

2020-2021

Youth Action Alliance Hawai'i

A youth leadership program
organized by the partnership of:

Seeds of Peace
HawaiiKidsCan
Pacific & Asian Affairs Council



Youth Action Alliance Hawai'i

About the Program...

Youth Action Alliance Hawaii was a 7-month, cohort-based, virtual program for Hawai'i high school students seeking to be civically engaged, take action to address issues in their community, and possess a global understanding of how those issues connect Hawai'i with the rest of the world.

The program represented a collaboration between three like-minded non-profit organizations - Ceeds of Peace, HawaiiKidsCAN, and the Pacific & Asian Affairs Council - that believe young people are vital to tackling the challenges we face as a society.



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Each organization drew on their strengths to oversee a different aspect of the program:

- **Global Awareness:** Pacific & Asian Affairs Council (PAAC) contextualized local issues by providing global perspectives on topics ranging from climate change to social justice movements to ecosystem health.
- **Civic Engagement:** HawaiiKidsCAN empowered participants with the knowledge and tools to advocate for systems change through public policy. YAAH students also learned about the power of advocacy and civic engagement through an optional virtual Capitol visit with legislators during legislative session. The students met with five legislators or staff members, including the chairs of the House and Senate education committees.
- **Community Action:** Ceeds of Peace supported students over the duration of the program as they created, developed, and implemented action plans to address critical issues in their communities.

With the support of the Stevens World Peace Foundation, the Atherton Family Foundation, and Rotary Club of Honolulu, we were able to serve and support 28 youth from 17 schools across 3 Hawaiian Islands.

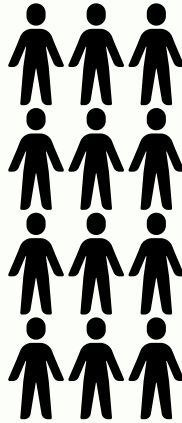
Youth Action Alliance Hawai'i

By the Numbers...

28 youth from 17 schools across 3 Hawaiian Islands participated.

4 youth mentors guided our participants through the program.

A team of 13 adult staff and volunteer mentors supported our participants



FIVE

Youth-Led
Action Plans
Launched



86% reported that their sense of leadership increased since the start of the program.

100% reported that they are now more likely to engage in community service than they were at the start of the program.

91% reported that they now are more comfortable in teaching their peers to take community action than they were at the start of the program.

100% reported that they now have more skills and tools to address community challenges than they did at the start of the program.

On average, participants reported, on a 1-10 scale... (1 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree)

I have a better understanding of the global contexts of important local issues, including food security, climate change, media literacy, societal health & well-being, and social justice.

9.5

I have a better understanding of the fundamentals of advocacy and public policy.

9.4

I am confident in my ability to work with my peers to carry out a project that improves my community.

9.4

For me, YAAH was a safe and supportive place where I felt accepted and empowered.

9.5

YAAH was an important part of my personal and educational growth during a difficult school year.

9.6

Youth Action Alliance Hawai'i Youth-Led Action Plans...

'Ea Ka 'Ai o Hawai'i

Our overarching mission is to share our understanding of resiliency and 'Ea in Hawai'i, to show that through 'āina we can actualize a better world. We seek to draw connections between sovereignty, food production, and resilience, and we strive to kickstart discourse and relationships between local food and resiliency producers and community members.

<https://sites.google.com/view/eakaaihawaii/home>

@eakaaihawaii



Webinar Series: March

ŌLELO HAWAI'I: MANA WĀHINE

- Celebration of **Women's History & Hawaiian language**
- Successful: 35 people registered
- Wonderful speakers: Discussed
 - Ōlelo Hawai'i in respective fields
 - Feminism as indigenous women
- Well received, taught us to prioritize questions

EA-DUCATION: MANA WĀHINE

- Celebration of **Women's History Month**
- Successful: 32 people registered
- Wonderful speakers: Discussed
 - How to integrate indigenous knowledge
 - Relevance of EA(sovereignty) in education
- - Heavy audience participation: Measure growth

Youth Health Hub

We strive to inform others, primarily youth, about the significance of accurately understanding physical, social, sexual, and mental health. We are actively breaking down barriers and de-stigmatizing topics youth should not feel embarrassed about discussing. Overall, we hope to promote healthy behaviors, achieve health literacy, and improve access to health resources. This will be done through virtual workshops, where experts will shed light on health topics, our website, which will debunk common misconceptions and supplement the information presented in the aforementioned workshops, and our social media pages to spread the information to a broader audience.

