

Meet the MENTORS



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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

YP HI SCHOOL MENTOR PROGRAM

The Young Professionals (YP) HI School Mentor Program is meant to help YOU (our students) grow professionally, personally, and academically. YP's (ages 21-39) are a community of leaders working to better Hawaii through working in various industries. In this program, the YP's have come together to help the next generation by nurturing your leadership and future. We hope that this program gives you a mentor for life!

WHAT IS YOUR COMMITMENT?

Students in the program must commit to the following:

- Be mentored from October 2026- December 2026 (can go beyond this date as agreed by mentor and mentee)
- Meet virtually at least twice a month and periodically meet in-person at school
- Working on one of the following Academic Projects:
 - Academy / CTE Capstone
 - STEM Capstone
 - AVID Service Learning Project
 - American Savings Bank KeikiCo Competition
 - Approved College / Career Project
- Willing to grow in your leadership and professional skills
- Willing to learn about an industry you are passionate about
- Open to college and career readiness advice and skills
- Open to a mentor for LIFE!



HOW THIS WORKS

STEP 1: REVIEW THE MENTORS

Find a mentor that best fits you by reviewing their industry and bio. Think about which mentor(s) would be the best support for your own professional growth, personal growth, and academic project. For an easier search, download the document and use control/command + F and enter in your industry of interest.

STEP 2: APPLY TO BE MENTORED!

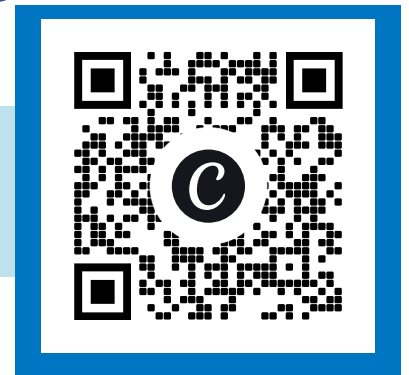
Once you think you found a preference of mentor(s) that would be a great fit, apply to be mentored! Remember to be as detailed as possible in your application to help us fit you with the best match. Please apply to be mentored as an individual or duo. If you apply as a duo, you must complete individual applications. You will have the option to mention who your partner is in the application.

APPLY TO BE MENTORED



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Due on Wednesday, September 30 for Oahu students



Oahu **MENTORS**



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Chachie Abara



Registered Behavior Technician

Malama Pono

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Education,
Health Services, Behavioral Science,
Social Science, Mental Health

About Chachie

Chachie Abara is a dedicated community advocate, public service professional, and creative voice based in Hawai'i. Her foundation in leadership began in high school as a student council representative, sparking a lifelong commitment to youth empowerment and civic engagement.

Throughout her career, Chachie has brought a grounded, community-first lens to public health, policy, and behavioral services. She previously served as a Program Specialist III for the Department of Health and as a Legislative Aide for a State Representative, where she analyzed policy and coordinated vital community outreach. Building on her dedication to human services, she is also a certified Registered Behavior Technician providing direct behavioral support to help individuals reach key developmental milestones.

Extending her passion for community well-being, Chachie co-founded the Filipino Mental Health Initiative of Hawai'i, an organization dedicated to expanding access to culturally tailored mental health support and breaking down stigmas within local communities.

As a versatile storyteller, Chachie hosts her own podcast focused on uplifting authentic community narratives and connecting deeply through shared human experiences. She has also expanded into creative publishing as a published children's author, writing engaging stories that empower young readers and celebrate local culture. Along with these creative pursuits, she actively organizes local walk-for-health initiatives, wellness workshops, and youth-focused outreach.

Leveraging her background across public health, legislative advocacy, and creative media, Chachie continues to build supportive spaces where individuals of all ages feel empowered to navigate life transitions and make a lasting impact in Hawai'i.

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Joshua Abeyta



Staff Attorney

The Legal Clinic

Best Match Industries

Law and Public Safety

About Joshua

Josh Abeyta is a staff attorney at The Legal Clinic, a nonprofit whose mission is to ensure justice for low-income immigrants and migrants in Hawai'i through high-quality immigration legal services, education, and advocacy. He received his B.A. in Economics from San Francisco State University in 2018 and his Juris Doctor from Santa Clara University in 2023. Throughout his career, Josh has also worked at the Hawaii State Legislature as a research attorney and interned at the Office of the Public Defender and Legal Aid Society of Hawaii. In high school he participated in Leadership, Key Club, the Gay-Straight Alliance, and school sports (including tennis, cross country, and swimming).

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Jeffrey Aglanao



HR Specialist

Kumabe HR

Best Match Industries

Business, Education, Hospitality and
Tourism

About Jeffrey

Jeff is an HR professional with 10+ years of experience helping people find opportunities and helping organizations build strong teams. His career has focused on full-cycle recruiting, talent acquisition, workforce development, employee onboarding, and building meaningful relationships with businesses, schools, and community organizations.

Throughout his career, he has been passionate about connecting the right people with the right opportunities while creating positive candidate and employee experiences. Whether it's leading recruitment efforts, developing hiring processes, or supporting workforce initiatives, he enjoys making an impact through people.

He holds both a Master of Human Resources Management and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Business Management from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He is also actively involved in professional and community organizations, including Young Professionals Hawaii and Rising Phoenix Jaycees.

When he's off the clock, Jeff is usually catching flights, planning his next adventure, or exploring somewhere new. He loves experiencing different cultures, trying new foods, and creating memorable travel experiences. If he's not traveling, you'll probably find him on a volleyball court, staying active, having fun, and embracing a little friendly competition while getting his steps in.

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Donnabelle Agtarap



Sr. Talent Acquisition Specialist

Hawaiian Host Group

Best Match Industries

Business

About Donnabelle

Born and raised on O'ahu, Donnabelle is a proud graduate of Waipahu High School and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where she earned a degree in Human Resource Management.

Throughout her academic journey, she actively sought opportunities to grow as a leader and team member. In high school, she was in student council and participated in band for four years and held leadership roles that strengthened her communication, collaboration, and ability to support others. In college, she continued developing these skills through her involvement with the SHRM Aloha Chapter and student organizations, where she expanded her professional network and leadership experience.

Professionally, Donnabelle has gained experience across several industries, including food distribution, engineering consulting, air cargo logistics, and food manufacturing. Her career has focused on human resources and recruitment, where she enjoys connecting people with meaningful opportunities and supporting their professional growth.

As a mentor, Donnabelle hopes to encourage students and young professionals to build confidence, embrace new experiences, and pursue opportunities that support both their personal and professional development.

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Cody Aguinaldo



**Registered
Representative**
New York Life

Best Match Industries

Business, Hospitality and Tourism, IT

About Cody

Cody Aguinaldo was born and raised on Oahu and attended President Theodore Roosevelt High School in Honolulu, where he stayed busy across a range of activities: Army JROTC (rising to Captain), Cross Country and Track & Field (long distance and pole vaulting), Marching Band, Civil Engineering Club (serving as President), and Robotics Club. He also co-captained a five-month Relay for Life campaign that raised nearly \$3,000 for cancer research.

He went on to the University of Oregon, where he earned a B.S. in Economics with a concentration in Banking & Finance, along with minors in Business Administration and Computer Information Technologies. While in Eugene, he stayed connected to home through the Hui O Hawaii Club, mentoring fellow island students, and volunteered regularly with local food banks and community service organizations.

His work experience spans a variety of industries. Cody has worked as a barista and shift supervisor at Starbucks, a server at Tango Contemporary Cafe, and a front-end cashier assistant at Costco. He also started his first financial practice before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and made the difficult decision to close it. Rather than walking away from the industry, he later returned and rebuilt with New York Life, where he now runs his own practice — a testament to his resilience and persistence.

While Cody has recently stepped away from nonprofit volunteer work with Lions International, he remains active as a mentor for the University of Oregon's Lundquist College of Business Undergraduate and Graduate Program, staying connected to the students coming up behind him.

Outside of work, Cody values steady growth, discipline, and staying connected to community themes carried through from his high school leadership roles to his volunteer work in college to how he approaches his clients and business today.

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Mokihana Aki



Director of Business Development

PBS Hawai'i

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication

About Mokihana

Mokihana Aki is the Director of Business Development at PBS Hawai'i. Originally from Kaua'i, she is a graduate of Kamehameha Schools – Kapālama and earned her Journalism degree from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She began her career as an intern at KHON2 News in Honolulu, where she worked her way up to become an award-winning news producer, earning two Edward R. Murrow Awards. In 2022, she joined PBS Hawaii as a producer, working on Home is Here, Nā Mele, INSIGHTS and KĀKOU: Hawai'i's Town Hall, before moving into business development in 2025 to strengthen partnerships with the local business community.

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Kailani Amine



Program Manager

HMSA

Best Match Industries

Health Services

About Kailani

Kailani Amine lives and works on Oahu, but is a Maui girl at heart. She graduated from Lahainaluna High School in 2012, where she was active in student leadership, played tennis for two years, and volunteered for Relay for Life, a cancer charity walk.

In her role as program manager at HMSA, Kailani supports the organization's corporate strategy and government relations teams. She's responsible for managing various special projects that have a direct impact on key corporate initiatives or operational goals from design through implementation.

Before joining HMSA, Kailani worked at the Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (WCAAP) in Seattle as a director, where she oversaw the Washington Child Health Improvement Partnership (WA-CHIP) with key partners to advance the health and well-being of all children in the state. She earned a bachelor's degree in public health at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and a master's degree in health administration from the University of Washington.

In her free time, Kailani enjoys reading, trying new places to eat, volunteering, gardening, and giving lots of affection to her Frenchie named Koda.

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China Andrade



Community Engagement Specialist

HMSA

Best Match Industries

Government and Policy,
Health Services

About China

China Andrade is a community engagement specialist at HMSA, where she supports initiatives that foster meaningful connections between members, partners, and the community. Her work focuses on promoting health education, access, and equity across Hawaii through collaborative outreach and engagement.

As a previous mentee in the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii Mentor Hawaii Program, China continues to grow her leadership and professional development skills. Mentor Hawaii is a six-month mentorship program that connects young professionals with mentors in their field. Before joining HMSA, China worked at Hawaii Pacific Health with Hawaii Health Partners, where she contributed to improving care coordination and health outcomes across the state.

China earned her bachelor of science in public health from Portland State University and a master's in public health from Oregon Health & Science University. She also earned her certified in public health credential from the National Board of Public Health Examiners. Her seven years in Oregon opened her horizons to diverse cultures and communities, deepening her commitment to giving back and serving others through public health.

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Tyler Belanga



Education Officer in HIDOE Assessment Section

HIDOE

Best Match Industries

Education

About Tyler

Tyler Belanga has spent basically his whole career finding ways to help students grow, whether that's in a classroom, creating new learning experiences outside of school, or figuring out what comes next. He studied History and Environmental Science in college, then later went back to school at Stanford to study education, because he realized what he really cared about was helping schools and teachers do right by their students.

Since then, he's taught in Boston, New York City, and even at a boarding school in Bangkok, Thailand. These days, he works for the Hawai'i Department of Education, where he helps come up with better, more meaningful ways for students to show what they've learned.

On the side, Tyler has spent years working one-on-one with students, helping them prep for tests, get more comfortable with public speaking, and navigate the sometimes-confusing process of applying to schools. He genuinely likes this part of the work as it's less about the "right answer" and more about helping someone figure out their own path.

