

University of Hawai'i
Candidate Advisory Council

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March 31, 2026

The Honorable Josh Green
Governor, State of Hawai'i
Executive Chambers
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Governor Green:

On behalf of the Candidate Advisory Council (CAC) of the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents and in conformity with the provisions of Act 72, Session Laws of Hawai'i, 2013, I am pleased to present the following candidates to you, listed in alphabetical order, to fill the following seats for the term to begin July 1, 2026.

One (1) Student Regent seat for a two-year appointment (currently filled by Regent Joshua Faumuina)

1. Jenny Brown
2. Olivia Frances Chung
3. Eric Pomaikai Gee
4. Raiyan Rafid

The CAC complied with the statutory requirements and assessed candidates in a confidential, fair, independent, and nonpartisan manner. All candidates, as required by law, were asked to disclose any existing or anticipated contracts or financial transactions with the University of Hawai'i. Finally, with the assistance of licensed and accredited external firms, the CAC had background checks done on each candidate. Based on the applications and CVs submitted, interviews with candidates, contacts with references, and background checks, the CAC believes that these candidates are able and willing to discharge the responsibilities of a member of the Board of Regents.

Brief biographies drafted by the candidates are attached.

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If you have any questions, please call 956-8213 or email at borapp@hawaii.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brigitte Yoshino".

Brigitte Yoshino, Chair
Candidate Advisory Council

Attachments

- c: Senator Ronald Kouchi, President, Hawai'i State Senate
- Representative Nadine Nakamura, Speaker, Hawai'i House of Representatives
- Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair, Senate Committee on Education
- Representative Andrew Garrett, Chair, House Committee on Higher Education
- Regent Gabriel Lee, Chair, Board of Regents
- President Wendy Hensel, University of Hawai'i
- Members, Candidate Advisory Council

Jenny Brown

Jenny Brown is a first-generation, half-Filipina, LGBTQIA+ STEM transfer student whose journey across UH's two- and four-year campuses has given her firsthand insight into the barriers students face such as affording tuition, finding reliable study spaces, navigating the transfer process, and understanding the true cost of attendance. These challenges revealed to her early on that students depend deeply on the structures and systems of the University, often in ways that go unnoticed until they fail. It was this understanding that sparked her commitment to serve as Student Regent: to ensure student voices are actively heard and translated into meaningful action.

Jenny's approach to service is rooted in action, persistence, and a focus on sustainable impact. Her time volunteering in ecological restoration at Makiki Valley Loop taught her that real change is built over years, not from symbolic gestures. She spent over 450 hours developing a service-learning partnership that connected UH faculty to this work, transforming a single volunteer effort into a formal, enduring program.

In governance, Jenny has made impact systemwide by co-leading a multi-year effort to implement a pilot program reducing summer tuition by nearly 50% across all UH community colleges, boosting enrollment at four campuses to six-year highs. To build effective representation through proactive engagement, she actively seeks student perspectives, maintains strong connections with stakeholders from campus to administration, and translates these insights into decisions that reflect the diverse needs of UH students. Her work spans the UH Student Caucus, Chancellor Search Advisory Committee, General Education Committee, and Academic and Institutional Policy and Procedures faculty senate subcommittee, where she contributes to high-level policy decisions while balancing diverse viewpoints and constraints.

Jenny works to provide tangible support to UH students. She has secured free laptops, Wi-Fi hotspots, and period product dispensers to improve student life, both on- and off-campus. Beyond working to provide goods and services to students, she engages students directly as an Engineering Student Ambassador, mentoring K-12 and college students, leading a community building program for women in engineering, and managing peer tutoring initiatives in her honor society.

Jenny's perspective is shaped by her time in leadership and as a student navigating multiple UH campuses, from community colleges to four year UH institutions, and soon as a graduate student in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Her experiences have given her firsthand experience tackling inequities, basic-needs challenges, and the impact of student-centered policies across the system.

Outside of her work and studies, Jenny enjoys yoga, visiting local matcha spots, and exploring flora native to Hawaii. Her approach to life and service reflects curiosity, persistence, and a dedication to her community.

