

## Hawaii Children's Action Network Summary

**Mission:** To advocate for Statewide policy and systems changes to improve children's well-being.

**Category:** Youth

**Contact:** Deborah Zysman, Executive Director

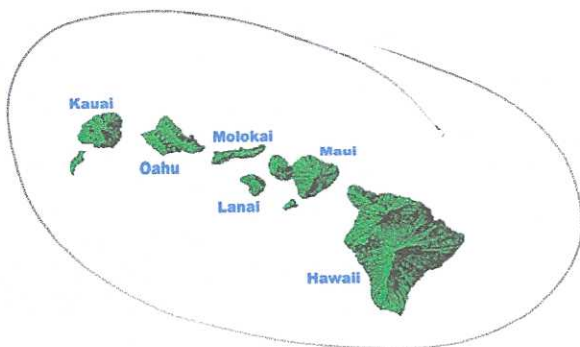
**Address:** P.O. Box 23198, Honolulu, HI 96823

**Grant History:** N/A

<b>2024 Request:</b> \$25,000 for general operating support
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**Notes:**

- Works to increase public engagement among parents and community members, and organize coalitions to achieve statewide policy and systems changes, especially for children living in poverty.
- Paid Leave Hawaii Coalition
- Working Families Coalition
- Programs addressing dental care, abuse and neglect, food security, education, child care, etc.



January 30, 2024

Laurence H. Dorcy Hawaiian Foundation  
81 East Seventh Street, Suite 125  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: Request for general operating support

Aloha Trustees:

Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) is grateful for this opportunity to submit this request for \$25,000 to the Laurence H. Dorcy Hawaiian Foundation (Dorcy Foundation). Funding will support HCAN's work to ensure all children in Hawai'i are safe, healthy and ready to learn.

**Need being addressed.** The Hawai'i Children's Action Network seeks to serve all vulnerable children and families in Hawai'i, with a focus on those disproportionately impacted by poverty and inequity, including Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, those with Limited English Proficiency, and residents in rural resource-limited areas of the state. Through the civic engagement of working parents and coalitions of like-minded partners, we seek to address these pressing needs:

*Economic stability of families.* Approximately 47% of children (age 0-17) in Hawai'i are in families that live in poverty or are classified as ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. ALICE households don't earn enough to afford the essentials.<sup>i</sup> More equitable economic policies are needed for working families, including a paid family leave policy, sick leave, earned income tax credit, and minimum wage. The lack of a paid family leave policy in Hawai'i forces working families to suffer a loss of income to take unpaid leave to care for a child or sick family member.

*Child care.* 64% of the more than 105,000 children under six have both parents in the workforce, and the state only has enough regulated child care slots to serve 24% of these children.<sup>ii</sup> On average, a family with a median income is spending 28% of their income on child care for two.

*Early education:* 50% of children age 3-4 do not attend preschool. As a result, only 8% of kindergarten classes display ready-for-school characteristics. Hawai'i does not have a universal preschool system, and children in low-income families and those in rural communities have limited or no access to preschool in advance of kindergarten entry.



*Child abuse and neglect.* In Hawaii, there are 115 reports of confirmed child abuse and neglect (CAN) each week. The rate of CAN among children aged 0-2 is almost 44%, and over 50% are Native Hawaiian/part Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (Micronesian, Samoan, Other Pacific Islanders).<sup>iii</sup>

*Child oral health.* Children in Hawai'i have among the worst oral health indicators in the country. Among 3<sup>rd</sup> graders: 71% have experienced tooth decay; 22% have untreated decay; and 7% have dental pain or infection (national 1%). In a survey of all Head Start children, 61% have experienced tooth decay, and 39% have untreated tooth decay, twice the rate of 3-5 year olds nationwide.<sup>iv</sup> Micronesian, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, and Filipino children have the poorest oral health of all race populations in Hawai'i.<sup>v</sup>

*Child food security.* 14% of children live in households that were food insecure at least once in the past year. Despite this need, Hawai'i fails to utilize the federal Child Nutrition Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Together these federal benefits have the potential to ensure low-income children have a reliable source of nutritious food.

