

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

JOSH GREEN
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



LESLIE WILKINS
CHAIRPERSON

ALLICYN C.H. TASAKA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 417, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 586-8630 Web: <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/>

**YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, December 14, 2018
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Princess Ruth Keelikolani Building
830 Punchbowl Street, Director’s Conference Room 321
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813**

MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

Ian Kitajima, Committee Chair, Oceanit
Winona Whitman, Committee Vice-Chair, Employment & Training, Alu Like, Inc.
Nate Gytoku, Sustainability Initiatives Programs, Kupu
Brig. Gen. (ret.) Bruce Oliviera, Hawaii Department of Defense, Office of Community Services
Major J Pedro, Community Affairs, Honolulu Police Department
Dani Ruiz, Foster Parent and Social Worker
Debbie Spencer-Chun, Adult Friends for Youth
Steve Sue, Chair, Bizgenics Foundation
Troy Sueoka, DOE – Career and Technical Education
Brooke Ward, Hale Kipa
Danny Wyatt, Leeward Community College Waianae-Moku

STAFF:

Allicyn Tasaka, Workforce Development Council
Maria-Elena Diaz, Workforce Development Council
Wayne Liou, Workforce Development Council
Michelle Miyashiro, Workforce Development Council

- I. **Call to Order**.....*Committee Chair Ian Kitajima*
The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Committee Chair Ian Kitajima.

- II. **Approval of Minutes**
 - A. November 7, 2018 Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 7, 2018, was made by Steve Sue. The motion was seconded by Nate Gyotoku. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

III. “Adult Friends for Youth” presentation by Deborah Spencer-Chun, M.S.W., President and Chief Executive Officer

Adult Friends for Youth (AFY) started at the University of Hawaii in 1986 as a pilot program to mentor middle and high school students, and now works with youth that are high-risk for violence. Youth are referred by schools and the community-at-large. AFY works with an entire peer group, not just the referred individual, and performs group counseling in-school or out-of-school, depending on youth’s enrollment status. On average, they follow the youth for a period of 3-4 years through high school and into adulthood, through their postsecondary experiences, and into the start of their career.

Programs are often created based on where youth are at in that moment in their lives. AFY can modify plans quickly to adjust to the needs of the youth. A variety of programs have been offered. A current program with the Honolulu Police Department and the Attorney General’s office is promoting Peace, Empathy, Acceptance, Respect, and Love (PEARL); a student transition program helping students move from middle school to high school. Started 6 years ago, PEARL is an anti-bullying and anti-violence convention limited to 4,000 students, selected by the communities in which AFY works. The students talk about the issues affecting them personally. Every skit performed at the convention is developed by the students from their own experience or an experience they’ve observed on campus. The next convention is in February.

Executive Director Allicyn Tasaka asked if AFY is statewide and how they are funded. Spencer-Chun responded their program area only runs from Waikiki to the Leeward Coast, but their convention is statewide. She also shared that they receive state and city grants and private donations, and hold an annual fundraiser. The next one is in January.

Danny Wyatt asked about AFY’s work on the Leeward coast. Spencer-Chun clarified that they work within the schools through their Mobile Assessment Center (MAC). Through MAC, they help students who are arrested for status offenses. This service is currently in Kapolei Middle and High Schools, Ilima School, and Waianae Middle School.

Steve Sue asked about how digital work, such as the Internet and computers, affects youth. Spencer-Chun said there are positives and negatives to the use of technology as the young people they work with have used social media for the wrong reasons in the past. It has also made their job more difficult since word about fights spreads quickly, attracting them. If youth can be guided to use technology for positive, productive activities they can pick up new applications quickly.

Chair Kitajima shared the story of a design challenge three years ago to redesign the school experience in partnership with the Department of Education (DOE). Over 100 youth participated, including some AFY participants. The AFY participants were more

creative and innovative than others. Chair Kitajima shared that if we positively focus that energy and creativity, youth will help transform the economy in a positive way.

Spencer-Chun's group sees an average of about 300-350 youth a week. The youth are seen with their peer groups, with an average of 10-15 in a group. Their largest population is in Kalihi, with Waipahu and Kapolei following. Counseling sessions differ depending on the needs and level of the group. They address issues such as peer relationships, family relationships, school, and so on. They start with basic skills, such as how to walk away from a fight, and build upwards, such as how would you handle a situation at work.

