Participants (in alphabetical order):
Zenaida Serrano Arvman, Public Information Officer
Maenette Benham, Chancellor
Sheri Ching, Fiscal Manager
Stacey Kelly, Registered Nurse
Lokelani Kenolio, Director of Enrollment Services
Jeffrey Moniz, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Therese Nakadomari, Director of Information Technology
Nancy Nakasone, Director of Human Resources
Christine Neves, Institutional & Admin Support
Gloria Niles, Director of Distance Education
Beverly Orillo, Environmental Health & Safety Specialist
Alan Rosenfeld, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Linda Saiki, Director of Budget
Leila Shimokawa, Director of Communications
Susan Young, Associate Professor in Health Care Administration

Interview:

Zenaida Serrano Arvman: Thank you for joining us for a Q&A with UH West O‘ahu regarding the re-opening of our campus for Fall 2020. The semester starts Aug. 24.

Nationwide colleges and universities are navigating how to re-open their campuses. Here at UH West O‘ahu, we are taking a holistic approach — our focus is the health and wellness of our campus ‘ohana. Let’s start with UH West O‘ahu Chancellor Maenette Benham.

Arvman: Chancellor, when you realized the pandemic would be prolonged into the summer and beyond, what steps did you take?

Maenette Benham: I will admit that I had been watching the COVID outbreak globally prior to April. In fact, on March 12, we had to shut down the campus. It was just as we were entering our spring break and we needed to make decisions about what to do given that COVID had reached the shores of Hawai‘i. And I do recall at that time many of the officers for the UH System and chancellors were discussing whether or not we had to close our campus down, if we were going to put all of our classes online, what we were going to do.

It was a decision at that point that we would pivot during the spring break and put all of our classes online and close down our campus. We thought at the time that we would actually be reopening and we would have graduation ceremonies on our campus in May. We did not anticipate that COVID-19 would be something (that) would define a new normal for all of us.
In April when we began to understand that COVID was with us for the long haul, we began to really take a look at some of the challenges that we were facing, besides closing the campus, there were a number of costs involved. We had to redo graduation. Our communication, we had to get messages out there because it was a very ambiguous time, we knew that people were feeling fearful and uncomfortable with the situation. So there were a number of work groups that we put together. Our team, our emergency team came together and we began to really take a look at what we needed to do moving forward.

Arvman: Can you describe the challenges you faced and how you addressed them?

Benham: Yes, and that’s why I’ve invited the real workers, the real worker bees of our campus, to be on this Zoom call with us. I use an ‘olelo noʻeau to best describe the work that we’ve been doing here on campus and I recently used it in one of my bulletins and it’s: “Aʻohe hana nui ke alu ‘ia!” Basically that means that ‘No task is too big when done together by all.’

And the challenges I have to say could not have been met without the expertise and the commitment and the skill set of all the people on the Zoom call and the folks that they work with. But I will say that operationally there were a lot of stuff we had to do and you can talk with the folks on the Zoom call about how we went about closing the buildings and cleaning them and whatnot. At the same time we put everything online ... Dr. Gloria Niles, Therese Nakadomari, all of the people around IT and education, our vice chancellors, our associate vice chancellor of academics, everyone had to get involved. It was a whole new teaching platform for some of our faculty and many of our students. At the same time, we had to really take a look at cleaning and we had to take a look at different ways of communicating and moving people to more remote areas. So I would like our staff to answer that question. So … let’s ask Gloria and our vice chancellor of academics and associate vice chancellor of academics to talk about what we had to do because we had to put everybody online.

