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A healthy, 'value-driven' company

By Eloise Aguiar

As a health insurance company, University Health Alliance (UHA) leads by example.

Founded in 1996 by a group of physician teachers at the University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine, the company's vision is to continuously improve the quality of its members' health care.

But UHA recognizes that it must first focus on its employees.

"At UHA, we realize that before we can provide excellent service to our customers, we must first ensure our associates are healthy, productive and happy," said Linda Kalahiki, senior vice president and chief marketing officer.

"Our tag line, 'Better Health, Better Life,' is at the core of our business," Kalahiki added. "A culture of wellness is instilled in our associates, who in turn care for the needs of our members."



Emily Weaver



Linda Kalahiki

For instance, associates (UHA's term for employees) are given one hour of paid leave twice a week to work out, and a \$75-a-month reimbursement for wellness activities, including gym fees, massage, healthy cooking classes and a personal trainer.

For its efforts, UHA earned the Healthiest Workplace award last year and also was honored by the American Heart Association with a Start! Fit-Friendly Company, Gold Achievement.

"Associates say they appreciate the 'ohana' atmosphere, rich benefits, advancement opportunities and the values the company supports," said Emily Weaver, senior vice president and chief human resources officer.

"We're a value-driven organization that really understands the importance of our associates and that they truly are the strength of our company," Weaver said. "So

we're a very transparent company with a foundation of respect, honesty and integrity, and we treat our associates with care."

The company has openings in several departments that require a variety of skills and educational backgrounds. "Positions requiring specialized training and experience are more difficult to fill, such as case management nurse, payroll administrator and system analyst," Weaver said.

"For instance, the case manage-

ment nurse has the important responsibility of making sure members who are at risk are getting the proper care to manage their conditions," she said. That position calls for a registered nurse with experience in clinical nursing, utilization management, and diabetes and chronic disease management.

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Lawrence Tabuado photos

Associates are able to thrive in the workplace because ideals such as sense of family and respect are encouraged at University Health Alliance.

Team play alive, well at UHA

During the last three years, University Health Alliance grew its employee base by 20 percent while many other companies lost people or stagnated because of the economy.

"We were actually hiring and strengthening our associates with training and programs," said Emily Weaver, senior vice president and chief human resources officer. "We want to grow our market share as an insurance company as well, and we know in order to do that we have to have the competency."

The company values its employees and refers to them as associates to let them know they are part of a team.

"It puts everyone on a level playing field," said Linda Kalahiki, chief marketing officer. "The connotation is more of a collaborative team effort. What everybody does makes a difference."



The 411

Company: University Health Alliance

Address: 700 Bishop St., Suite 300

President: Howard K.F. Lee, president and CEO

Phone: 532-4000

Web: www.uhahealth.com

Founded: 1996

Employees: 101

Now Hiring: Account Executive, Account Representative, Associate Services Payroll Administrator, Case Management Nurse I, Enrollment Representative I,

In-House Account Representative, System Analyst

Benefits: Company pays 100 percents for medical, drug and vision for the family selecting its UHA 3000 Plan, Performance Incentive Plan, Referral Bonus, Gift Certificates for successful insurance sale, counseling sessions,

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