



WORKFORCEDEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL

**QUARTERLY
BOARD MEETING
PACKET**

Wed, August 20, 2025

9:30am - 12pm

HAWAI'I WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 20, 2025

Board Meeting Packet
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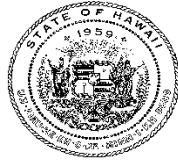
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Agenda

August 20, 2025

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
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HAWAII WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday, August 20, 2025
9:30a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Remote Meeting:

This meeting will be held remotely by Zoom interactive conference technology. Board members, staff, and members of the public may participate in the remote meeting by using the following Zoom link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85308113989?pwd=6S1XLMrWU78NYTTafyQjPITMw1O2rG.1>

If you do not have the technology or ability to join the remote meeting via Zoom, please dial +1 (669) 444-9171 on the telephone to participate in the remote meeting.

Meeting ID: 853 0811 3989
Passcode: 628108

Physical Meeting:

A physical meeting location will be open to the public and will have an audiovisual connection, which will allow individuals at the physical meeting location to participate in the remote meeting. The address of the physical meeting location is 830 Punchbowl Street, Room #310, Honolulu, HI 96813.

Meeting materials are available for review at: <https://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/workforce-development-council-meetings/> at least three (3) business days prior to the Board meeting as prescribed under Hawaii's Open meetings law.

Written and Oral Testimony:

Individuals may submit written testimony by U.S. mail or hand delivery at 830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 317, Honolulu, HI 96813 or by email at

DLIR.Workforce.Council@hawaii.gov. To ensure that members are able to review testimony prior to the meeting, we encourage interested persons to submit written testimony at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Any written testimony submitted after such time will be retained as part of the record and distributed to members as soon as practicable, but we cannot ensure members will receive it in sufficient time to review prior to any decision-making.

Individuals may provide remote oral testimony during the remote meeting at the Zoom link listed above.

Individuals participating at the physical meeting locations may also provide oral testimony during the remote meeting. Public testimony on agenda items will be accepted prior to the discussion of each item, at the time designated by the Chair.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

If you need an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, please contact Bennette Misalucha at (808) 586-8815 (for TTY/TTD Dial 711 then ask for (808) 586-8877) or email dlir.workforce.council@hawaii.gov as soon as possible. Requests made as early as possible will allow adequate time to fulfill your request. Upon request, this notice is available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, or electronic copy.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order.....*Workforce Development Council Chair Ken Loui*

II. Approval of Minutes

a. June 24, 2025

Requires Board Action

III. Presentation: Federal Funding Matters*Tim Carlton,
National Governors Association, Director of Legislative Affairs.*

A. Program Year 2025 and Program Year 2026 Budget Appropriations for
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

*There is considerable anxiety surrounding the federal budget
appropriations for WIOA, as states await clarity on the release of funds
for Program Year 2025 and the funding levels for Program Year 2026.
The National Governors Association has been closely monitoring the
situation and will share the latest updates on the approved Budget Bill,
along with insights into what it could mean for the states, particularly
Hawai'i.*

B. Possible Changes to WIOA Infrastructure

*Although there is no official proposal to abolish WIOA entirely, there is
significant structural overhaul that is being proposed as part of the
Fiscal year 2026 Presidential budget. The discussion will center on the
details of the proposed block grant called "Make America Skilled
Again" (MASA).*

C. Possible Re-Authorization of WIOA

*Congress has not enacted the WIOA re-authorization, and National
Governors Association will share the latest efforts and the chances for
passage.*

IV. Presentation: Awareness Outreach Campaign for the American Job
Centers *Caroline Witherspoon, President, and
Jocelyn Collado, Vice President, Becker Communications*

Becker Communications will present on the public awareness campaign which was launched in June and is anticipated to continue until September. Leveraging video applications, social media platforms, and traditional Public Relations channels, the campaign seeks to boost public recognition of American Job Center services across Hawai‘i. The presentation will also include findings from a preliminary survey assessing current awareness levels in Hawaii, followed by an overview of planned messaging and platform rollout.

V. Governor’s Report *Dan Kouchi, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor*

An overview on the recent accomplishments and initiatives of the Office of the Governor.

- A. Update on Governor’s leadership roles in the National Governors Association and the Western Governors Association
- B. Green Fees Signed into Law
- C. Insurance Stabilization
- D. Fireworks

VI. Labor Director’s Update..... *David Rodriguez, Designee for Department of Labor and Industrial Relations Director Jade Butay*

An update on the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) key priorities, and ongoing initiatives that support Hawaii’s workforce and economic resilience.

- A. Budget Process
- B. Legislative Process

VII. Fiscal Reports *Bennette Misalucha, Workforce Development Council Executive Director and Hong van Radke, from the Administrative Services Office.*

- A. Summary of Current Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program year 2023 Grant funds for the State of Hawaii as of June 30, 2025..... *Hong Van Radke*

B. Preliminary Forecast of WIOA Program Year 2023 Unexpended funds..... *Bennette Misalucha*

C. General Funds Fiscal Status

The presentation will focus on the Spending Plan proposal for the Fiscal year 2026 Workforce Development Council's General Appropriations (GA) funds and the Fiscal Year 2027 proposed budget.

This presentation was first vetted by the Executive Committee, which is in line with the Workforce Development Council's By-laws which stipulates that "The Executive Committee reviews and makes recommendations on all personnel matters, Council governance and compliance matters, standing committee matters, and other matters as directed by the Council". The Executive Committee unanimously approved both proposals at its July 30, 2025 meeting.

Requires Board Action

VIII. Status Report of Program Year 2022 WIOA Unexpended Funds.

The Workforce Development Council has been tasked with the disposition of \$1.5 million in Program year 2022 Unexpended Funds. This report will discuss the status of the six projects that are being funded by these funds.

- a. Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students (Grades 7-12) through Work-Based Learning Intermediary Support (Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education)
- b. Building Community College Workforce Capacity (University of Hawaii Community College)
- c. Research to Improve Hawai'i's WIOA Workforce Systems (Axios Consulting)
- d. Professional Public Relations Services to Increase Awareness of the American Job Centers (AJCs) in Hawai'i (Becker Communications)
- e. Expanding Sector Partnerships into new High Growth Industries (University of Hawaii/Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii)
- f. Fiscal Management *and Budget Processes Training* (TheGAteam)

IX. Success Stories

We have invited individuals who have successfully navigated their career

journeys after engaging with the services and support of the American Job Center, to share their stories. These stories highlight the real-life impact of workforce development efforts and the power of personalized guidance, training, and wraparound support.

X. Executive Director's Report..... *Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, Workforce Development Council*

A. Executive Director's Annual Report

The Program Year for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) concluded on June 30, 2025. As is customary, the Executive Director has prepared a summary of the prior year's key highlights and milestones. The report was reviewed by the Executive Committee at its July 30, 2025 meeting.

1. Highlights

- *Implementation of the State Unified Plan*
- *Board Governance*
- *Delineation of Role and Functions*
- *Fiscal Management*
- *Local Board Coordination*
- *Opportunities to be a Convenor, Analyst and Voice*
- *Community Collaborations*

2. Challenges

- *Uncertainty in federal funding*
- *Limited resources*
- *Prioritizing Initiatives*

3. Opportunities

- *Statewide alignment and Synergies*
- *Generational Commitment or North Star*

B. Update on the Implementation of the State Workforce Development Unified Plan

The State Workforce Unified Plan was submitted on March 4, 2024 as prescribed by United States Department of Labor and was approved in June 2024. As part of its federal mandate, the

Workforce Development Council is charged with the implementation of the Plan. A Synergy Summit II was held on July 9, 2025 attended by about 100 community stakeholders.

C. Update on the delineation of duties of the Workforce Development Council as an attached agency to Department of Labor and Industrial Relation effective July 1, 2024.

D. Focus for Third Quarter 2025

- *Operational Transition*
- *Continuing Implementation of the Unified Plan*
- *Building Strategic Partnerships with Community Organizations*
- *Kauai Operations*

E. Upcoming Activities/Events in 2025

- *Workforce Development Heroes*
- *September is Workforce Development Month*
- *September 24 is the Future of Work conference*

XI. Discussion of Written Reports from Core Partners Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). *

** To ensure efficient use of time, oral reports will not be presented during the board meeting. Instead, written reports will be accepted into the record, with full details available in the Board Packet.*

A. WIOA Title I and Title III - Workforce Development Division..... *Maricar Pilotin-Freitas, Administrator, Workforce Development Division*

- *Wagner-Peyser Performance Reports for PY 2025*
- *Success Stories/ Testimonials of Hele Imua Internship*
- *Outreach Services*
- *Family and Family Readiness Expo*

B. WIOA Title II – Adult Education Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).....
Wanelle Kaneshiro, Hawaii Department of Education, Workforce Division

1. The United States Department of Education released the federal funds for the Adult Education Family Literacy Act for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. AEFLA was in jeopardy of not being funded. Future funding is still questionable.

2. Regular meetings have been conducted with the Federal Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). Hawaii Department of Education remains under corrective action until agreement with Kauai one-stop shop is submitted.

C. WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation *Lea Dias, Administrator, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Human Services*

- 1. Performance Measures matrix and graphs*
- 2. Key Metrics and Outcomes*
- 3. Employment Outcomes*
- 4. Staff Vacancies*
- 5. Staff development initiatives*
- 6. Budget Issues*

XII. Discussion of Written Reports from the Local Workforce Development Board.*

** To ensure efficient use of time, oral reports will not be presented during the board meeting. Instead, written reports will be accepted into the record, with full details available in the Board Packet.*

A. Kauai..... *Adele Manera, Kauai Island Manager, Workforce Development Division*

- 1. Performance Measures: A report on the measurements for participants.*
- 2. Priorities: Staff recruitment; building alliances with businesses*
- 3. Challenges: low participation numbers*

B. Oahu..... *Harrison Kuranishi, Executive Director, Oahu Workforce Development Board*

The last Oahu Workforce Development Full Board meeting was held on July 24, 2025.

- 1. *New Oahu Workforce Development Board Staff Update*
- 2. *Updates on the status of the partner Memorandum of Understanding/Infrastructure Funding Agreements*
- 3. *Alignment with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*
- 4. *New Oahu Workforce Development Board Members*
- 5. *Program Year 24 Data Metrics*

C. Maui..... Chentelle Rowland, Executive Director, Maui Workforce Development Board.

- 1. *Maui County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB) meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 09/04/25 at 9:30am.*
- 2. *Sector Strategies & Employer Engagement Sub-Committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 08/07/25 at 9:00am.*
- 3. *Program/Youth Sub-Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, 08/05/25 at 9:00am.*
- 4. *Finance Sub-Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 13, 2025 at 9:00am.*
- 5. *Business and Community Outreach Activities*
- 6. *Performance Measures Results*
- 7. *Forthcoming Events : 2025 Ka Pewa Youth Leadership Summit*

D. Hawaii Island..... Clinton Mercado, Executive Director, Hawaii County Workforce Development Board

- 1.Board / Oversight Meetings
 - *The Hawaii County Workforce Development Board (HCWDB) convened its Oversight Committee meeting on June 12, 2025. The Committee reviewed a new policy and procedure that outlines what steps will be taken if there were to be a*

cessation of funding for WIOA programs for adults, youth and dislocated workers.

- *Job Seeker Services*
The Title I service provider, Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, continues to provide support for in-demand job training in the healthcare and transportation industries. The HCWDB continues to work with various organizations and entities in diversifying training opportunities through the Workforce Development Councils' Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).
- *Employer Services*
Board staff have continued to actively reach out to local employers to better understand their needs so that training programs can be tailored to meet those specific requirements.

2. Workforce Development Partnerships

- *Community & Economic Development Collaboration*
- *The board staff continues to strengthen its partnerships with local economic development organizations, including Neighborhood Place of Puna, and Youth Connect Point, to ensure alignment of workforce development strategies with economic growth initiatives that align with county and state goals.*
- *Support for Underserved Populations*
- *Programs targeting veterans, individuals with disabilities, and those involved in the justice system continue to be expanded to improve access to training, career counseling, and supportive services.*
- *HCWDB Staff, Servicer Providers, and Partners attended fiscal training in June 2025.*

3. Challenges & Areas for Improvement

Transportation Certification and Licensing Barriers: Staff, Servicer Providers, and Partners continue to send candidates to the County of Hawaii to apply for the open examiner positions. Licensing for Commercial Drivers continues to be held back due to the County of Hawaii having no examiners.

4. Upcoming Plans for 2025

Expansion of Partnerships

HCWDB Staff continue to work with partners and community organizations to expand its network of available resources.

Collaboration efforts are being utilized to reduce the amount of return funds at the end of the program's fiscal year.

XIII. Discussion of Written Reports from Standing Committees

* To ensure efficient use of time, oral reports will not be presented during the board meeting. Instead, written reports will be accepted into the record, with full details available in the Board Packet.

A. Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee.....Chair Cary Miyashiro/Vice Chair Lorna Woo

Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, July 1, 2025

Presentations:

Speaker: Shirlene Cardenas, President of the Hawaii Air National Guard State Advisory Council and a 22-year veteran with the Hawaii Air National Guard. Her distinguished military service included technology projects at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. She worked across both public and private sectors and is now Chief Executive Officer of MC3 Technologies, a firm specializing in Information Technology (IT) modernization and cybersecurity, supporting the Department of Defense.

- How National Guards can help solve the labor shortage.*
- Potential resource Workforce partnership*

Speaker: Michael Cardenas, CTO, MC3Technologies
Michael Cardenas is Chief Technology Officer of MC3 Technologies, leads technology strategy and oversees secure system design. He has worked on cybersecurity and IT modernization for over 20 years.

- Identified current cyber and IT workforce challenges in Hawaii.*
- Why is it important?*
- Presentation on impact on business and national security.*

Speaker: Tui Scanlan, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE)
Tui Scanlan is the President of IATSE Local 665, the union

representing Hawaii’s behind the scenes professionals in film, television, stage, and trade show production. A longtime member and current International Trustee, he brings deep experience in the State’s media workforce.

- What is IATSE Local 665?*
- Media programs in high schools and post-secondary*
- Growing & expanding the media sector in Hawaii.*
- How can we support this effort?*

Speaker: Dr Janet Davidson, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Chaminade University who spoke about the Symposium/Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium (Prison to College) @ Chaminade University, which was held on Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Speaker: Rosanne Propato, Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation
A look at successful programs for reentry to the community for justice involved youth and adults.

Other Events:

- Communication Access Conference @ Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii- Thursday, June 26, 2026/ “Pono” Tokioka, Department of Health/ Disability Communication & Access Board/ Supporting the Deaf and hard of hearing community.*
- Kawaiiloa Project & Family Wellness Learning Center, site visit on Friday, July 11, 2025 with Tai-An Miao, Asst. Professor, Department of Psychology, UH-Manoa. The Center uses a transformative model using indigenous values to end youth incarceration.*

Next Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at 1:00pm to 2:30pm.

B. Special Projects Committee.....Chair Keith DeMello/Vice Chair Dion Dizon

The Special Projects Committee (SPC) met on June 30, 2025. The agenda included:

- 1. Presentation: Public Awareness Campaign Overview by Becker Communications*

- a. *Pre-campaign survey results included that 81% of Hawai'i residents have never heard of American Job Centers (AJCs)*
- b. *Campaign Theme: "If I Can, You Can" featuring local personalities Augie T., Lanai Tabura, and Pashyn Santos*
- c. *Multi-channel approach including TV, radio, social media, digital advertising, and community outreach*
- d. *Campaign running through October 2025, with translation for some of the print and radio materials*
- e. *Committee feedback was positive, with members appreciating the comprehensive reach and appropriate talent selection*

2. Committee Discussion: 2026 Legislative Topics

- a. *Chair DeMello recapped the 2025 legislative session process and protocols*
- b. *Members DeMello and Scanlan submitted testimony during session on measures aligned with Workforce Development Council (WDC) priorities*
- c. *2025 Legislative Session outcomes:*
 - *Senate Bill 742 (Data Sharing) — Signed by governor, creates data sharing and government development working group; includes chair of WDC or his designee*
 - *Governor's messages (WDC member confirmations) — All confirmed*
 - *Note: Workforce Excellence Award Program resolution — Passed concurrently, sponsored by Sen. Stanley Chang*
- d. *Committee identified need for pre-session preparation timeline (now through December 2025), including discussion of potential housekeeping measures for WDC bylaws alignment with Hawai'i Revised Statutes*
- e. *Areas for improvement include proactive bill development, comprehensive position papers in advance of session, and coalition building*

Note: Potential special legislative session in fourth quarter 2025

3. Committee Actions

- a. *Recommended tracking intake data at AJCs to measure campaign effectiveness by asking clients how they heard about services*
- b. *Agreed to formalize legislative preparation timeline for 2026 session*
- c. *Supported continued collaboration with county partners for social media amplification*

4. Forthcoming Events

- a. *Workforce Synergy Summit on July 9 at Honolulu Community College*
- b. *Future of Work Conference on Sept. 24, 2025*
- c. *Launch of Workforce Development Heroes nomination process*

5. Announcements

- *Legislative coordination meeting with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) will be requested post-July*
- *NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING: Sept. 29, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. (Zoom and in-person at DLIR Room 317)*

C. Youth Services CommitteeChair Tui Scanlan/Vice Chair Carla Kurokawa

Presentations:

1. *Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium Highlights*
Presenter: Rylie Hager, Program Manager, Prison Education, Chaminade University; Hosted by Chaminade University, the Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium highlighted collaborative efforts to strengthen education and employment pathways for formerly incarcerated individuals in Hawai'i. This event brought together educators, employers, policy leaders, and community organizations to explore how education can serve as a bridge to career readiness and successful reentry.

