



'IMI HO'ŌLA

POST-BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM

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STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS: 'IMI HO'ŌLA ALUMNI SHARE THEIR PATHWAY TO MEDICINE

Three of our 'Imi Ho'ōla class of 2015 alumni, Drs. Ailea Apana, Ashley Morisako, and Kathryn (Kat) Roberts, shared their experiences, journey prior to 'Imi Ho'ōla and medical school, and provide advice to future 'Imi students.

We all heard that 'Imi was an extremely difficult and rigorous program and we were apprehensive due to lack of basic science knowledge we had, but knew this was our second chance at hopefully going to medical school. It was an opportunity to grow and excel and gain the necessary skills needed to become a physician. The 'Imi program gave us so much. When thinking back about the program, 'Imi gave us the confidence in ourselves to excel and helped us reaffirm our commitment, passion, and motivation to become a physician. The 'Imi curriculum is unique in that it emphasized the importance of fostering sociocultural discussions and juxtaposed them against the factors that directly impact poor health outcomes and disparities through service learning opportunities such as Kalaupapa, Moloka'i and learning about the biological and psychosocial impacts of Hansen's Disease in Hawai'i. 'Imi broadened our understanding and awareness for the current and often limited consideration devoted to sociocultural backgrounds of populations that contributes to the rise in morbidity and mortality of

Con't on page 4



Drs. Kathryn Roberts, Ashley Morisako, and Ailea Apana after the JABSOM Kīhei* Ceremony

TAKE A PEEK AT WHAT'S INSIDE:

- Student Highlights:
Alumni pathways to medicine
- Alumni Highlights:
Drs. Ailea Apana, Ashley Morisako & Kathryn Roberts
- Completion Ceremony 2019
'Imi Ho'ōla scholarship recipients
Keynote advice from Dr. Wong
- Faculty Highlights:
Dr. Chung Eun Ha & Mr. Robert Lipske

*A kīhei is a ceremonial cloak which is presented to Native Hawaiian students upon medical school graduation. Each kīhei tells a story of that student's journey to medicine. Similar to a physician's white coat, the kīhei symbolizes their responsibility as future Native Hawaiian physicians.

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS:

Drs. Apana, Morisako, and Roberts share their pathways to medicine. As first generation college students, often without physician role models, their path to becoming a physician often seemed like it was out of their reach. With hard work and determination they were able to accomplish this goal and gain lifelong friends.

Ailea Apana, MD



Psychiatry Resident at the University of Hawai'i, Honolulu, HI

I have always wanted to pursue a career in medicine but did not have any mentors who were in the field. I often felt like I had to figure things out by myself through trial and error as I progressed through high school and college. From a young age, I have been intrigued by science and the human body and had personally experienced a lack of healthcare resources within my own family. Because of those experiences I wanted to have the ability to give back to others in a field that I was passionate about. I heard about the 'Imi program while working in research in the Biomedical Sciences Building at JABSOM.

Ashley Morisako, MD

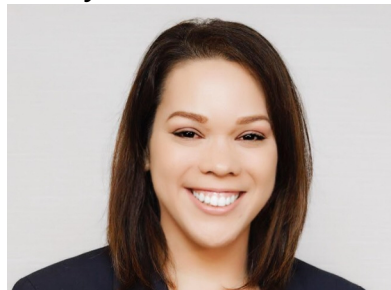


Internal Medicine Resident at Kaiser Permanente, Honolulu, HI

I felt that a career in medicine was unheard of until my sophomore year in college when I met one of my

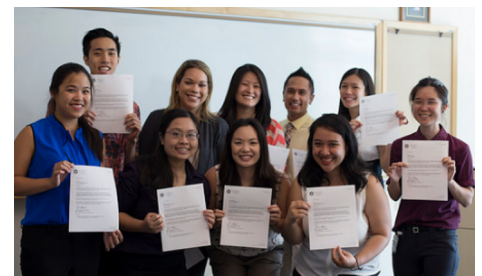
future mentors that guided me while I was on my journey to becoming a physician. Prior to entering the 'Imi program, I attended the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and received a Masters in Public Health in Native Hawaiian and Indigenous Health but felt I could make a larger impact on not only the community level but the level of the individual as a physician. I would like to improve the health of Hawai'i and/or Native Hawaiians by improving the patient-provider relationships especially for the underserved.

Kathryn Roberts, MD



Family Medicine resident at Riverside Family Hospital, Riverside, CA

As a child, I remember wanting to become a teacher and enjoyed science and how it played a role within the human body. I pursued a degree in Human Nutrition as it is a good supplement to medicine. I then worked as an office manager and insurance biller for Dr. Malcolm Ing, an Ophthalmologist, for seven years. During this time I learned more about the field of medicine and enjoyed the interactions with patients. I have also worked with the University of Hawai'i Department of Nutrition on a grant that studied childhood obesity amongst Pacific Island populations



Top Photo: 'Imi Ho'ola Class of 2015 at the annual service learning trip in Kalaupapa. Bottom Photo: Class of 2015 receiving their acceptance letters to JABSOM prior to the completion ceremony.

and was introduced to social determinants of health and how they affect the health of individuals and their community. These experiences reinforced my decision to pursue a career in medicine to help find solutions to these areas that impacted health. I did not have any mentors until I became a part of the Native Hawaiian Student Pathways to Medicine (NHSPM) during my last year of college and met Drs. Sasha Fernandes and Winona Lee. Through this program I had the opportunity to shadow Dr. Lisa Kahikina in Pediatrics and met other students who had similar paths and goals. These experiences made going to medical school more of a reality and gave me the confidence to apply. I heard about 'Imi through NHSPM and was encouraged to apply. I was waitlisted the first time I applied, but was accepted the second year.

