

Ka Lau

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LCPCS Brings On Transition Coordinator



Tara Whitford is setting up the College and Career Center at LCPCS.

As part of the Continual School Improvement process, LCPCS has recently acquired a College and Career (or “Transition”) Coordinator. Tara Whitford grew up in the “little tiny town” of Apple Valley, California, with no thought in her head of going to college. But a high school counselor changed all that, and she is delighted to be providing the same kind of assistance to LCPCS students.

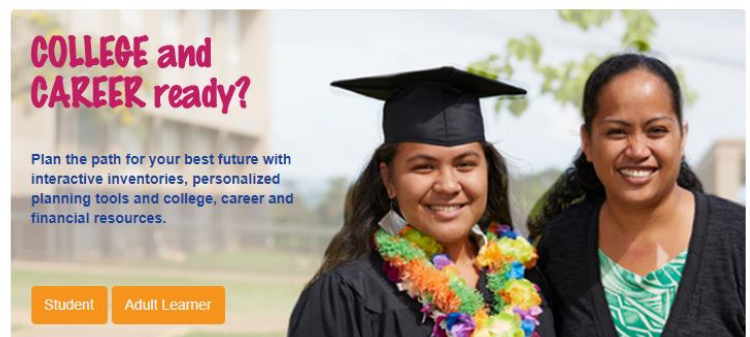
Basically, she says, her job is to connect students with resources, whether they are planning to enter the job market directly, or pursue a college education. This can take many forms, from getting kids signed up for college entrance exams, to helping them get their drivers’ licenses. “Kids from families who are working hard might not have that kind of support from home,” she said. Her job, as she sees it, is basically to help students define a goal, and then assist them in reaching that goal.

Recently for instance, Ms. Whitford has been working with senior Royce Baun. Initially, he was thinking of attending Hawai’i Community College, and maybe getting training as a vet tech. “A great goal,” she said, no problem with that. But Royce is so smart, she said, that she encouraged him to think bigger. Now Royce plans to attend UHH and major in the sciences, and is working with Ms. Whitford to earn a scholarship.

“We’re holding the bar high and they are jumping over it,” Ms. Whitford says. “I’m so proud of them.”

Some of what Ms. Whitford is doing (or has done):

- ⇒ Involving the unions to assist several students who are interested in becoming electricians;
- ⇒ Encouraging eligible students to connect with Alu Like, a program which (among other things) helps Native Hawaiians find employment;
- ⇒ Signing up students for Running Start, a program in which they take college courses for both high school and college credit (the bulk of this year’s seniors signed up for this, under Ms. Whitford’s guidance);

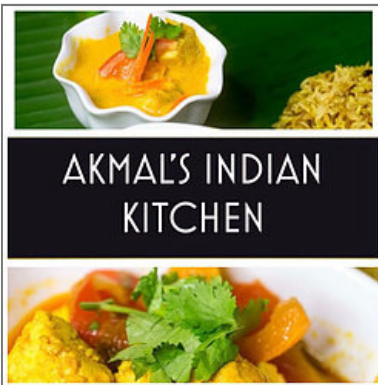


A screen capture from myfuturehawaii.org

- ⇒ Introducing kids to the “My Future Hawai‘i” website, a State sponsored online platform for college and career planning;
- ⇒ Helping students to obtain scholarships, and to use scholarship funding wisely;
- ⇒ Bringing UH admissions staff to LCPCS for a meeting in which five students were immediately accepted to UH-Hilo.

Bottom line? Helping to level the playing field by providing access to resources and support through the school to all students regardless of their personal circumstances or life goals.

Community Education Program takes off



You may be aware that wood-working classes have been offered to community members in LCPCS's wood shop. Well, did you know that other classes are now available? Hui Kāko'o O Laupāhoehoe, the non-profit organization that supports LCPCS and the surrounding communities, received a grant from the Laura Jane Musser Foundation to help develop a community education program. “It is a result of our great success with the adult woodshop classes,” says Hui Board President, Bari Russo. “LCPCS has so much potential to offer fun and educational classes to more than just its students.”

Classes in sculpting, Indian cooking, DIY tax preparation, small engine repair and woodworking are scheduled to begin in February. Ideas for future classes include gardening, yoga, cheese-making, bee keeping and welding.

The easiest way to get more information is to go to www.thehui.net, and then select the “Community Classes” button at the top. If you have ideas or would like to teach a class, program coordinator Rachel Conder would love to hear from you, at communityedhkol@gmail.com.

Seasider Spotlight



Molly Porzig teaches
High School Language Arts

Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Molly Porzig has over a decade's worth of experience supporting and empowering teenagers. She started working with youth in 2005 as an advocate, social worker, and community organizer. She earned her Bachelor's degree in feminist and community studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and her teaching credentials in high school language arts and social studies from Mills College, in Oakland. Her work has included counseling and leadership development to youth survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse; mentoring; and teaching humanities, social justice and writing.

Ms. Porzig says she moved to Hawai‘i during the summer of 2017 “to join Laupāhoehoe's dedicated staff of educators,” and is thrilled “to be so welcomed to such a loving, kind and generous community as Laupāhoehoe.” She is a committed advocate of critical thinking, community empowerment and social justice, and in her spare time, she volunteers with community organizations. She also finds time to play music, create random art projects (!) and explore the many beaches, rivers and mountains on the Big Island.