University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant College Program receives prestigious Dr. Arthur Chiu Award for Excellence in Hurricane Preparedness

At yesterday’s annual hurricane outlook news conference held by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Central Pacific Hurricane Center, the Sea Grant College Program (UH Sea Grant) at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa was awarded the 2013 Dr. Arthur Chiu Award for Excellence in Hurricane Preparedness.

The award is given annually to an organization, individual, or business that has demonstrated innovation or excellence in hurricane preparedness for the community. This year, UH Sea Grant was selected for its efforts to make Hawai‘i’s communities safer through its excellent work on the *Homeowner’s Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards*. The free handbook provides detailed information on how to prepare the home for a hurricane and other natural hazards, and outlines cost-effective steps that can significantly reduce the risks to lives and property.

Dr. Chiu was a University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa engineering professor for 42 years, an internationally recognized expert on the effects of wind on structures, and a longtime volunteer with the Hawai‘i State Hurricane Advisory Committee.

Doug Mayne, Vice Director of Hawai‘i State Civil Defense, presented the award. He said “The Sea Grant College Program has done some great work in promoting disaster resiliency and personal preparedness for Hawai‘i. In 2007 Dennis Hwang and Dr. Darren Okimoto wrote the *Homeowner’s Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards*. The homeowner’s handbook is an excellent guide for all hazards, but where it really shines is in the descriptive sections on hurricane mitigation measures for single family homes.” He also noted “The University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant College Program exemplifies the spirit of the Dr. Arthur N. L. Chiu Award through their continuous work in making Hawai‘i and its coastal communities a safer place.”

Due to an overwhelming response from the public, over 50,000 copies of the handbook have been printed and distributed to homeowners throughout the state. UH Sea Grant is currently revising the second edition of the handbook in time for the start of the June 1, 2013 hurricane season. In addition, with assistance from Dennis Hwang, state-specific handbooks have been developed in Mississippi, Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Texas, and Louisiana that are based on the initial Hawai‘i version.

Printed copies of the handbook are available for pick-up or it can also be downloaded for free from UH Sea Grant’s website: [http://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/publications](http://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/publications). A $5.00 shipping and handling fee will apply to mailed orders. For more information, please visit the website, email uhsgcomm@hawaii.edu, or call (808) 956-7410.

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The University of Hawai‘i Sea Grant College Program is part of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa’s prestigious School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology. It supports an innovative program of research, education and extension services directed to the improved understanding and stewardship of coastal and marine resources of the state, region and nation. Science serving Hawai‘i and the Pacific for over 40 years.