Mahalo to the Queen's Health Systems
Native Hawaiian Health Initiative
for their support of the
'Imi Ho'ōla Post-Baccalaureate Program

COMPLETION KEYNOTE: DR. VANESSA WONG

Dr. Vanessa Wong, Assistant Professor in the Department of Native Hawaiian Health and Co-Associate Director for the Office of Medical Education, was invited to be the keynote speaker for the 'Imi Ho'ōla Completion Ceremony on June 12, 2019. As Dr. Wong reflected on her experience in the 'Imi Ho'ōla Program (Class of 1994), she wanted to share a few words of wisdom from five classic TV shows and movies that debuted 25 years ago. Here are a few highlights from her speech. **The Shawshank Redemption:** *"I guess it comes down to a simple choice, really. Get busy living, or get busy dying."* Dr. Wong shared that we can choose how to spend our days and our time, so spend it doing the things you love, with the people you love. **ER:** *"Your attitude can get in the way of achieving your goals. Or it can help you"* A positive attitude can take you far. Approach every situation with an attitude of "what can I learn from this situation, from this person, from this patient." **The Lion King:** *"Everything you see exists together in a delicate balance. As king, you need to understand that balance and respect all the creatures, from the crawling ant to the leaping antelope."* Medicine is a team sport and all members are important. Be respectful and appreciative of all on the team. **Friends:** *"It's okay. Sometimes, things don't work out the way you'd thought they would."* Life is gonna throw you some unexpected curve balls but somehow, things work out. Be flexible. **Forrest Gump:** *"When I got tired, I slept. When I got hungry, I ate. When I had to go, you know, I went."* You're gonna be studying hard and for many hours at a time but don't forget to take care of your basic needs. It's really important to take care of yourselves so you can take care of others. *"Lieutenant Dan, Ice Cream!"* And if all else fails, ice cream makes everything better.



Dr. Vanessa Wong
'Imi Class of 1994
JABSOM Class of 1999

Dr. Wong would like to congratulate the 'Imi Ho'ōla Class of 2018-2019. She is excited to work with all of you as first year medical students!

QUEEN'S 'IMI HO'ŌLA SCHOLARSHIP

To address the growing physician shortage in Hawai'i, the Queen's Health Systems established a new scholarship for incoming medical students that have successfully completed the 'Imi Ho'ōla Program, have demonstrated excellence in academics, leadership, and professionalism, and have a desire to provide health care services to underserved populations within the state of Hawai'i. Congratulations to our first Queen's Health Systems 'Imi Ho'ōla Scholarship awardees!

1) Samuel "Kamuela" Andrade received a BA in Ethnic Studies at UH Mānoa and plans on serving as a primary care physician on Kaua'i, 2) James DeJesus IV earned his BS in Biochemistry from the University of Puget Sound and intends on practicing on O'ahu as an orthopedic surgeon, and 3) Bree Kaneakua obtained a BA in Psychology from Creighton University and is planning on serving as a primary care physician in her hometown of Hilo on Hawai'i Island.



'Imi class of 2019: Bree Kaneakua, James DeJesus IV, and Samuel Kamuela Andrade with Sharlene Tsuda, Vice President of Community Development, Queen's Health Systems

'IMI HO'ŌLA CLASS OF 2019



Left to Right: Krystal Anderson, Bianca Calio, Sharon Wong, James DeJesus IV, Samuel Kamuela Andrade, Tana Ramos, Queen's Health Systems past President and CEO Art Ushijima, 'Imi alumnus Dr. Angela Pratt, Jenna Maligro, Bree Kaneakua, and Weiming Du

PATHWAY CON'T:

noncommunicable diseases. It also emphasized the importance of producing the highest echelons of healthcare leaders and critical thinkers who can translate medical education for the communities in which they serve by understanding the historical and cultural context in which they come. Through the program, we were introduced to successful physicians in the community, who faced similar challenges, which gave us the inspiration needed to continue our journey. The support provided throughout our educational journey was needed to push ourselves to our true potential and to identify areas that needed improvement and how to navigate solutions to strengthen our knowledge as future physicians. 'Imi emphasized how important it is to work as a team and trust in your colleagues. We were able to enter medical school with a family of past 'Imi's, faculty, administration, and our own 'Imi classmates who provided support and encouragement throughout all four years of medical school.

