

OAHU WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

715 SOUTH KING STREET, SUITE 211 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-7790 • www.OahuWDB.com

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR



CHRISTOPHER K. LUM LEE
CHAIR

HARRISON KURANISHI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**SECTOR STRATEGIES
AND CAREER PATHWAYS
COMMITTEE MEETING**
Thursday, November 20, 2025
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Note: Per the State Office of Information Practices (OIP), members of the public may contact OahuWDB@honolulu.gov to be added to a mailing list for future meeting announcements

Members Present:

Andrew Rosen
Wesley Akamine
Carla Kobashigawa
Sarah Guay
Pat Anbe
Sudim Lazo
Mimi Sroat
Christopher Lum Lee
Vanessa Rogers, (Designee for Sherry Menor-McNamara)

Guests:

Kazu Hayashida, Hawaiian Electric, Workforce Planning Manager
Rose Templeton, Hotel and Restaurant Industry Employment & Training Trust, Program Manager

Staff:

Harrison Kuranishi, Oahu Workforce Development Board, Executive Director
Lisa Pereira, Oahu Workforce Development Board, WIOA Specialist
Erin Nicole Fernandez, Oahu Workforce Development Board, WIOA Specialist
Daven Kawamura, Oahu Workforce Development Board, WIOA Specialist

I. Call to Order

The Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee meeting was called to order at 1:01 pm by Committee Chair Andrew Rosen.

II. Welcome and Introductions

(Note: Per the State OIP, a quorum of members must be visible throughout the public portion of the meeting, but so long as that requirement is met, Oahu Workforce Development Board (OWDB) members are allowed to attend board meetings on audio only. Their votes will still count, and their attendance will also count toward

quorum. However, board members must state their names clearly during introductions and before all of their comments during the meeting.)

III. Public Testimony relating to Agenda Items

There was no public testimony relating to agenda items.

IV. Approval of August 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Chair Andrew Rosen requested a motion to approve the minutes for the August 28, 2025, meeting. Wesley Akamine moved to approve the minutes. Sarah Guay seconded the motion. There were no objections or abstentions. The minutes were unanimously approved.

V. Sector Partnership Quarterly Update

Vanessa Rogers, Vice President of Workforce Development at Chamber of Commerce Hawaii, gave the quarterly update from Chamber of Commerce Hawaii regarding Sector Partnerships. The presentation can be found at the following link: <https://oahuwdb.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/OWDB-SP-Update-11.20.25.pdf>

A couple key points from the presentation are as follows:

- In the Transportation Sector Partnership water subsector, a small grant was received from the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation. The funding will be used on the development of a Youth Apprenticeship program in the Maritime sector.
 - Andrew Rosen inquired if the work on the program has already started and what the age group that the program will be targeting.
 - Vanessa Rogers informed Andrew that Youth Apprenticeships are defined as 16 – 24 year olds. Currently the program is in the design phase, as there is not much infrastructure in the Maritime section a pre-apprenticeship is the goal in mind for pre high school graduation. The program should roll out in Fall 2026.
- In the Information Technology (IT) Sector Partnership there is the IT Help Desk Technician Prep, it will be the second cohort. There is an internship integrated into the course.
- Vanessa shared that a fundraising event was held on November 13, 2025 with 95 attendees representing seven sectors. A total of \$26,992 was raised. This brings the total raised for the Sector Partnership Fund to ~\$57,000, with the goal being \$150,000 by June 2026.
 - Andrew Rosen inquired where the money from the Sector Partnership Fund is going.
 - Vanesa informed him that there are several buckets, however a bulk of the funds will be going into personnel cost.

Andrew Rosen asked if there was a specific goal for the sectors and if the goal has been met.

- Vanessa informed him that four of the sectors had specific metrics including IT, Creative Industries, Energy, and Healthcare. Healthcare and Clean Energy have exceeded all of their goals. IT hasn't reached the employment goal. Creative Industries is still working towards the goals that were set.

VI. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Updates

Daven Kawamura, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Specialist at OWDB, shared a slide deck going over the WIOA updates. The slide deck can be found at the following link:

<https://oahuwdb.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/11.20.25-Sector-Strategies-and-Career-Pathways-Committee.pdf>

Harrison Kuranishi, Executive Director of OWDB, informed the committee that the data was shared to roll into the next agenda item to hopefully stimulate conversation regarding the industries that should be focused.