**How HCAN is meeting these needs.** Fewer than five organizations in Hawaii are working to change the policies and systems that have the potential to impact residents with unmet needs, and the only one solely focused on issues that impact children struggling with poverty and inequity. Unlike direct service agencies that provide food and immediate concrete support, HCAN works to increase civic engagement among parents and community members, and organize coalitions of community organizations to achieve upstream solutions. Our movement works together to shift policies and systems toward sustainably improving child outcomes.

*Economic stability of families.* HCAN is working on multiple fronts to address the ability of working families to overcome the barriers that prevent them from achieving economic stability and prosperity. This work involves two coalitions:

- **Paid Leave Hawaii Coalition** is a broad group of organizations and individuals working to advance paid family and medical leave (PFML) for ALL families in Hawaii. The need for PFML in Hawaii is great: almost half of residents live on a "survival budget," barely making ends meet. The state has 157,000 unpaid family caregivers, and this population will continue increasing as our population ages. PFML is also an equity issue, as lower-income workers – more likely to be Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander – are least likely to have PFML when they need help the most.
- **Working Families Coalition (WFC)** works to address barriers that inhibit income-limited families from achieving economic stability and improving their quality of life. WFC focuses on issues such as living wages and the Earned Income Tax Credit.

*Child care and early education.* HCAN established and facilitates the Hawaii Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance (HECAA), a coalition that works to ensure all children have equitable access to affordable, culturally reflective, high-quality care and education. After years of spearheading these issues, we have made noteworthy progress by increasing the



engagement of parents and community members to work alongside nonprofits, businesses, agencies, and policymakers. Activities and achievements include:

- Hawaii now has a public preschool that will increase to 92 classrooms (1,840 low-income children) within 2 years. Many of these classrooms are in communities that had no preschool options. HCAN will continue this work until every child aged 3-4 has the opportunity to benefit from preschool in advance of kindergarten.
- A key barrier to increasing the inventory of child care and early learning slots is the lack of workers. HCAN is exploring ways to build the underpaid and understaffed child care and preschool workforce and improve the accessibility of services. HCAN successfully convened child care providers and parents to work with the state to restructure child care subsidies to benefit more families and led efforts to secure funding for provider accreditation.

*Child abuse and neglect.* After years of inactivity due to lack of staffing and funding, HCAN has slowly rebuilt the Hawai'i Children's Trust Fund (HCTF) Coalition and Advisory Committee, entities charged with developing and implementing a comprehensive, coordinated approach to CAN prevention. In the past few years, HCAN has recruited and engaged 900 committed members to the HCTF Coalition and Advisory Committee, increased a listserv of 100 to 1,000, and facilitated development of the CANP Strategic Framework. Over the next few years the HCTF Coalition will identify and move forward with action steps to implement the CANP Strategic Framework.

*Child oral health.* To address the urgent need to improve the oral health and dental services for all residents, HCAN and the Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) are partnering to co-facilitate the *Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition (HOHC)*. Within the HOHC, HCAN is responsible for the Prevention/Access (P/A) workgroup, tasked with improving the quality and accessibility of oral health services for disparately impacted populations.

HCAN is collaborating with the University of Hawai'i (UH) School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene (SNDH) and the Department of Education (DOE) on a dental sealant program that is part of Hawaii Keiki, a school-based health program. Hawaii Keiki is temporarily funded by private grants and the UH SNDH, and is not sustainable without this support. Currently the program is in 27 schools across the state, and HCAN and UH SNDH are working to develop a sustainable model so that this free dental sealant program may be expanded to every Title I elementary school in Hawai'i.

*Child food security.* HCAN is the leading nonprofit working to address child food insecurity. We have two main initiatives that address the low utilization of federal child food benefits, and have the potential of providing children with unmet needs with a reliable source of nutritious food.

