

# UH Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing Dean Mary Boland Announces Retirement

Honolulu, Hawaii (August 20, 2019) – Mary G. Boland, dean of the UH Manoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing, announced plans to retire in summer 2020 during a meeting with faculty and staff today. During her 14 years as dean, the School has flourished through the addition of innovative approaches to education, research, and community service. Most notably, the expansion of the nurse practitioner programs to improve access to care, and the introduction of the Graduate Entry to Nursing Program, Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, and the Expanded Function Dental Hygienist certificate. These nationally ranked programs attract the best and brightest of Hawaii students.



“The delivery of health care is increasing in complexity and nurses must be educated to act as agents of change while advocating for consumers,” said Boland. “To do so requires they are prepared to provide high quality patient care and contribute to the systems and policies that influence the

design of care delivery in all settings.”

As the longest serving dean of the School, Boland successfully led three nursing and two dental hygiene national accreditations, and oversaw the funding and construction of the nationally recognized UH Translational Health Sciences Simulation Center, directed by Lorrie Wong, that serves students, clinicians, and health care organizations.

“Dean Boland is an innovative, big-picture thinker who is great at identifying areas of improvement or need and finding ways to create, build, and launch successful solutions,” said Mimi Harris, Chief Nursing Officer and VP of Patient Care at The Queen’s Health Systems. “One of her early initiatives was a research partnership with Queen’s. Together, Dean Boland, Stephanie Marshall, then the School Director for Community Partnership, and Cindy Kamikawa, then CNO – paired staff nurses and UH faculty who had research or evidence-based practice topics to conduct projects of mutual interest. The dissemination of project findings improves the quality and safety of health care delivery in the Queen’s system. This research partnership continues to flourish today and is a testament to Dean Boland’s commitment to excellence and innovation.”

Scholarships for students have increased greatly with donor funding and multiple new endowments have been established. Dramatic improvements in programs, national rankings, and funding reflect her enthusiasm and commitment to improving the health of people in Hawaii through nursing and dental hygiene education, research, and service.

“At our first meeting, Dean Boland asked me to increase the representation and success of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island students in nursing beyond entry level RN positions and over the years, provided the resources to do so,” said Nalani Minton, psychologist and director of the School’s Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island student cultural enrichment

programs. “The dean’s goal to increase the number of indigenous nurses obtaining master’s and doctoral degrees, and hiring these nurses to teach with us has been realized.”



During her time as dean, the School built strong connections with the State and global communities. Under her leadership, the Hawaii State Center for Nursing was launched in 2005. Today, the Center influences policy development to ensure the skills of nurses are used to provide evidence-based care in a hospital, long-term care agency, home, or community setting.

“One of Dean Boland’s greatest strengths is identifying and developing actionable, collaborative plans to address statewide needs,” said Laura Reichhardt, executive director of the Hawaii State Center for Nursing. “She is a kind and caring person, with an amazing ability to bring people together to reach common goals. Dean Boland has been a great mentor who helped me expand my understanding and expertise in nursing and health policy to better serve the community in Hawaii.”

In 2014, Boland partnered with the Hawaii Department of Education to improve student and school academic success by providing on-campus nursing and health services. Today, the Hawaii Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn program is funded by the State and includes 15 APRNs and 5 RNs supporting schools on Oahu, Maui, Kauai, and the Island of Hawaii. Through this innovative program, UH Manoa Nursing and Dental Hygiene faculty and students interact with school nurses and learn on-site in public school settings. The expansion of health

services at Dole Middle School led to Maureen Shannon obtaining national funding for an interprofessional team of child psychiatry physicians, pharmacist, nurse practitioners (APRN), dental hygiene faculty, and students to join with teachers and administrators to address unmet student needs in real time. This practice model has received national recognition as an exemplary interprofessional project.

Student success is one of Boland's main priorities, in the classroom and through extracurricular programs and opportunities. Boland is a steadfast supporter of student training programs and created the Student Ambassador program that provides professional development opportunities and supports the School chapter of the National Student Nurses Association that develops leadership skills. The School raised funds for students to attend the national NSNA meetings and conventions to broaden their horizons and learn about legislative processes. Boland championed inclusion of students on School committees so they can participate, learn, and provide a voice for the student body.



“As a recent graduate of the School, I can attest to Dean Boland’s overwhelming commitment to student success,” said Kiki Thurston, bachelor’s degree graduate, Class of 2019. “Dean Boland’s dedication to students was evident in the way that she listened to student input, addressed student concerns, and demonstrated an outstanding amount of genuine care for us. She took time to know students on a personal level and always went above and beyond to show that she cared for us deeply. Whether it be by addressing you by name as she walked by in the halls, or by providing snacks during finals week ... we could feel her genuine warmth. Dean Boland’s leadership provided a wonderful environment for students to learn and grow.”

“A great school requires strong students, engaged faculty, and professional support staff,” said Boland. “Today, we have all three. On my arrival, Hawaii embraced my family and I, and we will be forever grateful. The opportunity to serve UH has been a highlight of my career and I am so proud of what we all have accomplished together. I am excited to enter the next life chapter and anticipate a smooth transition. The School is ready to welcome a new dean who will take the School to the next level.”

Prior to joining the University of Hawaii, Boland served as associate dean and the François-Xavier Bagnoud Professor of Nursing at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (now Rutgers University College of Nursing). She has extensive academic research and administrative experience, and was the co-founder and director of the François-Xavier Bagnoud Center, an innovative interdisciplinary endeavor within the School of Nursing and New Jersey Medical School.

Boland is a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and a member of Sigma Theta Tau International, the nursing honor society. She is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania (BS), Seton Hall University (MS), and Columbia University (DrPH).

A search advisory committee with representation from the community, donors, faculty, staff, students, and Kualii Council will be formed, and a national search for Boland's successor will start by the end of the fall 2019 semester.

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### About UH Manoa Nursing

UH Manoa Nursing, the Nursing Capital of the Pacific, is the leader in nursing education and research in Hawaii with outreach to Asia and the Pacific Basin. We support the mission of the University of Hawaii at Manoa: to provide an innovative, caring and multicultural environment in which faculty, students and staff work together to generate and transmit knowledge, wisdom, and values to promote quality of life and health for present and future generations. The school offers the bachelor's, master's, doctor of nursing practice, and PhD degree programs. To reflect Hawaii's unique cultural diversity and heritage, UH Manoa Nursing is committed to increasing the representation of Native Hawaiian and other underserved people in all nursing programs.

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