2020 COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT

PLANTING SEEDS FOR A RESILIENT FUTURE

Prepared by the City and County of Honolulu
Department of Community Services
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ABOUT THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Department of Community Services is an agency of the City and County of Honolulu focused on creating opportunities to improve the quality of life for the people of O‘ahu. DCS oversees the City’s work in key areas such as housing, homeless services, community development, aging and disability resources, grants, housing and rental assistance, workforce training, and youth services. Under the leadership of Mayor Caldwell, DCS is responsible for implementing federal CARES Act funds in these areas to support the people of O‘ahu during the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, please visit http://www.honolulu.gov/dcs.
ALOHA,

In 2020, a year when all of our lives were upended by the threat of the deadly new Coronavirus, residents of the City and County of Honolulu were deeply impacted. Many lost the freedom to visit with ‘ohana safely, tens of thousands faced the prospect of unemployment or food insecurity for the first time in their lives and some grieved the loss of a loved one.

As the City and County of Honolulu agency charged with improving the quality of life for the people O’ahu and serving the most vulnerable among us — from keiki to kūpuna and those facing homelessness or hunger — COVID-19 created an unprecedented demand for the services we provide with our network of community partners. It also placed a sharper focus on the Department of Community Services’ vital mission and made our work more critical than ever.

I am so proud of our more than 200 team members — over 50% of whom are frontline workers — who stepped up for the community in this time of need and selflessly provided unwavering support to clients, partners, friends and families 365 days a year.

Since March, DCS has distributed $89.1 million in federal funds to 65 partner organizations and 88 programs supporting O’ahu’s communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Under Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell’s leadership, we collaborated with the Office of Economic Recovery, Office of Housing, Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resilience and the Department of Emergency Management to fully leverage the available resources and amplify our impact for our island’s residents. We invested in promoting public health, providing economic relief, supporting small businesses and workers, enhancing food security, addressing housing and homelessness and supporting keiki, kūpuna and vulnerable populations.

In this report, you’ll read more about how DCS has responded to COVID-19 and how we have planted the seeds for our recovery and a more resilient future for O’ahu. Our impact is only made possible by collaborating with nonprofits across O’ahu and their incredible contributions toward implementing new programs and providing critical services. All of us at DCS are proud to stand alongside our partners serving those in need and for the benefit of our community as a whole.

Mahalo nui loa,

Pamela A. Witty-Oakland

Director of the Department of Community Services
Deanna Yanagisako plants flowers at the Mānoa Gardens.
$8.5 MILLION  
**PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH**

The public health emergency required urgent action to protect community members, establish new disease prevention protocols, support vital medical services and stop the spread of COVID-19. Funds were awarded to organizations coordinating testing, outreach and education, isolation and quarantine options for O‘ahu residents, as well as for distribution of PPE and essential hygiene items to shelters and community-serving organizations.

$25 MILLION  
**ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES**

DCS and its nonprofit partners supported those facing economic hardship due to COVID-19 with financial assistance to cover basic living expenses, including rent, childcare and utility bills.

$8.4 MILLION  
**SMALL BUSINESSES AND WORKERS**

Small businesses, and the thousands of local families they employ, have been deeply impacted by the immediate and ongoing disruption of normal operations due to COVID-19. Funds were awarded to help local businesses survive and recover and equip out-of-work individuals with new skills, training and opportunities to reenter the job market.

$11.9 MILLION  
**FOOD SECURITY**

DCS distributed funds in support of initiatives to address an exponential increase in food insecurity since the onset of the pandemic. The efforts fed O‘ahu’s hungry families and included key investments to support local farmers, agricultural infrastructure and the long-term food resilience for our communities.

$19.5 MILLION  
**HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS**

The City and County of Honolulu mobilized resources and community partners to address a growing number of people on the brink of homelessness, as well as the increased risk of exposure to COVID-19 among unsheltered individuals. Partner organizations utilized funds to prevent homelessness, provide temporary shelter and wraparound services, including medical care for COVID-19 positive individuals, providing mediation services for tenants and landlords more.

$6.7 MILLION  
**KEIKI**

DCS distributed funds to programs offering child care for essential workers and working families as well as academic support and literacy workshops to minimize learning disruptions for students.

$6.3 MILLION  
**KŪPUNA**

Among the most at-risk in our community, kūpuna are especially vulnerable to complications from COVID-19, on their health and in access to food and services. Public-private partnerships and grants enabled the City and local initiatives to reach kūpuna safely at home with meal delivery, health checks and wraparound services as well as to support long-term facilities and caregivers in protection of O‘ahu’s kūpuna.

