For Immediate Release: October 21, 2021
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
Rebecca Like, PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
Tel (808) 241-1888
Fax (808) 241-1758

Hoʻokele Coalition awarded grant to support community substance use prevention

LĪHUE - The Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, Life’s Choices Kauaʻi, and the Hoʻokele Coalition were awarded a five-year Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant from White House’s Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in the amount of $125,000 for five years for a total of $625,000. After five years, community coalitions may re-compete for another five-year cycle. Hale ‘Opio Kauaʻi will serve as the fiscal sponsor.

Recognizing that local problems need local solutions, DFC-funded coalitions engage multiple sectors of the community and employ a variety of environmental strategies to address local substance use problems.

The Hoʻokele Coalition was established in 2018 and comprises 20 organizations and individuals from the Lihue community and has a balanced 12-sector representation of grasstops and grassroots groups. Their mission is to prevent and reduce youth substance use on Kauai using data-driven strategies.
The primary areas to be served by the Coalition shall include the central district of Kaua‘i. This area is inclusive of residents and businesses within the geographic location of Hulemalu Road through the Kuhio Highway and Kapule Highway junction. (the outskirts of Puhi to Hanamaulu)

Theresa Koki, Life’s Choices Kauai Coordinator and current chair of Ho’okele stated that “we are very excited that we received this grant to continue our work with youth leaders and our community stakeholders”. Vonn Ramos, Hale ‘Opio Kaua‘i Executive Director, stated, “We are very proud and honored to partner with Life’s Choices and continue to support the Coalition’s efforts to bring a greater impact to our community.” This is the first time the Central district under the Ho’okele Coalition have been awarded these funds. The East and West Coalitions have received the DFC funds in the past.

Some examples of how multiple sectors have been involved in strategies that help achieve the Coalition’s goals are:

- Collaboration with Kaua‘i Police Department with DUI checkpoints, Sticker Shock, and Safe Communities Townhall events;

- Media sector hosted National Prevention Week, signing-waving events, and painted anti-drug messaging murals around the community and produced video with the youth;

- Youth Leaders attended the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA’s) National Youth Leadership Initiative;

- Participated in gathering community data, recruiting Youth Council members, planning and implementing environmental strategies;
• Hosted Alcohol Awareness Month activities, and community events; and

• Conducted Key informant interviews, focus groups and environmental scans.

The Ho’okele Coalition will be re-structured under Hale Opio Kaua’i’s leadership and is currently recruiting a Project Coordinator.

For more information, please call Theresa Koki at (808) 241-4925 or Vonn Ramos at (808) 977-8202.

###