Jeff Moniz: As Maenette was mentioning, it was a real team approach and I'm glad that she called upon Associate Vice Chancellor Alan Rosenfeld and our Director of Distance Learning Gloria Niles to also add to this response. We took a real team approach and the other person who was very instrumental is our scheduler (Princess Soares). We had to move the big task of moving a lot of our courses online or into a hybrid modality. We only ended up with I think three purely face-to-face classes remaining. Everything else has been moved totally online or into some kind of hybrid modality. And it took a lot of hard work. I know, for example, we worked on coming up with the criteria for how we will decide what classes get to be, have a face-to-face component. And a lot of work went into, you know, Gloria described the different kinds of modalities that we would make available to our faculty. That kind of work, they’ll describe it a little bit more. One thing that we also wanted to do was we realized we didn’t want to just toss out the entire schedule for the fall as it was already created. We worked within the structures of the old schedule, the 80-minute blocks, and came up with a way to stagger face-to-face presence on campus in a way that would reduce passing time of people in the halls and also
shorten the time period so there’s a shorter duration that ppl would be sitting in a classroom together. Alan would be able to talk a little bit about the social distancing measures that we worked on and had to establish earlier on as we were making these plans. It was a real team effort that not only involved different offices in Academic Affairs but across the campus as well.

**Alan Rosenfeld:** The first thing I would point out is that there is no handbook for how to operate a higher educational institution in the midst of a pandemic. Not today and certainly not in March when this started. In many ways that initial transition of sort of chaos and just moving the entire curriculum online full stop coming out of spring break was easier than what we’re planning for in the fall. Now we’re looking at opening up the campus in a modified, responsible social distance format in the fall to hold some classes with in-person elements on campus. As of today we’re looking at a fall class inventory that’s 73 percent fully online, about 26 percent in hybrid online formats with some degree of in-class component, and only about one percent that are in traditional face-to-face format.

One thing that we found is that now more than ever, communication is key. We really have to work across all the departments, all the units of the campus and not only within Academic Affairs, to offer any of these classes with in-person components. We cannot merely say, ‘I’m going to teach History 231 and throw it up on the schedule.’ Now we need to have, for example, close coordination with our Information Technology Department to make sure that we have the capacity to project and record classes so that students can Zoom in and attend from off campus. We have to coordinate with our facilities team as well to make sure that our custodians can clean and sanitize the classrooms effectively. That means coordinating with our scheduler to make sure that we have appropriate time in between classes to allow for that cleaning to take place. We have to coordinate more closely than ever with our Student Affairs office as well. They’re answering questions from students who are wondering what these classes are going to look like — Is it going to be safe for me to attend in person? They’re wavering as to whether even they want to come back to campus or not in the fall. So it’s really trying to break down those silos and bring people to have these collaborative conversations. And that’s what we’re engaged in right now.

**Gloria Niles:** To build on what Vice Chancellor Moniz and Associate Vice Chancellor Rosenfeld have said, as we created the hybrid classes, we had to take into account the fact that each classroom could now only hold about 25 percent of the capacity that it typically would hold. So a classroom that typically would seat 40 students can only seat about 10 students given the desks being spaced six feet apart. So there were a number of factors that we had to consider of being able to provide effective instruction given the social distancing guidelines, as Associate Vice Chancellor Rosenfeld mentioned, that we are going to have to have students participating both online and in person at the same time given the limited number of seats in the class.

So we wanted to make sure that classrooms had large monitors, where the students that are participating online will be visible in the classroom and can be active participants in the classroom. We had to make sure that faculty were prepared, that they will also have to maintain
a safe distance from the students and so they would have to remain in a teaching zone, as we call it, that will be taped off in the front of the room. Many of our faculty really like that active engagement and interaction and walking around the classroom and so making sure that they realize that that’s part of what’s going to have to change in the in-person environment.

Students can’t be grouped together; they have to stay at their desk six feet apart and you have to have opportunities to engage students who are online and in-person at the same time. So we compiled lots of resources to assist faculty that we’ve placed on our Laulima site of how do you develop your pedagogy so that you can teach effectively with students who are in person and online. And then we also had to take into consideration diff ways that would determine who is going to be in person and who’s going to be online. So we created two different versions, one we call, we refer to HOT hybrid, meaning ‘here or there,’ and the HOT hybrid could either have rotating groups, meaning that there are two groups of students or three groups of students in a class and there are certain scheduled dates that they attend in person and dates that they attend online. And then there’s also a reserve seating group which gives a little more agency to the student. The student, there’s a sign-up system and the student would then determine which days that they’re available to attend in person and which days they would attend online by reserving a seat. Kind of like our new movie theaters, where you reserve a specific seat in the theater, our students would be reserving a seat in the in-person class on a particular day. So lots of those factors that we took into consideration for these new ways of teaching both in person and online at the same time.

