



## KAUA'I PLANNING & ACTION ALLIANCE

### **Managing in Tough Times: How Kaua'i Nonprofits Are Coping**

Tuesday, February 17, 2009

Kaua'i Humane Society

Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance hosted representatives from 25 Kaua'i nonprofits at a session on February 17, 2009 to discuss how they are being affected by the economic downturn and how they are responding. Amid the reality of belt-tightening and cutbacks, the island's nonprofits are finding ways to be creative and resilient. The following summarized the discussion from that session.

#### **How the Economy Is Impacting Kaua'i Nonprofits**

- forced consolidation of programs
- switching to on-call staff
- reduced salaries
- reduced staffing
- limiting services
- reduced programs and contracts
- less discretionary funds available
- increased demands for emergency services
- for national organizations, misperception that national funds are available to help when they are not
- reduced funding from government and donors based on economics rather than need
- impacts will be even greater next year than what is being seen now

#### **Strategies/Solutions for Coping**

- more collaboration
- utilize radio/on-air broadcasts for greater exposure
- barter for needed services
- see if the state unemployment division can require job seekers to provide community service
- use the Community Development Block Grant to invest in new energy solution enterprises for nonprofits

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO CREATE A BETTER FUTURE FOR KAUA'I

2959 Umi Street, Suite 201, Lihu'e, HI 96766 Phone 808.632.2005 Fax 808.632.2018  
Email [kpaa@kauainetwork.org](mailto:kpaa@kauainetwork.org) [www.kauainetwork.org](http://www.kauainetwork.org)

- get more creative
- increase the number of volunteers, give them meaningful tasks
- re-train staff
- increase communications with staff to keep them informed
- increase productivity
- high schools students must complete 50 hours of community service credit requirements – they might be volunteers
- review your mission -- is it relevant? If not, change it to be relevant
- emphasize to donors your agency's relevancy
- improve public relations and media relations
- offer creative fundraisers (can include mainland participants)
- utilize online/website donations
- work smarter
- seek cost savings strategies from staff
- advertise service needs online to recruit volunteers
- list volunteer needs on website: USAService.org (Renew American Together campaign)
- nonprofit executive directors should apply for Hawai'i Community Foundation's PONO Program
- explore opportunities for partnerships and collaboration
- meet regionally with other nonprofits to explore collaboration opportunities
- avoid duplication of other services and events
- form partnerships if missions are similar; hold joint board meetings to find ways to work together
- seek community buy-in for your services and organization
- consider sign waving for publicity – look for innovative ways to promote the organization; it's all about publicity
- develop demonstration projects that have funding available
- negotiate discounts with media; find ways to make it a win-win
- optimize your high school alumni connections
- use Facebook
- streamline; become optimally efficiency
- look at decreasing utilities expenses through conservation
- participate in nonprofit forums with opportunities for networking
- tell your story; communicate your message effectively
- help everyone recognize that arts and culture are community essentials
- look at lessons in history
- give a "voice" to the place you are located in -- believe in your community
- seek out statewide collaborations
- there are partnership grant applications; create coalitions to apply
- share services, work and funding with other organizations

- become lean and mean
- don't pigeonhole your services
- share office space with other nonprofits
- try to close gaps in services through partnering
- find "merge" opportunities
- maximize board member involvement
- read the resource handbook: "The Nonprofit Mergers Workbook: The Leader's Guide to Considering, Negotiating, and Executing a Merger" by David La Piana; Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, Publisher  
<http://www.lapiana.org/research/workbook.html>
- brainstorm your agency's highest potential; dream! Complete the Big Goals exercise; take a big picture view
- look at increasing fees for services
- broaden community support
- do "it" well!
- use good business sense
- raise visibility; communicate that nonprofits are essential – a vital "pillar" in community!
- look at using "green" business tools
- mimic the Kauai-Made model
- create a mayor-supported signature event for Kaua`i
- about \$2 million for "shovel-ready" job training programs in Hawai`i will be available from the economic stimulus legislation that just passed