2. *Creative Careers and Youth Empowerment Through Film*
Presenter: Kanani Foster, Director, Cherry Street Films. Cherry Street Films champions creative storytelling while nurturing the next generation of filmmakers through innovative youth development programs. Through hands-on film camps and mentorship opportunities across Hawaii, the organization provides young people with technical skills, creative expression outlets, and professional development in the growing creative economy. Foster's work demonstrates how the film and media industry can serve as a powerful platform for youth engagement, cultural preservation, and career pathway development in Hawaii's evolving creative landscape.
3. *Executive Director's Report: Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, Workforce Development Council provided an a) update on the 2024-2028 Workforce Development State Unified Plan Implementation; b) Agenda for the upcoming Workforce Synergy Summit II 3; c) Update on the Workforce Development Council roles and responsibilities; d) Status on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act unexpended funds for Program Year 2022.*

XIV. Evaluation of the Executive DirectorWDC Chair Ken Loui

A discussion regarding the survey results for the Executive Director's Performance Review.

In the past, personnel discussions such as this were conducted in executive session. However, upon seeking guidance from the Office of Information Practices (OIP), we were advised that this evaluation should be conducted in an open session in accordance with current transparency requirements.

The Executive Committee discussed this agenda item at its July 30, 2025 meeting, which is in line with the Workforce Development Council By-laws which stipulates that "The Executive Committee reviews and makes recommendations on all personnel matters, Council governance and compliance matters, standing committee matters, and other matters as directed by the Council".

The Full board will vote on the Executive Committee's recommendation.

Requires Board Action

XV. Announcements and Public Testimony (if any)

At this time, the public is welcome to announce upcoming events and comment on relevant issues that were not included in this meeting's agenda.

Please be advised that in compliance with the Sunshine Law, the Committee cannot discuss or act on issues that were not included in this meeting's agenda, but issues raised in constituent comments may be included in a future agenda for the Committee's consideration.

XVI. 2025-2026 BOARD MEETING DATES (subject to change)

2025 Fourth Quarter Wednesday, November 19, 2025 9:30 am to 11:30 am

2026 First Quarter Wednesday, February 18, 2026 9:30 am to 11:30 am

2026 Second Quarter Wednesday, May 20, 2026 9:30 am to 11:30 am

XVII. NEXT MEETING

*The next quarterly board meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Wednesday, November 19, 2025** at 9:30 a.m. at 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 310, Honolulu, Hawaii 96701.*

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

Approval of Minutes June 24, 2025

REQUIRES BOARD ACTION



STATE OF HAWAII

KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHANA

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 317
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**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL'S
QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY**

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

In-person and online via Zoom

ATTENDANCE:

Council Members Present:

Andrew Garrett, Representative for the State House of Representatives

Nalani Brun, Designee for Mayor Kawakami, Director in Office of Economic Development on Kauai

Jade Rojas-Letisi, Designee for Mayor Bissen, Executive Assistant for the Office of Economic Development on Maui

Wanelle Kaneshiro, Designee for Keith Hayashi, Director for Workforce Development Branch in the Department of Education (DOE)

Della Teraoka, Designee for Wendy Hansel, Interim Vice President for University of Hawaii System

Thomas Chock, Designee for James Tokioka, Program Specialist for the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT)

David Rodriguez, Designee for Jade Butay, Equal Opportunity Officer for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Rosella Guardascione, Chair for the Hawaii County Workforce Development Board

Christopher Lum Lee, Chair for the Oahu Workforce Development Board

Kehaulani Kukahiko, Acting Chair for Kauai Workforce Development Board

Leslie Wilkins, Chair and President for the Maui Economic Development Board

Amber Akana, Seafarer's International Union of North America

Scott Collins, Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA)

Pane Meatoga III, Operating Engineers Local 3

Tui Scanlan, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 665

Gina Anonuevo, First Hawaiian Bank

Keith DeMello, Ulupono Initiative

Rona Fukumoto, Lanakila Pacific

Jared Higashi, Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association
Shelli Ihori, Hawaii Pacific Health
Derek Kanehira, Alexander and Baldwin
Sean Knox, Hawaii Employment Services Inc.
Ken Loui, Pacific Marine & Supply Co., Ltd.
Trang Malone, CVS Health
Cary Miyashiro, Quad D Solutions
Sean Nakamura, Tradewind Group
Carla Kurokawa, Alu Like Inc.

Excused:

Dan Kouchi, Designee for Governor Josh Green
Andrew Kawano, Director, Department of Budget and Fiscal Services, City and County of Honolulu
Benson Medina, Director of Training, Hawaii Laborers & Employers Cooperation and Education Trust
Lea Dias, Director, Workforce Development Division, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Dion Dizon, Director of Career and Technical Education, Kamehameha Schools
Lorna Woo, Director of Human Resources, Enterprise Holdings
Manu Bermudes, Vice President of Human Resources, Hawaii Gas
Cheryl Cross, Executive Search Consultant, Inkinen Executive Search
Robert Lietzke, General Manager, Marriott International

Noted Guests (in order of presentation):

Roseann Freitas, Chief Executive Officer, Building Industry Association of Hawai'i
Julie Van Radke, Administrative Services Officer (ASO), Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Adele Manera, Kaua'i Island Manager, Workforce Development Division
Harrison Kuranishi, Executive Director, O'ahu Workforce Development Board
Chentelle Rowland, Maui County Workforce Development Board Staff
Clinton Mercado, Executive Director, Hawai'i County Workforce Development Board

Staff:

Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, Workforce Development Council (WDC)
Evan Palmer, Specialist, Workforce Development Council (WDC)
Kelly Quitevis, Specialist, Workforce Development Council (WDC)
Angela Chock, Hele Imua Intern, Workforce Development Council (WDC)

WRITTEN MINUTES

I. Call to Order (00:04:23 – 00:12:48)

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Council Chair Ken Loui, who confirmed the meeting was being held in accordance with Hawai'i's Sunshine Law. He welcomed attendees, reminded Zoom participants to keep cameras on, and emphasized the importance of notifying staff if leaving early.

Angela Chock, Hele Imua Intern, conducted the roll call. Quorum was established at 9:43 a.m. with 26 members present.

Chair Loui also welcomed several newly appointed and reappointed members, county designees, and guests, many of whom introduced themselves verbally or via Zoom chat.

II. Approval of Minutes of February 19, 2025 (00:12:49 – 00:14:08)

Chair Ken Loui called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on February 19, 2025.

Board Action: Council Member Sean Knox moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cary Miyashiro.

Hearing no objections or discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

III. Presentation – Building Industry Association of Hawai'i (00:14:09 – 00:32:35)

Presenter: Roseann Freitas, Chief Executive Officer, Building Industry Association of Hawai'i (BIA)

Roseann Freitas presented on BIA-Hawai'i's Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Training (PACT) Program, a 6-week curriculum aimed at preparing individuals for careers in the construction industry. The program is certified by HBI and includes safety training (OSHA-30), CPR/AED, hands-on exposure to various trades, and life skills such as resume writing and cooking.

Key highlights:

- 83% program completion rate, above national averages for similar programs
- Participants are placed in jobs or internships upon completion, with some offered jobs at graduation
- Program funding comes from sources such as WIOA, the Weinberg Foundation, and the Hawai'i Building Industry Foundation
- Efforts to expand include launching in Maui, supporting youth from underserved communities, and collaborating with HUD and other partners
- Barriers such as lack of food, transportation, and basic life skills are addressed in the program
- Emphasis on increasing female participation in the trades, currently only 10.7% industry-wide

- Future plans include stronger partnerships to create continued pathways into apprenticeships, union programs, or higher education

Freitas also shared impactful student stories, including one participant who was homeless and showed perfect attendance. She noted the importance of mentorship, accountability, and exposure to successful role models from similar backgrounds.

Q&A Discussion Topics Included:

- Funding sources and per-student costs
- Transitioning to formal apprenticeships (requires GED)
- Tracking post-program outcomes like starting salaries
- Outreach and recruitment strategies
- The value of building life habits such as punctuality and accountability

Chair Ken Loui and several Council members expressed appreciation for the program and its alignment with WIOA goals.

IV. Certification of the Kauai American Job Center (00:32:36 – 00:38:32)

During the discussion, it was noted that Scott Collins joined via Zoom, bringing the total present to 27 council members.

Presenter: Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, WDC

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha provided an overview of the certification process for the American Job Center (AJC) on Kaua'i, which falls under the purview of the State Workforce Development Council due to the absence of a local board. A site visit and review were conducted in April 2025, and findings and recommendations were included in the meeting packet.

Recommendation: Provisionally certify the Kaua'i AJC with conditions, including a corrective action plan due by September 30, 2025, addressing improvements such as expanded outreach.

Board Action:

Council Member Cary Miyashiro moved to approve the conditional certification, seconded by Council Member Tui Scanlan.

A roll call vote was conducted by Angela Chock, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Report on the 2025 Legislative Session (00:38:33 – 00:45:11)

Presenter: Keith DeMello, Chair, Special Projects Committee

Council Member Keith DeMello reported on the Workforce Development Council's engagement during the 2025 legislative session, noting that he and Tui Scanlan were authorized in late 2024 to represent the Council's policy positions. The Council submitted testimony on seven measures, all of which passed, including six gubernatorial appointments and Senate Bill 742, which established a data-sharing governance working group under the Office of Enterprise Technology Services.

SB 742 aligns with the Council's mission and pillars by improving workforce data integration to address challenges such as outmigration and underemployment. The bill names the WDC Chair or designee to the working group.

Keith also shared preliminary recommendations for strengthening the Council's legislative strategy in future sessions, including earlier issue identification, Special Projects Committee development, and formal WDC approval in advance of each session.

Council Member Tui Scanlan expressed appreciation for Keith's leadership and collaboration. Chair Loui and WDC staff also acknowledged the significant time and effort involved.

VI. Fiscal Reports and HIOE Vote (00:45:12 – 01:05:15)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha introduced Julie Van Radke, DLIR Administrative Services Office staff, who now oversees the state's WIOA funds. Julie reported on the closeout of Program Year (PY) 2022 and the status of PY 2023 expenditures. Of the \$3.9M in recaptured PY 2022 funds, \$1.4M has been spent and \$2.5M is encumbered as of April 2025. These funds are awaiting liquidation through invoicing, particularly from Ready to Work programs. For PY 2023, 40–60% of local area allocations had been spent as of April 30, 2025.

Bennette followed with a county-by-county breakdown of PY 2023 expenditures and forecasts through June 30, 2025:

- Hawai'i County: \$1.78M allocated; \$885K spent (~50%); forecast to lapse \$688K.
- Honolulu: \$5M allocated; \$2.8M spent (~55%); forecast to lapse \$1.26M.
- Kaua'i: \$600K allocated; \$173K spent (~29%); forecast to lapse \$325K.
- Maui: \$1.1M allocated; \$720K spent (~64%); forecast to lapse \$255K.

The total anticipated lapse across all counties is approximately \$2.5M, down from \$3.9M the previous year.

Bennette also shared a comparative analysis of WIOA allocations from 2022–2025. Hawai'i's total allotment has decreased from \$10.3M in 2022 to \$8.3M in 2025. Although national WIOA funding has slightly declined, other states—like New Jersey and California—have seen increases, suggesting variation in the federal allocation formula based on population and economic indicators. Sean Knox presented a question about whether unspent funds contributed to Hawai'i's lower allotments, but Bennette and Maricar Pilotin-Freitas clarified that federal statute determines the formula.

Bennette discussed the status of general funds appropriated by the legislature for Fiscal Year 2025. She then presented a proposal to use the remainder of WDC's General Appropriations (GA) funds—approximately \$378K—for a DOE Adult Education initiative involving career pathway modules. This proposal, previously endorsed by the Executive Committee, was brought to the full board for approval.

Board Action:

Council Member Cary Miyashiro moved to approve the recommendation. Council Member Carla Kurokawa seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was conducted by Angela Chock, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. Status Report of Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds (01:05:16 – 01:06:00)

Bennette reported on the disposition of \$1.5M in PY 2022 unexpended WIOA funds that were allocated to the WDC for targeted projects. Six projects are being managed under WDC oversight. While five are on track to meet liquidation deadlines by June 30, 2025, one project is experiencing complications that are still being resolved and could not be disclosed in detail at this time.

VIII. Success Stories (01:06:52 – 01:12:04)

Chair Ken Loui introduced a new recurring agenda item to highlight the real-life impact of workforce development programs across the state. He emphasized the importance of remembering how council decisions tangibly affect local communities. Two success story videos were shared—one from Hawai'i Island and one from Maui.

The first featured Kevin Aki, a former high school dropout who experienced homelessness and poverty before finding support through the American Job Center Hawai'i and Goodwill Hawai'i's Olokahana Program. With their help, he earned his diploma, developed workforce and life skills, and now works full-time with the County of Hawai'i's rapid response team.

The second story featured Dexter Corpus, a Maui resident and current high school CTE teacher in digital media. He described how local workforce programs provided educational and emotional support throughout the pandemic. With guidance and resources, he completed his associate's and bachelor's degrees, obtained a teaching certification, and now continues with professional development as an educator.

Chair Loui and members expressed appreciation for these uplifting examples and affirmed their value as inspiration for the Council's continued work.

IX. Executive Director's Report (01:11:58 – 01:25:37)

Executive Director Bennette Misalucha presented her report, covering board vacancies, unified plan implementation, delineation of roles and responsibilities, quarterly highlights, and upcoming events. She noted three current private sector vacancies and one labor sector vacancy on the Council. Updates were shared on the forthcoming July 9 Synergy Summit II, September workforce development events, and progress toward a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to clarify roles between WDC, WDD, and DLIR ASO. Bennette recognized recent staff additions Evan and Kelly, as well as intern Angela, for their contributions.

Looking ahead to Quarter 3, WDC will prioritize organizational planning, a board retreat in October, budget planning, and assisting Kauaʻi's local board transition. Upcoming events include a fiscal training and a Strada Foundation webinar. Kelly also invited members to a site visit of the Kawaiola program on Friday, July 11. The initiative, supported by the Kellogg Foundation and Partners in Development Foundation, aims to replace youth incarceration with an indigenous model of care.

X. Local Workforce Development Board Oral Reports

A. Kauai (01:25:37 – 01:29:37)

Adele Manera, Kauai Island Manager for the Workforce Development Division, shared updates on WIOA performance and priorities. Participation has increased, with adult participants doubling to 16, dislocated worker participants rising to 6, and youth enrollment at 4. Much of this growth is due to dual enrollments in the Hele Imua and QUEST programs. The Kauai team is actively recruiting to fill a vacancy in the WIOA Youth Program. A fall job fair is tentatively planned for mid-October at the Kauai Convention Hall. Despite ongoing challenges with low enrollment, the local board is encouraged by a new eligible training provider: Kauai Community College will now offer WIOA-approved courses.

B. Oʻahu (01:30:25 – 01:34:26)

Harrison Kuranishi began the report by sharing recent updates from the Oʻahu Workforce Development Board (OWDB). A new Chair, Christopher Lum Lee, was elected to succeed Jason Chang, who served in the position for seven years. At the same April 2025 Board meeting, OWDB amended its bylaws for the first time in several years and expanded its membership from 19 to 23 members. New board members include Sarah Guay (Hawaiʻi Employers Council), Wes Akamine (ʻŌlelo Community Media), and Andrew Rosen (Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce).

Kuranishi reported strong Quarter 3 WIOA performance results, including a 57.3% increase in Adult program participation, a 17.58% increase in the Dislocated Worker program, and a 162% increase in Youth program enrollment. The Adult program met its employment rate goals for the fifth consecutive year, and the Youth program achieved both measurable skills gains and median earnings targets for the first time

in five years. He also shared a participant letter commending American Job Center staff member Lisa Pereira for her outstanding support.

Christopher Lum Lee also addressed several administrative matters. He confirmed the completion of OWDB's One-Stop Operator Certification using a new format and announced an additional \$400,000 allocation to O'ahu's QUEST grant. He also provided an update on the extension of the service provider contract, clarifying the board's decision-making process and reaffirming its commitment to transparency and accuracy in public communications.

C. Maui - (01:34:27 – 01:39:12)

Chentelle Rowland reported on recent subcommittee meetings and key updates from the Maui County Workforce Development Board. The Sector Strategies & Employer Engagement Subcommittee met with Marshall Norman from UHMC and Good Jobs Hawai'i to address CDL training needs. Kazu Hayashida of Hawaiian Electric also expressed interest in workforce collaborations.

Rowland highlighted QUEST program activity, including the placement of 19 interns and projected 66% budget expenditure by the contract end date (9/15/25). Karey Kapoi LLC continues to support strategic outreach. QUEST's Instagram outreach yielded 37.4K views and 516 interactions.

Maui's second annual Hiring Fair for graduating high school seniors, held on April 11, 2025, at Fairmont Kea Lani, featured 56 employers, 4 community resources, and 135 students. The event focused on jobs offering wages that meet ALICE-calculated living standards (\$19.69/hour or \$39,385/year). Transportation support was provided for students from across the county, including Moloka'i and Lāna'i.

Rowland reviewed Q3 performance measures and described technical assistance efforts to improve WIOA outcomes through targeted outreach and clearer service strategies. Staff TA covered fiscal monitoring, program reporting, HireNet, and ETPL processes, with gratitude expressed to Bennette Misalucha for her support.

Upcoming events included a Maui County Career Expo (already held) and an updated date for the State of Hawai'i Vacancies Fair, now scheduled for July 10 at the State Building. Staff will also participate in Fiscal Management Training on June 26–27, 2025.

D. Hawai'i County – (01:39:24 – 01:42:45)

Clinton Mercado began by acknowledging staff member Kevin Aki, noting his contributions to the Hawai'i Island office. He reported that HCWDB currently has a full

board of 19 members and recently held both a board meeting and an Oversight Committee meeting in March 2025.

He highlighted several approved updates, including:

- An increase in Individual Training Account funding from \$2,500 to \$3,000, and from \$5,000 to \$6,000 for Commercial Driver Licensing (CDL) programs.
- A policy allowing the use of WIOA funds for CPR, AED, and First Aid certifications when required for employment or training completion.