Arvman: So going back to the initial challenges, I was wondering if maybe we can hear from IT and Communications about what those were? Maybe you can elaborate a little bit about that?

Therese Nakadomari: In the early days, we had a challenge of getting equipment out to the faculty and the staff. We had to predict what people had. We had prepared in late February to purchase a lot of web cameras and headsets so that we could make sure that our faculty could teach distance effectively. We already had some software that would do lecture capturing and we just had to distribute that. We did purchase a lot of Zoom licenses and I think we gave out 125 licenses during that time frame and, you know, kudos to the faculty for learning on their own how to get on Zoom and use it for their classes. We did loan out roughly about 10 laptops out to students who contacted us about not having equipment, that and we did have a few students come in to use our computer lab during the spring shutdown.

Arvman: I was wondering if (Interim Director of Enrollment Services Loke Kenolio) could speak to how our students were severely impacted, and how we addressed that?

Lokelani Kenolio: Our students were pretty severely impacted. That transition was hard not only for our faculty and staff, it was extremely hard for the students, as well. Our priority was safety first. So we made sure we got students, they were safe, that they were able to care for
their families first and really tried to provide that support there. That was a big teamwork, effort, with faculty and staff, the whole, everyone.

The second, though, challenge was really that transition to online. And two things were really highlighted in that spring semester, it was actually having the tools like computers, Wi-Fi, access to hot spots, we realized that was a need. But the other need was the skill to learn online well. Like having that ability to be able to do these multiple forms of online learning. So we really tried to help support them get through the semester with multiple means. Therese shared how we lent out computers, laptops, we worked with our providers to get, make sure they were, had access to the free Wi-Fi, so that was another success tool that helped students.

In terms of the learning and online, we ended up having all of our Student Affairs team, all 40 staff, call students, give a personal call, do a check in — ‘How are you doing with your safety? How can we support you?’ And we also then provided support through our Noʻeau Center for Learning, with the tutors. Unlike, ‘How do I do this online?,’ we did these mini workshops of, ‘How do I do Zoom?’ Especially for the students who had to make that quick transition from face-to-face to online. So really providing the tools, skills, in a quick version, but allow them to feel supported and get them through the end of the semester.

Arvman: I was wondering if maybe Nancy with HR can address the similar question regarding how we supported employees during this time?

Nancy Nakasone: We had a very short turnaround to implement a telework, a work-from-home plan. Supervisors and employees developed, identified duties and responsibilities and essential functions that could be done from home and to ensure that maintaining essential services, to ensure success for all of our students. They developed various plans, some stayed home 100 percent, some stayed home maybe one or two days, and we have a whole bunch of employees that weren’t able to stay home, but they continue to work every day. They did that in a very, very short time, thinking that it was going to be for a short period and not realizing that we would be doing this, this is going into our fourth month. But we’ve been very successful with what we’ve been doing.

Arvman: Maybe Communications can also address some of the early challenges?

Leila Shimokawa: I want to reiterate what Associate Vice Chancellor Rosenfeld was saying about communications. It was truly a team effort and all of the people on this call and beyond, around the campus, were really in a collaborative spirit. So I think that helped Communications do what they needed to do to push out the information to our students, faculty, and staff.

I think the hardest part early on was that the information was coming so fast and it kept changing almost every single day. And so we wanted to be really consistent with what we were saying. We wanted to align with what our UH System was pushing out, as well as the state and federal authorities. It felt like we were just running to catch up. But once decisions were made
and we were able to fine-tune those plans and really provide some concrete information, I think that’s when people started to feel a little bit more comfortable with what we were doing.

