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**First lady of limu  
UH's Gorey art**

**Partial to plumeria  
Dance as activism**

## Faculty member is face for biomedical careers

by Tina Shelton

The National Institutes of Health has named Professor Marjorie Mau one of eight BioMedical Faces of Science—a nationwide program featuring a website, biographical videos and a traveling exhibit (due in Hawai‘i in 2011) designed to inspire middle and high school students, especially those from diverse minority backgrounds, to consider careers in science.

Mau, a wife and mother of two boys, is a busy practicing physician in addition to being a UH Mānoa professor and leading health disparities researcher. Likely the first female Native Hawaiian endocrinologist (a specialist in diabetes, endocrine and metabolic disorders), her research at the John A. Burns School of Medicine has brought more than \$20 million dollars in grant funding to the university.

"It's somewhat amusing for me to be the first, because I am the sixth of seven children in my family," Mau laughs. Growing serious, she adds: "I do believe it is important for our state's young people and the next generation of leaders to know that anything is possible."

Mau's mother Lorraine taught English at Farrington High School and father Francis worked as an environmental engineer for the Navy. Both received degrees at UH Mānoa, but Mau's application to JABSOM was rejected. "I was an average student, and I have the proof," the Kalani High School graduate says with a smile. She attended college and medical school at Creighton University in Nebraska. She also holds a master of science from Harvard School of Public Health.

On the mainland when the Hawaiian Renaissance spurred a surge of cultural pride in the 1970s, Mau has played her own critical role by advancing Native Hawaiian health issues in academia. She served seven years as inaugural chair of UH's Department of Native Hawaiian Health—the country's first department in an accredited medical school dedicated to indigenous health and healthcare. She continues her research as director of the Center for Native and Pacific Health Disparities Research and holds the inaugural Myron "Pinky" Thompson Endowed Chair for Native Hawaiian Health Research.

Native Hawaiian-Chinese, she credits her mother's parents with helping her live and learn her Hawaiian values. Grandfather Harry Ching, the first postmaster general in 'Ewa Beach, "had a boat and went fishing, among other things. My grandmother, Elizabeth Naholowa'a Ching, who never completed high school, also worked hard and was wise beyond her years of schooling. My Popo really lived the meaning of aloha and Hawaiian values."

Mau was the physician aboard the Polynesian Voyaging



Society canoe *Hōkūle'a's* 2007 voyage to Micronesia to honor master navigator Mau Piailug. She calls the experience he huliau, a turning point, in her life as a physician, researcher, teacher and a Native Hawaiian, grounding her in those deep Hawaiian values.

"Hawai'i is blessed with beautiful surroundings, people who are truly the heart and soul of the place and a rich heritage of cultures, especially its original Native Hawaiian culture. This unique experience brings forth innovative perspectives for ideas in science," Mau says with enthusiasm. "If the BioMedical Faces of Science program does nothing else but bring hope and inspiration for our young people to get involved with science and health, it will have been all worth it for me!"



Learn more: about the UH Mānoa medical school at <http://jabsom.hawaii.edu>; about BioMedical Faces of Science at [www.biomedicalfacesofscience.com/index.htm](http://www.biomedicalfacesofscience.com/index.htm)

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## Medical school faculty are among Hawai'i's best docs

One in five of the physicians featured in *Honolulu* magazine's June "Best Doctors in Hawai'i" issue is a faculty member of the Mānoa's John A. Burns School of Medicine. Faculty at the school include doctors who treat patients at the school's 11 academic training hospital partners on four islands. The magazine's list is researched by Best Doctors in America, which asks physicians nationwide who they would refer patients to.

Half of the 2,900 practicing physicians in Hawai'i are graduates of either JABSOM or its Hawai'i Residency Programs, which trains physicians in 16 specialties.