**YOUTH SERVICES**

Aloha Nui Governor Green. I am Winona Whitman, Vice-Chair, for the Youth Services Committee. I am speaking on behalf of our outstanding Chair, Ian Kitajima, from Design Thinking Hawaii, who could not be here today and could articulate much more about our Committee’s activities.

The Youth Committee’s goal and focus have been to reach out and meet with as many people and groups who are involved with disenfranchised, socially and economically, at-risk youth. Some of the agencies who have provided valuable assistance in working together with our Committee have been from Quad D Solutions, Adult Friends for Youth, Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education, Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Leeward Community College, Division of Rehabilitation, Departments of Human Services and Education, Bizgenics, Hawaii Kids CAN, Maui Economic Development Board, Kinai `Eha, Oceanit, and more. With the many collaborative engagements, we can therefore build upon our programs to alleviate the issues and challenges facing our youth rather than expecting the U.S. Department of Labor to solve the problems for us.

Out of the 14 Youth Program elements allowed under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) our Committee has primarily focused on initiatives in work-based learning experiences, entrepreneurial skills training, activities to prepare youth for postsecondary education and training, and guidance and counseling, specifically trauma-informed care led by Stacy Ferreira, Budget Chief, Senate Ways & Means and Josiah 'Ākau, Executive Director, Kinai`Eha.

The U.S. Department of Labor in its Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act shows support for trauma and trauma-informed care. They provide resources on ensuring that we, the youth workforce system providers, understand the impacts of trauma on the young people we serve and are critical to positive outcomes. Furthermore, USDOL states that integrating trauma-informed practices into WIOA service delivery can help youth feel safe, supported, and engaged while participating in education, training, and employment.

We are excited on your newly created Office of Wellness and Resilience and your Director Tia Hartsock who will be working with your philosophy and approach to understanding the root causes of trauma, in order to address health and wellness and provide an opportunity for Hawai`i and its people to truly make strides to improve health and resiliency outcomes for generations.

We are so appreciative that the Trauma Informed Care will be implemented statewide by your Office of Wellness and Resilience under Director Hartsock. Mahalo nui loa and

Mahalo nui loa, Governor Green, for meeting with us today.