

Hawai'i County Workforce Investment Board (HCWIB) Report to the WDC

Date: April 12, 2012
County: Hawai'i
Compiled by: Kathleen Nielsen

1) Summary

WDD and the Onestop assisted with the coordination of 2 Agriculture Skills Panel Forums in East and West Hawaii (Jan. 24 and Mar. 6 respectively) Nearly 300 employers, agencies, policy-makers participated in a structure but flexible format that encouraged long-term visioning as well as specific and immediate action steps needed to sustain and expand our agricultural industry here on the Big Island.

Informal discussions, initiated by industry leaders, are taking place across the island. Several SESP OJT contracts are being negotiated as a result of the resource sharing at these forums.

Hawaii Island Healthcare Alliance (HIHA) has been actively working with Big Island Legislators in seeking support for the Rural Residency Program in East Hawaii and additional funding to support the healthcare system in Hawaii County. The Recruitment & Retention Committee of HIHA has been conducting specific events to complement this policy-advocating entity: 1) coordinated a physicians tour from interested physician candidates interested in practicing in Hawaii; 2) working with the Department of Education and local high schools in bringing healthcare training modules to students; and 3) working on a cadre of healthcare resource speakers to visit local high schools.

The East Hawaii Business Leadership Network—is coordinating an employer workshop on May 18 informed employers of the benefits, services, and laws of our Department and its administratively connected entities.

Hawaii One stop and Hawaii WDD recently received word that it will be one of two counties in receipt of the Disability Employment Initiative Federal Grant along with Maui Branch WDD. Staff has already been hired and participating in some WDC-directed training and webinars.

Our Rural Outreach Services Initiative (ROSI) continues to be self-sustaining with timely support from UHH and North Hawaii Education and Research Center's staff. Agency activities continue 5 days a week at this rural site: Services and agencies include, but not limited to: eldercare, substance abuse prevention, sustainable agriculture, workforce development, housing assistance, education and training, energy saving initiatives, VITA (free tax preparation services), etc.

Since our initial landmark Workforce Summit in May 2011, a follow up Workforce Summit II was held in August of 2011. Four groups have been meeting flesh out follow up activities from Workforce Summits (May 2011 and Aug 2011), to eventually become action plans for Hawaii Island: Infrastructure, Communication, Collaboration, and Education and Training. Although meetings are not held as regularly as we would like, a host of new stakeholders has joined our workforce conversation.

On January 13 2012, Kona Kohala Chamber of Commerce held an economic development forum with notable change and thought leaders.

The health crisis for Hawaii Island continues with several initiatives underway. The Hawaii Island Healthcare Alliance and the Recruitment & Retention Committee are working on policies and initiatives that will create more access of healthcare professionals to our residents.

Hawaii Island is pursuing the workforce needs of the agriculture industry. Several planning meetings have already been held. A successful Jan. 24 Ag Skills Panel Conference was held at the Nanimau Gardens.

The Astronomy Workforce Pipeline Work Group has been diligently working with various observatories regarding their workforce needs—particularly with TMT planning to become a big part of this industry. Various work groups and meeting through the leadership and guidance of Dr. Jim Kennedy, LWIB 1st VP.

The Rural Outreach Services Initiative (ROSI), a collaborative effort among agencies and resources willing to support the Hamakua Community with additional funding sources, is continuing at North Hawaii Education and Research Center. A ROSI Navigator team is being formed to provide the local leadership and direction of this landmark initiative. ROSI has embraced the concepts of Hoowaiwai, put forth by our Hawaii County and Hawaii Alliance for Community Business & Economic Development (HACBED) and the leadership of Bob Egres.

2) Individual WIA Programs

Workforce Development Division - Adult Program:

Unemployment rate for Hawai'i County edged downward from 9.7% to 9.0%, this is an improvement of .7% in Hawaii County from a year ago at the same time. Typically, Adult Program participants are adversely affected by the influx of qualified, skilled workers flooding the labor market and a lack of new job openings during this sluggish economy. Hawai'i Branch, with its local offices in Hilo and Kona, has stepped up its job preparation activities for our participants to increase their competitiveness.

Despite employment opportunities remaining scarce, WDD staff continues to provide an array of job readiness workshops with heavier emphasis on career navigation and counseling. Continuous engagement is a common theme for all levels of unemployed individuals. Participants have opportunities to seek local college financial aide assistance through orientation and application workshops at the One-Stop. As a direct result of a Greg Newton training in early 2010, Career Exploration workshops and Job Clubs have been added Core and Intensive activities. Training opportunities have almost exhausted program service monies. Job readiness workshops and veteran counseling services have been expanded to the Hamakua Coast through the Rural Outreach Services Initiative.

