

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

Date: June 2015

County: Hawai'i

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1) Summary

HCWIB Chair and staff attended the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) Forum located in Washington D.C. This forum offered many opportunities to hear and learn from leaders in business, workforce, education and economic development on workforce trends and challenges. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) implementation was the driving force throughout the conference.

There have been great efforts towards the WIOA transition. Although, one of the challenges our Hawai'i County Workforce Investment Board (HCWIB) incurred was how to navigate through the conflict of interest concerns which have been raised by our and the other county WIBs. With that being said, there is positive movement forward; including the WIOA Youth Program Request for Proposal (RFP) process has begun.

2) Individual WIA Programs

Adult Program - Workforce Development Division Updates and Highlights:

Unemployment rate for Hawai'i County for March 2015 was 4.9%, the State was at 3.9% and the Nation was at 5.6%. Compared to the same time last year, Hawaii County was 5.7%, the State was 4.5% and the Nation was at 6.8%.

With the improved economy has come an increase in placements and new opportunities for job seekers. Yet, there is no shortage of eligible individuals/consumers seeking job training and other related Adult services.

WDD houses Hawaii Community College staff involved with the C3T program. The Hawaii Community College is utilizing a computer lab and desk space which has helped to defer costs on rent etc. conserving overhead cost usually associated/shared with the WIA Adult program.

Enrollment for the Adult program for the ending of March 2015 was at 84% of the goal (141 enrolled versus 168 planned). Major training activities have been curtailed as we wind down this 2014 funding cycle; but staff continues to provide Core and Intensive Services and actively collaborate with BIWC partners, Workforce Solutions (persons with disabilities) and Going Home (ex-offenders) for a broad range of support services.

The Disabilities Employment Initiative ended in March 2015 but much of its activities continue via the WIA Adult Program (i.e, services to individuals with disabilities, customized employment promotions, Ticket-to-Work issuances, etc.)

Dislocated Worker Program - Workforce Development Division Updates and Highlights:

Even with the low unemployment rate, there continues to be an increase in our participants' job and career choices and desire for 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.

Successes have shown in placements when combining the Volunteer Internship Program (VIP) with the On-the-Job Training (OJT) component. Employers seem receptive to the "try-out" VIP piece which acts as a gateway to OJT and outright hiring

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The recent lava threats in the Puna District have subsided and the preparation for high levels of new Dislocated Workers for that population has ceased.

Hawaii Health Systems Corporation announced significant layoffs State wide. For Hawaii Island, 72 Hilo Medical Center employees will be affected; 10 from Honoka'a Hale Ho'ola and 5 or so from Ka'u Community Hospital.

Enrollment for the Dislocated Worker program for the ending of March 2015 was at 140% of the goal (129 enrolled versus 92 planned).

Training opportunities remain status quo in anticipation of transitioning to the new WIOA.

In-School Youth – Paxen Updates and Highlights:

Paxen met with Alu Like staff and enrolled 24 active East Hawaii participants in the Alu Like summer work experience program. Participants and their parents will complete the intake process with Alu Like staff at a later date.

Two case managers have been hired. There is a case manager on both the east and west side of the island. All Paxen files are housed in the Workforce Development Offices in East and West Hawaii.

Paxen staff have conducted 8 FAFSA workshops throughout the month with participants and their parents in order for FAFSA SAR reports to be received to ensure that participants are able to complete scholarship applications in a timely manner.

Paxen staff have met with and assisted 10 participants with starting the scholarship application process.

Completed a work readiness workshop at Kealakehe High School with 9 seniors who are food stamp recipients. Participants successfully completed 30 hours of work readiness training and are currently being placed at various employment sites throughout West Hawaii to complete their 30 hours of paid work experience.

The Hilo High School work readiness program was successfully completed by 7 seniors.

Two participants have successfully completed their work experience programs and two more participants will start their work experience in early April.

The WIA ISY Program successfully completed its West Hawaii program with 9 seniors from Kealakehe High School completing their work experience portion of the program. These 9 seniors are now working with the Kona case manager to complete all requirements to ascent into secondary education at the Hawaii Community College West Hawaii Campus in August.

The 9 participants in the WIA ISY Program in Kona successfully completed their work experience portion of the program working in various locations on the Kealakehe High School campus. Because transportation is a huge issue for these students the Kona case manager needed to look for work experience opportunities near or on campus that would not cause a hardship on participants while still giving the participants work experience opportunities that are geared towards their career goals. Several students who were interested in culinary arts were able to work in the high school's cafeteria. These students not only earned a stipend wage from Paxen but they also received free meals from the cafeteria. One student who is interested in business management was given the opportunity to shadow the school's SASA and assist with clerical and daily school operations duties. A participant who was interested in auto mechanics was able to work with the school custodial staff on various building maintenance projects around the campus.

Seventeen In-School Youth participants graduated from various high schools island-wide. Of those 17 graduates 10 participants have submitted their collegiate applications and received their acceptance letters to various colleges including Linfield College, University of Hawaii at Manoa and Hawaii Community College.

