



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR

News Release

For Immediate Release: March 5, 2021

COUNTY OF KAUA'I
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
NALANI BRUN, DIRECTOR
(808) 241-4946

County re-launches Rise to Work program, applications open March 8

LĪHU'E – The County of Kaua'i has announced that it will be re-launching the Rise to Work program, which was created in 2020 to help Kaua'i residents who lost their job connect to temporary job opportunities with local employers. Interested individuals are encouraged to apply when applications open on Monday, March 8.

The expanded 2021 program, which increases the number of positions available, is made possible through the generous support of Dr. Priscilla Chan and Mark Zuckerberg through the Chan Zuckerberg Kaua'i Community Fund of the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF).

“Through our CARES funding we created the Rise to Work program to help get those unemployed back to work and making a living wage, but we always knew those funds would expire in December,” said Mayor Kawakami. “During a meeting with the Chan Zuckerberg team, I shared about how this program has made a huge impact in our community and that one day we wanted to revive and expand the program and bring jobs back to our people. Through Priscilla’s and Mark’s generous donation of \$4.2 million to the Hawai'i Community Foundation, the Rise to Work program lives again – offering purpose and hope to people who are struggling. We are extremely grateful for this opportunity to boost our economy and our community while continuing to keep our health and safety initiatives at the forefront.”

Last year, the Rise to Work program provided temporary positions for 280 displaced workers and supported 100 local employers using funds from the CARES Act. This year, funding will support up to 400 workers and up to 200 employers.

Participants in the program receive weekly pay, free health insurance benefits and the opportunity to learn new skills and gain professional connections. In addition to supporting displaced workers, the Rise to Work program also benefits non-profit organizations and our local business community on Kaua'i by increasing their capacity, without adding payroll costs.

"Our family cares deeply about Kaua'i, and we are pleased to support this valuable program that has far-reaching positive effects in a community we love," said Chan. "Our gratitude goes out to the County of Kaua'i, KGEFCU, ProService, and HCF for quickly collaborating to strengthen and support residents, businesses, and organizations during this time."

Local business and non-profit organizations interested in hiring employees through the Rise to Work program can complete the employer application form on the [Kauai Forward website](#) beginning Monday, March 8. The County of Kaua'i will be partnering with ProService Hawai'i again to implement the program.

"Congratulations to Rise to Work, Mayor Kawakami and the team at the Office of Economic Development, for conceiving such an innovative program," stated Ben Godsey, CEO of ProService Hawai'i. "Rise to Work proves that we can locally conceive, quickly stand-up and execute a program that boosts our local economy, supports employers and employs our hard-working people with competitive wages and full benefits. Our entire ProService 'ohana is honored to be your partner supporting Rise to Work and the positive impact you are having in our community. We are delighted to continue partnering with you, your employers and their employees."

"With the last Rise to Work program being a huge success with positive feedback from businesses and employees, we are thrilled to be able to offer this program again," said Michelle Lopes, Economic Development Specialist with the Office of Economic Development.

Both part-time and full-time positions will be offered for displaced workers with a variety of skills and experience. The county will post a list of these job opportunities on the Kaua'i Forward website and through our American Job Center. Participating employers will also be advertising their positions and will be managing the recruitment and selection for their positions.

"We are grateful to all of the partners who are working together to make this program possible, including Dr. Priscilla Chan and Mark Zuckerberg, Hawai'i Community Foundation, ProService Hawai'i and Kaua'i Government Employees Federal Credit Union," said Diana Singh, Business Innovation Coordinator with the Office of Economic Development.

"The tremendous impact of Rise to Work is testament to how our community mobilizes in response to crisis," concluded Monica Belz, CEO, KGEFCU. "In 2020, Rise to Work enabled us to hire critically needed staff quickly and easily to deploy millions of dollars to support rent relief, employment and job creation."

For more information on the Rise to Work program, please visit the Kaua'i Forward website: www.KauaiForward.com/RisetoWork.

###