

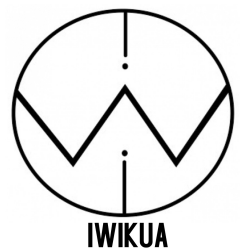
# Kaua`i Ag Internship Program

## 2016 Annual Program Report



### Supported by:

Corporation for National & Community Service - AmeriCorps | Alu Like  
Foundation for Sustainability & Innovation | Hawai'i People's Fund  
Kokee Lodge | Robin Arrington | Eric Burda | Kim Wright | Eleanor Synder | Greg & Denise



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## Kauaʻi Ag Internship Program

To inspire our next generation of farmers and agriculturalists, Malama Kauaʻi piloted a paid Ag Internship Program in 2015, with the help of Hawaiʻi People’s Fund and many individual donors.

The program was in response to the [2013 Hawaiʻi Agricultural Skill Panel Report](#), which made a clear yet unanswered call to action for Kauaʻi to: create and strengthen high school internship and college mentorship programs; and to engage in mentoring students *by people with experience with new farmers*. Participants involved in this statewide report included over 600 stakeholders in the private, nonprofit, and government sectors. The #1 workforce challenge identified on Kauaʻi was the disconnect between educational institutions and the agriculture industry. Additionally, only 24.7% of Kauaʻi youth aged 16-19 are employed. In 2013, only 82.0% of Kauaʻi 16-24 year-olds were in school and/or employed. This rate is notably lower than the statewide average of 87.3% and also lower than the U.S. average of 85.4%. (Keiki to Career Kauaʻi 2014 Youth Indicators Report).

We are setting out to change that. Our long-term goals include replacing imported “WWOOFer” labor with local ag students interested in developing careers in agriculture, creating and institutionalizing a hands-on ag internship program within our island’s college and high school systems, and growing an interested pipeline of talent to become our future farmers by filling the gap of in-field mentorship that currently exists.

In 2016, we expanded our 2015 Winter Break pilot project into a year-round program offering paid internships to Hawaii-based students interested in exploring careers in agriculture. In addition to their stipends, students who successfully complete an Ag Internship receive a recommendation letter and internship evaluation for use in their future career development activities. Several students also received Educational Awards to help pay for college. Every session we had more applicants than we could accept due to funding limitations. In 2016, the program:

- Placed 23 high school and college interns who participated in 113 total weeks of paid agricultural internships across Kauaʻi
- Increased access and exposure of ag career pathways to underrepresented groups in the agriculture sector: 61% of interns were Native Hawaiian and 39% were female
- Engaged over 50 partners, guest speakers, field trip sites, and collaborators across Kauaʻi in supporting and mentoring our aspiring agriculturalists
- Helped to bring awareness to the issues of local farmer development and youth unemployment via [The Garden Island coverage](#), KKCR radio interviews, a [Hawaii Public Radio interview](#), and a creative outreach video that one of our Ag Interns made; Internship Mentor Clint Snyder of KUGA Agriculture was also featured on the front page of MidWeek Kauaʻi



## 2016 Internships

### *Spring Break*

During Spring Break, we hosted 7 Native Hawaiian Ag Interns at Malama Kaua'i's Community Farm in Kalihiwai & Hale Puna with IWIKUA & KUGA Agriculture in Waimea for a total of 27 weeks of paid internships.

Interns at Malama Kaua'i Community Farm worked on various projects including the Youth Garden & Demonstration Farm, and visited north shore ag sites including the Kilauea Community Agricultural Center, Kanuikapono's School Garden, Kalalea Juice Hale and Anaina Hou's Botanical Gardens & Nursery. With IWIKUA, interns worked on Hale Puna's agroforestry project, including building a replica model of Hale Puna (Gullick-Rowell Mission House) as a chicken coop.

### *Summer*

Summer was our most impactful session yet, hosting 10 interns at 3 main Internship Site Partner Farms across the island for 8 weeks. Through the AmeriCorps Summer Associate program, we were able to also offer 9 of these interns a \$1,222 Education Award in addition to their weekly stipend to help pay for college.

Students got an in-depth look at the agricultural industry on Kaua'i, with field trips and hands-on service projects to 15 different sites across the island, such as National Tropical Botanical Garden, KCC's GoFarm, 'Ohana Farm, Kealia Farms, CTAHR's Ag Research Station, Waiawa, Kokee Resource Conservation Program, Steelgrass Farm, KOA Farm, & many more. These were complemented by 9 workshops and lectures from experts on a variety of topics including cover crops, soil, pruning, air layering, GIS in ag, beekeeping, grafting, vermiculture, small business development, and even local food preparation. By the time summer wrapped up, interns had completed a total of 80 weeks of internships!

### *Winter Break*

We capped off the year with an engaging Winter Break, hosting 6 interns at Malama Kaua'i's Community Farm in Kalihiwai and KUGA Agriculture in Waimea.

In Kalihiwai, interns learned basic building skills while making a farm stand, engaged in seed saving techniques, worked in the Youth Garden, participated in Poi Day and toured farms at Waipa, learned about bunchy top virus and fruit tree care, harvested fruit for Village Harvest at a large citrus orchard,, and completed a service project at Anaina Hou Community Park while learning about sugarloaf pineapples and Hawai'i's agricultural history.

On the west side, interns were hosted by Clint Snyder of KUGA Agriculture and participated in a variety of projects including planting seed starts, mixing their own growing medium, and learning food forest management techniques. The interns also spent time working in Kekaha Elementary's lo'i; listening to guest speaker, Eric Hansen talk story about cover cropping and his work with GoFarm Hawai'i; maintaining the Waimea Community Garden; and planting and farm site planning at IWIKUA's new farm.