In early July, late June, we pushed out our guidelines, and so people started to understand that there was so much work being done behind the scenes that maybe they weren’t informed about. But now it’s like, OK, the campus does have a plan and we are implementing those plans. Chancellor Benham stood up all these task groups who were just scrambling behind the scenes. Everybody on this call was participating in some form in one of those task groups. And so there was just so much work being done behind the scenes.

And as far as Communications, we were happy to be able to help to allay some fears going out and in terms of what Loke was saying about working with the students, you know, I think what we wanted to make sure the … students knew, is that we are working really hard on making sure the campus is safe and healthy, so when students return to campus, we have procedures in place that will help them going forward.

**Arvman:** I was wondering if anyone on the panel can address the issues regarding facilities, regarding PPEs? (Per Chancellor Benham, on this day of recording, Facilities people, including Kevin Ishida, Vice Chancellor of Administration, were on campus preparing for Hurricane Douglas, which is why they were not on the Zoom call.)

**Benham:** I will say that in March, we moved everybody off campus working remotely, students online, very few people, the density on campus was very low. It really did give us a window of opportunity to start to clean the classrooms and to learn about what was happening in other places around the world that helped us to determine how we were going to approach our campus.

Unfortunately, Bonnie Arakawa isn't on the call and neither is John Murakami. Both have been integral in the ways in which we are cleaning our campus, setting up our cleaning stations, rearranging our rooms, as well as purchasing the PPE. But I’m going to talk to Bev. Bev has been working with them. And Therese is a really good example of what we did. She had to prepare a computer lab this summer in order to accommodate those students who did not have access to computers or internet service.

**Beverly Orillo:** Yeah, it’s been really challenging in getting supplies, as in wipes, hand sanitizers, just like everyone else is experiencing right now. A lot of places, we are competing with first responders, you’ve got the hospitals, general public, all getting the same thing. What really helped us is a lot of resources. We’ve checked with our other counterparts at the other campuses, reached out to a whole bunch of different resources to get our supplies. But rest assured, we do have wipes, we do have disinfectants.

Our custodials have been trained and talked about this whole situation where there, it’s going to be a lot of cleaning of high-touch areas. So there’s a lot of things that has been implemented.
plexiglasses had to be purchased so that people that are going to be working with the public, that they’re protected. We needed to make sure that our classrooms are all set for the six-feet distancing. This is also including the laboratories. We had to find the safe areas for our laboratories. Students are going to be coming into the laboratories for the instructions. So we want to make sure that they’re protected as well. I’ve also talked with a lot of the science instructors to make sure that our students that are going to be in the laboratories, that they are protected while they’re doing the experiment, not just from the experiment itself, but also of the pandemic that we’re going through. So a lot of challenges, but just as everyone’s been saying, we’ve been working all together from our team here, and as well as our counterparts on the other campuses.

**Benham:** And I just want to interject that we have a lot of signage now on campus that explains to students what they’re responsible for and faculty, employees, staff, you know, you go up the stairs one way, you go down the stairs another way. There’s a limit of people going on elevators, same with the bathroom, same in the library. There’s a good deal of signage around campus to help us keep the physical distancing that’s required as well as reminders to wear your facial covering, washing your hands, and all those other things.

**Nakadomari:** Setting up the computer lab was a huge challenge for us on top of taking care of the faculty first, and then taking care of all the staff that needed to work from home. My Help Desk students were amazing. They got the room set up and social distanced within a day and they made sure that all the computers on our campus, our computers have different software for different courses, we had at least one or two of them brought up to the A227 lab. They were quickly trained on the cleaning protocols and we opened up the next week and they took care of the students that came over to use the lab and the Wi-Fi. We had a lot of students come in, needed a place to study and use the Wi-Fi. They said there was a lot of distractions at their homes so we were very happy to have people come in and utilize the lab.