Outside of work, Tyler's usually got a book in his hands, is out hiking or gardening, or is playing flag football or basketball. He is passionate about physical and mental health and loves the concept of forward movement, both literally and figuratively. He's a big believer that people learn best when they feel supported, not judged. That's the kind of mentor he hopes to be.

Tyler is looking forward to being part of YP and getting to know the next group of students coming up in Hawai'i.

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Zoë Brooks-Jeffiers



Chief of Staff

Family Promise of Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Non-profit/Social Services

About Zoë

Zoë Brooks-Jeffiers serves as the Chief of Staff at Family Promise of Hawai'i (FPH), a local nonprofit dedicated to preventing and ending family homelessness throughout the islands. In her role, she serves as a strategic partner to the Executive Director and leadership team to ensure continuity across the organization, drive key projects forward, and support the overall team through HR practices. Before transitioning to FPH, Zoë worked at Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) as the Communications and Development Coordinator. There, she worked alongside her team to build a grassroots movement working to improve the lives of keiki and their families in Hawai'i through advocacy. Throughout high school and college, Zoë was heavily involved in theatre, choir, leadership organizations, and other extracurriculars. The arts, her dogs, crafting, the ocean, and the outdoors all play a vital role in her life. As a lover of her community and improving the lives of those around her, Zoë is thrilled to work alongside incredible students as a high school mentor again and see what everything they will be bringing to the table this year!

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Jenny Brown



Program Coordinator

University of Hawaii College of Engineering

Best Match Industries

Education, Government and Policy,
Engineering

About Jenny

Jenny Brown is a first-generation, half-Filipina engineer from O'ahu who currently serves as Lead Program Coordinator in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She leads a \$15.3 million federally funded program, the Cleanroom Hawai'i Internship Program, which she built from the ground up—growing the first cohort, building industry partnerships, and helping expand Hawai'i's semiconductor and tech ecosystem.

She describes her path as “tacking”: turning into the wind, shifting direction, and treating unexpected experiences as valuable scenic routes rather than distractions. Her own scenic routes have included time as a dental assistant, studies in business, work in higher education and governance, and research in engineering, astronomy, and ICS.

After earning an A.A.B. in Business Management, she completed dual A.S. degrees in Engineering and Physical Science with Honors at Kapi'olani Community College, then her B.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering at UH Mānoa. She is now pursuing her M.S. in Electrical Engineering with a focus on semiconductors and finds the balance between her people-facing role and technical work fulfilling.

Leadership and community became intentional parts of her story later in life. Jenny held multiple leadership roles and served in governance and advocacy positions across the UH system, including co-leading the grassroots effort that successfully cut summer tuition from \$248 to \$131 per credit across all UH community colleges. She currently serves as an Interim O'ahu Voting Member on the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women, continuing her commitment to civic engagement. On campus she runs hands-on engineering workshops. Off campus she chairs a community group for women in engineering, outreach, and for years now, she stays connected to her passion for biology by restoring native ecosystems with Nā Ala Hele.

When she has free time, you'll find her doing yoga, showing up at a random community event, or taking the scenic route around the island.

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Nainoa Campbell



**CTE Pathways
Specialist**
Hawai'i P-20

Best Match Industries
Education, Kinesiology/Athletics

About Nainoa

Nainoa is a program director at Hawai'i P-20, leading initiatives to expand Work-Based Learning and strengthen pathways from education to the workforce. From 2012 to 2022, he served as an educator and administrator at Saint Louis School, supporting student development and academic excellence. From 2022 to 2024, he worked with HIDOE Title I schools as an Educational Specialist, advancing equity-driven programs for underserved communities. With a deep commitment to education, Nainoa continues to build scalable, student-centered programs that empower learners and prepare them for success in school, career, and life.

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Lawrence Castillo



Manager of Operations, Queen's Clinically Integrated Physician Network

The Queen's Health Systems

Best Match Industries

Business, Health Services

About Lawrence

Lawrence is originally from Ewa Beach on Oahu. After high school, he earned a dual degree from the University of Southern California, including a Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Studies and a Master of Science in Global Medicine from the University of Southern California. After working for a few years, he then pursued a Master of Public Health in Health Policy at Yale University.

Lawrence's career has centered on value-based care and population health. He has worked both in Hawaii and on the mainland in healthcare-related areas, spanning consulting, project management, quality improvement, and care management. He returned home in 2023 to work at Queen's, where he is currently the Manager of Operations for The Queen's Clinically Integrated Physician Network, an Accountable Care Organization spanning more than 1,400 providers and 130,000 patients across Hawaii.

Lawrence is looking forward to serving as a mentor, drawing on his own experiences navigating school and job applications, early career decisions, resumes, and interviews to help guide others through similar milestones, to pay it forward to his home community.

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Jasmine Cho



Assistant Member Relationship Manager

University of Hawaii Federal Credit Union

Best Match Industries

Business

About Jasmine

Jasmine is a proud McKinley High School alumna. Go Tigers! During her time at McKinley, she was involved in Key Club and tennis. She went on to attend Chaminade University of Honolulu, where she earned her Bachelor's degree in Communication with an emphasis in Marketing. She spent a decade in advertising and marketing before transitioning into banking, where she currently works as an Assistant Member Relationship Manager at University of Hawaii Federal Credit Union.

Outside of work, Jasmine stays actively involved with AAF Hawaii, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii's Young Professionals, and the Honolulu Chinese Jaycees. She enjoys meeting new people, building connections, and finding ways to give back to the local community.

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Coby Chock



Director of Public Policy and Advocacy

Alzheimer's Association

Best Match Industries

Government and Policy, Health Services

About Coby

Coby Chock is a public policy professional and community advocate from Hawai'i with a passion for leadership, service, and improving the lives of others. A graduate of Saint Louis School's Class of 2018, he excelled in a rigorous Advanced Placement (AP) curriculum while serving as class president during his junior and senior years. He was a member of the National Honor Society, participated in Mock Trial and Political Society, competed in ILH soccer and air riflery, and graduated first in his class.

Outside the classroom, Coby was heavily involved in Scouting, serving as Senior Patrol Leader for two years before becoming a Junior Assistant Scoutmaster. He earned the rank of Eagle Scout, a reflection of his commitment to leadership and community service.

Coby attended the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where he earned a B.A. in Economics and a Certificate in Spanish in just two years, graduating summa cum laude. During his undergraduate studies, he participated in an exchange program at UMass Amherst and studied abroad at the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo in Mendoza, Argentina.

Following graduation, he ran for the Hawai'i State House of Representatives in 2020. While unsuccessful, the experience launched his career in public service and allowed him to build lasting relationships with leaders across Hawai'i. He went on to serve as a Policy Advisor to Senator Glenn Wakai, supporting legislative work related to energy, economic development, and tourism.

Coby later earned a Master of Professional Studies in Integrative Plant Science from Cornell University, where he received a grant to study viticulture across tropical regions, including Thailand, Brazil, and India. Today, he serves as Director of Public Policy and Advocacy for the Alzheimer's Association. Motivated by personal experiences with family members who lived with dementia, he advocates for policies that improve care, support, and outcomes for individuals and families impacted by Alzheimer's disease. In his current role, he is leading efforts to transform dementia care across Hawai'i by advancing initiatives that improve clinical practices, develop statewide dementia care infrastructure, support the adoption of new medical advances and treatments, and ensure equitable access to care for residents in rural communities and on the Neighbor Islands.

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Sherman Chum



Home Loan Consultant

Hawaii Mortgage Group

Best Match Industries

Business, Real estate and finance

About Sherman

Sherman Chum is a graduate of Kalani High School and currently works as a Home Loan Consultant with Hawai'i Mortgage Group, where he helps individuals and families navigate the homebuying and financing process.

He earned his bachelor's degree in Organizational Management and later received his MBA from the University of Arizona. Throughout his career, Sherman has developed a strong interest in financial education, relationship building, and helping others better understand important financial and career decisions.

Outside of work, Sherman stays involved in the community through organizations such as the Rotary Club of Kahala Sunrise and the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i Young Professionals. His involvement has given him opportunities to support community service projects, educational initiatives, and programs that bring people together.

Having grown up and attended public school in Hawai'i, Sherman is excited for the opportunity to give back by mentoring local students. He hopes to share what he has learned through his own education, career changes, successes, and challenges while also helping students explore their interests, ask questions, and gain a better understanding of the different paths available to them after high school.

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Kira Diehm



Associate Director of Development, UH Mānoa Athletics

UH Foundation

Best Match Industries

Business, Education, Sports

About Kira

Kira Diehm is the Associate Director of Development for University of Hawai'i Mānoa Athletics, where she helps raise funds for all 21 athletic programs, supporting student-athlete scholarships, NIL opportunities, and operational needs. A former volleyball player, she competed in high school and continued playing club volleyball while attending Indiana University, where she earned a degree in Journalism.

Kira began her career at KITV4 Island News as the 10 p.m. News Producer before transitioning to marketing and communications at the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i. Today, she combines her background in communications and athletics to support UH student-athletes. Her favorite part of her role is helping current and former student-athletes access opportunities and resources that contribute to their success both on and off the field.

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Dan Diez



Practice Director – VP

Robert Half

Best Match Industries Business

About Dan

Dan Diez is someone who cares deeply about helping people grow, building meaningful relationships, and making a positive impact in his community. Based in Honolulu, he currently serves as Vice President – Practice Director at Robert Half, where he leads the firm's permanent accounting consulting practice in Hawaii. Over the years, he has helped grow the team significantly while developing talent, supporting clients, and creating lasting partnerships across the local business community.

Before joining Robert Half, Dan worked at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Education, where he supported technology and distance learning programs through business management, contract administration, and online course development. He also had the opportunity to teach an undergraduate course, combining his interest in education with his commitment to student success.

Dan earned both his MBA in Accounting and his bachelor's degree from Clark University, where he graduated magna cum laude with a major in Political Science and minors in Management and Law and Society. During his time at Clark, he was deeply involved in campus life and was recognized for his leadership and service to the university community.

Outside of work, Dan has always valued mentorship, teamwork, and service. A former basketball coach at both the college and high school levels, he continues to enjoy helping young people build confidence and reach their potential. He also volunteers as the Hawaii Field Director for the Horatio Alger Scholarship program, supporting students as they pursue educational opportunities. His honors include Pacific Business News' 40 Under 40, Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals' Level Up Leader of the Year, and Robert Half's Premier Award for Leadership. Dan is also proud to be a Horatio Alger National Scholar and an Eagle Scout.

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Shell Dowsett-Whims



Senior Supply Chain Analyst

Reyes Holdings (Island Distributing)

Best Match Industries

Business, Supply Chain Specifically

About Shell

Shell Whims is a Senior Supply Chain Analyst with Island Distributing, a Reyes Beverage Group company, where she helps manage supply chain and logistics operations. Her experience spans sourcing, procurement, transportation, inventory management, and process improvement, with a focus on creating efficient and sustainable business solutions.

Shell earned her MBA from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in 2026 while working full-time, an experience that strengthened her leadership, problem-solving, and time management skills. Throughout her career, she has led projects involving freight optimization, cost reduction, operational planning, and process improvement across complex supply chains.

Originally from the Pacific Northwest, Shell moved to Hawai'i in 2016 to help care for her grandparents. She is passionate about giving back to the community, continuous learning, and helping others reach their potential.

As a mentor, Shell hopes to help students navigate the transition from school to the workforce with greater confidence and preparation. She believes that career success is built not only on professional skills, but also on personal growth, resilience, and a willingness to keep learning. If she can play even a small role in helping students feel more equipped for their future, she considers that a meaningful opportunity and privilege.