$1.8 MILLION  
**VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES**

DCS aided organizations serving vulnerable populations such as those who have been the victims of domestic violence or are struggling with substance abuse or behavioral health challenges. Initiatives included raising awareness of the issues and improving access to support for O‘ahu residents whose physical, mental and emotional health suffered due to conditions brought on by the Coronavirus.

**TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED TO SUPPORT O‘AHU COMMUNITIES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:** $89.1 MILLION
“There are hundreds of thousands of people on O’ahu right now who are struggling to make ends meet and wondering how long this will all last. In order for us to get through this, we all need to come up with creative solutions and work together to help those in need.”

— Mayor Kirk Caldwell

“On behalf of the Department of Community Services, we want to thank our nonprofit partners for working with us to serve the community needs of O’ahu. Whether it’s during the COVID-19 pandemic or the work we do every day year-round, our team is honored to be a part of funding the incredible work that our partners have done during this pandemic.”

— DCS Director Pamela A. Witty-Oakland

At left: DCS Director Pamela A. Witty-Oakland, DCS Deputy Director Rebecca Soon and Mayor Caldwell at the Pūnāwai Rest Stop.
In March 2020, O‘ahu residents and businesses were suddenly required to take extreme — and for some, costly — health precautions in the wake of the arrival of COVID-19 to our island. At the same time, many were facing the toughest economic crisis they’d ever experienced, as visitor and kama‘aina spending evaporated with the halt of transpacific travel and the county shelter-in-place order. Under these circumstances, CARES funding administered through the Department of Community Services and in collaboration with the Department of Emergency Management fulfilled urgent needs in public health, including continued health care for individuals who lost medical coverage; PPE and testing for people experiencing homelessness; hotel rooms for first responders; COVID-awareness education for culturally-diverse communities; and facility upgrades for hospitals and health centers.

17 INITIATIVES FUNDED

$8.5 MILLION AWARDED

COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE Aloha Medical Mission, Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, Hawai‘i Children’s Action Network, Hawai‘i Hotel Industry Foundation (HHIF), Ho‘ola Nā Pua, Kōkua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services, Pacific Medical Administrative Group, Papa Ola Lōkahi, Partners in Development Foundation (We Are Oceania), Project Vision Hawai‘i, St. Francis Healthcare System, Wai‘anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center.
**WAI’ANAE COAST COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CENTER SERVES WEST O’AHU PATIENTS**

The Wai’anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) has been on the frontlines of the pandemic in Leeward O‘ahu. WCCHC maintained its 24-hour emergency medical services by adapting its operations and securing adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for its staff and patients, thanks to financial aid from DCS. The healthcare provider also stood up drive-through COVID-19 testing and associated contact tracing, which allowed the organization to more effectively follow up on any positive tests and isolate outbreaks.

In addition to the ER department, WCCHC shifted its primary health services to telehealth appointments to ensure uninterrupted care to more than 38,000 patients across West O‘ahu.

“Our Health Center patients on the Wai’anae Coast and in Kapolei, Waipahu and ‘Ewa have many barriers to accessing health care, never more so than now, but have proven amazingly adept at utilizing virtual technology,” said Dr. Stephen Bradley, Chief Medical Officer for the Wai’anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center.

The center has been planning to introduce telemedicine for some time, but the fundamental challenge has been a lack of adequate infrastructure to fully implement the technology.

“CARES funds have allowed us to plan various upgrades and plan the needed improvements to a system that will revolutionize healthcare to the communities we serve and potentially to all underserved areas throughout the islands,” Dr. Bradley added.

**WE ARE OCEANIA SUPPORTS HARD-HIT PACIFIC ISLANDER COMMUNITY**

We Are Oceania, a collaborative project from the nonprofit Partners in Development, filled a critical role in reaching out to the community hardest hit by the pandemic — Pacific Islanders. This grassroots group helped connect families affected by COVID-19 to alternative lodging for quarantine or isolation, established a resource hotline with multilingual staffers, and provided food and supplies to families facing hardship. WAO also communicated with the Pacific Islander community through a cultural lens to inform and dispel questions, fears and uncertainties.

“CARES funds have allowed us to plan various upgrades and plan the needed improvements to a system that will revolutionize healthcare to the communities we serve and potentially to all underserved areas throughout the islands”

– Dr. Stephen Bradley
ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

The Household Hardship Relief Fund was established by Mayor Caldwell and the City and County of Honolulu to assist O‘ahu residents experiencing severe financial hardship resulting from unemployment or business interruptions. The public-private partnership between the city and its three nonprofit partners — Aloha United Way, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement and Helping Hands Hawai‘i — was seeded with $25 million in CARES funds to offer direct payment for basic needs including rent, mortgage, electric, medical insurance, emergency household expenses, senior care and childcare expenses.

