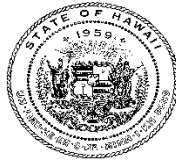


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**MILITARY AND VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Thursday, April 17, 2025**  
**1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**  
**In-person and online via Zoom**

**WRITTEN SUMMARY**

**MEMBERS:**

Trang Malone – Chair, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee; Workforce Initiative Advisor, CVS Health  
Cheryl Cross – Vice Chair, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee; Executive Board Member, Inkinen Executive Search  
Bennette Misalucha – Executive Director, Workforce Development Council  
Rona Yagi Fukumoto – President & CEO, Lanakila Pacific  
Amber Akana – Safety Director Union Representative, Seafarer's International Union of North America  
Wanelle Kaneshiro – Designee for Superintendent, Department of Education  
Cary Miyashiro – President, Quad D Solutions

**GUESTS:**

Nicole Anderson – Currently unaffiliated, supporting military and veteran initiatives  
Rosella Guardascione – Chair, County of Hawaii Workforce Development Board  
Dr. Farrah-Marie Gomes – Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Hawaii System  
Joshua Kaakua – University of Hawaii Community College; Pillar II Catalyst Team Lead  
Victoria Harvey – Hiring Our Heroes  
Tracy Steele – Senior Program Manager, Military Spouse Fellowships, Hiring Our Heroes  
Ann Greenlee – Director, DOL VETS for Hawaii and Guam  
Kat Andrews – Community Employment Coordinator, Department of Veteran Affairs, Pacific Islands  
Carol Kanayama – Workforce Development Division

**STAFF:**

**I. Call to Order [Video 00:05:05]** by Trang Malone, Chair

Trang Malone called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. and confirmed it was a public meeting under the open meeting law. Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

**II. Presentations: [Video 00:10:23]**

**[Video 00:10:23]** by Dr. Farrah-Marie Gomes, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, University of Hawaii

Dr. Gomes outlined the University of Hawaii's efforts to serve military-connected students across all 10 campuses through the "Serving Military-Connected Students" committee. She announced a final draft report with recommendations including system-wide priority registration, policy updates for military leave, comprehensive faculty/staff training, and establishment of assessment metrics.

**[Video 00:22:09]** by Wanelle Kaneshiro and Joshua Kaakua, Pillar II Catalyst Team Leads

Kaneshiro and Kaakua presented Pillar 2's focus on building education and training alliances with seven key objectives including industry-aligned training, cross-sector collaboration, and apprenticeship programs. They highlighted the Department of Education's CTE teacher shortage and opportunities for military veterans in these positions.

**[Video 00:47:21]** by Cheryl Cross, Vice Chair

Cross summarized the March 25th House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee hearing on TAP, revealing only 52% of service members complete the program on time. She outlined recommended improvements including more employer involvement, earlier spouse access, and creation of a dedicated Undersecretary of Defense for transition.

**III. Roundtable Discussion on Military Education Benefits [Video 00:57:41]** by Trang Malone, Chair

Discussion focused on supporting military education benefits and communication strategies. Kat Andrews provided detailed information on GI Bill benefits and military-friendly schools offering accelerated programs and online accessibility.

**IV. Update on the Military Spouse Sub-Committee [Video 01:16:27]** by Carol Kanayama, Workforce Development Division

Kanayama reported on American Job Center outreach including newcomer orientations, National Guard briefings, and successful hiring events. She announced upcoming events on Kauai (April 23) and Oahu (May 20) with veteran priority services.

**V. Executive Director's Report [Video 01:20:51]** by Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director

Misalucha provided updates on unified plan implementation and agency transition status, targeting full transition by June 30th/July 1st. She announced an April 28th economic panel and congratulated new Council member Amber on Senate confirmation.

**VI. Announcements and Constituent Comments [Video 01:24:10]** by Trang Malone, Chair

Chair Malone announced CVS Health's workforce training center partnership with US Vets. Kat Andrews announced a May 9th veteran stand-down event at the Akaka VA Clinic.

**VII. Next Meeting [Video 01:28:15]** by Trang Malone, Chair

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 17, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom or at the DLIR building.

**VIII. Adjournment [Video 01:28:15]** by Trang Malone, Chair

Trang Malone adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m.