Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Sister-University Partnership between UH and Ryudai

Back in November 1988, then-President Agarie Yasuharu of the University of Ryukyus (Ryudai) and President Albert J. Simone of the University of Hawai‘i signed an agreement on international exchange and collaboration. The two institutions have since partnered on a variety of initiatives, including joint efforts between the law, medical, and tourism schools, and have also administered numerous academic exchange programs across the humanities. To celebrate the 30th anniversary of this important sister-university partnership, the University of Hawai‘i will host a commemorative event on October 12-13, 2018 on Mānoa campus.

A delegation from the University of the Ryukyus will visit UH during this time, which includes current Ryudai President Oshiro Hajime and his administrative team, as well as members from the medical school and the faculties of engineering, agriculture, and humanities and social sciences. They will be welcomed by UH President/Chancellor David Lassner, Dean R. Anderson Sutton of the School of Pacific and Asian Studies, UH faculty and students, and members of the Okinawan community in Hawai‘i. Besides sharing experiences and stories of the three-decade-long partnership, participants from the two universities will discuss ways to move the relationship to the next level. A symposium, open to the public, is scheduled on Saturday, October 13, starting at 9 am.

The University of the Ryukyus was established in 1950 by the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) and later became a national university when Okinawa reverted to Japanese sovereignty in 1972. It has grown into a comprehensive institution with seven colleges and eleven graduate departments today. The University of Hawai‘i, originally established in 1907, consists of seventeen colleges and attracting students and researchers from around the world including Okinawa. In 2009 the University of the Ryukyus opened the International Institute of Okinawan Studies (IIIOS), which has now evolved into the Research Institute for Islands and Sustainability (RIIS). The Center for Okinawan Studies (COS) at UH Mānoa was established in 2008, thanks to the strong support of the university, the state legislature, and the local Okinawan community. We are celebrating its 10th anniversary this fall too.

From left: Executive Vice President Reiko Hanashiro, President Hajime Oshiro, COS Director Masato Ishida, and RIIS Director Yoko Fujita meet at the University of the Ryukyus in May to discuss partnership and collaboration.
Nakasone Travel Award Recipients

Ryler Neilsen, MA in Japanese Linguistics

I am very grateful for having received the Nakasone Student Travel Award. Thanks to the generous support, I could attend the 27th Annual Graduate Student Conference on East Asia at the University of Columbia on February 23-24, 2018. I presented my research on “code-switching” between Uchinaaguchi and Japanese that appeared in a Japanese television drama called *Work Transfer Drama: Surprises of Okinawa at New Years*. The media features interactions between Japanese monolinguals and Okinawan bilinguals.

The code-switching in the show is meant to mimic speeches that visitors from mainland Japan would likely hear in Okinawa. My analysis revealed that the use of Uchinaaguchi indexed more vivid and informal interactions as well as Okinawan identity. It also demonstrated a social bonding between other Okinawans marking rights and obligations toward addressees. I hope that my research piqued the interest of others since my findings shed light on the nature of the current language landscape in Okinawa.

Most presentations at the conference were about either China and Korea and mine was the only presentation that dealt with the under-described languages of the Ryūkyūs. Through participation and presentation at this conference I believe I was able to bring more attention to Okinawan socio-linguistics on the mainland. The experiences I had have been invaluable to me. I was able to meet with professors of the East Asian department at Columbia and solicit their critiques of my research. It was a very memorable time. I am so grateful for the support I received.

Congratulations Dr. Megumi Chibana, former COS Graduate Assistant

Congratulations to Dr. Megumi Chibana who graduated this summer with her Ph.D. in political science from UH Mānoa. Megumi, the first Okinawan to finish the doctoral program in political science, has been an integral part of COS, working as our graduate assistant over the last two years. Megumi also recently received a student travel award from the Matsuro and Tsuruko Nakasone Endowment Fund. Through this support Megumi participated in the tenth annual meeting of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association on May 17-19 in Los Angeles, CA. Her paper on “tacit farming” around military bases in Okinawa was presented as part of the panel “Pacific Cross-Currents: Storytelling and Organizing to Resist Military Occupation.” In her research, Megumi examines how everyday practices of tacit farming have come to express an Okinawan form of indigenous resistance and resurgence. COS wishes Megumi the best of luck in her future endeavors.

Orvis Auditorium UH Mānoa Campus
November 11, Sunday, @6:00 pm

A concert on ancient Ryukyuan religious music, court music of the Ryukyu Kingdom, and Christian hymns based on Ryukyu folk songs. For further details, please visit our COS website.

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Dr. Manabu Yokoyama’s Lecture and Workshop on Frank Hawley’s Okinawa

From April 24-26, Ryukyuan historian and expert in Okinawan historiography Dr. Manabu Yokoyama (Waseda University) held a series of events at UH Mānoa focusing on Frank Hawley (1876-1964), a British linguist and journalist who was a collector of rare Ryukyuan/Okinawan books. After Hawley passed away Hamilton Library obtained a large portion of his collection through the efforts of Sakamaki Shunzo (1906-1973), the university, and the local Okinawan community in Hawai‘i.

