



HAWAI'I LODGING & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

MEDIA CONTACT

Teddi Anderson
President, TLC PR
(808) 535-9099
teddi@tlcpr.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ClimbHI and HLTA Recognize Two Hawaii Educators with New Hospitality Award

The award provides immersive industry experiences and mentorship, and includes a \$1,000 stipend

Honolulu, Hawaii, June 15, 2021 – Hawaii workforce development nonprofit ClimbHI has partnered with the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA) to recognize two educators on Oahu and the Island of Hawaii with a new award. The first-of-its-kind immersive award provides an array of learning opportunities within the hospitality industry. Each teacher also earns a \$1,000 stipend to fund experiences that will provide an enhanced understanding of the industry.

"ClimbHI and HLTA recognize the importance of our educators in communicating the value of the hospitality industry to the next generation of Hawaii's leaders," said Julie Morikawa, President of ClimbHI. "Our teachers are creating innovative opportunities to support students and help them learn about engaging careers here at home."

Each teacher will receive overview briefings from HLTA, Hawai'i Tourism Authority and Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau staff; job shadowing and on-site learning at a hotel or resort in Hawaii; and other immersive experiences that showcase various aspects of the industry. The teachers will also be paired with mentors from HLTA's Women in Lodging & Tourism committee.

2021 award winners:

Alyssa Alcos is a teacher at Waianae High School on Oahu, where she advises the school's DECA Club. The club prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. For the past 2 years, Alyssa has served on the board of the Hawaii Association of Career & Technical Education, which promotes career readiness among the different education pathways.

"If hospitality is about having the love to serve, then hospitality in Hawaii has got to be about sharing the love of our culture through service," Alcos said. "I hope I can continue to perpetuate that in my future curricula."

Fern White is a West Hawaii District Resource Teacher for Career & Technical Education programs on the Island of Hawaii. She is a National Board Certified English Language Arts Teacher who has taught guidance, health, physics, computer science, and engineering design. White said she will use the stipend to learn more about the image of hospitality in Hawaii and how cultural values are embedded in the industry.

Alcos and White were recognized during a virtual ceremony with Morikawa and Mufi Hannemann, President and CEO of HLTA, on June 9, 2021.

"It has been a long-standing objective of HLTA to assist hospitality educators," Hannemann said. "The teachers who were selected in the first year of this award are exemplary in every sense of the word and will help us lay a solid foundation for us to build upon."

In April, ClimbHI hosted its first-ever virtual [Leadership, Exploration, Inspiration](#) (LEI) hospitality industry program for 1,000 students from high school and intermediate schools across the state. LEI was created by ClimbHI in 2011 to inspire Hawaii's youth to pursue careers in the state's visitor industry by providing them with the means to achieve success. The program has helped thousands of students across the state with networking and hands-on educational opportunities.

In addition, ClimbHI is inviting businesses, associations and nonprofit organizations to sign up for the ClimbHI Bridge online portal. This free portal provides opportunities for students and teachers, including guest speaking, career fair participation, mentorships, and much more. For more information, visit climbhi.org/portals.

About ClimbHI: Founded in 2009, the Hawaii-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit ClimbHI seeks to inspire students to finish high school and proceed to post-secondary education or employment by exposing them to future career paths and the steps necessary to achieve those goals. For more, visit climbhi.org.

###