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Ellie Dunkle



Ocean Engineer, Project Manager

Sea Engineering, Inc.

Best Match Industries

Industrial and Engineering
Technology, Natural Resources,
Renewable Energy

About Ellie

Ellie Dunkle is an Ocean Engineer and Project Manager at Sea Engineering, Inc., where she works on understanding coastal processes, oceanographic data, and geophysical surveying. She grew up swimming competitively and got involved in environmental groups in high school and college, which set her on the path toward ocean and climate work.

Ellie has a B.S. in Ocean Engineering and a B.A. in Spanish from the University of Rhode Island (2019) and an M.S. in Coastal and Ocean Engineering from Oregon State University (2021). She's a AAUS Scientific Diver and part of Sea Engineering's dive team, doing fieldwork across Hawai'i, Palau, and Micronesia — deploying instruments and studying ocean environments firsthand. Her work also includes sea level rise studies, environmental permitting, GIS coastal assessments, and numerical modeling. In 2025, she completed the ACEC Hawai'i Emerging Leaders in Engineering program.

Outside of work, Ellie's usually in the water — surfing, free diving, or hunting for shells — or out for a run, on a yoga mat, or cooking up some vegan food.

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Casey Eickholt



Pilot

Hawaiian Airlines

Best Match Industries

Hospitality and Tourism,
Transportation, and the Military

About Casey

Casey is an inter-island pilot for Hawaiian Airlines and member of the Hawaii Air National Guard. He grew up in Pueblo, Colorado where he developed a love for the outdoors. In high school he engaged in several extracurriculars including speech and debate club, a few sports, and building a trebuchet. As a self-proclaimed hippie with long hair, he surprised his teachers and parents by deciding to attend the United States Air Force Academy.

At the Air Force Academy, Casey majored in Physics and filled cadet leadership positions ranging from an athletic reconditioning coach, to mentoring high school applicants. In his free time he discovered a love for meditation and restored a classic car with his dad. After graduation, he served 13 years on active duty flying the T-1 Jayhawk and the KC-135 Stratotanker. His military career gave him the opportunity to blend flying, teaching, and traveling the world. He also discovered a love for retirement planning, and attained a Masters degree in Financial Planning.

In 2022, Casey left active duty to move to Hawaii and begin a new career as a commercial pilot, while maintaining a part-time role in the Air Force. The pilot career field offers tremendous flexibility, which allows him to invest much of his time in hobbies and friends. He splits his free time between a local meditation center, scuba diving, running clubs, yoga, land restoration, and extensive travel.

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Marisa Escalante



Senior Director, Events & Special Projects

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Business

About Marisa

Marisa Escalante is the Events & Special Projects Senior Director at the Chamber. In her role Marisa assists with the planning and coordination of the Chamber's activities along with assisting with the content and graphic creation for digital marketing and social media.

Marisa previously worked for Inception Design as an Account Manager and Raynor Hawaii Overhead Doors and Gates Inc. as a Marketing Intern.

Marisa is a recent college graduate, receiving her BBA in Marketing & International Business and MS in Marketing Management from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Shidler College of Business. She is inspired by good works, passion and the ability to grow from any situation.

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Tristan Fried



Spine Surgeon

Excel Health

Best Match Industries

Health Services

About Tristan

Dr. Tristan Blase Fried is an orthopaedic spine surgeon in Honolulu who specializes in minimally invasive and endoscopic spine surgery. He enjoys helping patients get back to doing the things they love while continuing to improve the field through research and innovation.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Dr. Fried completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at Rothman Orthopaedics and Thomas Jefferson University before pursuing advanced spine surgery fellowship training at Rush University in Chicago.

Outside of the operating room, he enjoys mentoring students who are interested in medicine. He hopes to share what the journey to becoming a physician is really like, answer questions about healthcare careers, and encourage students to pursue their goals with curiosity, hard work, and confidence.

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Erika Galarneau



Director of Marketing

Northwestern Mutual

Best Match Industries

Marketing

About Erika

Erika grew up between Japan and New York, spending the school year in Japan and summers in New York as a child. In high school, she was a member of the student council and speech club and won first place in the extemporaneous category her senior year. After graduating from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. with a major in Criminal Justice, she began her career in professional services marketing, working at law firms in, Tokyo, New York City, and Honolulu for the past 15 years, and currently works in the finance and insurance space at Northwestern Mutual Hawai'i, the Hawai'i office of a large Fortune 500 company. Outside of work, Erika is active in the Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals and as 2026–2027 President of the Rotary Club of Kahala Sunrise. In 2025, she was featured in the Young Professionals issue of Pacific Edge Magazine. When she's not working or volunteering, she's usually off on an adventure around O'ahu with her husband, and their two children.

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Matthew Galarneau



Associate Vice President & ALM Officer

First Hawaiian Bank

Best Match Industries

Business, Financial Services

About Matthew

I grew up in Hawaii and played basketball throughout high school, an experience that taught me the value of discipline, teamwork, and communication. I went on to earn a B.S. in Mathematics from Oregon State University and a Master's in Quantitative Finance from Columbia University.

After my undergraduate, I spent nearly 10 years living in New York, first working as an actuarial consultant and later at a quantitative hedge fund, where I developed a strong interest in financial markets, quantitative analysis, and data-driven decision making.

Eventually, I made the decision to return home to Hawaii and join First Hawaiian Bank. I began my career at the bank in the Data Science & Analytics department before transitioning into Treasury, where I currently work in Asset Liability Management. My work combines quantitative analysis, financial markets, and strategic decision making to help manage the bank's balance sheet and financial risks. I also enjoy using Python to automate workflows and develop tools that make analysis more efficient and repeatable.

Outside of work, I still enjoy playing basketball and, most importantly, spending time with my wife and kids.

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Dazja Gianessi



Director of Operations

Ronald McDonald House Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Business, Health Services,
Hospitality and Tourism,

About Dazja

Dazja Gianessi is the Director of Operations at the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii. During her high school years, Dazja was a dedicated athlete, driven student, and engaged member in the community. She served as President of her high school Interact Club as well as school treasure, she was national honor society member, as well as a competitive cheerleader, varsity soccer player, and state competition for track and field. After high school, Dazja was given a presidential nomination to receive an appointment to the United States Military Academy (USMA). During her time at USMA, she was a member of the Women's Rugby Team, and was as an engaged member of the Diversity and Inclusion Club. After leaving USMA due to an sport related injury, Dazja devoted her time working with Hawaii's youth. For the last eleven years, she has worked in the nonprofit sector in roles that serve children at companies such as YMCA of Honolulu, Parents and Children Together, After-School All-Stars, Jumpstart Preschool, RMHC-HI each position learning and growing from before.

From after school director, preschool director, and now Director of Operations for Ronald McDonald House Charities of Hawaii being able to serve Hawaii's youth continues to be a privilege.

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Jonavan Gonzalez

Note: Virtual Only



Design and Business Operations

Walt Disney Imagineering

Best Match Industries

Business, Industrial and Engineering Technology

About Jonavan

Jonavan Gonzalez was born and raised in Nānākuli, O'ahu, where he attended Nānākuli High and Intermediate School. During high school, Jonavan was a multi-sport athlete, competing in football, soccer, and track, and carried that same drive and discipline into his academic career.

Jonavan went on to attend the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where he earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering before returning to complete an M.S. in Finance, combining technical problem-solving with business and financial strategy. During his time at UH Mānoa, he was involved with the Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship (PACE), where he mentored fellow students on prototyping, product development, and pitching.

Jonavan currently works at Walt Disney Imagineering as a Design and Engineering Operations Intern, where he supports the teams responsible for bringing Disney's parks and experiences to life. Landing a role at Imagineering has been a lifelong goal, and he sees it as an opportunity to keep growing both professionally and personally.

Outside of work, Jonavan is happiest outdoors. He loves the beach, staying active, and playing volleyball, and he tries to bring the same energy and balance he found through sports growing up into his everyday life. Above all, Jonavan stays connected to his roots in Nānākuli and is passionate about giving back to the community that shaped him, especially by supporting the next generation of students as they figure out their own paths forward.

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Anastasiya Hewett



Senior Rate Analyst

HECO

Best Match Industries

Business, Government and Policy,
Renewable Energy

About Anastasiya

Anastasiya Hewett is a Senior Rate Analyst at Hawaiian Electric. She has worked in the utility industry for the past five years and cannot imagine not being part of such meaningful work. She credits her family and years of involvement in sports for shaping her character and strengthening her people skills. She enjoys solving problems and finding unconventional approaches, and believes that different experiences, backgrounds, and ways of thinking are a tremendous advantage. She earned her degree from the University of Colorado in International Business and Management, with minors in Accounting & Finance, and her MBA from Louisiana State University.

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Reid Horimoto



Lead Content Specialist

Central Pacific Bank

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Business

About Reid

Reid Horimoto was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii, and attended Iolani High School, where he participated in a range of sports (where he received no accolades), as well as the Boy Scouts (where he received his Eagle Scout award). He then earned his Bachelor's degree in Marketing from Santa Clara University, where he joined the business fraternity Delta Sigma Pi, serving as SVP, and the Ultimate Frisbee team (Santa Clara Altered Beasts, again no accolades). After graduation he stayed in the Bay Area and started working at Fiserv, in customer support, before pivoting to fraud prevention and risk management.

While at Fiserv, he returned to SCU to earn his MBA, which led him to another pivot to Customer Success at Vyond. He eventually returned to Hawaii, where he worked briefly for the State as the Executive Officer for the Hawaii Medical Board, before joining Central Pacific Bank's Management Trainee program, which rotates through four departments at the bank (Marketing, Fraud/BSA, Cash/Treasury Management, and Branch Banking). It was through this program that he discovered the Hawaii Chamber of Commerce's Young Professionals Program, which he sees as a way to both reconnect with the Hawaii business world, while also being able to bring his knowledge and experience to future generations.

Providing guidance is something that resonates with Reid, as he has had the privilege of learning from many people throughout his professional career. He believes that equipping future generations with as much knowledge as possible will not only help individuals, but also Hawaii's business world in general, by populating it with capable people who feel connected to the success of Hawaii.

In his free time, he enjoys playing video games, photography, creating music, and playing the occasional round of golf (still no accolades).

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Tigger Huisinga



Senior Development Director

American Heart Association

Best Match Industries

Business, Health Services

About Tigger

Tigger Huisinga (she/they) is a nonprofit professional who got her career start in social work and healthcare. Attending high school outside of Seattle, she was an active athlete, key club volunteer, and DECA competitor. With a bachelor's in Social Work from the University of Washington, she has over 7 years of experience working in human services and clinical settings. She moved to O'ahu to pursue a post-baccalaureate in Applied Behavioral Analysis/Special Education. After pivoting to the nonprofit world, she wanted to use her background for good while trying something different. She had dabbled in fundraising back in Seattle and had a passion for connecting with different organizations and people who were as passionate about having a positive impact as she is. It's been a fun and eventful few years, growing her repertoire and fundraising over \$3 million during her time in Hawai'i.

Tigger is an active community member, participating in queer sports, serving on the board of the Hawai'i LGBT Legacy Foundation, and running a Photo Booth business with her partner. Life is a balance of work and play, and she is always up for a new adventure.

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Katie Kaahanui



**Director,
Safe & Sound Westside**
Department of the Prosecuting Attorney

Best Match Industries
Government and Policy, Law and
Public Safety

About Katie

Katie Kaahanui is a public safety and behavioral health professional whose career has centered on strengthening communities and creating opportunities for people to thrive.

