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UH Manoa's Avegalio delivered keynote speech at San Francisco minority event

(Honolulu, HI – September 30, 2009) – Dr. Failautusi Avegalio gave the keynote speech to hundreds of individuals and organizations committed to advancing minority business enterprises at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco for the Regional Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Conference, held on August 21, 2009. MED Week is hosted by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) to honor the outstanding achievements of minority entrepreneurs, as well as individuals and organizations that have demonstrated leadership and commitment in advancing minority business enterprises.

Twelve leaders in minority business enterprise throughout the San Francisco region were honored. Dr. Avegalio, a native of American Samoa and advocate of traditional wisdom in the modern world, gave a keynote presentation focused on the entrepreneurial spirit in Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Territories – nations that share a common ocean voyaging heritage. "Dating back to a time when European voyaging was limited to the Mediterranean Sea and guided only by the sight of land, Pacific voyagers followed intuition and dreams to cross the ocean – a true testament to early innovation in those regions" Avegalio said.

Avegalio expressed the need to maintain the focus of Pacific entrepreneurial energy as it was at that time – "to promote and sustain social and environmental balance and harmony in addition to wealth." He placed great emphasis on the importance of the concept of wealth and the definition of capital, "I attribute the lack of balance and disharmony in society and in particular, the ecological systems of our natural environment, to a narrow definition of capital as only money. An expanded definition of capital must include quality of life dimensions."

At a time when many businesses are struggling to survive, Avegalio made the point "It is okay to make a decent profit. But also contribute to raising the common good. It's a sustainable balance that makes a difference."

Dr. Avegalio instills these philosophies in his career where results are paying off. Backed by his staff and collective accomplishments at Pacific Business Center Program (PBCP) and Honolulu Minority Business Enterprise Center (HMBEC), Avegalio garnered a top award – the San Francisco Regional 2009 Minority Business Advocate of the Year. Avegalio's modesty was evident when asked how he earned this award, "I can't think of anything I've ever achieved or accomplished without the help of others."

Regional MED Week conferences were held in five cities nationwide preceding National Minority Enterprise Development Week in Washington, D.C. August 26 – 28, 2009.

Dr. Avegalio is the Director of the Pacific Business Center Program (PBCP) and the Executive Director of the Honolulu Minority Business Enterprise Center (HMBEC) at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. For more information, visit www.pbcphawaii.com or www.honolulu-mbdc.org.

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