

Opportunity for Youth Action Hawai'i Policy Initiative

OYAH Welcomes Policy Intern Kapri Tulang-De Silva



Left to right: Haumea Velasco, Shawn Kana'iaupuni, Sydney Story, and Kapri Tulang-De Silva at Kinai 'Eha.

Kapri Tulang-De Silva, a second-year student at the University of Hawai'i William S. Richardson School of Law (WRSL), brings an extensive background in serving various populations in need. She has externed with the Office of the Public Defender, worked for a personal injury solo practitioner, engaged with victims of the Lahaina fires, and currently, volunteers with a Circuit Court criminal judge.

As a future lawyer, Kapri wants to ensure social justice for Hawai'i's neglected, overlooked, and undervalued, especially Hawai'i's children. She plans to reform Hawai'i's public interest laws and education system to better serve the needs of Hawai'i's keiki.

Kapri was impressed with OYAH upon first learning of its mission in her graduate program. OYAH Policy Intern and WSRL upperclassmen, Sydney Story, re-introduced Kapri to OYAH during the WRSL's Public Interest Fair. Intrigued by Sydney's work experience at OYAH, Kapri followed up with Sydney about how she could join the OYAH team. Kapri is ecstatic to be a part of the OYAH 'ohana. She feels at home - amongst colleagues who share the same passion for engaging and supporting Hawai'i's youth and communities through grassroots efforts.

Kapri joins third year law students Haumea Velasco and Sydney Story in the current policy initiative cohort and follows in the work of interns (from left): Lyla Gonsalves, Harley Broyles, Leah Delos Santos, Haumea Velasco, and Sydney Story.



Legislature Considers Bills that Affect Youth and the Justice System

OYAH policy interns are actively advocating for the adoption of 30 policy proposals at the state capitol, including:

SB 694 which prohibits minors from being held in prisons for adults.

SB 778, HB 103 which raise the age for a life without parole sentence.

SB 224, HB 677 which require the Dept. of Corrections to assist in obtaining ID.

SB 950, SB 952 which require the Office of Wellness to support trauma-informed systems for Child Welfare Services.

HB 1342 which expands support for re-entry of incarcerated individuals.

SB 544 which allows court to reduce mandatory minimums and consider factors relating to a offenses committed when a minor (during adult sentencing).

HB 613, HB 645, SB 1098, all of which appropriates funds to DHS for emergency shelter and services to unaccompanied homeless youth.

SB 361, HB 280 which permanently establish and appropriates funds for the Community Outreach Court as a division of 1st Circuit District Court.

SB 1420, HB 1101 which makes the Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program permanent within the Office of Youth Services, requiring collaboration with all state and county departments that offer services to ID homeless youth and young adults and authorizing contracts with non-profit organizations for placement in shelters.