



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII*
KAPI'OLANI
 COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Kapi'olani CC is Voted "2009 Best of the Best"

Aloha Everyone:

In its fourth annual, "**Best of the Best** Official People's Choice Awards," the readership of The Honolulu Advertiser voted Kapi'olani Community College to be the best vocational school on O'ahu for 2009. It is with much gratitude that I thank all of you for making this recognition possible.

What does it mean to be the "Best of the Best"? Let me share a story that started me thinking how the best starts by first being good.

I met Steven, a student with muscular dystrophy, several years ago. Steven's dream was to earn a college degree so he could help others with disabilities cope with the challenges of college. One day I saw him almost trip as he was rushing to class. He said he could not stop to chat because he wanted to share the solution to his homework, which was to visibly fill a room with something, corner to corner. I was intrigued by the assignment, but I also wanted to know Steven's solution. He wouldn't tell me, so I invited myself to his class.

The instructor allowed me to be a visitor for the day and she immediately asked her students to share their solutions to the assignment. One student volunteered, "Fill the room with laughing gas." Another student ventured, "Shake a pillow out and fill the room with feathers." Other solutions were offered, all very imaginative, all very creative. The instructor, seeing Steven's silent assent, asked Steven if he had a solution. Steven led the instructor outside and in a few minutes, the instructor returned, smiling. On cue, Steven turned the classroom lights off while the instructor lit a candle.

Steven succeeded in visibly filling the room, corner to corner. He had bested every solution and his classmates told him so.

This true story reminds me of why I am at Kapi'olani Community College: I value education and I respect the learning that allows our students to stretch their minds in unfamiliar areas and to strive to do their best despite any challenge. I see how each sector and each person on campus contributes to the laurels and accolades of the college. There are approximately 400 faculty and staff, with another 150 lecturers, and we come together to work and learn as a unified community.

The difference between just good and excellence is found in the commitment we give to what we do. Thank you everyone, for making Kapi'olani Community College one of the "Best of the Best" places to work, to study, and to learn. I am grateful to be here, at this campus, to witness how students like Steven are able to fulfill their dreams, and to create dreams for all those who challenge themselves to strive for the highest.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana,

Leon Richards
 Chancellor