



‘IMILOA
Astronomy Center of Hawai‘i

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Hawaiian Culture and Astronomy Find Common Ground at New Center

‘Imiloa offers a connection between the Hawaiian Culture and Astronomy

Hilo, Hawai‘i – Hawai‘i’s cultural past connects with the present and the future at the new ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center of Hawai‘i located in Hilo on Hawai‘i’s Big Island.

With its stunning architecture, titanium cones and award-winning landscape of native and “canoe” plants of Hawai‘i, the Center since opening on February 23, 2006, has become a new landmark for the island, and a major new destination for visitors to the Big Island.

“This facility is a place of gathering, inspiration and connection,” said Peter B. Giles, executive director of the Center. “Our *nu‘ukia*, our mission, is to celebrate Hawaiian culture and Maunakea astronomy to share an inspiring example of how science and culture can be united to advance knowledge, understanding and opportunity.”

‘Imiloa Astronomy Center is located more than nine acres of land overlooking Hilo Bay on the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo Science and Technology Park campus. The Center features more than 100 exhibits in its 12,000-square-foot gallery that intertwines astronomy and Hawaiian culture into a compelling story of human exploration and voyaging.

The Center takes its name from the Hawaiian word *‘imiloa*, which means to explorer or to seek knowledge or profound truth. Exhibit programs explore the connections between the early Polynesian star navigators, our earliest astronomers and observers of the skies, and today’s astronomers, who look at stars for answers to questions about how life began.

(more)

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In the Voyaging Exhibit 'Imiloa hosts a one-fifth scale model of the Hokūalaka'i canoe, a modern day canoe, which symbolizes a continuing journey to preserve Hawaiian language and culture. The Center also showcases the exploration of the stars by the astronomers on Maunakea, one of the world's tallest peaks standing 13,800 feet above sea level, and one of the world's most pristine locations for astronomical research. Observatories atop Maunakea constitute the largest collection of modern observatories in the world and research from those telescopes is revolutionizing our understanding of the universe.

In addition to the exhibit gallery, the Center includes a planetarium with a state-of-the-art digital projection system, with 3D stereoscopic capability. 'Imiloa's Planetarium is the first in the world to have this capability. For visitors, a must-see is the planetarium's dramatic destination show, "*Maunakea: Between Earth and Sky*," created specifically for the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center. The planetarium also has changing shows throughout the year, in addition to the feature show.

A powerful presentation in the exhibit hall is "4D2U Voyage Through Space" show from the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, which operates the Subaru Telescope, which is located on the summit of Maunakea. Using 3-D glasses, visitors will experience a beautiful and powerful representation of time and space based on real observational and computer simulation data.

Another feature of the Center is its beautiful and award-winning landscaping which has one of the largest and most diverse collections of native and Hawaiian "canoe" plants found in the islands. More than 50 native, indigenous and Polynesian-introduced plants are featured.

'Imiloa Astronomy Center of Hawai'i, located on Hawai'i's Big Island, opened in February 2006. The world-class destination intertwines the Hawaiian cultural and navigational understanding of the stars with real-time information direct from Maunakea's world-famous astronomy observatories. It is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, visit the Web site at www.imiloahawaii.org or call (808) 969-9700.

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