Mercado addressed continued challenges with CDL licensing due to a shortage of examiners on Hawai'i Island. He noted support from Maui examiners and efforts to coordinate with the DMV for emergency hiring solutions. A major success was the February 22 job fair at Prince Kūhiō Plaza, which drew over 2,000 attendees and nearly 50 employers. The event offered on-site interviews and resume support, and some participants were hired the same day. A similar event is being planned for West Hawai'i.

He also announced the Connect Kākou initiative, a county-led broadband expansion project that will support island-wide computer literacy classes and improve outreach for American Job Center services. The initiative involves partnerships with Hawai'i Community College, Waipahu Community School for Adults, Goodwill Hawai'i, and the Workforce Development Division. Mercado concluded by expressing optimism for continued growth and collaboration during Program Year 2024.

XI. Written Reports from Core Partners (01:42:46 – 01:43:03)

Chair Ken Loui noted that written reports from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core partners were included in the board packet on pages 100 to 118. Attendees were asked if there were any questions regarding the reports. Hearing none, the meeting proceeded to the next section.

XII. Review of Written Reports from Standing Committees for the period February 19, 2025 to June 24, 2025 (01:43:04 – 01:43:45)

The Chair directed the Council to the written reports submitted by various Workforce Development Council (WDC) committees, located in the board packet on pages 119 to 136.

These reports include updates from the following committees:

- Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee

- Special Projects Committee
- Employer Engagement Committee
- Military and Veteran Affairs Committee

Appreciation was expressed for the work of the committee chairs and their members. Attendees were encouraged to review the reports and were reminded that they are welcome to attend committee meetings. No questions were raised.

XIII. Announcements and Public Testimony (01:43:47 – 1:52:00)

Chair invited members of the public to provide announcements or testimony on items not listed on the agenda. It was reiterated that, in compliance with the Sunshine Law, discussion or action on such topics could not occur during this meeting, but items raised may be included on future agendas.

David Rodriguez delivered a message on behalf of the Director of DLIR. He formally acknowledged the collaborative efforts of the Attorney General’s Office, Administrative Services Officer, Workforce Development Division (WDD), and the Executive Director in swiftly amending certain program contracts—specifically those involving Becker Communications and community colleges. This prompt response ensured the timely delivery of goods and services in compliance with WIOA grant obligations and federal Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200), thereby upholding both fiscal and programmatic integrity. Rodriguez also shared information on the President’s proposed FY 2026 budget, which includes eliminating funding for several key workforce programs, including WIOA Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker grants. The proposal consolidates 11 federal programs into state block grants under the “Make America Skilled Again” initiative, reducing ETA funding by 34%—from \$4.6 billion to \$3 billion—and eliminating programs such as Job Corps, YouthBuild, and apprenticeship grants. The topic will be added to a future agenda for formal discussion once more guidance becomes available from Congress.

Tui Scanlan (IATSE 665) alerted the Council to a historic data breach involving 16 billion leaked passwords. He advised organizations to immediately update passwords, especially those tied to financial accounts and social media, and recommended adopting multi-factor authentication and password manager applications for enhanced security.

Leslie Wilkins (MEDB) inquired about the protocol for the newly authorized Advocacy Committee to submit testimony supporting WIOA reauthorization and funding. Executive Director Bennette Misalucha affirmed that the topic could be added to the next agenda, at which point formal board action could be considered. Due to Sunshine Law restrictions, no

discussion could occur at this time. Wilkins concluded with a positive announcement: MEDB has placed 147 paid interns across every island this summer, serving students from rising juniors to returning college and graduate students. The program supports work-based learning and expands the statewide talent pipeline.

XIV. 2025 Board and Executive Committee Meeting Dates (01:52:01 – 01:52:23)

The upcoming meeting dates were noted for both the WDC Quarterly Board and Executive Committee:

Quarterly Board Meetings (subject to change):

- Q3: Wednesday, August 20, 2025, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM
- Q4: Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Executive Committee Meetings (subject to change):

- Q3: Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM
- Q4: Wednesday, October 22, 2025, 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

XV. Next Meeting

The next WDC Quarterly Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for:

Date: Wednesday, August 20, 2025

Time: 9:30 AM

Location: 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 310, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

XVI. Adjournment (01:52:23 – 01:52:32)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 AM.

Presentation: Federal Funding Matters, National Governors Association

Tim Carlton, NGA, Director of
Legislative Affairs

Presentation to Hawai'i Workforce Development Council

August 20, 2025

President's Budget Basics

- **President's Budget – What is it?**

- “The President’s budget is only a request to Congress, but it establishes the President’s wishes regarding the direction of national policies and priorities and often influences the direction of congressional revenue and spending decisions.” – Congressional Research Service
- Ultimately, Congress needs 60 votes to pass appropriations and authorizing bills

- **President's FY26 Budget**

- May 2, 2025, the White House released the “Skinny Budget” – a 46-page document briefly summarizing the biggest changes in the FY26 budget
- May 30, 2025, the White House released the full budget, detailing agency-by-agency spending proposals for FY26

FY26 President's Budget – Workforce

- **What does the administration propose for the public workforce system?**
 - **Make America Skilled Again (MASA) Grants** – Would consolidate 11 workforce programs into a new MASA Grant, aiming to streamline administration and increase local flexibility. If enacted as proposed, MASA would replace the current WIOA structure, reduce overall federal workforce funding by \$1.6 billion, and require at least 10% of funds to support apprenticeship.
 - **Job Corps** – Would eliminate Job Corps, citing high costs, safety concerns, and poor outcomes. The administration has sought to cut off funding for Job Corps, but last week a federal judge temporarily blocked the phase-out, pending further legal proceedings.
 - **State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations** – Would slightly increase funding for UI administration while eliminating over \$675 million in state grants for Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (ES). ES would be consolidated into new MASA program.

FY26 Funding Snapshot – Workforce

Program	FY25 Funding	President's Budget	House FY26	Senate FY26
Department of Labor	\$13.5B	\$9B		\$13.67
ETA - Training and Employment Services	\$3,898,587,000	\$2,965,905,000		\$3,977,088,000
<i>*Make America Skilled Again</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>\$2,965,905,000</i>		<i>N/A</i>
Adult Employment and Training Activities	\$885,649,000	\$0		\$875,649,000
Youth Activities	\$948,130,000	\$0		\$948,130,000
Dislocated Workers Employment and Training Activities	\$1,396,412,000	\$0		\$1,396,412,000
Apprenticeship Program	\$285,000,000	\$0		\$285,000,000
Workforce Data Quality Initiative	\$6,000,000	\$6,000,000		\$6,000,000
Job Corps	\$1,760,155,000	\$176,370,000		\$1,760,155,000
State Unemployment Insurance and Employment Service Operations	\$4,012,150,000	\$3,421,838,000		\$4,081,150,000
UI - State Administration	\$2,759,635,000	\$2,759,635,000		\$2,750,635,000
Employment Service - Grants to States	\$675,052,000	\$0		\$675,052,000
Foreign Labor Certification - State Grants	\$23,282,000	\$23,282,000		\$23,282,000
Veterans' Employment - State Grants	\$185,000,000	\$185,000,000		\$185,000,000

Budget Reconciliation – State of Play

- **Expands Pell Grant eligibility to include short-term, workforce training programs**
 - 150–599 clock hours, 8–15 weeks
- **FAFSA required to verify income eligibility**
- **Bachelor's degree holders are eligible**
- **Programs must be offered by accredited institutions**
- **Implementation begins July 1, 2026 for the 2026-2027 academic year**
- **ED rulemaking in the coming months**
 - ED negotiated rulemaking to get underway this fall/winter

Workforce Pell (Sec. 83002 of OBBBA)

- **Governors and state workforce boards certify programs that:**
 - Align with economic needs of the state:
 - High-skill, high-wage, or in-demand sectors
 - Meet hiring requirements of employers
 - Lead to recognized postsecondary credentials:
 - Stackable and portable
 - Provide academic credit articulating to certificates or degrees
- **U.S. Secretary of Education verifies:**
 - Completion rate $\geq 70\%$ (within 150% of normal time)
 - Job placement rate $\geq 70\%$ (180 days post-completion)
 - Tuition and fees \leq value-added earnings of students (3 years prior)

WIOA Reauthorization Update

- **Congress Fell Short of Passing “A Stronger Workforce for America Act” in 2024**
 - Initially included in Continuing Resolution but stripped at last minute
 - NGA issued statement supporting “A Stronger Workforce for America Act”
- **Key Elements of A Stronger Workforce for America Act**
 - Provides greater flexibility over statewide funding
 - Establishes process to redesignate local areas
 - Creates a new state flexibility pilot program
 - \$65M for Youth Apprenticeship Grant Program, ~\$150M for Individual Training Accounts, 5-15% of Dislocated Worker national program funding for Workforce Data Quality Initiative
 - Establishes new training mandate
- **To be determined how WIOA reauthorization will be impacted by MASA proposal**

Q&A

Presentation: Awareness Outreach Campaign for the American Job Centers

Caroline Witherspoon, President, Becker
Communications

Jocelyn Collado, Vice President, Becker
Communications

American Job Center Hawai'i Public Awareness Campaign

Workforce Development Council
Hawai'i Department of Labor & Industrial Relations

HAWAII RESIDENT ATTITUDE STUDY

PREPARED FOR BECKER COMMUNICATIONS,
ON BEHALF OF AMERICAN JOB CENTER HAWAII
MAY 2025

METHODOLOGY

- Becker Communications, on behalf of American Job Center Hawaii contracted Anthology Research to conduct a quantitative study in the form of an online survey of Hawaii residents.
- A total of 410 respondents statewide took part in the study with fieldwork beginning on April 11 and ending on April 30, 2025.
- The margin of error for a sample this size is +/- 4.84 percentage points with a 95% level of confidence.
- The sample was compiled using a combination of sources that included third-party sample providers and Anthology Research's proprietary panel of Hawaii residents.
- The data were weighted to reflect population estimates of adults 18+ by ethnicity by island.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A majority (81%) of respondents had never heard of AJC Hawaii before taking the survey.
- Name awareness is significantly higher on Oahu compared to Neighbor Islands.
- Among potential job seekers (n=172), 72% had not heard of AJC Hawaii before the survey.
- Only 11% of respondents recalled seeing or hearing AJC Hawaii ads.
- Among potential job seekers, 66% did not recall any recent advertising or messaging.
- A small proportion of respondents (17%) reported using AJC Hawaii services. Users tend to be younger, more affluent, college-educated, homeowners, and locals born and raised in Hawaii.
- When asked about potential usage, respondents displayed a net positive sentiment. Among those who have previously used AJC services (n=75), 65% indicated they were “very likely” to use the services again.
- Among job seekers, career guidance and training programs are the most appealing services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (cont.)

- Insights & Recommendations
 - Given the low initial awareness, targeted advertising and outreach, particularly on Neighbor Islands, are essential.
 - Develop more engaging and memorable campaigns, as current advertising recall is low, especially among job seekers.
 - Highlight career guidance and training opportunities, as they are the most attractive to potential job seekers.
 - Leverage the positive experiences of past users in marketing efforts to build credibility and trust.

If I Can, You Can

Campaign Overview

- American Job Centers (AJCs) provide free support to help Hawai'i residents find meaningful employment. Yet, many are unaware of these services or hesitate to seek help due to stigma.
- The **“If I Can, You Can”** campaign features local voices—celebrities, influencers, and everyday workers—sharing their job journeys to build awareness and trust. Running statewide from June to September 2025, the campaign uses traditional and digital media to connect with communities.

Campaign Goals

- ① Raise awareness of American Job Centers across Hawai'i
- ② Build trust and relatability through culturally relevant messaging
- ③ Drive traffic to the centers in each county
- ④ Encourage job seekers to explore free services, resources, and support

Target Audiences

Primary

- Unemployed and underemployed adults
- First-time job seekers
- Career changers
- Underserved ethnic populations

Secondary

- Community influencers and leaders
- Local employers and business owners

Key Messages

Empowerment: "If I can find a job, start fresh, or learn something new — you can too."

Accessibility: "Help is free. Help is local. Help works."

Community Support: "Everyone deserves a chance to find meaningful work."

Campaign Components

Storytelling Through Local Personalities

- Augie T - Respected entertainer & community advocate
- Lanai - Media personality with deep community ties
- Pashyn Santos – Content creator with a strong social media presence

Appear in:

- TV & radio spots
- Social media campaigns

Multimedia Advertising

- TV & Streaming Services
- Radio
- Community Newsletters
- Faith-Based Bulletins
- Out of Home

Digital & Social Media

- Social Media:
 - Facebook
 - Instagram
- Digital Advertising:
 - Google
 - YouTube
 - Facebook
 - Instagram

Community Engagement

- Job Fair Outreach
- Partnerships with local nonprofits, advocacy groups, and faith-based organizations
- Educational Outreach at schools and colleges with information on AJC services

Media Relations

- Distribute news releases
- Editorial solicitation for story placements with local TV, radio and print media
- Secure op-eds and feature placements
- Media training for spokespeople

TV Spots

The Teppenyaki Chef



TV Spots

The Mechanic





The Maid

Social Media Posts



Island Specific Posts



Testimonials



Reels

Digital Ads

Sponsored

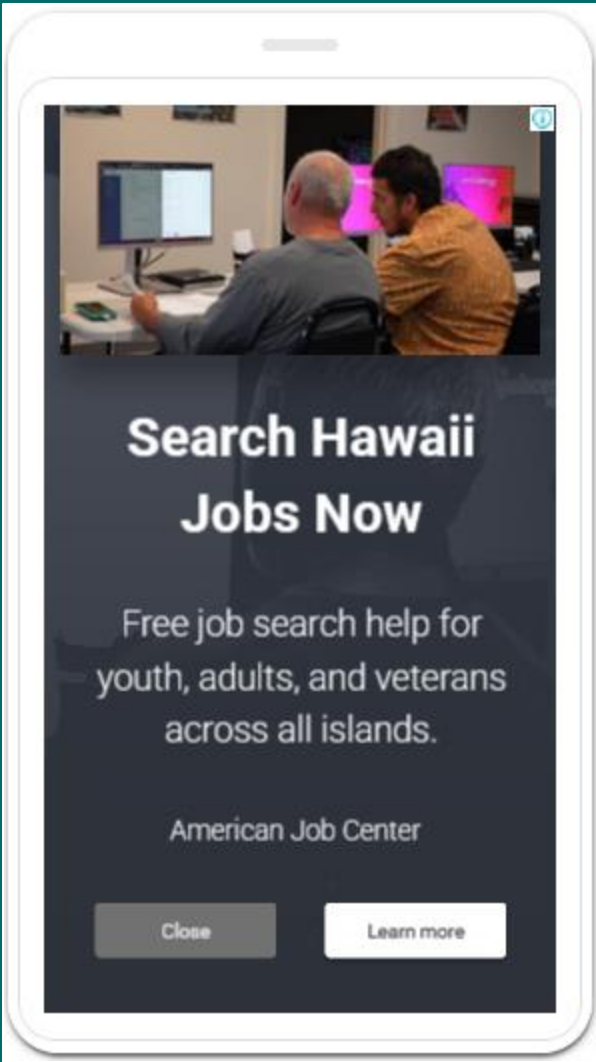
 labor.hawaii.gov/

Resume Help for Free - Start Your New Career

Find free job help, career training, and support at American Job Center Hawaii. Start your career journey with Hawaii's one-stop job center for all job seekers. Local Career Support. Free Job Assistance. Training Programs Offered. Help for All Job Seekers.

[Oahu](#) [Hawaii Island](#) [Maui](#)

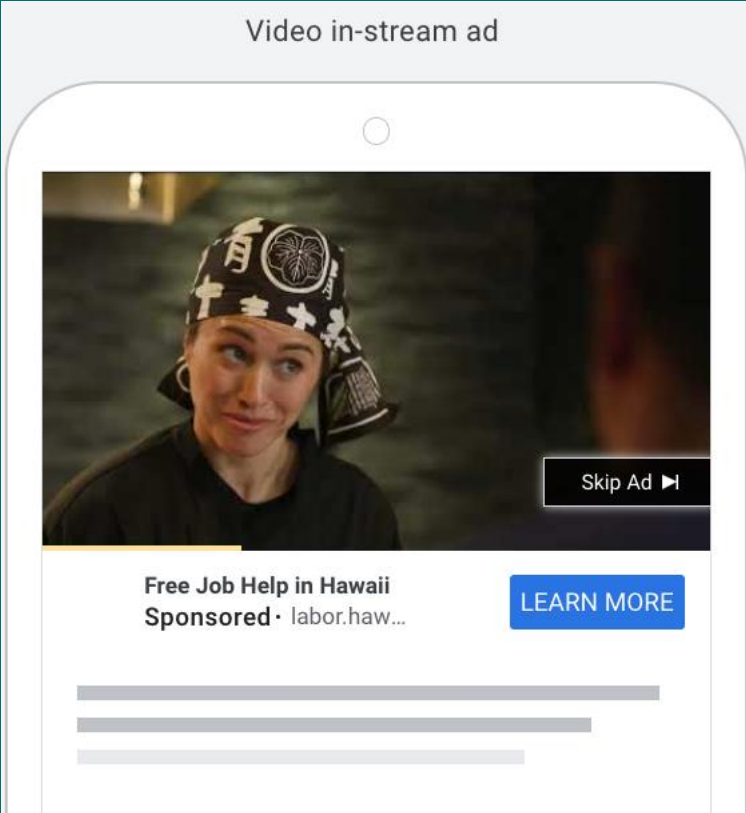
Google Search Ad



A mobile display ad for the American Job Center in Hawaii. The background is dark with white text. At the top, it says 'Search Hawaii Jobs Now'. Below that, it says 'Free job search help for youth, adults, and veterans across all islands.' At the bottom, it says 'American Job Center' and has two buttons: 'Close' and 'Learn more'.


Google Display Ad

Video in-stream ad



A video in-stream ad for the American Job Center in Hawaii. It features a woman wearing a black and white patterned headscarf. The text 'Free Job Help in Hawaii' and 'Sponsored · labor.haw...' is visible. There is a 'Skip Ad' button and a 'LEARN MORE' button.