**Arvman:** UH West O‘ahu received approximately $2.6 million in financial support from the federal government through the CARES Act. How did we use this funding?

**Benham:** I’m going to just briefly overview it, but then I’m going to turn it over to Loke and Sheri to talk a bit more about the CARES Act. There are really three traunches to the CARES Act. The first went directly to students. The second traunche was monies that we had to use to address immediately the impact of COVID on our campus by supporting faculty, staff, and students. A lot of it was just cleaning our campus and preparing our campus supplies and equipment. And the third traunche that Sheri can explain a little bit more as well, it’s a little bit more flexible and it’s to help us to get through this academic year.

**Kenolio:** I’ll start off with how we used that first batch of money, which was for the students and the good news is that we were able to provide all of our spring students or most of our spring students, nearly a thousand of them, a check of support of about $700, so that was really good news for many of our students. What we found was when we made those phone calls out to
students to do our check-in, one of the number one concerns was finances. So we’re very thankful that we were able to get these funds to provide these to students.

The second batch of funds, so that we did have for students we were able to support our summer session students with a small check, about $150, but again this is to support and alleviate some of that financial concerns as students and families deal with the COVID crisis.

**Sheri Ching:** As Chancellor Benham had mentioned, our campus was very fortunate to get basically three traunches of CARES funds. And as Loke mentioned, the first about $700,000 went directly to students. The second traunce was another $700,000. This was to be used for institutional costs, so costs directly related to this, the pandemic and so a majority of these costs … the funds were used for the costs that people Therese mentioned as far as IT equipment and as Bev mentioned PPE, sanitizing materials, and whatnot. And because we are a minority-serving institution, we got, we qualified, luckily, for a third traunche of funds and that was about $1.2 million. And because as Chancellor Benham mentioned that it is a bit more flexible in its usage, we are using it as strategically as possible to continue our operations due to their budgetary, upcoming budgetary constraints this fiscal year.

**Arvman:** The fall semester opens on August 24, which to this day is exactly a month away. Can we talk about the process if there is a positive case on campus?

**Nakasone:** Effective on July 6, we started the COVID hotline and calls would come into the HR office to report any COVID symptoms, which would be the fever, cough, runny nose, or whatever cold symptoms, in addition to if they got tested, if they were exposed, a family member is exposed or whatever situation. So we have that set up and ready to go and whenever we, if we get, whatever information that we get, we do share with the COVID direct, the directors, and we have a team that is looking at each action that comes in and then we have an action plan set up to address each situation.

**Benham:** We do have a UH West O‘ahu COVID response team. The co-leads are Chris Neves and Nancy Nakasone. And we do have a process set up to intake information from our employees and our students. One way, as Nancy had raised, is through our hotline. There’s a phone number and you can access that online (689-2525). We do also have an email address that people can email us as well (covidwo@hawaii.edu) and Chris checks that email regularly and so the information will come in. Both Chris and Nancy along with Dr. Susan Young and Stacey Kelly, who is our registered nurse, are those people who really take a look at that data to make a decision of what we need to do. That is I think most of the campuses currently have a COVID response team. I will also say that we are going to be instituting a health app that the UH system is putting together which should go live for all people who come to our campus — employees, students, as well as visitors. That health app we’re hoping to go live in mid-August. Our campus is fortunate that we’re going to have a chance to pilot it in several days to see how it works and to work out the bugs. So there’s a variety of ways that we’re going to get information to help maximize the health and well-being of everyone on this campus.
Stacey Kelly: After Nancy asks questions or the student contacts the hotline, if they’ve already been exposed or they have a positive test, of course we encourage them and tell them you know to stay put, to self-isolate or whatever they need to do as far as their symptoms, as far as seeking medical attention or whatever warrants at that point. We want to totally discourage any students that are feeling ill or even questionably ill to stay home. That being said, if they were to get sick on campus or start to feel ill, we want to limit them from moving about the campus. And all of us of course are exposed to all the media and all the information about those things. You just want to stop in your tracks and not move around. If the student does present though, then we’ll do a quick check, try to get them to a health provider as soon as possible and isolate all the places that they had been on campus. I don’t foresee that this is going to be a huge problem. Hopefully people won’t just instantly become sick. Usually you wake up and you feel sort of icky, so people won’t come to campus. But should that happen, we have a variety of questions and we’ll be going through some health assessment and whatnot. We prefer that the private physician does that, but I am available to do any of those screenings. Also, like I said, we do want to keep them isolated and definitely they need to have a mask on, as do all of us. If they become, if the questions warrant any involvement with Department of Health, of course I will do that immediately and also talking to Susan. (Susan is well versed in contact tracing. Susan mentioned if someone’s already testing, DOH is going to know before we know.)