A 2009 graduate of Kalani High School, Katie continued her education at home in Hawai'i and holds a Master of Science in Counseling Psychology with a concentration in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Chaminade University of Honolulu, as well as a Master of Science in Criminal Justice Studies. She is a licensed Associate Mental Health Counselor in Hawai'i and has built a unique career at the intersection of mental health, public safety, community engagement, and systems change.

Throughout her career, Katie has worked across the nonprofit, business, and government sectors, including the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i and the Waikiki Business Improvement District. Today, she serves with the City and County of Honolulu Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, where her work bridges public safety, behavioral health, and community engagement together. She works closely with law enforcement, schools, service providers, and community partners to develop prevention and intervention strategies, strengthen pathways to behavioral health and social services, and address community safety concerns before they escalate. Her role includes working alongside law enforcement in the field, developing youth-focused initiatives, coordinating multidisciplinary partnerships, and building programs that balance accountability and opportunities for individuals to access support.

Katie is especially passionate about public safety, mental health, leadership development, and helping others recognize possibilities for themselves that they may not yet see. Her professional journey has taught her that careers do not always follow a straight line, and that seemingly different experiences can ultimately become some of a person's greatest strengths. Additionally, she also credits her own past experiences being a mentee to her own personal growth, and believes strongly in showing up with curiosity, building meaningful relationships, and using education, experience, and connection to create positive change in the communities you serve.

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Alicia Kaita



Student; Peer Advisor

University of Hawaii at Manoa

Best Match Industries

Health Services

About Alicia

Alicia Kaita is a Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Science in Health and Exercise Science student at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and is expected to graduate in Spring 2027. She has been active in athletics and extracurricular activities throughout high school, including tennis and Key Club. This experience helped her develop her interest in serving the needs of the community, especially in health.

She has worked in many different health care settings. She is a Medical Assistant at CdR Plastic Surgery in Honolulu and was a student intern with iCARE at Rehabilitation Hospital of the Pacific. She also has completed internships at Adventist Health Castle Hospital (COPE Health Scholar) and Enchanted Lake Physical Therapy. These experiences have given her the opportunity to learn clinical skills directly while gaining knowledge about patient care and rehabilitation.

Alicia has also done community service outside of academics and work, including a medical mission trip to Costa Rica thru VIDA Hawaii. She also enjoys research and has worked on projects that look at differences in pre-injury concussion data across the Hawaiian islands.

As she prepares for a career in healthcare, Alicia is hoping to continue building her clinical and research experience. She wants to go to physician assistant school and eventually pursue a career in Neonatology or OBGYN.

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Piikea Kalakau-Baarde



Managing Director, External Affairs

TFA Hawai'i

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication,
Education, Government and Policy

About Piikea

Piikea Kalakau-Baarde is a typical local girl from Waimānalo, Hawai'i, who serves as the Managing Director of External Affairs at Teach For America Hawai'i. Growing up, Piikea was a three-sport athlete in softball, basketball, and cross country, but she always had a deep love for the arts and humanities—frequently found buried in a book or at the beach when she wasn't on the field or court.

She earned her bachelor's degree in English from Hawai'i Pacific University, a master's in Secondary Education from Johns Hopkins University, and a doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Chaminade University.

After exploring careers in law and politics, Piikea found her passion in education, starting as a 7th and 8th grade English teacher at Wai'anae Intermediate through Teach For America. She loved being in the classroom, but she eventually transitioned into systems-level educational leadership to broaden her impact. Today, she leads external affairs for TFA Hawai'i, balancing relational community building with operational leadership across diverse stakeholders.

In her free time, Piikea loves traveling, spending time with family and friends, going to the beach, trying great food, and spoiling her dog, Banksy.

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Dan Kaneko



Marketing and Communications Specialist

Hawaii Dental Service

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Business,
Health Services

About Dan

Dan Kaneko is a strategic marketing and communications professional who helps tell the stories of local businesses and organizations in Hawaii. He currently works as a Marketing and Communications Specialist at Hawaii Dental Service (HDS), where he creates campaigns that connect with stakeholders and support the mission of Hawaii's leading dental benefits provider.

Dan is a proud Kamehameha Schools "lifer" and stays closely connected to the campus as an assistant coach for the cross country and track teams. For him, coaching is about more than running. It's about helping students become strong, disciplined and thoughtful leaders, both on and off the track.

During his time at Kamehameha, Dan was involved in a wide range of activities including athletics, student publications, video production and academic clubs. After graduation, he attended the University of Miami in Florida, where he completed both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees through an accelerated program, helping to save time and money.

Before joining HDS, Dan held roles at Kamehameha Schools, YMCA of Honolulu and Hawaiian Electric. He is excited to mentor students who are ready to grow, challenge themselves and build a brighter future for themselves and their communities.

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James Kealohi



Director of Community Engagement & Volunteer Experience

YMCA Honolulu

Best Match Industries

Business, Nonprofit

About James

James is a nonprofit leader and community advocate currently serving as Director at the YMCA of Honolulu. In his current role, he drives organizational impact by cultivating robust community partnerships, aligning diverse stakeholders, and overseeing community engagement and service operations.

A graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, James brings deep experience across institutional advancement, fundraising, and program design. Throughout his career, he has managed operating budgets exceeding \$2M, directed strategic grant initiatives, and worked closely with civic leaders, public agencies, and local partners to secure resources that address critical community needs like supportive housing and economic resilience. At the YMCA, he excels in coalition-building, uniting neighborhood groups and institutional stakeholders around shared missions to deliver responsive, equity-driven programming.

Deeply committed to a culture of service, James pairs his professional leadership with extensive personal volunteerism. He actively engages in grassroots community service as a local chapter leader with Gay for Good and collaborates on local service initiatives with the Rotary Club of Kahala Sunrise. Whether mobilizing volunteers, building partner coalitions, or driving institutional outreach, his work centers on strengthening community networks and fostering lasting social impact.

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Elizabeth Kim



Care Transitions Specialist

*Hawaii Medical Service Association
(HMSA)*

Best Match Industries

Health Services

About Elizabeth

Elizabeth Kim grew up in Kaneohe and graduated from Castle High School in 2007. After high school, she initially considered law and then psychology. After her first year at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, she decided to follow in her grandmother's footsteps and pursue a career in nursing.

Elizabeth went on to attend UH Mānoa's school of nursing and received her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing in 2013. She is now a Registered Nurse (RN) Care Transitions Specialist at HMSA, where she works to ensure that patients are discharged home safely. Before her current role, she held various RN positions in long-term care nursing, home health, and cardiac outpatient care.

In her free time, Elizabeth enjoys traveling, exploring new restaurants, and spending quality time with her family at the beach.

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Erika Knudson



Senior Wish Manager

Make-A-Wish Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Business, Non-Profit

About Erika

Erika Knudson is a dedicated nonprofit professional with a passion for creating meaningful experiences and making a positive impact in her community. She currently serves as a Wish Manager at Make-A-Wish Hawaii, where she helps bring life-changing wishes to children facing critical illnesses. Over the course of her career, Erika has held a variety of roles within Make-A-Wish Hawaii, demonstrating her commitment to the organization's mission and the families it serves. She also gained valuable experience in staffing and workforce development during her time with Remedy Intelligent Staffing Hawaii.

A lifelong leader, Erika was actively involved throughout high school, serving in student government all four years while also participating in both marching band and concert band. These experiences helped develop her leadership, teamwork, and organizational skills, which continue to guide her professional and community involvement today.

Erika earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Entrepreneurial Studies from Hawaii Pacific University. During her time at HPU, she was recognized for her academic achievements as a member of Delta Mu Delta Honor Society and the University Scholars program.

Known for her collaborative spirit and dedication to service, Erika brings creativity, compassion, and strong relationship-building skills to every endeavor. She is committed to helping others, fostering meaningful connections, and creating memorable experiences that leave a lasting impact on the individuals and communities she serves.

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Mahina Komeiji



Training Development Manager

FCH Enterprises/Zippy's

Best Match Industries

Business, Education, Hospitality and Tourism

About Mahina

Mahina Komeiji is a learning and development professional with a passion for education, leadership, and community engagement. During high school, she served as Editor-in-Chief and Lead Graphics Designer for Nā Pueo, her school's student newspaper, developing strong communication, storytelling, and creative design skills.

She attended Emerson College, where she studied Writing, Literature, and Publishing, before earning a Master of Education in Secondary Education, English from Lesley University. Mahina spent ten years with the Hawai'i Department of Education, where she dedicated her career to supporting student learning and academic growth. She later transitioned into corporate learning and development with FCH Enterprises, the parent company of Zippy's Restaurants, where she continues to focus on employee growth, training, and organizational development.

Outside of her professional career, Mahina is actively involved in several leadership and professional organizations. She serves on the Emerging Leaders Council for the Hawai'i LGBT Legacy Foundation and is a member of the Association for Talent Development (ATD) and Toastmasters International. She is also the director of Hawai'i Horror Nights, where she combines her creativity, leadership, and passion for community events to create memorable experiences. Through her work in education, talent development, and community service, Mahina remains committed to helping individuals learn, grow, and achieve their full potential.

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Kiana Langer



Vice President of Community Engagement

Waikiki Improvement Association

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Business,
Hospitality and Tourism

About Kiana

Kiana Langer is the VP of Community Engagement at the Waikiki Improvement Association, where she works to strengthen relationships between businesses, residents, and stakeholders across Waikiki.

Prior to this role, Kiana built a strong foundation in marketing across several Hawai'i-based companies. As Marketing Specialist at Premier Restoration Hawaii, she led statewide marketing efforts across O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i Island — developing campaigns that supported the sales team, building end-to-end lead generation systems including an AI chatbot, and managing digital strategy from SEO/SEM to TV segments. At Cleaner's Warehouse, she built the company's marketing program from the ground up, creating brand strategy, launching social media, optimizing Google Ads and Google My Business, and implementing CRM systems to better connect with B2B clients. She also brought her marketing expertise to Probuilt, further rounding out her experience across industries.

With years of marketing experience, Kiana has executed campaigns from concept to launch across industries, driving measurable results through data-backed decision making. She specializes in CRM development, analytics reporting, and multi-channel marketing, using platforms like Salesforce, Luxor, Google Ads, LinkedIn, and SEO tools to increase visibility and generate leads. Whether building new marketing infrastructure or refining an established strategy, she thrives on turning ideas into measurable outcomes.

Outside of work, Kiana is actively involved in volunteer initiatives with childhood cancer advocacy groups — experiences that have strengthened her passion for collaboration and purpose-driven work.

When she's not teaching Lagree or taking a Barre class, you'll find Kiana deep in CRM analytics or on a Teams meeting brainstorming creative ways to market to the neighbor islands. She's a forward-thinking marketer who thrives in team environments, embraces challenges, and delivers results that grow brands people trust.

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Raquel Lasconia



Commercial Sales Specialist

Island Energy Services

Best Match Industries

Business, Oil & Gas

About Raquel

Raquel attended Kapolei High School, where she was an active student-athlete, participating in basketball, volleyball, softball, track, and Powderpuff football. Raquel graduated from the University of Hawai'i–West O'ahu with a degree in Business Administration Management, where she also achieved Principal's List recognition. Raquel initially attended a summer school program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa before transferring back to UH West O'ahu to continue her education closer to home.

Throughout her professional career, Raquel has gained experience across several industries and organizations. She previously worked in the Athletics Department at UH Mānoa and in hospitality at Ko Olina. For the past 7.5 years, Raquel has been with Island Energy Services, where she currently serves as a Commercial Sales Specialist.

