

**HAWAII COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD UPDATE REPORT (November 2020 – February 2021) TO THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETINGS
February 5, 2021 and February 11, 2021**

Please explain how the American Job Center is operating and assisting job seekers and employers under challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to present.

The American Job Center is still open by appointment only and assisting job seekers and employers virtually. Rapid Response is going out to locations to speak with employers and the affected employees to provide information, AJCH business cards and whatever else they may need.

UI claimants are the main reason for our recent call volume and we assist them with their work search, resume and HireNet needs and basic UI questions they may have and then we give them UI's number for the questions only UI can answer directly.

Please share new ideas, programs, procedures you have implemented that is working well (best practices) at the American Job Center and at the WDB. Department of Human Services and Unemployment Insurance offices are closed to the public. The only access their clients have is the security guards who are posted outside. The HCWDB has been supplying the security guards with the American Job Center businesses cards that have the address, phone number and email address on the front and on the back, it has the URL for HireNetHawaii.com. We told the security guards that if people are looking desperate or need to speak to someone, they can contact the AJC and we can provide additional resources, access to programs, etc. The security guards have said it's a great help and their clients are making calls into the AJC for all the support they can get. We ran through out first batch and are having additional cards made up.

The AJC partners clients seem to really appreciate it and the security guards feel like they are able to help as well. We are working on getting it to all the partners who may have clientele with additional needs.

What is the plan of action to improve the coordination and delivery of rapid response services and business outreach under WIOA? HCWDB is working on getting out ahead of the rapid response delivery. We are working on letting businesses know we are there for them when times are good, and we'll be there when times slow down. Working with the AJC partners and other County Departments to help get the word out of the services the AJC offers. We are also working with Workforce Development Division to gain access to the employers that have a solid foundation and can help us get the word out.

What is the process for ensuring that program funds are not returned to WDC at the end of the 2-year performance period? The HCWDB is reviewing the funding on a monthly basis and speaking with the WIOA service providers to make sure they remain on track. We are working on opportunities for additional outreach. Hawaii County is working with other counties for best practices and brainstorming sessions. Looking for additional opportunities in our service area. Staff is looking at the availability of virtual tools that will help assist program participants and the program itself. Looking at professional development opportunities for the program staff. Offering additional support services for the participants as the needs arise. We are looking for additional Eligible Training Providers, so we have more opportunity for training.

What are the top 3-5 areas of focus and projects that the board has prioritized for 2021. Please include timelines and how the projects will be funded. Employment Recovery from Covid. It has already started. We are looking at using the Employment Grants. We are looking at mobile and virtual opportunities to meet participants where they live and not have to commute for services. Business Engagement using Rapid Response funds. Helping those students that are falling behind while being taught in the virtual schools and classrooms. Working with the Workforce Resilience Initiative to assist with the digital footprint by providing computer classes that include laptops.

The HCWDB will continue to work on the needs of Hawaii County and with the new administration that took over December 7, 2020.

Please provide a brief overview of the board's committees and activities undertaken in 2020 to present. We created the Business Engagement Committee and the Program Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee was part of the AJC Certification Process in 2020. The Local Area Plan was approved, along with the Board By-Laws. Next up the Program Oversight Committee is reviewing WIOA policies and procedures, reviewing the MOU and the IFA, The Business Engagement Committee is merging with our Business Services Team to consolidate efforts and have a unified front and will be meeting on a regular basis to finish their plan and start its implementation.

Please share accomplishments and success stories of the WDB and American Job Center. Lianalyn Wilson came to the American Job Center from Alu Like's Work Experience program. She was at the American Job Center from October through December 2020. Her duties included reception, clerical and HireNet Hawaii "tech support". Lianalyn has great digital skills and was able to assist in projects from the AJC partner program staff and help at the AJC "call center" as the AJC is closed to the public but scheduling appointments and assisting virtually via video conferencing, telephone and email.

Lianalyn finished her work experience and was dual enrolled in the WIOA Out of School Youth program, in the hopes of returning to the AJC for additional training and work experience. In the meantime, the youth provider, Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc., had a vacancy for a fulltime position as an Administrative Assistant. Lianalyn took her experience she learned at the AJC and put it to practical use during her interview with Goodwill. She was offered the position and will be starting as soon as her background check has cleared.

Making her a success for both the Native American and Out of School Youth programs with unsubsidized employment.