YouTube Ad


 **State of Hawai'i Department of Labor & Industrial Relations** **Sponsored**


Ready for a new career path? Find jobs, build your resume, and get FREE support from your local American Job Center.

Whether you're starting fresh or leveling up, we offer training, job search help, and guidance—at no cost to you.

- ✓ Free resources
- ✓ Real career support
- ✓ No stress

Visit ajchawaii.com and take your next step today.



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Job Support
American Job Ce... [Learn more](#)

Facebook Ad

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♥ 💬 📌

dlir_higov Ready for a new career path? Find jobs, build your resume, and get FREE sup... [more](#)

Instagram Ad

July Social Media Highlights

Overall Performance:

- Audience size, impressions, and video views increased across Facebook and Instagram
- Combined engagement rate of 5.3%; Facebook had 6.5% due to a strong paid ad performance

Facebook:

- Slight dip in engagement after July 1 boosted ad, but spikes on posts about AJC locations, service, and job search tips.
- **Top Posts:**
 - AJC Maui Highlight
 - "Did You Know" Reel
 - AJC O'ahu Highlight

Instagram:

- Multiple engagement spikes drive by Reels
- **Top Posts:**
 - Meet Kevin Aki Testimonial Reel
 - "What is the AJC?" Reel
 - AJC Kaua'i Reel

Key Takeaway:

- Video content, especially reels, drives the highest engagement
- Location highlights and quick job-seeking tips resonate across both platforms

Print/Collateral

LOOKING FOR WORK?

American Job Center O'ahu can help for FREE!

✓ Resume Help

✓ Job Listings

✓ Skills Training

✓ Career Advice

Body





Call (808) 768-5701
or visit labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/american-job-centers
Dole Cannery | 680 Iwilei Road, Suite 700 | Honolulu, HI 96817

AmericanJobCenter[®]
HAWAII

The Bus

Print/Collateral

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NOW **HIRING!**

**NEED A JOB?
WANT A FRESH START?**
The American Job Center Hawaii Is Here to Help.

Your one-stop shop for **FREE** support:

- ✓ Resume help
- ✓ Job training programs
- ✓ Career coaching
- ✓ Access to local job openings
- ✓ Help for first-time job seekers, career changers & more

 Stop by your local American Job Center Hawaii or visit **AJCHawaii.com**
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 Stop by American Job Center Hawaii – Hawaii Island, call **(808) 935-6527** or visit **AJCHawaii.com**
Hawaii Island County Building - Hilo | 88 Kanoelehua Avenue | Hilo, HI

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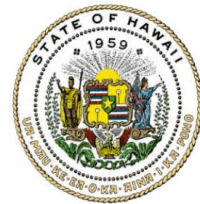
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想要一個嶄新的開始嗎?**
夏威夷美國職業中心在此為您提供協助

讓您一次到位的**免費**支援:

- ✓ 協助填寫履歷表
- ✓ 工作培訓計畫
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JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

AMERICAN JOB CENTERS HELP HAWAII RESIDENTS BUILD CAREERS IN A CHANGING ECONOMY

Free career counseling, job search assistance, and skills training available on O'ahu, Hawaii'i Island, Maui and Kaua'i

News Release 2025-09

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 4, 2025

HONOLULU — With employers across Hawaii'i looking for skilled workers, American Job Centers (AJCs) are helping residents build the skills and connections they need to secure in-demand jobs. The centers offer free, in-person and virtual services on O'ahu, Hawaii'i Island, Maui and Kaua'i.

AJCs provide one-on-one career counseling, résumé and interview support, job search assistance, skills training, tuition support, on-the-job training, and employer recruitment services. Each center also offers resource rooms with computers, internet access and printers.

According to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, Hawaii'i's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 2.8 percent in June 2025, well below the national rate of 4.1 percent. Over the past year, the state gained 14,500 nonfarm jobs, a 2.3 percent increase, with gains in health care, private education, and trade-related sectors despite a decline of 1,200 jobs in June.

While the overall employment outlook is strong, many employers continue to face labor shortages in key industries, and job seekers are pursuing new skills and training to meet demand.

AJCs serve people of all ages and backgrounds, including those facing barriers to employment. On Hawaii'i Island, East Hawaii'i resident Kevin Aki first connected with the Hilo AJC at age 17 while experiencing homelessness. After meeting staff at a community outreach event, he joined a youth program that led to an internship and, eventually, a long-term career. Today, more than a decade later, Aki works as a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act specialist at the same center.

"When I first connected with the American Job Center, I had no idea it would lead to a career," Aki said. "Now I get to give back and help others build their own futures."

"American Job Centers are a vital part of our statewide workforce strategy," said Bennette Misalucha, executive director of the Workforce Development Council. "By offering personalized support, skills training, and employer connections, the centers give residents a path to stable careers while meeting the workforce needs of local industries."

AJCs also partner with employers to identify hiring needs and connect them with qualified job seekers in industries such as government, hospitality, health care, retail and other sectors. The centers also help businesses develop training opportunities aligned with Hawaii'i's long-term workforce priorities.

All Hawaii'i residents—including veterans, young adults, kūpuna, immigrants, individuals with disabilities and those experiencing job loss or underemployment—can access AJC services

Centers are open on weekdays and offer in-person and virtual support. For locations, hours or more information, visit ajchawaii.com.

#

Hawaii'i's American Job Center Program Year 2022 Outreach Project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The total project cost is \$300,000, which is 100 percent federally funded.

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American Job Centers offer Hawai'i residents free training for in-demand jobs


August 10, 2025 · 6:00 PM HST

119    

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The County of Maui Service Center in Kahului houses the American Job Center of Maui. (Photo Credit: Olivier Koning / G70)

American Job Centers in Hawai'i are offering free resources to help residents gain the training and connections they need to land in-demand jobs.

Each center on O'ahu, Hawai'i Island, Maui and Kaua'i provides one-on-one career counseling, résumé and interview support, job search assistance, skills training, tuition support, on-the-job training and employer recruitment services. They also have resource rooms available with computers, internet access and printers.

According to the state labor department, employers continue to face labor shortages in key industries, and job seekers are pursuing new skills and training to meet demand. Over the past year, the state gained 14,500 nonfarm jobs, a 2.3 percent increase, with gains in health care, private education and trade-related sectors, despite a decline of 1,200 jobs in June.

American Job Centers serve people of all ages and backgrounds, including those facing barriers to employment.

On Hawai'i Island, East Hawai'i resident Kevin Aki first connected with the Hilo American Job Center at age 17 while experiencing homelessness.

After meeting staff at a community outreach event, he joined a youth program that led to an internship and eventually, a long-term career. Today, more than a decade later, Aki works as a

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American Job Centers offer Hawai'i residents free training for in-demand jobs

August 11, 2025 · 5:00 AM HST

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American Job Centers in Hawai'i are offering free resources to help residents gain the training and connections they need to land in-demand jobs.

Each center on O'ahu, Hawai'i Island, Maui and Kaua'i provides one-on-one career counseling, résumé and interview support, job search assistance, skills training, tuition support, on-the-job training and employer recruitment services. They also have resource rooms available with computers, internet access and printers.

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ARTICLE CONTINUES BELOW AD



On Hawai'i Island, East Hawai'i resident Kevin Aki first connected with the Hilo American Job Center at age 17 while experiencing homelessness.

After meeting staff at a community outreach event, he joined a youth program that led to an internship and eventually, a long-term career. Today, more than a decade later, Aki works as a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act specialist at the same center.

"When I first connected with the American Job Center, I had no idea it would lead to a career," Aki said. "Now I get to give back and help others build their own futures."

Governor's Report

Dan Kouchi, Policy Advisor, Office of the
Governor

Labor Director's Update

David Rodriguez, Designee for
Department of Labor and Industrial
Relations Director Jade Butay

Fiscal Reports

Bennette Misalucha, WDC Executive Director
Hong van Radke, ASO

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Grants Summary As of 06/30/2025

PY22

County	Allocated	Expenditures	Balance As of 6/30/24	Lapsed 6/30/25
Honolulu	4,711,403	2,692,707	2,018,696	
Hawaii	1,647,337	1,111,897	535,440	
Maui	1,221,938	642,938	579,000	
WDD-Kauai	617,019	207,407	409,612	
Rapid Response	557,592	253,345	304,247	
WIOA State Level	1,545,051	1,409,296	135,755	
Total by County	10,300,340	6,317,590	3,982,750	-

Funds to Lapse 6/30/25

Statewide from Unexpended Funds	Unexpended Funds	Expenditures	Encumbrances	Planned Encumbrances	Balance As of 06/30/2025
WIOA Adult	1,303,410.01	909,924.13	393,485.88	0.00	0.00
WIOA Youth	1,421,927.78	1,271,210.95	150,716.83	0.00	0.00
WIOA DW	817,410.37	531,018.89	286,391.48	0.00	0.00
WIOA RR	304,247.00	304,247.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
WIOA State Level	135,755.00	135,755.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	3,982,750.16	3,152,155.97	830,594.19	0.00	0.00

PY23

County	Allocated	Expenditures	Balance As of 6/30/2025	Lapsed 6/30/26
Honolulu	4,816,645.00	3,475,389.30	1,341,255.70	
Hawaii	1,697,603.00	1,124,906.41	572,696.59	
Maui	1,039,013.00	719,454.57	319,558.43	
WDD-Kauai	537,493.00	204,155.62	333,337.38	
Rapid Response	511,366.00	75,206.59	436,159.41	
WIOA State Level	1,518,020.00	1,070,162.88	447,857.12	
Total by County	10,120,140.00	5,599,112.49	3,450,864.63	-

GRANT SUMMARY DETAILS
AS OF JUNE 30, 2025

		PY22/FY23 EXPENDITURES										FORECASTING	PY24/FY25 EXPENDITURES				
		PY22					PY23					PY24					
		Expenditures		PY22	PY22		Expenditures		PY23	PY23		Expenditures		PY24	PY24		
		PY22	PY22	Funds Avail.	% Expended	PY22	PY23	PY23 Exp	Funds Avail.	% Expended	PY23	PY23 Exp	PY24	PY24 Exp	Funds Avail.	% Expended	PY24
		Budget	06/30/24	06/30/24	06/30/24	Participants	Budget	6/30/2025	6/30/2025	6/30/2025	Participants	7/31/2025	Budget	5/31/2025	5/31/2025	5/31/2025	Participants
Adult Program:	Hawaii	615,398.00	456,194.35	159,203.65	74%	194	698,272.00	482,270.84	216,001.16	69%	100	61,880.31	550,121	550,121	0%		
DW Program:	Hawaii	277,263.00	217,556.05	59,706.95	78%	36	254,277.00	220,853.07	33,423.93	87%	20	27,352.91	252,020	252,020	0%		
Local Admin:	Hawaii	164,734.00	130,996.43	33,737.57	80%		169,760.00	60,440.11	109,319.89	36%		3,960.30	140,931	140,931	0%		
Youth Program:	Hawaii	589,942.00	307,149.68	282,792.32	52%	44	575,294.00	361,342.39	213,951.61	63%	31	36,167.00	466,233	466,233	0%		
Rapid Response	Hawaii	94,791.00	59,936.10	34,854.90	63%		86,932.00	24,954.83	61,977.17	29%		5,385.25	86,161	86,161	0%		
	Hawaii Total	1,742,128.00	1,171,832.61	570,295.39		274	1,784,535.00	1,149,861.24	634,673.76		151	134,745.76	1,495,466	0.00	1,495,466	0	
Adult Program:	Honolulu	1,566,467.00	977,778.19	588,688.81	62%	709	1,687,490.00	1,416,201.87	271,288.13	84%	644	112,646.64	1,545,579	1,545,579	0%		
DW Program:	Honolulu	815,479.00	426,181.85	389,297.15	52%	141	777,787.00	416,381.23	361,405.77	54%	130	24,626.30	756,060	756,060	0%		
Local Admin:	Honolulu	471,141.00	347,678.25	123,462.75	74%		481,665.00	258,735.78	222,929.22	54%		19,372.08	448,563	448,563	0%		
Youth Program:	Honolulu	1,858,316.00	941,069.13	917,246.87	51%	146	1,869,703.00	1,384,070.42	485,632.58	74%	132	90,174.83	1,735,425	1,735,425	0%		
Rapid Response	Honolulu	278,796.00	41,612.27	237,183.73	15%		265,910.00	22,352.62	243,557.38	8%		10,833.72	258,482	258,482	0%		
	Honolulu Total	4,990,199.00	2,734,319.69	2,255,879.31		996	5,082,555.00	3,497,741.92	1,584,813.08		906	257,653.57	4,744,109	0.00	4,744,109	0	
Adult Program:	Kauai	217,564.00	88,477.17	129,086.83	41%	17	145,473.00	85,554.53	59,918.47	59%	12	6,504.33	157,198	157,198	0%		
DW Program:	Kauai	235,583.00	70,614.03	164,968.97	30%	7	194,447.00	72,881.19	121,565.81	37%	5	6,229.09	177,897	177,897	0%		
Local Admin:	Kauai	-	-	-			53,749.00	22,664.03	31,084.97	42%		1,925.91	51,620	51,620	0%		
Youth Program:	Kauai	163,872.00	48,315.66	115,556.34	29%	4	143,824.00	23,055.87	120,768.13	16%	2	1,489.13	129,509	129,509	0%		
Rapid Response	Kauai	72,487.00	40,278.88	32,208.12	56%		66,478.00	5,163.09	61,314.91	8%		2,733.08	60,819	60,819	0%		
	Kauai Total	689,506.00	247,685.74	441,820.26		28	603,971.00	209,318.71	394,652.29		19	18,881.55	577,043	0.00	577,043	0	
Adult Program:	Maui	419,589.00	184,231.78	235,357.22	44%	96	378,230.00	276,682.44	101,547.56	73%	81	32,974.43	366,747	366,747	0%		
DW Program:	Maui	326,191.00	128,634.70	197,556.30	39%	31	269,234.00	142,637.97	126,596.03	53%	25	12,214.84	296,494	296,494	0%		
Local Admin:	Maui	122,193.00	65,140.85	57,052.15	53%		103,902.00	71,201.86	32,700.14	69%		5,014.07	102,474	102,474	0%		
Youth Program:	Maui	353,965.00	264,930.75	89,034.25	75%	33	287,647.00	228,932.30	58,714.70	80%	20	21,872.74	259,019	259,019	0%		
Rapid Response	Maui	111,518.00	111,518.00	-	100%		92,046.00	22,736.05	69,309.95	25%		7,566.67	101,366	0.00	101,366	0%	
	Maui Total	1,333,456.00	754,456.08	578,999.92		160	1,131,059.00	742,190.62	388,868.38		126	79,642.74	1,126,100	0.00	1,126,100	0	
	Grand Total	8,755,289.00	4,908,294.12	3,846,994.88		1,458	8,602,120.00	5,599,112.49	3,003,007.51		1202	490,923.62	7,942,718	0.00	7,942,718	0	

		Remaining funds after adjustment					Remaining funds after adjustment					Remaining funds after adjustment					
		Budget	Expenditures	Unexpended Funds	Moved From PY23		Budget	Expenditures	Unexpended Funds	Move to PY22	Move From PY24		Budget	Expenditures	Unexpended Funds	Move to PY23	
RAPID RESPONSE	Hawaii	94,791	59,936.10	34,854.90	65,941.69	(31,086.79)	86,932.00	86,932.00	-	(65,941.69)		20,990.31	86,161.00	-	86,161.00	-	86,161.00
	Honolulu	278,796	41,612.27	237,183.73	114,050.94	123,132.79	265,910.00	114,050.94	151,859.06	(114,050.94)		265,910.00	258,482.00	-	258,482.00	-	258,482.00
	Kauai	72,487	40,278.88	32,208.12	32,208.12	-	66,478.00	34,893.34	31,584.66	(32,208.12)		63,792.78	60,819.00	-	60,819.00	-	60,819.00
	Maui	111,518	111,518.00	-	92,046.00	(92,046.00)	92,046.00	92,046.00	-	(92,046.00)	17,197.44	74,848.56	101,366.00	17,197.44	84,168.56	(17,197.44)	101,366.00
		557,592	253,345.25	304,246.75	304,246.75	-	511,366.00	327,922.28	183,443.72	(304,246.75)	17,197.44	425,541.65	506,828	17,197.44	489,630.56	(17,197.44)	506,828.00

PY23/FY24 RAPID RESPONSE

County	RR Budget	RR Up to May	June Estimate RR	RR Funds Available
Hawaii	86,932.00	65,941.69	5,709.35	15,280.96
Honolulu	265,910.00	-	9,070.00	256,840.00
Kauai	66,478.00	2,685.22	2,678.00	61,114.78
Maui	92,046.00	17,197.44	6,461.00	68,387.56
TOTAL	511,366.00	85,824.35	23,918.35	401,623.30

*** DATA REFLECT THE \$304,246.75 RR TRANSFER FROM PY23 TO PY22

PY22/FY23 UP TO MAY					PY23/FY24 UP TO MAY					PY24/FY25 UP TO MAY							
RAPID RESPONSE					Remaining funds after adjustment					Remaining funds after adjustment					Remaining funds after adjustment		
	Budget	Expenditures	Unexpended Funds	Moved From PY23		Budget	Expenditures	Funds	Move to PY22	Move From PY24		Budget	Expenditures	Funds	Move to PY23		
	Hawaii	94,791	59,936.10	34,854.90	65,941.69	(31,086.79)	86,932.00	86,932.00	-	(65,941.69)	20,990.31	86,161.00	-	86,161.00	-	86,161.00	
	Honolulu	278,796	41,612.27	237,183.73	114,050.94	123,132.79	265,910.00	114,050.94	151,859.06	(114,050.94)	265,910.00	258,482.00	-	258,482.00	-	258,482.00	
	Kauai	72,487	40,278.88	32,208.12	32,208.12	-	66,478.00	34,893.34	31,584.66	(32,208.12)	63,792.78	60,819.00	-	60,819.00	-	60,819.00	
	Maui	111,518	111,518.00	-	92,046.00	(92,046.00)	92,046.00	92,046.00	-	(92,046.00)	17,197.44	74,848.56	101,366.00	17,197.44	84,168.56	(17,197.44)	101,366.00
		557,592	253,345.25	304,246.75	304,246.75	-	511,366.00	327,922.28	183,443.72	(304,246.75)	17,197.44	425,541.65	506,828	17,197.44	489,630.56	(17,197.44)	506,828.00
<u>Budget to be reallocated:</u>																	
Hawaii					31,086.79												
Honolulu					(123,132.79)												
Kauai																	
Maui					92,046.00												
					-												