When thinking about our future goals, we envision ourselves serving our communities as Native Hawaiian, female physicians addressing health disparities of underserved populations, such as Native Hawaiians. We aspire to be prominent community leaders who advocate for the reduction of health disparities and work with underprivileged populations. Our hope for the future is that Native Hawaiians can continue to be strong in the face of adversities as we begin to see a paradigm shift in healthcare to one that is more patient-centered and focuses on the psychosocial impacts of health and illness. Despite the continual struggles faced by our population, the perpetuation of programs such as 'Imi Ho'ōla and mentoring can and will interest more individuals like ourselves in the healthcare field. We often share our pathway stories with those who are thinking about a similar path and

who share a similar passion with the hope to inspire those who may be underrepresented in medicine to pursue this career.

When asked if we would share some words of advice to current and/or future 'Imi Ho'ōla students, we want them to know that you don't have to be exceptionally intelligent or look like those who came before you. I would look at the JABSOM classes and tell myself "I don't look like them, so maybe this isn't meant for me," and I would read the JABSOM statistics and tell myself well I didn't get those scores or do exceptional activities so I don't fit the profile. There is no profile. If you have a passion, it will carry you through the challenges, and you will succeed. If it doesn't happen the first time, try again. If it's meant to be, it will happen for you. Trust the process. Those who have completed the program have gone on to become amazing physicians who have contributed immensely to our community in Hawai'i.

PLEASE WELCOME THE 'IMI HO'ŌLA CLASS OF 2020



Front Row from Left to Right: Mark Kevin Razalan, Peggy Su, Jennifer Wong, Melia Takakusagi, and Joshua Villaro. Back Row from Left to Right: Collin Liang, Joshua Ilustre, Sarah Albrecht, Piueti Maka, Lamar Carter, Genardine Arizala, and Pearl Dasalla

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS:

The 'Imi Ho'ōla Post-Baccalaureate Program would like to take this time to thank our dedicated faculty members for all that they do for our students and for the 'Imi Ho'ōla program! Dr. Ha and Mr. Lipske are tutors in Phase II of the program. Their dedication to the students and to the mission of 'Imi Ho'ōla to "Improve health care in Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin by increasing the number of physicians through an educational program that addresses disadvantaged students' academic and professional needs" over the years has helped to shape our alumni over the years.



Dr. Chung Eun Ha

InJe University, Korea (B.S)
University of Hawaii (Ph.D.)

Where were you raised?

Pusan, Republic of Korea

What do you teach? Instructor of Medical Biochemistry since August, 2006



Robert (Bob) Lipske

Where did you not graduate from?
High School drop out
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (B.A.)
University of Hawaii at Mānoa (M.A.)
University of San Diego (J.D.)

What do you teach? Instructor of academic reading, writing, and college English. **Specialty:** Humor that no one else thinks is funny

Why teach at 'Imi? As a teacher and a life-long learner, I find that my greatest joy stems from watching highly motivated students of our program grow academically, build self-confidence, and evolve into self-directed independent learners. Another great reward of teaching in the program is the fact that I have assisted students in achieving their life goal of becoming caring physicians. I enjoy seeing my students thrive in medical school after completing the program, and achieve their goal of becoming physicians.

Why teach at 'Imi? I am the first in my family to attend college, and I have met obstacles in my life. However, I believe that it does not matter where you start; it only matters where you finish. Importantly, I passionately believe that education gives us the best possibility to reach our chosen finish lines, and that reaching our potential should not be pre-determined by our social or economic status, or by obstacles tossed in our paths. Correspondingly, "The U.S. has one of the world's largest health disparities between the rich and poor-behind only Chile and Portugal." (Toy, 2017, para. 1). 'Imi Ho'ōla focuses on removing such health disparities in Hawai'i and the U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands. What you do at Imi Ho'ōla matters, and I am truly honored to be involved with you and with this program.

MAHALO FROM THE CLASS OF 2015

"There aren't many words to explain how grateful we are to the support the faculty and admin at 'Imi have given us. They have supported and encouraged us throughout our journey and are all considered a part of our family. During our worst days, a simple visit to the 'Imi offices would change the day around. They have helped us grow, develop, and improve ourselves. We wouldn't be where we are today without their support."

- Ailea, Ashley & Kat



WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Please complete the 'Imi Ho'ōla Alumni Contact Form at <https://goo.gl/forms/xSNHG2uF81zMxMYp1>

This is one of the ways we are able to learn more about all the things our 'Imi alumni have accomplished and a way to share 'Imi updates and future events.

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Dr. Kelli-Ann Voloch to update your contact information at ihalumni@hawaii.edu or call (808) 692-1029



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Kelli-Ann Frank Voloch, MD, and Éminence gris: Winona Lee, MD

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of JABSOM or the University of Hawai'i.

Suggestions and submissions are welcome. Please submit to ihalumni@hawaii.edu.

'IMI HO'ŌLA

POST-BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM

those who seek to heal



Est. 1973

The 'Imi Ho'ōla Post-Baccalaureate Program seeks to **improve the health care** in Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin by **increasing the number of physicians** through a 12-month educational program that **addresses disadvantaged students'** academic and professional needs.

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