"MAKAWALU VORTEX" STONE BASALT SCULPTURE BY LOCAL ARTIST JERRY VASCONCELLOS DEDICATED ON JUNE 19.

Event featured 'oli, hula, and maile lei ceremony.

HONOLULU – The sculpture and earthen artwork "Makawalu Vortex," designed by local artist Jerry Vasconcellos and located between the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center ("Cancer Center") and the John A. Burns School of Medicine ("JABSOM"), was dedicated on Thursday, June 19, at 10 a.m.

The program featured an 'oli presented by Meleanna Aluli Meyers, and followed by hula performed by Kumu Hula Leina'ala Kalama Heine's Halau Na Pualei o Likolehua. Cancer Center Director Dr. Michele Carbone emceed, and the speakers included David Lassner, president of the University of Hawaii; Jonathan Johnson, Executive Director, Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and Vasconcellos.

The artwork was designed by Vasconcellos to serve as a physical manifestation of the core mission of the UH Cancer Center – to ease suffering, to comfort, to heal, and to discover. The concept of makawalu, or "many eyes," is part of the Native Hawaiian orientation toward seeking the path to total awareness and synthesizing all that is learned into practical knowledge. The two pohaku from Kailua also portray a vortex that draws energy from the surrounding atmosphere and radiates that energy outward. Thus, the Makawalu Vortex is the artistic symbol of the UH Cancer Center, with its message of striving for excellence and healing energy.

The late Jeff Nakamura of Shimokawa + Nakamura Architects designed the Cancer Center building and wanted the artwork to be created by a Hawaii artist. He liked that the Makawalu Vortex was tied to a local legend that was forward looking, and that the sculpture might even outlast the building he designed.

"Jeff wanted the artwork to complement the UH JABSOM and Cancer Center..."
facilities, pay homage to the Hawaiian culture, and help support our local artists," said Colin Shimokawa, Principal of Shimokawa + Nakamura, who designed the two campuses. "This is why the Makawalu Vortex sculptures, crafted of stone quarried in Kailua by local artist Jerry Vasconcellos, appealed very strongly to Jeff."

Dr. Carbone added, "Out of more than 250 proposals, this is the design that Jeff wanted, and I think he would be pleased to see it in place now in front of the beautiful Cancer Center he so brilliantly designed."

"The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts is honored to fulfill the objectives of the Art in Public Places Program with commissions like this one at the UH Cancer Center," said SFCA's Jonathan Johnson. "Makawalu Vortex is about seeing, opening our eyes and minds to possibilities. Broaden our views and we may find the answer where we least expect it."

Artist Jerry Vasconcellos describes his work with deep passion.

"My work is all about the material," said Vasconcellos. "To get a chance to celebrate stone on the scale that was necessary for a space like this was a challenge and a way to show homage. This stone, from the caldera of the Ko'olau, is the heart of the source. This is the same lava that formed Honolulu, that provided the run off to create Kaka'ako!

"When I think about research, teaching and learning effectively, I think about seeing things from multiple perspectives," he said. "The eyes are looking to the sources - the sky, the earth, the ocean, the sun, the people who work in this facility. They are looking at each other, as well, to search from within. I want the Makawalu Vortex to foster the open mindedness and wisdom of the search for the truth that will lead us to find answers by incorporating the power and energy of the land as a healing source in the form of the stones, and the power and energy of a double vortex to gather and focus energy."

ABOUT THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS The Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts was established by the Hawai'i State Legislature in 1965, to promote, perpetuate, preserve and encourage culture and the arts, history and the humanities as central to the quality of life of the people of Hawai'i. HSFCA funding is provided by the State of Hawai'i and the National Endowment for the Arts. Find out more at http://sfca.hawaii.gov

ABOUT THE UH CANCER CENTER The UH Cancer Center is one of 68 research institutions designated by the National Cancer Institute. Affiliated with the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, the center is dedicated to eliminating cancer through research, education, and improved patient care. Learn more at www.uhcancercenter.org. Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/UHCancerCenter. Follow us on Twitter @UHCancerCenter.