

**HAWAII COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD UPDATE REPORT
TO THE STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, August 12, 2021**

What is the status of moving Hawaii County WDB staff and operations to the Department of Research and Development? Physical space has been allocated within the Department of Research & Development (R&D) for two full-time HCWDB staff. Equipment purchasing to support their operations is under review. County code changes are being formulated to ensure statutory support for the shift within the County. Program Year accounts are in the process of being transitioned to R&D.

What are the plans to fill the vacancy of one full-time staff position?

R&D plans to recruit for the vacancy once the HR transition has occurred for the two full time positions.

The Hawaii County WDB and AJC have been conducting job fairs. Please explain how the job fairs were organized and promoted, numbers of job seeker and employer participants, successful placements, and areas to improve for future job fairs. Hawaii County has not held any job fairs during COVID-19.

Due to COVID-19 businesses were closing their doors and laying off/furloughing their employees, which caused the employees to file for Unemployment Compensation. Now we have employers looking for job seekers. The AJC traffic continues to be slow due to the UC/PUA benefits plus weekly stipends. Before we have a job fair, we want to ensure we have the supply - which is not currently there, for the employer demand.

The AJC Partners are looking at hosting a virtual job fair sometime in October. Hawai'i Community College is helping to facilitate, and the partners will put the word out to their program participants, and the AJC will contact those employers who are looking for assistance in finding qualified candidates. The reason we are looking at October is so we can meet the holiday needs of employer staffing along with those still unable to find work after they are required to job search in September.

In September the UI Benefits will expire and people will need to start looking for work. The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations – Unemployment Insurance are reinstating the requirement of three jobs searches per week. Many employers are currently offering bonuses for people to sign on but are still unable to fill their positions due to the less stringent UI requirements since COVID-19.

Once the job fair(s) is established, it will be promoted on HireNet, the State DLIR WDD/WDC and County Websites, AJC Partner websites and press releases will be sent out (based on the past our press releases, the AJC has gotten interviews with the local radio stations to promote awareness), advertising in the Job Center and on employers' websites. It will also be promoted via the AJC's Facebook page.

What activities are being performed to integrate Rapid Response, TAA and dislocated worker services to ensure participants are being dually enrolled? All the programs are located at the AJC and communicate with each other regarding program referrals and support for participants.

The Business Services Team actively goes out and meets with employers, the Rapid Response assistant also coordinates meetings, follow up information and assistance for job seekers at the American Job Center. The Rapid Response Coordinator coordinates the meeting for employers who submit WARN letters, and those that we see in the newspaper or word of mouth from the community. The AJC Partners and WIOA service providers attend the meetings including those that have the TAA contract. Follow up is initiated by one of the programs based on the participants primary interest (usually WIOA) and then referrals are made to the additional programs once the participant has been enrolled in the primary program of their choice.

What amount, if any, was returned to the State for unused PY19 WIOA Title 1 funds for adult, dislocated worker and youth programs. Please list amounts for each program.

Adult \$70,903
DW \$15,711

Please share accomplishments and success stories of the WDB and American Job Center.

Please see attached documents.

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program:

Ensuring Long Term Success!

Glenn Manaba came through the doors of the American Job Center due to COVID-19, in 2020, and was able to experience a plethora of support throughout the entire 2020, leading into present day 2021.

2020—Glenn was devastated when he lost his management job at a local hotel in Hilo. Like many others in our community, suffering the effects of COVID, he was in search of stability and security. He did not want to rely on the uncertain unemployment insurance benefits, and wanted to be proactive in his quest for not just earning income, but making an impact. He enrolled into the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program in April 2020 with the goal of changing his career path and following his passion of service. He stated: “I’m choosing to focus on the silver lining of this grim situation, and pursue the opportunity of helping improve the quality of life, for others.” He worked closely with his employment counselor on assessing his skills, strengths, and needs. After several appointments that centered on his enrollment, mentorship, and coaching, he decided that he wanted to pursue a career as a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA).

He worked closely with his employment counselor to select a course and training provider that would meet his needs of attaining quality training at a time that would suit his schedule. Within a short time-frame, his employment counselor was able to coordinate discussions with a training provider, and assess his comfort-levels. He was very grateful and appreciated the fact that he did not have to navigate this career switch alone. Within a few short weeks, right at the height of COVID, he was able to secure a spot in his preferred training course and have all course expenses covered by the WIOA Program! He was so grateful and shared: “I am going to pass this course with flying colors, and make the program and myself proud!” Indeed, despite the setbacks of COVID—course modifications such as reducing class size, schedule, etc. he remained focused on sticking out the course, and kept close contact with his instructors and employment counselor, and just as he said, with flying colors, he passed his course, clinicals, and graduated with his CNA Certificate in June 2020.

After analyzing his job and self-sufficiency needs, he worked closely with his employment counselor to identify his next steps, which was to pursue his CNA licensure. Through analyzing labor market needs and demand with his employment counselor, he was able to clearly see that with a CNA license in Hawaii, he would have access to higher paying positions, with a greater opportunity for stability—both in schedule and income. His employment counselor walked him through the CNA licensure application process and informed him that the WIOA Program would cover his licensure expenses as well! He was so stoked and said: “I cannot believe a program like this exists—I’m ready to get this license!”

