Aloha pumehana! I am very pleased to be assuming the position of Dean of the School of Pacific and Asian Studies (SPAS) and Assistant Vice Chancellor for the Office of International and Exchange Programs (OIEP). As a UH Mānoa grad myself (M.A. in Ethnomusicology, 1975), I’ve always valued the wonderful education I received here – from coursework and advising under the able guidance of Professor Barbara Smith and Professor Ricardo Trimillos, to my summer study abroad experience in Indonesia with Professor Hardja Susilo. I am happy to be back for more than a visit and contributing to international education here.

A little about my background: I have devoted most of my professional life to teaching and research about Asia, specializing in the music and cultures of Indonesia since my time at UH Mānoa in the 1970s and branching out to conduct research in South Korea since 2001. As a grad student at UH Mānoa, I studied Indonesian and Javanese languages, in addition to academic and practicum courses in musical traditions of Asia – plus one semester of hula kahiko. After a year of research in Indonesia as an East-West Center grantee, I finished an M.A. thesis and taught as a lecturer at Windward Community College and UH Mānoa for a year before moving to the University of Michigan for my Ph.D (completed in 1982) and then the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where I taught until Spring 2013. In addition to teaching academic courses on music of Asia and seminars in ethnomusicology there, I also directed the Javanese gamelan music ensemble.

For three terms, I served as Director of UW-Madison’s Center for Southeast Asian Studies. As I developed my interests in Korean culture and took Korean language courses at UW-Madison, I joined the executive faculty of the Center for East Asian Studies, working with colleagues and Korean alumni to establish two new faculty positions at UW-Madison in Korean Studies.

As part of my preparation for my new position at UH Mānoa, I have been spending hours reading through materials on the UH websites, focusing mostly on OIEP and SPAS, but also exploring the international dimensions of other Schools, Colleges, and programs around the campus. There is a truly impressive array of activities, a stellar faculty and staff, and lots of new initiatives under way. I’m excited about working to enhance and develop our international programs, ensuring UH Mānoa’s well-deserved reputation as a true standard-bearer of excellence in Pacific Island Studies, Asian Studies, and global education.

Mahalo,
R. Anderson (Andy) Sutton
LIVE LONG AND PROSPER by Lois Kajiwara (http://www.uhm.hawaii.edu/international/)

Warp speed, the Enterprise, Mr. Spock, United Federation of Planets, tribbles, and those unforgettable Klingons – the diverse universe of Star Trek continues to have a big impact on our culture. On an international scale, Star Trek – which incorporates relevant issues such as war and peace, politics, and hope for the future into its plots – is a bond that brings people of all nations together.

If you have seen a Star Trek TV series or movie, chances are you have viewed the work of graphic designer Mike Okuda. Born in Tokyo but raised in Hawai‘i, how did a local boy without any Hollywood connections get a job with Star Trek? The answer is initiative – along with talent, hard work, and some good timing. Back then, Mike decided to send his control panel designs (unsolicited) to Paramount, and they were so impressed with his designs that he received a phone call out of the blue to work on Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home. That movie was the start of his very busy (and cool!) career with the Star Trek franchise – after Star Trek IV, he worked on The Next Generation, Deep Space Nine, Voyager, and Enterprise as the scenic art supervisor. To date, Mike has worked on a total of seven Star Trek movies and is the coauthor of the Star Trek: The Next Generation Technical Manual, the Star Trek Chronology, and The Star Trek Encyclopedia. He coauthored the last two books with his wife Denise, who also works for Star Trek as the video and computer graphics supervisor.

Interested in media and production, Mike graduated from UH Mānoa with a B.A. in Communications. Where does art fit in? As a child, he was interested in how art, as a tool, achieves a specific goal. This approach has carried through to his work as an artist, for what inspires him is problem solving – finding creative solutions for the challenging projects that he is asked to design. The following is my interview with Mike:

Why do you think Star Trek is so enduring? What do you feel is its message?
Star Trek has touched a lot of people. Simply put, it is good storytelling. It is a series about discoveries, adventures, family. If we work hard, have ethics, etc., there is no limit to our future. We can literally reach for the stars. Star Trek was born in the era of the space age, which was a symbol for a better tomorrow. This was Gene Roddenberry’s vision.

Which series is your favorite?
The original series is my favorite because I saw it as a child.

Is Star Trek IV your favorite movie?
Yes, it is extremely special because it is the first movie that I worked on and also because it has a social message.