General Funds Status

**REQUIRES BOARD
ACTION**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**LBR 135***As of July 24, 2025*

General Funds Appropriation FY 2026 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026)

\$455,000

DISBURSEMENT	AMOUNT	NOTES
Governor's Automatic Savings	\$45,500	represents 10% of total
Personnel*	\$90,000	Salaries not covered by WIOA admin funds
Workforce Analysis/Studies	\$100,000	Studies on WD relevant issues that confront Hawaii
Grants	\$125,000	Parameters TBD
Future of Work Conference	\$20,000	Conference fees, neighbor island travel, etc, Workforce Heroes
Conferences	\$17,000	conference fees, travel, etc
Employers Boot Camp	\$20,000	Parameters TBD
Board Members Conference	\$10,000	travel for neighbor island, room rental, etc
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$25,000	
TOTAL	\$452,500	

Subject to approval by Department of Budget and Finance*PROPOSED: To Be Submitted to DLIR/ Governor's package/2026 Legislative Session**

General Funds Appropriation FY 2027 (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027)

\$455,000

DISBURSEMENT	AMOUNT	NOTES
Governor's Auto Savings	\$45,500	represents 10% of total
Personnel*	\$155,000	Salaries not covered by WIOA admin funds/1 add FTE
Workforce Analysis/Grants	\$75,000	Studies on WD relevant issues that confront Hawaii
Grants	\$100,000	Parameters TBD
Future of Work Conference	\$20,000	Conference fees, neighbor island travel, etc, Workforce Heroes
Conferences	\$17,000	conference fees, travel, etc
Employers Boot Camp	\$20,000	Parameters TBD
Board Members Annual Conference	\$10,000	travel for neighbor island, room rental, etc
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$10,000	
TOTAL	\$452,500	

**Subject to approval by Department of Budget and Finance*

Status Report of Program Year 2022 WIOA Unexpended Funds

Bennette Misalucha, WDC
Executive Director



Presentation on the Status of Program Year 2022 WIOA Unexpended Funds As of July 24, 2025

Background:

According to guidance from the U.S. 20 CFR § 683.110: “Funds which are not expended by a local area(s) in the 2-year period described in [paragraph \(c\)\(1\)\(i\)](#) of this section, must be returned to the State. Funds so returned are available for expenditure by State and local recipients and subrecipients only during the third program year of availability in accordance with WIOA secs. 128(c) and 132(c). These funds are available for only the following purposes: (i) For statewide projects; or (ii) For distribution to local areas which had fully expended their allocation of funds for the same program year within the 2-year period.”

In a letter to the Workforce Development Council, the Director of the Department of Labor has put forth the new protocols for Hawaii in the redistribution of the unexpended funds, wherein the Workforce Development Council has been charged with the disposition of \$1.5 million in unexpended funds.

An evaluation team composed of the Deputy Director, the Workforce Development Division Administrator, the Administrator of the Administrative Services Office, and the Executive Director of the Workforce Development Council have been meeting regularly to discern the disposition of the funds.

The presentation will provide an update on the status of the Program Year 2022 Unexpended Funds. For information purposes only. No Board action needed.

PROJECT 1

Title: Research to Improve Hawai`i's WIOA Workforce Systems

Status: The final report was submitted by June 30, 2025. A final meeting to discuss the findings will be set up and relevant stakeholders will be invited to participate.

PROJECT II

Title: Professional Public Relations Services to Increase Awareness of the American Job Centers (AJCs) in Hawai`i

Status: Becker Communications rolled out the awareness campaign on June 30, 2025. The ads and the outreach initiatives will run until September. We are engaging with the American Job Center to track impact.

PROJECT III

Title: Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students (Grades 7-12 through Work-Based Learning Intermediary Support

Status: The targeted schools throughout the state have received the work-based learning efforts from the intermediaries. Review of the work reports are pending.

PROJECT IV

Title: Building Community College Workforce Capacity

Status: The UHCC has a protocol in place at all the seven campuses focused on identifying possible WIOA participants. The relevant reports have been submitted. There are 48 enrollees in the Certified Drivers License (CDL) programs, and they are expected to go through their licensing process shortly.

PROJECT V.

Title: Expanding Sector Partnerships into new High Growth Industries

Status: The Transportation Sector partnership has been set up with Hawaii Department of Transportation Deputy Director Tammy Lee as the lead convenor. The group had its first meeting in May and will have a next meeting this summer. The Chamber of Commerce has submitted a presentation on the steps to set up a sector partnership.

PROJECT VI.

TITLE: Fiscal and Budget Process training for Pertinent Employees

Status: The contractor, The GATeam, conducted a fiscal training on June 27-28, 2025 attended by about 40 participants. The fiscal trainers also met with the Administrative Services office (ASO) employees to discuss ways to make internal processes more efficient. The contractor also submitted a folder of internal policies which need to be updated based on current rules.

###

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UNEXPENDED FUNDS**PY 2021 to PY 2023****As of August 20, 2025****PY 2021****TOTAL STATE ALLOCATION FROM THE US DoL: \$7,842,556**

	Allocated	Expenditures	UNEXPENDED FUNDS
WIOA-Admin	567,066.00	554,490.91	12,575.09
WIOA-DW	1,159,453.00	854,853.00	304,599.34
WIOA Youth	2,256,398.00	1,653,618.44	602,779.56
WIOA Adult	2,153,479.00	1,509,084.04	644,394.96
WIOA -Rapid Response	529,778.00	353,678.15	176,099.85
TOTALS	6,666,174.00	4,925,724.54	1,740,448.80

PY 2022**TOTAL STATE ALLOCATION FROM THE US DoL: \$10,300,340**

County	Allocated	Expenditures	UNEXPENDED FUNDS
Honolulu	4,711,403	2692707	2,018,696.00
Hawaii	1,647,337	1111897	535,440.00
Maui	1,221,938	642938	579,000.00
WDD-Kauai	617,019	207407	409,612.00
Rapid Response	557,592	253345	304,247.00
WIOA State Level	1,545,051	1409296	135,755.00
Total by County	10,300,340	6,317,590	3,982,750.00

PY 2023**TOTAL STATE ALLOCATION FROM THE US DoL: \$10,120,140**

County	Allocated	Expenditures	Balance As of 6/30/2025
Honolulu	4,816,645.00	2,616,521.00	1,341,255.70
Hawaii	1,697,603.00	1,124,906.41	572,696.59
Maui	1,039,013.00	868,022.00	319,558.43
WDD-Kauai	537,493.00	204,155.62	333,337.38
Rapid Response	511,366.00	75,206.59	436,159.41
WIOA State Level	1,518,020.00	1,070,162.88	447,857.12
Total by County	10,120,140.00	6,669,275.37	3,450,864.63

PY 2024**TOTAL STATE ALLOCATION FROM THE US DoL: \$9,344,351**

ANALYSIS

1. The local areas' expenses in PY 2021 was \$4.9 million. It spent 63% of its Total allocation
2. The State received a substantial increase in WIOA allocation in PY 2022 and PY 2023
3. At the same time, the feds released a \$10 million grant for Good Jobs initiative which had less stringent rules on documentation. Although it was a great program, the Good Jobs initiative had a negative impact on WIOA participation.
4. The Local areas spent \$6.3 million in PY 2022 or a 77% increase over PY 2021 spending which was \$4.9 million
5. But because the State's allocation increased from \$ 7.8 million to \$10.3 million from PY 2021 to PY 2022, the locals were only able to spend 61% of its allocation
6. If the State's allocation had remained at the PY 2021 numbers, the State would have spent 81% of its budget
7. For PY 2023, the locals spent 66% of their allotment. If the State's allocation had remained at the PY 2021 level, all that spending would have represented 85% of its allocation
8. For PY 2024, if the same spending rate is maintained (average of \$6.5 million), then the spending would represent 69% of its budget
9. The locals are only able to spend their 2 year budget in a span of one year, because of a WIOA rule that the prior year's budget has to be totally expended before one could access the next year's budget.

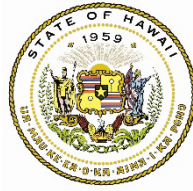
Success Stories

Executive Director's Report

Bennette Misalucha, Executive
Director, Workforce Development
Council

DR. JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE BUTAY
DLIR DIRECTOR

WILLIAM KUNTSMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

KEN LOUI
CHAIRPERSON

BENNETTE E. MISALUCHA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
830 Punchbowl Street, Suite 317, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 586-8815 Web: <http://labor.hawaii.gov/wdc/>

STATE OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

REPORT

This report, prepared on July 30, 2025, covers the period from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

Message from the Executive Director

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) is pleased to present the 2025 *State of the WDC Report*, summarizing key accomplishments and milestones during the Program year from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

This annual report, which is anticipated to be presented at the Council's August quarterly board meeting, also outlines the challenges faced and the strategic actions underway to strengthen the Council's role in furthering workforce development objectives in the State.

Now in its second year, the *State of the WDC Report* follows the inaugural edition presented at the August 22, 2024 Council meeting. That report remains available on the WDC website.

Prior to May 2023, the Council had experienced a prolonged vacancy in the Executive Director position, resulting in a period of uncertainty and transition. Since then, the primary focus for the last two years has been to reestablish stability, provide strategic direction, and work with community partners - private sectors, philanthropic organizations, and other government agencies - to uplift the State's workforce development systems. During this critical rebuilding phase, the challenges of limited staffing became even more apparent. For nine months, from April 2024 to January 2025, the Executive Director served as the sole WDC employee, navigating a continuity in the operations (Board and Committee work) while laying the groundwork for a

stronger organizational structure.

These efforts were further strengthened by action from the State Legislature, which restored the Workforce Development Council's Program ID effective July 1, 2024. The Budget authorized seven full-time positions, (four program positions under WDC, and three fiscal positions under the Administrative Services Office) assigned the federal program funds to the restored Program ID and appropriated general funds to supplement available federal resources.

By the first quarter of 2025, the Council had reached a point of operational stability, bolstered by the hiring of two highly capable and committed team members. Their contributions have been instrumental in advancing the Council's initiatives through the first and second quarters of the year.

The progress achieved over the past year is a testament to the steadfast support of Council Chair Ken Loui, the engagement of WDC members, the partnership with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and the robust community engagement with workforce development partners. The accomplishments outlined in this report reflect the power of cross-sector collaboration, shared purpose, and an unwavering commitment to expanding workforce and economic opportunities across the state.

At the same time, the Council acknowledges the ongoing challenges that must be addressed including uncertainty in federal funding across all government agencies, shifting economic conditions, persistent workforce readiness gaps, and the need to ensure equitable access to workforce services, especially for individuals facing systemic barriers to employment. These challenges demand continued innovation, accountability, and partnership.

Looking ahead, the Workforce Development Council remains committed to close collaboration with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations—particularly the Workforce Development Division—to align strategies, uphold federal mandates, and implement responsive workforce solutions that serve both employers and job seekers.

The Council expresses its gratitude to all who contributed to this year's progress. With unified vision and sustained effort, Hawai'i is well-positioned to build a stronger, more resilient

workforce that can continue to learn, work, thrive, and yes, belong.

MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

A. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STATE UNIFIED PLAN

Our most significant accomplishment this year has been the work to implement the Hawai'i State Unified Plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Plan document was approved in June 2024 and immediately following its approval, we mobilized efforts in collaboration with community organizations, philanthropic partners, and state agencies to begin building the necessary systems for success. This process required extensive coordination, stakeholder engagement, and a strong commitment to alignment.

WDC's role in the implementation of the Plan is mandated in WIOA, which stipulates the first function of the WDC is to *“develop, modify and implement the State Unified Plan”*.

In December 2024, WDC hosted the “Synergy Summit I,” bringing together approximately 60 core partners for an in-depth exploration of the Unified Plan. The Plan is organized around four strategic pillars, each supported by a Pillar Catalyst Team composed of leaders from across sectors. Between January and June 2025, these teams met regularly to identify potential initiatives aligned with their respective pillars.

Building on the momentum of the first summit, WDC convened Workforce Synergy Summit II on July 9, 2025, at Honolulu Community College campus, gathering nearly 100 stakeholders from across Hawai'i's workforce, education, and business communities. This second summit served as a dynamic forum to review the progress of the Pillar Catalyst Teams, refine proposed initiatives, and foster cross-sector collaboration to ensure alignment with the State Unified Plan's four strategic pillars.. The strong turnout and active engagement underscored a shared commitment to advancing Hawai'i's workforce priorities and building a more connected and resilient workforce ecosystem.

One major part of the agenda was a preview of Hawai'i's "North Star" for workforce development, which is envisioned to be transformational. The development process was supported by a grant from the National Governors Association. This guiding vision, now called the Hawaii Generational Commitment, was previewed and received positive feedback from attendees. The Generational Commitment is planned to be officially unveiled in September 2025 to coincide with Workforce Development Month, setting the stage for the next phase of transformative action in workforce alignment across the state.

B. STRONG BOARD GOVERNANCE

Ongoing

We continue to conduct a comprehensive gap analysis of WDC board membership and committee structures, identifying key sectors for targeted recruitment and refining committee roles to enhance alignment with strategic goals. Throughout this past year, we continued to collaborate with the U.S. Department of Labor for technical assistance to support our governance efforts.

Last year, we held the first joint training session for state and local workforce boards. Throughout the year, training modules were held by a contractor, Safal Partners, and these sessions were aimed at deepening understanding and improving oversight of the system.

As a result, our committees are active and purposeful, and state board engagement remains strong. This past June, we held our new Members Orientation session with about ten new members present. We hope to institutionalize the on-boarding process for new members.

Currently, we still have some vacancies on the board: three vacancies in the private sector, and one vacancy for labor. We have identified the sectors which need to be represented, and efforts are underway to fill these open positions.

During the past year, we held roundtable discussions for every Committee, to discern the core functions of each committee. This was a productive exercise as it brought each Committee

leadership into an understanding of the core goals, and the expectations on direction and performance. Currently, there is also some movement on Committee assignments. With some Committee chairs transitioning out of WDC, it will give us an opportunity to re-evaluate the direction and composition of each committee. We hope to host a Board retreat during the Fall to solidify these plans.

Over-all, we expect to build on this foundation, consistently review to ensure our committees remain relevant and further strengthen our governance capacity.

C. EVALUATING THE DELINEATIONS OF ROLES

Following the reinstatement of WDC's program ID in the FY2026 Supplemental Budget, the Director of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations convened an ad hoc task force to review relevant documents and clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the Workforce Development Council (WDC) and the Workforce Development Division (WDD). This task force is composed of the Deputy Director, the Administrative Services Officer, the Administrator for the Workforce Development Division and the Executive Director for the Workforce Development Council. This review process is nearing completion. Like the model used in the State of Idaho between the State Board (or Council) and its labor agency, we anticipate that a memorandum of understanding will be needed to formalize the delineation of duties.

D. STRENGTHENING LOCAL BOARD COLLABORATION

Ongoing

In 2024, we initiated regular monthly meetings with the Executive Directors of each local area, recognizing this as a valuable platform to strengthen collaboration, enhance communication, and ensure strategic alignment with state goals. These meetings have fostered a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities, while also promoting the exchange of best practices across local areas.

Building on this momentum, our long-term vision is to cultivate high-performing local workforce boards and service delivery systems that can effectively respond to evolving

economic conditions and the unique needs of their communities.

To advance this vision, we launched, in March 2025, a monthly coordination meeting that brings together all local areas to discuss performance metrics, operational challenges, and opportunities for improvement. These sessions are attended not only by local area staff but also by service providers and other key partners, creating a comprehensive forum for dialogue, problem-solving, and the alignment of strategies to improve outcomes for jobseekers and employers alike.

E. WDC AS A SECTOR CONVENER

Ongoing

Healthcare:

In February 2024, WDC helped organize a statewide Long-Term Care Summit that brought together nearly 100 healthcare leaders and stakeholders to tackle pressing workforce issues. As chair of the Workforce Committee, WDC supported the Department of Health in shaping its Master Plan for long-term care, focusing on solutions to critical challenges such as staffing shortages, training needs, and recruitment pipelines. The summit emphasized the need for a united approach to strengthen Hawai'i's healthcare workforce and better prepare for the growing demands of an aging population.

Transportation:

In 2024, WDC began convening partners to launch a transportation sector partnership aimed at building career pathways in maritime, aviation, and commercial driver's license (CDL) training—starting as early as high school. With funding from WIOA Program Year (PY) 2022 Unexpended Funds, the University of Hawai'i Workforce Development Division, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i, established the state's first Transportation Sector Partnership in 2025. Led by the Deputy Director of the Department of Transportation, the partnership held its first meeting in mid-2025 to set priorities and address workforce gaps. A second gathering in Fall 2025 will focus on expanding training programs, engaging employers, and creating long-term solutions for Hawai'i's transportation industry.

F. EXPANDING ACCESS TO AMERICAN JOB CENTERS

Ongoing

The American Job Centers (AJCs) remain underutilized, and the Workforce Development Council (WDC) has made it a priority to increase their visibility and accessibility to the public. To address this challenge, WDC funded a statewide awareness campaign that was launched on June 30, 2025, and is scheduled to run through September 2025. This campaign, supported by PY 2022 Unexpended Funds, is designed to educate jobseekers, employers, and community partners about the valuable services AJCs provide—from career counseling and job placement assistance to training programs and employer support.

