

Kaua`i Planning & Action Alliance

Bringing people together to create a better future for Kaua`i

ALLIANCE IN ACTION

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KPAA Moves into New Office, Hires New Staff Member

On April 1 KPAA moved into its first office, on Umi Street in Lihue. Many of you may know the building as the home of Hale 'Opio. We are happy to be their new tenant and enjoy the location right in the middle of town. You are invited to stop by any time to talk about issues or just talk story. Here is our contact information:

Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance
2959 Umi Street, Suite 201
Lihue, HI 96766
Phone 808.632.2005
Fax 808.632.2018
Email kpaa@kauainetwork.org

We are also fortunate to have a new part-time Administrative Assistant, Rayne Regush, who started last week. Rayne has her own business providing office management and secretarial services and has been a volunteer at the Kauai Historical Society. She is a great addition to KPAA.

What has KPAA been up to?

So much has happened in the past few months. Here are a few highlights:

Kauai Community Drug Response Plan Developed: Since October 2003, KPAA has been facilitating the work of about 90 volunteers who served on the Drug Action Team and its four committees to develop an island-wide five-year plan to combat drugs. Assisted by consultant Nadine Nakamura of NKN Planning, we worked closely with Roy Nishida, the County's Drug Coordinator. The plan was presented to about 200 community members at a meeting April 13th and Senator Inouye announced that Kauai will receive about \$1.4 million in federal funds to support elements of the plan.

A few statistics provide a glimpse of the drug problem on our island...

- 80-90% of all crimes committed on Kauai are drug related.
- Of the island's population of 58,463, 1,085 adults and 195 adolescents receive some level of treatment for drug abuse each year. At several agencies, there is a waiting list of youth and adults needing treatment.
- Over 17% of adolescents – that's about 1 in 5 – report exposure to illicit drug use in school and the community.

To tackle these problems, the plan is divided into four main areas – preventing drug use, enforcing drug laws, providing treatment for those who need services, and offering assistance to those who are leaving treatment or incarceration so they can successfully reintegrate into the community. A fifth area focuses on coordinating all these activities and educating the community about drug use and services available.

Work is already underway on some of the planned activities as the four committees and the Drug Action Team continue to meet. Over the next few months organizations will be preparing their applications for financial support to increase services to combat this significant problem.

In working on the drug issue, it became clear that drug use is just a symptom of other challenges confronting Kaua'i. While this plan will work to decrease drug use, action is needed to address larger, structural problems we face, such as:

- changes in the family structure (youth reporting few family ties & poor parental supervision; many teens aged 16-18 not in school and not working; all parents in the labor force)
- economic issues (low number of jobs paying livable wages; lack of opportunities for job advancement; high number of employees without a high school education)
- housing challenges (high cost of housing in relation to income; people living in crowded conditions; limited supply of affordable and mid-range housing; homelessness).

Work Begins to Support Park Improvements: A Parks Action Team has been formed to identify how business, the community, government and non-profits can work together to bring additional resources – both human and financial – to improve and maintain our State and County parks. The budgets of our State and County parks departments are stretched thin; staffing and operations budgets are seldom sufficient to provide the level of repair, ongoing maintenance and landscaping many would like to see. A recent Hawai'i Tourism Authority study highlights some of these needs.

- On Kaua'i, visitor use of State Parks exceeded resident use by more than 6:1 (87% vs. 13%)
- 3 of the 5 most popular State Parks in Hawai'i are on Kaua'i (Ha'ena, Wailua River, and Na Pali), hosting mostly out-of-state visitors.
- Kaua'i State Parks hold a 33% share of State Park visitors, following Oahu at 40%
- The top three activities of park users on Kaua'i are scenic views/photographs (77%), hike/walk (48%), and use the restroom (29%)
- Kaua'i State Park users rate their experience 8.4 on a 10-point scale (state average is 8.5). Visitors are more satisfied than residents (8.6 compared to 7.5).
- State Park users on Kaua'i are most satisfied with scenic views, the ocean/water experience, and flora/fauna; they are least satisfied with food concessions, restrooms, parking, directional signage, and security.

No similar study has been done for our County parks, but it appears that residents are the primary users of County parks. The Parks Action Team will be identifying its goals and plans over the next couple of months.

What About the Other Priority Goals? Two additional goals were selected by KPAA's membership – solid waste reduction and public education improvements. Work on those two goals will begin when funds to support the facilitation of the planning and implementation process can be secured. If you have ideas for funding, please contact Diane Zachary at dzachary@kauainetwork.org or 632-2005.

KPAA Annual Membership Meeting Planned

Our Annual Meeting will be held in late June; tentative date is Tuesday, June 29 from 9 to 11:00 AM. This important meeting will include the presentation of the 2004 Kauai Community Champion awards to two organizations that have provided exemplary service to the community, selection of KPAA Advisory Board members to fill terms of 6 members expiring this year, and consideration of revised by-laws so that KPAA can apply for non-profit status. Details of the meeting will be sent soon.

Mahalo for Supporting KPAA

Many thanks to our new sponsors Verizon Hawaii, First Hawaiian Bank and Pioneer Hii-Bred International, Inc. for their support of KPAA's programs. And mahalo to Bank of Hawaii for providing files and furniture for KPAA's new office. We appreciate our sponsors' investment in Kaua'i's future.

Announcements

Hawaii Community Services Council is holding a workshop series at the Radisson Kauai Beach Resort in June. For complete information, visit the HCSC website www.hcsc-hawaii.org/wkshp_schedule.htm. Deadline to register is June 10. Courses include:

- Board Alive! Best Practices for Nonprofit Board Governance, Wednesday, June 23, 12:30-4:30 P.M., \$65
- Proposal Writing, Thursday, June 24, 9 A.M.- 4:30 P.M., \$100
- Financial Management, Friday, June 25, 8:30 A.M.-4:30 P.M., \$25

Questions about KPAA? Comments? Please contact:

Diane Zachary

Telephone (808) 632.2005

E-mail dzachary@kauainetwork.org

Aloha: It's Kaua'i's Spirit

If you prefer not to receive this KPAA newsletter, please email kpaas@kauainetwork.org and we will promptly remove your email address from our list.