

For Immediate Release

Contact: Janis Wong
Media Relations, The Kohala Center
jwong@kohalacenter.org
direct: 808-325-1114, office: 808-887-6411

Dr. Kamanamaikalani Beamer selected to lead The Kohala Center

KAMUELA, Hawai‘i—January 13, 2015—The Kohala Center has announced the appointment of Kamanamaikalani Beamer, Ph.D. as its next president and chief executive officer. Beamer will succeed Matthews Hamabata, Ph.D., who is retiring after serving as the organization’s president and CEO since its founding in 2000.

Beamer, a geographer, historian, author, public servant, and resident of Waimea on Hawai‘i Island, will assume leadership of The Center on March 1 on a part-time basis and on a full-time basis on July 1. Hamabata will continue to serve as a consultant to Beamer and The Kohala Center, overseeing select projects including the development of The Center’s future campus on Kohala Mountain.

“I feel that the values and goals of the Kohala Center are closely aligned with my own ethics and aspirations,” Beamer said. “I was born and raised in rural Hawai‘i. I know that there is much that our lifestyle and aloha can provide to others. There is a pressing need to provide sustainable economic alternatives for these communities, for Hawai‘i, and for the world. The Kohala Center has built amazing programs, fostered powerful relationships, and had the courage to remain independent while becoming a leader in strengthening the rural, agricultural, and knowledge economies of Hawai‘i.”

Hamabata passes to Beamer the legacy of strategic influence built by The Kohala Center over the last 15 years. The Center began in 2000 with an operating budget of \$7,500 and no employees. It now works with an operating budget of \$3.9 million, \$3.7 million in net assets, and 23 full-time and 15 part-time employees, all of whom are engaged in building ‘āina-based (land-based) programs for community well-being in the areas of energy self-reliance, food self-reliance, and ecosystem health.

“For those who know Dr. Beamer, we cannot help but be impressed by his personal integrity, his enormous intelligence, his service to the community, his ability to build bridges, his ease of movement across cultures, his musicality, and his sincere commitment to the values of *aloha ‘āina* (love for the land),” Hamabata said. “In my mind, Kamana represents Hawai‘i’s future. We look forward to working toward that future under his guidance and leadership.”

Dr. Kamanamaikalani Beamer selected to lead The Kohala Center, page 2

Contact: Janis Wong
Media Relations, The Kohala Center
jwong@kohalacenter.org
direct: 808-325-1114, office: 808-887-6411

Beamer's affiliation with The Kohala Center dates back to his selection as a postdoctoral fellow in The Center's inaugural cohort of the Mellon-Hawai'i Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship Program in 2008–2009, and presently serves as a mentor to one of the program's current postdoctoral fellows. He comes to The Kohala Center from his current position as a member of the faculty at the Hui 'Āina Momona Program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UH-Mānoa), with a joint appointment in the Richardson School of Law and the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge.

“Kamana Beamer has demonstrated leadership and ability in every single endeavor he has pursued,” said Dr. Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio of the Kamakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at UH-Mānoa. “His scholarship is thoughtful and always well-researched, his teaching both passionate and grounded and his program leadership has made him a valuable asset at Kamehameha and Mānoa. His leadership at The Kohala Center will continue the remarkable record of growth and achievement left by Matt Hamabata.”

Beamer's recent book, *No Mākou ka Mana: Liberating the Nation*, is based on research in Hawaiian language archives in Hawai'i, New England, and Europe and revolutionizes the way in which Hawai'i residents think of themselves and their history. His research on governance, land tenure, and Hawaiian resource management, as well as his prior work as the director of 'Āina-Based Education at Kamehameha Schools, prepared him for his continuing service as a director of Stanford University's First Nations Futures Institute, a resource management development program for indigenous leaders developed by Stanford, Kamehameha Schools, and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in New Zealand. In 2013 Beamer was nominated by Hawai'i Governor Neil Abercrombie and confirmed by the State Senate to a four-year appointment on Hawai'i's Commission of Water Resource Management. He is the son of Kaponu Beamer and grandson of Nona Beamer, bringing with him the historical, educational, and musical legacy of the Beamer 'ohana (extended family).

“Our selection committee had the daunting task of finding a successor to Matt Hamabata,” said Roberta Chu, The Kohala Center's board chair. “The candidates were all outstanding and accomplished individuals which made the decision very difficult. In the end, it became clear that knowledge of and dedication to Hawai'i Island were the defining issues. Kamanamaikalani Beamer was born, grew up and now lives on Hawai'i Island. Although youthful, he is a wise soul and will bring added energy to build on what Matt has developed to date for The Kohala Center. This is an exciting time for this organization as we enter a new chapter.”

The Center's current programs include Hawai'i Island School Garden Network, Hawai'i Public Seed Initiative, Rural and Cooperative Business Development Services, Beginning Farmer-Rancher Development Program, Kāhala'u Bay Education Center, and Kohala Watershed

-more-

P.O. Box 437462 | Kamuela, Hawai'i 96743 | Tel. 808-887-6411 | Fax 808-885-6707 | www.kohalacenter.org

The Kohala Center is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Contact: Janis Wong

Media Relations, The Kohala Center

jwong@kohalacenter.org,

direct: 808-325-1114, office: 808-887-6411

Partnership. To ensure that island residents qualify for the knowledge-rich jobs that The Center is creating in rural Hawai‘i, the organization serves more than 8,300 children and youth annually through environmental education, science, engineering, and mathematics programs. To foster the development of *kama ‘āina* (native-born) intellectual leadership for a knowledge-based economy and society, The Center developed and facilitates the Mellon-Hawai‘i Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellowship Program with the support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Kamehameha Schools, and the Kahiau Foundation.

“The Kohala Center has made an excellent choice in its selection of Dr. Kamana Beamer as its next president and CEO,” said U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-Hawai‘i). “The Center has proven itself as an independent, rigorous, and creative leader in the development of programs for the well-being of Hawai‘i’s communities. Given Dr. Beamer’s leadership and his steadfast devotion to education, Hawaiian culture, and the environment, I am confident he will move The Center forward in its all-important mission.”

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 traditional knowledge into action, so that communities in Hawai‘i and around the world can thrive—ecologically, economically, culturally, and socially.