

FINALISTS

STUDENT SEAT

- **Kelli K.K. Acopan**
- **Richard J.M. Aglugub**
- **David B. Enriquez**
- **Racquel S.D. Raneses**

Kelli K.K. Acopan

Kelli Acopan is a graduate of 'Iolani School and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, having graduated cum laude with her bachelor of arts in history in December 2017. She is a current masters student at Mānoa in the Department of History, focusing on gendered social history in the United States. She is also a wife and mother to three school-aged children.

Prior to attending the University of Hawai'i Mānoa, she received her associate of arts in liberal arts at Windward Community College, where she served for 2 years as the president of the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i at Windward Community College (ASUH-WCC). During her term, Acopan served on various campus and system-wide committees, actively submitting legislative testimony, and collaborating with community organizations such as the Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club and the Kāneohe Neighborhood Board in assuring that the student voice was heard on policy and decisions from both the UH System and surrounding community. She also served as the Vice Chair of the University of Hawai'i Student Caucus (UHSC), filling in as the ranking executive member when the Chairperson was unable to serve. In her executive capacity in both organizations, she has focused on student advocacy and involvement on issues both campus and system-wide, championing issues like student engagement, Open Education Resources, and administrative transparency.

Acopan currently serves as the Student Regent of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She continues to support student success and engagement as the affiliate liaison to the UHSC, attending monthly Caucus meetings as well as meeting with students and student groups throughout the system. She also supports student success through academic tutoring and outreach for students aged K-12, working with underprivileged and at-risk high school students in her position with TRiO Upward Bound at Windward Community College, and serving as a substitute teacher for the Hawai'i Department of Education and University Laboratory School.

Acopan is a member of the Alpha Lambda Theta Chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa National Honor Society (PTK) at Windward Community College, and at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, the Alpha Beta Epsilon Chapter of the Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society (PAT) and the 130th Chapter of the Golden Key International Honor Society.

In her spare time, Acopan enjoys spending time with her family and friends, gardening, cooking, baking, and reading. She is also an avid crafter, something that has translated into a local small business retailing and teaching papercrafting, scrapbooking, and cardmaking with a focus on capturing stories and celebrating everyday moments creatively while having fun. Her work has appeared on local crafting shows like the *Joy of Crafting* and in international online magazines. She also intermittently designs for companies and manufacturers in the papercrafting industry.

Richard J. Aglugub

Richard Jay "RJ" Aglugub was born on the island of O‘ahu and raised in the communities of Wahiawā and Kapolei. He is a graduate of Kapolei High School, where he played soccer and football and was a student in the Health Careers Academy.

For his undergraduate education, he earned his B.S. in Psychology at Alcorn State University, a HBCU (historically Black college/university) in the south, while serving in various student leadership roles. As a Student Intern at the Office of Institutional Equity and Inclusion at Alcorn, he created and implemented mentoring programs like Real Men Read and M.A.D.E. (Men Achieving Dreams through Empowerment) that engaged the campus student body as well as the youth of its surrounding communities.

After graduation, RJ moved back home and worked in other career fields where he continued to grow personally and professionally. During his time at Bank of Hawai‘i, he learned to be consumer-oriented and developed strong professional skills that allowed him to engage people to effectively assess and address their financial needs. While working in Care Coordination at Queens Medical Center-Punchbowl, RJ learned to thrive in a fast-paced, high-stress, high-stakes environment and strengthened his ability to stay level-headed and have difficult conversations with people in crisis.

For his graduate work, he completed his M.Ed in Educational Administration in Spring 2019 at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. As a current doctoral student in the Ph.D in Educational Administration (Higher Education) program, RJ actively promotes student success as a part-time advisor for the College of Education. In addition, he also served as President of the Higher Education Student Association, Graduate Associate Program member for National Association for Student Personnel Administrators, and as Coordinator for the FilGrad (2019-2020) program. He also exemplified his vested interest in the Filipino community at UH by sharing public testimony to pass S.B. 1418, which would appropriate funds for the Pamantasan Council to promote access, diversity, and workforce development for Filipino students systemwide. As well, RJ feels that he has the most impact when he uses his student affairs background to teach his students about ethnic studies, a course that is meant to foster empathy and develop critical-thinking skills by examining U.S. and Hawai‘i history and contemporary social issues from a social justice lens. In his role as a lecturer and teaching assistant for the Department of Ethnic Studies, he worked with many first-year college students and high school juniors and seniors through various programs, which include the Hawai‘i Undergraduate Initiative, Mānoa Access Initiative, and Mānoa Academy.