WIA counselors continue to take part in an accelerated employer relations campaign (at the State and local levels) in order to generate and reestablish relationships with local employers. The promoting of use of services, facilities, Employer Resource Center, Tax Credits and On-the-Job Training opportunities will assist in future placements and retention of trainees.

With modest budgets and limited training dollars, program staff continues to refer to other BIWC E & T agencies as well as non-mandated partners like Goodwill Industries, Paxen Group, Salvation Army, etc. Further, we continue to look to HIWEDO, non-profit arm, for support.

As an active partner with the Going Home Initiative, a community-based reentry program for prisoners, WDD is a referral source for ex-offenders reentering the labor market. They are given priority services to WIA orientation and testing. Co-case management services are offered while enrolled in WIA Adult program. WDD also participates in job readiness workshop delivery to furlougees at Hale Nani Correctional Facility. Recently, BIWC has partnered with HIWEDO, our workforce system's non-profit entity, and its Mentoring Program for ex-offenders.

Workforce Solutions, another community consortium advocating the self-sufficiency of persons with disabilities, also is a referral source to our Adult Program. With the inception of our Business Leadership Network and its mission to recognize business leaders supporting persons with disabilities, this will greatly enhance employment opportunities for this population with our island employers. A very successful inaugural recognition event was held to recognize business leaders who advocate for the self-sufficiency of employees with disabilities with plans to coordinate another scheduled for October 2012

Due to Hawai'i County's high per capita poverty rates and double digit unemployment rate, Hawai'i Branch continues to dual enroll participants with one-stop partners like Alu Like, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Senior Employment & Training Program, and other non-mandated one-stop partners to optimize funding resources due to the poor economy.

In Hilo, a computer training room and the valuable resources from the Hilo Community School for Adults instructor and volunteer instructor are making it possible for WIA participants to receive basic education, introduction to computer basics and basic keyboard training.

Job Clubs for Veterans who are dually enrolled in WIA programs are also made available.

In Kona, the Kona Community School for Adults provides Competency-Based High School Diploma training at the one-stop location. Orientation sessions have been reduced from eight a month to 4 a month primarily due to reaching a more stable degree of lay offs. These orientations however, are still at capacity as many are interested in training and retraining. Specifically, there is overwhelming interest in Certified Nurse Assistant Training. Unfortunately, many of our graduates are taking a longer time obtaining gainful employment upon completion due to the poor economy.

As of February 29, 2012, (March 2012 numbers not available at time of report) Adult enrollments for Hawaii Branch exceeded goals for the year by 11%. Planned was 221 and actual was 247.

Workforce Development Division - Dislocated Worker Program:

Similarly, this population has been adversely affected by the stubborn economic slowdown. Fortunately, many of these participants have greater skill sets and sounder work maturity skills. However, with many participants, new occupational skills and skill sets need to be learned. Readjustment services in this very tight economy become paramount to their re-employment. This population, however, remains more selective on long-term training opportunities offered by our Program.

What is becoming more and more apparent is the increased desperation in our participants' job and career choices and desire for immediate employment vs. education enhancement. However, due to the economic realities, many have opted to enroll in courses at the Hawaii Community College and at the University of Hawaii at Hilo Campus. Participants also take advantage of financial aid workshops and orientations. Still others remain on, and collect their unemployment insurance benefits for longer periods of time since the approval and continuation of State and Federal extensions. These individuals seem to be lulled into complacency, not choosing to re-enter the labor force immediately, nor participate in training or educational enhancement. That said, we continue to be ahead of our enrollment goals for the year.

Business closures and multiple layoffs generating many unemployed applicants seeking re-employment and re-training services under our Dislocated Worker Program have stabilized but still has saturated the labor market with qualified enrollees with valuable transferrable skills for a very limited amount of job openings.

Business closures and multiple layoffs are generating a variety of high end specialized unemployed applicants. Seeking reemployment becomes more challenging with the absence of related or similar occupations in those fields.

Computer training, Certified Nurse Assistant and Commercial Driver Education are the predominant training of choice. Many of the dislocated workers are now accepting employment opportunities that are well below their original expected pay range. Many participants are opting to return to school and/or receive more training during this economic downturn.

WIA counselors continue to take part in an accelerated employer relations campaign in order to generate and reestablish relationships with local employers. The promoting of use of services, facilities, Employer Resource Center, Tax Credits and On-the-Job Training opportunities will assist in future placements and retention of trainees.

