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Hospitality workforce development program expands in high schools

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A hospitality certificate program for Hawaii high school students has been renewed for the 2021-2022 academic year.

The Service Excellence Certificate program was designed specifically for Hawaii Department of Education schools by local workforce development nonprofit ClimbHI. The certificate is available through the DOE's Career and Technical Education Hospitality Pathway, and aims to help students prepare for jobs in the hospitality industry.

"It's exciting that we are able to continue to offer this world-class curriculum to our students. This program is the perfect fit with our Hospitality Pathway, to strengthen customer service skills.



VOSHADHI/ISTOCK

"Our hospitality leaders are generously supporting a program that will pay dividends for these students and the Hawaii workforce for years to come," stated Julie Morikawa, president and founder of ClimbHI. "This incredible public-private effort is especially appreciated during the most challenging of times for our hospitality industry."

Providing these opportunities without an added fee makes this program much more accessible for our students,” said Jill Tanaka, a teacher in the Public and Human Services Academy at Kapolei High School, in a statement.

The program launched in January 2020 with funding from the Hawaii Tourism Authority. ClimbHI announced this week that the program has been renewed for this school year through support by additional sponsors that include: Prince Resorts; Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association; Kaanapali Beach Resort Association Foundation; Mauna Kea Beach Hotel; Residence Inn by Marriott Oahu Kapolei; Koloa Landing Resort at Poipu; Marriott's Ko Olina Beach Club; The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Waikiki Beach; Highgate; and Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa.

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Morikawa created the Service Excellence Certificate in partnership with Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration. To date, more than 600 students have finished the program. Further growth is expected this year, with nearly 1,000 students from 13 high schools signed up to participate this semester.

“The Hawaii Lodging & Tourism Association counts education among its three core pillars, and we have been committed to investing in and supporting the future leaders of the hospitality industry,” stated HLTA President & CEO Mufi Hannemann.

“ClimbHI’s Service Excellence Certificate for the DOE CTE Hospitality Pathway provides both credentials and critical training for public school students, and we are grateful that the program will be continued.”

Christina O'Connor
Reporter
Pacific Business News



