The title of this inaugural issue of Hawai‘inui‘aka‘a’s new monograph series, *I Ulu I Ke Kumu* (Flourishing from the Source), is distilled from several ‘ōlelo no‘eau, or traditional wise sayings. These include “I ulu ka lālā i ke kumu” (the branch grows from its trunk/the student develops because of the teacher), “O Mākālei, lā‘au ona ‘ia e nā i‘a” (the Mākālei tree, sought by the fish), “He lālā au no ku‘u kumu” (I am a branch from my teacher/source), and others. The glosses for these sayings are functional, but cannot give all of the implications and layered references that the Hawaiian words intentionally signify. Each ‘ōlelo no‘eau has multiple interpretations and applications, depending on the way the words are understood, and all of them are linked to this title.

The initial *I* in our title gives a time sense, shows presence, and at the same time exhorts the setting or case (be it so). *Ulu* means to come about, to grow and flourish, to be urged on, inspired, or even possessed. The second *I* marks the agent or cause of the growth or inspiration, which is *Ke Kumu*, the source, base, teacher, purpose, foundation, origin, root, group, or tree (and a score or more of other meanings, as your dictionary will show). With all of these implications, a fuller translation of our title might be “The case is, and let it be such, that emergence, growth, and inspiration are outcomes resulting from one’s origin, foundation, purpose, and guidance.” Though unwieldy, such an interpretation would perhaps reveal more literally the intention of this monograph.

*I Ulu I Ke Kumu* was selected as the first title and theme in the Hawai‘inui‘aka‘a monograph series because it allowed great flexibility for perspectives and positions. Classic and intricate at the same time, the title mirrors and connects to a swath of what makes up the Hawaiian community today and those who would learn from contemporary Hawaiian reflections. This monograph presents a range of thinkers and doers from the Hawaiian community—not just academic voices, but also individuals who are actively engaged in practical and scholarly perpetuation of Hawaiian knowledge. The writers include students and sages, academics and icons, and hopefully this range resonates with the readership that we anticipate.

Each of the writers in this assembly addresses the concept of kumu from different aspects, and this is what was hoped for in the discussions that generated
and framed this monograph. Kawena Komeiji and I both reach back to an increasing familiar kumu in order to illuminate our work today so that current and future steps are grounded. Kau'i Sai-Dudoit and Uluwehi Cazimero reflect on kumu that guided how their branches emerged and grew and how those forces are still shaping them as kumu who foster further branching. Nahua Patrinos looks at how the branches of a kumu span distance, whether yards or years, to connect with today, near and far. Noelani Losch, Meleanna Meyer, and Isabella Abbott all look out from the kumu and express their insights and concerns about making branches ulu, or flourish.

*I Ulu I Ke Kumu* initiates the Hawai‘inuiākea monograph series and follows the agreed-upon format, but its goal is not to set a model for the nature and content of future monographs. Instead, each monograph will be generated by a different concept team who will propose a theme and a slate of submissions. *I Ulu I Ke Kumu* opens a doorway into the Hawaiian community for this new endeavor, providing a portal into the works and thoughts of some of Hawai‘i’s doers, scholars, and collaborators.

Me ke aloha,
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