Susan Young: As we can see it takes a full village to bring all of this information together and have it go out in a nice streamlined format so that everyone is informed — students, faculty, our administrators. And students often will have many questions — ‘Well what does this mean? What does that mean?’ They’re getting bits and pieces from the media. So part of our goal is also to make sure that we’ve educated everyone appropriately with the newest information. We know with COVID some things have changed in the last couple of months. But as Stacey was saying, I have gone through contact tracer training through Johns Hopkins and through UH and Department of Health here in Hawai‘i. And it’s true, the perfect world will be that our Department of Health has been notified the minute there is a positive case and they will get that information either from a lab or from a physician’s office. So there’s a couple of different areas they may get the information. Once that information is given to Department of Health, they will call whoever is positive and they will determine how many contacts they may have. Then that information is given to a contact tracer. That person is very important for the fact that, remember we know now that some folks are asymptomatic. They may have signs and symptoms and not even realize it. And may not realize that they have to go into quarantine because they were exposed. So I’ll be working very closely with Stacey and our whole team to provide that information to make sure that we are indeed reaching everyone and giving that education that’s needed. Many students may have a question — ‘Well what if that contact tracer calls me? How do I know that’s who they are? Why are they asking me for my name? And my birthday?’ And so we have things in place so that they will know what to ask, what to expect when they get that phone call. But most of all don’t be scared that Department of Health is calling to help you stay safe and keep your family safe.
Arvman: What will UH West O‘ahu look like come August 24?

Benham: It will be absolutely fabulous. We are going to have a smaller density of people on campus given that the majority of our classes, about 75, 74 percent of our classes will be online, the rest will be in some sort of hybrid format. The density will be smaller. It will be nice actually to see a lot of faces come back and to welcome them. We will be physically distanced, and so you’re going to have to throw the shaka sign or elbows, high fives from far away. Everyone will be wearing face masks or facial coverings or shields to help not only protect themselves, but their colleagues and their peers. The campus will be filled with a lot of signage to remind you to check in on the health app or check in on the web survey.

Rosenfeld: I want our campus to be a happy place and to be a safe place. A place of refuge for our students, even students studying fully online, we cannot just take it for granted that they have the computer access, the internet access, or the quiet work environment at home to succeed. And we want to make sure they feel welcomed and safe to come to campus and study, attending classes or in the library or another space on campus in a socially distanced and responsible manner. But we want to welcome them and we hope that they have a positive experience.

Nakadomari: For the fall, every classroom will have self-sufficient Zoom capabilities so that faculty can use any modality that they choose. Each room has enough technology where they could broadcast their classes synchronously or we are currently setting up two studios that they could ... record their classes so they can offer it asynchronously. So we’re trying to meet all the needs as things pop up, we will be ready to meet that challenge.

Kenolio: I can share from the student services lens that we’re going to be open and ready, focusing on safety, but focusing on students’ experience, too. We know that it’s going to be still very much a virtual-type experience. So student orientation, student life activities, tutoring, a lot of our services, whether it’s getting a transcript or seeing an advisor, will continue to be more of a virtual option for students to access safely, but still get the answers and support they need. We will have services open for face-to-face, but may be limited. They will be working now through a plexiglass, face shields, and face masks. But we will have the services open and ready to go.