Beyond her professional career, Raquel is actively involved in her community. She serves on the Board of Directors for the UH Mānoa Nā Koa Football Booster Club and the Make-A-Wish Hawai'i Young Leaders Board. Raquel is also a member of the Chamber of Commerce, reflecting her commitment to professional development, community involvement, and giving back to Hawai'i.

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Thomas Lee



Director of Government Partnerships

Hawaii Data Collaborative

Best Match Industries

Government and Policy, Health
Services, Data, Public
Health/Epidemiology/Military

About Thomas

At the Hawaii Data Collaborative, Thomas works with partners to strengthen how government and government data integrate with the community to address pressing challenges, and identifies opportunities for HDC to provide data strategy and capacity support to partners seeking to expand government data utilization and sharing. Thomas currently is a member of the State Data Task Force and is a member of the Hawaii Army National Guard. Grounded in Epidemiology and Public Health, Thomas previously served as faculty at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa where his research focused on COVID-19 epidemiology, modeling, and data utilization. Thomas also supported COVID-19 operations across the Pacific as an Army Reservist as the lead COVID-19 modeler and forecaster for the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency from April through July, 2020. Raised in Honolulu, O'ahu, Thomas received his PhD and MPH in Epidemiology from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, holds a Bachelor of Arts in Chinese from the University of Notre Dame, and is a graduate of Punahou School.

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Chelsea Ligsay



Registered Nurse

The Queens Medical Center

Best Match Industries

Health Services

About Chelsea

An experienced Registered Nurse with 13 years of clinical nursing experience at The Queen's Medical Center, Ligsay is dedicated to providing compassionate, patient-centered care and education. Throughout her nursing career, she has developed a strong foundation in clinical practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and professional mentorship.

A proud local resident and graduate of Farrington High School, Ligsay recently earned her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, specializing in Nursing Education and Leadership. Her journey toward becoming a nurse is rooted in perseverance and determination. As a teenage mother, she graduated from high school with Magna Cum Laude honors and continued to pursue her goal of becoming a registered nurse. She went on to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Her personal journey has shaped her resilience, strengthened her character, and deepened her belief in the power of perseverance. Having navigated significant challenges while pursuing her education and career, she is passionate about encouraging others to recognize their own strengths, overcome obstacles, and pursue their goals with confidence.

Her passion for mentorship has been shaped by her experience precepting nurse residents on a cardiac telemetry unit, where she guided new nurses as they transitioned from the classroom into clinical practice. Through this role, she found fulfillment in helping emerging nurses develop critical thinking skills, build confidence, and establish a strong professional foundation.

As a mentor, Ligsay strives to be a knowledgeable resource and trusted confidant, providing guidance, encouragement, and meaningful support to help each student recognize their potential and achieve their personal and professional goals.

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Professionals
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Richmond Luzar



Principal

Aura Strategies

Best Match Industries

Government and Policy

About Richmond

Richmond Luzar is the founder of Aura Strategies, a Honolulu-based public interest consulting firm serving non-profits through government relations, communications, and fundraising. He also founded Keep Hawai'i Home, an organization focused on lowering housing costs for local people.

Previously, Richmond served as Director of Government Affairs at Hawaii Public Policy Advocates and as Policy and Communications Director for Honolulu City Councilmember Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, where worked to pass laws for the State of Hawaii.

He has a degree in Political Science from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

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Brian Madamba



Culture Program Manager

HawaiiUSA FCU

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Business

About Brian

Brian Madamba, known online as Brevenchym, is a Hawai'i-based content creator, emcee, culture professional, and community advocate whose work blends local humor, storytelling, and a deep connection to Hawai'i's people and culture.

Born and raised in Waipahu, Brian has built Brevenchym into a growing digital platform known for its unapologetic personality and distinctly local perspective. Through comedy, lifestyle content, and observations about everyday life in Hawai'i, he has cultivated an engaged community across social media while collaborating with local and national brands to create content that feels authentic, entertaining, and rooted in place.

Beyond the screen, Brian brings nearly a decade of experience in organizational culture, learning and development, and employee engagement. As Culture Program Manager at Hawai'iUSA Federal Credit Union, he helps shape initiatives that strengthen workplace culture, develop people, and connect employees to a greater sense of purpose and community impact. He is also actively involved with the Association for Talent Development Hawai'i Chapter and has contributed his time to mentorship, education, and community initiatives throughout the islands.

Whether he is behind a microphone, in front of a camera, or building experiences within the workplace, Brian believes in the power of connection, humor, and storytelling to bring people together.

Through Brevenchym, he continues to amplify a modern Hawai'i perspective while showing that local voices can be deeply rooted in home and still resonate far beyond the islands.

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Jasper Jay Marcelo



Commercial Real Estate Agent

CBI

Best Match Industries

Business, Education, sales

About Jasper

Jasper Marcelo is an industrial commercial real estate agent with Clients Best Interest (CBI) Hawaii, where he specializes in helping organizations acquire, sell, and lease industrial properties on Oahu. A United States Marine Corps veteran, Jasper served as both a Diesel Technician and Military Police officer, experiences that instilled the discipline, integrity, and work ethic that continue to guide his professional career.

Jasper earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with concentrations in Accounting and Finance, followed by a Master of Business Administration from Hawaii Pacific University. Before transitioning into commercial real estate, he gained experience in accounting through positions with Helping Hands Hawaii, Deloitte, and Enterprise Holdings.

Throughout his academic and professional career, Jasper has remained committed to leadership and community service. He has served in leadership roles with organizations including the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii Young Professionals and the Filipino Chamber of Commerce, where he has helped organize fundraising galas, community festivals, and networking events that support local businesses and nonprofit initiatives.

Passionate about lifelong learning, Jasper is actively pursuing the CCIM and SIOR designations to further enhance his expertise in commercial real estate. He enjoys advising business owners on commercial real estate strategies and helping clients make informed long-term decisions that strengthen their operations.

Outside of work, Jasper enjoys weightlifting, golf, reading, and volunteering in the community. He is dedicated to building lasting relationships and serving others with professionalism, integrity, and a commitment to putting his clients' best interests first.

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Callie Martin

Note: Virtual Only



COO/President

Hawaiiverse/Hawaiiverse Foundation

Best Match Industries

Business, Creative
Media/Marketing/Admini

About Callie

Callie is a versatile, results-oriented Higher Education and operations professional with over a decade of experience driving student success, academic programming, and high-level administrative operations. Her career is rooted in creating meaningful pathways for students—specializing in the strategic design, execution, and data-driven evaluation of career exploration, internship programming, and post-graduation readiness initiatives, with a special focus on diverse and rural populations.

Throughout her tenure across the University of Hawai'i System, she has navigated multifaceted roles ranging from Student Success Coordinator at UH Hilo to Private Secretary in the Office of the Chancellor at Hawai'i Community College. She combines a strong foundation in instructional delivery and curriculum design with executive-level administrative expertise, grant writing, and peer mentorship supervision.

Outside of traditional higher education, she serves as Chief Operating Officer at Hawaiiverse and President at the Hawaiiverse Foundation, Program Manager for Wastewater Alternative Initiatives (WAI) where she oversees daily business operations, strategic growth, program development and cross-departmental efficiency, as well as. Whether she is building campus-wide referral networks, lecturing in interdisciplinary studies, or directing youth-led workforce my passion lies in fostering collaborative environments that empower individuals from early education through career transitions.

Core Strengths: Academic & Administrative Operations | Program & Curriculum Development | Grant Writing & Management | Workforce Development & Student Affairs | Executive Leadership & Cross-Sector Collaboration

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Brooks Anthony Martinez



Civil Engineer

Wilson Okamoto Corporation

Best Match Industries

Industrial and Engineering
Technology

About Brooks

Brooks Martinez is a Civil Engineer at Wilson Okamoto Corporation. Brooks has always been fascinated by the infrastructure and connectedness of the communities and neighborhoods throughout Oahu that he calls home. Brooks graduated from Moanalua High School in 2017, where he played in the school's orchestra and marching band and did various community service projects through the school's National Honor Society chapter.

Brooks earned his Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. He attributes his academic success and quick transition into his career to being able to stay in Hawaii for college, as he was able to learn industry-specific technical knowledge and problem-solving skills then apply his education to local extracurricular activities and internships. His involvement and leadership experiences with the University's Chi Epsilon chapter and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) student chapter, specifically the Steel Bridge competition team, led to many hands-on project opportunities and personal and professional connections that he maintains today.

Brooks was motivated to continue his education and eventually earned his Master's degree in Civil Engineering also at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. For this thesis, Brooks applied his knowledge of hydraulic and structural engineering to develop a numerical ranking criteria for the stability of existing seawalls around Oahu, work that contributed to a University publication on the overall assessment of coastal roads across the State of Hawaii.

Now at Wilson Okamoto Corporation, a Honolulu-based civil engineering consultancy, Brooks specializes in site development, working on projects ranging from enhancing existing roads to developing new residential, commercial, and hospitality sites. In 2026, Brooks earned his Hawaii Professional Engineer (Civil) license. He strives to use his experience and passion for his home community to ensure development is done responsibly and respectfully to the people and places they will serve.

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Toru Matthew



Corporate Development Relationship Officer

Hawaii State Federal Credit Union

Best Match Industries

Business

About Toru

Originally from the Marshall Islands, Toru came to O'ahu more than a decade ago to pursue higher education. Toru completed undergraduate studies at Chaminade University before earning an MBA in Business Administration from the Shidler College of Business.

Toru currently works at Hawai'i State Federal Credit Union, where building relationships and making friends is a big part of what Toru enjoys most about the role.

Outside of work, Toru enjoys volunteering and playing volleyball. Toru is looking forward to meeting their mentee, sharing the experiences and lessons they've gained along the way, and helping make their journey into adulthood a fun, meaningful, and memorable one!

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Jake McCool



Director

Koa Capital Partners

Best Match Industries

Business, IT

About Jake

Jake McCool is a business and technology leader based in Honolulu, Hawai'i, with a background spanning business systems, process improvement, technology, real estate, and operations.

Jake earned his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), graduating cum laude with College Honors. While at UCLA, he was actively involved with Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, serving in leadership roles including Parents' Day Chairman and Alumni Relations Chairman. He later earned his Global MBA from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Shidler College of Business while working full-time.

Professionally, Jake began his career in real estate development with Related Companies in Los Angeles before moving to Honolulu, where he held project management roles with H2O Process Systems and Koa Process. He later served as Special Projects Manager for Koa Restoration & Maintenance before becoming Director of Business Systems for Koa Shared Services. In his current role, he leads business systems and IT across Koa Capital Partners' Hawai'i portfolio, focusing on technology, automation, data, process improvement, and organizational scalability. He is also currently serving as interim President of Premier Restoration.

Outside of work, Jake enjoys new technology, investing, weight training, golf, soccer, tennis, swimming, hiking, and pickleball.

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Casey Metrose



Outreach and Business Development Manager

Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Anything non-profit, community service, fundraising related

About Casey

Casey has dedicated her career to serving Hawai'i's communities through nonprofit leadership, community engagement, and fundraising. A graduate of Waipahu High School, she grew up dancing, swimming, and playing water polo—experiences that helped shape her appreciation for teamwork, connection, and community.

With more than three years of full-time nonprofit experience, Casey has supported organizations including the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and Hawaiian Humane Society.

