

**WDC EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT for WDC BOARD MEETING**  
**Period of February 11, 2022 – May 12, 2022**

**Committee Chair: Brian Tatsumura**  
**Committee Vice Chair: Sheryl Nojima**

The Employer Engagement Committee met on April 14, 2022.

The Opportunity Population Subcommittee Chair Evan Nakatsuka reported the group conducted outreach to at-risk, English learners and students with disabilities at Farrington High School's Kinaole Program. Ten students expressed interest in the services at the American Job Center. Six of 10 students have found employment through the Kinaole Program. Kinaole program staff have asked if training or meeting options with students' parents and families at the high school campus are an option, similar to early college programs with the Honolulu Community Colleges. Additionally, follow up meetings are planned with leaders in the Micronesian community from organizations such as We Are Oceania, Marshallese Community Organization, Ohana Baptist Church, City and County of Honolulu Office of Economic Revitalization, and the Consulate General of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to connect with jobseekers from these communities. Other areas that the subcommittee is exploring include Aloha United Way's focus on the Asset Limited, Income Constrained and Employed (ALICE) population; and how the American Job Centers can play a role in upskilling or dual referrals for eligible job seekers; and barriers to program participation, employment, and additional resources.

The Employer Engagement Committee discussed short-and long-term goals and recommended the following:

- Long term goals remain the same
  - Assessment Challenge to Employers for Digital Literacy Assessment Testing: Our Committee is taking the lead with the WDC membership and partners to promote employers to have their employees engage in assessing their level of basic computer skills.
  - Working with AJC to upscale the workforce through training and helping people with barriers to employment find suitable employment.
  - Probe employers how we can best support them and having them give us inputs into their current business as business is changing more rapidly than ever.
  - Engagement with other committees to find common opportunities and solutions.
- Short term goals
  - Schedule in-person visits to the Oahu American Job Center with Lei Nakamura and explore future collaboration.
  - Kinaole Program and Debbie Leong-Yep is reaching out to Linda Puppolo on Maui at her request to explore how we could collaborate. Farrington Kinaole Program mock interviews are now in its 7<sup>th</sup> year. For the fall 40 student are in the program and so far 23 students have found jobs. Successful student and parents of mock interviews are a key part of the process. Concept of community within the school.
  - Evan Nakatsuka chair of Opportunities Population Subcommittee looking into possible collaboration with ALICE (Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed) group through Aloha United Way resources and upskilling with the American Job Centers.
  - The Opportunities Population Subcommittee has been addressing issues relating to individuals with barriers to employment. Continue to reach out to Micronesian community organizations and build a relationship with the group.
  - Cary Miyashiro is setting up a pilot program in the DOE schools for digital literacy assessment.

As Vice Chair Sheryl Nojima's term ends in June with the WDC, the Committee acknowledged her service, leadership and efforts on the committee. Cheryl Cross has been an active member of the committee for several years and will serve as Vice Chair starting July 1, 2022.