As for alternatives to a high school education, Spencer-Chun is still exploring options since competency-based diplomas no longer qualifies. A discussion followed about educational options. Maria-Elena Diaz reminded the committee that the Youth Program at the American Job Centers (AJCs) has access to funds that can support the youth in getting their equivalency diplomas or occupational training.

Diaz asked what at what point do participants exit the program. Spencer-Chun replied there is no termination process. Many of the youths are followed into their adulthood and the end goal is whatever makes them productive and happy. Bruce Oliviera asked what happens at the end of the 32-week curriculum. Spencer-Chun explained that the basic curriculum is the 32 weeks, and is offered year-round.

Sue asked if there are measurements of success being tracked. The measurements being tracked are improving to the next grade level or graduating, and decrease in fights or violence based on school reports and/or self-reporting. They are working on other measurements such as enrollment in college (22 enrolled in college last year compared to 5 in 2012). Oliviera asked about the limit on the number of participants, and Spencer-Chun responded that they are currently at capacity.

Oliviera asked how referrals are made in the MAC program and Spencer-Chun explained that MAC will be a pilot program once it starts. The referrals will come from HPD. After a youth is arrested, families are informed about the program, and the MAC program contacts the family to work with them to keep the youth out of the juvenile justice system.

J Pedro added more information regarding juvenile diversion programs such as Ho'opono Mamo in places like Kalihi. It is a complete diversion program where youth with a criminal offense receives a chance to have their records expunged if they complete the program. For a status offense, the case will not continue through the system if the youth completes the program. HPD is the only major department that continues to handle status offenses. In most places, social services handle status offenses. Currently there are 254 open runaway cases. Positive Outreach Intervention (POI) program is part of the juvenile justice track that begins helping youth on their way to see the judge. Ho'opono Mamo helps youth avoid facing a judge, and hopefully will become a statewide program. Pedro also sits on the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council, where they have been working on reducing costs and number of youth in facilities.

Sue asked Spencer-Chun if they use role-playing in their counseling. She replied that it is used and focus can range from what to do if another gang member approaches them to talking to their parents about what they've been doing in school. Sue suggested role-playing a business context such as a restaurant job, airline job, or a hotel job and certify the youth if they pass. This will teach the youth how to behave properly in a given setting and increase their potential of getting hired in a certain industry.

Diaz suggested the remaining agenda be deferred until the next meeting to give Nate Gyotoku an opportunity to share information about Kupu. Chair Kitajima agreed. Gyotoku said that while Kupu has many programs, the core mission is to engage youth, who generally are high school drop-outs between the ages of 17 – 26. Their programs are *aina*-based and engages them in hands-on learning, specifically in conservation and sustainability. One such program is a 25-week community program. The first phase is *malama aina* and focuses on working in the fields 4 days a week at one of a variety of sites. In phase two, half of the time is in *malama aina* and the other half is in a competency-based class. In the third phase, they stop working in the fields, continue their education, and either find a part-time job or volunteer for an organization to gain work experience. At the end of the program, they graduate with a competency-based diploma. Tutors are available to help participants pass HI-Set. There may be adjustments to the existing program since C-Based is no longer recognized as a high school equivalent diploma by the Department of Education. The community program has about 70-80 at-risk participants and they work out of two campuses: one will be at the Kewalo Basin Net Shed, scheduled to be completed at the end of January, and the other is in Waianae but they are currently looking for new office space. The remaining programs are statewide, and they work with about 350 young adults in all their programs per year.

IV. Discussion on prioritizing committee responsibilities

Chair Kitajima announced that Diaz will prepare a survey to send out to the group regarding possible areas of focus for this committee. Chair Kitajima pointed out that while working under the umbrella of workforce development, the committee will be the driving force of the initiatives coming from these meetings, so they should determine the topics of focus. Committee members also have first-hand knowledge of current issues, what has value to the system, and how some groups can possibly partner on these initiatives. Chair Kitajima will circulate a Penta chart worksheet for members to use as a way to advocate for a possible topic. Sue discussed how according to a theory of change, we can move forward together by choosing the end result we wish to achieve. The committee can then use the desired goal as the basis for determining the path forward.

V. Next Meetings

Diaz will send out a poll in January 2019 for the next meeting date.

VI. Adjournment

Chair Kitajima adjourned the meeting at 10:06 a.m.