NEG-OJT program to assist with serving the long term unemployed in obtaining retraining for growth occupations being implemented.

Future revisions to OJT contracts should help promote and market the service, and make the process more user friendly for employers

As of February 29, 2012, (March 2012 numbers not available at time of report) Dislocated Worker enrollments for Hawaii Branch exceeded goals for the year by 2%. Planned was 231 and actual was 236.

Goodwill Industries – Out of School Youth Program:

Number Served: Ola has served fifty-five older and younger youth. Of these, forty are age 14-18 and fifteen are age 19-21.

Success: A successful Kona Ohana Night was held on Thursday, March 22 from 6:00pm to 7:30pm. The family night encourages the youth, their families and friends to learn more about the Ola program. Representatives from the Governor's office, Mayor's office, Queen Liliuokalani Children's Center, Family Court, Youth Council and staff from West Hawaii Today were also present at the event. The annual event helps to promote leadership opportunities for the youth; as they plan, direct, and implement the entire program for the night.

The CB Occupational Knowledge Unit ended on March 7 for the Hilo Youth. The unit test was administered on March 8 to eleven youth. Altogether, 10 youth passed the unit test. The CB Community Resource Unit began on March 12.

Four youth completed and passed all 5 CB unit tests. They have also passed the Mastery exam on March 16 and will receive their high school diploma from HCSA.

Youth who are not ready for CB classes continue to receive basic skills instruction and participate in leadership and life skills activities. The youth continue to receive individualized tutoring & are encouraged to perform self-study on PLATO & SPARKS learning systems.

Community service involvement and leadership opportunities are continuing on a bi-monthly basis for the youth. Youth participate in garden activities at the Hilo Boys & Girls Club and clean-up efforts at the City of Refuge in Honaunau, Kona.

Youth who are not ready for CB classes continue to receive basic skills instruction and participate in leadership and life skills activities. The youth continue to receive individualized tutoring & are encouraged to perform self-study on PLATO & SPARKS learning systems.

Staffing: The Hilo and Kona full-time Youth Specialists positions were filled by Michelle Kanaka'ole on March 1 and Ashlynn Victorino on March 27.

Outreach Efforts: All staff continue to advocate and promote the Ola youth programs. A number of referrals have been received from our other Goodwill program staff such as FTW/VR, SEE & TAONF in Hilo and Kona. There has been active outreach by all staff who advocate and promote the Ola youth programs each month especially in the rural communities. We also encourage referrals from our Youth Council partner, Workforce Development Division, to the Ola programs.

Part II Program Services/ Activities:

2011-2012 Collaborations:

The Ola program's ongoing collaborative relationships include Hilo & Kona Community School for Adults, Boys and Girls Club Community Garden, County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Dodo Mortuary, County of Hawaii-Highways Division, Hakalau Maile Farm, Good Years Daycare Center, Hilo Public Library, Hawaii Tribune-Herald, Department of Health-Environmental Health, Alfalfa and Hay Cubes, Hawaii Institute of Health Care and Training Services, Pu'uhoonua o Honaunau-City of Refuge, Bayside Chevron, Arc of Kona, Department of Health-Communicable Diseases Division, STD/HIV Branch and County of Hawaii-Parks and Recreation Division.

Paxen – In School Youth Program:

Success: Currently, we are serving an enrolled total of Forty-Seven (47) "ACTIVE" participants. We had an "Annual Planned Total" of Fifty-Eight (58) participants for Program Year 2011-2012, but we currently have a total of Fifty – Nine "active" and "exited" participants for PY 2011-2012. Our current "Active" numbers for the West side of the Island are Twenty-Two (22) and Twenty-Five (25) for the East side of the Island.

During the month of March, we worked closer with the older participants on finalizing their financial aid applications & scholarship forms. The colleges have begun sending out their acceptance letters and so most of the casemanaging done with these participants are strategizing which college acceptance letter they would like to accept. The discussion incorporated financial situation, living quarters, family location, geographic, and friends. These participants exhibited great leadership skills during the discussion and utilized Critical thinking skills learned during their work readiness training.

Also during the month of March, we worked with a participant who has been living on his own since his senior year in high school. He was a teenage father, and had no support from his family members. He was very interested in music and we were able to link him up with a local recording company a year ago for work experience. Since then he's done some odds and ends for work. However, recently we've linked him with a mentor who's been working with animals. This has changed the mentality of our participant, he has since applied to work at the Humane Society and is looking into farming and animal breeding.

