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# ClimbHI recognizes businesses for excellence in workforce development

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Two local nonprofits — ClimbHI and the Hawaii Executive Collaborative — are recognizing three businesses for excellence in providing workforce development opportunities through their virtual career training platform ClimbHI Bridge.

The nonprofits awarded YMCA of Honolulu, Bank of Hawaii and The Queen's Health Systems with the ClimbHI Bridge Service Award.

ClimbHI launched the ClimbHI Bridge with support from the Hawaii Executive Collaborative in late 2020 as a way to connect students and teachers with businesses for workforce development opportunities. Amid the pandemic, those opportunities have included things such as virtual site visitations and remote internships.

So far, 275 Hawaii businesses and nonprofit organizations have enrolled on the platform, and it's reached nearly 2,000 educators



COURTESY OF CLIMBHI

Morikawa founded ClimbHI in 2011 with the goal of educating students about future career options.



successful public-private partnership that touches all school districts throughout Hawaii,” said ClimbHI President [Julie Morikawa](#) in a statement. “ClimbHI Bridge offers a wide range of opportunities that bring unprecedented connectivity to urban and rural areas across the state and will continue to grow as a key metric for workforce development.”

“When we provide opportunities like ClimbHI Bridge, we are bringing together the collective efforts and talents of our students, educators, communities and businesses to ensure that we are preparing the next generation of Hawaii’s leaders for careers right here at home,” stated Lynelle Marble, executive director of the Hawaii Executive Collaborative, which has committed to funding the program for five years.

The award also recognized three educators for organizing nearly 60 workforce development events through the portal: Geraldine Valencia of Campbell High School; Fern White, West Hawaii Resource Teacher; and Maria Bernard-Reantaso of Moanalua High School.

The ClimbHI Bridge marks an expansion for ClimbHI, which Morikawa founded ClimbHI in 2011 to educate students about future career options in the hospitality industry. The Bridge, however, is open to all industries and includes users across sectors including finance, nonprofits, health care and more.

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