@youth.health.hub

Youth Action Alliance Hawai'i Youth-Led Action Plans...

Ho'ohana Murals

We engage in plastic pollution and climate change education and advocacy. We're inviting our community to join our art competition, building plastic recycling murals to raising plastic pollution awareness. We're also launching a student-run Instagram page and social media featuring activities and our competition. We also hope to raise awareness of Bill 40 (one of the strongest plastic laws in the nation, which bans single use plastic used by restaurants and businesses).

<https://linktr.ee/ho.ohanamurals>
@ho.ohanamurals

HI College Prep

We are a youth-led group addressing the issue of college preparation awareness. We engage in FREE college application advice, information on scholarship activities, test prep tips, career webinars, and Reserve opportunities.

<https://linktr.ee/hicollegeprep>
@hicollegeprep

Social Justice & Culture Alliance

We are a group that aims to help educate youth and adults about some of the challenges faced by the LGBTQIA+ community. We embrace a strategy of empowering the community from the ground up, facilitating leadership opportunities, and advocating for changes with a real impact. We are a youth-led project base in Hawaii - throughout the islands. Our mission is to create virtual safe spaces to educate the public on topics and issues surrounding the LGBTQIA+. Our goal is to create a community that is knowledgeable and accepting of the LGBTQIA+ community.

<https://sjcallianceyaah.com>
@sjcallianceyaah

ACTION PLAN

What is LGBTQIA+? Feb. 20
1pm-3pm HST
An intro to the LGBTQIA+ community and types of identity
Guest Speaker: Camaron Miyamoto, Director of UHM's LGBTQ+ Center

How To Be An Ally Feb. 27
1pm-3pm HST
How to be a supportive ally and address issues that affect the LGBTQ+ community
Guest Speaker: Jenifer Jenkins, Community Co-Chair DOH Sexual and Minorities Workshop & Policy Lead

Testimony Workshop Mar. 9
4pm-5pm HST
How to write testimony and act on issues you care about
Guest Speaker: David Miyashiro, Executive Director at HawaiiKidsCAN

Queer Health & Wellbeing Mar. 13
1pm-3pm HST
Support for LGBTQ+ individuals & mental/emotional health
Guest Speaker: Stephen Harris, Counselor & KCC's Co-Commissioner for LGBTQIA+ Equality

Love, Simon Mar. 27
1pm-4:30pm HST
Movie screening + the importance of LGBTQ+ education

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Testimonials

YAAH really helped to demystify things like economics or Hawaii's legislative process, which can seem so daunting for students. Providing us with outlines on how to get started with action planning helped to remove some of the barriers that we encountered when brainstorming our project. Being in a program where the goal was to actually do some community organizing or be civically engaged by testifying was a lot more helpful than if we were just told how to do it. Learning as we formed our projects helped us to see things in a more realistic and applicable context, which I think will make the concepts we learned stick more, allowing us to become more capable of leading projects in the community and outside of a structured program.

At the start of the program, I feel like I lacked empathy for people from different backgrounds and cultures but now as an alumni of this program, I have a greater appreciation and empathy for people from different backgrounds and enjoy hearing everybody's stories. I also never knew that I had such a strong love for community service and making positive change in the community. Community service has become one of my values and I strive to inspire others to make meaningful change as well. I also strengthened my leadership skills and became better at public speaking and met a bunch of new friends and mentors.



In the beginning of YAAH I think that I was feeling helpless in the midst of all the injustices going on in the world and at home too honestly. But through this program, waking up early every other weekend, and making friends with the amazing people in my hui I learned a lot and I was forced to confront a lot of problems and actually try to do something about it. I think I have more hope now like I do feel like I can make an impact even if its something small.

At the start of the program I was very eager to learn about ways that I could be part of my community and help out. I didn't know the resources or who to reach out to and how I was going to meet these people. YAAH build up my connections to different organizations around me and in other islands. I've become more aware of what kind of work I want to do in life and how I can use the skills of being responsible, collaborative and creative in college and how I will look for these same clubs there. YAAH gave me the confidence to be a leader and an engaged person in my community and I'm so grateful for that.

I'm very happy to say I got a lot of confidence from this program to go out in my community and address issues I see. Not to just look at them and wish or hope it would change. I now feel I have the tools, confidence, and understanding to go out and make a change in my community.