

## Kaua`i WIB Report to the WDC

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Island:	Kaua`i County
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### 1) SUMMARY

#### **CURRENT STATE OF KAUA`I'S WORKFORCE**

Kaua`i's unemployment rate increased from its December 2010 7.9% two-year low back up to 8.5% in March 2011. The number of unemployed increased during this period by 250 as the labor force increased by 450. While leisure industry has been holding steady with strong performance particularly with the high end properties such as St. Regis and Grand Hyatt, retail now struggles after a strong holiday season.

Our popular Borders store was a casualty of this corporation's bankruptcy and it closed in April resulting in the loss of 45 jobs. Princeville at Hanalei closed its second golf course for extensive renovations and laid-off about 35 workers. Two long-time Coconut Plantation Marketplace tenants, a bar and a pizza place popular among locals, closed in March. So despite the announced end of the recession, consumer spending continues to be conservative thus negatively impacting small businesses.

#### **KWIB ACTIVITIES/EVENTS/PROGRAMS**

Renewable energy continues to be a key focus for KWIB and the community. KIUC recently got approval for permits to develop hydroelectric plans for Kauai's 5 main river systems while work on Environmental Assessments for 4 of these alternate river sites continues. This action is significant for the community in potentially controlling future power costs since it serves as a "place holder" for our publicly owned utility's right to develop these sites. Other private enterprises also had plans to develop these resources and are now precluded from doing so.

Kauai's second Photovoltaic course commenced on April 25 at Kauai Community College, this time with 13 SESP and 2 WIA Adult program participants. Additional KCC non-credit courses offered through their ED2GO on-line program have a green focus, and are currently being reviewed by KWIB for inclusion on Kaua'i's training matrix. This will enable us to offer a wider array of training since the number of jobs per job type is limited on Kauai.

The Kaua'i WIA Administrator and Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) continue to collaborate and pool SESP resources to bring the Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) training to Kaua'i in August or September that will equip local energy managers to sit for the Certified Energy Manager (CEM) or the Energy Manager in Training (EMIT™) credentials. Large energy consumers around the State will be able to benefit from this training, especially those from hotels, hospitals, utilities, manufacturing, large commercial facilities, etc. Their ability to significantly reduce their power consumption will reduce their operating costs and delay or reduce utility companies' need to expand their energy production.

This training supports the goals of Kaua‘i’s Energy Sustainability Plan and the State’s Clean Energy Plan. Kauai Community College is now a partner in this effort. More details will be forthcoming soon.

WorkWise once again coordinated in conjunction with the County a very successful two-day March TSA job fair at the County’s Civic Center in anticipation of their extensive hiring this spring.

WorkWise – Kaua‘i One Stop Job Center staff partnered with Kaua‘i Community College Cooperative Education to host a Job Fair for students and the public on the Community College campus last month. Strong business presence of 41 key employers with a wide array of job opportunities was of great encouragement to eager job seekers, especially since no island-wide job fair had been held in the past two years because of low hiring activity by businesses.

KWIB identified potential participants for the WDC’s March Software Development Skills Panel and five were recruited for the event. One of them, a 27 year old entrepreneur who has developed several successful internet businesses including Ukulele Underground which offers on-line ukulele instruction and other services, was inspired by the event. He is currently organizing others on Kauai to continue discussions about the challenges and opportunities of this evolving business deliver system. He currently has one employee but envisions aggressively expanding his workforce over the next year.

WIA and WorkWise staff, along with numerous KWIB members have been busy volunteering many hours to support our high schools’ career education programs including: speaking at career awareness events as well as resume writing and interview preparation workshops, conducting mock interviews, and judging senior projects. These activities are vital to help bring the real world of work to our students, as part of the Board’s effort to “Grow Our Own Talent.”

WIA staff conducted review and submitted extensive comments for 3 drafts of the WDC’s Older Youth Program Report in March, April and May.

Much staff and Board Members’ time have been invested in finalizing our PY10 Youth Program contract. Due to numerous unforeseen delays, final contracting is still pending.

## **2) INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS**

### **WorkWise – Kaua‘i – ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS**

#### **WorkWise Kauai/WDD Activities**

Job Seeker documented walk-in visits dipped to 35 per day in April. This “apparent reduction” is likely due to the loss of one staff member at the end of March who left to join KCC’s OCET staff as a Training Coordinator. Though temporary, her contributions to the office were significant since she was a former Supervisor in the office. With this reduction in staff coverage, ensuring that most walk-ins actually register before receiving services is difficult.

## **Projects/Programs**

As described above, WorkWise staff were vital in promoting job fair events to ensure that job seekers attended both, as well as employers participated in the job fair held at KCC. They also promoted KCC's grant-funded HITS Program such that standing room only crowds attended the two informational sessions and enrollment was maximized.

Staff continue to enroll and serve new and existing participants in the **WIA** programs and the **Volunteer Internship Program (VIP)**.

The **Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA)** program continues to successfully serve participants despite the loss of the staff person who presented the majority of workshops.

The **Employment and Training Fund (ETF)** incumbent worker training program was re-activated Jan. 01, 2011, to run through June 30, 2011 to assist employers with upgrading the skills of their existing workforce. Staff continue to use a variety of means to promote the program to ensure that funds are well-utilized before they expire.

## **WIA YOUTH PROGRAM**

Unanticipated delays to the County of Kaua'i's award of the Youth Program continue. At this time, it is hoped the contract will be awarded and the contract executed before the end of May.

## **3) OTHER ITEMS**

### **Kaua'i Community School for Adults**

With significant DOE budgetary cutbacks resulting in the loss of the Principal's position at KCSA as of July 1, the current plan is to continue offering the C-based Mastery program at the 3 high school locations, while the GED, ABE, and ESL programs will have to be consolidated at one central location, the Kauai High School campus. As stated previously, this is unfortunate since enrollment increased significantly over the last 21 months due to the continuing depressed economic conditions; program services are vital to our Youth Program as well.

## **4) KAUA'I COUNTY ACTUAL VS. GOALS FOR 3rd QTR of PY 10**

Quarterly Report information not yet available

## **5) OTHER**

none