Out-of-School Youth – Goodwill Industries Updates and Highlights:

Job Readiness Training (JRT) Resume and Cover Letters

- Youth broke into (2) groups in order to work on creating a resume and cover letter.
- Both groups were given templates to fill information regarding themselves.
- Once rough drafts were completed, youth finalized using MS Word for completion.
- Case managers distributed a handouts to clients to review commonly asked interview questions.
- Clients were asked to answer each question on a sheet of paper pertaining to themselves and a job of choice.
- Once all youth were done answering questions, the case manager reviewed each question in a group setting. This allowed client and peers to hear the different types of responses that could be said when asked.

Job Fair Sanga Hall

- Youth visited various vendors for employment and or college information
- Youth were provided Job Readiness folders created with Resumes and Cover letters to hand out if interested in an opportunity.
- Youth visited numerous vendors for employment and college information.
- Youth were able to ask questions at interested booths.

SafeTALK

- Youth were introduced to the upcoming “E Malama ‘Ola Prevent Suicide Hawaii Annual Conference” taking place at Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort and Spa in April. All interested youth registered for the event.
- Youth explored the negatives and positives of decision making.
- SafeTALK is intended as "suicide alertness" training. SafeTALK teaches you to recognize persons with thoughts of suicide and to connect them to suicide intervention resources. It is designed for communities or organizations that already have ASIST trained helpers in place to maximize intervention as the main suicide prevention focus

Community Resources Unit

- Competency Based (CB) youth in the Kona Ola Program continued the Competency Based Community School Diploma Program (CBCSDP) studying the Community Resources unit which focuses on Government Services and resources , Recreational Resources, Cultural and Literary Traditions (American and Local Hawaiian)
- All CB participants took the Community Resources Unit Test – All youth passed

Writing

CB participants practiced writing personal statements for college applications

Field trip to West Hawaii Civic Center:

- The Ola Group was guided by the assistant to Mayor to meet Kona Council Members who took us on a tour of their offices and Council Chambers.
- In the Council Chambers, the students were guided through the process of how issues are introduced to the Council in the form of bills, resolutions and or communications. Members gave the example of the recent law that was passed restricting electronic cigarette smoking in public areas. Ola students also shared conversations they recently had with their Council Members regarding current issues such as homelessness, drug use in Kona, and shoreline protection in West Hawaii. The students were happy to hear that the politicians remembered talking to them.
- Mayor's assistant also arranged for the students to speak with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Much information was shared about the documents needed to apply for a drivers' permit and a drivers' license, how to make an appointment for a street test, what is included on the street test, aspects of the written test, drivers' training requirements and a myriad of other questions about obtaining driving privileges.
- Next, Director of Parks & Recreation spoke to the group about the developments in West Hawaii for his department. Probably the most important sentence he said to the Ola group was, “The Parks & Recs department has 430 full time jobs on this island.” That statement made the students sit up and listen! He was very generous with his time and ate a wonderful lunch that the Mayor's assistant arranged for group.
- Director of Parks & Recreation shared his story of growing up in Hilo, attending UH Hilo, and being employed for Suisan, while transferring to another company and working for an old friend, the Mayor himself!

- Youth was very surprised when the mayor himself entered the room and came around the table introducing himself, one at a time to the youth. We were even more surprised when he sat down and shared how he had difficulties in school himself and his “run-in” with the law! The Mayor sat with the Ola students for about 20 minutes and “talked-story” - advising them to d

Financial Literacy

- Using the “The Super Duper Simple Book on Money”, youth learned about different types of debt and focused on four major debts including a mortgage, credit cards, car loans and school loans.

Ohana Night

- Participants invited parents, counselors, probation officers, and other stakeholders to an open house and presentation on Ola program services.
- Participants presented projects they have worked on in Ola using PowerPoint and display boards.
- Youth prepared a 3 min speech informing the guest of the services they receive here at Ola along with their current and future goals.
- Students worked on planned PowerPoint presentations for Ohana Night featuring various topics i.e. how their ethnic backgrounds have influenced them, the development of a new product to introduce to the consumer market, how they came to the Ola I Ka Hana Youth Program, what they plan to do after they receive their diploma.

Soft Skills – RIASEC Career Pathways Assessment

- Youth completed RIASEC assessment to identify their preferences in areas of “Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional.”

Toastmasters

- Youth learned about the Toastmasters Hilo Club and the importance of improving public speaking skills and leadership skills.
- Youth learned 5 public speaking principles, how to organize a speech and how to evaluate a speech.
- Youth participated in various improv activities to practice public speaking skills.

Mentoring Presentation – Augie T.

- Youth participated in a presentation by comedian and public relations representative Augie T. and learned about his life, failures and successes.

Youth learned the importance of facing your fears, preparation and hard work

Mentoring Presentation – Prosecuting Attorney

- Youth learned what a prosecuting attorney does, what it is like to work in government, what steps he took to get where he is including mistakes and successes.
- Youth learned the meaning of “Whatever you believe and can conceive, you can achieve.”