We continue to provide follow up to the twelve participants who have been exited during PY 2010-2012. Seven of those participants are currently employed, one is currently enrolled in University of Hawai'i, two are currently employed and two has been MIA for the past year. We continue to work with the local community colleges and University to establish a rapport between them and the participants who are of eligible age. We've assisted participants in applying for and sustaining higher education and financial aid tuition assistance, resume building, financial literacy, employment seeking, referrals to outside agencies, etc.

Collaborations: We continue to work with Public Library System, Department of Human Services, First to Work Program, Child Welfare Services, BISAC, Leo's Club, Key Club, Court System, Mental Health Services, Child and Family Services, Workforce Development Offices, Hui 'Ana, HCEOC, University of Hawaii system, Hilo and Kona Community School for Adults, Judges, Public Defenders and Probation Officers, Therapists, Staff from Hilo High school, Kea'au High school, Hawaii Academy of Arts and Sciences, Pahoa High School, Kamehameha Schools, Ka'u High school, Konawaena High school, and Kealakehe High school, and local businesses (Shaka, Hana Hou Restaurant, Boys and Girls Club, HOVE Loggers, etc).

Big Island Workplace Connection (BIWC) One-Stop Activities:

Jan.: Working with HIWEDO and Hawaii Island Team with Health Innovation Challenge Grant

Jan. 5: LWIB Planning and Outreach sub-committee meeting

Jan. 6: Meeting with Director of Labor, planning for Agriculture Skills Panel

Jan. 12: Hawaii Energy Presentation to clients and staff

Jan. 24: Conducted E. HI Agriculture Skills Panel Forum at Nanimau
 Jan 25: Formed a Health Innovation Challenge Work Group to prepare for possible next round of grants.
 Feb. 2: Met with Hawaii Air CEO and Corporate Staff, local business leaders to learn of company's expansion plans and workforce needs.
 Feb. 2: Joint Chamber Education Committee meeting
 Feb. 6: R & R Committee coordinated physicians visit to various health care institutions. (Out of 4 interested physicians, only one participated. However, very likely physician will be relocating to Big Island)
 Feb. 6-29: Series of W. HI Ag Skills Panel Planning meetings were held in W. HI.
 Feb. 6: Physicians Tour of Hawaii Island (with various health institutions)
 Feb 6: NEG-OJT executed with HIWEDO
 Feb. 9: One Stop /WIA presentation to HCC Human Services students
 Feb. 12: Rural Outreach Services Navigator (Leadership) Planning Meeting
 Feb. 14: Going Home Consortium Meeting
 Feb. 15: Workforce Solutions Meeting
 Feb. 15: Second Chance Advisory Committee Meeting (mentoring program for ex-offenders)
 Feb. 16: Kuokoa Green Presentation to business leaders (Richard Ha's operation; geothermal proponent)
 Feb. 17: DOE Community Alliance presentation re: new initiatives in agriculture
 Feb.21: Job Corps assessment and intake of potential enrollees at the One Stop
 Mar. 1: LWIB Planning and Outreach sub-committee meeting
 Mar. 2: Green Power solutions conducted interviews for potential hires
 Mar. 6: Conducted W. HI Ag. Skills Panel at Kona Beach King Kamehameha Hotel.
 March 8: Attended luncheon meeting with CEO Mark Dunkerly of Hawaiian Airlines in Kona
 March 12: Huiana Internship with Oceanic Time Warner started over spring break
 Mar. 12: One-Stop, WIA, HNH presentation for Catholic Charities Youth program
 Mar. 14: Second Chance Mentoring Advisory Meeting
 Mar. 16: OHCD Section 8 conducted Family Self-Sufficiency presentation
 March 19: Follow up meetings with Kona Kohala Chamber on employment portion of Economic summit
 Mar.21: Youth Council Meeting at the One-Stop
 Mar. 22: Huiana Governance Meeting
 Mar. 24: attended Pacific/Big Island Biodiesel Job Fair
 March 28: Met with governor's liaison to discuss training programs for new Palamanui HCC campus.
 March 29: Computer basic class started in partnership with Kau I ka Malie Multi Media Cultural Center
 March 29: Attended Governor Abercrombie luncheon in West Hawaii
 Mar. 30: Disabilities Employment Initiative teleconference with WDC
 Mar. 30: County of Hawaii monitored WIA programs
 Apr. 2-3: Federal monitoring of WIA and Wagner-Peyser Programs
 Apr. 4: Recruitment & Retention (healthcare occupations) meeting
 Apr 4: Staff training on WIA and Wagner Peyser updates on Oahu
 Apr. 5: Rural Outreach Services Initiative (ROSI) Navigator Strategic Planning meeting at NHERC
 Apr. 10: Going Home Employer Relations, General Membership and Executive Committee Meetings
 Apr. 12: Business Leadership Network Planning Meeting for May 18 Employer Forum (labor laws, etc.)
 Apr. 18: Workforce Solutions Business Close Up Session
 Apr. 26: Huiana Hoike (graduation) for interns completing Spring Session
 May 10: 3rd of 3 Entrepreneurs Expos
 May 18: Business Leadership Network sponsorship of Labor Laws Employer Workshop at Hilo Hawaiian (Director Takamine, EEOC, Hawaii Civil Rights Commission, etc.)

