



# Medical School Hotline

## The John A. Burns School of Medicine Today

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The John A. Burns School of Medicine (JABSOM), University of Hawaii at Manoa, has received much attention this year. The very existence of the Medical School has been challenged. The continual threats and rumors of closure, acute lack of funding and negative publicity from the media and local critics have been demoralizing and have affected recruitment of a permanent Dean.

However, the overwhelming support from the Hawaii Medical Association, Hawaii Coalition for Health, Friends of the Medical School, hospitals, alumni, students and faculty has been impressive and gratifying. The response and resolve of supporters from many sectors and groups in the State have bonded the faculty, students, alumni, and community supporters together. Morale at the School is high. There is much activity going on but much work is still to be done. Regular meetings between the support groups and the Dean's office are ongoing to coordinate campaign strategies and to plan public relations, political activities, lobbying efforts, and fund raising.

The good news is that the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) has reaffirmed the accreditation of the School until the year 2002. The Committee continues to raise concerns regarding the limited funding and financial stability of the School. The Problem-based Learning (PBL) curriculum, however, received very positive comments. The improvements and continual refinements of the program were recognized. The students' performances in the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) and National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) supported the success of our PBL curriculum.

All of the School's 13 residency and fellowship programs for physicians were accredited by their national Residency Review Committees. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) recently reviewed the School's graduate medical education programs and full accreditation is expected.

A new building for Dr. Ryuzo Yanagimachi's cloning research has been approved and funded. Construction is expected to begin to house the Honolulu Institute of Biogenesis Research within the School of Medicine.

Recruitment is currently underway to fill the newly created position of Associate Dean for Business and Hospital Affairs. This individual will assist with the School's long range financial planning and relationships with our affiliate hospitals.

Several retirements have occurred and replacements will be recruited. The Department of Cell Molecular Biology (formerly named the Department of Genetics and Molecular Biology) will coordinate the Cell Molecular Biology and Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs. A search for a chairperson to head this interdisciplinary department will begin. Plans for collaborating with our community hospitals and partnering with community resources and facilities are being developed.

In a few weeks, the Class of 2003 will enter its first year. These 62 students are impressive by their credentials and by their diversity. The class will be formally welcomed into the medical community by the JABSOM Class of 1978 at the White Coat Ceremony on Friday, August 6, 1999.

In spite of troubling times, JABSOM is weathering the storms and continues to prepare for a bright future with the support of the Hawaii community. The following are some key issues and facts about JABSOM.

### Impact on students:

- The major purpose of the medical school is to provide an opportunity for a medical education previously unavailable to residents of Hawai'i and other Pacific islands.

- Since 1975, 145 Hawaiians, 32 Guamanians, 80 Filipinos, 14 Samoans and 14 Micronesians have their received MD's from JABSOM.

### Impact on health care:

- The major emphasis of the medical school is to train students to a high level of competence as primary care physicians with the goal of improving health care in Hawai'i and the Pacific Area.

- The presence of a medical school improves the overall quality of health care in a community, and this is recognized by our practicing physicians, 93% of whom, a recent poll by the Hawai'i Medical Association opposed closure of the medical school.

- Continuing medical education, which enables practicing physicians to keep abreast of the latest techniques and standards of care, is provided primarily by medical school faculty.

- Clinical expertise to support tertiary care in major hospitals are provided by physicians affiliated with the school of medicine

- Outreach training, especially to rural and outer-island facilities is done almost exclusively by faculty and programs affiliated with the medical school

- The majority of in-hospital care of patients is provided by residents in training programs, which are all under the auspices of the medical school

- Research and improvements in health care requires dedicated individuals to identify problems in the community, develop and test hypotheses, and eventually devise solutions to improve care, all of which is a vital part of the educational programs here at the school of medicine and a primary obligation of the faculty

### Impact on the community:

- Making a medical education more accessible to residents of the State ensures that all ethnic and socioeconomic groups are represented in the medical profession.

- Local people appreciate being cared for by local physicians who have an appreciation not only of their diverse cultures but their unique healthcare needs as well. As an example, the late Nadine Kahanamoku left the bulk of her estate to the medical school to provide scholarships for students because she appreciated having 'local kids' take care of her while she was hospitalized.

- Training students in the community and exposing them to community programs and resources increases the likelihood they will return to practice in those areas.

- Community service is ingrained in JABSOM students who are eager to give back to the community, and highly recognized and rewarded by the institution which sends the message that altruism and duty are critical elements of the medical profession; the aim is to cultivate in them a strong commitment to community service.

- Care for indigent patients is provided at many community clinics by faculty and residents.