



CIFAL Honolulu - “I Go To College” Early College Program Session 1

People

Deadline: 11 Feb 2026

Type:	Workshop
Location:	Chaminade University of Honolulu, United States of America
Date:	12 Feb 2026
Duration:	5 Hours
Programme Area:	Decentralize Cooperation Programme
Website:	https://chaminade.edu/catholic-school-fifth-graders-go-to-college/
Price:	\$0.00
Event Focal Point Email:	cifalnetwork@unitar.org
Partnership:	Chaminade University of Honolulu, , Chaminade University of Honolulu

BACKGROUND

The “I Go To College” Early College Program is a collaborative initiative between Hawai'i Catholic Schools and Chaminade University designed to introduce elementary students to higher education in a positive and engaging way.

Approximately 350 fifth-grade students from Catholic schools across the state of Hawai'i participate in immersive, day-long campus visits. Students attend mini-classes taught by university professors, experience campus life, interact with peers from other islands, and participate in a formal graduation ceremony.

Research supports early exposure to college environments. A seven-year longitudinal study (Radcliffe & Stephens, 2008, *Research in Middle Level Education*) found that campus visits are integral to shaping positive perceptions of college. Early college and career awareness—especially among first-generation and underrepresented students—significantly increases aspirations for higher education and supports long-term enrollment and diversity outcomes.

This program aligns with efforts to expand access, opportunity, and aspiration in education.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

- To provide early exposure to college life for elementary school students.
- To foster positive perceptions of higher education.
- To increase college awareness among first-generation and underrepresented students.
- To inspire academic curiosity through engaging, university-level mini-classes.
- To strengthen partnerships between K-12 Catholic schools and higher education institutions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the program, participants will:

- Develop a foundational understanding of what college life is like.
- Engage in hands-on academic experiences led by university faculty.
- Explore introductory concepts in psychology, language morphology, and science.
- Build confidence in envisioning themselves as future college students.
- Recognize college as an attainable and welcoming goal.

CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

The program includes:

1. Campus Welcome & Orientation

Students gather on campus and are introduced to the university environment.

2. Interactive Academic Sessions

Examples of Session 1 classes include:

- **Amazing Brain Class**

Exploration of brain functions, limitations, and psychology, emphasizing patience and acceptance.

- **Catching Morphology Concepts through Pokémon**

Learning word parts (morphology) through Pokémon names and understanding how language connects to meaning and abilities.

- **Mini Science Lab: The Invisible Ink Mystery**

A fast-paced, hands-on lab where students write secret messages using invisible ink and reveal them using a color-changing indicator, engaging in scientific inquiry.

3. Campus Experience

- Interaction with university faculty and staff
- Exposure to campus facilities including Sullivan Library and classrooms
- Shared pizza lunch fostering community and connection

4. Graduation Ceremony

Students receive diplomas and mortar boards from the President of Chaminade University in a ceremony held at Mamiya Theatre, reinforcing identity as future college students.

METHODOLOGY

- Experiential learning
- Hands-on laboratory activities
- Interactive mini-lectures

- Inquiry-based learning
- Cross-school peer engagement
- Positive reinforcement through symbolic graduation ceremony

The program emphasizes joyful learning, belonging, aspiration-building, and early college identity formation.

TARGETED AUDIENCE

- Fifth-grade students (elementary level)
- Catholic school students across Hawai'i
- Students including first-generation and underrepresented college-bound populations