Mentoring Presentation - Psychologist

- The presenter shared about his own recovery from alcohol addiction and what resources helped him overcome his own barriers.
- Youth learned about the importance and value of mentors.

Soft Skills – Goal Setting II

- Youth learned why setting goals is important.
- Youth explored different types of goals including: artistic, attitude, physical, pleasure, public service, career, financial, educational and family.
- Youth learned how setting smaller goals is an important step in reaching long term goals.
- Youth also learned how to set SMART goals: goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely
- Youth identified their top 3 areas and picked a career pathway from those 3 areas and learned how much education is needed.

Kona Impact

- Guest Speaker talked to youth on marketing a product to sell to consumers.

Hawaii Federal Community Credit Union

- Guest Speaker mentored youth on how the credit union markets its services to consumers.

Soft Skills – Time Management

- Youth were given a worksheet to complete that shows how much hours they spend in the categories of education, work, leisure and sleep.
Youth identified how much time they spend on leisure and discussed ways to improve their use of time.

Financial Literacy - HFS Credit Union Presentation

- HFS Credit Union marketing team provided a presentation on what a credit union is, what a budget is and 5 steps to saving and spending wisely, what a credit score is and credit building tips, tips on credit card use, and how to manage debt.

Suicide Prevention Mentoring

- As part of the SafeTALK suicide prevention campaign, a department of health professional provided mentoring for the youth, discussing how to share your personal voice to stand for something important.

Soft Skills – Goal Setting

- Youth learned about the distinction between a job and a career and what transferrable skills are.
- Youth shared what their career goals are and how their transferrable skills can help them reach that goal.
Youth also listed short term goals to help them reach their career goal.

Tutoring – CASAS Preparation

- Youth completed a CASAS practice test in math to assess their knowledge in basic skills math.
- Youth reviewed the CASAS practice test in math and was provided tutoring and instruction for problems that the youth struggled with.

E Malama ‘Ola Suicide Prevention Conference

- Youth attended this 2 day conference at the Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort and Spa with supportive adults to learn about suicide prevention strategies to take back to their own communities.
- Youth were given a chance to share about their own suicide prevention campaign and hear from other youth suicide prevention work.
- Youth heard from a keynote speaker and participated in leadership training and development sessions.
Youth also learned about self-care, civic engagement, community service and CONNECT Suicide Prevention for Youth.

3) Other Programs

Big Island Workplace Connections (BIWC) One-Stop:

Focus has been on building strong relationships in our network. One-stop partners are developing and updating descriptions of their organizations and what services they provide. Once completed, it will be outlined in a booklet for all partners to access. Also, monthly meetings are being hosted by each partner at their program locations in order to provide a complete understanding and allow for more comprehensive referrals.

Wagner-Peyser:

The Hilo WDD Office embarked in a special initiative focusing on disenfranchised youth (foster, adjudicated, formerly incarcerated, disabled, in-school Title I) to provide an array of job readiness workshops focusing on interpersonal and life skills, labor market information and employer expectations designed especially for this population. Leadership and peer mentoring activities complemented most of their participation in this initiative.

The other project, the Workforce Development Employer Committee (WDEC) has participated as speakers for the JRT project and has embarked in several meaningful exercises and employer sessions that the group felt important. Civil Treatment and the DISC WORKPLACE TRAINING (which the group is diligently working with the Hawaii Community College to make happen) allows business leaders to customize classes for their company to address behavioral & leadership styles, generational impacts, developing listening skills, developing business trust based relationships, and working as a collaborative team. The group is also looking to co-sponsor a Blue Zones Project for business leaders as part of the introduction and recruitment of worksites for the Blue Zones Healthways organization.

Volunteer Internship Program (VIP):

This Employment & Training Fund Program served as an invaluable pre-OJT component for our WIA Adult and Dislocated Workers programs where it: 1) offered work experience and skills acquisition to eligible participants while still being eligible for Unemployment Insurance payments; and 2) provided both the employer and participant an opportunity to be productive in the labor exchange process while allowing critical time to consummate the legally-binding contractual agreements.

First-to-Work and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) Programs:

Both of these welfare-to-work programs continue to conduct week-long Job Readiness Training Sessions at the WDD Offices. In addition to the invaluable skills and self-esteem gained, many serve as important volunteer resource room assistants to help our many job seekers seeking employment and job search assistance. This remains a critical aspect of maintaining services to our job seekers despite the continued funding challenges.

Dept. of Public Safety & WDD Work Connections Program:

A separate funding source, through the Department of Public Safety, allows a staff person to directly impact work furlonghees, parolees and those awaiting trial by providing pre-employment job readiness training of up to 30 hours. Upon completion the staff provides ongoing vocational counseling, job development and placement services and follow-up. Both Kona and Hilo Offices have achieved nearly 100% job placement rates with this population.

4) **Other:** **HCWIB Quarterly Meeting:** The HCWIB has held 3 meetings already in the year 2015. Our next meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2015.