

Date: April 28, 2005

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The Struggle for the Soul of the University of Hawai'i A Statement by the Stop UARC Coalition

We are a coalition of students, faculty and community members who care deeply about the University of Hawai'i (UH) and about the future of Hawai'i. After studying the issues carefully, we have concluded that the proposed Navy University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) is wrong for UH, wrong for Hawai'i and wrong for all of humanity.

We have one simple demand, that UH President McClain cancel all plans for a UARC at UH. We will not leave his office until he stops the UARC or until we are forcibly removed. This is a non-violent action.

Frustrated by the UH Manoa Chancellor's lack of transparency, honesty and respect regarding the UARC, and concerned that the Administration is already determined to establish the UARC over the serious concerns and overwhelming opposition from all sectors of the campus and community, we have no choice but to resort to nonviolent civil resistance to save our university. The Chancellor's late consultation is disingenuous; consultation should have occurred three years ago when UH began negotiating for the UARC.

Our reasons for opposing the UARC are as follows:

1. The UARC would be involved in military weapons related research which is incompatible with the mission of UH. The UH motto: "above all nations is humanity" is contradicted by the UARC purpose: "improve system performance of DoD weapons systems."
2. The UARC represents a grave injustice to Native Hawaiians and fuels military expansion in Hawai'i. We uphold UH core values such as "aloha", "malama 'aina" (caring for the land) and "a Hawaiian place of learning". The UARC violates these principles by expanding weapons related research and secret military projects that threaten the health and safety of people and the environment, desecrate Native Hawaiian sacred places, and increase the killing power of US weapons systems. Mauna Kea, Haleakala and Nohili are among the places that the UARC would impact. The Kualii Council, the body representing the interests of Native Hawaiians on the UH Manoa campus, testified before the Board of Regents: "Since the American military has done more to damage our ancestral lands than any other entity, we cannot support the establishment of a UARC at the University of Hawai'i."
3. The UARC would set a bad precedent by fundamentally altering the relationship between UH and the military. Contrary to claims that the UARC is only another funding mechanism, the laws and regulations that govern UARCs explain that a UARC is a

uniquely close relationship between the Navy (sponsor) and the University (provider), much like a marriage, which would change what is now faculty-directed research into military-directed research. Essentially the UARC's purpose is to generate research on demand, dictated by the needs of the military sponsor. As such, even information about unclassified contracts could be declared "privileged" and therefore secret.

4. Military secrecy subverts academic freedom and public accountability. We value the fundamental mission of a public university to generate and disseminate knowledge, to stimulate creative thinking and debate, and to maintain academic standards of rigor, honesty, ethics and accountability. By its very design, the UARC will be driven by military objectives and will be cloaked in secrecy due to either the classified nature of the work, or simply the provider-client privilege that extends to such sponsored forms of research. Reviewing the legacy of secret military research from Agent Orange experiments conducted by UH employees on Kaua'i in the 1960s to the nuclear holocaust unleashed on Marshall Islanders by 67 US nuclear bomb blasts in the Pacific, history does not allow us to blindly trust that the UARC will always be safe and peaceful as proponents argue.
5. The UARC may be part of a wider scandal involving alleged corruption and mismanagement of military research contracts. There is currently underway a Naval criminal investigation of the University of Hawai'i, the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i and the Office of Naval Research for alleged mismanagement of classified research data, alleged misuse of contract funds, and possible conflicts of interest. Key offices and personnel implicated in the investigation were also deeply involved in the development and negotiation of the UARC proposal.
6. The noncompetitive award of the UARC to UH may be in violation of Federal Acquisition Regulations requiring full and open competition for government contracts. Unlike other recently created UARCs that were awarded after an intensive competitive process, the Navy UARC was awarded to UH without any competition. This could carry severe penalties for Navy officials who are found to have violated the laws, and could result in financial losses, legal liabilities, and serious threats to the University's reputation and standing. Again, key offices and personnel currently under investigation were also deeply involved in the development and negotiation of the UARC proposal. If only to avoid any appearance of impropriety, the UARC should not be allowed to proceed.

The UARC represents misplaced priorities and lapses in judgment and ethics on the part of the University Administration. Our call goes out to all members of the UH community, the people of Hawai'i and people of the world to join us in saving UH, ending the militarization of Hawai'i and upholding humanity by urging UH President David McClain and the UH Board of Regents to stop the UARC now. Make the priority education, not war.