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ClimbHI continues to expand virtual career training portal

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In looking back at the first full year of running its virtual career training portal, local nonprofit ClimbHI says it's "dramatically increased" participation on the platform.

The numbers certainly back up that statement: When PBN checked in with ClimbHI President and CEO Julie Morikawa last February, she said that more than 200 Hawaii businesses and 1,000 educators had enrolled on the platform at the time, reaching about 4,000 students.

As of this week, ClimbHI says there are more than 420 organizations and nearly 2,300 educators using the portal. And it has now reached 32,000 elementary, intermediate and high



COURTESY OF CLIMBHI

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

school students at 150 schools statewide.

ClimbHI conceptualized the ClimbHI Bridge online portal in 2019, with an official launch in December 2020 in partnership with the Hawaii Department of Education, and funding from the Hawaii Executive Collaborative. The portal connects students to businesses for career development opportunities such as volunteering, internships, or job fairs. Plus, teachers can utilize the platform to recruit guest speakers for their classes, and arrange site visits, or other hands-on learning experiences.

“Too many students in Hawaii do not finish high school, and too few secure a post-secondary education or pursue a particular career path,” ClimbHI President Julie Morikawa, who’s a past winner of PBN’s Pineapple Awards, said in a statement. “ClimbHI Bridge connects students with working professionals in a meaningful way, motivating students to think about — and plan for — their futures.”

While ClimbHI is best known for its work in the hospitality sector, the portal is designed for any industry. Some participating businesses in 2021 included Hawaiian Electric Company, The Queen’s Health Systems, YMCA of Honolulu and Bank of Hawaii.

“The ClimbHI Bridge tool has been such an easy-to-use system. In 2021 we had around 30 different requests, and already over 10 requests in January 2022,” stated Kazu Hayashida, workforce planning manager at The Queen’s Health Systems. “It is so easy to put up the opportunities that we are looking for and to connect with these individuals.”

ClimbHI said that the portal is continuing to grow. Last month, the Bridge booked 179 events, which the company estimates will reach about 20,000 students.

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