$25 MILLION AWARDED

11,250+ RESIDENTS SUPPORTED

COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE
Aloha United Way, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement and Helping Hands Hawai‘i.
HELPING O‘AHU FAMILIES FACING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

More than 4,800 households and 16,600 individuals facing financial challenges due to the COVID-19 crisis received support from the Household Hardship Relief Fund program to pay their bills. The Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, which helped to process applications and distribute funds, collected the following testimonials from the beneficiaries of the program.

“I am so grateful to have this help in paying for my rent. This enabled me to provide for my parents and children during this uncertain time. Thank you so much for helping our ‘ohana.”
– Cherish Sistoza, Wahiawa

“I am very thankful for this program. I could say and write so many words about it because it helped me get through the month and saved me and my family from being evicted. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.”
– Lokboj ‘Ohana, Kalihi

“Thanks to your help, we were able to avoid being homeless. We used the funds to help us pay our rent during this time. My husband is in the tourism industry and is the sole provider. He is still furloughed. Your program has helped keep a roof over my family’s head. Mahalo plenty!”
– Fanesog ‘Ohana, Wai‘anae

“We lost our livelihood when COVID-19 hit. We had zero income immediately because we are house cleaners for vacation rentals and that stopped. Unemployment would not start for PUA till months later. Your program helped us pay rent when we had nothing to give our landlords. Thank you so much.”
– Long ‘Ohana, Ewa Beach
UHERO reported that between January and April 2020, Hawai’i small businesses suffered job losses of more than 40%, putting tens of thousands of O‘ahu residents out of work. Of those businesses participating in their survey, nearly 20% reported no revenue while another 20% reported earning less than half their baseline monthly revenue in July. In an effort to support struggling businesses and individuals, the Department of Community Services funded programs focusing on jobs and skill development for displaced workers and initiatives fostering economic recovery.

In July, WorkHawai’i students return to the classroom to receive vocational training.

7 INITIATIVES FUNDED
$8.4 MILLION AWARDED

COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE
Economic Development Alliance of Hawai’i, Kula no na Poʻe Hawai’i, Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement, and collaborations with the Department of Labor and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE OF HAWAI’I’S INNOVATIVE PROGRAM CONNECTS DISPLACED WORKERS WITH NEW CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The Economic Development Alliance of Hawai’i designed the Aloha Connections Innovation (ACI) program to provide a pathway to jobs and career opportunities in the innovation sector for workers who have been displaced due to the pandemic. Funded with CARES Act money, the program has three primary goals:

1. Provide jobs and skill development for O’ahu’s displaced workforce seeking potential career changes
2. Enable small businesses and innovation-driven enterprises in future growth sectors to assist with displaced workers to reboot our economy; and
3. Connect interns with businesses that seek additional support, bringing them into contact with potential future employers

When the pandemic hit, Maddie Buresh lost her job and decided to embark on a new career path in digital marketing. Through the ACI program, Buresh applied and was hired as a digital marketing intern with the Bizgenics Foundation.

“I finally had a chance to move forward after months of uncertainty and persevering through job rejections. It was a promising step in the right direction.” – Maddie Buresh

Brandon Kubo also lost his job in the hotel industry due to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 crisis. He wanted to branch out into a more creative sector like social media and digital marketing, but struggled to find a job because he didn’t have the experience most employers require.

“I searched for a job unrelated to tourism, but most employers required specific amounts of experience which I did not have. I felt lost not knowing where to start,” Kubo said.

That’s when a friend introduced him to the ACI program. Kubo applied and was hired as a marketing and outreach associate with the Hawai’i International Film Festival.

“Working in a creative industry like film provided the experience I was searching for. Thanks to the ACI program, this experience has been truly amazing, I am learning so much, and it has been a lot of fun,” Kubo added.
POP-UP MÄKEKE OPENS NEW ONLINE FRONTIER FOR LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES

In response to the pandemic's impact on small and microbusinesses, the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement created Pop-Up Mäkeke, an online marketplace featuring more than 400 Hawai‘i businesses and 12,000 locally-made products. Customers can visit the online hub to browse products or watch QVC-style shows featured on KHNL, KGMB, K5 and Facebook Live.