As a first-generation college student and a product of the public school system in Hawai‘i, he believes that unwavering mentorship in tandem with a strong sense of identity was critical to his success. If not for skilled, compassionate, and dynamic student affairs professionals, RJ would not be working to help students in Hawai‘i to realize their purpose, in the same fashion that he came to realize his. He understands the value of a quality education and is committed to paying forward life-changing work to the communities and institutions of Hawaii.

Outside of work and school, RJ loves to travel, enjoys attending live music shows, and stays active by playing soccer and basketball during his free time.

David B. Enriquez

David B. Enriquez is currently pursuing a juris doctor at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's William S. Richardson School of Law. He graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in political science and philosophy from UH Mānoa.

During his undergraduate career, David served in positions that impacted students in various ways. Enriquez served as one of four Senators-At-Large for the Associated Students of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He advocated on behalf of students at the Hawaii State Legislature for expansion of mental health services. He as also served as one of four Student Ambassadors for the College of Social Sciences at UH Mānoa (CSS). There, he helped to establish a collaborative group called the President's Club, where student clubs of the CSS strive to enhance the social and professional engagement of the college.

As a first-generation law student of the William S. Richardson School of Law, David serves on the Student Bar Association, representing the Class of 2022. He was a founding committee member of the school's Food Pantry: CJ Cubby's.

Racquel S.D. Raneses

Racquel Raneses is currently a Graduate Student in the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Racquel's current focus for in the graduate program is Health. In the future, Racquel hopes to work within community-based organizations that addresses issues surrounding health disparities among indigenous populations and ethnic minorities. Racquel graduated with her Bachelors of Science in Family Resource Management with a Minor in Filipino Language in the Spring 2012 from University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. At this time, Racquel was active with UH Mānoa's College Opportunities Program as a Peer Mentor. As a Peer Mentor, Racquel served students who were academically under prepared, economically disadvantaged, non-traditional, underrepresented and in need of academically structured college entry. In addition, Racquel interned with the American Cancer Society assisting with coordination of Childhood Camps.

After graduation, Racquel began her professional career with experience healthcare related positions. Racquel was a Team Recruiter with the American Cancer Society for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer. Later, Racquel worked with United Healthcare as a Clinical Care Coordinator, where she worked with Medicaid and Medicare recipients and community providers. With 4 years of experience at UHC, Racquel then began working as a Social Service Coordinator with a local nursing home, Pālolo Chinese Home. Racquel has extensive experience in working with a diversity of individuals and families that have a complexity of needs. Racquel worked with residents and their families at all levels of care, from hospice – end of life care, skilled rehabilitation and long-term care. Racquel familiar with other support services and community-based programs specific to the resident's needs for referrals. These agencies included home health services, health plan coordinators, non-profit organizations and the Department of Human Services. Health has always been a place of interest for Racquel; from advocacy, prevention, education to care coordination. Each position has added to Racquel's knowledge and passion for helping others which has led her to pursuit of her Master's in social work.

Currently, Racquel is a Graduate Assistant Program Coordinator for the Senior Citizen Visitor Program (SCVP) with the Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity Office (SEED). Racquel has organized and coordinated SCVP since Fall 2019 with up to 300 community participants each semester. With a diversity of experience, Racquel demonstrates flexibility and range of interpersonal skills, from de-escalation, mediation to education. Additionally, Racquel is a Graduate Intern with Women's Center's PAU Violence Program which addresses with issues around dating/domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking. Through this internship, Racquel serves students, faculty and staff of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. With PAU Violence, Racquel co-facilitates trainings and workshops, and tables

Racquel is a part of a graduate student initiative, Nā Koa Ho'okaulike. This collective formed within the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, led an Aloha 'Āina Education Series is to raise awareness of current injustice issues happening in real-time throughout the Hawai'i community. With Nā Koa Ho'okaulike, Racquel organized a panel of professional Social Workers that began a discussion on the role of the Social Work profession in the Aloha 'Āina movement, fostering allyship, and develop clear goals to address injustices by holding ourselves accountable.

On her free time, Racquel enjoys going to the beach, listening to music and relaxing with her family.