The first part of the workshop, held on April 24 in the Tokioka Room, attracted many members from the community. Dr. Yokoyama spoke to a crowded room about the life and work of Frank Hawley and how Hawley came to amass his collection on Okinawa. The second part of the workshop was held on April 26. Participants were invited to sit around a table with Dr. Yokoyama and had a close discussion about Hawley and the various research techniques Dr. Yokoyama employs in his research. Through his presentation Dr. Yokoyama enthusiastically portrayed a vivid picture of a British intellectual who lived in Japan, loved books more than anything else, and was eventually married to an Okinawan woman.

Between the two workshops, a library colloquium talk took place in Hamilton Library under the title, “Treasures at UH Hamilton Library—Hawley & Sakamaki: The Founding of UHM Ryukyuan Studies.” UHM History professor Dr. Yuma Totani and Okinawan Studies Librarian Sachiko Iwabuchi introduced the audience to the idea of the library collection initiative and offered an overview of the collection. Dr. Yokoyama delivered a special lecture on important features of the Hawley collection. Multiple items from the Hawley collection were displayed at the event, which fascinated the audience. We wish to thank the many participants for making the events successful.

Okinawan Studies on KZOO Radio

On Sunday, April 15, COS director Dr. Masato Ishida, UHM history professor Dr. Yuma Totani, and Okinawan studies librarian Sachiko Iwabuchi made a half-hour appearance on KZOO Radio. They were featured on the program “Kariyushi to Tomoni,” presented by the Hawai‘i United Okinawa Association and hosted by Mr. Cyrus Tamashiro and Ms. Hanae Higa. During the program, Dr. Totani talked about the April 25th colloquium at Hamilton Library featuring the Sakamaki-Hawley collection of Okinawan materials. She announced Dr. Manabu Yokoyama’s visit for the event too. COS director Dr. Masato Ishida discussed a two-part workshop by Dr. Yokoyama and the role of the Center for Okinawan Studies in organizing such events. Ms. Iwabuchi elaborated how the Okinawan community helped the university purchase Frank Hawley’s Ryukyu/Okinawa collection that has now become a solid foundation of Okinawan studies at UH Mānoa.

(Front Row) From left, Sachiko Iwabuchi, Dr. Masato Ishida, and Dr. Yuma Totani pose with radio hosts (Back row) Cyrus Tamashiro and Hanae Higa in the KZOO radio station.
Dr. Shinye Gima and Mr. Mark Matsunaga: 
The Pacific War as seen by Nisei Soldiers of the Military Intelligence Service

On March 7, UH Mānoa Library and the Center for Okinawan Studies hosted a talk event at Hamilton Library for the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). Dr. Shinye Gima gave a personal account of his experiences as a Hawai‘i-born Okinawan. He shared the story of how he and his younger brother, Noboru, ended up on opposing sides of the war, and highlighted the human side of the war in his talk.

Dr. Gima was in second grade when his grandmother in Okinawa asked his father to send one of his sons to live with her. “Shinye, do you want to go to Okinawa?” his father asked. Dr. Gima replied, “No, I don’t want to leave my friends in school.” His younger brother Noboru, however, said “I’ll go,” so he went and grew up as a Japanese in Okinawa. “He went to Okinawa instead of me, and saved my life,” Dr. Gima commented.

After the war broke out, Dr. Gima volunteered for the MIS. His unit arrived in Okinawa in late April, 1945, while his brother, Noboru, had volunteered to join a unit of the Japanese army. His brother was caught and became a prisoner of war (POW). Dr. Gima was hoping that Noboru had survived and looked for him. At one of the POW camps, Dr. Gima came across a POW registration card that had Noboru’s picture on it. “I hadn’t seen him for a long time, so I went over the description many times before I was convinced that he was alive,” Dr. Gima said.

But Noboru had already been sent to another camp in Hawai‘i.

It was in 1946 that the brothers and the family reunited in Hawaii. In his talk, Dr. Gima also brought into focus his experience on Kume Island, where the U.S. accepted the surrender of Japanese military officers. Following Dr. Gima, Mr. Mark Matsunaga described the broader historical context of the MIS, which helped the audience understand better what the situation was like in Hawai‘i immediately following the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Students, faculty, community members including veterans filled the room for this morning talk.

Dr. Masato Ishida: Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawai‘i

On Saturday, February 24, COS Director Dr. Ishida gave a lecture at the Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawai‘i (OGSH) in Waipahu. His presentation focused on the life and work of Ifa Fuyu (1876-1947), the “father of Okinawan Studies.” Besides discussing Ifa Fuyu’s family genealogy, Dr. Ishida highlighted Ifa’s visit to the Hawaiian Islands in 1928 and his pioneering work in historical linguistics.