DCS’S AMERICAN JOB CENTER HAWAI‘I AND WORKHAWAII PLACE PEOPLE ON THE PATH TO SUCCESS

Within DCS, the American Job Center Hawai‘i serves as a one-stop shop for job seekers looking for training, financial assistance and career advice as well as employers seeking recruitment assistance and outplacement support. DCS’s WorkHawaii is another vital resource offering programs in the following areas: job readiness preparation, rent to work, ticket to work, vocational rehabilitation training and youth services. The youth program helps teens and young adults access programs and services that put them on the path to economic, educational and social well-being.

(Center) Kāhi‘i Lewis, president and CEO of the Council of Native Hawaiian Advancement, and the Pop-up Mäkeke team connect local products with consumers.

The youth program helps young adults ages 16 to 24 achieve their educational and employment goals.
The Bank of Hawai‘i Foundation’s December COVID-19 Insights survey found that 1 in 4 Hawai‘i residents have experienced food security since the start of the pandemic. The increasing demand for access to fresh food and meals revealed our communities’ need for a more resilient food system. Programs supported with CARES funding administered through the Department of Community Services and in collaboration with the Office of Economic Revitalization established food distribution events, growth and development of microfarms and urban gardens, distribution of food vouchers and improvements for food packaging facilities.

Aloha Harvest hosted more than 200 food distributions across O‘ahu, sharing more than 1.5 million pounds of food with over 50,000 families.

**FOOD SECURITY**

**21 INITIATIVES FUNDED**

**$11.9 MILLION AWARDED**

**COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE**

Aloha Harvest, Feeding Hawai‘i Together, GoFarm Hawai‘i, Hawai‘i Agriculture Research Center, Hawai‘i Farm Bureau Foundation, Hawaii Foodbank, Hawai‘i Food Manufacturers, Ke Kula Nui O Waimānalo, Kōkua Kalihi Valley, Kula no na Po‘e Hawai‘i, Lanakila Pacific, Mālama Meals United, Pacific Gateway Center, Pili Group, SSFM International, The Salvation Army, Wai‘anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center.
CULTIVATING FOOD SECURITY FOR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

URBAN GARDENS HELP FOOD-INSECURE RESIDENTS BECOME MORE SELF-RESILIENT

Working together with residents at seven City-owned, special needs housing locations, DCS helped create urban gardens, constructing more than 160 garden beds and planting 20 fruit trees with the goal of providing sustainable, fresh produce to individuals and families facing food insecurity. Nearly 1,100 residents from vulnerable communities, including previously homeless families and youth, kūpuna, domestic violence survivors, and low-income families, will plant, harvest and eat the homegrown fruits and vegetables.

“Growing our own food on-island is vital to making our community more resilient,” said Mayor Kirk Caldwell. “Expanding our food production footprint will not only provide locally grown produce; it is part of a movement where the food we eat is grown, picked, processed, distributed, and prepared by the people of O’ahu for the people of O’ahu. Along with helping to sustain the bodies of those affected most by the pandemic, this project will also feed their spirits as they see their hard work grow into what will become vibrant urban gardens.”

At ALEA Bridge in Hale‘iwa, program coordinators installed 13 garden beds and fruit trees like mulberry and avocado. April Keller and her young son venture out to the flourishing gardens every morning to look at the array of growing vegetables, including tomatoes, squash, lettuce, and kale, as well as herbs like mint.

“My son really loves tomatoes and picking them off the vine, so we are both really excited to see them growing,” Keller said. “He is fascinated with the whole process, and it’s a good teaching opportunity for him.”

Keller looks forward to tending the garden and making healthy meals and mint tea for her family. She recently harvested cabbage, cilantro, green onion, parsley, and kale from the gardens to create kalua pig and cabbage with cilantro rice.

The project was made possible by a private-public partnership with DCS, the Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Land Management, Hawai‘i Community Foundation, SSFM International, Supersistence, local landscaping companies, and community-based nonprofits.
“Along with helping to sustain the bodies of those affected most by the pandemic, this project will also feed their spirits as they see their hard work grow into what will become vibrant urban gardens.”

– Mayor Kirk Caldwell
PACIFIC GATEWAY CENTER INVIGORATES FARM-TO-TABLE FOOD SYSTEM

Amid rising food insecurity, Pacific Gateway Center immediately pivoted to support refugee and local immigrant farmers while providing free food to foreign-born individuals, kūpuna and vulnerable, at-risk communities. The farm-to-table partnership enlisted Under My Umbrella, local restaurant Pig and the Lady, a group of volunteer chefs from Chef Hui, the Marshallese Community of Hawai‘i, West O‘ahu Christian Church, volunteers from Help is on the Way and other responsible citizens to prepare and distribute 800 meals to Marshallese, Micronesian and Pacific Islander communities as well as members of UNITE HERE Local 5.

