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ENGINEERS WEEK SHOWCASES IMPACT OF INDUSTRY SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS



Sherry Menor-McNamara
President & CEO

Engineers Week, February 22-25, proved to be a momentous week for the Chamber's Sector Partnerships initiative, when 33 engineers from 24 engineering companies in the Engineering Sector Partnership dispersed throughout our local schools to provide industry-led work-based learning activities for

students. Young leaders grades 3 through 12 were given the opportunity to explore the world of engineering. During that week alone, over 500 students were reached.

A wide variety of activities held during Engineers Week served to influence and build our next generation of engineers.

- Local employers visited seven Hawaii Department of Education schools for Engineering Field Day to facilitate an interactive activity. Elementary, middle and high school students were exposed to various engineering disciplines, including environmental and coastal.
- The University of Hawaii College of Engineering hosted virtual and in person career fairs that gave graduating engineers the opportunity to meet and potentially get hired by local engineering firms.
- The Chamber hosted a virtual parent and guardian night featuring a panel of engineers, post-secondary educators and engineering students to share a future path for students and their families interested in engineering.
- In partnership with STEMworks, the Chamber supported Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day. This event exposed middle school girls to a career in engineering and STEM, inspiring young women to pursue a career in STEM

and enabling a more gender-equitable STEM landscape.

- The week concluded with engineering mock job interviews with Waipahu High School students. These practice job interviews centered around real-world engineering interview questions to help participating students envision future steps to becoming an engineer.

Engineers Week is just one example of how local employers can get involved in influencing the next generation of young industry leaders through Sector Partnerships. The objective of Sector Partnerships is to align industry leaders around a set of shared priorities, resulting in collective action that addresses workforce opportunities. Industry leaders are supported by partners in secondary and post-secondary education, government, and workforce and economic development partners. All work together to build a Kindergarten to Career Pathway for students that provides real-world experiences that help students build their technical acumen and professional skills so that, ultimately, they can successfully compete for good, local jobs.

Sector Partnerships are convened by the Chamber of Commerce with support from the state Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. The state Department of Education, Kamehameha Schools and University of Hawaii System are also key partners in the effort.

Hawaii's employer community, however, plays

the largest role in Sector Partnerships. Recognizing that workforce development collaboratives like Sector Partnerships are part of its talent acquisition strategy, local employers are committing their valuable time to gather with competitors within their industry to prioritize action they can take together to build their industry's future workforce.

This past month, the Chamber continued to expand Sector Partnerships to other in-demand, high-wage industries, including healthcare and information technology. Leaders from both industries came together to select common priorities of importance and the methodology behind the work. Both industries are of particular importance with their potential impact on employment opportunities in Hawaii.

While these new Sector Partnerships may look different in their approach and leadership, the objective remains the same: to build a strong talent pipeline through shared industry priorities and collective action. The Chamber continues to champion the work of Sector Partnerships and looks forward to a stronger local talent pipeline for the future.

To learn about the Chamber's Sector Partnership initiative, visit www.cochawaii.org/sector-partnerships.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- YP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLASS**
Thursday, April 21, 2022
- YP PROGRAM EXEC CONNECT**
Thursday, April 28, 2022
- EMPLOYMENT LAW MID-YEAR UPDATE WEBINAR**
Friday, April 29, 2022
- CANDIDATE FORUM: HAWAII GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION 2022**
Wednesday, May 4, 2022
- BUSINESS AFTER HOURS PRESENTED BY TREEHOUSE COWORKING KAHALA**
Wednesday, May 25, 2022

Visit cochawaii.org for more information and to register.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP



As a new member of the Chamber, Finance Insurance Ltd., is excited to expand its network and market outreach. The Chamber provides ample opportunities for intra, inter and cross-sector partnerships in both private and public domains. For nearly two decades, I have immensely benefited - professionally and organizationally - from the value offered by the Chamber. Whether it's tackling hot topics and trends facing our business community or advocacy to curb the cost of doing business, the Chamber always goes the extra mile. This is exactly why I'm excited to have Finance Insurance join the Chamber and leverage our partnership to advance our go-to-market efforts.

JOY BARUA
President & COO, Finance Insurance

Ask the Expert

John Knorek
Director
Labor and Employment

TORKILDSON KATZ HETHERINGTON HARRIS KNOREK ATTORNEYS AT LAW A LAW CORPORATION



Q: Are non-compete and non-solicitation agreements enforceable in Hawaii?

Yes. The Hawaii Supreme Court in Prudential Locations, LLC v. Gagnon (February 17, 2022) reaffirmed Hawaii law permits businesses to restrict employees from competing against the company and soliciting former clients/customers after leaving employment. A non-compete agreement must 1) protect a legitimate business interest and 2) be reasonable.

Preventing competition is not a legitimate business interest under HRS 480-4(a) and Hawaii law. Training that provides skills beyond those of a general nature is a legitimate interest; as are protecting trade secrets, confidential information or special customer relationships. If other employees have access to purported confidential information, but are not restricted by non-compete agreements, the information will not be deemed "confidential".

To be reasonable, a non-compete clause must not: (a) be greater than required (b) impose undue hardship on the person restricted and (c) have a benefit that is outweighed by injury to the public. Non-competition agreements must be limited in the a) scope of matters/interest covered, b) geographic reach and c) duration. The more limited in these three areas the more likely the agreement will be enforceable.

Non-compete agreements are prohibited in the technology industry, HRS 480-4(d) and the legal profession. Rule 5.6 of the Hawaii Rules of Professional Conduct.

The Prudential Locations decision explained "[w]orkforce stability and customer relationships can, however, be legitimate ancillary interests for an agreement prohibiting the solicitation of employees." "Solicitation" requires an active initiation of contact. Merely "encouraging" someone to leave employment cannot constitute "solicitation."

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