



Roots of Kauaʻi Green Careers Certificate Preliminary Program Report

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About Roots of Kaua`i



Roots of Kaua`i is a free 10-week, 60-hour Green Careers Certificate program focused on environmental literacy and career development education held May through July 2014, for young adults aged 18 to 35.

Environmental topics covered included Fundamentals of Environmental Literacy, Water, Waste, Transportation, Energy, Building, Health, Food & Agriculture, Community Organizing & Leadership, and Financial Literacy & Social Entrepreneurship. Career development topics included Self-Assessment & Career Planning 101, Resume Writing, Interview Preparation, Networking & Informational Interviews, Succeeding in Life and on the Job,

Portfolio Development, and Career Planning for the Future. Students particularly enjoyed guest speakers, such as Dr. Carl Berg from Surfrider Foundation and Mālama Hulē`ia, and Ben Sullivan, the Energy Coordinator from the County of Kauai Office of Economic Development.

Students also completed an additional 100 of internship hours in a local green business; some paid and some unpaid. Internship sites included Anuenue Farm, Eddie Jo Organics, National Tropical Botanical Garden, Waipa Foundation, Kauai Community Recycling, Nani Moon Meadery, Kauai Nature School, ReStore Kauai, Kauai Juice Co., Mālama Hulē`ia, and D.A. Solar. There were many more internship sites than students, showing a great demand for entry-level talent in the green industries.

The program culminated with a presentation of the students' final projects - a 'green' business or community project plan and pitch to community leaders. Judges for the pitch session included:

- John Latkiewicz, Kauai Center Director, Small Business Development Center
- Kaeo Bradford, County of Kauai WIA Administrator, Workforce Development Board
- Palo Luckett, Owner of Pacific Light & Power
- Glenn Sato, Sustainability Manager, County of Kauai Office of Economic Development

The cost of the program was just \$1,615.35 per graduate, and was funded by Atherton Family Foundation, Garden Isle Foundation, and RSF Social Finance, as well as in-kind donations from Malama Kauai and others.

What Our Students Are Saying:

The course was great! The program has been very helpful & valuable in my career path and I hope it will be available to many more people!

...everyone needs to have a class like this if they plan to live their lives in a community that has problems or concerns with the environment. It also helps students learn life skills that aren't offered at the basic level.

I thought I had a good knowledge of being sustainable - I was proved wrong. This class has opened my eyes to a lot of issues here on Kauai as well as globally.

Our Student Population



Our first session of Roots of Kauai included 18 students from all areas of the island, from Kekaha to Hanalei. Overall, we were very pleased with the diversity of students represented in our class, and our ability to provide services for young adults who needed the program the most. A demographic snapshot of our students:

- **Average annual income:** \$8,978
- **Average age:** 25 (19 to 33 years old)
- **Sex:** 50% Male & 50% Female
- **Highest education level completed:**
72% GED or High School Diploma; 17% Bachelors; 11% Certificate or Vocational Training
- **Nationalities:**
50% Caucasian; 22% Native Hawaiian; 17% Other Pacific Islander; 5.5% Asian; 5.5% Hispanic/Latino

Moving forward to our next sessions, we will be concentrating our efforts on recruiting unemployed students in minority populations to diversify our class even further.

Measurement of Outcomes

Outcome 1: To Increase Student Education & Community Engagement.

Our objective is to keep students engaged and retained in our program through to graduation, build an alumni network of students to work with future students as mentors, and to inspire and achieve continued student involvement in civic engagement, volunteerism, and leadership.

Goal: 90% Student retention to graduation

Of the 18 students enrolled in the program, 14 completed the program and graduated. Of the four that did not graduate, 2 students secured employment and were unable to fulfill the program commitment, and 2 students had personal issues that stood in their way of completing class. Although we see the two who dropped out due to employment as ultimate “wins”, the overall result was lower than goal: 77% of students completed the course.



Goal: 75% Continued student involvement in civic engagement, volunteerism, and leadership

Upon class completion, 86% of students were already continuing to volunteer in their community, and 100% planned to.

79% of students stated that they felt more comfortable talking to public officials about environmental issues.

Goal: 25% Alumni participation in future class sessions as guest speakers/mentors

86% of students stated they would be willing to be a class speaker or mentor to new Roots of Kauai students as a member of the Roots Alumni Network.

Outcome 2: To Increase Student Self-Sufficiency Through Goal Achievement.



We aim to achieve a high level of student and internship site satisfaction, and ensure that students reach their professional and personal goals, including educational matriculation, job placement and/or entrepreneurship.

Goal: 90% Student & Internship site satisfaction of the overall program

100% of graduates stated they enjoyed the program and 100% said they would recommend the class to others.

What Students Loved:

"The financial part helped me a lot. The teachers were very helpful. Awesome program."

