News & Events

CTAHR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS ANNUAL DINNER

Join friends, former classmates, and colleagues at the CTAHR Alumni Association and Friends 2011 Annual Dinner, which will take place on Sept. 30, from 6 to 8 p.m. It will be a Chinese buffet at the Maple Garden, which is located at 909 Isenberg Street (across from Stadium Park). Parking is available at First Hawaiian Bank (corner of King and Isenberg Streets) after 6 p.m. The cost of the dinner will be $25 per person. Please send a check (payable to CTAHRAA) and the names of everyone who will be attending to

CTAHR Alumni Association & Friends, UH-Manoa
3050 Maile Way, Gilmore 210
Honolulu, HI 96822

If you’d like to make a donation to the CTAHRAA Scholarship Fund, please include the donation in your check. If you have any questions, please contact Charles Kinoshita at 956-6997 or kinoshitac@ctahr.hawaii.edu.

Grants & Awards

BUSINESS PLAN CHAMPS

Diagenetix, a research team/company headed by Ryo Kubota (PhD student, MBBE) recently won $20,000 at Rice University’s Business Plan Competition. The team, which also includes MBBE graduate Scott Shibata, MBA/JD student Kahlan Salina, and MBA student David Schmidt, is the first from Hawai‘i to have qualified for this prestigious event. It’s the biggest business plan competition in the world, with hand-picked teams competing for over $1.3 million in prizes. The Diagenetix members were awarded NASA’s Best Earth/Space Life Science Innovation Award for the pioneering and timely product they have invented and intend to market, a hand-held device that identifies the bacteria and viruses that cause numerous infectious diseases. The team also won the grand prize at UH’s Shidler Business Plan Competition in 2010. Both Ryo and Scott are mentored by Daniel Jenkins (MBBE). From left to right: Jeffrey Davis, Scott Shibata, Kahlan Salina, David Schmidt, and Ryo Kubota.

GOATS ON THE SLOPES
Mark Chynoweth (NREM, Master’s student) received the Best Student Oral Presentation Award at the awards luncheon of the Hawai‘i Conservation Conference held Aug. 2-4. Mark, whose co-advisors are Chris Lepczyk and Creighton Litton (both NREM), is interested in “geospatial analysis of environmental issues to conserve natural resources for future generations.” In a session on “Invasive Species (Feral Mammals),” he gave a presentation on “Movement Patterns and Habitat Utilization of Nonnative Feral Goats in Hawaiian Dryland Montane Landscapes.” Large populations of nonnative, feral goats have been present on five Hawaiian Islands for at least a century, he explains, but little is known about how they use and interact with their environment. Understanding this is essential to managing not only the goats, but also the native and nonnative plants they interact with and disturb. GPS satellite collars were used to track the goats’ movement patterns for a year in the Pohakoloa Training Area; the results of this study will be useful for the conservation and restoration of the native Hawaiian dry forest ecosystem, which is perhaps the most degraded type of ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands.

**Spotlight on Our Community**

**HELPING MOOOVE HAWAI‘I BEEF TO THE TOP**

Ashley Stokes (HNFAS) coordinated CTAHR’s first Beef Herd Breeding and Artificial Insemination summer course. Manoa students traveled to Kamuela, on the Big Island, to attend lectures and gain hands-on experience at the Mealani Research Station; Douglas Vincent and Michael Duponte (both HNFAS) also offered instruction. The ANSC499 class visited Ponoholo Ranch, Parker Ranch, and Spencer Akana’s Ranch to see each ranch’s unique breeding and AI management program. Jill Mattos of Hawaii Beef Producers invited the class to tour their slaughter and processing facilities for the beef industry, and Glen Fukumoto (HNFAS, Extension) explained carcass evaluation and the USDA grading system. Finally, students were challenged to successfully AI cows and withstand the “not so glorious” elements of the job. Each one came through with flying colors—along with cramped arm muscles and plenty of sweat.

What ensured this newly introduced course’s success was the teamwork with Mealani Research Station staff, including Marla Fegerstrom (HNFAS), the Farm Manager; Roy Ishizu; Leslie Hasegawa; Lori Hasegawa; and Damien “Sonny” Arruda III), as well as Hawai‘i County Extension’s Russell Nagata. Mealani hosted a cookout on the last day to celebrate—the guest of honor was the station’s own grass-finished rib-eye beef, provided by Kulana Foods, Inc. A big mahalo for partial funding for the course from the USDA/NIFA-funded Agribusiness Education, Training, and Incubation Project, and to all of those who contributed to the success of the class!

**GO MILK A SNAIL!**

Jon-Paul Bingham (MBBE) will be featured in an hour-long discussion on OC16’s ThinkTech Hawaii about the importance of snails in biochemical research, particularly the possible applications of cone
snails’ toxins for pain relief and pesticides. The program airs this Sunday, Aug. 21, at 10:30 p.m., though the video can also be seen online if that’s past your bedtime. Though these snails are extremely poisonous, they have the ability to dull the sensation of pain, and a pain medication made from a particular type of cone snail has already been approved by the FDA. How does one extract the toxins from these deadly creatures, you may ask? Why, you milk them, of course! But be very careful. Jon-Paul describes the only person ever to have survived the sting of a certain type of cone snail—20 years later the man’s still in pain, with a wound that won’t heal. Also explained is the complicated life cycle of the rat lungworm and the tortuous process, involving snail slime, by which it can end up on a consumer’s plate—or wreaking havoc with her or his nervous system. Wash that lettuce!

**FREE FOR THE CATCHING**
At this year’s Universities Council on Water Resources (UCOWR) conference, Planning for Tomorrow’s Water: Snowpack, Aquifers, and Reservoirs, NREM extension educator Trisha Macomber conducted a workshop on Rainwater Harvesting for Potable Water. UCOWR is an organization consisting of over 90 member universities and organizations leading in education, research, and public service in water resources. Featured speakers at this year’s conference, held in Boulder, Colorado, also included author Steven Solomon and Colorado Supreme Court Justice Greg Hobbs, as well as speakers from the Western Governors Association, the US Bureau of Reclamation, the Army Corps of Engineers and the USDA. Trisha shared with audience members how rainwater catchment has been used for many years in Hawai’i for domestic, commercial, and agricultural use. This is a new practice for states like Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah, where for the first time since territorial days, rain is again free for the catching. In 2009, two new laws in Colorado were passed to allow citizens to collect rainwater legally. To find out more about catching rainwater in Hawaii, check out Trisha’s informative publication.