

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Kupu is the 501(c) (3) non-profit organization that manages the Hawaii Youth Conservation Corps (HYCC), the only youth corps in Hawaii and the only statewide AmeriCorps program. Kupu will engage 401 AmeriCorps members in service who will leverage an additional 148,000 volunteer hours in natural resource management and sustainability related service throughout Hawaii, statewide. At the end of the three years (October 1, 2013-September 30, 2016), the goal will be to improve economic well-being, improve employability, restore ecosystems, and increase environmental knowledge. This project focuses on the CNCS areas of Economic Opportunity (O14, O17), and Environmental Stewardship (E4, E3). CNCS investment of \$2,217,793 will be matched with \$952,228 along with other non-matching funds for a total budget of \$4.2 million.

## Rationale and Approach

NEED: Hawaii's natural environment faces monumental challenges as its beautiful, yet fragile ecosystems hold the record of being the endangered species capital of the world with approximately 25% of all the federally listed endangered species. Coupled with this problem is a severe career and educational disconnect which many young adults in Hawaii face. The very people who will inherit and lead these islands are not engaged nor trained and worse yet, many are distressed and need programs to help them develop a career and educational pathway. The primary CNCS priority which the HYCC plans to respond to is a Tier 1 combination of Economic Opportunity and Environmental Stewardship in order to encourage youth to pursue higher education while protecting natural resources including watersheds, reserves, coastal areas, and wetlands.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY NEED(O14): A long-term solution towards improving Hawaii's natural resources is by providing economic and educational opportunity and pathways for young adults in the field of natural resource management. According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation Policy Report, Hawaii holds the seventh worst employment rate for 16 to 19 year olds in the nation. The policy report further stated that young people lack connections to jobs and school (which also causes the government to spend more to support them), and just as young people struggle to gain experience and find a job, businesses also cannot find the skilled workers they need. The "green" industries in Hawaii are growing and it is necessary to engage young adults and provide them with the necessary training needed to obtain education and careers in order to be competitive for jobs. A report published in 2011 by UHERO, found that there are 3,278 full-time natural resource management positions in Hawaii today and that employers were mainly looking for applicants that

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have received higher education. It further reported that the growth rate for these jobs will remain positive for the foreseeable future, if applicants can meet the education requirements. Another report released from the Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic, Development and Tourism (DBEDT) reports that there is an expected 26% growth in green jobs in Hawaii over the next two years, compared to the 1% growth rate of other industries. This growth is fueled by Hawaii's goal of being 70% energy efficient by 2030. However, these jobs still remain largely out of the reach of Hawaii's youth because of the low rate of academic advancement in Hawaii. A recent study by the Alliance for Excellent Education found that only 64% of high school students in Hawaii graduate in 4 years, and thousands drop out each year. In 2012, only 53% of Hawaii's high school seniors attended college upon finishing high school (national average is 70%).

**\*ENVIRONMENTAL NEED(EN4):** Hawaii's resources and its people are being confronted by social, economic, and environmental problems that threaten to negatively impact Hawaii. Hawaii has diverse ecosystems unlike any other place in the world; over 90% of the plants, birds, insects, and other species are endemic to Hawaii. Unfortunately, these species are being lost at an alarming rate giving Hawaii the dubious honor of being the extinction capital of the world and having more endangered species per square mile than any other place on the planet (<http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/angered>). \* Extinctions, however, are just a symptom of a larger problem, which is the introduction of non-native species. According to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), there are 130 invasive plant species in Hawaii, with another 200-300 having the potential to become invasive ([www.state.hi.us/dlnr/dofaw/hortweeds/](http://www.state.hi.us/dlnr/dofaw/hortweeds/)), and a new pest reaching Hawaii every 18 days (<http://hawaii.gov/lrb/rpts02/gaps.pdf>). The damage that these invasive species cause is felt across Hawaii, as Hawaii takes a large role in the \$120 billion+ the US spends each year in damages due to invasive pests (Pimentel, 2005). \* Watersheds are areas of land that provide habitat for native species and allow mountains to collect water to recharge aquifers which Hawaii depends on. In a 2006 report, it was estimated that the Koolau Forest Reserve, one of 12 major watersheds, contributed \$1.42-\$2.63 billion in ground water recharge for Hawaii. This same study said they considered a reduction in recharge from the Watershed at 31% efficiency due to disturbances including invasive and non-indigenous species of plants, animals and insects ([www.uhero.hawaii.edu/assets/EDE.pdf](http://www.uhero.hawaii.edu/assets/EDE.pdf)). The loss of watersheds will lead to a loss of Hawaiian culture, the loss of endemic and indigenous Hawaiian species, and diminished water supplies.