“We’re so grateful and appreciative of the food we received,” said a recipient of one of Pacific Gateway Center’s food distributions. “It restores our faith in humanity, seeing people come together and kōkua. We can get through this together. The uncertainty is a heavy burden to carry, but you folks helped us deal with it.”

Since April 2020, Pacific Gateway Center has been hosting a weekly food distribution at its Nā Kūpuna Makamae Center, reaching over 12,000 families and distributing over 150,000 pounds of food and locally grown agricultural produce.
According to the Hawai’i Data Collaborative, 59% of Hawai’i households are considered asset-limited, income-constrained, employed or below (ALICE), up 17 points since the pandemic began. As more O’ahu residents live with financial vulnerability, the demand for services supporting the island’s economically-disadvantaged and its unsheltered individuals has increased. The Department of Community Services awarded Community Resilience and Housing and Urban Development funds to address the needs of the growing population of at-risk individuals across O’ahu.

Right: Future resident Sean Fernandez with a Hale Kipa Case Manager standing outside 38 newly-created affordable housing units at the Maunakea Marketplace.

16 INITIATIVES FUNDED
$19.5 MILLION AWARDED

COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE
ALEA Bridge, Family Promise of Hawai‘i, First United Methodist Church, Habilitat, Inc., Hawai‘i Health & Harm Reduction Center, Institute for Human Services, Mediation Center of the Pacific, Partners in Care, Residential Youth Services & Empowerment, River of Life Mission, Young Women’s Christian Association.
Addressing Oʻahu’s homelessness crisis was the responsibility of the state before Mayor Kirk Caldwell stepped up and leaned into finding meaningful solutions. During the past eight years, Mayor Caldwell’s administration and the city’s Office of Housing has:

**ESTABLISHED HOUSING FIRST** — a permanent, supportive housing program, which includes housing units available through projects like Pūnāwai and provided around 825 Housing First, veteran, and other special housing vouchers.

In partnership with the Department of Land Management and the Office of Housing, **ADDED ROUGHLY 1,300 AFFORDABLE UNITS** to its affordable rental housing portfolio, raising the total to more than 2,500 units.

**ACHEIVED A 10% REDUCTION IN TOTAL HOMELESSNESS** — roughly 510 individuals — between 2017 and 2020.

In partnership with the Department of Health, **OPENED TEMPORARY QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION CENTERS** with stabilization beds and services to care for unsheltered individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

“When I came into office in 2013, addressing homelessness and its root causes became a key priority of our administration. Projects such as the Pūnāwai facility, Housing First rental assistance programs, Hale Mauliola navigation shelter, mobile hygiene trailers, and with the pandemic, Temporary Quarantine and Isolation Centers, are some of the many tools the City developed and implemented to assist those most in need by providing them a hand up. These key initiatives, which are guided by our local upbringing of helping others with compassion, accountability and aloha, are only possible with community buy-in and the support of the City Council leadership.”

– Mayor Caldwell
PŪNĀWAI REST STOP HELPS HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY, STABLE HOUSING

The Pūnāwai Rest Stop located in the heart of ʻIwilei is designed to provide care, compassion and recovery to individuals experiencing homelessness on O‘ahu. The facility serves 2,500 unduplicated individuals each year, placing more than 100 people into housing annually, delivering more than 6,000 case management contacts and offering showers, toilet access, laundry services, veterinary checks for pets and postal service. The City and County of Honolulu operates the rest stop in partnership with Mental Health Kokua.

“By having a place like the Pūnāwai Rest Stop, it’s a place for people to regain some dignity in their life. It’s a starting place, it’s a place to regroup and a place to rebuild,” said Greg Payton, CEO of Mental Health Kokua.

Named after the healing waters that run under the Kūwili Street location, Pūnāwai brings together community-based partners through a hygiene center (ground floor), clinic (mezzanine), respite (second floor) and permanent supportive housing component (third floor). In November 2020, the City blessed the completion of 21 permanent supportive housing units.

“The ultimate goal is to get them housing,” said Dorene Toulant, Program Director of the Pūnāwai Rest Stop. “Everybody deserves that chance, everybody deserves the option of having a place. It’s difficult to be a productive member of society without the basic need of housing.”

Pūnāwai Clinic and Respite is anticipated to open for modified service in January 2021, with the full clinic anticipated to open in the summer of 2021.

IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE REST STOP HAS PROVIDED MORE THAN 145,000 SERVICES TO THOUSANDS OF CLIENTS.

