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LEAD FOR HAWAII RECRUITING NEW LEADERS FOR PAID FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Lead For Hawai'i is creating a network of young, local change makers ready to challenge the status quo, take action in solving challenges in our community, and help build a better future for all people on our islands. The organization is seeking applicants for its inaugural fellowship and those interested have until June 18 to apply at lead4america.org/hawaii.

Lead For Hawai'i is a Hawai'i-based affiliate of a national nonprofit, Lead For America, which works to recruit, train and place new leaders into service through paid fellowships with local businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies. The nonprofit finds and supports homegrown talent - dynamic and diverse individuals who are driven to help make their communities strong, vibrant and compassionate while tackling pressing problems.

A 2020 Lead For America fellow with a degree in Anthropology, Ching is the Executive Director of Innovation for Lead For Hawai'i. Possessing a background in corporate communications, finance, and technology, Znamierowski is Lead For Hawai'i's Director of Community Engagement and Entrepreneurship. Both Ching and Znamierowski grew up in Kona, now work in the Hawai'i County Planning Department, and are honored to be able to serve the island that gave so much to them. Coming from a career in mental health and a life as a creative, Morrow is foremost a storyteller. As Lead For Hawai'i's Director of Programs and Strategy, he helps guide and support fellows as they lead their community into a future of empowerment and prosperity through wrap-around mentorship and training: strengthening their identity and sense of place. Together, this Lead For Hawai'i team is already capturing the public's imagination about what new avenues of opportunities can exist here and starting to lay a foundation for progress that will be led by breakthrough leaders.

"Our island communities are facing significant challenges, from COVID-19 and healthcare access, to workforce development, diversifying our economy, caring for our cultural and natural resources and ensuring that every child receives an excellent education. The talent and leadership this moment requires is born within every community on our island," Ching said. "Far too many young people in Hawai'i, particularly for those who grow up in our highest need communities, the narrative of success has become one of leaving and never coming back. And even for those who maintain the condition to return, and serve, the pathways to do so are often few and far between. We also know it doesn't have to be this way."

Designed to empower and invest in the innovation, passion, leadership and development of future leaders, Lead For Hawai'i's two-year paid fellowship will be offered to just 8 change makers. The first cohort is scheduled to start training on July 26 and to begin work August 16.

Each Lead For Hawai'i fellow will receive an annual stipend of \$34,000 and be placed with a host institution to work on crucial initiatives, such as land use and policy, sustainable agriculture, Kīlauea recovery efforts in community capacity and resilience, cultural preservation and perpetuation, legislative processes, and indigenous, place-based conservation. This year's host institutions are Hawai'i County, The Kohala Center, Akaka Foundation for Tropical Forests, Kahua Pa'a Mua, and Shaka Tea. Learn more about the sites and projects at lead4america.org/placementsites.

"Lead For Hawai'i offers our county the ability to gain highly qualified and skilled young professionals for temporary employment while simultaneously allowing us to foster their growth, build their networks, and ultimately contribute to their real-life work experiences," said Hawai'i County Mayor Mitch Roth. "These individuals, without a doubt, bring a tenacity, vigor, and willingness to learn that is simply unparalleled to other staffing programs we've used in the past, and we look forward to their continued contributions to our communities and the people of Hawai'i County."

Lead For Hawai'i's three pillars are: "Informed by the Past," "Grounded in the Present," and "Solving for the Future." To epitomize, it is vital that this next generation of leaders obtain the education and skills needed to be successful in implementing their work and vision, as well as to make real contributions and mobilize the transformation. Each fellow will engage in an experiential learning and training structure. Lead For Hawai'i's Place-Based Leadership Development creates a multi-stakeholder community to inform and influence. The experiences range from learning from cultural practitioners and kūpuna, participating in workshops and specialized training with local leaders, and going on immersive excursions with defined purposes. The idea is to bridge divides, foster fresh thinking, and develop dynamic ways of collaboration to shape a more inclusive and sustainable future.

In partnership with Hawaiian canoe carver and practitioner Alika Bumatay, the first-ever cohort of Lead For Hawai'i fellows will carve a canoe.

"The wa'a, or canoe, is as symbolic as it is functional, and for our cohort's purpose, it will serve as the vessel that steers us through the fellowship in service to and with one another," Ching said. "The art of canoe carving will not only strengthen the fellows' cultural and historical foundation, it will serve as a mode of healing and personal transformation. At the end of their two-year collaboration, the cohort will have formed robust bonds while completing their canoe, and learning how to fulfill the unique roles and responsibilities associated with each canoe seat."

Lead For Hawai'i's fellowship program is targeting candidates that are recent graduates, millennials and young professionals, who are committed to serving their community for two years. After completing their fellowship, each fellow will receive training on how to run for office, launch social ventures, and advice into positions of public leadership.

The Lead For Hawai'i team hopes to grow the number of fellows each cohort and eventually expand its fellowship program by offering it on other islands. This inaugural fellowship is being covered by AmeriCorps, hosts and local philanthropy in the communities Lead For Hawai'i is serving. Lead For Hawai'i is grateful for having the privilege of being just one of seven AmeriCorps Hawaii Formula Planning Grants that were awarded this year. Because of the generosity and support garnered so far, the Lead For Hawai'i team is ready to launch its fellowship program.

Applicants are encouraged to explore the Lead For Hawai'i website, lead4america.org/hawaii, and schedule a call with the team at <https://calendly.com/lfhi>. To apply, get involved or more information, contact Znamierowski at 896-7649 and emily.znamierowski@lead4america.org.