Conservation organizations have more to manage than their resources permit. HYCC conducted a feasibility study with a sampling from the 80 sites it assists statewide. The following are responses

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showing the percentage of sites who need additional HYCC aid in the following areas: invasive species control (70.6%), threatened and endangered species restoration (64.7%), community outreach (52.9%). Without assistance, Hawaii's watersheds will continue to be destroyed and overpopulated by invasive species. HYCC is needed to provide critical support to these agencies. \* ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION NEED (EN3): One of the major problems facing Hawaii's natural resources is the lack of understanding and awareness (especially by the young adults who live here). HYCC's pre-assessment tests given to new members show an average score as low as 30%. The HYCC program is needed to help youth understand the importance of the environment and involve them in protecting it. Environmental and natural resource education also has to be present in Hawaii's schools to reach a larger audience and further broaden young people's interest and knowledge in the subject. Over the last 6 months, Kupu has interviewed numerous people in the Hawaii Department of Education (DOE) and found that while many public high schools in Hawaii have natural resources courses, these courses focus on agriculture rather than environmental science due to the lack of time and resources. Unfortunately, this means that natural resource management and environmental science is not being taught. Intentional intercessory and other education and training programs are necessary to help young adults get engaged and informed about natural resource management and sustainability in Hawaii and beyond. \*b. MEMBERS AS HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MEANS TO SOLVE COMMUNITY PROBLEMS: Today there are five HYCC programs that engage about 250-400 young adults annually, ages 16-24 years of age on average in summer through year-round internships. The majority of members are from underserved or distressed backgrounds. HYCC also engages huge amounts of community volunteers to help achieve program goals. Activities include watershed management, threatened and endangered species restoration, invasive species removal, coastal restoration, wetland rehabilitation, trail maintenance, cultural and environmental education, cultural site restoration, environmental education, and volunteer leadership and recruitment. Other key components to programming include job preparedness, life skills training, environmental education, disaster preparedness certifications, and most recently training in sustainability areas such as renewable energy and sustainable agriculture. \* Ultimately, the HYCC engages young adults in service, teaching them about responsibility, community, and citizenship while engaging them to provide their community with much needed aid. HYCC participants also become community leaders by recruiting and leading volunteers, participating in trainings such as American Red Cross's Shelter Operation Certification (In 2012, all 67 FT members were certified), and even receiving leadership training which Kupu staff have been trained in by Stanford University's Positive Coaching Alliance. \*

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Based on needs measured in the community, Kupu is requesting aid from CNCS to increase positions available to meet the increasing demand for programming need in Hawaii. As will be shown, Kupu has demonstrated competency in managing, coordinating, and expanding programming and is confident that increased aid from AmeriCorps will be successfully implemented to further meet the community needs identified. \* The programs described below constitute the HYCC program as a whole. Programs range from team-based summer experiences to year-long placements at various partner organizations. Programs have been designed so members can move successively from one program to the next to develop a career pathway towards education and job pathway development. \*

**Extended Internship Program (EIP):** All EIP corpsmembers are full-time (FT) AmeriCorps members who work individually or as a team at specific sites in order to build capacity by assisting with field based projects, volunteer leadership/recruitment, and environmental education development. In 2013-14, EIP members will also further impact environmental education by working at new sites like public schools to assist with environmental education (through additional leveraged funds from a local foundation). This will help make up for the lack of environmental education in the schools as mentioned in the Needs section. Members are directly supervised and mentored by managers at the host site. 94 FT positions with living allowances (LA) and 16 FT without LA requested. In 2012, 350 individuals applied for 67 FT positions. \*

**Frontiers Program:** This program is reserved for past HYCC participants. Minimum Time (MT) AmeriCorps members are assigned to one site for a program period and engage in similar activities as the EIP members. They are directly managed by host site managers and are remotely supervised by an HYCC coordinator on a regular basis. 60 MT Positions with living allowances requested. In 2012, 62 applied for 32 MT positions. \*

**Gateway Program:** This program is primarily for young adults between the ages of 17-21 who work for 6-8 weeks during school intercession (generally summer) completing natural resource management work. Each member completes one week of training and then serves 5-7 weeks at different organization each week. Members work alongside an AmeriCorps team leader (TL). Each team is coordinated by a Kupu staff member who oversees TLs and checks on teams weekly. 100 MT positions without allowance requested for member positions. 21 MT positions with allowance requested for TL positions. \*

**Education Award Service (EAS):** These positions allow HYCC to create internships and volunteerism at various conservation and community partner sites throughout Hawaii which are underserved. 110 MT positions without living allowance are requested. In 2012, 549 applied for the Gateway and EAS program's 113 education award only MT positions. \*