- 55,600 loads of laundry
- 78,300 showers
- 230 placements to housing or treatment
- 8,300 case management contacts

A Pūnāwai client talks about the importance of a safe space for basic hygiene. “Hygiene is a big thing, especially when you’re living out on the streets,” he said. “It gives you that peace of mind that there’s somewhere to go when you need some kind of treatment or someone to talk to.”
MEDIATION CENTER OF THE PACIFIC HELPS TENANTS, LANDLORDS FIND SOLUTIONS

With thousands of residents facing financial hardship and unable to pay rent, open communication between tenants and landlords has never been more important. Enter the Mediation Center of the Pacific.

"Through mediation, landlords and tenants are assisted in engaging in conversations that encourage them to work together to apply for rental assistance, agree on payment plans, and discuss future options that will enable the tenant to remain in their residence when the moratorium ends, said Tracey Wiltgen, Executive Director of the Mediation Center of the Pacific. "By participating in mediation, the relationship of the landlord and tenant is strengthened, and the legal process of eviction is avoided."

Volunteer mediators Chuck Buckla and Kendra Epstein share information about the center’s mediation program at a CARES Resource Fair.
Parents and children faced new challenges as families moved indoors and schools moved online following county emergency orders. Issues related to childcare and education required innovative solutions for keiki of frontline workers and students learning in virtual classrooms, while programs were developed to support at-risk youth with counseling, tutoring and social services.

**KEIKI**

12 INITIATIVES FUNDED
$6.7 MILLION AWARDED

COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE
CARING FOR THE KEIKI OF ESSENTIAL WORKERS AND FAMILIES

YMCA OF HONOLULU CREATES A SAFE, ENRICHING ENVIRONMENT FOR KEIKI

As the Coronavirus pandemic swept across O‘ahu, the question on many parents’ minds was, “what should I do with my kids?” While some juggled working from home with their keiki underfoot, essential workers found themselves in the midst of a childcare crisis.

The YMCA of Honolulu, Kama‘aina Kids and other childcare organizations answered the call and rapidly adjusted operations to continue providing a safe, healthy environment for O‘ahu’s keiki. With the support of CARES funds, the YMCA established the Essential Worker’s Child Care program at its Nu‘uanu, Windward and Leeward locations. The affordable program offered a safe, hygienic space for keiki to engage in enrichment programming like arts and crafts, physical activity outdoors and academic assistance for distance learning. This service brought peace of mind to parents, easing their financial burden and enabling them to continue working and serving our community.

In the summertime, YMCA expanded its childcare program to three additional branches — Mililani, Kalihi and Kaimuki-Waialae — and offered day camps services to all working families that needed the support. Continued CARES Act aid allowed the YMCA to extend its program through the start of the new school year.

“With significant support received from the City and County’s Coronavirus Relief Fund, the YMCA of Honolulu was able to serve over 1,400 keiki in our Essential Worker’s Child Care program, Summer Day Camps and Learning Centers islandwide,” said Kerri Van Duyne, Vice President of Development at the YMCA of Honolulu. “Working parents had a safe, enriching place for their keiki to go when school campuses were closed, which was a great relief to many of our families.”

“Working parents had a safe, enriching place for their keiki to go when school campuses were closed, which was a great relief to many of our families.”
– Kerri Van Duyne
KAMA'AINA KIDS TENDS TO THE LITTLEST LEARNERS

When the pandemic hit, Kama'āina Kids, one of the largest childcare providers in the state, saw its daily attendance drop from 10,000 keiki a day to just 250. The organization focused on keeping its preschool locations open to care for the young children of essential workers. This specialized program, with its heightened sanitation practices and COVID procedures, received CARES aid from DCS. The financial support enabled the organization to compensate its dedicated employees, purchase sanitation equipment, provide much-need supplies and pay rent and utility payments for its facilities.

Beyond childcare, the non-profit provided nutritious, grab-and-go meals for families with reduced incomes at eight locations across O'ahu. Kama'āina Kids also handed out more than 1,000 bags filled with bread, cereal, spam, snacks, a $10 Safeway gift card and more to families.
At risk for severe complications from COVID are our kūpuna, requiring O‘ahu caregivers and long-term care facilities to enhance safety measures. For older adults still living in their homes, innovative solutions were born out of the need to bring services to kūpuna, minimizing their exposure in crowded places like grocery stores and health clinics.