"The confidence & initiative to make my goals a reality. This program helped me define and focus on my goals in life and pushed me to take action and not just talk or think about what I want."

"...the exposure to new ideas and networking, where to go for green careers, plus the internship hours - great opportunities!"

"I know more about the issues in my community. I know where I can find information about solutions to the problems. I feel more confident I can voice myself for issues I want to see changed. I have more direction in and the drive to find a job that will be sustainable."

"What I loved the most about the class was learning about environmental businesses from around the world. I always felt I had all the help I needed, or extra help from the instructors!"

"The networking opportunities! Learning how to talk to people, share your ideas and inspiration, and how to ask people for their time and help; making connections and building relationships."

"I really appreciate the confidence that this program has given me to know that I can explore and make a career path that is my own. The resume building and goal setting helped to put my skills and wants on paper and helped me to have guidance toward a solid career. The internship work and community project planning have given me really good experiences and challenges."

"Becoming more aware of what's available in the community, and of myself and my goals"

"Wonderful. Great people. Great education. The heavy knowledge is well supplemented with hope, inspiring solutions, and current businesses that are existing to improve the environment."

Our internship sites were also fully satisfied with the program and the students they selected:

100% were satisfied with intern performance

100% said that if a position was available, they would hire the intern

100% said they would participate in program again

What Internship Sites Are Saying:

"Great workers and enthusiastic interns come from this program." - Waipa Foundation

"It was a great help to us having such a wonderful worker. The program overall seemed to be very organized and well put together. It was nice to be able to give back to the community, even in such a small way." - Kauai Juice Co.

"It was really quality and good for our farm" - Anuenue Farm

*"Although this is my first experience having an open minded individual, it makes a strong impression."
- Restore Kauai*

*"I was impressed by how eager the interns were to learn about water issues and to apply them to their own interests. I would definitely recommend this internship program and will keep the interns in mind when discussing future job opportunities."
- Mālama Hulē'ia*

"Great! I really appreciate the enthusiasm and interest of the kids who came in the program. Send me more!" - National Tropical Botanical Garden

"Your program brought people together with similar values to institute positive change on the island. Well done!" - Kauai Nature School



WIN

Goal: 85% Graduate educational matriculation, job placement or entrepreneurship within 90 days of graduation

92.8% of students (all but one) have started college, secured a new position or begun a new green business as of graduation.

3 students are currently enrolled in college-level studies; 6 students were hired by their internship sites; and 5 students are starting businesses.

We look forward to reporting updated data for October 2014; 90 days after the program ended.

Outcome 3: To Promote & Enhance the Image of Sustainable/Green Industries.

By achieving the first two goals, we hope to build a stronger buy-in from the community and agencies that the sustainable and green industries are worthy of investment as a strong workforce development sector, in line with the Department of Education's emphasis on Natural Resources Career Pathways. We're aiming for increases in student applications each cycle to demonstrate growing community interest and significant pieces of press coverage to show that we are successfully marketing the green economy within the local community. We will also provide a detailed report on our program outcomes and findings to various partners and agencies.



This course was great – every time I talked about it I had feedback that the person listening wanted to take this class.

Goal: 25% more student applications for each cycle

We received 36 applications for our first session's application period, although several applicants were not qualified for the program and some others did not follow through on attending an interview. We are aiming to receive a minimum of 45 applicants for our second session of the program to be held in 2015.

Goal: 10 or more pieces of press coverage

By gaining press coverage, we are promoting the image of the green and sustainable industries as a viable sector of the economy worth investing in, while helping to market our internship site businesses and organizations. Our target goal was to receive 10 pieces of press coverage during our program, which we just fell short of - not bad considering the limited media options on such a small island!

1. [Free Green Careers program coming to Kauai](#), The Garden Island, January 15, 2014
2. [Free Green Careers Certificate Program Launches](#), For Kauai Magazine, April 5, 2014
3. [Environmental Education Thrives on Kauai](#), The Garden Island, April 9, 2014
4. [Bring smiles, hearts, hands to honor Earth](#), The Garden Island, April 14, 2014
5. Live Interview w/Program Manager Megan Fox on "Out of the Box", KKCR, May 8, 2014
6. [Roots of Kauai: 14 graduate from green careers pilot program](#), The Garden Island, August 11, 2014
7. [Roots of Kauai's Future Environmental Leaders](#), Tasting Kauai, August 11, 2014
8. [Learning To Be Green Professionals](#), MidWeek Kauai, August 13, 2014
9. Live Interview with Roots of Kaua'i Graduates on "Kaua'i Vibrations", KKCR, August 20, 2014



Goal: The completion of a Program Report detailing results achieved

This report is being sent to various partners, agencies, and funders. We hope that through it, we can all gain insight into the possibilities of the green economy on Kaua'i, as well as highlight the potential results of future programs. We will provide an update to this report 90 days after student completion of the program to accurately assess job placement results and the lasting effects of the program. Please let us know if you would like to receive the updated report.

