The University of Michigan Regents Communication

Request for Action

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Amy Kuʻuleialoha Stillman, Ph.D., Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, professor of American culture, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, and professor of musicology, School of Music, Theatre & Dance, retired from active faculty status on December 31, 2026.

Professor Stillman attended the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa where she earned a Bachelor of Music in composition with Highest Honors (1978), a Bachelor of Arts in Hawaiian studies (1980), and a Masters of Arts in ethnomusicology (1982). She attended Harvard University where she earned a Doctorate in 1991. Professor Stillman's first academic appointment was at the University of California at Santa Barbara (1991), becoming an associate professor in 1997. In 1998, she joined the faculty at the University of Michigan and became a professor in 2011. Between 2019 and 2022, she completed three levels of environmental stewardship training and chant training with Hālau ʻŌhiʻa. She attained the rank of Kumu Hula for hula kahiko under the direction of Kumu Hula Kekuhi Kealiʻikanakaʻoleohaililani in 2025.

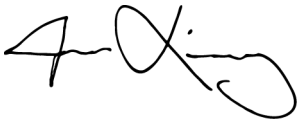
Professor Stillman is the world's preeminent scholar of Hawaiian music and dance. Her first monograph, *Sacred Hula: The Hula Alaʻapapa in Historical Perspective* published in 1998 broke ground as the first scholarly examination of the sacred form of altar hula, *hula kuahu*. She is in the final stages of completing two monumental, unrivaled research projects. The first, *Hawaiian Songs Ancient and Modern*, is a scholarly edition of musical scores for pre-European and westernized traditions of Hawaiian music. The culmination of decades of training, this edition includes a deep and broad contextualization of Hawaiian repertoire. The second, *Genealogies of Hawaiian Music and Hula*, examines social practice and global circulation of Hawaiian music and hula since the late nineteenth century. Examining notions of "authenticity," "tradition," and the Hawaiian concept of "kuleana" (responsibility), this project will stimulate discussions within performance communities around the ways elders' narratives of survivance are being displaced by revisionist histories. Throughout her career, Professor Stillman has ensured that ancient hula has found continued expression through performance whether as a consultant for Kūlia i ka Pūnāwai (Kumu Hula Association of Southern California) or a master hula teacher with the Great Lakes Hula Academy. She is a two-time winner of the GRAMMY Award for Best Hawaiian Album for her work as co-producer and lyricist for *ʻIkena* (2009) and *Huana Ke Aloha* (2011).

Her excellence in teaching has been recognized with an Arthur F. Thurnau professorship in 2022. As director, Professor Stillman has led both the Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies

Program (2000-07, 2014-17) and the Native American and Indigenous Studies Program (2022-25) in American Culture. She is the recipient of the Harold R. Johnson Diversity Service Award and the Shirley Verrett Award for Arts Advocacy and Mentorship.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar and teacher by naming **Professor Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor Emerita, professor emerita of American culture, and professor emerita of musicology.**

Respectfully submitted:



Jon Kinsey
Vice President and Secretary of the University

November 2026