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NEWS RELEASE

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Working on the Westside: Changing Jobs, Changing Lives

West O'ahu Residents Can Find Opportunities
at the Hire Leeward Job Fair on June 24, 2017

HONOLULU —Leeward resident Malia Ching is no stranger to Westside traffic— for years, she spent up to four hours a day in traffic, driving from Nanakuli to Downtown Honolulu and back for work.

Then about four years ago, looking to spend more time with her family, the medical professional started searching for a job closer to home. Along with Malia, many Leeward residents are now learning about Hire Leeward, an initiative designed to connect *Leeward residents with Leeward jobs*. The public, private partnership is empowering thousands of West O'ahu residents to take advantage of the many job opportunities within their community.

For the 5th consecutive year, Councilmember Kymberly Marcos Pine is proud to partner with the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce to present The 5th Annual Hire Leeward Job and Career Fair taking place on Saturday, June 24, 2017, at the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu campus from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Today, Malia continues to work in healthcare, as a Clinic Operations Manager at the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center's Kapolei Health Care Center. Most importantly, she reclaimed several hours of her life. Her commute, which once took two hours in each direction, now takes only five *minutes*.

“Working closer to home gives me more time to be with my family and friends,” said Malia Ching. “I’m able to get home in five minutes and cook a sensible dinner that my family can enjoy at 6 o’clock instead of at 8.”

Another Leeward resident who made a career change is Kapolei resident & father Drew Cabacungan.

For over a decade, Drew battled rush hour traffic to and from work for up to three hours a day. The commute took a toll on him, and he knew he needed a change.

One early morning, as Drew was getting ready for work, an item on the local morning news caught his eye.

The Four Seasons Resort O’ahu at Ko Olina was soon coming to Kapolei, and in anticipation of their grand-opening, they were hosting a job fair for Leeward residents looking to work closer to home. When Drew saw this, he felt he found a new opportunity.

“When I learned about *Hire Leeward* and how many residents like myself are making career switches to work closer to home, I told myself: What do I have to lose? Let’s take a chance.” Drew said. “I went ahead and applied for a new job.”

A year ago, Drew was proud to land the position of Assistant Director of Purchasing at Four Seasons Resort O’ahu at Ko Olina. Today, his commute to work has decreased from 90 minutes to ten *minutes*.

“After finding a job closer to home, I have saved up to 20 hours a week-- hours which I used to spend sitting in traffic,” Drew reflected. “I have much more time to spend with my three year old, I can enjoy a cup of coffee in the morning... I actually started working out again!”

Thousands of West O’ahu residents will have the same opportunity to make a career change at an upcoming job fair taking place this weekend in Leeward O’ahu:

With the annual theme of “*Connecting Leeward Residents with Leeward Jobs*”, the 5th Hire Leeward Job & Career Fair will host over 70 businesses and organizations offering a wide range of Leeward-based job opportunities including: healthcare, financial services, food service, hospitality, retail, administrative, and more.

“For our Leeward residents-- this isn’t just a career change, this is a lifestyle change,” said Councilmember Kymberly Marcos Pine. “By finding a job closer to home, residents can leave their days of sitting in traffic behind, and spend those treasured hours with their families. Many don’t realize that there are over 60,000 Leeward jobs on the Leeward coast; one for just about every adult in my district.”

Councilmember Pine is proud to announce that this year's Presenting Sponsor of the Hire Leeward Fair is Ko Olina Resort, whose partners, including Aulani, A Disney Resort & Spa, Four Seasons Resort O'ahu at Ko Olina, Marriott's Ko Olina Beach Club and Ko Olina Golf Club, will be looking to fill immediate job opportunities.

According to Ko Olina, the growing 642-acre resort company expects to generate an additional 27,300 jobs on the Leeward coast within the next 10 years, with an estimated 31,800 permanent jobs at full build-out. By partnering with Hire Leeward, they hope to connect hundreds of career opportunities to West O'ahu residents in the near future.

Additionally, Four Seasons Resort O'ahu at Ko Olina Director of Human Resources Joseph Hodnette will be present at Saturday's Hire Leeward fair to provide *free* Leeward career education seminars, helping residents learn the skills and make the connections they need to find a job closer to home.

The 5th Annual Hire Leeward Job & Career Fair expects to host thousands of residents in attendance. Attendees can get priority and complimentary entrance into the Fair by registering online. For more information on the *Hire Leeward* initiative and the Fair, job seekers are encouraged to visit www.HireLeeward.com.

Councilmember Pine represents residents of District One ('Ewa, 'Ewa Beach, Kapolei, Honokai Hale, Ko Olina, Nanakuli, Maili, Wai'anae, Makaha, Keaau, Makua).
www.councilmemberpine.com