Student Businesses & Community Projects

Although all students were required to complete a business or community project plan and pitch to a judging panel of community leaders, some students took it a step further and actually launched their businesses.

Here are a few select projects that you should keep an eye on!

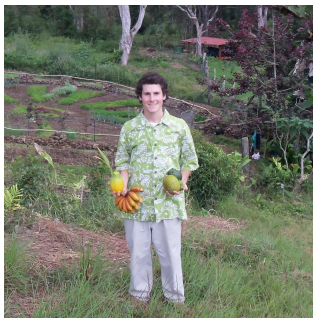


H2O Pono

Nadia Kaley, 28, of Kapaa launched H2O Pono, a water conservation and water catchment business that provides both educational and installation services. During the program, Nadia and fellow classmate Stormy Soza received WET Teachers Certificates from the Department of Water for water conservation education and gained hands-on conservation experience interning at National Tropical Botanical Garden. They will be launching their first community workshops soon!

Ho'okahe Wailana

Kaui Fu, 28, of Kilauea, and Shawna Blackford, 20, of Lihue, won the Green Pitch Night competition with their river stewardship community project, which is a partnership with Hawaiian Civic Club and Hanalei Canoe Club. Their project focuses on trimming/clearing the Hanalei River of excessive hau overgrowth, planting native gardens, and educating young canoe club members about native plants and ecology. They are currently fundraising for this nonprofit project.



Kauai Gardens

Carey Tinsley, 24, of Kilauea began Kauai Gardens, a permaculture and pono landscaping company, with the ambitious goal of expanding into a full nonprofit venture focused on sustainable agriculture and healthy living. You can see Carey's promotional video and presentation on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7YMqagvMV4>

Kauai Music Services

Ryo Shintani, 26, of Lihue, won the "Judge's Choice" award at the Green Pitch Night for his sustainable music therapy service aimed at providing services to developmentally disabled youth and seniors with cognitive disorders. This has been a long-time dream of Ryo since returning from Berklee College of music after studying music therapy for two years and working as a behavioral paraprofessional here on Kaua'i. Ryo performed at graduation to demonstrate his talents!



Rootless Yardcare & Small Engine Repair

Kanoa Nabeshima-Costa, 25, of Waimea, has launched his business that provides sustainable landscaping services focused on native plants, integrated pest management strategies, and small engine repair services.

A View for the Future

We were very pleased with this pilot program, and it has encouraged us to develop further employment-based programs that help to provide experience and learning opportunities for Kauai's youth and young adults. Malama Kauai has decided to absorb this program and seek funding to offer two sessions in 2015; it has also inspired the FarmCorps agricultural internship/apprenticeship program we are launching soon. *A few key findings that we hope to address in future sessions:*

- ❖ **Difficulty in Reaching Potential Students.** It is difficult to outreach to potential students with a new program. Facebook advertising and word of mouth were the most successful avenues in attracting applicants to the program. For next year's program, we will increase our marketing budget and utilize our increased networks, including program alumni, to market the program more widely.
- ❖ **Student Commitment and Retention.** We did not hit our goal of achieving 90% student retention in the program, although two of the students who dropped did so because they obtained jobs. To address this, we aim to deliver our motivational psychology workshop earlier on in the course to help students deal with the struggles of balancing school, internships, jobs, and family life while remaining focused on their long-term goals, by understanding how their mind works and addressing negative thought patterns that stand in their way of success. Many students found this workshop helpful. We will also incentivize students by offering a \$500 completion stipend for education or business startup.
- ❖ **Curriculum Changes Needed.** Students commented on their end of course surveys that they would like more speakers and more Hawaii-based examples in the curriculum. To address these requests, we will be lengthening each class by an hour (bringing the course to 80 hours) to ensure that we can incorporate more community speakers, and working with the curriculum provider to include more Hawaii-based content and examples.
- ❖ **Adjustments to Internships.** We noticed that many students were not meeting their weekly internship hours and having difficulty completing 100 hours by the deadline, even though the requirements were stated several times before and after the program began. We will assist the internships in providing more structure to their interns by requiring that internship sites set weekly schedules for their interns to meet the minimum weekly and total hours required. We also plan to begin the internships later in the program and allow them a month after classes are finished to complete their internship, without the continued distractions of homework and projects.
- ❖ **Business Plan Support.** Students also had difficulty with their business plans, and less than half of the class took advantage of the free services offered by John Latkiewicz at the Small Business Development Center; some only took advantage of his services in the last couple of weeks. For next session, the SBDC will be delivering a 3-hour workshop to students as a part of their curriculum to help better prepare them for their business plans and to build a stronger relationship with the SBDC.

Mahalo for your support for Roots of Kua`i!
Keep an eye out for us in 2015!