

**KAUAI COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD UPDATE REPORT
(August – November 2020) TO THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, November 12, 2020**

Please summarize the overall impact that the COVID pandemic has had on the operations of the WDB and American Job Center.

From March through September, the AJC was completely closed to the public. Our only interaction was via phone calls. No one was allowed in due to Covid 19 concerns. Beginning in October, with the installation of Safety equipment, we began to open our doors on a limited basis. WDD staff are able to meet with clients by appointment only. TANF case workers are utilizing our conference room to meet with Clients for counseling and other services.

We've also begun to allow walk-ins who require assistance with UI claims, access to Hirenet or to create Resumes and Apply for jobs. They are met by our OED clerk who was hired through the CARES act. All persons entering the AJC are temperature screened, set up at a sanitized station and monitored through a plexiglass window. We anticipate that as UI benefits begin to expire, our AJC will start to see a higher influx of customers seeking job services.

***Please explain how services are being delivered at the American Job Center.
What is the staffing level, hours of operation, accommodations made for COVID?***

Our hours of operation are 0800-1630 hours. WDD is fully staffed. We have sanitized stations for client usage and some partners are beginning to return on a limited basis. Hale Opio, our Youth provider, has recently started meeting clients and conducting intake services.

As stated in the previous response, the AJC has an OED staff clerk who is responsible for the initial contact with all persons entering the AJC. Steps to minimize Covid infections are as follows; Temperature screening, hand cleaning, minimum health questions and observation, sanitized stations, Plexiglas screens and complete cleaning of all workspaces daily and as required.

What actions have been and/or being planned to overcome the challenges/barriers as a result of COVID?

A policy was distributed to WDD staff, OED personnel and other entities housed within the AJC. "Safely open" which provides guidance on a safe, secure means of reopening our AJC.

Guidelines on self-care, monitoring conditions, screening of clients, the proper usage of computer equipment, assisting in greeting/screening clients as well as following national guidelines on Covid with regards to safety protocols when dealing with members of the community and fellow co-workers.

Please provide updates on the status of the following:

1. New Local Plan

Kauai's Local Area plan is currently being worked on. The County of Kauai will require an extension. We anticipate the Plan being completed no later than Jan. 31, 2021.

2. MOU/IFAs with core and mandatory partners

The MOU/IFA was sent out for signatures several months ago. We did receive a few modification requests. A few partners have signed and accepted the current MOU/IFA. We are still waiting on Signatures from all the STATE entities and the Department of Education/Kauai Community College. I have followed up several times and have been assured that the MOU/IFA are being reviewed.

3. Policies and procedures for Title I programs, records policy, code of conduct and conflict of interest policies, civil rights and EEO policy for AJC

Several Draft policies have been written and to be presented at the next KWDB meeting.

- Oversight Monitoring
- Conflict of Interest
- Records Retention

I am currently working on the Draft EEO policy and should have it completed before the next board meeting

4. Certification of the American Job Center.

We are not ready for certification

5. WDB membership and list vacancies and recruitment

Kauai Workforce Development Board is down to 11 members.

- 4 Business
- 3 Workforce
- 2 Government
- 2 Education

At our recent Board meeting, we discussed recruitment and seeking potential board members.

6. Projects and activities of board committees

None to discuss at this time

Please share accomplishments of the WDB and American Job Center.

During the past several months, I represented the Kauai Workforce Development Board within the Office of Economic Development. Through CARES Act funding, Kauai County and OED was able to partner with Proservice Hawaii to launch the Kauai Forward “Rise to Work” programs.

Several target areas were defined:

- Meal Delivery Program to High Risk Groups
- Non-profit economic loss support (Childcare, Community service)
- Mental Health and Domestic Violence prevention
- Agriculture for a self-sustaining Kauai
- Transforming Tourism/Economic Diversion
- Non Profit Grants (Agriculture, Information Technology, Conservation)

The program, for which I sat on the selection board, was the Non-Profit program. Determining which non-profit organizations were eligible for CARES funding, to hire Workers who lost employment or somehow experienced loss due to the Covid19 Pandemic.

Through the RFP process, we provided approximately \$1.5 million to Non-profit organizations, who in turn were able to hire over 50 employees to work on Agricultural preservation, Food Distribution and Conservation.

With additional funding from the CARES Act, Michelle Lopes, our new AJC clerk, hired by the Kauai Office of Economic Development, became the Program coordinator for another "Rise to Work" program. This program was developed to help Displaced Workers in finding short-term employment.

The Program runs from September through December 2020. Approximately \$2.5 million dollars of CARES funding was allocated. The Program services 98 businesses and pays the salary for approximately 275 employees. The wages of the employees ranged from \$15-\$22 an hour, depending on type of employment, skill level and experience. Hired at 40 hours a week with full benefits.

Lastly, I was able to secure a grant of \$20,000 through Nalani Brun, OED Director/County of Kauai & the CARES Act. The grant will be utilized by our Workforce Development Division Counselors/Staff to augment WIOA training fund monies and pay for classes provided by Kauai Community College. The money is targeted for Adult and Dislocated Workers, who otherwise may not have been able to attend classes due to limited funds available.

Example of a few “Rise to Work” Success Stories:



(L) Orly Yadao, Owner of Orly Patisserie and (R) John Kauo (Rise to Work Baker)

Orly Patisserie – Being the owner of Orly Patisserie who opened up shop in the midst of a pandemic had Orly wondering how everything would pan out. He was thrilled when he learned about the Rise to Work program allowing him to employ three people to assist with baking, and running operations and at the same time keeping his labor costs at a minimum during this uncertain time. He’s at peace knowing he has help with this business boost. He’s hoping to keep a few of his Rise to Work hires as permanent employees too!

For John Kauo, he heard about the Rise to Work program from another employee and quickly jumped at the opportunity. His hours were scaled back tremendously at Rainbow Smoke Barbeque when the pandemic hit. The frustration of UI filing and benefits were so inconsistent he’s happier being employed and not just having ‘a job’ but working for an employer that takes pride in his business, his creations and is professionalism. He’s hoping his employment can continue on past the 12 week program.



Shale Shore(top) with Kaua'i Sailing Association, she has so many visions of giving back to the community she didn't know where to start. But with the help of the Rise to Work program employees she was able to hire Marine Educators, a Cleaner and an Aquarium Planner who duels as a Grant Writer. With the help of the Marine Educators, her volunteers could now be paid for their time and efforts of assisting with Pod Learning where kids ages 7 and up can come in and get

teacher support for their schoolwork(for distance learners) followed up in the afternoon by Marine Science experiments with the keiki learning hands on. Her cleaner Gina(not pictured) was able to power wash the entire building inside and out in preparation for their renovations of painting, replacing the floor tiles and updating the space. And her Grant Writer is able to take the necessary time to research and apply for grants. The Rise to Work employees are helping to make the dream possible she said!

Featured Marine Educator Naya Shaw(bottom photo) has been a volunteer since the age of 13 with Kaua'i Sailing Association. Now she's a young adult who loves working with kids, learning and seeing them advance. She also has a passion for photography and was a college student in New York and decided to come back to Kaua'i when the pandemic started. With the uncertainty of the world right now, she's unsure of her path when the Rise to Work program ends.