- Hawai'i persistently underutilizes the Federal Child Nutrition Program (CNP). According to the Food Research & Action Center, Hawai'i is ranked 51<sup>st</sup> for participation in school breakfast<sup>vi</sup>, 33<sup>rd</sup> for the summer nutrition program<sup>vii</sup>, and 51<sup>st</sup> for afterschool suppers.<sup>viii</sup> HCAN is working to address several key barriers, including: reimbursement rates that are insufficient to cover food costs in Hawai'i, the state with the highest cost of living in the nation; and the lack of vendors willing to produce



CNP meals, attributed to the low reimbursement. We are working with the Hawai'i Department of Education to get the afterschool meal/snack program in the public schools.

- Low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk are eligible for food support through WIC. However, only 79% of eligible pregnant and postpartum women and 49% of eligible children participate. HCAN is conducting outreach to increase WIC participation among Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Filipinos, and partnering with the Hawai'i Coalition for Immigration Rights for outreach to immigrants.

*Civic engagement of parents and community members.* All parents want the best for their children, but many feel that their voice won't be heard and their opinion doesn't matter. Some parents see a need in the community or have struggled to find support for their children and want to take a proactive role in helping others. Policymakers are working to address issues that confront their constituencies; however, most do not fully understand the barriers and opportunities that impact children in working families today. In addition, government and nonprofit agencies are unable to address all of the safety, education, and health needs among children in every community. In many cases, families are best positioned to assist other families.

HCAN seeks to build a culture of civic engagement among parents, and support them in serving in leadership roles in their communities to assist children and families to thrive. These three main programs are core to HCAN's civic engagement:

*Hawaii Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)* is our civic engagement training program that consists of a retreat, intensive 20-week curriculum, and community projects. PLTI is offered on Oahu, Maui, and Statewide (online). We have over 100 PLTI graduates, and in the last cohort there were 98 applicants for 39 spots. The demographics of PLTI graduates: 24% identified as Native Hawaiian, and 38% identified as Pacific Islander/Asian; and approximately 38% reported having a family income of less than \$60,000.

PLTI graduates develop their own community projects, and their activities span a wide range of health, education, and support services for children and families. Examples of recent PLTI projects included<sup>ix</sup>:

- *Spectrum of Support (SOS) Church Engagement Project:* A support group for parents of children with Autism diagnosis.
- *Keiki Food Connection:* Partnering with WIC to grow food at home.
- *Hey Aunty:* An app where youth can reach out for help and get 1-1 support.
- *Head Start, Policy Council Member:* Being on the policy council for the Head Start.
- *IEP Meeting, Here I Come!:* A picture book for IEP process & translation in Tagalog.
- *The Risk to Keiki is Real-Naloxone on School Campus Can Save a Life:* Getting Nar-Can in Charter Schools on Hawaii Island.
- *The Museum of Papahānaumoku & Mahina:* An Art, Play, Healing Center for Women and Families "Play Cafes."
- *Word Around Town:* A list of free, shared book stands on Maui.
- *It's Cool to Be Kind:* An Anti-Bullying coloring book.



- *The Hanuola Project*: Addressing indoor air quality in schools.
- *STEAM on the Spectrum*: A support group teaching STEM for children with Autism.
- *Milk Sweeties LLC – Parent Education Support Services*: Developing Parent Education Support Services - Parent Education and Resource website.
- *'Ohana Garden and Grindz Ongoing (OGGO)*: Keeping families engaged after going through the free 4 week 'Ohana Garden 'n Grindz (OGG) program, a University of Hawaii family-based agriculture program on Molokai.
- *Keiki Whispers*: Providing children and youth in Hawaii with an outlet to express personal secrets, burdens, and/or frustrations through artwork and writing.

*Ohana Leadership Council (OLC)* is our inaugural group of 17 parent and community leaders who represent diverse family definitions including traditional, single mother, single father, same-gender parent, and delayed family decisions due to high cost of living. OLC members live on Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii Island, and they have identified their priority issues as economic support (paid leave, tax credits) and social services for families (accessibility, prevention).