**CommunityU (CU):** Positions offer distressed youth such as high school dropouts, recently immigrated minorities, and adjudicated youth an

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opportunity to gain skills in natural resource management and other green jobs such as photo-voltaic installation. CU participants are also able to attain their high school diploma through the program, engage in job readiness workshops, receive career counseling, and go through life skills building activities. CU participants are not AmeriCorps members, however they work alongside AmeriCorps EIP members and can be promoted to Frontier Members. Three FT EIP members are expected to work as team leaders for the CU program. \* The HYCC develops youth to be stewards: caring for others, their community, and environment while meeting prevalent social needs. Based on annual demographic surveys, the majority of participants in HYCC programs are from low-to-middle income homes, are minorities, and from rural areas. The opportunities they are offered through the HYCC are especially valuable in helping them grow out of their current situations. The HYCC offers various programs to provide a variety of opportunities to involve youth statewide. Additional impact will be shared in the upcoming sections; showing how intercessory activities are meeting the needs stated above.

Data shows that HYCC members provide significant and meaningful impact in our state which would not occur otherwise. In 2012 alone, 241,712 service hours were contributed by HYCC members and leveraged volunteers (approximately 15,000 volunteers generated by HYCC), providing a value of service of \$4.4 million, calculations based on figures from independentsector.org. Member's services also benefited over 700,000 acres through invasive species removal. If fully funded in 2013, members and volunteers are expected to provide at least 283,000 annual service hours, and leverage an additional 148,000 volunteer hours, totaling 431,000 hours benefiting the community. This is equal to close to \$9.4 million dollars in direct watershed restoration work alone. 2012 ROI for CNCS federal dollars was an incredible 500% with over \$6 million in benefits leveraged from \$1.2 million in corporation funding.\*

c. EVIDENCE-BASED/EVIDENCE-INFORMED AND MEASURABLE COMMUNITY IMPACT: Kupu has exceeded past performance measures and utilizes a variety of measurement tools to assess impact and program performance. It has created replicable systems to develop a strong foundation to conduct and convey evidence-based assessment to improve programming, convey impact, require accountability, and allow for replication. \* HYCC conducts surveys and evaluations regularly. These statistics help to evaluate program success. For example alumni surveys show approximately 80% continue to volunteer within the community and 76% pursue a career in conservation or a related field. Program evaluations also demonstrate that members leave the program inspired to make a positive difference with their life (average indication of 9.3 out of 10), as well as encouraged to pursue

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further education (average indication of 8.7 out of 10) showing that programs are meeting needs stated above. These benefits are reflective in the lives of highly distressed youth with 48% of members from households with an average incomes below \$30,000, with the highest single demographic (27%) coming from households with less than \$10,000 in income. \* Economic Opportunity: HYCC provides a tremendous economic and educational opportunity for the members who participate in its programs. As mentioned in the needs section, the key to employment in natural resource management was career and educational advancement, especially in helping members to pursue their degree. Kupu has a career counselor whose role is to develop the next steps for members and assist them on a career pathway through the various HYCC programs and beyond. Additionally, Kupu has developed partnerships with the state DOE and local universities to provide members with college and high school credits. \* The HYCC programs have been highly effective in responding to the economic opportunity need of furthering education and development of career pathway for distressed youth. Member exit evaluations exemplify evidence-based success in responding to this need: Of last year's 67 EIP program members, 62% went onto a higher education or career upon completion: 7 members continued onto graduate school, 12 members continued on to a second AmeriCorps term, and 23 gained full-time employment directly after completing the program. 56% of Kupu's surveyed partner sites throughout the state indicated that they had hired or planned to hire Kupu alumni for a full-time position or internship in 2011. In a 2011 alumni survey, 98% of respondents indicated that the experience they received helped them to succeed in life, 98% indicated that they gained valuable leadership skills, and 95% indicated improved work ethic. In 2012, 83% of CU members received employment upon completion of program. In addition, a 2011 survey also showed that 56% or 169 young adults would have been unemployed if they hadn't participated in HYCC. Statistics show HYCC is having an impact in helping youth to develop a career and educational pathway and even if they do not pursue a related career they are inspired upwards in life and given skills to succeed. One example of a past member who gained employment is Kai Connely, who came from a low-income family in a rural area, began as a Gateway member, went through four HYCC programs, and is now employed full time by the DLNR. There are hundreds like Kai who have similarly completed HYCC and now have jobs and careers. \* Environment: The HYCC programs provide critical support to over 80 natural resource and conservation managers working to protect Hawaii's vast and unique ecological resources with extremely limited financial and personnel resources. As mentioned earlier, last year there was \$4.4 million in equivalent direct environmental services and over 700,000 acres that benefited from invasive species removal. If funded in 2013, members and volunteers are expected