**KŪPUNA**

8 INITIATIVES FUNDED
$6.3 MILLION AWARDED

COMMUNITY PARTNERS INCLUDE
Kūpuna Food Security Coalition, 4 Miles LLC, Kanu Hawai‘i, Kula no na Po‘e Hawai‘i, Lunalilo Home, Wa‘ianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center.
EXPANDING PROGRAMS TO SERVE AT-RISK SENIORS SAFELY AT HOME

KŪPUNA FOOD SECURITY COALITION MOBILIZES TO SUPPORT ELDERLY ADULTS IN NEED

More than 18% of the City and County of Honolulu’s population, or approximately 177,000 individuals, are over the age of 65. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the risk for severe illness with COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk. To better serve kūpuna safely during the pandemic, the City & County of Honolulu Department of Community Services (DCS) invested more than $6 million in federal funding to advance existing programs and develop new infrastructure to provide meals and wraparound services.

“Many kūpuna are isolated at home in normal times, but this pandemic has forced many to rely on outside support as they face increased risk from COVID-19,” said DCS Director Pamela A. Witty-Oakland. “That has created an incredible demand for necessities like food, services and social interaction.”

FROM MARCH TO NOVEMBER 30, 2020, THE HUI HAS DELIVERED MORE THAN 1.2 MILLION MEALS AND OVER 30,000 HEALTH AND WELLNESS CHECKS, ALONG WITH OTHER CRITICAL SERVICES TO O’AHU SENIORS SINCE THE ONSET OF THE PANDEMIC.

Delivered 1.2 million meals
Conducted 30,000 health and wellness checks
Served 8,000 kūpuna weekly
Formed in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Kūpuna Food Security Coalition (KFSC) is an innovative public-private partnership founded by DCS’ Elderly Affairs Division, AARP Hawai’i, Hawai’i Pacific Health Institute, Aloha United Way, Kanu Hawai’i and Age Friendly Honolulu that has grown to over 40 member organizations. This broad network of passionate individuals, nonprofit organizations, service providers, businesses, funders and state and local agencies to help those in desperate need of food, services and resources.

“I have people that have put their lives on the line to come visit me — and they are kind and gentle and caring,” said one kupuna who receives Meals on Wheels deliveries at her home. “This service has been a godsend.”

79-year-old Sydney Limtiaco is a widow who lives alone without a car. Due to pre-existing health conditions, she’s been stranded at home during the pandemic and unable to pick-up the necessities. Our Kūpuna, a KFSC member and nonprofit, connected Limtiaco in April with the Honda ‘ohana, who volunteered to help run errands for her and deliver whatever supplies she may need. The Hondas haven’t just become Limtiaco’s lifeline for groceries and medications; they’ve become her friends as well.

“They brought me flowers on Mother’s Day. Since I lost my daughter 12 years ago, that meant a lot,” Limtiaco said. “The Hondas are wonderful angels to me.”

KFSC plans to continue its vital work beyond the pandemic by supporting impactful and sustainable solutions that provide food and wraparound services to kūpuna who need it most.

“They bought me flowers on Mother’s Day. Since I lost my daughter 12 years ago, that meant a lot. The Hondas are wonderful angels to me.”
– Sydney Limtiaco
The pandemic also exacerbated stressors facing survivors of domestic violence, individuals with substance abuse issues and those struggling with behavioral health challenges. Through funding to local service providers specializing in support for these vulnerable populations, the Department of Community Services helped O’ahu residents connect with the care they needed to ensure safety for themselves and their families.
PROTECTING OUR MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

HALE MALUHIA PROVIDES A SAFE HAVEN FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

While the lockdown amid the COVID-19 pandemic was intended to keep people safe, for some, it unintentionally made an already difficult and dangerous situation even worse. As COVID-19 amplified economic and other hardships for women and children in Honolulu, the City’s nonprofit partners worked to provide a vital safety net and connect victims with the support they need to survive and thrive again.

Hale Maluhia, operated by the Domestic Violence Action Center in partnership with Housing Solutions, Inc., opened its doors during the first week of April 2020 and provides 20 one-bedroom apartments for survivors of domestic violence. Offering on-site services for survivors and their families, including attorneys to assist with temporary restraining orders, custody matters and other civil legal issues, Hale Maluhia provides stable long-term housing with the goal of equipping the survivors of domestic violence with the tools, skills and confidence to move forward from their abusers.

“At some point, I was losing hope, and I thought I was going to go crazy,” said Marina, a survivor of domestic violence in the Hale Maluhia program. “They are really very helpful, and I am thankful to God that there are people with golden hearts like them.”

As of July 2020, Hale Maluhia is housing 15 single mothers and 33 children.

