



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Hawai'i Community Foundation announces \$7M in funding to 194 nonprofits statewide to address systemic inequities and help solve Hawai'i's greatest challenges

The first year of the CHANGE Framework Grants Program aims to uncover critical areas across our state that need deeper investment and support

HONOLULU, HAWAI'I — Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) today announced \$7M in awards from its CHANGE Grants program to 194 nonprofits statewide who are working to address some of our state's most difficult challenges. For its inaugural year, the CHANGE Grants program is aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the [six interconnected sectors of the CHANGE Framework](#)—including the core issues, gaps, solutions and needs—and pinpointing where momentum is taking place and more investment is needed. The six sectors of the CHANGE Framework are: Community & Economy, Health & Wellness, Arts & Culture, Natural Environment, Government & Civics, and Education.

Funding for the first-year of grants include \$2M from 665 donors statewide and \$5M from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott's gift to HCF in 2020.

HCF is focused on rewiring the systems that are driving long-term systemic inequities across the state. Each letter of the CHANGE Framework represents a sector, or area, that affects our community and its ability to thrive—from our economy to education. Under each sector, HCF has assembled a curated set of data to track progress on where disparities exist; the organization is also making deep investments into the community with the support of hundreds of donors and working with partners across the state from government to nonprofits to find solutions together—all for its vision to see an equitable Hawai'i.

To put the organization's equity focus into action, HCF implemented Trust-Based Philanthropy into the CHANGE Grants program, a movement to address the inherent power imbalances between foundations and nonprofits using elements of transparency, equity and collaboration. To be sensitive to the time and workloads of organizations, for example, the application was streamlined to only a handful of questions. HCF staff spent more than 340 hours with applicants in virtual interviews to learn and assess where HCF resources can make the most impact.

"To address Hawai'i's inequities we have to uncover the root of the problem by speaking with the people closest to the work," says Michelle Kauhane, senior vice president of Community Grants and Initiatives at HCF. "Over the past few months, we've had insightful, deep conversations with our local nonprofits—and the approach has enabled us to learn and to listen to how they are addressing our state's challenges and to hear their solutions."

As one of the CHANGE Grants program grantees, Hāna Health, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in rural Hāna, Maui will use the award to help fund several innovative projects aimed at fostering equity in Hāna, such as economic development and food security by utilizing 30 acres of farmland to create jobs and grow healthy, fresh food. “This grant opportunity will allow us to move forward on our own agenda for change, which is working to assure the Hāna community is the most healthy, vibrant community possible,” says Cheryl Vasconcellos, executive director of Hāna Health. “We’re really trying to use a holistic approach to develop an equitable health care system and community, so access is improved and people are able to earn enough money to support themselves and their families.”

The average CHANGE Grants award is \$36,000 per nonprofit and can be used for general operating and program expenses, providing grantees flexibility to use the money to best meet their organizational needs. About 51 percent of the applicant organizations have annual operating budgets of less than \$500,000. In the future, the CHANGE Grants program aims to make deep investments in the opportunities that have been uncovered by the conversations and the progress of the work on the ground.

“We live in a world of competing urgencies,” says Maja Grajski, executive director of the Donkey Mill Art Center, also known as Hōlualoa Foundation for Arts and Culture on Hawai‘i Island, and a CHANGE Grants Program grantee. “The arts at-risk are the proverbial canary in the coal mine of community well-being. At the core of what we do is provide keiki and the kid-at-heart in each of us with a safe space to connect through our imaginations at a deeper level with ourselves, each other, our diverse community and the environment.”

For a complete list of CHANGE Grants program grantees, visit www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/change.

*****VISUALS*****

***Images of the CHANGE Grants program grantees and their work by sector, are available at this link:
www.dropbox.com/sh/rh9iwjkpalub22r/AABxjNQLzkLW_d7b_w7-dla?dl=0***

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About the Hawai‘i Community Foundation

With 105 years of community service, HCF is one of the leading philanthropic institutions in the state. HCF is a steward of more than 1,000 funds, including more than 300 scholarship funds, created by donors who desire to transform lives and improve communities. In 2020, HCF distributed \$142.4 million in grants and contracts statewide, including \$9.2 million in scholarships. HCF also serves as a resource on community issues and trends in the nonprofit sector.

About Hāna Health

Hāna Health’s kuleana (mission) is to improve the quality of life for Hāna residents through initiatives that address health, social, and economic needs of the community. It envisions the Moku (district) of Hāna as a restorative community where wellness thrives and people live long, healthy, purposeful lives – a place where ‘ohana (family) can grow and prosper. Visit hanahealth.org.

About Hōlualoa Foundation for Arts and Culture

Donkey Mill Art Center is the home of Hōlualoa Foundation for Arts and Culture, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit art education organization. The Donkey Mill is a place of convergence for the exploration of arts and culture to inform, inspire and strengthen individual and collective well-being. Visit donkeymillartcenter.org.