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News Release

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County continues efforts for feminist economic recovery plan

LĪHU'E – The County of Kaua'i continues to support a feminist economic recovery plan for COVID-19, an initiative led by the Kaua'i County Committee on the Status of Women (KCCSW) through a Kaua'i County Council resolution signed in December 2020.

“We recognize the vulnerability faced by women, children, and minorities, especially throughout the extreme challenges of this pandemic,” said Mayor Derek S. K. Kawakami. “At the start of our pandemic response, with the reality that women most often serve as providers and caregivers to their children, we quickly implemented a flexible work schedule protocol. This gave our associates the ability to telework from home and support their children’s needs, as most schools transitioned to distance learning, while continuing to financially support their families.”

In a recent report to the KCCSW, the county describes its COVID-19 recovery efforts that support last year’s Resolution 2021-04, “Supporting and Urging Equity, Inclusion, and Social and Economic Justice Principle in COVID-19 Related Recovery Initiatives.” Such efforts include formulating the Kaua'i Economic Recovery Strategy Team (KERST) under the leadership of the Office of Economic Development Director Nalani Brun, where ten teams were developed to address and guide the county in its recovery and support plan and initiatives. The 90 members of these teams were comprised of 45 women and 45 men, and included a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds and expertise. Additionally, many of the county’s Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act grantees were awarded funding for

programs that support women, children, our houseless community, and kupuna. These grants included programs for food distribution to kupuna and houseless populations, non-profit economic loss support, mental health and domestic violence prevention, educational support, employment assistance, and housing assistance.

“As Kaua‘i’s representative to the Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women, I was pleased to receive this report which puts the words of Resolution 2021-04 into action,” said Edie Ignacio Neumiller, Kaua‘i Commissioner on the Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women. “As the first county in the state to provide this information, I’m proud of Kaua‘i’s leadership and commitment to addressing the long-standing issues surrounding equity, inclusion, and social and economic justice. The County of Kaua‘i continues to take the lead in supporting and promoting COVID-19 recovery efforts for women, children, the houseless and LGBTQ community and kupuna.”

Resolution 2021-04 which was unanimously passed by the Kaua‘i County Council in December, recognizes that COVID-19 has magnified long-standing inequalities of women and LGBTQ people in Hawai‘i. It urges policy makers to view the pandemic through a gendered lens and incorporate principles of equity, inclusion, and social and economic justice into county programs centered on COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. The legislation is based on the Hawai‘i State Commission on the Status of Women’s plan called “Building Bridges, Not Walking on Backs,” which is the nation’s first feminist economic recovery plan for COVID-19.

To view the county’s report to the Kaua‘i County Commission on the Status of Women on Resolution 2021-04, please visit www.kauai.gov/KCCSW.

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