

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



DEPT. COMM. NO. 412

CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 22, 2021

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,
President and Members of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Scott K. Saiki, Speaker
and Members of the House of
Representatives
Thirty-First State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 431
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Saiki, and Members of the Legislature:

Enclosed are reports to the Legislature in accordance with section 352D-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, Annual Report of the Hawaii State Youth Commission.

In accordance with section 93-16, HRS, the report is available to review electronically at the Department's website, at <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/reports/legislative-reports/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cathy Betts", is written over a horizontal line.

Cathy Betts
Director

Enclosure

C:

Governor's Office

Lieutenant Governor's Office

Department of Budget & Finance

Legislative Auditor

Legislative Reference Bureau Library (1 hard copy)

Hawaii State Public Library, System State Publications Distribution Center (2 hard copies, 1 electronic copy)

Hamilton Library, Serials Department, University of Hawaii (1 hard copy)

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REPORT TO THE THIRTY-FIRST HAWAII STATE LEGISLATURE 2021

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF
SECTION 352D-11, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES,
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HAWAII YOUTH COMMISSION**

**Hawaii State Youth Commission
OFFICE OF YOUTH SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
FEBRUARY 2021**

In accordance with section 352D-11(b)(4), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), the Youth Commission (HiYC) submits its report to the Governor and the Legislature for activities of the Youth Commission from 2019 through June 2020.

Act 106, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2018, established the Youth Commission to advise the Governor and Legislature on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programs, and budgets concerning the youth of the State.

The 15 HiYC Commissions (ages 14 – 24) are appointed by the Governor, the Senate President, and the Speaker of the House, and include representation from all counties. HiYC is tasked with the following responsibilities:

- (1) Respond to request for comment and recommendation on matters referred to it by the governor or legislature;
- (2) Conduct research and community outreach regarding the needs of the youth of Hawaii;
- (3) Make recommendations addressing the concerns and needs of the youth of Hawaii; and
- (4) Report to the governor and legislature the activities, goals, and accomplishments of the commission by July 1 of each calendar year beginning July 1, 2019.

I. Activities, Accomplishments and Goals

July 2019 – December 2020

Recruitment and selection of the HiYC Coordinator.

The Office of Youth Services (OYS) recruited for and hired Chet Okayama, a Children & Youth Program Specialist V, Civil Service appointment position #122878. Mr. Okayama started on December 16, 2019.

January – May 2020

Recruitment/Selection/Appointment of HiYC

- The HiYC selection panel was developed with representation from the Governor, House Speaker, and Senate president. Recruitment efforts were extended through May to secure representation from all counties and to ensure the diversity of HiYC to meet all conditions of Act 106, SLH 2018.
- The recruitment process included HiYC Coordinator connecting with youth programs, schools, colleges, and youth advocates on all islands.
- A University of Hawaii at Hilo practicum student was recruited to assist HiYC Coordinator.
- The 15 youth commissioners were selected in May 2020 followed by confirmation of their appointments.

- The HiYC Coordinator supported the HiYC by completing administrative tasks and other responsibilities for the HiYC as assigned by the Office of Youth Services.

June 2020

Start-up and Training

- Following the selection of the 15 youth commissioners, the first HiYC meeting was held on June 26, 2020 with regular bi-weekly meetings to follow.

Agenda for the June 26, 2020 meeting:

- Invited guests included: All HiYC selection committee members including designees for Governor Ige, Senator Saiki and House President Kouchi
- Agreements and cultural opening
- Respect for the land and our islands, Respect for each other, and Respect for ourselves
- Congratulations were given to the final 15 youth commissioners and the start of HiYC
- Introductions: Youth commissioners shared their name stories & cultural - racial identification
- Stuff to Do (Volunteers): Sunshine Law & Robert's Rules
- State Capitol Public Access Room – Explore and check out virtual training offered
- Homework (All): Pick one A-L-O-H-A value to be followed up on at next meeting

"Akahai", meaning kindness to be expressed with tenderness;

"Lōkahi", meaning unity, to be expressed with harmony;

"Olu'olu" meaning agreeable, to be expressed with pleasantness;

"Ha'aha'a", meaning humility, to be expressed with modesty;

"Ahonui", meaning patience, to be expressed with perseverance.

- Due to COVID-19 effects, learning and implementing best ways to communicate through distances and development of new-normal work skills were essential for the start-up.
- Initial HiYC training plans were started.

Goals for July 1, 2020 through June 31, 2021

Short-term:

- Focus on relationships, team building and getting to know each other with election of HiYC Officers by October 2020.
- Advocate for Hawaii's young adults to vote in the 2020 Presidential, Hawaii Mayoral, and all elections.
- Research/Review of the history of youth advisory groups in Hawaii and Youth Commissions in the United States and in other countries. Connect with other current

and active Youth Commissions, Youth Power, and Youth Vote programs both locally and nationwide.

- Continue to increase collaborations with potential community partners to support, engage, and connect youth voices statewide.
- To address the Aloha Spirit statute, section 5-7.5, HRS, and set a foundation of aloha for HiYC, training with Pono Shim on *The Aloha Response* was scheduled for July 10, 2020.
- Plans were started to meet requirements to function as a state commission (including training by the Ethics Commission, training on Sunshine Law and Rogers Rules, and completion of other state-requirements).
- HiYC training on legislative processes and youth advocacy was scheduled for July 24, 2020.

Long-term:

- Development of HiYC Commissioners as future young leaders.
- Empowerment of the HiYC Commissioners towards leading the HiYC and turning their own goals and youth voice into realities.
- Establish the HiYC as the "Youth Voice HUB" for the State of Hawaii. This will include youth engagement and empowerment, research and innovation, education and assistance for youth to navigate the legislative process, and development of connections across all communities and counties.
- Each youth commissioner was selected, in part, because of their efforts and drive to address the concerns and needs of the youth of Hawaii. The group identified three priority areas including Economy, Environment, and Health to track and advocate for over the next year.
- Integrate the 'Ohana Nui multigenerational framework into HiYC efforts by connecting youth with kupuna to share their wisdom and aloha for a better Hawaii.

II. Recommendations

HiYC requests continuing support for the HiYC as it begins its work.

Due to the HiYC not yet being fully-formed in state fiscal years 2019 and 2020, there are no specific recommendations addressing the concerns and needs of youth in Hawaii with this initial report.