters emphasize employing critical Pacific pedagogies, ontologies, and epistemologies to bridge the past with the present within Indigenous spaces of knowledge production (Case, 2020; deGuzman et al., 2011; Diaz & Kauanui, 2001; Kruse, 2021; McGavin, 2023; Thaman, 2003).

This curriculum was initiated to build upon the strong Pacific Studies foundation that Pacific scholars and allies collaborated to situate, cultivate, and establish at BYUH. The program changes are a response to the need for rigor, direction, and perspective from and by those in relation to the Pacific (Teaiwa, 2011). The Pacific Studies program at BYUH, together with the journal, *Pacific Studies*, the Pacific Islands Research Collection in the Joseph F. Smith BYUH library, Nāpela Center, PCC, and the many Pacific faculty, administration, and staff provides a unique community and resources collected over the decades that can be hard to find in other institutions (this does not include the resources and connections to be had beyond the institution and into the communal spaces of the Ko'olauloa region).

The Future of Pacific Studies in Ko'olauloa

Reflecting on the past, we can see how Hawai'i continues to push forward the field of Pacific Studies. The University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu has implemented a push for Pacific languages. 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) has been institutionalized and provides access to engage and enhance one's understanding of this vital knowledge. Samoan language has followed suit, carving out space to provide another Pacific language for students. At the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Pacific Islands Studies (CPIS), they have recently provided a publication series called *Teaching*

¹⁴ The Holokai Modular Curriculum program was introduced in Fall 2017. All majors, minors, and certificates are grouped into three core areas of study: Arts & Humanities, Math & Sciences, and Professional Studies. Students are required to complete their major in one area and a minor/certificate in each of the other two areas. For example, the Pacific Islands Studies majors must pursue a minor or certificate in the Math & Sciences category and a minor/certificate in the Professional Studies category. This new Holokai Modular program has also helped to improve Pacific Studies growth as a major and minor degree program. For more information, please see BYU-Hawaii (n.d.): <https://holokai.byuh.edu/>

Oceania. This collective process through CPIS and cosponsored by Kapi'olani Community College and Brigham Young University-Hawai'i has produced a series that "take[s] advantage of digital technology to enhance texts with embedded multimedia content, thought-provoking images, and interactive graphs" (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Pacific Islands Studies, n.d.b, para. 1).

After graduating from BYUH, Aiono's law school application situated land-based philosophies and native land protectionist experiences from the movement to stop the Kahuku windmills, Kū Kia'i Kahuku as driving motives to attend the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa William S. Richardson School of Law. They saw her value and admitted her to the 2024-2025 entering class. Recognizing Aiono's potential and continual progress through her academic and career journey has pushed Pacific Studies at BYUH to be mindful of future opportunities for students within the program and field. The Pacific Studies program at BYUH intends to also explore and develop an interface between the Humanities and STEM, as well as Indigenous Science or sports law (Wesley-Smith, 2016; Teaiwa, 2011; Teaiwa, 2017). Perhaps this future development may build new relationships and collaborative programs with the local Ko'olauloa community and other entities beyond and explore internships and work opportunities with professional and business schools.

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