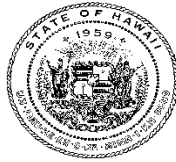


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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS  
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

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**SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING  
Monday, October 21, 2024  
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
In-person and online via Zoom**

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS:**

Keith DeMello, Committee Chair, Vice President of Communications & External Affairs, Ulupono Initiative  
Dion Dizon, Special Projects Committee, Vice Chair, Business Representative, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers  
David Rodriguez, State's Equal Opportunity Officer, Director's Office, Dept of Labor and Industrial Relations

**GUEST:**

Carla Kurokawa, Manager, Employment and Training, Alu Like, Inc.  
Christine Beale, University of Hawaii System Director of Workforce Development  
Clinton Mercado, Business Representative, American Job Center, Hawaii County  
Denise Pacheco, Big Island Manager, Workforce Development Division, County of Hawaii  
Doug Adams, Director, Research and Development, County of Hawaii  
Eileen Caldwell, Director of Human Resources, Marriott Hawaii and French Polynesia  
Kevin Kimizuka, Manager, Maui Workforce Development Division  
Leina'ala Nakamura, Administrator, Work Hawaii, Dept of Community Services, City & County of Honolulu  
Matt Stevens, Executive Director, Hawaii Workforce Funders Collaborative  
Rona Fukumoto, CEO, Lanakila Pacific  
Suzanne Skjold, CEO, Aloha United Way  
Thomas Chock, Creative Industries Division, Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

**STAFF:**

Harrison Kuranishi, Executive Director, Oahu Workforce Development Board  
Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, DLIR Workforce Development Council  
Lynn Araki-Regan, Administrative Services Officer, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

**I. Call to Order**

The Special Projects Committee meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Dion Dizon. Vice Chair noted that Chair Keith DeMello will join later, and agenda order changed.

## **II. Roundtable Discussion/Continuation of the Questions during the July 15, Committee meeting**

Vice Chair Dizon provided context for the discussion, explaining that the WDC's responsibility includes development and continuous improvement of the state's workforce development system. She emphasized that American Job Centers (AJCs) are the first line of defense for workforce development, making them a critical focus area. Vice Chair Dizon also reviewed the main challenges identified in July's meeting: underutilization of services, services not being housed in the same facility, agencies finding challenges providing comprehensive and integrated services, signage issues making locations hard to find, and technology barriers for clients

Community Engagement: Vice Chair Dizon opened discussion on how AJCs engage with local communities and stakeholders. Administrator Leina'ala Nakamura shared several WorkHawaii Division initiatives. Administrator Nakamura reported they have established dedicated WIOA program recruiters to focus on community engagement and have developed partnerships with 10 libraries for island-wide accessibility. The division received approval for expansion to 3 additional libraries and has created a military spouse outreach program at Army Schofield and Pearl Harbor Joint Base. Administrator Nakamura also described the simplified enrollment process focusing only on required WIOA documentation and the planned implementation of digital signatures for program applications. She reported successful enrollment of over 100 individuals in WIOA adult programs since July 1. Discussion of success measurements. Additionally, Administrator Nakamura shared about media outreach activities which will include placing placards on city buses.

Administrative Services Office (ASO) Administrator Lynn Araki-Regan announced a pending initiative to place an AJC recruiter outside the UI Claims office, noting they are awaiting Deputy Attorney General approval. Big Island Workforce Development Division Manager Denise Pacheco explained WIOA service provider co-location with unemployment and other offices for community access. She detailed Big Island AJC's community engagement efforts, describing their regular participation in career fairs, job fairs, resource fairs, and health/wellness clinics, VA clinics and military spouse fairs. She shared division plans to expand services to rural communities emphasizing their focus on targeting small town events and locations to better serve the entire island.

Marketing Strategies: Administrator Nakamura outlined their marketing initiatives, describing a \$35,000 allocation for media outreach across adult, dislocated worker, and youth grants. She detailed plans for TV commercials and social media campaign. She also described their "Level Up with Work Hawaii" branding and active use of social media for youth program outreach.

Innovative Practices: Administrator Nakamura described the new SMS text message system, which allows staff to send appointment reminders directly from Outlook to clients' phones. The system was developed in partnership with the city Department

of Information and Technology and will be rolled out soon.

Vice-Chair Dizon reviewed possible future activities of virtual job coaching and employer-led trainings delivered through the AJCs. ASO Araki-Regan suggested utilizing free broadcast opportunities through Akaku, Olelo, and their counterparts to share AJC content statewide. Thomas Chock offered Creative Industries Division's support for developing media content and outreach materials.

Collaboration and Support: Supervisor Pacheco requested Council support for developing affiliate sites and achieving comprehensive status for Hawaii County. She expressed a desire to access to Council members' expertise, suggesting their knowledge could benefit both workforce development staff and WIOA providers. Leina'ala Nakamura requested implementation support for the revised definition "basic skill deficient".

Bennette Misalucha responded to Harrison Kuranishi's question re: partner participation. Ms. Misalucha also noted that at the Future of Work Conference, only 48% of attendees were familiar with AJCs, highlighting the need for increased awareness efforts. She emphasized that low awareness among workforce development professionals indicated a significant gap in public awareness and shared planned next steps re: an awareness campaign.

### **III. Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha shared that the Synergy Summit will be held on December 9 with the goal of engaging stakeholders in next steps of Unified Plan. The Executive Director also reviewed some findings from the Future of Work conference and Work Heroes, upcoming events, and focus for the coming quarter.

### **IV. Chair Report**

Chair DeMello update on the Permitted Interaction Group (PIG) structure during the 2025 Legislative Session, sharing the 2 options available and considerations of each. Special Projects Committee voted on their preferred option which will be recommended to the WDC. The Chair also shared that following a roundtable discussion on protocols to nominating a member of the State Board, the issue continues to be researched.

### **V. Announcements and Public Testimony**

There were no announcements or public testimony.

### **VI. Next Meeting**

The next committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 2025.

### **VII. Adjournment**

Committee Chair Keith DeMello adjourned the meeting at 2:42 p.m.