Carla Kobashigawa brought up the recent Federal furlough, she inquired that since government is such a large sector in Hawaii how would the board be able to leverage such events to boost numbers.

- Harrison Kuranishi gave an example of the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notifications (WARN) notice that go out. These WARN notices are sent out when mass layoffs have happened/are eminent. Harrison noted that individuals that receive WARN notices are eligible for WIOA Dislocated Worker program.

VII. Open Discussion regarding the Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Committee

Chair Andrew Rosen mentioned that he wants to create an action plan from the committee to show what the committee is focusing on and to track the numbers of what is being worked on.

Carla Kobashigawa noted that using income as a metric is hard as across the different industries there are vastly different starting salaries. She noted that in Information Technology (IT), growth in the industry comes from maturation in specific systems or environments. Years of experience in the field opens up the eligibility for higher levels of certifications and competitiveness.

- Vanessa Rogers stated that the “Hawaii’s Generational Workforce Commitment” that came from the working groups of State Agencies and different workforce development professionals revolves around the same verbiage that Carla noted. The goal is to have individuals on a pathway with a trajectory to a living wage, not necessarily the starting wage.
 - The Sector Partnerships that Chamber of Commerce Hawaii all start with a workforce analysis to identify the base level.

Andrew Rosen inquired if focusing on one to three industries would be something that the committee would want to do.

- Carla Kobashigawa noted that the State Unified Plan identifies seven economic sectors including, Tourism, Defense, Construction, Healthcare, Technology/IT, Energy, and Public Sector. She noted that if the committee identifies industries/sectors that they should align with the economic sectors that are identified.
 - Andrew Rosen asked which of the sectors that are identified would benefit the most from a collaborative effort of the committee.

- Carla noted that IT is a high demand industry, Transportation has been a focus area with the lack of Commercial Driver's License trainers, and Public Sector has been a focus of the County.
- Sarah Guay noted that out of the three industries/sectors that Carla brought up that Public Sector is the one that she hasn't heard as much work being done. She noted that to avoid redundancy/duplication it may be the best targeted industry to start with. Carla Kobashigawa echoed Sarah and added that since public sector reaches over multiple industries it presents an opportunity to spread.

Harrison Kuranishi noted that for WIOA everything ties into the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), if focus is put on certain industries/sectors trainings may need to be added.

- Harrison informed the committee that the State was monitored and per a finding, 92% of the courses that were on the list were purged due to not having participants enrolled or credentials earned. Harrison noted that board staff is now exercising more caution when adding courses onto the list.
 - Andrew Rosen asked if the reason for the purge was because the courses were irrelevant or if the correct individuals are just not getting pointed in the right direction for the courses, and where the breakdown is happening.
 - Harrison noted the ecosystem that is currently at the American Job Center (AJC), WIOA has many partners however only the four core partners are actually present at the AJC. If the ecosystem is bolstered it may help with dual enrollments and participation.

Andrew Rosen asked the committee if the members feel like the mission/vision of the board is being accomplished.

- Sarah Guay indicated that she doesn't feel like the mission is being accomplished. She noted the breakdown that Andrew brought up earlier in the meeting, and echoed that there seems to be a breakdown between the ETP's, participants, and employer needs.
- Wesley Akamine noted that no matter what sector or industry that is focused on, a solid communication plan should be detailed/discussed to have transparency and a base understanding for all parties participating.

Carla Kobashigawa stated that she can start pulling information/data to start the workflow for the possible focus on Public Sector.

- Wesley Akamine recommended to have a case study on a participant journey to identify where break downs are in the process.
- Sarah Guay chimed in saying on the same note if an employer's journey can also be studied to see how they navigated any problems solved.

Harrison Kuranishi noted that a monitoring of the service provider will be happening soon, he informed the committee that during the monitoring contact to the

participants, employers, service providers, etc. can be made. He noted that if there are any areas of interest from the board members, to reach out to WIOA staff.

Andrew Rosen noted that he is interested in attending the monitoring, Harrison noted that the monitoring is open for any board members.

VIII. Announcements

There were no announcements.

IX. Schedule Next Meeting

The next Sector Strategies and Career Pathways committee meeting hasn't been scheduled yet. When tentatively scheduled, invites will be sent out accordingly.

X. Adjournment

Chair Andrew Rosen adjourned the meeting at 2:07 pm.