The campaign was developed following a recommendation from the Special Projects Committee, which identified the need to raise awareness and ensure that these critical workforce resources do not go unnoticed or underused. To maximize outreach, the campaign spans multiple platforms, including social media, television, radio, print publications, and community-based outreach efforts. By taking a multi-channel approach, the campaign aims to reach diverse audiences across all islands and highlight the AJCs as a key resource for both jobseekers and businesses.

G. ADMINISTRATION OF WIOA PY 2022 UNEXPENDED FUNDS

A significant milestone for WDC in 2025 is the administration of six projects funded by the WIOA Program Year 2022 unexpended funds. These projects were carefully vetted by a task force composed of the DLIR Deputy Director, the WDD Administrator, the ASO Administrator, and the WDC Executive Director. Their collective expertise and oversight ensured that the selected initiatives align with the State Unified Plan and address critical workforce priorities.

While managing these projects represents a new area of responsibility for WDC, we are actively building internal expertise—particularly in procurement, project oversight, and fiscal accountability—and remain committed to seeking technical assistance and training to ensure the

highest standards of implementation.

The six projects currently underway are:

1. Research to Improve Hawai'i's WIOA Workforce Systems
2. Professional Public Relations Services to Increase Awareness of the American Job Centers (AJCs) in Hawai'i
3. Increasing Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Students (Grades 7–12) through Work-Based Learning Intermediary Support
4. Building Community College Workforce Capacity
5. Expanding Sector Partnerships into New High-Growth Industries
6. Fiscal and Budget Process Training for Pertinent Employees

Together, these projects represent a strong investment in research, community engagement, training capacity, and sector alignment, laying the foundation for long-term workforce improvements statewide.

H. EVENTS, CONFERENCES AND RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Another key milestone in 2025 has been WDC's active sponsorship and organization of events designed to engage stakeholders, share insights, and celebrate the workforce community. The 2026 Future of Work Conference, held in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i, is now in its second year and was deemed a resounding success as gleaned by more than 300 attendees. This conference brought together thought leaders, industry experts, and policymakers to explore emerging workforce trends and strategies to prepare Hawai'i for the jobs of tomorrow.

WDC also convened two major events—Synergy Summit I in December 2024 and Synergy Summit II on July 9, 2025—each serving as dynamic platforms for stakeholders to align efforts around the State Unified Plan and its four strategic pillars.

To foster ongoing dialogue, WDC hosted several webinars, including two widely attended

economic forecast sessions featuring economist Dr. Paul Brewbaker and Dr. Seth Colby, which provided valuable perspectives on Hawai'i's economic outlook and its implications for workforce development.

Recognizing the contributions of workforce professionals, WDC sponsored the Workforce Development Heroes awards, which celebrate the dedication and innovation of individuals and organizations that build strong career pathways for jobseekers and workers across the state. This recognition aligns with Workforce Development Month, formally declared by the Governor each September, which highlights the vital role workforce programs play in strengthening Hawai'i's economy and communities.

In addition, WDC created learning opportunities by inviting other states and local workforce boards to share their best practices. These sessions included presentations from the Las Vegas Workforce Development Board, the Eugene, Oregon Workforce Development Board, as well as the State Workforce Boards of Illinois and Delaware. These peer-to-peer exchanges have been invaluable in helping Hawai'i identify innovative approaches and proven strategies to improve the effectiveness of its own workforce programs.

WDC also engaged with the National Youth Council, focusing on strategies to support incarcerated youth and their reintegration into the workforce.

In July 2022, WDC co-sponsored a pilot project for Hele Imua interns, in partnership with SHERM and First Hawaiian Bank, which offered a four-week webinar series designed to teach essential soft skills and practical workplace skills, ensuring that interns are better equipped to transition into meaningful employment opportunities.

I. WDC as the Voice of Workforce Development

Another notable milestone has been WDC's growing role as a trusted voice on workforce development issues, both within Hawai'i and on national platforms. The Council has been

invited to speak at several high-profile events, reflecting the value of its insights and leadership in addressing workforce challenges and opportunities.

In 2024, WDC participated in the SHERM Conference (Society for Human Resource Management), a premier gathering for HR professionals and business leaders focused on talent management, workforce strategies, and organizational development. The topic was on the state of workforce in Hawaii and the State Unified Plan.

WDC was also featured at the Hawai'i Talent Summit, sponsored by the Hawai'i Employers Council, where we discussed the disruption in the labor eco-system and the need to act now, in view of current trends in Hawai'i's labor market.

On the global stage, WDC contributed to a worldwide women's webinar organized by Bayer International, highlighting workforce equity and opportunities for women in emerging industries.

Additionally, during both 2024 and 2025 Hawai'i on the Hill events in Washington, D.C., WDC was invited to deliver workforce insights and provide opening remarks on the state of Hawai'i's labor conditions and the Unified Plan, showcasing the Council's role as a connector as well as an advocate.

CURRENT CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THEM

A. Uncertainty in WIOA funding

One of the most pressing challenges facing Hawai'i's workforce system is the uncertainty surrounding federal funding for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These funds are a critical lifeline, supporting programs that provide training, upskilling, and employment services for jobseekers and businesses across the state. However, fluctuations in federal budgets, shifting national priorities, and potential policy changes create instability that is

largely beyond Hawai'i's control. This uncertainty makes it difficult to plan long-term initiatives, invest in innovative programs, or ensure consistent services to communities that need them most.

While Hawai'i cannot fully control federal funding allocations, the state can take strategic steps to reduce the impact of these uncertainties:

1. **Diversifying Funding Sources:**

Leveraging partnerships with local businesses, philanthropic organizations, and other state agencies can help build alternative funding streams to support critical programs. For example, public-private partnerships can fill gaps where federal dollars fall short.

2. **Maximizing Existing Resources:**

By improving efficiency, such as aligning workforce efforts across agencies, sharing data, and streamlining services, Hawai'i can ensure every WIOA dollar stretches as far as possible.

3. **Building Resilient Systems:**

Investing in long-term strategies, such as sector partnerships, career pathway development, and digital upskilling initiatives, ensures that workforce programs remain relevant and effective even when federal resources fluctuate.

While the uncertainty of WIOA funds is an external factor, Hawai'i's resilience will depend on its ability to adapt, innovate, and collaborate. By building a workforce ecosystem that is both agile and community-driven, the state can weather funding challenges while continuing to prepare its people for the jobs of the future.

B. Limited Resources

One of the significant challenges facing the Workforce Development Council (WDC) is the constraint of limited resources. With only a handful of personnel, the capacity to fully address the breadth of workforce development priorities, ranging from policy alignment to sector partnerships to operational mandates, is stretched thin.

Additionally, WDC's funding streams are limited, which affects its ability to scale innovative programs, provide robust technical assistance, and carry out strategic initiatives that require sustained investment.

This limitation is further magnified by the complexity of the workforce ecosystem. As WDC is tasked with serving as a convenor, policy driver, and strategic leader, the demand for research, coordination, and stakeholder engagement continues to grow, requiring more staff and financial flexibility than currently available.

Potential Solutions:

While these resource constraints are challenging, several strategies can help mitigate their impact:

- 1. Leveraging Partnerships:**

By collaborating more closely with state agencies, local workforce boards, educational institutions, and the private sector, WDC can extend its reach and amplify its impact without overextending its staff. Partnerships can also lead to shared funding opportunities or in-kind support.

- 2. Pursuing Additional Funding Streams:**

WDC can explore federal discretionary grants, philanthropic partnerships, and public-private collaborations to supplement its base funding. Proactively identifying opportunities for competitive funding can strengthen the council's financial stability.

- 3. Prioritizing High-Impact Initiatives:**

With limited resources, it is critical to focus on initiatives that offer the greatest potential for systemic change—such as modernizing the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), fostering sector partnerships, and supporting the State Unified Plan priorities.

- 4. Investing in Staff Development:**

Ensuring that the current team is well-trained and empowered allows WDC to maximize the value of each staff member's expertise. Cross-training and skill development can increase efficiency and reduce operational bottlenecks.

5. Utilizing Technology and Data:

Streamlining processes through technology, such as enhancing HIRENET’s capabilities and adopting modern digital collaboration tools, can free up staff time for more strategic work.

Despite these challenges, WDC’s ability to innovate and adapt will be key to sustaining its role as a catalyst for workforce development. With careful prioritization and stronger collaboration, the council can continue to lead with impact even within its current resource limitations.

C. Educating all Board members on WIOA

We recognize the ongoing need to continue educating all board members—both at the state and local levels—on the core principles, requirements, and opportunities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). A well-informed board is essential for making sound policy and funding decisions that strengthen workforce outcomes statewide.

To achieve this, we plan to organize webinars and learning sessions featuring organizations and programs that have successfully implemented WIOA. These sessions will provide board members with practical insights, real-world examples, and best practices that can be applied in Hawai‘i.

The goal is to create a stronger, more knowledgeable board that can fully understand the workforce system's complexities and make informed, strategic decisions. The more board members understand the core business—ranging from WIOA performance metrics to sector strategies and funding streams—the better equipped they will be to guide efforts that truly benefit jobseekers, employers, and the broader community.

D. County of Kauai: Absence of a Local Workforce Board

A unique and pressing challenge is the absence of a local workforce development board in the County of Kauai. As previously discussed in council meetings, the Workforce Development Division (WDD) has been managing operations on the island, stepping in to fill the gap. Under

WIOA, when no local board is established, the State Board is expected to function as the local board. However, our current board has not yet been adequately trained or structured to perform this dual role.

We have sought technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to better understand the responsibilities and processes required for the State Board to act in this capacity. Despite the valiant efforts of WDD staff, Kauai has struggled with underperformance in workforce outcomes, a challenge that underscores the urgent need for a more sustainable governance and operational model.

Possible Solutions:

- 1. Establish a Local Advisory Board for Kauai**

Work with county leadership and community stakeholders to formally establish a local board. This would provide Kauai with a dedicated body focused on its unique workforce needs. This ad hoc group may even become the nucleus of a future local Kauai board.

- 2. State Board Training and Capacity Building**

Until a local board is created, the State Board must receive comprehensive training to effectively fulfill its role as a local board. This includes understanding local plan development, performance accountability, and funding oversight. Technical assistance from USDOL and peer learning from other states could accelerate this process.

- 3. Transition Kauai Operations to a Dedicated Service Provider:**

A possibility is to utilize Kauai's WIOA allocation to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a dedicated service provider. A contracted service provider could offer a focused, on-the-ground presence to coordinate with local employers, service providers, and educational institutions while increasing participant enrollment and program outcomes

- 4. Enhanced Partnerships with Community Organizations:**

Strengthen partnerships with Kauai's nonprofit organizations, industry groups, and educational partners to create innovative training and employment programs tailored to local needs.

5. Targeted Use of Funds:

Leverage discretionary or recaptured WIOA funds to invest in Kauai-specific workforce initiatives, such as sector partnerships or high-demand training programs, to address gaps and improve performance outcomes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

A. Strong Alignment with Community Efforts

With the implementation of the State Unified Plan, Hawai'i's workforce community has come together in new and meaningful ways—uniting government, business, education, and nonprofits around a shared vision for economic growth and opportunity. These collective efforts highlight the importance of working together as partners rather than operating in silos, ensuring that every initiative is strengthened by the expertise and commitment of all stakeholders.

This shared responsibility extends across every island and every sector, with a focus on building a workforce that reflects the strengths, values, and aspirations of the community. By aligning resources and leveraging partnerships, we can address both immediate workforce challenges and the long-term needs of Hawai'i's economy.

As we strive to achieve the state's "North Star"—the Generational Commitment—this work is not just about programs or policies but about creating a legacy of opportunity for future generations. Together, we are laying the foundation for a workforce system that is resilient, inclusive, and capable of adapting to the challenges of tomorrow.

B. Championing Operational Excellence

As the delineation of roles between the Workforce Development Council (WDC) and the

Workforce Development Division (WDD) becomes clearer, it has become evident that a stronger focus on WIOA operations is essential. Compliance is a cornerstone of WIOA, and building a robust system to support and sustain compliance efforts is a top priority.

Last year, with the generous support of the U.S. Department of Labor, the State benefited from technical assistance provided by SAFEL Partners, a team of expert trainers with years of experience. This technical assistance included comprehensive training on critical areas such as fiscal management, board governance, and operational best practices—equipping our teams with the knowledge and tools necessary to strengthen our workforce system.

Moving forward, we recognize the need for personnel with deep expertise in WIOA operations, compliance requirements, and fiscal accountability. Developing this capacity within our team will ensure that we not only meet federal and state standards but also operate efficiently and effectively to deliver high-quality outcomes for Hawai'i's workforce.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Optimization

One key area of operational excellence that WDC is prioritizing is the optimization of the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). This system, which plays a critical role in connecting jobseekers with high-quality training programs, requires a comprehensive re-examination to ensure it meets both the needs of customers and the standards of service providers. Hawai'i is not alone in facing challenges with its ETPL; this is a common issue across many states. Recognizing this, WDC is committed to taking on this challenge as an opportunity for significant improvement.

Our vision is to transform the ETPL experience—from streamlining the customer journey for jobseekers to enhancing the way service providers interact with the system. This includes reviewing and updating protocols for approving, monitoring, and, when necessary, removing providers to maintain high standards of quality and accountability.

To identify best practices, WDC has engaged with other states, including Illinois and Delaware, both of which have demonstrated strong, user-friendly ETPL systems. These states have shared valuable insights into their processes and technology, which are guiding our approach. We are also evaluating the capabilities of HIRENET, Hawai'i's workforce data system, to determine how its ETPL functions can be improved or reconfigured to better serve our stakeholders.

Our aspiration is to position Hawai'i as one of the leading states in ETPL innovation—creating a system that is transparent, efficient, and trusted by both jobseekers and training providers. By adopting proven strategies and modernizing our processes, WDC aims to ensure that the ETPL becomes a true engine for workforce development success.

C. WDC as a Workforce Analyst: Producing Insightful Reports

One of the key functions of WDC under WIOA is to serve as an analyst, providing data-driven insights and research that inform decision-making. A major opportunity for growth lies in expanding WDC's capacity to produce regular analysis reports that highlight workforce trends, and sector-specific challenges. By framing the conversation with accurate and timely information, WDC can empower policymakers, local boards, and community leaders to make strategic and informed decisions that directly impact Hawai'i's workforce development system.

Such reports could also serve as a valuable resource for employers, educators, and training providers, by helping to identify skill gaps, anticipate future workforce needs, and align programs with the demands of Hawai'i's evolving economy.

In doing so, WDC would not only fulfill its role as a convener but also as a trusted source of knowledge and guidance for shaping long-term workforce policies.

In conclusion, while this year's accomplishments are commendable, there remain opportunities

for growth and improvement. The challenges encountered have offered valuable lessons and underscored areas where strategies and approaches can be further strengthened.

Moving forward, the focus will be on building upon successes, addressing areas of concern, and collaborating closely with DLIR, WDD, and other community stakeholders to effectively navigate future challenges.

After two years in this role, the Executive Director's commitment to the mission remains steadfast. There is a determined effort to deepen knowledge and expertise in WIOA to drive exceptional outcomes and to continue to forge partnerships in the community. With the steadfast support of the Council members, the path ahead is not only promising but also positioned for sustained growth and continued achievement of the Workforce Development Council.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Workforce Development Council Q3 Meeting
August 20, 2025
Bennette E. Misalucha
Executive Director



ANNUAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS

- Implementation of the State Unified Plan
- Board Governance
- Delineation of WDC Role
- Fiscal Management
- Local Board Coordination
- Convenor, Analyst and Voice
- Community Collaboration



ANNUAL REPORT

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges

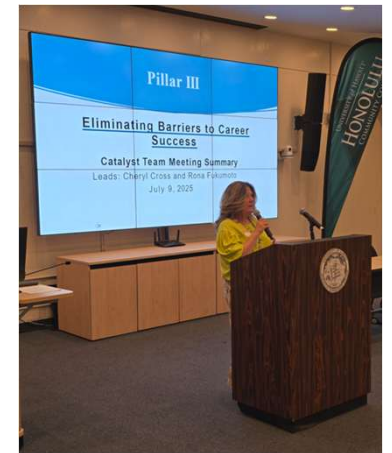
- Uncertainty in WIOA funding
- Limited resources
- Prioritizing initiatives

Opportunities

- Statewide alignment
- Generational Commitment



UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE UNIFIED PLAN: SYNERGY SUMMIT II



HAWAII'S GENERATIONAL COMMITMENT: WORKFLOW FROM PREVIEW TO PUBLIC LAUNCH

July 2025

MILESTONE # 1 : JULY 9, 2025 (Preview to Workforce Stakeholders)

August 2025

Design & Package

*(Brand Design & Package)
(branding, graphics, data,
measurements)*

Statewide Alignment

*(Communicate with
Relevant Internal and
External Stakeholders)*

SYNCHING WITH GOVERNOR'S POLICY TEAM

*Prepare for Governor's Proclamation of
Workforce Development Month
Media Event*

MILESTONE # 2 : September 2025
(Governor's Launch/ Public Launch)

September
2025

Community Roll-out

Identify Changes to Policy,
If any
Find Alternate Sources of
Funding for Initiatives

Oct, Nov, Dec
2025

Policy Action (if any)

Introduce 2026
Legislative Session

FOCUS FOR THIRD QUARTER



*Operational Transition
from Workforce
Development Division*



*Implementation of the
Unified Plan*



*Building Strategic
Partnerships with
Community Organizations*



Kauai Operations

ANNUAL REPORT

UPDATE ON DELINEATION OF ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Third Quarter completion
- Memorandum of Understanding



