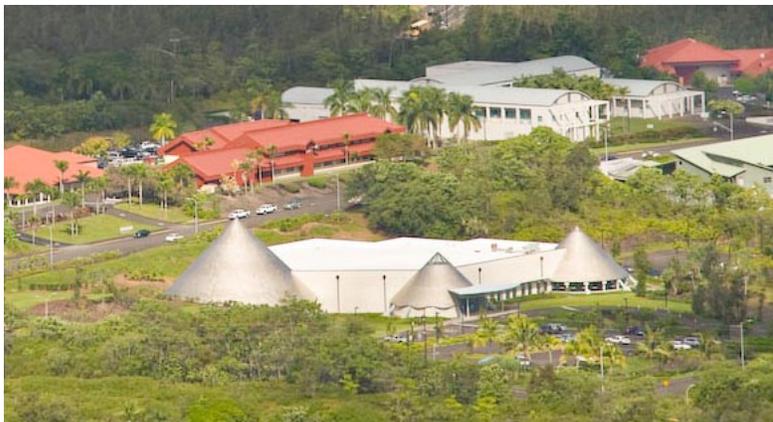


Pacific Islands Region Signs Agreement with `Imiloa Astronomy Center and Volcanoes National Park

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Pacific Islands Region (ONMS/PIR) announces the signing of Memorandum of Agreement with the University of Hawai`i's `Imiloa Astronomy Center and the Volcanoes National Park on the Big Island of Hawai`i, December 11 at the `Imiloa Center. Hawai`i's Senior Senator Daniel K. Inouye, who was one of the driving forces for the establishment of the `Imiloa Center, will give the keynote address. Also in attendance will be the signers of the MOA, ONMS/PIR's Regional Director Allen Tom, the University of Hawai`i Hilo Chancellor Dr. Rose Tseng and Volcanoes National Park Superintendent Cindy Orlando, as well as invited state and county officials.

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) will pave the way for new and innovative partnerships between the three programs. Programs may include education and outreach, staff interchange, collaborative trainings and other mutually beneficial projects.

`Imiloa Astronomy Center for Hawai`i is part of the University of Hawaii at Hilo. Its 40,000-square-foot exhibition and planetarium complex sits on nine acres in the University of Hawai'i's Science and Technology Park, above the Hilo campus. Currently featuring more than 100 exhibits, the Center's 12,000 square foot gallery intertwines astronomy and native Hawaiian culture in the context of human exploration and voyaging (see www.imiloahawaii.org for more information).



`Imiloa Astronomy Center at the University of Hawai`i at Hilo

The Hawai`i Volcanoes National Park encompasses two of the world's most active volcanoes, Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea. The Park is an International Biosphere Reserve and is Hawai`i's only World Heritage Site.

The MOA will facilitate collaborations between the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument's Mokuāpapa Discovery Center in Hilo (<http://hawaiireef.noaa.gov/education/center.html>), and the new partners. This exciting

alliance will stimulate programs enhancing public awareness and appreciation of the connections between the land, the sea and the sky.

Event Schedule for December 11, 2008 at `Imiloa Astronomy Center, Hilo, HI

- 1:00 pm Ceremony begins—opening blessing
- 1:05 pm UH Hilo Chancellor Dr. Rose Tseng’s Welcome Address
- 1:10 pm Agencies’ Addresses
 - Volcanoes National Park— Cindy Orlando, Superintendent
 - NOAA— Allen Tom, ONMS/PIR Regional Director
 - `Imiloa— Dr. Rose Tseng
- 1:16 pm Senator Inouye’s Address
- 1:25 pm Agreement Signing (Dr. Rose Tseng, Allen Tom, Cindy Orlando)
- 1:30 pm Presentation to Senator Inouye by Sig Zane (Allen Tom to introduce)
- 1:32 pm Closing—invitation to exhibits, planet, refreshments
- 1:45 pm Museum Theater performances—interaction with students