

For Immediate Release

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Hawai‘i Island students present scientific research projects

The Kohala Center and W.M. Keck Observatory host environmental education symposium

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—May 5, 2016—How will climate change, deforestation, urban growth, and water quality impact the future of Hawai‘i’s ecosystems?

Teams of students and teachers from several Hawai‘i Island schools presented findings from place-based scientific research projects conducted this school year through The Kohala Center’s Hawai‘i Island Meaningful Environmental Education for Teachers (HI-MEET) program. The environmental education symposium took place on Thursday, May 5, 2016, at the W.M. Keck Observatory headquarters in Waimea.

“This symposium went beyond the traditional ‘science fair project’ by giving students real-world experience presenting field science research projects in a professional-style scientific conference setting,” said Ilene Grossman, environmental education coordinator at The Kohala Center. “Students had the opportunity to connect with mauka and makai environments here at home and to think critically about the future of our island planet. We enjoyed some eye-opening presentations and are hopeful that this generation will devise innovative responses to the challenges our ecosystems face.”

Jamison Gove, a research oceanographer with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), delivered a keynote address focused on the impacts of climate change on the Hawaiian Islands. Presentations included a climate change oral history video and sea level rise study conducted by Waimea Middle School students, a comparative study of sea urchins in the Old Airport Marine Life Conservation District and Honokohau Harbor by West Hawai‘i Explorations Academy students, stormwater management ideas for Kona by Kealakehe High School students, and others addressing forest research and restoration projects around Hawai‘i Island.

The Kohala Center’s HI-MEET program supports grades 6–12 teachers with structured environmental education professional development that includes classroom instruction, fieldwork, and on-going mentor support. Teachers become skilled in leading their students

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through the design and implementation of field-based environmental research and service learning that aligns with Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards.

About The Kohala Center

Founded in the year 2000, The Kohala Center (<http://www.kohalacenter.org>) is an independent, community-based center for research, conservation, and education. We turn research and ancestral knowledge into action, so that communities in Hawai‘i and around the world can thrive—ecologically, economically, culturally, and socially.

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