*HCAN digital network* has grown to 6,500 members that are engaged in issues that impact families, many that are working parents busy raising children but want to stay informed and want their voices to be heard. These members advocate on priority issues, participate in focus groups and surveys, and join coalitions and forums to elevate the perspectives of children and families.

**Demographics of our clients and number of individuals served.** HCAN seeks to serve all vulnerable children in Hawai'i, with a focus on those disproportionately impacted by poverty and inequity, including Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, those with Limited English Proficiency, and residents in rural resource-limited areas of the state. These children lack family and community resources necessary to develop to their potential and thrive. The population of children living in poverty is estimated to be 139,492 of the over 300,000 children living in Hawai'i.<sup>x</sup>

**Geographic region.** HCAN serves children and families that live in the State of Hawai'i.

**How Dorcy Foundation grant money would make a difference to HCAN clients.** A grant for general operating support from the Dorcy Foundation will go towards assisting parents and community members that are working to improve the quality of life of children and families in their communities. Some use of the funds include:

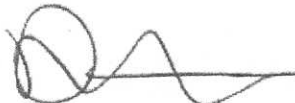
- The vast majority of parents that participate in one or more of our civic engagement programs are working parents, struggling to make ends meet in the state with the highest cost of living in the country. Funds will go towards stipends to assist with transportation, childcare, and other expenses that enable parents to participate in community meetings and events.
- The PLTI graduates are working on their own projects to help children and families in their communities, and they do this on their own time and often with their own funds. Funds will be used to support PLTI graduates to develop and implement their community projects.

- We frequently hold community meetings and events, and funds will enable us to provide meals or snacks for parents and community members that have taken time out of their busy schedules to attend.

**Contact.** Deborah Zysman, Executive Director  
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Website: [hawaii-can.org](http://hawaii-can.org)

We are grateful for the opportunity to be considered by the Dorcy Foundation for general operating support, and hope you will not hesitate to contact us if you require additional information in your decision-making process.

Mahalo,



Deborah Zysman  
Executive Director

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<sup>1</sup> "ALICE in Focus, Children in Financial Hardship: Hawaii", Hawaii Research Brief, United for ALICE, accessed January 2024.  
<sup>2</sup> DeBaryshe, B. D., Stern, I., Bellasario, C., Zysman, D., & Bird, O. (2017). [Hawaii Early Learning Needs Assessment](#). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Center on the Family.  
<sup>3</sup> "State of Hawaii Department of Human Services Databook", December 2022, accessed January 2024.  
<sup>4</sup> "The Oral Health of Hawaii's Low-Income Head Start Children", 2017-2018, Hawaii Department of Health, Family Health Services Division. Accessed January 2024.  
<sup>5</sup> "Hawaii Smiles 2015, Oral Health of Hawaii's Children", Hawaii Department of Health, accessed January 2024.  
<sup>6</sup> "The Reach of School Breakfast and Lunch During the 2021-2022 School Year", Food & Research Action Center, March 2023. Accessed January 2024.  
<sup>7</sup> "Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation, Summer Nutrition Status Report", Food & Research Action Center, July 2023. Accessed January 2024.  
<sup>8</sup> "2021 Afterschool Nutrition Report, Afterschool Suppers: A Snapshot of Participation", Food & Research Action Center, July 2023. Accessed January 2024.  
<sup>9</sup> PLTI Community Projects - Hawaii Children's Action Network  
<sup>10</sup> "ALICE in Focus, Children in Financial Hardship: Hawaii", Hawaii Research Brief, United for ALICE, accessed January 2024.