For over a year, Casey has served as the Outreach and Business Development Manager at Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawai'i, where she leads fundraising initiatives, corporate sponsorships, strategic partnerships, community outreach, and public engagement. She is passionate about bringing businesses, organizations, and individuals together to support local families with seriously ill keiki.

Casey has successfully led the statewide McFun-Raising Program, expanded its reach and strengthened partnerships across Hawai'i. She has also represented Ronald McDonald House Charities Hawai'i through television appearances on HiNow Daily and KHON2 News, as well as community events and outreach opportunities at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center, Ala Moana Center, Kahala Mall, and other venues across the island.

Casey earned her Master of Public Administration from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and believes strong communities are built through collaboration, compassion, and service. She is especially passionate about fundraising because every partnership, sponsorship, and dollar raised helps provide comfort, hope, and a home away from home for families when they need it most.

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Nicole Monton



AVP, Strategic Communications & Public Affairs

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication,
Government and Policy

About Nicole

Nicole is dedicated to ensuring the Chamber's mission not only reaches, but also resonates with its target audiences. As AVP of Strategic Communications & Public Affairs at the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii, she is responsible for maintaining relationships with media representatives, key stakeholders, government officials, and community leaders. She facilitates the 2030 Blueprint Policy Committees and alliances, and oversees executive marketing strategies, public relations campaigns, and the Chamber's website, newsletters, and podcast.

Nicole is a seasoned communications professional with a proven track record of crafting and executing impactful communication strategies and narratives that drive brand growth, enhance recognition, and foster meaningful stakeholder relationships. As the former managing editor of MidWeek, she played a pivotal role in shaping the publication's editorial voice, curating compelling content that resonated with readers across the state. Her prior experience also includes managing special sections for the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, serving as managing editor of Crave, and working as a contributing editor for Oahu Publications Inc.'s Kaka'ako VERT magazine.

Her career has also extended into education, where she served as an adjunct professor at Hawaii Pacific University, teaching courses in journalism, publication production, graphic design, multimedia, and communications. Nicole earned her bachelor's degree in journalism and graphic design, as well as her master's degree in communications, with a focus on East Asian studies and crisis communication, from Hawaii Pacific University.

She previously served on the Alakai Young Leaders board for Hawaii Foodbank and currently volunteers as a communications/media contributor with Metro Christian Church.

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Emanuel Moura



Director of Growth

Lights On

Best Match Industries

Business, Hospitality and Tourism

About Emanuel

Emanuel Moura is the Director of Growth at Lights On Digital, a local hospitality-focused digital marketing and revenue management agency on Oahu. He runs paid media, email marketing, and organic growth for a portfolio of hotels and resorts. He also handles the agency's own marketing and sales, which makes Lights On one of his clients.

In high school, he played soccer and was involved in leadership, yearbook, and a multicultural program. He attended California State University, Monterey Bay, and graduated with a B.S. in Business Administration and a concentration in Marketing. Some of the companies he worked at after school were Vistaprint and Yelp, both working with small businesses.

He still plays soccer every week, which is the first thing he would tell a student: the things you care about at sixteen do not stop mattering once you have a job. His work would be unrecognizable to his high school self, since much of it now involves building AI and automation tools that did not exist to be studied. He was willing to be the person who figured something out before anyone wrote the instructions, and that has been worth more than any single skill on his résumé.

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Jocelyn Oshiro



Information Specialist

City & County of Honolulu / Honolulu Police Department

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Law and Public Safety

About Jocelyn

Jocelyn Oshiro is a communications professional with experience across the public, nonprofit, and higher education sectors. A proud graduate of Moanalua High School, she was involved in student council, played volleyball, and participated in the MeneMAC media program—experiences that helped shape her passion for communication, leadership, and community engagement.

Jocelyn attended Saint Martin's University, where she earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Business Administration. During her time in Washington, she worked in various professional roles, gaining experience in communications, business, and community-focused work.

Today, Jocelyn works in the Honolulu Police Department's Public Affairs Office, where she applies her communications and digital media skills to support public safety and strengthen relationships between law enforcement, media, and the community. Her expertise includes digital marketing, social media strategy, content creation, and campaign development.

Through mentorship, Jocelyn hopes to share her experiences, encourage emerging professionals to pursue opportunities with confidence, and help others discover how their education, interests, and experiences can come together to build a meaningful career. She is passionate about helping the next generation develop their communication skills, navigate professional opportunities, and find ways to make a positive impact in their communities.

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Richard Padilla

Note: Virtual Only



**Lead,
Consumer Marketing**
NVIDIA

Best Match Industries
Business

About Richard

Richard Padilla is a marketing and communications leader proudly from Kaua'i, Hawai'i, and currently living in San Francisco. A 2010 graduate of Waimea High School, Richard participated in student council both at his school and as a part of State Student Council, an experience that helped shape his early interest in leadership, service, and community.

He later studied marketing at Hawai'i Pacific University, where he began building his career through freelance work with MacRumors, BuzzFeed, and Atlantic Records in support of Childish Gambino's 2013 album "Because The Internet. Those early opportunities helped him discover a passion for connecting technology, entertainment, culture, and communities through meaningful storytelling.

Over the past decade, Richard has had the honor of contributing to some of the largest and most visible marketing campaigns at several of the world's most notable consumer brands, including Kingston Technology and HyperX, McDonald's Corporation, Nintendo of America, YouTube and Google, and NVIDIA. Today, he helps lead consumer social media marketing efforts supporting NVIDIA's consumer brands, helping translate innovations in artificial intelligence, gaming, and consumer technology into culturally relevant stories for global audiences.

Although his career has taken him from Hawai'i to opportunities across the country, Hawai'i is always on his mind. Richard remains deeply grateful for the values, perspective, and sense of community that growing up on Kaua'i gave him.

As a mentor, Richard hopes to give back by sharing the guidance, encouragement, and lessons he wishes he had earlier in his journey. He is passionate about helping Hawai'i's next generation of young professionals confidently pursue ambitious opportunities, remain proud of where they come from, and forge paths even stronger than those created by the generations before them.

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Coye Parrish



Case Manager

Institute for Human Services (IHS)

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Health Services

About Coye

Coye is a Diné (Navajo), Two-Spirit community advocate, creative entrepreneur, and emerging leader based in Honolulu. Originally from the Southwest and raised in Lawrence, Kansas, Coye earned a Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous and American Indian Studies from Haskell Indian Nations University in 2019. While in college, they were selected as a CUNY Knight Diversity Fellow, strengthening their interest in storytelling, representation, and community-centered leadership.

Coye currently works as a Case Manager at the Institute for Human Services, supporting individuals experiencing homelessness and navigating mental-health, substance-use, legal, and housing-related challenges. Their work includes community outreach, relationship-building, advocacy, crisis support, and coordinating services across O'ahu. This experience has deepened their commitment to trauma-informed care and creating environments where people feel seen, respected, and supported.

Beyond human services, Coye is the founder and Experience Curator of Coye Curations, a developing creative platform that produces fashion, cultural, and community experiences. Through projects such as The Runway Social, they create opportunities for emerging creatives, models, designers, and Indigenous voices to connect and be recognized.

As a mentor, Coye hopes to encourage young people to embrace their identities, recognize their strengths, and build futures rooted in purpose. They believe meaningful mentorship begins with listening, consistency, cultural awareness, and helping young people see possibilities that may not yet feel visible to them.

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Kelvin Mathew Pascua Rinen



Customer Service Agent

Unifi Services / Westjet Airlines

Best Match Industries

Business, Hospitality and Tourism

About Mathew

Mathew is currently pursuing a degree in Human Development & Family Science at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Born and raised in Madrid, Spain, he later moved to Hawaii, where adjusting to a new environment taught him the value of growth and being open to new opportunities.

During high school, Mathew was part of the Media and Broadcasting Team, helping record school events and news. One of his favorite traditions was filming students standing hand in hand while singing their alma mater, a moment that reminded him of the importance of community, school pride, and creating memories that last.

Since 2022, Mathew has worked for multiple airlines as a Customer Service Agent and is beginning a new role this month. Having loved airplanes since childhood, working at the airport has been a dream come true. Growing up, he would pretend to be a flight attendant and customer service agent, and today he enjoys helping travelers while watching aircrafts take off and land every day.

His passion for helping others led him to Human Development & Family Science, where he hopes to support people and families through every stage of life. Mathew believes there is no single path to success and that every experience, whether in school, work, or life, helps shape who you become. He hopes to encourage students to be open to new opportunities, trust the process, and never let other people's doubts define what they are capable of.

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BJ Ramel



Product Management Analyst

Central Pacific Bank

Best Match Industries

Business

About BJ

BJ Ramel is an active community advocate whose passion for student leadership began during his own time at Leilehua High School in Wahiawa, Hawaii. There, he developed a strong foundation for community involvement by serving as Class President, as well as President of both Key Club and the National Honor Society, alongside playing percussion in the marching band.

Building on those early experiences, BJ attended the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, majoring in Management Information Systems and Business Management at the Shidler College of Business. To build his technical and strategic expertise, he completed coursework in coding, information systems, and product and project management. Beyond his academics, BJ constantly sought out diverse opportunities to grow, which included a campus work-study position, a product management internship at HMSA, and an enriching study abroad experience in South Korea.

Currently, BJ works as an Analyst in the Product Management Department at Central Pacific Bank, where he seamlessly combines his leadership, communication, and technical skills. BJ is thrilled to join the mentor program to give back the same support that shaped his own path. He hopes to show students that by staying curious and finding a good balance, they can explore all their diverse interests and confidently take on their exciting next steps.

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loane Sabas



Director, IT

James Campbell Company

Best Match Industries

Business, IT

About loane

loane Sabas is a technology leader with more than a decade of experience in IT operations, information security, and technology strategy. He currently serves as Director of Information Technology at James Campbell Company, where he leads efforts to optimize IT operations, strengthen security, and align technology initiatives with organizational goals.

Prior to joining James Campbell Company, loane spent nearly nine years with Strategies 360, progressing from System Administrator to Director of IT Operations & Information Security. He also worked with CyberHawaii as a Cybersecurity Consultant and Program Manager, where he mentored cybersecurity coaches and helped Hawaii businesses and nonprofits strengthen their cybersecurity readiness.

A graduate of Mid-Pacific, loane earned his Bachelor of Science in Information Systems from Western Oregon University. He also holds a Graduate Certificate in Information Security & Risk Management from the University of Washington and is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration at Colorado State University.

Outside of work, loane enjoys traveling, playing golf, and following Seattle sports teams and attending University of Hawai'i athletics events. He is passionate about leveraging technology to solve problems, developing the next generation of technology and cybersecurity leaders, and contributing to Hawaii's growing technology community.

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Kelsey Joy Sablan



Director of Development

Armed Services YMCA

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Business

About Kelsey Joy

Kelsey Joy Sablan, originally from Guam, is the Director of Development at the Armed Services YMCA, focusing on donor stewardship and fundraising, and the owner of kejobusa, providing services in design, photography and digital communications.

Kelsey attended Chaminade University, graduating in 2024 with a B.A. in Communications: Integrated Marketing and minors in Business Administration and Marketing. In 2025, she received her Master's of Arts in Strategic Communication from National University in San Diego.

She built experience in communications, marketing, and public relations through internships with M.Dyer Global, Summit Media, the Office of Economic Revitalization, and AARP Hawai'i, fueling her passion for community-focused nonprofit work. At Chaminade, she served in multiple leadership roles and earned top placements in the Silversword Business Plan (1st) and IACBE National Business Case (3rd) competitions.

