

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH ACTION HUI POLICY PRIORITIES

An initial cohort of University of Hawai'i college student advocates has been engaged by members of the Opportunity Youth Action Hui to advance initiatives in support of the hui member organizations, including Native Hawaiian equity in the criminal justice system, workforce training and development, trauma-informed care, and the education, health and well-being of youth.

Community Mental Health Task Force Receives Update from Honolulu Police Department

Honolulu Police Department Major Mike Lambert gave an update at a recent state Mental Health Task Force meeting on the HPD's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training. Lambert said that a grant was received to pay instructors and conduct trainings. The goal of the program is to have 200 CIT trained officers and 400 Mental Health First Aid trained officers. He said that the training modules are fixed but can adjust to the needs of the community. There will be a training subcommittee of the Crisis Intervention Team steering committee, community members are invited to attend.

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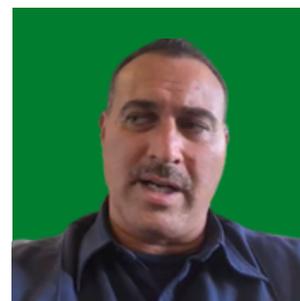
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Lambert asked the Task Force for feedback and said that if a training doesn't fit into the CIT model, that the Team can find the most appropriate platform to enhance an officer's knowledge.

Lambert can be reached at mlambert@honolulu.gov. (The Mental Health Task Force contact is Heather Lusk for information about team sections, such as homelessness.) The community mental health task force is the open community group started by Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland. It is currently hosted by Mental Health America of Hawaii in partnership with Representative Ryan Yamane.

Discussion Session Conducted!

OYAH Externs Harley Broyles and Leah Delos Santos convened a discussion session with University of Hawai'i law students and members of the Opportunity Youth Action Hui, exploring Native Hawaiian equity in the criminal justice system on November 17.



*Josiah Akau (above), Shawn Kana'iaupuni, Carla Houser, Levani Lipton and Tracy Parker shared with students the goals and priorities to reduce youth incarceration and promote restorative justice, representing the Opportunity Youth Action Network.
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OYAH Policy Externs Build Advocacy Capacity



University of Hawai'i law students learned more about RYSE, Kinai 'Eha, Partners in Development Foundation, the Ponoticians Club, and the work of the OYAH. The students asked, "what are the biggest challenges OYAH faces in promoting Native Hawaiian equity in the criminal justice system?" The students wanted to know how to get more involved. Carla Houser from RYSE shared information about the program which supports street youth to move beyond homelessness. She said that lessons learned from this work include: a team of dedicated, compassionate, and well-trained youth service providers is key; a key goal of the Housing First for Youth approach is for youth to be independently housed, but to also be supported through a successful transition to self-sufficiency. Dr. Kana'iaupuni shared the Kawailoa image below.



"Jurisdictions should identify opportunities to adopt more research-based, developmentally appropriate approaches to improve school attendance and performance for youth under system supervision."

OYAH 2021 - 2022 Policy Priorities

- Improve and increase resources available for child and adolescent mental health programs.
- Improve the transition for youth and young adults transitioning from minor to adult programs and services.
- Eliminate housing discrimination.
- Secure a cost-of-living increase for the Imua Kākou stipend for young people aging out of foster care.
- Create a reporting system for the abuse of minors whose social security benefits are used by adults who no longer care for them.
- Promote a more holistic approach by agencies.
- Increase and improve the continuum of care for trafficked youth.
- Raise awareness about rights of minors to housing.
- Improve youth access to medical care.
- Gain approval for commercial opportunities for incarcerated youth concerning agricultural program.

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