

**UH MĀNOA GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION**  
**2445 Campus Rd., Hemenway Hall 212**  
**Honolulu HI 96822**

**A Resolution Urging a more Active Response to On-Campus Deaths and more Extensive Suicide Prevention Measures**

- WHEREAS*, UHM's current suicide response programs are based on crisis-response rather than proactive prevention<sup>1</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS*, although not all campus deaths are suicides, suicide was the leading cause of death among college-aged (18 to 25 years) students in Hawaii in 2010-2014<sup>2</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS*, in the past two years alone at least two people have died unexpectedly on campus, and one other remains in critical condition; and,
- WHEREAS*, the administration of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM) has failed to communicate anything to the community about these tragedies or pro-actively offer counseling to those who have been affected; and
- WHEREAS*, current policies regarding the response from UHM to student deaths and other deaths on campus are considered insufficient by many members of our community, since such policies do not include any general communication to the UHM community regarding either the tragedy itself or the university services offered to affected students<sup>3</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS*, effective communication in response to campus deaths and suicides can prevent future suicides by advertising and normalizing mental health services<sup>4,5</sup> and aid in the mourning process by curtailing rumors and providing public sympathy to the bereaved; and,
- WHEREAS*, UH Hilo and UH West O'ahu provide strong examples of more active outreach programs and policies with regards to student deaths which include respectful community announcements<sup>6</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS*, the need for improved policies with regards to on-campus deaths and suicide prevention has been brought to the attention of the administration on multiple occasions by several concerned community members; and,
- WHEREAS*, the UHM policies regarding death and suicide prevention on campus have yet to be improved or modified in response to community concerns; therefore,
- BE IT RESOLVED*, that the UHM Graduate Student Organization (GSO) urges UHM administrators to alter current policy regarding the UHM administration's response to deaths which occur on campus; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*, that this policy must include an announcement to the community indicating that a tragedy has occurred and advertising UHM counseling services to all students; and,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*, that this policy must include contacting the family of the victim for permission to announce details of the incident before providing any sensitive information to the public, fully respecting the privacy of the victim and their family; and,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*, that this policy may include a further announcement, dependent upon permission from the victim's family, honoring the victim and their loved ones, and providing details of memorial services; and,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*, that such announcements must closely adhere to current best-practices regarding suicide prevention<sup>5,7</sup>; and,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*, that the GSO urges UHM administrators to improve the state of suicide prevention efforts at UHM by tasking the UHM Counseling Center with launching a pro-active suicide prevention program for students and staff; and,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*, that suicide prevention measures and programs should be based on established best practices and studies that have been conducted on the topic of suicide prevention<sup>5,7</sup>; and,

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED*, that the UHM Counseling Center be tasked with better advertising its services to students and staff; and

*BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED* that copies of this resolution shall be sent to: UH Board of Regents, UH President David Lassner, UHM Interim Chancellor Robert-Bley Vroman, Professor Susan Schultz, Vice Chancellor of Students Lori Ideta, Dean of Graduate Education Krystyna Aune, Associated Students of the University of Hawaii (ASUH) President Kelly Zakimi, Ka Leo O Hawai'i, Student Housing Services director and interim Dean of Students Mike Kaptik, the UHM Women's Center and LGBT Office, Co-coordinators of Outreach at the UH Counselling and Student Development Center (CSDC) Joel Gaffney and Hannah Im, and Director of KOKUA Ann Ito.

Introduced by BJ Avery, GSO Advocacy Chair

1 Based on information found on <http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/counseling/>

2 Received from Daniel Galanis, Ph.D., Epidemiologist, Injury Prevention and Control Section, Hawaii Department of Health

3 Based on policy documents received from Dr Susan Schultz, originally from Dr. Lori Ideta, Interim Vice Chancellor for Students, received 8 September 2015

4 Received from Kris Bifulco, MPH Program Manager – Pono Youth Program, 11 September 2015

5 <http://suicidepreventionmessaging.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/safety>

6 <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/uhh/congress/documents/studentdeathprotocolwithposthumousdegreesrevised.pdf>

7 Examples can be found at <http://www.wiche.edu/mentalHealth/suicide-prevention-toolkits>