3) Other Items/Programs

EUC: Preparing to serve Unemployment Insurance Claimants on extended benefits with job readiness and labor market information workshops in Hilo, Kona and Waimea.

REA- Re-Employment & Eligibility Program continues with approximately 30 U.I. Claimants per week. A series of follow-up sessions are conducted by WDD staff with these targeted individuals with the intent to reduce the overall duration of U.I. benefits. This, as well as most programs, takes advantage of ongoing, relevant workshops at our one-stop locations. Continuation of this program through 2012 is very likely.

NEGOJT: Able to execute 10 NEG OJT contracts and expended 100% of funding

Over the past several months, heavy emphasis has been placed on the promotion and execution of our NEG OJT Program. It is projected that Hawaii Branch will reach its expenditure and numeric goals for this program. Our VIP Program is being promoted as a pre-hiring options for our employers.

VIP – Utilizing VIP as a precursor to OJT negotiations and in tandem with ETF.

Continuing to promote VIP as a precursor to ETF

Volunteer Internship Program – recently, this initiative has been extended and being incorporated with our Employment & Training Fund Program. This innovated program will work in tandem with our business service delivery strategy and specifically with our ETF Program. UI claimants to continue to receive UI benefits, but this program allows them to volunteer up to 32 hours/week at various businesses with the intent of getting job training and employment.

ETF Program – Continuing to promote ETF with VIP to bundle WDD services to employers.

This incumbent worker training program will be a welcomed addition of the resources and programs available to our employers. Budgets are currently being formulated and Eligible Training Providers are being recertified. Promotional efforts with employers, business organizations and incumbent workers have already begun. This ETF Program will be working in tandem with our VIP.

SESP: Has approximately \$45K earmarked for interested OJT employers

Insufficient training funds due to higher-than-anticipated cost of all training modules. Low enrollments directly linked to inability to enroll in program due to RAD’s requirement of a training gateway component.

Provider agreements were executed effective April 1, 2011. We are enrolling participants in training; several of whom are dual-enrolled in WIA. WDD is continuing to meet with Hawaii Community college and additional training providers. A successful Hawaii Island Green Conference was held Nov. 1, 2011 at the Hawaii Preparatory Academy in Waimea.

Disabilities Employment Initiative Grant DEI: Selected as a pilot one-stop operations with Maui County. Both Disabilities Coordinator and Business Rep. on board and receiving training from WDC via bi-weekly teleconferences. In process of setting up a Business Leadership Network in West Hawaii.

4) Quantitative Report – 3rd Quarter PY 2011*

***Final for Quarter 1-3, pending from the state**

Actual vs. Goals	3rd Qtr	4 QTR.	GOAL	% of GOAL
(3rd Quarter PY 2011)	ACTUAL	CUMULATIVE	For Year	Cum./Goal
Youth Program				
Older Youth Entered Employment Rate			40.00%	250%
Older Youth Retention Rate			60.00%	167%
Older Youth Earnings Increase			\$1,750	427%
Older Youth Credential/Diploma Rate			38.00%	263%
Younger Youth Skill Attainment Rate			71.00%	123%
Younger Youth Diploma or Equivalent Rate			46.00%	121%
Younger Youth Retention Rate			44.00%	152%
Adult Program				
Entered Employment Rate			50.00%	103%
Retention Rate			82.10%	102%
Average Earnings			\$10,800	99%
Employment and Credential Rate			55.00%	118%
Dislocated Worker Program				
Entered Employment Rate			65.00%	97%
Retention Rate			86.00%	106%
Average Earnings			\$14,750	100%
Employment and Credential Rate			60.00%	108%

5) Other

HCWIB Quarterly Meeting:

The HCWIB held its quarterly meeting at the West Hawai'i Civic Center in Kona on Wednesday, February 8, 2012. They also held a special meeting to discuss State budget shortfalls. Our Next HCWIB meeting will be May 9, 2012 in Hilo.