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Feb. 2018: Manoa Innovation Center lease ends, Hawaii Innovation Products Exhibition, Hawaiian Cool Water, and more...

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## From Robbie's Laptop

This is a challenging time for HTDC. The Manoa Innovation Center lease agreement with UH ends July 1 and HTDC will lose its main source of revenue. At this time, the future of our operation is in jeopardy. In other news, Hawaiian Cool Water is graduating and growing into a bigger space in Kalihi. On February 9, Hawaii's leading tech companies were able to show off their products created with Hawaii's SBIR matching grant funds at the State Capitol. Legislators interacted with company founders and employees who have benefited from the program. Important bills continue to move forward in this legislative session that support the innovation economy. We want to thank our legislators for their years of support to help build a robust tech economy that will provide high paying jobs for Hawaii's young people. We look forward to continuing HTDC's efforts to advance Hawaii's innovation economy.



Stay inspired & keep moving forward,

Robbie Melton  
*Executive Director and CEO*



## Noteworthy

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## HTDC lease at MIC ends, future unclear

The University of Hawaii System, which owns the property on which the Manoa Innovation Center (MIC) sits, has notified the tenants of the center that the university will be replacing HTDC as their landlord, effective July 1, 2018. Because rent revenues HTDC receives annually from client leases funds the agency's operations – including staffing and services provided to clients, like providing educational programs, events and administration of our grant programs and federal contracts – the ability of HTDC to keep its doors open is now in question.

Currently, there are three bills moving forward at the legislature to provide operating funds for HTDC: one of which would transfer the MIC ownership from UH to HTDC, an appropriations bill that would replace the lease rent revenue being lost, and the budget bill, which contains the governor's message that would provide operating funds for the agency. One of these must be enacted to keep HTDC in existence.

In the weeks ahead, HTDC needs its partners, clients and grant recipients to make their voices heard in order to continue the successful creation of a local tech and innovation economy.

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The Hawaii Innovation Products Exhibition, sponsored by HTDC, took place at the Hawaii State Capitol on February 9. Innovative science- and technology-based products were on display to showcase the results of the Hawaii Small Business Innovation Research (HSBIR) matching grant program. Company representatives spoke with legislators about how important the grant is in creating jobs and getting their products into the market.

Thanks to HSBIR funding, these companies were able to impact the local economy. For example, Hawaii Biotech, Inc. engineered vaccines for West Nile and dengue viruses, and Small Kine Farms developed agricultural practices to grow and organize Portabella mushrooms for the first time in Hawaii. These are among the many companies impacting the local economy.



## Homecomings

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## Eric Heenan!

Prior to founding [Alaka'i Executive Search](#), Eric Heenan spent 20 years working in executive search and IT sales in Japan. Now that he has returned home, Heenan is using his experience and extensive network to grow Hawaii's tech community. [Hear more on Ho'i Mai!](#)



## Investing In Hawaii

### Hawaiian Cool Water graduates from MIC

For Michael Hernandez-Soria, graduating from HTDC and the Manoa Innovation Center is bittersweet. He and his wife Alix started Hawaiian Cool Water from their Kahaluu garage in July of 2012. Soon their innovative water filtration systems and water cooler business began taking over their home. When they found out they were expecting their first child, the couple knew it was time to find a new place.

The couple found MIC and moved in April 2013. The incubator lease rates allowed the company to flourish and capture clients such as Young Brothers, Hawaii Pacific Health and state agencies. Their success allowed them to hire more staff and expand to the neighbor Islands and Los Angeles.

"MIC has been a great place to come and work every day; it's been a home for us," Hernandez-Soria said. "While we're a full-fledged business now, we have pretty large ambitions, and it feels like MIC helped us get to the starting line."

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## Did You Know?

Your voice matters! Make your voice heard at the Hawaii State Legislature.

Check out our list of important tech-related bills and sign up to receive updates at [htdc.org/2018bills](http://htdc.org/2018bills). Some of which include:

- [HB583](#): Appropriates funds to HTDC for FY19 administrative and operational costs
- [SB2904](#): Appropriates funds to HTDC for continuance of the small business innovation research program.
- [HB2610 / SB2903](#): Appropriates funds for the HTDC's manufacturing grant program.
- [HB2084](#): Provides an appropriation to support the Neighbor Island Innovation Initiative (NI3) program.



## In The News

[New technology at State Capitol: Showcase for Hawaii research and development companies](#)

[Plans progress for innovation center in Kakaako](#)

[Now's the time for Hawaii small business to speak up about proposed laws](#)

[Meet the Denver University alum who's now building a green Hawaii](#)

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## Connections

Feb. 22 // [HiSTEP 2018 Seminar: Marketing in Japan](#)

Feb. 22 // [How Your Company Can Benefit from Federal & State Tax Credits](#)

Feb. 28 // [#WetWareWed Powered by AT&T](#)

March 1 // [Celebrating 30 Years - HVCA Deal & Entrepreneur of the Year Awards](#)

March 7 // [Setting the Foundation for Business Success Workshop](#)

March 9-10 // [AT&T Hackathon Hawaii](#)

March 22 // [Financials & Funding Fundamentals Workshop](#)

April 3 // [Loco Moco Security Conference Training](#)



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