ANNUAL REPORT

UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

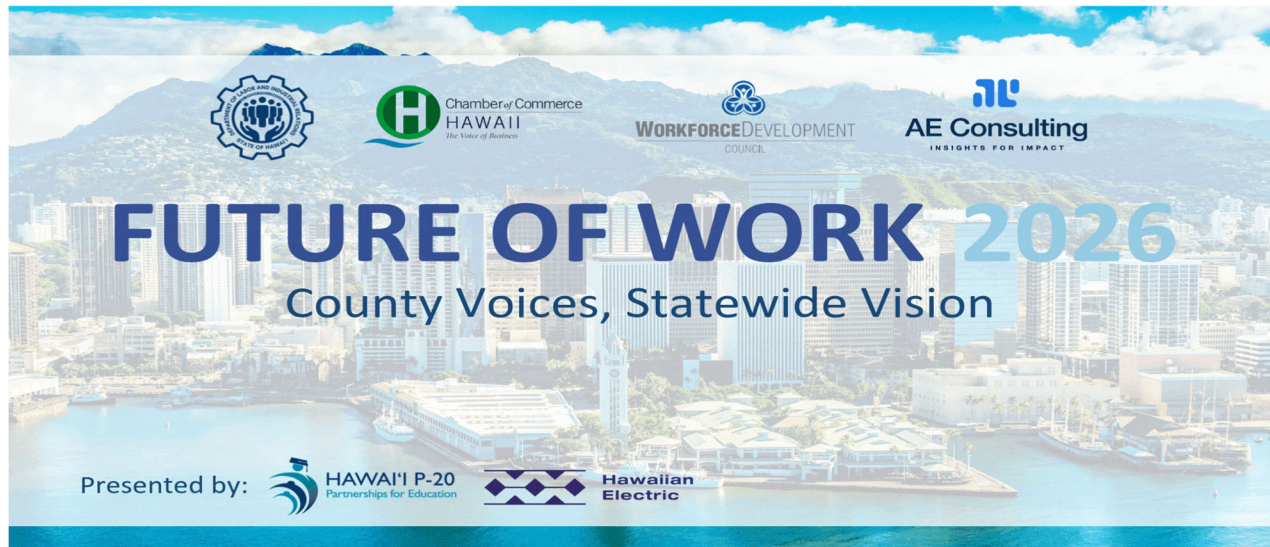
- Workforce Development Month: **September**
- Future of Work Conference: **September 24**
- Workforce Development Heroes



MAHALO

Executive Director's Report
Workforce Development Council Q3 Meeting
August 20, 2025
Bennette E. Misalucha



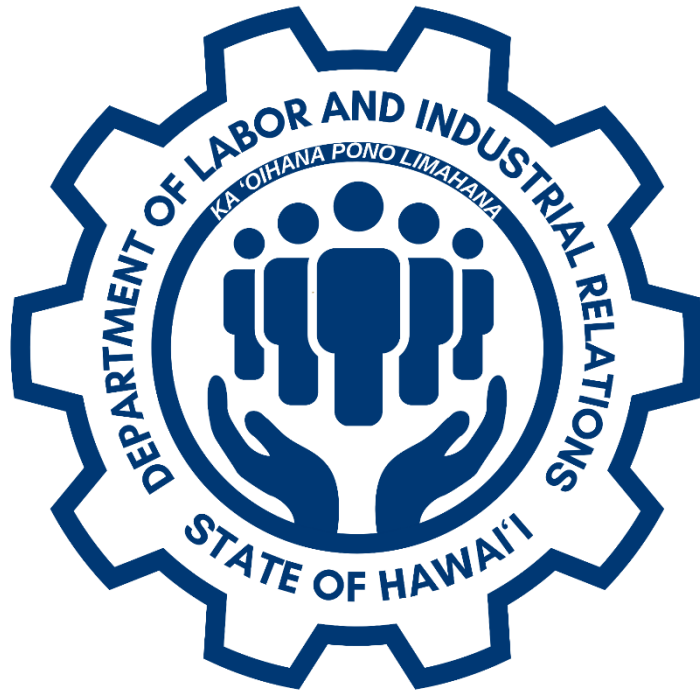


Agenda Item	Time	Notes
Check In	8:30 AM	Light breakfast and networking
Welcome and Opening Remarks	9:00-9:30 AM	
Keynote Speaker and Sector Overview	9:30- 10:30AM	Overview of Economic Trends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Patrick Sullivan (30 min) • Dr. Seth Colby (30 min)
Break	10:30-10:45 AM	
County Presentations	10:45-11:45 AM	Representatives from each county will present on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local workforce needs and training gaps • Broader challenges impacting their workforce • County-specific workforce priorities and key initiatives • A vision for the future of work in their county
Young Professional Panel	11:45 - 12:30 PM	
Lunch	12:30-1:30 PM	Open networking
Workforce Heroes	1:30 - 2:30 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All finalists acknowledged • All winners called to stage, recognized, and invited to take a seat at panelist table • Workforce Heroes Panel
Closing Remarks	2:30- 3:00 PM	Engage and Take Action

Written Reports from Core
Partners for the period of
February 2025 to June 2025

Title I and Title III - Workforce Development Division

Maricar Pilotin-Freitas



**Workforce Development Division
Program Report
August 1, 2025**

Statewide WIOA Title I Performance*

(4/01/2025 - 6/30/2025)

	Participants	Employment 2nd Quarter	Employment 4th Quarter	Median Earnings	Credential Rate	Measurable Skills Gains
PY 2024 Negotiated Performance Levels - Adult	~	72.50%	74.00%	\$7,500	50.40%	50.40%
ADULT	476	66.1%	67.60%	\$7,829	50.00%	33.90%
PY 2024 Negotiated Performance Levels - DW	~	63.30%	77.80%	\$10,025	100.00%	8.00%
DISLOCATED WORKER	190	77.10%	70.10%	\$10,978	44.00%	43.20%
PY 2024 Negotiated Performance Levels - Youth	~	67.00%	64.00%	\$5,000.00	62.00%	50.50%
YOUTH	200	50.00%	81.80%	\$3,763	50.00%	25.20%

*Not finalized

Statewide WP Performance Measures*

(4/01/2025 - 6/30/2025)

Wagner-Peyser	Negotiated	Rolling 4 Qtrs
Participants	-	1,450
Employment Rate (Q2)	57.00%	61.0%
Employment Rate (Q4)	61.00%	63.6%
Median Earnings	\$8,300	\$10,629

*Not finalized

Outreach Services through Career/Job Fairs & Community Events

May 9, 2025 - Stand Down Event for Homeless Veterans at Akaka Center: 400+ attended. WDD provided support and resources to homeless veterans, connecting them with the AJC for employment services.

May 20, 2025 - Keehi Lagoon Memorial: 78 attended, 35 employers, 28 veterans. 6 reported hired. Feedback: a great resource to connect job seekers and employers

June 3, 2025 - Job Corps Rapid Response Event: WDD, UI, DHS, participated to provide info on various support & services, and job opportunities to 58 Job Corps employees.

June 5 – Military Community Hiring Event JBPHH, 15 attended

June 10, 2025 - Going Home Hawaii Consortium: Monthly event 6/10/25, 7/8/25

June 12, 2025 - Career Pathways Committee Monthly Meeting: 6/12/25, 7/9/25

June 14, 2025 - Soldier & Family Readiness Expo: 1st squadron, 299th Cavalry Regiment

June 20 – DLIR Job Fair: 45 attended, 7 divisions/ employers. WDD supported this event to attract those looking to hire employees laid off from the feds.

June 25, 2025 - Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium, opportunities for Justice Impacted

July 16, 2025 - Community Partnership Hui: Foster and Transitioning Foster youth meeting

Name: Jarret Espiritu.

Employer: DLIR WDD

Program: JVSG

Mr. Jarret Espiritu is a veteran of the Air Force, having served for over 20 years. After completing his military service, he worked as an independent contractor for Amazon while pursuing a master's degree in strategic communication at the Hawaii Pacific University. Following the end of his contract with Amazon, he explored various programs available to eligible veterans and ultimately enrolled in the Jobs for Veterans Service Grants (JVSG) program.

During his employment counseling sessions with the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP), Jarret expressed a strong desire to work with veterans, providing guidance and support that would enhance their lives. His case manager, Mr. Irv Higa, recommended that Jarret apply for a DVOP position with the Workforce Development Division, as it perfectly aligned with his career interests.

With Irv's support, Jarret applied for a temporary 89-day DVOP position and successfully secured an interview, receiving an appointment in April 2025. He is now leveraging his passion for helping veterans while learning how to assist them in finding employment.





Community Outreach

Soldier & Family Readiness Expo – June 14, 2025

Title II

Wanelle Kaneshiro
Workforce Development
Branch DOE




Workforce Development Council Quarterly Board Meeting
Wednesday, August 20, 2025
9:30 AM to 12:00 PM

REPORT
Adult Education Family Literacy Act
WIOA Title II
Hawaii State Department of Education

1. The U.S. Department of Education released AEFLA funds for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.
 - AEFLA was in jeopardy of not being funded.
 - Future funding is still questionable.
2. Regular meetings with the federal Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE)
 - HIDOE remains under corrective action until agreement with Kauai one-stop shop is submitted.

Submitted by:



Wanelle Kaneshiro
AEFLA State Director
Hawaii State Department of Education

08/03/2025

Date

Title IV – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Lea Dias, Administrator

Hawaii DVR PY24 Q4 (April 1 – June 30, 2025)		
Performance Measures		
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)		
Participants served (VR)	3608	
Participants exited	120	
WIOA Program Involvement	Adult Dislocated Worker Youth Wagner-Peyser Adult Education Job Corps Youth Build Total	276 6 83 9 17 6 8 405

Q1: Successful Closures in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)			
(7/1/24 to 9/30/24)			
Job Title	Participant	Wage	Hours Worked
Childcare Workers	1	16.00	30.00
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	1	14.00	3.00
Dishwashers	2	18.50	14.00
Electrical Engineers	1	37.98	40.00
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	1	52.75	35.00
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3	18.33	27.67
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1	19.50	18.00
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	2	23.43	22.00
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1	19.10	32.00
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1	26.00	40.00

Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	1	29.59	40.00
Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other	1	16.00	15.00
Office Clerks, General	3	19.92	32.00
Retail Salespersons	2	19.00	24.50
Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs	1	14.00	16.00
Social and Community Service Managers	1	28.84	40.00
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	4	18.00	15.25
Average Total	27	22.99	26.14
Median Total	27	19.10	27.67
Q2: Successful Closure in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)			
(10/1/24 to 12/31/24)			
Job Title	Participant	Wage	Hours Worked
Building Cleaning Workers, All Other	1	14.00	4
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	1	18.00	30
Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers, All Other	1	14.32	40
Food Preparation Workers	1	14.50	24
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1	14.00	15
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	1	14.00	4
Legal Support Workers, All Other	1	30.00	10
Managers, All Other	1	26.90	40
Mechanical Engineers	1	28.85	40
Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	1	18.00	40
Occupational Therapists	2	38.20	40
Packers and Packagers, Hand	1	20.17	40
Project Management Specialists	1	34.27	27
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	2	19.75	30
Average Total	16	22.78	27.42
Median Total	16	18.88	30

Q3: Successful Closures in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)			
(1/1/25 to 3/31/25)			
Job Title	Participant	Wage	Hour Worked
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	1	23.50	40.00
Chefs and Head Cooks	1	14.00	40.00
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1	14.32	40.00
Computer Hardware Engineers	1	48.08	40.00
Environmental Engineering Technicians	1	20.00	40.00
Financial Managers	1	29.49	40.00
Managers, All Other	2	40.09	32.00
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1	30.47	40.00
Mental Health Counselors	1	32.00	40.00
Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other	2	22.19	35.00
Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	1	16.50	40.00
Security Guards	1	14.00	20.00
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	3	23.30	30.00
Waiters and Waitresses	1	25.00	40.00
Average Total	18	25.49	36.92
Median Total	18	23.40	40.00

Q4: Successful Closure in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)			
(4/1/25 to 6/30/25)			
Job Title	Participant	Wage	Hours Worked
Administrative Services Managers	1	20.00	40.00
Adult Basic and Secondary Education and Literacy Teachers and Instructors	1	20.00	30.00
Baggage Porters and Bellhops	3	16.68	36.67
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary	1	43.30	40.00
Building Cleaning Workers, All Other	1	14.00	40.00
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	1	20.67	40.00
Cashiers	1	15.75	40.00
Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other	1	15.00	20.00
Computer Systems Analysts	1	30.06	60.00
Construction and Building Inspectors	1	20.00	40.00
Construction Laborers	1	18.90	40.00
Construction Managers	1	40.00	40.00
Court, Municipal, and License Clerks	1	18.31	40.00
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	1	18.25	27.00
Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	1	35.86	40.00
Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	1	55.15	40.00
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1	17.00	40.00
Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers, All Other	1	18.00	24.00
Food Service Managers	1	32.88	40.00
General and Operations Managers	1	38.46	40.00
Human Resources Specialists	1	20.00	40.00
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2	17.42	40.00
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1	17.00	40.00
Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other	1	14.00	20.00
Office Clerks, General	3	18.13	33.33
Project Management Specialists	1	64.90	40.00
Real Estate Sales Agents	1	43.19	40.00
Registered Nurses	1	65.77	26.00
Retail Salespersons	1	14.00	30.00
Roofers	1	18.00	30.00

Security Guards	1	17.51	40.00
Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs	1	15.50	20.00
Special Education Teachers, Elementary School	1	32.88	40.00
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	5	14.30	32.00
Teachers and Instructors, All Other	1	46.15	30.00
Teaching Assistants, Preschool, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School, Except Special Education	1	20.00	40.00
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	1	21.63	40.00
Average Total	46	26.17	36.18
Median Total	46	20.00	40.00

Cumulative Successful Closures in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) (7/1/24 to 6/30/25)			
	Participant	Wage	Hours Worked
Average Total	107	24.60	32.73
Median Total	107	19.96	40.00

Staff Vacancy Report	
DVR is actively hiring qualified individuals for various positions	
Staff Vacancies as of 7/23/25	
County	Vacancies
Oahu/Administration and Staff Services Office	5
Oahu Branch	12
Services for the Blind Branch (Ho'opono)	9
Hawaii Branch (Hilo/Kona)	6
Maui Branch (Maui, Molokai/Lanai)	3
Kauai	3.5
Total	39/112 (35% vacant)

Accomplishments for the Period: 07/24 – 06/25

Key Accomplishments

Goal/Project	Key Actions	Impact/Results
Increased Applications, Eligibility, IPEs, and Employment Outcomes	Led statewide initiatives to streamline processes, trained staff, and monitored progress closely	Improved client access and services, resulting in growth across all key VR performance indicators
Budget Management & Forecasting	Worked closely with TA, leadership and fiscal team to monitor spending and forecast future needs	Ensured financial stability and maximized resources for participant services
Resolved Federal Corrective Action Plan & State Audit Findings	Collaborated with RSA, auditors, TAC and staff to address long-standing issues and implement corrective measures	Successfully closed findings dating back to 2015 and 2019, restoring federal and state confidence
Reimagine & Renew Initiative	Launched a statewide initiative to modernize service delivery, strengthen staff engagement, and improve outcomes. Presented at annual DHS leadership meeting	Created a culture of innovation, collaboration, and accountability across DVR
Improved Consumer Satisfaction Survey	Redesigned the survey and emphasized participant-centered services	Achieved the best consumer feedback results in DVR's recent history

Key Metrics & Outcomes

- Attrition rate prior to IPE improved significantly:
 - PY 22: 77.4%
 - PY 23: 25.9%
 - PY 24 (to date): 23.1%
- Successful employment outcomes increased:
 - PY 21: 44
 - PY 22: 39

- PY 23: 30
- PY 24 :107
- Staff vacancies reduced from 42% to 35%, strengthening service delivery and team stability.

Leadership Impact

- Mentored and supported branch administrators and supervisors, leading to stronger team cohesion and staff development.
- Built stronger cross-agency partnerships with DHS and external stakeholders, resulting in more collaborative service delivery. MOUs with DOE, DOH/DD, AJsCs.
- Provided steady leadership through policy changes and federal audits, reinforcing accountability and organizational trust. Grant Manual completed for smoother transition of staff.

Challenges Overcome

- Resolved long-standing federal and state compliance findings while maintaining day-to-day service delivery.
- Balanced a demanding budget year with increased participant needs and limited resources, ensuring services were not disrupted.
- Revised policies/ procedures to remove unnecessary obstacles
- improved staff morale

Written Reports from Local Workforce Development Boards

Kauai

Adele Manera, Kauai Island
Manager, Workforce
Development Division

Oahu

Harrison Kuranishi, Executive
Director, Oahu Workforce
Development Board

Workforce Development Council Board Report

Oahu Workforce Development Board

August 20, 2025

The last Oahu Workforce Development Full Board meeting was held on July 24, 2025.

- I. New Oahu Workforce Development Board Staff Update
- II. Updates on the status of the partner Memorandum of Understanding/Infrastructure Funding Agreements
- III. Alignment with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- IV. New Oahu Workforce Development Board Members
- V. Program Year 24 Data Metrics

ADULT	Negotiated Rate	PY24 Actual
Participants		590
Employment Rate (Q2)	75%	72.4%
Employment Rate (Q4)	75%	79.5%
Median Earnings	\$7,700	\$7,872.97
Credential Rate	64%	42.4%
Measurable Skills Gain	64%	50.8%

DISLOCATED WORKER	Negotiated Rate	PY24 Actual
Participants		117
Employment Rate (Q2)	74%	80.0%
Employment Rate (Q4)	79%	76.5%
Median Earnings	\$10,000	\$10,559.38
Credential Rate	70%	28.6%
Measurable Skills Gain	70%	32.0%

YOUTH	Negotiated Rate	PY24 Actual
Participants		156
Employment Rate (Q2)	68%	68.4%
Employment Rate (Q4)	65%	67.7%
Median Earnings	\$5,000	\$4,804.45
Credential Rate	65%	77.4%
Measurable Skills Gain	53%	58.3%

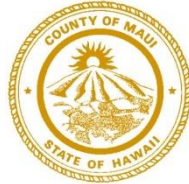
Maui

Chentelle Rowland, Executive
Director, Maui Workforce
Development Board

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director

CYNTHIA LALLO
Chief of Staff



OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 MAIN STREET
ONE MAIN PLAZA, SUITE 300
WAILUKU, HAWAII 96793
www.maui-county.gov

August 4, 2025

I. Board and Sub-Committee Meetings

A. **Maui County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB)**

- a. MCWDB Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 09/04/25 at 9:30am.

