



KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA

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New KIRC Collaboration with UH Maui College Students Launches Sustainable Energy Program on Kaho‘olawe

A \$25,000 grant from the County of Maui, Office of Economic Development to launch a sustainable energy program on Kaho‘olawe has yielded an unexpected, yet remarkable outcome: a new collaboration between the Kaho‘olawe Island Reserve Commission and the University of Hawai‘i Maui College.

The grant was originally designed to support KIRC staff, consultants and interns in the KIRC’s long-term goal of converting all operations on Kaho‘olawe to green energy. Funds would specifically finance the build, transport and installation of a photovoltaic system to generate power for two of KIRC’s volunteer huts located at a restored Navy base camp at Honokanai‘a Bay - a traditional greeting point for voyaging canoes traveling to Tahiti and current ceremonial staging area and gathering place for volunteers coming to the island, located on the western side of Kaho‘olawe.

While receiving training in photovoltaic systems design at UH Maui College, KIRC Resource Conservation Specialist Lyman Abbott developed a relationship with Professors Stuart Zinner and Carlton Atay. This connection led to a thriving collaboration with the student body of Carlton’s current Sustainable Construction Technologies (ENRG 193V) course.

"We were very excited about this collaborative opportunity for students to get hands-on experience with off-the-grid photovoltaic systems, while also developing a deeper appreciation and understanding of the Hawaiian cultural values associated with Kaho‘olawe," states Zinner, "students from both our 193V Internship in Sustainable Technology class and Engineering Technology and Electronic & Computer Engineering Technology programs participated. The support and leadership of Brian Lampshire from Rising Sun Solar was a tremendous asset, as well as the contributions of electrician Daniel Wine and his son Eddie who was a KIRC intern."

Working alongside Abbott, Zinner and Atay, and Rising Sun Solar and Electric, the class assembled and tested the system on campus, disassembled, packed and shipped it to Kaho‘olawe, and then reassembled and installed it at Honokanai‘a.

Professor Carlton Atay continues, "It was perfect timing for my students to have an opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills. Culturally, it was a wonderful experience and education in going to the island for the students."

Project manager Lyman Abbott: “The process of installing PV in KIRC’s base camp enabled the students from UHMC to learn how to construct an off-grid PV system with batteries in a very remote location. This will help the KIRC’s Restoration Program volunteers on Kaho`olawe understand the process of attaining energy independence from fossil fuels.”

This project is the first of many steps to convert all operations on Kaho`olawe to green energy. The PV system will provide the electrical power for the two main base camp berthing huts on Kaho`olawe, which house approximately 1,000 staff and volunteers annually. An annual 15.5 ton-reduction in CO2 emissions into the atmosphere, or 310 tons over the life of the photovoltaic system, will be achieved - significantly reducing the KIRC’s carbon footprint. This will support Maui County’s goal of achieving 95% of all energy needs in Maui Nui sustainably with a carbon-neutral footprint by 2020 and KIRC’s goals of achieving power and infrastructure sustainability and lowering costs currently financed by its diminishing trust fund.

“For the past three years, the KIRC has worked to reduce energy needs on Kaho`olawe as a precursor to converting base camp’s entire electrical system to renewable energy sources,” explains KIRC Executive Director Michael Nāho`opi`i, “Many of KIRC’s smaller, on-island infrastructures are already powered by either solar or wind, but these infrastructures are mostly located in remote areas of the island. Our vision is to create a completely renewable energy power grid on Kaho`olawe utilizing wind and solar energy. This project is a critical starting point in this direction. We are proud to partner with the next generation, who will become the new stewards of Kaho`olawe, as we make this vision a reality.”

KIRC is currently developing its collaboration with the University of Hawai`i Maui College for its forthcoming Hui Kāpehe college internship program. Made possible by a grant through the Native Hawaiian Career and Technical Education Program (NHCTEP), in partnership with Alu Like Inc, the program will offer work-related experience, community service learning, and job shadowing opportunities related to career and technical education (CTE) to UHMC students of Native Hawaiian descent in one of KIRC's core program areas: Operations, Ocean, Restoration, Culture and Administration. Details and application are available at <http://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov/HuiKapehe.shtml>. Interested applicants will compete for 60 paid internship opportunities.

About the KIRC

The Kaho`olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) was established by the Hawai`i State Legislature in 1993 to manage the Kaho`olawe Island Reserve while it is held in trust for a future Native Hawaiian sovereign entity. The KIRC establishes policies and usage of the island and its surrounding waters through comprehensive restoration and monitoring programs. Its Cultural Program integrates a Native Hawaiian cultural perspective into all programs and activities. The organization is managed by a seven-member Commission and a committed staff. For more information, call (808) 243.5020 or visit www.kahoolawe.hawaii.gov.

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