Okinawan Studies Forum with COS Director Dr. Masato Ishida

COS began the spring semester with a forum by the newly appointed Director, Dr. Masato Ishida. The forum, titled “Okinawan Studies at UH,” was held on January 26. Dr. Ishida referred to accomplishments made by past and present COS faculty and students, viewing them as foundations for further research at UH. Dr. Ishida then discussed interrogation reports of prisoners of war preserved in the National Archives. He explained how they cast new light on the battle of Okinawa from the U.S. side. The event also functioned as a meet-and-greet, where community members were able to introduce themselves to Dr. Ishida. We wish to thank our colleagues and guests for joining us for this event.
On March 26, the Worldwide Uchinanchu Business Network (WUB)’s seventh talk story conference took place at the Hawai‘i International Imin Conference Center. The theme of the conference was “Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education and Research in Okinawa and Hawai‘i: Views from the Cutting Edge.” The panel featured keynoter Dr. Peter Gruss (President/CEO, Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology), Governor David Ige, Dr. David Lassner (President/Chancellor, UH System), Dr. Kenneth Kaneshiro (Director, Center for Conservation Research and Training and the Hawaiian Evolutionary Biology Program), and Mr. Glenn Lee (STEM Learning Coordinator/Robotics Design Technology Instructor, Waialua Intermediate and High School).

In the keynote lecture, Dr. Gruss discussed numerous real world examples and emphasized that STEM knowledge offers the key to solving large scale global challenges. Governor Ige, a former engineer, said that STEM education is fundamental to creating high-quality jobs for young people in Hawai‘i. The importance of growing business at home, rather than trying to bring it from elsewhere, was also stressed by UH System President Lassner. Dr. Kaneshiro and Mr. Lee presented on a number of amazing achievements made by students in Hawai‘i’s local schools. The event was co-sponsored by the East-West Center, Center for Okinawan Studies, and OIST. The event attracted over 100 participants including UH faculty, students, WUB members, and people from the community.

Hamilton Library: Christianity in Okinawa Exhibit

From May 17 through August 31, the Asia Collection at Hamilton Library featured an exhibit on “Christianity in Okinawa.” A number of sample manuscripts, documents, translations, and photographs that describe the journey of Christianity into Okinawa were displayed. The exhibit brought into focus four important figures: Bernard Jean Bettelheim, Reverend Henry B. Schwartz, Ifa Fuyu, and Shin’ichi Araki. They played central roles in disseminating Christianity throughout the Ryukyu Kingdom and modern Okinawa. The fourth figure, Shin’ichi Araki, was an Okinawan minister who translated the Bible, hymns, and proverbs into Ryukyuan. The Okinawa Collection at UH was fortunate to receive as donations copies of Araki’s translations last year. The exhibit took place on the fourth floor of Hamilton Library.

Okinawa-related Courses at UHM

**ANTH 487 Okinawa and its Diaspora**
Explore the ties of identity that exist within and between Okinawa and its diasporic populations.

**ASAN 3200 Asian Nation Studies: Okinawa**
Examine the cultural, social, economic, and political lives of Okinawa’s people.

**EALL 197**
New beginner Okinawan language course that assumes no prior Japanese language training (forthcoming in Spring 2019).

**DNCE 106 Introduction to Okinawan Dance**
**DNCE 306 Okinawan Dance I**
**DNCE 406 Okinawan Dance II**
Learn traditional Okinawan dance at the introductory, beginner, or intermediate level.

**HIST 423 Okinawa**
Survey Okinawa’s social, cultural, economic, and political history from earliest times to present.

**JPN 471 Okinawan Language and Culture**
**JPN 472 Okinawan Language and Literature**
Explore the language, literature, culture, and folk customs of Okinawa and the Ryukus.

**MUS 311F Okinawan Music Ensemble I**
**MUS 411F Okinawan Music Ensemble II**
Learn classical Okinawan uta-sanshin playing and singing techniques and more.
We wish to express profound gratitude to the late Ms. Jane Fujie Serikaku, Executive Director of the Hawaii United Okinawa Association (HUOA) and retired educator, for her extraordinary generosity and outstanding service to the Okinawan community in Hawaii. Ms. Serikaku graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 1971 with a Bachelor’s degree in education and obtained a Master’s degree in educational administration in 1985. As a longtime community leader, an ardent supporter of education and one of the early recipients of the Milken Educator Award in Hawaii, Ms. Serikaku helped coordinate the Hawaii-Okinawa High School Student Exchange program for over 25 years and also initiated the HUOA Leadership Study Tour that have given young Okinawans from Hawaii an opportunity to visit their ancestral homeland and learn about Okinawan culture. Loved and admired by many, she will be missed greatly.

Special Thanks to our Donors (July 2017—June 2018)

COS News is the newsletter for the Center for Okinawan Studies. Our goal is to report on the events sponsored by the Center and to highlight the activities of students, faculty, visiting scholars, and community members who are involved in the field of Okinawan Studies and studies of the Ryukyu Archipelago.

To sign up for COS News and other announcements by email, please contact cos@hawaii.edu to be added to our email listserv.

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