“There are far too few places for survivors to make their escape,” said Nanci Kreidman, CEO of the Domestic Violence Action Center. “The City and County has made an investment in addressing domestic violence through the support of this property to house survivors with a program called Hale Maluhia. It’s an enormous gift.”

In 2021, DVAC will celebrate 30 years of service to our community. Committed to ending domestic violence and other forms of abuse, DVAC delivers high quality and culturally sensitive programs with integrity and compassion to create safety and self-sufficiency for survivors and their children.

“I am thankful that there are people with golden hearts like them.” - Marina, a survivor of domestic violence.
BOBBY BENSON CENTER TREATS AT-RISK YOUTH

Bobby Benson Center, a residential treatment facility dedicated to offering Hawai’i’s adolescents the assistance they need in overcoming substance use and co-occurring disorders, continues to provide crucial services to youth. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization has helped youth navigate the obstacles in their lives as substance use and mental health disorders rise.

For the Bobby Benson Center’s residential treatment group setting, youth often arrive off the streets with a history of drug and alcohol use, putting the center in a vulnerable state and at higher risk of contracting and spreading Coronavirus. Support from the Department of Community Services allowed the Bobby Benson Center to implement protocols, establish barriers, purchase PPEs, and install other programmatic procedures to continue treating each child and their family. Equally important, Bobby Benson Center has managed to keep the virus out of its main campus and coordinated networks with other agencies to provide consistent testing of staff and clients to ensure a virus-free facility.

Without the center, many of our youth would be on the streets, using drugs, utilizing unhealthy and dangerous coping skills, and have nowhere to turn to cope with mental health issues. Throughout the pandemic, the Bobby Benson Center remains a place of refuge, hope and healing as it combats multi-generational issues, helping to heal not only individuals but families, communities, and Hawaii as a whole.
IMPACT FOR OUR COMMUNITY

**$8.5 MILLION**
PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH

“[Community] health centers build relationships that go back more than a generation. It’s one of trust. We knew they would be able to reach out to the most vulnerable members of our community.”
— Mayor Kirk Caldwell

**$25 MILLION**
ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

“This program helped my kids and myself keep a roof over our heads. I was scared of what would happen since I was jobless and couldn’t afford to pay my bills. I am thankful for this program for keeping my ‘ohana safe and sheltered.”
— Sandobal ‘Ohana, Honolulu

**$8.4 MILLION**
SMALL BUSINESSES AND WORKERS

“Breaking into a marketing career hasn’t been easy. Many times, it felt like my skills and dynamic background got overshadowed by my lack of formal training. I just needed the chance to demonstrate my ability and build my confidence.”
— Maddie Buresh, Aloha Connections Innovation program participant

**$11.9 MILLION**
FOOD SECURITY

“This is my very first garden in my whole life. There’s a really big seed that’s been planted here, and I’m just excited about it blossoming. People who never came out of their apartments are coming out, taking garden plots and are talking to each other.”
— Deanna Yanagisako, Mānoa Gardens kūpuna housing resident and gardener

**$19.5 MILLION**
HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

“What we do at Pūnāwai is remind them that they are somebody, that they are valuable, that they mean something and that they are loved.”
— Dawn Wemple, Lead Center Assistant at Pūnāwai Rest Stop

**$6.7 MILLION**
KEIKI

“Working parents had a safe, enriching place for their keiki to go when school campuses were closed, which was a great relief to many of our families.”
— Kerri Van Duyne, Vice President of Development at the YMCA of Honolulu

**$6.3 MILLION**
KŪPUNA

“From hot meals to fresh produce and groceries, our incredible taskforce and volunteers are making a real difference in the lives of our elderly residents. With each visit and delivery, this coalition is helping our kūpuna lead healthy, independent lifestyles and age-in-place within the comfort of their homes.”
— Derrick Ariyoshi, County Executive of the Elderly Affairs Division of DCS

**$1.8 MILLION**
VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

“Without the center, many of our youth would be on the streets, using drugs, utilizing unhealthy and dangerous coping skills, and have nowhere to turn to cope with mental health issues. Throughout the pandemic, the Bobby Benson Center remains a place of refuge, hope and healing.”
— Sione Naeata, Executive Director of the Bobby Benson Center

**$89.1 MILLION**
AWARDED TO SUPPORT STRUGGLING O’AHU RESIDENTS, FAMILIES, AND BUSINESSES
On behalf of the City and County of Honolulu, the Department of Community Services is proud to fulfill our mission of creating opportunities to improve the quality of life of the people of O'ahu, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information about the Department of Community Services, please visit www.honolulu.gov/dcs.