Benham: I want people to know that our library will be open. There will be limited hours for the library. The first floor will be open and many services will be available as well.

Orillo: I wanted to add for the classrooms for the students, there’s going to be hand sanitizers in the classroom for them to use. There’s going to be wipes for them to use in the classrooms, as well as if they want to wipe their desks. The desks, seating is going to be six feet apart. You’ll see a lot of blue tape on the floor of the classrooms. It’s kind of as a guide for the instructors as this is a safe spot for you, you’re six feet away from the very closest student. So you’ll see that
in the classrooms. In the libraries, in other public areas there’s also hand sanitizers for everyone to be using. So you’ll see a lot of that on campus.

**Shimokawa:** The campus will be filled with people who are hopefully embracing our Pueo Safety Promise. That’s the pledge that we are going to be pushing out to our campus community that talks about being accountable to yourselves and each other, to keep each other safe and healthy. And so that includes things like staying home if you’re symptomatic, if you’re showing a temperature over 100.4 degrees, submitting to the health app or web survey prior to coming into campus every day. And again we talked about that earlier, with the process that will go to the response committee. Wearing a face covering, a face shield, any type of thing that’s going to be protecting, again, others around you. Keeping informed about the latest updates as Dr. Young was saying. It’s about understanding the current situation and being informed through what our state and our federal authorities are telling us. And finally being kind and compassionate, caring for the well-being of our campus community. I think it’s really important that we all know that we’re in this together and that we’re all here supporting each other in any way that we can.

**Arvman:** Across the state, we are dealing with budget crises. What considerations has UH West O’ahu made?

**Benham:** Before I punt this to our Budget and Finance people who are on the line, I know that this is something that many of our campus employees are very interested in and I just want to let everyone know that we have been attending to this throughout the summer. And as we get closer to convocation, which will be held on August the 19, we hope to have more information about this topic. But to give you an idea of what we’re looking at and how we are analyzing it right now, I want to turn it over to our Budget and Finance folks, Linda Saiki and Sheri Ching.

**Linda Saiki:** We’ve been working really hard over the summer and towards the end of the spring semester trying to figure out what kind of allocations we are looking at. Basically we have two parts of funds. One is the general funds from the state and that’s very unpredictable at this moment, not knowing what our state revenue will look like. In addition we also have to juggle what our enrollment will look like … over the summer semester as well as into the fall semester. But I assure you we’ve been working hard. It’s been all hands on deck. We’ve been trying to get it down to a very lean budget, but I’m confident that our campus will be able to provide the same level of high expectations that we have, given our lean situation. But we’ll do fine. We’ll be OK.

**Ching:** Yes, I agree with Linda. We’ve been working very hard together to work on and manage our fiscal constraints, or upcoming, anticipated, I should say, fiscal constraints. We’ve been trying to be very cautious, really looking and scrutinizing all costs to make sure that we are prioritizing our costs appropriately. And we have done some, basically right now if it’s institutional costs, everything has to be approved by both the respective vice chancellor and the chancellor. So we are trying to make the best and most appropriate decisions as we move forward.
Benham: I do want to say both Sheri and Linda have done extraordinary in terms of providing us with guidance, us, I should say, the vice chancellors and myself. But also John Stanley and Christi Palacat from our Institutional Research Office who has also been providing us with the kind of information we need to run a variety of different scenarios. … I want people to understand that this is extremely lean times and I want to publicly thank our vice chancellors for their ability to really take a look at their operational budgets and cut anywhere up to 50 percent of what they would normally expend during a fiscal year to help us to make it through, to thrive in this year and at least for the next two to three years to come. Again, more information to come.

Arvman: What have we done to address falling enrollment due to the pandemic?

