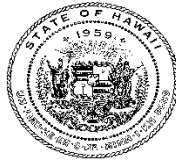


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GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY  
DIRECTOR

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**WDC YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING WRITTEN SUMMARY**

**Monday, May 5, 2025**  
**1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**  
**In-person and online via Zoom**

**MEMBERS:**

Tui Scanlan - President, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 665  
Carla Kurokawa - Employment and Training Manager, Alu Like, Inc.  
Lea Dias - Administrator, Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Christopher Lum Lee - Vice Chair/Acting Chair, Oahu Workforce Development Board; President and CEO of TriSec, Inc.; CEO of Hawaii's Coffee Works  
Wanelle Kaneshiro - Director, Workforce Development Branch, Department of Education (Designee for Keith Hayashi)  
Rona Fukumoto - President & CEO, Lanakila Pacific  
Nalani Brun - Director, Office of Economic Development (Designee for Derek Kawakami, Mayor of Kauai)

**GUESTS:**

Matt Stevens - Hawaii Workforce Funders Collaborative  
Kaulana McCabe - Kupu Foundation, Vice President of Programs  
Steven Schatz - Hawaii P20  
Warren Kawano - Hawaii P20  
Ryan Shimabukuro - Hawaii P20  
Jen Sagapolutele-Tautuiaki - Hawaii Workforce Pipeline Senior Intermediary Manager  
Janet Davidson - Chaminade University of Honolulu  
Halen Dennis - Spill the Tea Cafe  
Harrison Kuranishi - Oahu Workforce Development Board  
Raymond Sin – Active Duty, United States Air Force (Public Observer)

**STAFF:**

Bennette Misalucha – Executive Director, Workforce Development Council  
Kelly Quitevis – WDC Staff

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**I. Call to Order [00:01:32] by Tui Scanlan, Chair**

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program  
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Meeting called to order at 1:32 p.m. as public meeting under open meeting law. Members and guests introduced themselves.

## **II. Presentation: Empowering Youth Through Conservation: The Kupu Foundation Approach [00:03:09] by Kaulana McCabe, VP of Programs, Kupu**

### **Overview of KUPU's Mission and Programs [00:04:47]**

Kupu is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 2007, starting with \$50,000 Hawaii Youth Conservation Corps grant on Kauai. Now serves 300-400 youth annually across Hawaii, Guam, Saipan, and American Samoa through 200+ site partners.

### **Youth Development Through Conservation [00:05:18]**

Four major programs outlined:

**Hawaii Youth Conservation Corps Summer Program [00:06:58]:** Ages 17+, Oahu and Maui only. 300 hours (8 weeks), \$18/hour plus \$1,565 education award. Applications increased after transitioning to hourly wage model based on youth surveys prioritizing paid employment.

**Kupu AmeriCorps Program [00:09:26]:** Ages 17-38, part-time or full-time up to one year. \$18-20/hour with PTO and healthcare. Created from CARES Act, continued through Green Jobs Youth Corps bill.

**Conservation Leadership Development Program [00:11:06]:** 6-11 months full-time, ages 17+, \$17/hour (\$18 Maui). Full service earns \$7,395 education award. Includes monthly start dates, professional development, service trips.

**Community Program [00:12:40]:** Ages 16-24, serves high school dropouts at Kupu Center in Keeaumoku Basin. Offers GED pathway, DOE alternative learning program, breakfast/lunch services.

### **Successes, Challenges, and Lessons Learned [00:20:13]**

Record 1,600+ applications this year through social media influencer partnerships (Passion Santos, Magic Mike, Tumoa). Challenge: 70% local applicants, competing with immediate employers during lengthy placement processes.

### **Opportunities for Future Collaboration [00:24:37]**

Funding: 50/50 philanthropic/government. Concerns about AmeriCorps federal cuts. Contingency plans include new green fee bill (\$100M to DLNR) and increased philanthropic support.

## **III. Presentation of Project Funded by WIOA Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds [00:28:27] by Warren Kawano, Ryan Shimabukuro (Hawaii P20), and Jen Sagapolutele-Tautuiaki (Hawaii Workforce Pipeline)**

### **Overview and Hawaii P-20 Vision [00:29:02] by Ryan Shimabukuro**

Work-based learning intermediaries serve as relationship brokers between schools and employers. Three-year investment grew from two Oahu intermediaries to statewide coverage.

### **Current Outcomes [00:36:28]**

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2024 results: 200 work-based learning opportunities across 59 schools, 1,000+ professionals engaged, nearly 15,000 student participants. Partners include Kauai Economic Development Board, Hawaii Workforce Pipeline, Chamber of Commerce, Cultivate Hawaii, MEB, Vibrant Hawaii.

### **Implementation [00:38:30] by Jen Sagapolutele-Tautuiaki**

Hawaii Workforce Pipeline serves Windward and Honolulu districts using three-pillar model (home-school-community). Offers customized experiences from elementary career awareness through high school internships, including professionalism workshops, virtual career conversations, and on-site experiences.

### **Future Initiatives [00:55:52]**

Focus on sustainability, sector-specific implementation, and adapting to rural/remote communities with limited local businesses.

## **IV. Executive Director's Report [01:08:25] by Bennette Misalucha**

### **Current Projects Update [01:09:13]**

**Unified Plan:** Second pillar meetings scheduled. NGA technical assistance for north star formulation. Timeline: July 9 Synergy Summit 2, September workforce development month.

**Agency Transition:** Ongoing transition to DLIR attached agency status.

**Active Projects:** Community college CTE enrollment, P20 intermediaries, UH-Chamber transportation partnership, American Job Center research and PR campaign.

### **Upcoming Events [01:12:34]**

- July 9, 2025: Synergy Summit 2
- September 2025: Future of Work Conference and Workforce Development Month

### **Financial Report [01:14:28]**

PY 2022 unexpended funds: Six projects totaling \$1.5M must conclude by June 30th. PY 2023 current spending shows ~\$2.8M unspent across local areas, Big Island leading at 50%+ expenditure rate.

## **V. Announcements and Constituent Comments [01:16:42]**

None

### **Public Announcements [01:17:10]**

**Janet Davidson:** "Pathways to Meaningful Work" symposium June 25, 2025, focusing on education-employment pipelines for formerly incarcerated individuals.

**Halen Dennis [01:19:49]:** Youth Thrive Fest June 13, 2025, free for ages 18 and under at Kahala. Mental health support for 600 youth annually, focus on LGBTQ+ community.

## **VI. Next Meeting [01:21:20]**

July 11, 2025, 1:30 p.m. via Zoom and DLIR offices, 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 317.

**VII. Adjournment [01:21:57]**

Meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.