In the midst, she found a passion and keen eye for digital design, photography, website design and management, and digital communications. Through kejobusa, she works as an independent contractor or freelancer for clients.

She hopes to grow as a leader in the nonprofit sector, expand her skills in fundraising and strategic communication, while giving back to communities in Hawai'i and Guam.

Outside of work, she volunteers her time under the Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals (YP) program assisting the communications committee and YP High School Mentor committee. You may also find her with her loved ones, at the beach or at a workout class!

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Zoë Shimizu



Manager of Events and Programs

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication,
Hospitality and Tourism, Marketing
and Advertising

About Zoe

Zoe Shimizu is the Manager of Program & Events, bringing experience in strategic marketing, event execution, and community engagement. She previously served as an Account Executive at a local marketing agency, working with travel and hospitality clients since 2023.

Born and raised in Hawaii, Zoe earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Communicology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Currently, she serves on the Events Committee for the Young Professionals Program and sits on the Board of Directors for the nonprofit Hale Kipa, where she chairs the Development Committee.

She plans to continue serving the community in any way she can. In her free time, you can find her basking in the sunlight and playing fetch with her golden retriever.

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J.P. Snyder



General Partner, Co-founder

Nēnē Ventures

Best Match Industries

Business, Government and Policy, IT

About J.P.

J.P. Snyder is a former Marine Corps officer, technology operator, and venture capitalist based in Honolulu, Hawaii. After the attacks on 9/11 he knew he wanted to serve in the US military, which took him to Virginia Tech on a national ROTC scholarship and then into the Marine Corps as a logistics officer. After a few years of driving trucks, shooting guns, and generally having a blast, he decided to see what life outside the military looked like.

That decision led him into startups.

J.P. joined AI startup ZeroEyes as an early employee and the company's first employee in Hawaii. He built and ran a 24/7 operations center as the company grew from a small startup into a nationally deployed technology company. He later joined Onebrief, helping them grow to a \$2B valuation; deploying their software across the Pacific, California, and Japan. Somewhere along the way, he also earned an MBA from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa.

Today, J.P. is building Nēnē Ventures, an investment firm backing founders working on hard problems in defense, national security, and technology.

His career has not followed a particularly straight line, intentionally. He believes there is enormous value in doing difficult things, taking responsibility before you feel completely ready, and putting yourself around people who are better than you.

Most importantly, he believes you do not need to have your life figured out at 18. Just like you can drive all the way home on a pitch black night with just your headlights, you just need to move one step at a time.

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Tyler Spruill



Manager, Accounting and Operations

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii

Best Match Industries

Business

About Tyler

Tyler grew up in Salt Lake and graduated from Moanalua High School. She then received her bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Hawaii at Manoa Shidler College of Business. During her time in school, she interned at Kamehameha Schools in their IT operations department. Once graduated, Tyler worked at Island Insurance company for several years helping local people with their insurance needs. She has a passion for working with companies and organizations that care about Hawaii's needs and give back to the people and community.

During her free time, she enjoys reading, writing, and drawing. She also spends ample time finding new places to eat around the island and sharing a meal with her friends. Her goal in life is to travel to as many different places as possible and start her own stationery business.

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Randy Soriano



Executive Director

Hawai'i LGBT Legacy Foundation

Best Match Industries

Business, Marketing,
Communications

About Randy

Randy Soriano is a nonprofit executive, marketing leader, and community connector with nearly 20 years of experience in strategic management, fundraising, program development, and community engagement across Hawai'i. As Executive Director of the Hawai'i LGBT Legacy Foundation, he leads statewide initiatives that advance equity, inclusion, and belonging for Hawai'i's LGBTQIA+ community through programs, partnerships, and events that create measurable social impact. Previously, he led the marketing department at Title Guaranty Hawai'i, part of Fidelity National Financial, where he oversaw brand strategy, client relations, and corporate communications for the state's largest kama'āina title and escrow company. His work focused on strengthening brand visibility, enhancing client engagement, and driving business growth through creative, data-informed marketing initiatives.

Randy's leadership style is collaborative and mission-driven, centered on building strong teams, cultivating strategic partnerships, and helping organizations grow with purpose. He currently serves on the board of the Hawai'i Rainbow Business Alliance, where he helped lead the organization's rebranding and revitalization to better support Hawai'i's LGBTQIA+ business community. He previously served as a three-term President of the Rotary E-Club of Hawai'i and on the board of the Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center. In 2022, he chaired Honolulu Pride, helping guide the event to record-breaking attendance and community participation.

A proud graduate of the 2023 Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Hawai'i Fellows Program, Randy now serves as a mentor in the program, supporting emerging leaders as they develop their skills and create positive change in their communities. He has also served as a high school paddling coach for over 15 years, mentoring student-athletes and helping young people develop teamwork, discipline, and leadership through sport. His work has been recognized by Pacific Business News as a Business of Pride honoree (2019) and 40 Under 40 recipient (2025), and by Pacific Edge Magazine as Young Professional of the Year (2022).

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Karwin Sui



Communications Manager

American Savings Bank

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Business

About Karwin

Karwin Sui is a communications and marketing professional passionate about storytelling, leadership, and giving back to Hawaii's community. As Communications Manager at American Savings Bank, Karwin leads external communications, media relations, executive communications, and digital strategy.

Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Karwin graduated from California State University, East Bay with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing and Corporate Management and a Bachelor of Art in Economics. While in college, Karwin was an active member of Delta Sigma Pi, a professional business fraternity that fostered a passion for leadership, networking, and professional development.

Leadership has been a constant throughout Karwin's life. In high school, Karwin was a four-year varsity volleyball player, served as Senior Class Secretary, wrote for the school newspaper, and was actively involved in student life. Those experiences helped develop strong communication, teamwork, and leadership skills that continue to shape Karwin's career today.

Before joining American Savings Bank, Karwin held communications and marketing roles with the Hawaii State Department of Education, National Kidney Foundation of Hawaii, San Francisco Unified School District, and theBalm Cosmetics. Throughout these roles, Karwin developed expertise in public relations, marketing, executive communications, community engagement, and strategic storytelling.

Outside of work, Karwin is actively involved in Hawaii's nonprofit and professional community. Karwin serves on the Child & Family Service Guild and the Make-A-Wish Hawaii Young Leaders Board, and has participated in leadership programs including the Patsy T. Mink Leadership Alliance, Chamber of Commerce Hawaii Young Professionals' Mentor Hawaii program, and the McLean Leadership Program. In 2021, she was named a PRNEWS' Top Women in PR.

As a YP HI School mentor, Karwin hopes to inspire students to stay curious, embrace new challenges, and recognize that leadership comes in many forms. Whether in the classroom, on the court, or in the workplace, every experience can help shape a meaningful and rewarding career.

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Christina Tamaru



Facilitator, Talent & Organizational Development

Hawaii Employers Council

Best Match Industries

Business, Education

About Christina

Christina was born and raised in Honolulu and graduated from Iolani School, where she was involved in band and Key Club and loved creative writing. Since high school, she has lived in various places, including Washington, New York, California, and Japan. She attended Whitman College and majored in Asian Studies with a minor in Japanese. Her undergraduate academic interests centered around gender studies and Japanese culture, and she spent her junior year abroad in Kyoto. She later earned her Master's degree in Global Studies at the University of Tokyo. For her thesis, she researched contemporary Japanese consumer culture through the lens of popular snack products. Although most people are surprised by that fact, she believes that you can really take anything (even if it's something simple) and turn it into an interesting academic project.

Christina currently works for the Hawaii Employers Council (HEC) as a Talent & Organizational Development Facilitator. HEC provides workforce solutions services to several hundred member companies throughout the state, and Christina is responsible for teaching courses on essential soft skills and various management/leadership topics to employees in those companies. She finds it fascinating to get to work with businesses of all different sizes and industries, and as a self-proclaimed PowerPoint nerd, she loves being creative with her presentations and figuring out engaging and innovative ways to help others learn. She also thinks it's ironic that she ended up on such a career path because she grew up terrified of public speaking, but as a result, she feels it's a valuable skill that anyone can learn.

Prior to joining HEC, she was a program manager at Hawaiian Airlines, overseeing policies and procedures related to disability regulations. She was also previously a high school Japanese language teacher and has worked in various other education-related spaces. Although she enjoys working in her current field, she misses mentoring and working with students, as those are some of her favorite memories of her time as a teacher.

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Jillian Tamaru



Senior Catering Sales Executive

Kyo-ya Hotels and Resorts, LP

Best Match Industries

Hospitality and Tourism, Food and
Beverage

About Jillian

Jillian graduated Cum Laude from McKinley High School and participated in Student Council – Events Coordinator, Band President, and was a part of the Girl's Bowling Team.

A few years later, she then graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa – Bachelor's Degree of Science, with a major in Travel Industry Management.

Her very first job was working at Jamba Juice as a team lead/store trainer, opening 2 successful locations in Ala Moana. Shortly after, Jillian started her hospitality journey as a night auditor working overnight at Trump International Hotel in Waikiki, whilst working as a regional sales servicing coordinator at the Kyo-ya Hotels and Resorts, in the daytime. After about a year and a half of running on determination and little sleep, Jillian finally landed her dream job as a sales coordinator for the catering and event management department for the Kyo-ya Hotels and Resorts. Two years later, she was promoted to a catering sales manager. There she sold and serviced all types of events for their 4 flagship properties in Waikiki. Then pandemic hit and she became furloughed. In an effort to continue her education and learning, Jillian became a CMP – Certified Meeting Professional through the Events Industry Council becoming 1 of 13,000 individuals worldwide to hold this particular certification.

Over the last few years, Jillian has served on the board for the Oahu Wedding Association, as well as volunteered for various community events through Chamber of Commerce.

In her free time, Jillian loves to travel, never to the same place twice and has been to over 15 different countries within the last 7 years. She is also a foodie, to which she loves experiencing new restaurants and cuisines.

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Joshua Thompson



Risk Reporting and Data Analytics Master Professional

Hawaii State Federal Credit Union

Best Match Industries

Business, Finance / Banking / Data

About Joshua

Joshua is a 2007 graduate of Hawai'i Baptist Academy, where he spent much of his high school years playing varsity basketball and volleyball. In 2011, Joshua graduated from California Baptist University with a degree in Communication Studies, with an emphasis in Broadcasting and Journalism.

Professionally, Joshua has built an extensive background in business lending and operations. More recently, his work has focused on data analytics for his loan portfolio, combining his experience in lending with a strong interest in data and analysis.

With a wealth of unique life experiences, Joshua brings a relatable and engaging perspective to mentoring. His personality and diverse background allow him to connect well with high school students and help prepare them for the opportunities, challenges, and experiences they may encounter as they transition into the real world.

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Jett Uehara



Executive Meeting Manager

Highgate Hotels - Romer House Waikiki

Best Match Industries

Hospitality and Tourism

About Jett

Jett is a hospitality professional from Honolulu, Hawai'i, with a passion for creating meaningful experiences, building relationships, and serving the community. During high school, Jett was actively involved in theatre, cross country, and track and field. These experiences helped Jett develop confidence, creativity, discipline, and a strong appreciation for teamwork. Jett's interest in working with people and creating memorable experiences eventually led to a career in hospitality.

Jett attended the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management. While living in Las Vegas, Jett gained valuable experience in the hotel and events industry, supporting groups, meetings, and special events in one of the world's leading hospitality destinations.