Sector Strategies & Employer Engagement Sub-Committee Meeting

- a. Sub-committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 08/07/25 at 9:00am.

- b. Employer Engagement: Alpha Inc

On Monday, 07/07/25, the County of Maui's Chief of Staff, Mayor's Executive Assistant and I met with Jason Stenger, President/CEO of Alpha Inc.

- They are the biggest non-union construction company in the State, specializing in heavy civil construction, water well drilling, pump installation, underground utilities, excavation and grading, and renewable energy.
- Purpose of the meeting was to identify ways to partner and create training/employment pathways for our community.
- From that meeting, we were connected with Sunny Cabello, Talent and Development Manager.
 - Alpha values training/promoting from within.
 - Current training program includes: foreman 14; superintendent 4; program operator 5; and carpentry 1
 - They have a pilot program with Maui High School, with the first cohort starting in November. We have expressed our interest in supporting those who qualify for WIOA for those needing steel toed shoes and other protective gear. The first meeting with Maui High School is scheduled for Tuesday, 08/05/25.
 - Sent ETP application; OJT; future cohort (internal/external adults)
 - Second Chance Employment

Program/Youth Sub-Committee Meeting

- a. Program/Youth Sub-Committee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 08/05/25 at 9:00am.

b. Program Update: BIA PACT – Business Industry Association will be having a Maui Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Training from 9/8-10/24, 8:30am-3:30pm, at the Cameron Center.

- This training is a comprehensive, hands-on workforce development program designed for individuals with little or no prior experience in construction.
- It introduces participants to the essential skills, tools, and knowledge needed to begin a career in the building industry.
- Certifications Earned
 1. U.S. Department of Labor Credential
 2. HBI Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Training Certificate
 3. Fundamentals of Green Building (BIA Hawaii)
 4. OSHA-30 Construction Safety and Health
 5. Adult First Aid/CPR/AED (American Red Cross)
 6. Optional: Lead Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) and OSHA Disaster Site Worker Certification
- We currently have 12 individuals referred to participate. The Adult/DW program will be determining WIOA eligibility for supports and services.

Finance Sub-Committee Meeting

a. Finance Sub-Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 13, 2025 at 9:00am.

WIOA Program Year (PY)23 funds ended on 06/30/25. Percentages of program expenditures spent are as follows:

- Adult Program – 73%
- DW Program – 53%
- Youth Program – 80%

B. Performance Measures Negotiations

a. Executive Director, C. Rowland, reviewed performance measures for PY24 and PY25 for Quarter 4 for the WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs.

b. C. Rowland has identified areas of improvement and is working closely with subrecipients, Goodwill Industries of HI, to ensure front line staff are provided with the necessary tools and resources to meet expectations.

<u>WIOA Title I Adult Program</u>	<u>PY24</u>	<u>PY25</u>	<u>QTR 1</u>	<u>QTR 2</u>	<u>QTR 3</u>	<u>QTR 4</u>
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	65%	65.5%	60%	25%	33%	50%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	68%	70%	76.7%	80%	70%	62.5%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,500	\$8,000	\$ 10,034.20	\$ 13,251.24	\$ 13,251.24	\$ 10,201.85
Credential Attainment Rate	51%	51%	33.3%	33.30%	0%	0%

Measurable Skills Gains	51%	51%	12.5%	12.50%	25%	6.30%
WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program	PY24	PY25	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	72%	72%	50%	50%	60%	58.30%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	77.5%	78%	72%	78.9%	68.80%	83.30%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$9,500	\$10,000	\$ 8,861.15	\$ 10,506.59	\$10,506.59	\$10,506.59
Credential Attainment Rate	51%	51%	0	0	N/A	N/A
Measurable Skills Gains	51%	51%	0	100.00%	100%	100%
WIOA Title I Youth Program	PY24	PY25	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	67%	68%	50%	80%	80%	100%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	65%	66%	83.9%	66.70%	50%	80%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$5,000	\$5,200	\$ 4,730.49	\$ 6,951.24	\$ 8,480.70	\$7,789.41
Credential Attainment Rate	62%	62%	44.4%	33.30%	0	33.30%
Measurable Skills Gains	53%	53%	40.9%	47.60%	52.4%	33.30%

C. **Staff Technical Assistance (TA)** – On-going

a. Staff have requested TA on areas such as fiscal monitoring, program reporting, HireNet, and the Eligible Training Provider list.

b. Staff would like to thank Bennette Misalucha for her role in setting these TA opportunities up.

II. Forthcoming Events/Announcements

A. **2025 Ka Pewa Youth Leadership Summit**

Theme: *Empower the Present, Shape the Future*

Date: Friday, September 12, 2025

Time: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Location: University of Hawai‘i Maui College

Hawai‘i’s future lies with its youth, who are now being given a platform to collaborate with today’s leaders and help shape tomorrow. This first-of-its-kind for Maui Nui - a youth-led summit, planned and executed by Maui County high school students through The Maui Nui Hui, will be scheduled this fall to focus on action and collaboration. Their mission is to give young leaders the tools, connections, voice and influence needed to shape a future they can take ownership of to build and thrive in right here at home.

The summit centers around four core goals:

- Amplifying youth voices in local decision-making
- Addressing outmigration affecting Maui Nui’s future

- Equipping students with practical life and academic tools
- Creating a youth-driven roadmap for long-term community impact

B. Success Story – WIOA Youth

This young man joined the WIOA Ola I Ka Hana Youth (Ola) program as an In-School Youth, completing his final year of high school. He needed assistance with post-secondary education and was uncertain about his future plans. However, he took the initiative to apply to UH Maui College. During his time in the Ola program, he successfully participated in the program's Community Work Experience Program (CWEP) at the Goodwill Retail Store in the summer of 2024. Currently, he is a full-time student at UH Maui College and has successfully completed his spring semester.

The Ola program has provided him with vital support services, including books and supplies for school, as well as clothing for job interviews. He is on track to finish his last semester at UH Maui, where he will graduate with a Liberal Arts degree. He plans to transfer to UH West Oahu to pursue a BA in Creative Media. His growth and maturity during the program have empowered him to achieve his goals.

Submitted by:

Chentelle Rowland

Chentelle Rowland
Executive Director
County of Maui – Office of Economic Development
Maui County Workforce Development Board

Hawai'i Island

Clinton Mercado, Executive
Director, Hawai'i County
Workforce Development Board

**HAWAI'I COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (HCWDB)
QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
MEETING**

Period: April 2025 – June 2025

Overview of the key initiatives and activities related to Workforce Development by the Hawaii County Workforce Development Board (HCWDB).

1. Status Updates

- **Board / Oversight Meetings**
 - The HCWDB convened for an Oversight Committee meeting on June 12, 2025.
 - The HCWDB Oversight Committee reviewed a new policy and procedure that outlines what steps will be taken if there were to be a cessation of funding for WIOA TITLE I.
- **Job Seeker Services**
 - The WIOA Title I service provider, Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, continues to provide support for in-demand job training in the healthcare and transportation industries. The HCWDB continues to work with various organizations and entities in diversifying training opportunities through the Workforce Development Councils' Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).
- **Employer Services**
 - Board staff have continued to actively reach out to local employers to better understand their needs so that training programs can be tailored to meet those specific requirements.

2. Workforce Development Partnerships

- **Community & Economic Development Collaboration**
 - The board staff continues to strengthen its partnerships with local economic development organizations, including BISAC, Neighborhood Place of Puna, and Youth Connect Point, to ensure alignment of workforce development strategies with economic growth initiatives that align with county and state goals.
- **Support for Underserved Populations**
 - Programs targeting veterans, individuals with disabilities, and those involved in the justice system continue to be expanded to improve access to training, career counseling, and supportive services.
 - HCWDB Staff, Servicer Providers, and Partners attended fiscal training in June 2025.

3. Challenges & Areas for Improvement

- **Transportation Certification and Licensing Barriers**
 - HCWDB Staff, Servicer Providers, and Partners continue to send candidates to the County of Hawaii to apply for the open examiner positions. Licensing for Commercial Drivers continues to be held back due to the County of Hawaii having no examiners.

4. Upcoming Plans for July - September 2025

- **Expansion of Partnerships**

- HCWDB Staff continue to work with partners and community organizations to expand its network of available resources. Collaboration efforts are being utilized to reduce the amount of return funds at the end of the program's fiscal year.

Conclusion

Moving into the third quarter of 2025 and the first for the program year, the board and its staff will continue its to focus on expanding its partnerships, outreach efforts, and utilizing its strategies for spending down WIOA program funds.

Written Reports from
Standing Committees for
the period June 2025 to
August 2025

Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee

Chair Cary Miyashiro
Vice Chair Lorna Woo

**Workforce Development Council
Third Quarter Meeting
Wednesday, August 20, 2025
Ke'elikolani Building
830 Punchbowl Street**

REPORT:

SECTOR STRATEGIES & CAREER PATHWAYS COMMITTEE Submitted by:

Chair - Cary Miyashiro, Quad D Solutions LLC,
Vice Chair -Lorna Woo, International Union of Painters, and Allied Trades

**Sector Strategies & Career Pathways Committee Meeting,
Tuesday, July 1, 2025
Presentations:**

Shirlene Cardenas, HING (Hawaii National Guard) State Advisory Council

Shirlene Cardenas, President of the Hawaii National Guard Advisory Council
And a 22-year veteran with the Hawaii Air National Guard. Her distinguished
Military service includes IT project at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. She
worked across both public and private sectors and is now CEO of MC3
Technologies, a firm specializing in IT modernization and cybersecurity, with
deep experience supporting the Department of Defense.

- Defined the Hawaii National Guard State Advisory Council.
- Identify those served.
- How HING can contribute to the labor shortage.
- Potential resource Workforce partnership

Michael Cardenas, CTO, MC3Technologies

Michael Cardenas is Chief Technology Office of MC3 Technologies,
leads technology strategy and oversees secure system design. He has
worked on cybersecurity and IT modernization for over 20 years.

- Identified current cyber and IT workforce challenges in Hawaii.
- Why is it important?
- Presentation on impact on business and national security.

Tui Scanlan, IATSE

Tui Scanlan, President of IATSE Local 665, the union representing Hawaii's
behind the scenes professionals in film, television, stage, and trade show production. A
longtime member and current International Trustee, he brings deep experience in the
state's media workforce.

- What is IATSE Local 665?
- Media programs in high schools and post secondary?
- Growing & expanding the media sector in Hawaii.
- How can we support this effort?

Symposium/Visits targeting those with barriers to employment.

Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium (Prison to College) @ Chaminade University- Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Dr Janet Davidson, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Chaminade University

Rosanne Propato, Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation

- A look at successful programs for reentry to the community from nationwide lockups.

'25 Communication Access Conference @ JCCH- Thursday, June 26, 2026

“Pono” Tokioka, Department of Health/ Disability Communication & Access Board

- Supporting the Deaf and hard of hearing community.

Kawailoa Project & Family Wellness Learning Center, site visit @ Hawaii Youth Correction Center- Friday, July 11, 2025.

Dr Tai-An Miao, Asst. Professor, Department of Psychology, UH-Manoa

- Transformative Indigenous model to end youth Incarceration.

Next Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee meeting

Tuesday, October 7, 2025

1:00pm to 2:30pm.

Special Projects Committee

Chair Keith DeMello
Vice Chair Dion Dizon



Workforce Development Council Board Meeting
Wednesday, Aug. 20, 2025
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

REPORT
Special Projects Committee

Highlights for the Quarter

- I. COMMITTEE MEETING: The Special Projects Committee (SPC) met on June 30, 2025. The agenda included:
 - a. Presentation: Public Awareness Campaign Overview by Becker Communications
 - i. Pre-campaign survey results included that 81% of Hawai'i residents have never heard of American Job Centers (AJCs)
 - ii. Campaign Theme: "If I Can, You Can" featuring local personalities Augie T., Lanai Tabura, and Pashyn Santos
 - iii. Multi-channel approach including TV, radio, social media, digital advertising, and community outreach
 - iv. Campaign running through October 2025, with translation for some of the print and radio materials
 - v. Committee feedback was positive, with members appreciating the comprehensive reach and appropriate talent selection
- II. Committee Discussion: 2026 Legislative Topics
 - i. Chair DeMello recapped the 2025 legislative session process and protocols
 - 1. Members DeMello and Scanlan submitted testimony during session on measures aligned with Workforce Development Council (WDC) priorities
 - 2. 2025 Legislative Session outcomes:
 - a. Senate Bill 742 (Data Sharing) — Signed by governor, creates data sharing and government development working group; includes chair of WDC or his designee
 - b. Governor's messages (WDC member confirmations) — All confirmed
 - c. Note: Workforce Excellence Award Program resolution — Passed concurrently, sponsored by Sen. Stanley Chang
 - ii. Committee identified need for pre-session preparation timeline (now through December 2025), including discussion of potential housekeeping measures for WDC bylaws alignment with Hawai'i Revised Statutes
 - iii. Areas for improvement include proactive bill development, comprehensive position papers in advance of session, and coalition building
 - iv. Note: Potential special legislative session in fourth quarter 2025

III. Executive Director's Report

- i. Unified Plan Implementation on target with July 9 Workforce Synergy Summit scheduled
- ii. Roles and responsibilities mapping between the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) Workforce Development Division and WDC expected completion in third quarter
- iii. Upcoming launch of workforce development heroes search with awards at September conference

IV. COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

- i. Recommended tracking intake data at AJCs to measure campaign effectiveness by asking clients how they heard about services
- ii. Agreed to formalize legislative preparation timeline for 2026 session
- iii. Supported continued collaboration with county partners for social media amplification

V. FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

- i. Workforce Synergy Summit on July 9 at Honolulu Community College
- ii. Future of Work Conference on Sept. 24, 2025
- iii. Launch of Workforce Development Heroes nomination process (TBD)

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- i. DLIR legislative coordination meeting to be requested post-July

VII. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING: Sept. 29, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. (Zoom and in-person at DLIR Room 310)

Submitted by:



Keith DeMello

Chair

Special Projects Committee

Youth Services Committee

Chair Tui Scanlan
Vice Chair Carla Kurokawa

**Workforce Development Council
Third Quarter Meeting
Wednesday, August 20, 2025
Ke'elikolani Building
830 Punchbowl Street**

REPORT:

YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE

Submitted by:

Evan Palmer – WDC Staff on behalf of:
Chair - Tui Scanlan, IATSE Local 665
Vice Chair - Carla Kurokawa, Alu Like

**Youth Services Committee Meeting,
Tuesday, July 8, 2025**

Presentations:

Rylie Hager, MSCJ, Program Manager, Prison Education, Chaminade University

Rylie Hager manages Chaminade University's Prison Education Program, which offers college-level coursework, holistic support, and mentorship for incarcerated students. The program serves many parents and youth affected by generational incarceration through the Second Chance Pell initiative.

- Presented highlights from the Pathways to Meaningful Work Symposium.
- Outlined successes of Chaminade's prison education cohorts, including associate degrees earned in prison and upcoming bachelor's programs.
- Discussed the role of higher education in reducing recidivism and improving reentry outcomes.
- Addressed barriers to employment and employer stigma facing formerly incarcerated individuals.
- Highlighted innovative practices including remote employment opportunities for incarcerated workers.

Kanani Koster, Director, Cherry Street Films

Kanani Koster leads Cherry Street Films, an organization providing youth with hands-on training in filmmaking through summer camps, school-based workshops, and long-term mentorship programs. The organization emphasizes technical skill-building, storytelling, and career exploration, especially for underserved communities including Native Hawaiian and Micronesian youth.

- Shared impact of Cherry Street Films' mission and youth empowerment initiatives.
- Highlighted the June 2025 Honolulu Film Camp, held in partnership with Kūmau Productions.
- Demonstrated focus on teaching collaboration, creative expression, and career readiness.
- Outlined mentorship by local industry professionals including Erin Lau, Bryson Chun, and Gerard Elmore.
- Discussed ongoing efforts to connect film programs with DOE career pathways.

Executive Director's Report:

Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director, Workforce Development Council

- Updated committee on State Unified Plan Implementation (2024–2028) progress.
- Reported on the Workforce Synergy Summit II and Hawai'i Generational Commitment "North Star" initiative rollout.
- Clarified ongoing efforts to delineate responsibilities between WDC and Workforce Development Division.
- Highlighted WDC website improvements and enhanced public accessibility.
- Announced upcoming events including Strada Foundation Webinar (July 25) and Future of Work Conference (September 24).

Site Visit Announcement:

Kelly Quitevis, WDC Program Specialist

Announced upcoming learning tour at Kawaihoa Youth & Family Wellness Center

- Site visit scheduled for Friday, July 11, 2025, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM.
- Tour of community partner sites on Kawaihoa campus.
- Opportunity to hear from young people in education, vocational training, and mentorship programs.
- Focus on Indigenous, healing-centered system of care replacing youth incarceration.
- 8-year initiative funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Next Youth Services Committee meeting

Tuesday, October 1, 2025

1:30pm to 3:00pm.

Evaluation of the Executive Director

**REQUIRES BOARD
ACTION**

WDC Chair Ken Loui

Announcements and Public Testimony

2025-2026 BOARD MEETING DATES (subject to change)

Fourth Quarter Wednesday, November 19, 2025
9:30 am to 11:30 am

First Quarter Wednesday, February 18, 2026
9:30 am to 11:30 am

Second Quarter Wednesday, May 20, 2026
9:30 am to 11:30 am

NEXT MEETING

The next quarterly board meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. at 830 Punchbowl Street, Room 310, Honolulu, Hawaii 96701.

Adjournment