# HAWAII CHILDREN'S ACTION NETWORK

## Statements of Financial Position

June 30, 2022 and 2021

<b>Assets</b>	<b>2022</b> <b>(Audited)</b>	<b>2021</b> <b>(Reviewed)</b>
Current assets:		
Cash	\$ 1,329,517	\$ 1,053,086
Restricted cash	39,498	56,497
Grants receivable	90,838	30,000
Other receivables	35,040	16,995
Prepaid expenses	9,232	9,840
Total current assets	1,504,125	1,166,418
Certificates of deposit	99,773	150,997
Investments	233,425	164,053
Total assets	<u>\$ 1,837,323</u>	<u>\$ 1,481,468</u>
<b>Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 123,586	\$ 8,251
Accrued payroll	52,581	39,940
Funds held in custody for others	39,498	56,497
Deferred income	638,111	474,965
Total current liabilities	853,776	579,653
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions	983,547	901,815
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 1,837,323</u>	<u>\$ 1,481,468</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.



## HAWAII CHILDREN'S ACTION NETWORK

### Statement of Activities

Year Ended June 30, 2022 (Audited)

Revenue and support:		
Grants	\$	962,910
Contract services		469,242
Contributions		257,885
Net investment loss		(21,774)
Other income		97,078
Total revenue and support		<u>1,765,341</u>
Expenses:		
Program services:		
Public education and engagement		747,147
Collaborative advocacy		292,231
General policy		187,541
Data and research		181,695
Supporting services:		
Fund development and administration		274,995
Total expenses		<u>1,683,609</u>
Change in net assets		81,732
Net assets without donor restrictions:		
Beginning of year		<u>901,815</u>
End of year	\$	<u><u>983,547</u></u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

## HAWAII CHILDREN'S ACTION NETWORK

### Statement of Activities

Year Ended June 30, 2021 (Reviewed)

	<b>Without Donor Restrictions</b>	<b>With Donor Restrictions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Revenue and support:			
Grants	\$ 785,630	\$ -	\$ 785,630
Contract services	273,173	-	273,173
Contributions	44,466	-	44,466
Net investment return	15,512	-	15,512
Other income	63,514	-	63,514
Net assets released from restrictions	100,000	(100,000)	-
Total revenue and support	1,282,295	(100,000)	1,182,295
Expenses:			
Program services:			
Public education and engagement	492,993	-	492,993
General policy	149,066	-	149,066
Collaborative advocacy	96,035	-	96,035
Data and research	88,158	-	88,158
Supporting services:			
Fund development and administration	189,776	-	189,776
Total expenses	1,016,028	-	1,016,028
Change in net assets	266,267	(100,000)	166,267
Net assets at beginning of year	635,548	100,000	735,548
Net assets at end of year	\$ 901,815	\$ -	\$ 901,815

See accompanying notes to financial statements.



HAWAII CHILDREN'S ACTION NETWORK

Statement of Functional Expenses

Year Ended June 30, 2022 (Audited)

	Program Services				Supporting Services	Total
	Public Education and Engagement	Collaborative Advocacy	General Policy	Data and Research		
Payroll and related benefits:						
Salaries, wages and payroll taxes	\$ 330,247	\$ 27,668	\$ 102,431	\$ 60,248	\$ 67,877	\$ 588,471
Employee benefits	21,768	2,034	7,528	6,933	4,858	43,121
Total payroll and related benefits	352,015	29,702	109,959	67,181	72,735	631,592
Operating expenses:						
Professional services	202,816	138,607	2,121	113,683	56,242	513,469
Contract services	10,725	19,003	68,000	-	60,447	158,175
Supplies	28,326	56,127	126	-	4,085	88,664
Rent	44,234	25,200	-	-	6,624	76,058
Meetings	28,542	80	-	-	769	29,391
Advertising	23,381	289	-	-	205	23,875
Utilities	11,818	2,062	300	-	732	14,912
Printing and publications	8,936	2,493	-	-	3,185	14,614
Insurance	3,103	738	1,032	831	4,091	9,795
Dues and membership	2,424	276	-	-	3,025	5,725
Travel	1,518	586	765	-	1,161	4,030
Miscellaneous	29,309	17,068	5,238	-	61,694	113,309
Total operating expenses	395,132	262,529	77,582	114,514	202,260	1,052,017
Total expenses	\$ 747,147	\$ 292,231	\$ 187,541	\$ 181,695	\$ 274,995	\$ 1,683,609

See accompanying notes to financial statements.