



MidWeek

This column by Senator Michelle Kidani was published in MidWeek's **Central Oahu VOICE** section on Wednesday, December 30, 2015.

Mark your calendars

Families of students at **Mililani Middle School** and interested members of the community are invited to participate in an informational meeting to be held on Tuesday, January 12, at the campus cafeteria beginning at 7:00 p.m. My colleague **Senator Donovan Dela Cruz** and I will host the session to bring everyone up to date on the school's transition to a single track calendar.

We're following up on the legislature's action last session to eliminate the DOE's multi-track schedules at our public schools. Mililani Middle is the state's largest middle school with about 1,800 students and is expected to be the last multi-track school to shift back to a traditional calendar.

We are grateful to MMS Principal **Elynn Chung** who has been very helpful in the planning process. It's a complex issue, but the school administration has been innovative and enthusiastic in addressing the challenges. *Look for more details about the meeting in a flyer that will arrive in your mailboxes soon.*

Proud Graduates

The 2015 winter commencement ceremony at UH West Oahu was special in many ways. I was so impressed when **Mililani resident Marissa Pagud** spoke on behalf of the graduating class. Marissa is a Kamehameha Schools alum and one of more than 260 West Oahu graduates this past semester – the largest ever graduating class at our UH campus. She received her bachelor's degree in English – reaffirming her love of literature that she rediscovered in her classes at UHWO.

The campus also said aloha and mahalo to retiring **Chancellor Rockne Freitas**, who has guided the campus since 2013. "Rock" leaves after more than two decades of service to the University and the State of Hawaii. I was pleased to represent my colleagues in the Senate in presenting a congratulatory certificate to Chancellor Freitas. UHWO is now under the capable leadership of Dr. Doris Ching, a distinguished longtime UH administrator who will head the campus while the search for a permanent Chancellor proceeds.



Retiring UH West Oahu Chancellor Rockne Freitas and Fall Semester Class of 2015 Student commencement speaker - and Mililani resident - Marissa Pagud.

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Join us in January

Finally, let me wish all of you a Happy New Year with the hope that you have a healthy and productive 2016. Just a few weeks after New Year's, we will welcome the Year of the Monkey in the Asian lunar tradition. The monkey is seen as clever, intelligent and quick to act. People born in the Year of the Monkey are said to be free from inhibitions, and ready to think outside the box. "What is difficult, the monkey can do right away; what is impossible may take a little longer," says one commentary. Definitely something to keep in mind as we lawmakers convene our 60-working day session next month.

For people born in the Year of the Monkey, "What is difficult, the monkey can do right away; what is impossible may take a little longer."



You are, of course, invited to opening day of the session on Wednesday morning, January 20. Please stop by my office in room 228 to meet and greet me and my staff as I begin my eighth term as your Senator. And please do not hesitate to contact me at any time at my State Capitol office, telephone 586-7100, or by email senkidani@capitol.hawaii.gov.

Happy New Year! Enjoy a safe and joyous celebration as we look forward to 2016.



The next regular session of the Legislature will begin on Wednesday morning, January 20, 2016. Please join us at the State Capitol, and stop by my office in room 228 to say hello!