After launching his prometric exam application, Glenn began studying and working even closer with both his employment counselor and CNA instructors to help boost his confidence for test-day. In addition to preparing for his test, he also began searching for employment. He and his employment counselor met numerous times to strategize employment seeking, and to their excitement, he was offered a position as a CNA with Yukio Okutsu veteran's home. However, at this time, the veterans home began battling COVID head-on, and seen an immediate increase and outburst of uncontrollable COVID cases hitting the facility and residents. To err on the side of safety, Human Resources informed him that they were going on a temporary hiring freeze, and would inform him of when he could start working, citing: "hopefully in the near future."

Though being downhearted, Glenn continued to work closely with his employment counselor on strategizing his next steps. Together, they began to resume focus on studying for his CNA licensure exam. However, another hurdle stood in his way—due to COVID, prometric exams were pushed back until August, pending the COVID crisis. Though this could've easily been another challenge for Glenn, he continued without letup and worked with his employment counselor on strategizing yet again his next steps. His employment counselor encouraged him and kept closely connected in helping him to identify other avenues or potential employment routes. He decided that he would use the time allotted to focus on his personal growth in a local nonprofit, and building his skills. His employment counselor continued to host both virtual and in-person meetings with Glenn to ensure he was moving forward—developing soft and transferrable skills while waiting out the COVID hiring freeze and Prometric freeze.

In no time, Glenn got the call that he could successfully test, and without a doubt, he successfully passed his prometric exam in August 2020, and became a licensed CNA in the State of Hawaii. He was so excited and expressed appreciation for his employment counselor and her endless support, and shared: "I don't know what to do without your help. I am very much grateful for such a great program you have. I really appreciate you checking in with me to make sure everything remains okay and most especially for taking off the financial burden off my shoulders."

Despite all of these challenges, he persisted with his employment counselor on obtaining gainful employment. They met several times to assess the job market, review his resume and prepare to submit his employment applications. Despite the challenge of COVID and mass job-loss in our county, he was pleasantly surprised and excited to get a call back from Yukio Okutsu Veterans State home offering him full-time employment, earning \$16.41, effective October 2020. He took to this new line of work quickly and successfully passed his three months' probation! Glenn continued to work diligently and thoroughly enjoyed his new line of work stating that he felt he was making the best impact he could with his patients, and with others. During all of this, Glenn remained steadfast with his meetings and check-ins with his employment counselor. Together, they were able to develop a savings goal and spending plan that would help Glenn continue to achieve his overall goals, in addition to employment. Overall, Glenn's infectious smile paved the way for him to light up the lives of many during the darkest of times. He attributed his success in

this new industry to the fact that he did not have to navigate alone. He felt that the WIOA Program provided him the guidance, support, and encouragement he needed to succeed, and therefore, provides that to those he serves.

2021—Fast forward to present day, Glenn continues to make an impact in the lives of the many he serves. Through this new line of work as a licensed CNA, he was able to develop new skills, while honing in on his existing skills of leadership, compassion, and passion for making a difference through quality care. Though he was extremely happy as a CNA, our island tourism and hospitality industry opened up again, and he was called back to work in his management position. He discussed this opportunity with his employment counselor and decided that he would return to his position as he felt he could go back as a greater leader who could help affect more positive change within our local community. He accepted his position and is now earning \$20 per hour, with full benefits. Glenn never regretted his decisions to change course in doing what was best for him, as that in turn, allowed him to play a part in the lives of many.

The WIOA Program worked and will continue to work with Glenn through each phase of his life, while continuing to provide him with a wide array of options that would lead him to an enhanced skillset level, and the ability to give back, and to make an impact—across any field he may choose. With a heart full of appreciation, Glenn shared: “I am forever grateful. Thanks to the WIOA Program, I never worried about my next step, or about how I would pay for my bills. This program is a blessing!”

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July 26, 2021

CONGRATULATIONS Best of East Hawaii 2021 Winner!!!

Hello!!!!

It is my pleasure and honor to CONGRATULATE your business,
The Hawaii Tribune-Herald readers have Voted you as one of the best. The top three
vote getters are being recognized as sometimes a mere two votes separate the top three
winners. You have been named a FINALIST in the category of:

AMERICAN JOB CENTER HAWAII
BEST BUSINESS / EMPLOYMENT SERVICE!

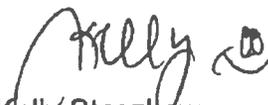
Whooo hooo! Super exciting!

We will be announcing all the winners in a tabloid come Sunday, Aug. 29th so
please **MUMS THE WORD** till then. In the meantime if you'd like to do a Mahalo ad to
thank your customers who voted for you I've attached the flyer for this. Also please
VERIFY the information on the attached 3-line form. Be sure all the information listed are
correct as this is the info that will be published. If you could get back any changes to this
prior to **Friday, August 6th** by calling me direct 930-7312 or send a shout out to my
email <kstaszko@hawaiitribune-herald.com> ...that would be greatly appreciated!

I'll have your window clings and an extra copy of the tabloid for you after we publish.
Hopefully, I can deliver by then...

Congratulations again! What an honor to be recognized by the community you serve!

Sincerely,


Kelly Staszko

2 attachments