Who were you happy to meet on the set?
I was thrilled to meet and work with the original cast members, especially Bill Shatner and Leonard Nimoy.

Of all the designs (including alien written languages, computer screens, exotic graphics) that you have done for Star Trek, which one stands out?
That’s a very hard choice. If I had to pick one, it would be the style of the control panels for Star Trek: The Next Generation.

Which Star Trek technology would you like to have?
Does it have to be real? How about the transporter?
LIVE LONG AND PROSPER (continued from page 2)

Is there a character in Star Trek that you can relate to?
I'd probably say the "triumvirate" of Kirk, Spock, and McCoy in the original series. Kirk as the decision maker, Spock representing Kirk's logical mind, and McCoy as his emotional side. I'm not saying that I'm like them, but I certainly aspire to Kirk's decisiveness, Spock's logic, and McCoy's wisdom.

What has been your biggest challenge?
Time constraints and my own creativity. I have to be able to come up with the fastest, most efficient way of doing a design – and then create something cool – within the budget.

What was the funniest thing that happened while working on Star Trek?
One story comes to mind. I was chatting with Patrick Stewart (Captain Picard) one day during production and he asked me, “How does warp drive really work?” I replied that there are some scientific underpinnings, but the truth is that no one really knows if it is even possible. Patrick responded, “Nonsense.” With a grand hand gesture he said, “All you have to do is point forward and say, ‘Engage!’” And he was right, of course!

Most unusual request?
That's hard to pinpoint. There were always unusual requests. (Chuckles.)

What do you like best about being involved with Star Trek?
I get to play with cool toys, and meet a lot of amazing people. And my work touches people, some of whom have been motivated to become scientists, astronauts, engineers, teachers, doctors, and nurses because they were inspired by Gene Roddenberry's vision of the future.

Do you miss Hawai'i? How is living in Los Angeles?
I love Hawai'i. I have a lot of family and friends living there. I also miss local food like poke! But for work, living in L.A. is essential for my career.

Would you like to reveal something that people don't know about you?
Ever since I've moved to L.A., I find myself craving Spam musubi at the oddest times!

What kind of advice would you give to the students at UH?
Study as many things as you can in as many fields as possible because everything is useful at some point in your life.

What are you working on currently?
I'm a consultant to CBS on their project to remaster Star Trek: The Next Generation in high definition. Along with Denise, I'm working with them on the visual effects, helping them to rebuild all of the spaceship shots and other effects in a way that takes advantage of the resolution of high def, while respecting the artistic choices and style of the original effects team.

Mike mentioned that science fiction and the space program were major influences when he was growing up. The fact that he is able to have a very successful career in both of these realms makes his story quite... fascinating.
UP CLOSE & PERSONAL WITH ALFRED KAN — PART 2

Alfred Kan, a senior majoring in marketing and international business with a minor in Japanese, was an exchange student living in Tokyo for two semesters through the MIX program. Below, he shares some of his thoughts and experiences since his return to Hawai‘i this August.

What was the most challenging thing about studying abroad and how did you overcome it?
I think the most challenging thing was trying to make friends with the Japanese people. Most of my classes were with other international students, so it was hard to actually meet Japanese students. I overcame this by joining four clubs and being active in each of those clubs.

What did you enjoy about studying abroad?
I enjoyed practicing Japanese, eating delicious food with friends, participating in clubs at Keio, and being able to have a true Japanese university experience.

How are your Japanese language skills now?
I don’t think my Japanese improved that much in terms of grammar and writing kanji, but I think my kanji reading ability greatly improved as well as my speaking skills because I studied a lot of kanji and I tried to only use Japanese when talking to my Japanese friends.

Are you happy that you chose Keio University?
Yes, definitely! I learned some important information about Japanese businesses and I made a lot of valuable connections at Keio.

What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about studying abroad?
Always keep an open mind and try to understand the culture rather than just comparing everything to one’s own culture. For example, some people may think that Japanese people are rude when they slurp their noodles, but in Japanese culture, it is considered good manners because it conveys to the cook that the food is delicious.

How has this experience prepared you for your future endeavors?
I plan to go back to Japan to teach English after I graduate. Since I have already experienced living in Japan, it will be easier the second time around.

Now that you are back in Hawai‘i, what do you miss about living in Japan?
I miss tonkotsu ramen, shopping at Shibuya, and all of the friends that I made during my student exchange.