Olivia Frances Chung

My name is Olivia Chung, a 21-year-old current student at the University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu in my fourth year, majoring in business marketing with an expected graduation date of Spring 2027. I am a first generation college student coming from a diverse background. I am the current Student Life Events Supervisor at UHWO, I have worked my way up to this position and grown in this role from an event coordinator in 2022, to the student lead in 2024 and now the events supervisor. I am well versed and passionate about student fees and what we do with them. I am a part of various committees and positions on campus such as the Campus Center Board, Health Technology & Transportation committee, NASPA Undergraduate Fellows Program and more that help me develop as a student leader and aspiring Student Affairs Educator, looking to further my education of getting my Masters after completion of undergrad. Outside of the university I continue to serve the community as I spend my Summers as a Summer Fun leader at local parks. I am an regular blood donor with the Blood Bank of Hawai'i and a mentee with A'ali'i mentoring, in partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai'i. Along with years of volunteering for Iroquois Point Elementary School.

Eric Pomaikai Gee

Eric Pomaikai Gee is a student in the Honors College at the University of Hawaii at Manoa pursuing a double major in International Business and Finance with a minor in Political Science. Born and raised in South Kohala on Hawaii Island, he received the Sarah Rosenberg Award for community service and graduated from Kealahou High School in 2024 as valedictorian and commencement speaker.

Eric was appointed by Senate President Ron Kouchi to the Hawaii State Youth Commission and by Mayor Mitch Roth as Inaugural Chairperson of the County of Hawaii Youth Commission, where he drafted founding bylaws and advised county officials on youth policy and budget priorities. He has also worked with Hawaii Green Growth on statewide sustainability and education initiatives and as Operations Coordinator for Traditions Hawaii, a cultural performance organization founded by Kumu Nani Lim Yap.

A Villars Institute Fellow since 2022, Eric participated in an international Antarctic expedition to Union Glacier Camp led by Robert Swan in December 2025, selected as the only American on the expedition, speaking to nearly two million students worldwide about climate stewardship. In 2024, he was one of twenty students selected nationally for the World Affairs Council of America Student Scholars Program in Washington, D.C., and participated in a congressional briefing on postsecondary education policy. He was also featured in Roadtrip Nation's two-part 2025 PBS documentary Rethinking Higher Ed.

Active in the cultural and local community life of Hawaii Island for most of his life, including fourteen years with the Yau Gong lion dance troupe, Eric is committed to ensuring that students across the UH system have a voice in the decisions that shape their education.

Raiyan Rafid

Raiyan Rafid is an immigrant and proud graduate of the University of Hawai'i (UH) System, where he earned a BA in Psychology and an MS in Finance. He is currently pursuing a Juris Doctor at the William S. Richardson School of Law at UH Mānoa. Throughout his time at UH, he took on leadership roles in student organizations, working to promote equity, affordability, and meaningful changes that improve student life.

While pursuing his MS in Finance at the Shidler College of Business, Raiyan served as President of the UH Mānoa Campus Center Board (CCB), the governing body that oversees the Campus Center Complex. In this role, he led budgetary and policy initiatives that significantly increased revenue and implemented equitable student wage policies that not only strengthened CCB's financial position but also saved the university millions of dollars. He also helped expand programs addressing food insecurity among students, including establishing an endowment to support the student food pantry in perpetuity.

As Vice President of the undergraduate student government at UH Mānoa, Raiyan helped launch a free Hawaiian language program that was attended by hundreds in person and thousands online. His commitment to affordability also began at Kapi'olani Community College, where he was part of the leadership team that successfully reduced the student bus pass from \$225 to \$40.

Professionally, Raiyan served as an Asset Coordinator with the University of Hawai'i Office of Strategic Development and Partnership, where he supported the management of the university's real estate portfolio.

Raiyan views Hawai'i as his permanent home and is committed to a lifetime of civic leadership and legal advocacy to help build a more affordable, equitable, and inclusive future.