Kenolio: The enrollment, I can share, is like everyone else, that has been our number one summer focus. We actually pulled together a recruitment hui of about 24 faculty, staff to come together to relook our enrollment efforts that we already had in place. But really to key in on how COVID has affected the change in how people view the college experience and if they’re able to do that. And so we came up with a list of efforts and with the help of many faculty, staff we have really put out to four target groups. Our first year, those recent high school graduates, to our transfer students, we’ve done efforts for our continuing students. We’re very excited that we can continue all those efforts, things from personal phone calls, to outreach, to very low-cost budget type items, such as postcards. We’ve done lots of … social media to get the word out about, we’re here, we’re ready to help you, let us help you register for classes. So we are really putting out all the efforts to get the enrollment up and at a good place. I can share that as of today, every day we look at our enrollment numbers, at the start of summer we were at a, we were very worried, we were at a negative 20 percent of enrollment compared to that time last year. But as of today, we’re just down 3.5 percent. Our goal is to be at the same count of students that we had last fall. So we’re about 320 students away from that goal. But we’re really going to push hard with everyone’s efforts to get that last group of students.

Arvman: This is my last question. What are your biggest take-aways from this experience?

Moniz: It harkens back to what Chancellor started with and that’s the importance of taking a team approach. And some of the things that other folks on this panel have mentioned about the importance of communication. I think about validating the thoughts and ideas of our staff and faculty as we work together on troubleshooting issues and just making sure that we recognize the value of those efforts. So it really, I feel like the biggest takeaway has been that value, that importance of a team approach.

Nakadomari: I second what Jeff said that our campus is amazingly collaborative and we work together really well, there are some bumps, but really well overall to get a task done. I’ve heard from other campuses and they didn’t fare so well during the spring changeover and I think we
did it very effectively and with minimal loss I guess. And for my department, it was the Boy Scout motto of, “be prepared.” If I didn’t do a huge order of headsets and whatnot in February, we would not be prepared for this shutdown. So kudos to everybody here, and all of our staff. I think we did really well getting through it.

**Rosenfeld:** I’ll just say real quickly we are not in this alone. This is a global crisis and we should count our blessings and be thankful that we’re in a position where we can help and support others, rather than being in a position when we’re in dire straits and need assistance. So let’s all pull together and make this happen.

**Kenolio:** My biggest takeaway is not only the collaboration, it’s just our resilience and our willingness to push through it. It’s been a tough several months, but together we were able to really work through some of the hard pieces and I appreciate that people who have strengths have really reached out to each other and shared those strengths, especially with the quick move to transition to all the technology. So echoing what everyone is saying, it’s definitely a kākou effort.

**Benham:** Similar to everyone else, I have learned that it’s extremely important to be patient and persistent through this entire process, to really learn from what’s happening globally, as Alan said, we are not in this alone. There are so many other campuses across the globe that are facing the same issues we are. And there are a lot of lessons to be learned from their strengths as well as the challenges that they have faced as well. And I think we have to remember to be kind and compassionate with one another. I know right now with Hurricane Douglas knocking at our door, there is emergency fatigue. We have been in a state of high anxiety for a really long time and we’re feeling it and it’s important not only to be compassionate and kind to each other, but also to be compassionate and kind and patient with one’s self. We’re all in this together and we all together … we’ll do things that are going to be good for our campus, for our families, for our communities.

I want to end with an ‘olelo no‘eau, similar to the one that I started with and this ‘olelo no‘eau is one that I believe illuminates what everyone had just said. And it’s: ‘A`ohe `auwa`a pa`a i ka hālau i ka mālie.’ Basically that means that no canoes are stuck in the shed when it’s calm. It speaks to the call that everyone, everyone here on this Zoom call and in our campus community, everyone is in it together. We’re in our canoes, we are out there working together and moving forward. So that’s my message. And I’m deeply grateful again to everyone on this call and everyone who has been working on campus to ensure that we open on August 24 and in a good way, in a welcoming way, to welcome everybody back to a wonderful, vibrant academic year that’s safe and healthy.

**Arvman:** Thank you again, everyone, for joining our Q&A today. For more information, please visit our website at westoahu.hawaii.edu/covid-19.