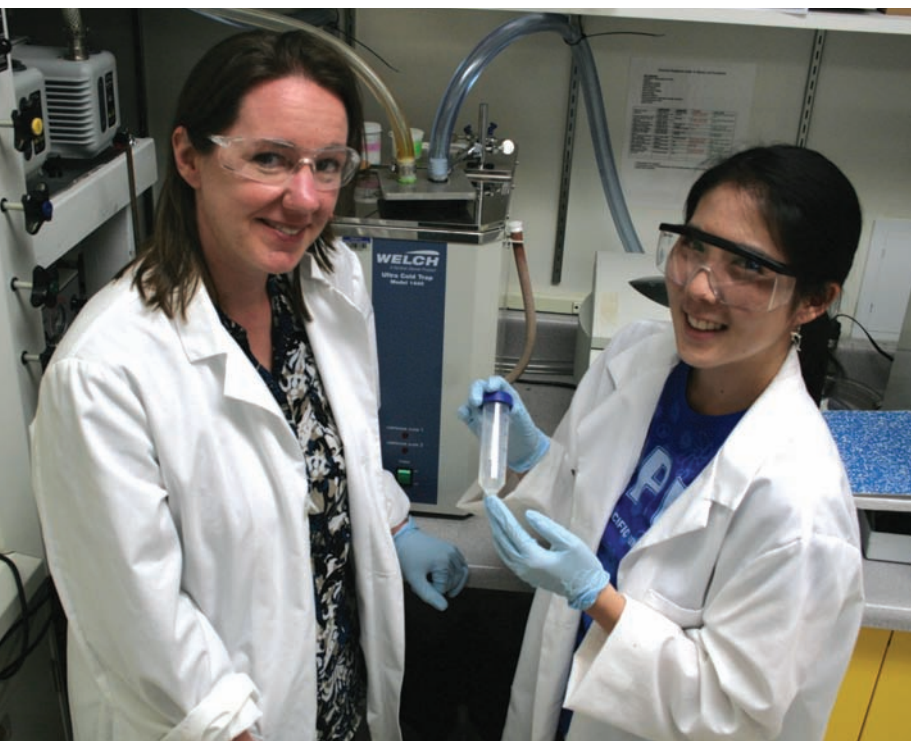


HPU Science Student Finds Formula for Success



Associate Dean Brenda Jensen, Ph.D., of the College of Natural and Computational Sciences, and student Hannah Tsunemoto study a chemical compound at a science lab at the Hawai'i Loa Campus.

Hawai'i Pacific University Biology major Hannah Tsunemoto surprises people with what she's already studying as an undergraduate student. Take the internship she has this semester.

Tsunemoto screens tissues from stranded whales and dolphins to look for bacterial or viral infectious diseases. This research may lead to greater knowledge of sea mammal health in Hawai'i waters.

"It's trying to figure out what killed [the mammals] and if those infections were the cause of that," Tsunemoto said.

"Hawai'i is such a hot spot for ecological diver-

sity. We have huge varieties of not only fishes and plants, but marine mammals, as well. By understanding what affects them, we can better figure out how to conserve the variety [of life]."

Tsunemoto, of Hawai'i Kai, is participating in an IDeA Network for Biomedical Research Excellence Spring Undergraduate Research Internship. She is assisting Jessica Jacob, a Marine Sciences graduate student at HPU, in a project to sequence viral and bacterial genomes.

The internship continues work Tsunemoto started last fall with Dr. Brenda Jensen, Associate Dean of the College of Natural and Computational Sciences

and an assistant professor of biology.

"Dr. Jensen is my mentor and she definitely makes science more interesting," Tsunemoto said. "She helped me so much to gain confidence in our research."

Tsunemoto previously conducted research at a larger university. "You get lost in the grain work."

She said she is happy her professors at HPU "actually know your name" and involve students in hands-on opportunities throughout their respective academic degree programs.

"There's a lot more research than you see, going on underneath the surface. We definitely have a lot of programs,"

said the Kaiser High School graduate.

Tsunemoto, a junior, plans to pursue a Ph.D. and focus on genetics and microbiology.

She was a recipient of a President Scholarship, the highest level merit scholarship awarded to incoming HPU freshmen who graduated from a local high school. Qualified Hawai'i students are automatically considered for merit scholarships.

"Hannah is an extremely dedicated student who is very competent and organized in the laboratory," Jensen said. She cites Tsunemoto as a great example of local science students who are getting a strong academic start at HPU.

"We offer a solid Bachelor of Science degree, with small class sizes taught by professors who are active in research,



HPU President Scholarship recipient Hannah Tsunemoto

plus the chance to participate in real research as a part of degree requirements," Jensen said.

Research topics include

deep water benthic ecology, marine mammal biology, toxicology, electrophysiology, ichthyology, paleofisheries, biogeochemistry, taxonomy, coral reef ecology, particle physics and more, Jensen said.

Depending on their degree program, some science students study at HPU affiliate, the Oceanic Institute, which is recognized as the premier

aquaculture facility in the nation. Other students cruise on HPU's research vessel, the R/V *Kaholo*, to study and collect marine life samples at Kane'ohe Bay.

For more information on HPU's College of Natural and Computational Sciences, visit <http://www.hpu.edu/CNCS/index.html> or call 236-5853.

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