## Intern Impact

Ag Interns were surveyed to gain their feedback on the program, how it impacted their future direction, and how we could make improvements. Students were highly engaged and a handful of them returned for a second internship session. From participant surveys, interns shared how they were impacted:

- 94% learned more about farming and agriculture (6% *somewhat*)
- 100% felt they increased their job preparation and earning potential
- 69% reported an increase in their confidence in finding an agriculture job (31% *somewhat*)
- 94% had more general confidence in themselves (6% *somewhat*)
- 88% increased their interest & motivation to continue their education in agriculture (12% *somewhat*)
- 63% had an increase in their interest & motivation to continue a career in agriculture (37% *somewhat*)
- 69% felt prepared to work in, run, or own a farm (15% *somewhat*, 6% *no*)

### From the Ag Interns...

"I have a much better understanding of how much work (and what kind) goes into ag. I feel inspired to start my own garden (even a commercial garden in the future), because of this program. Aside from ag, this was also very educational in the sense of outreach and all the work that goes into running a nonprofit. It opened my eyes up to the major role ag plays in the community and how important it is to educate and promote sustainability to kids and adults. I will continue to involve myself in the ag community through volunteering after this internship now that I know how important it is."

~ Kat



"I learned a lot about what kinds of plants and animals are most sustainable to farm in the sense of business, environmentalism, and community. This internship taught me a lot of memorable, practical knowledge, but also got me thinking more creatively about ways to start a business that can last generations. I really liked the blend of hands-on work and lectures from community members. When we would learn something about soil or grafting, we could use it for the rest of the internship and by the end of the internship we had most of the knowledge transformed into a skill."

~ Jacob

**\* Hired at Gullick-Rowell Mission House's ag project!**



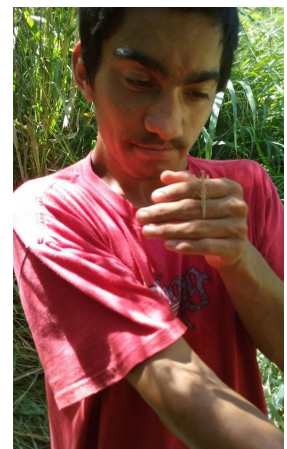
"I learned how to be patient and plan things out at a higher level. To be persistent that although results may not show now that they will eventually appear with continued determination. I learned the process of farming and also the business aspects. I have much more respect for farmers seeing how much hard work goes into farming."

~ Cody



"As my first internship, this really helped me understand what I want to do after high school. It helped me to understand more about the ecosystem and even more about the business side of agriculture."

~ Kaya





## Future Goals

Although we were pleased with our first-year program results in establishing the program model, this is only the first phase in reaching our long-term goals. During Year 2, we aim to:

- Engage more funders to expand internship offerings to more students. Participants' #1 suggestion for program improvement was to have more students in the program and we had more applicants than we could place each session. Millennials are well-known for being highly social and teamwork-oriented, so larger intern groups are sure to increase program engagement.
- Continue to develop a pool of returning interns to be mentored, focusing on those with a serious career interest in agriculture, to build a qualified pool of potential future farmers and deepen their knowledge and connections in the agriculture industry. This is concurrent with expanding to include new site visits and workshops so that returning participants are offered a variety of learning experiences and exposure to more agribusinesses in the community.
- Reach funding goals for staffing in order to (1) invest more time into effectively partnering with educational institutions to support them in developing long-term, systemic solutions that replace this program with institutional programs in high schools and the college and (2) develop support services for intern job placement with local farms to replace off-island WOOF'er labor with program graduates.

## Mahalos

### Funders



Kokee Lodge | Robyn Arrington | Eric Burda | Kim Wright | Eleanor Synder | Greg & Denise

### Partners & Supporters

Anaina Hou  
Ashly Trask, NTBG  
Aunty Lorna Poe, Ai Pono  
CTAHR Extension Services  
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Fiskars  
GoFarm Hawaiʻi  
Hanai  
IWIKUA  
Kalalea Juice Hale  
Kanuikapono PCS  
Kapaʻa High School  
Kauaʻi Beekeepers Association  
Kauaʻi Community College

Kauaʻi High School  
Kauai Organic Agroecology Farm  
Kawaikini NCPSC  
Kealia Farm  
Ke Kula Niʻihau o Kekaha  
Kekaha Elementary School  
Kilauea Community Agricultural Center  
KKCR  
Kokee Resource Conservation Program  
KUGA Agriculture  
Kula Aupuni Niihau A Kahelelani Aloha  
Mālama Hulēʻia  
Maʻo Farms  
MidWeek Kauaʻi

Miguel Chrisman  
National Tropical Botanical Garden  
Peter King, KCC GIS Instructor  
Regenerations  
Small Business Development Center  
Steelgrass Farm  
TGI-The Garden Island Newspaper  
Ulupono Initiative  
Uncle Kane & Makaweli Taro Farmers  
Waimea Community Garden  
Waimea High School  
Waipa Foundation  
Waiwa  
West Kauaʻi Farms

***We're currently fundraising for our 2017 Kauaʻi Ag Internship Sessions!***

**If you'd like to make a donation to see this program continue in 2017, you can donate online [HERE](#), or mail a check to PO Box 1414, Kilauea, HI 96754!**