Jett has worked with Highgate Hotels in both Las Vegas and Hawai'i and currently serves as the Executive Meeting Manager at Romer House Waikiki. In this role, Jett develops new business, builds and maintains client relationships, contracts group room blocks and events, and supports programs from the initial inquiry through execution. He works with both local and national clients planning corporate meetings, social gatherings, wedding-related events, and other group experiences.

After building his career in Las Vegas, Jett is grateful to be back home in Hawai'i and continues to grow within the local hospitality community. He is especially passionate about welcoming visitors with genuine aloha, connecting people, and helping clients create experiences that feel personal, meaningful, and memorable.

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Kimberly Uehisa



Founder and CEO

Early Cardiovascular Health Outreach

Best Match Industries

Business, Education

About Kimberly

Kimberly (she/her/hers), from Honolulu, Hawaii, is a Founder and CEO of Early Cardiovascular Health Outreach, a non-profit that promotes heart health habits for youth through educational programs and activities. Kimberly graduated from Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science with a Master of Public Health and a Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences. She earned her bachelor's degree from University of California, Los Angeles, majoring in Microbiology, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics with a minor in Global Health. She has served globally on medical mission trips and interned at California Department of Public Health.

Kimberly received her high school diploma from Island Pacific Academy. During high school, she served on student council, played tennis, and competed in track and field. She was also a member of the robotics team, which competed in the World Championships. In her free time, Kimberly enjoys running, volunteering, and traveling.

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Jennifer Vo



Senior Accountant

Nakupuna Companies

Best Match Industries

Business

About Jennifer

Jennifer attended McKinley High School, where she was an active member of the Leo Club and French Club. She later attended the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, earning a degree in Accounting. During college, she also had the opportunity to study Japanese in Kobe, Japan, an experience that allowed her to explore a new culture and step outside of her comfort zone.

Her first job related to accounting was a six-month internship at Hotel La Croix where she gained valuable experience and learned payroll. She later joined Poukihi as a staff accountant and was promoted to senior accountant, where she continued to grow her accounting knowledge and gained valuable insight into the nonprofit sector. She now works in accounting and payroll at Nakupuna Companies as a senior accountant and enjoys helping others and continuing to learn.

Outside of work, Jennifer enjoys running and participating in marathons. She hopes to be a mentor who encourages students, shares her experiences, and helps them feel more confident about their future.

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Rachel Wong



Talent & Workforce Planning

HSFCU

Best Match Industries

Industrial and Engineering
Technology, IT

About Rachel

Rachel's background is primarily in early career programs, primarily within the sciences, technology and engineering. After developing a fondness for science in high school, she became a "big sis" for women in Computer Science at Rice University, a founding officer of the Multiracial Students at Rice, and served on Rice's Diversity Council.

Rachel has spent her career working with underrepresented groups in tech, designing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion initiatives, and championing entry-level growth strategy in workforce development. In her first post-undergraduate role at Optimizely, she contributed to the company's Diversity Statement, co-chaired their Diversity & Inclusion Group (DIG), facilitating their summer internship program and apprenticeship program – which was later used as the basis to develop the Twilio Apprenticeship Program.

The great-granddaughter of a Hawaii DOE educator, Rachel has worked to promote programs that support the expansion of opportunities for student-focused career exposure and breadth-first education to facilitate critical thinking. She is currently located at Hawaii State FCU, focused in Talent Acquisition & Workforce Planning.

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Brianne Yamada Nitahara



Manager, Joint Use Infrastructure

Hawaiian Electric Company

Best Match Industries

Industrial and Engineering
Technology, Renewable Energy

About Brianne

Brianne Yamada Nitahara was born and raised in Honolulu and is a proud graduate of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering with minors in Music and Japanese. During college, she remained active in student leadership, serving as the Head Drum Major of the University of Hawai'i Marching Band and President of the Engineers' Council. She is deeply passionate about her culture and heritage, having performed and taught Okinawan taiko for over 15 years, and continues to dance today.

Bri is the Manager of Joint Use Infrastructure at Hawaiian Electric, where she leads initiatives that help expand broadband, telecommunications, and critical infrastructure across Hawai'i through engineering, construction, and strategic partnerships. She is passionate about construction management, infrastructure design, and building projects that strengthen Hawai'i's communities. Throughout her career, she has held engineering, project management, and leadership roles that combine technical problem-solving with collaboration to bring complex projects from concept to completion.

Committed to giving back, Brianne serves on the boards of the Hawai'i United Okinawa Association and the University of Hawai'i Engineering Alumni Association. She is also actively involved with the Child & Family Service Guild, the U.S.-Japan Council, and the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i Young Professionals, where she serves as Co-Chair of the Mentor Hawai'i Committee.

Outside of work, Bri enjoys spending time with her husband, Tyler, their son, and their two golden retrievers, Puka and Lani. In her free time, she enjoys golfing, playing spike ball and paddleboarding.

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Jadyne Yomono-Manago



Talent Acquisition Outreach Program Manager

Hawaiian Airlines / Alaska Airlines

Best Match Industries

Arts and Communication, Business,
Hospitality and Tourism

About Jadyne

Jadyne Yomono is a Hawaii-born leader dedicated to people, programs, and community impact. A graduate of Pacific Buddhist Academy, she was actively involved in student council, athletics, and extracurricular activities that fostered her early interest in leadership, teamwork, and service.

She continued her education at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, earning both her bachelor's degree and a Master of Human Resource Management from the Shidler College of Business. These academic experiences equipped her with the skills to merge strategic thinking with a people-first leadership style.

Professionally, Jadyne has built a career at the intersection of program management, human resources, and talent development. At Hawaiian Airlines, she launched and scaled more than ten workforce and talent pipeline initiatives, connecting local students and professionals to meaningful aviation career pathways. She also played a key role in expanding ambassador and volunteer programs that have engaged hundreds of participants across Hawaii. Prior to her current role, she gained experience in account management and project management, broadening her expertise in operations, partnerships, and organizational growth.

Beyond her career, Jadyne is a deeply engaged community leader. She serves on the Family Promise Hawaii Board of Directors, contributes as an Executive Committee Member of the Child & Family Service Guild, and supports numerous volunteer-driven events and philanthropic initiatives throughout the islands.

Through her professional work and community service, Jadyne remains committed to building programs that create opportunities, strengthen connections, and leave a lasting impact on Hawaii's people.

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Jared Sam Agtunong



Executive Assistant

County of Maui

Best Match Industries

Government and Policy

About Jared Sam

Jared Agtunong serves as an Executive Assistant for Maui County Councilmember Thomas Cook, where he supports legislative initiatives, constituent services, and community engagement. Passionate about public service, he is committed to building stronger communities through collaboration, leadership, and civic involvement.

Outside of his professional role, Jared serves as Chair of the Maui County Democratic Party, Government Relations Director for the Maui Filipino Chamber of Commerce, and Secretary of Binhi at Ani Filipino Community Center. Through these roles, he has enjoyed mentoring students, young professionals, and emerging community leaders as they explore careers in public service and community leadership.

Jared holds a Master of Public Policy and believes mentorship is about empowering others to discover their strengths, pursue meaningful opportunities, and lead with integrity. He looks forward to sharing his experiences while learning from the next generation of Hawai'i's leaders.

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Soo-Lin Lee



Business Operations Manager/HR

Children's Dentistry of Maui

Best Match Industries

Business, Health Services

About Soo-Lin

Soo-Lin Lee is a versatile business and marketing professional with over a decade of leadership experience across healthcare, real estate, hospitality, and education. She currently serves as the Business Operations Manager at Children's Dentistry of Maui, where she oversees daily operations, leads team development, and implements systems that drive long-term success. Soo-Lin brings a marketing mindset to operations—aligning strategy, communication, and organizational goals to enhance both team performance and patient experience.

A graduate of Arizona State University's W.P. Carey School of Business, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Marketing with certificates in Small Business & Entrepreneurship, and a certificate in International Business. She also completed a study abroad program at the School of Economics in Prague, Czech Republic. Her global experiences and love for cultural exploration have fueled her adaptability, creativity, and commitment to continuous learning.

Known for her strategic mindset, positive leadership, and drive for improvement, Soo-Lin thrives on building strong teams, streamlining processes, and developing innovative solutions. Her diverse professional background highlights her ability to inspire collaboration, drive growth, and contribute to organizational success.

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Matthew Lugo



Aerospace Engineer

Privateer

Best Match Industries

Business, Government and Policy,
Industrial and Engineering
Technology

About Matthew

Matthew Lugo is an aerospace engineer from and working in Maui, who's passionate about pushing forward the tech industry in-state. With a Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering and a Master's in Aerospace Engineering, he's always been fascinated with learning how things work, and how to use that knowledge to build smarter and better. He's been employed at Privateer for over 4 years, and worked on everything from satellites to software solutions to business development to community outreach.

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Jonathan Pasion



Executive Sous Chef

Fairmont Kea Lani

Best Match Industries

Hospitality and Tourism,
Culinary/Food Service

About Jonathan

Jonathan Pasion is a Maui-born culinary leader, mentor, and community advocate. Born and raised in Pā'ia, he is a proud 2008 graduate of Maui High School. He began his culinary education at the University of Hawai'i Maui College, where he studied Culinary Arts and received the Tylun Pang Scholarship. He later continued his education and graduated from Johnson & Wales University.

Jonathan currently serves as Executive Sous Chef at Fairmont Kea Lani, helping lead culinary operations across multiple restaurants, banquets, and resort outlets. His career has also taken him beyond Hawai'i, including helping open Onemata Restaurant in Auckland, New Zealand. He previously held leadership positions at Andaz Maui at Wailea and Kō Restaurant.

Throughout his career, Jonathan has earned numerous culinary and leadership honors, including Fairmont Kea Lani's 2024 Leader of the Year and multiple Maui AgFest competition awards. However, he considers developing future hospitality leaders and giving back to his community among his most meaningful accomplishments.

Jonathan regularly mentors culinary students, participates in high school and college programs, and supports local nonprofit organizations. He is also a member of the 2026–2027 Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows cohort, where he continues developing his leadership skills and deepening his commitment to serving Maui Nui. Having benefited greatly from mentors throughout his journey, Jonathan is passionate about helping Hawai'i's youth build confidence, recognize their potential, and discover meaningful pathways for their futures.

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Jade Rojas-Letisi



Economic Development Director

County of Maui

Best Match Industries

Government and Policy

About Jade

Jade Rojas-Letisi is the Director of the County of Maui Office of Economic Development, where she leads initiatives focused on workforce development, economic diversification, small business support, and creating stronger career pathways for Maui County residents.

Born and raised in Maui, Jade graduated from Saint Anthony Junior-Senior High School and attended Linfield University as well as the University of Hawai'i Maui College. Her professional journey has taken her through entrepreneurship, marketing, legislative service, and county government. She previously served as Marketing Coordinator for Queen Ka'ahumanu Center, a Council Aide with the Maui County Council, and an Executive Assistant and Economic Development Specialist in the Office of the Mayor before stepping into her current leadership role.

Jade is especially passionate about workforce development, mentorship, and helping young people recognize that there is no single path to success. Her own career has been shaped by a willingness to embrace unexpected opportunities, continually learn, and build meaningful relationships along the way.

She is an alumna of the Ka Ipu Kukui Fellows leadership program, Partners for Democracy, and Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i YP Mentor Hawai'i, where her experience as a mentee reinforced her belief in the transformative power of mentorship. Today, she remains actively involved in mentorship and leadership initiatives and is committed to helping the next generation build confidence, explore career possibilities, and see a future for themselves here at home in Hawai'i.

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Apply to be mentored



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To learn more about the program or for any questions, email

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