



KUPU

2010



“So far I’ve learned in this program that every bit counts and helps...”
-Cadiz

A LITTLE ABOUT KUPU...

Kupu is a Hawaii based 501c3 nonprofit organization whose programming is meant to restore Hawaii’s environment and communities, as well as Hawaii’s youth. Kupu realizes the powerful and deep connection between Hawaii’s youth, and Hawaii- the islands we call home. Hawaii is a unifying point for youth from different races and backgrounds; through the many differences, Hawaii’s resources are revered. This reverence is a source of passion for youth who want to give back and make a difference for Hawaii. Kupu’s flagship division is the Hawaii Youth Conservation Corps (HYCC). The HYCC consists of four programs that provide over 300 positions annually in environmental conservation throughout the state of Hawaii for youth between the ages of 15 and 30. The four programs range in scope from summer programs to year-round internships. These programs place youth in resource management areas which need critical assistance with important conservation projects like watershed restoration, endangered species rehabilitation, invasive species removal, trail maintenance, coastal out-planting, and Hawaiian cultural projects. These youth work with over 80 different conservation agencies throughout the year and in 2009 provided 126,211 hours of service and a benefit of \$3.69 million dollars to

Hawai’i. The HYCC has successfully provided experiential training to thousands of young adults over the last decade and has equipped young adults with the experiences and training them so that they advance educationally, socially, and in future careers. The HYCC also provides hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to help youth in Hawai’i advance educationally. In 2010, through its Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards program the HYCC is expected to provide over \$460,000 in educational funds to assist young adults to attend colleges, universities, community colleges, and specialty schools. Kupu has also developed partnerships with the University of Hawai’i to provide college credits to participants to assist these young adults advance educationally. Kupu programming has served a critical role in providing short-term jobs and job training to Hawaii’s young adults and in 2009 HYCC received about \$1 million dollars in AmeriCorps stimulus ARRA funds to provide an additional 45 full-time positions.



“This summer changed my outlook at conservation a lot. It made me more aware of what’s happening in the field and what we are doing to save our environment.”
-Chelsey Borge

Overview of Urban Corps

Currently, Kupu is further expanding its youth job-training programs by developing a "Green Jobs" training program focused on low-middle income young ages 16-24. This program, currently called Urban Corps, will have a multi-prong focus to address critical needs which Hawai'i and our world are facing. This program will focus on providing a 50/50 ratio of classroom based training to provide young adults with assistance to obtain a GED or equivalent and job skills along with half their time working on "green" projects. Kupu understands that there is a growing sector of "green" jobs that range from sustainable agriculture to renewable energy to natural resource management. It is the Urban Corps goal to develop young leaders by equipping youth with the job experiences and training necessary to excel in these fields as they grow in Hawaii.

Target Members: Young adults 16-24 who are in low-middle income bracket, especially those who lack their high school degree or equivalent.

Classroom Training: Through partnerships, youth will be prepped to take and pass their GED. By obtaining their GED, members will have higher marketability in the workforce and have more opportunities open to them. Members will also receive life skills training from guest speakers and partners such as on financial literacy, parenting skills, and work readiness skills. In future years, Kupu's goal is to develop a partnership with a charter school or develop its

own charter so members can receive their diploma.

Green Jobs Training: Members will work half of their time and gain experiences in-house through green projects as well as the opportunity to work with outside partner companies and agencies to gain broader experience. Program funding is also diverse and will consist of grants, fee-for-service-projects/contracts, and partnerships. Some sample projects may include:

- Energy Audits: Through a grant from EPA a Hawai'i based energy audit will be developed and implemented locally
- Photo-Voltaic Installation
- Barrel-Catchment system construction and installation
- Worm Bins construction
- Graffiti Abatement: Other youth corps such as Los Angeles Conservation Corps have successfully partnered with their city to develop a hotline to quickly clean up graffiti and promote the integrity of the community
- Recycling: Members will develop recycling centers and accounts to receive can recyclables. Members will service accounts as well as sort recyclables. Youth corps in California and other states currently conduct similar services with much success
- Urban Trail development
- Park and playground maintenance
- Tree planting



Different office view!

TEAM WORK



"Though the work can be hard and vigorous, at the end of the day it's all worth it because you go home with a sense of fulfillment because you took your time to make the world a better place."
-Kyla Winthers-Barcelona



Partnerships:

Kupu has partnered with some key organizations in the development of this program. These so far include:

Hawaii Community District Authority: HCDA has provided the possibility to develop a Green Training Center to host the training and administrative needs for the Urban Corps in one of its Kaka'ako facilities. This will be the first green training facility of its kind in Hawai'i and will provide a key service in the heart of Honolulu to promote both sustainable practices and social benefit to the larger community.

Kanu Hawai'i and Blue Planet Foundation: Kanu Hawaii, Blue Planet Foundation are partnering with Kupu to develop an energy audit and spread awareness about energy efficiency at home while living in Hawai'i.

Hawaii Correctional Industries

Hawaii Drug Court: Kupu is looking to partner with Hawaii Drug Court to provide position for offenders in the court system. These particular members will receive great support through the Urban Corps and will have opportunities to learn new skill, gain a GED if they don't have one.

Building Industries Association of Hawaii: Will be provide training in many different trades including: Electrical, plumbing, construction, and HVAC.

Windward Community College: Provides life skills courses, employment and internship positions and follows up with members after they complete the program to make sure they find employment.

Hawaii Solar Energy Association: Help provide internship sites for Urban Corps members to work.

Benefits:

- Training local youth to obtain jobs in Hawai'i in a growing green economy vs. hiring skilled labor from outside Hawai'i
- Opportunities for micro-enterprise experiences
- Assisting local communities by developing their young adults and providing them with both education and training for work
- Members receive pay while going to school to better assist them meet their financial obligations as they continue their educational pursuits
- No job training centers currently available to provide experiential training such as this, especially to underprivileged young adults.
- Helping those who socially need the assistance the most obtain aid, and gain skills in an emerging field. This training will give them a higher competitive advantage in the workforce and make them more marketable than those with training in already inundated fields.

Needs/ Assistance:

Kupu need assistance in several areas to start the Urban Corps program. Current needs include:

- Renovation of an existing building in Kaka'ako to establish a "green" job training center.
- Seed funding would help Kupu start up the program
- Initial Operational expenses for the program coordinator and administrative assistant
- Equipment expenses for tools that Urban Corps members will use to complete training and work projects. Equipment will include tools for urban trails, graffiti abatement, and construction and installation of barrel catchments and worm bins.