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increase ROI to 600-700% from 500%. \*Environmental Education: The HYCC has helped to environmentally educate a wide spectrum of individuals with varied learning styles. Youth work with specialists in a variety of fields and the knowledge they gain cannot be found in textbooks. As part of the last performance measures, an environmental pre/post test showed that youth volunteers (led by AmeriCorps team leaders) post test scores increased 43% in only six weeks. This includes 89 youth showing a higher environmental awareness seen in pre/post-program testing, exceeding the target of 75 for the outcome. The output was that 100 youth would enroll in the program and that target was met. \*HYCC teaches youth about conservation, and is effective in inspiring them to continue to live with an environmental mindset. On average, members indicated in end-of-program evaluations that their knowledge gained was 8.8 out of 10. Further, 98% of alumni said HYCC encouraged them to engage in environmental issues. Kupu has also developed strategic partnerships to assist members in their general education and career pursuits. This includes the University of Hawaii, which offers college credits to members who fulfill the requirements. Public school teachers have also been able to receive continuing education credits as a summer TL. In addition, Kapiolani Community College provides a tuition waiver annually to one outstanding HYCC alumni in order to honor a former HYCC member who passed away, but whose life was dramatically benefited by his involvement in HYCC. Kupu's CU program provides a C-Base alternative high school diploma option for participants.

\* Since Kupu's principal staff began managing AmeriCorps funds in 2003, they have developed and continue to refine methods to track data (such as above), to show impact and evaluate and improve performance of programs. These methods include data sheets, pre/post testing, evaluations, journals, regular performance reviews, surveys, and social media to collect data. Kupu has also developed logic models and associated performance measures to track key data to provide evidence of intervention success. The performance measures and targets were developed based on several years of evaluations, refinement of past performance measures, and based on surveys and discussions with professionals in the fields that HYCC impacts. All performance measures were met or exceeded.

\*The Tier 1 CNCS priority area met by the HYCC is Economic Opportunity (O14, O17); complimented by Environmental Stewardship (EN4). Tier 3 , Environmental Stewardship (EN3) is not shown due to page limitations, but info can be found in the performance measures. Past performance results have been stated above. \* Tier 1: Economic Opportunity Focus Area (O14, O17), LOGIC MODEL. Need: Programs needed to train disadvantaged youth and encourage them to continue education so they can be eligible for environmental careers. \* Intervention: HYCC programming will expose young adults to careers in conservation and other related fields, including

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conveying the educational needs to obtain jobs in these fields. Daily service activities and special activities such as career counseling, job fairs, speakers, and other events help encourage and prepare youth to pursue college. \*Output: (O14) Number of National Service Participants who have their high school diploma or equivalent but have not completed a college degree prior to their term of service. Target: At least 150 members (projected number on past enrollment results) will be enrolled with high school diploma or equivalent without a college degree. Indicator: Enrollment forms.

\*Outcome: (O17) At least 75 members who did not have a degree will indicate enrollment and/or complete a college course within one year of exiting program. Target determined based on program evaluations and alumni surveys. Indicator: Questionnaire.

\*Goal at end of 3 year grant cycle: Increased desire to pursue higher education will be seen through intentional programming, at least 75 members per year or 225 members over three years will indicate enrollment in higher education within one year of exiting program. \*Past Performance: This is a new performance measure for HYCC. However, similar statistics have been measured and have been referenced above to show evidence of HYCC's success in encouraging young adults to pursue their education.

Tier 2: Environmental Stewardship, Improving Lands or Habitats (EN4) (Complimentary Measure to Economic Opportunity), LOGIC MODEL \*Need: The HYCC will address the need of watershed and natural resource degradation caused by invasive species which have destroyed native forest, led to many species becoming endangered or extinct, and have reduced many ecosystems' ability to retain water in aquifers.

Intervention: Members and volunteers work statewide to remove invasive species from public lands in HYCC programs.

\*Output: (EN4) Total acres of parks or public land impacted by members' efforts to clear invasive species will be counted. Indicator: Data Sheets, Target: 750,000 acres. Target was determined based on past data, size of public lands available for members to impact in Hawaii, and expected program size.

\*Outcome: Of the total conservation lands impacted by members and volunteers, certain lands will be totally cleared of a target invasive species. Indicator: Activity Log, Target: 12,000 Acres. These targets were determined based on past data and expected increase in program. \*Goal at end of 3 year grant cycle: (EN4) Hawaii ecosystems will have a fewer number of invasive species, with over 30,000 acres cleared of target invasive species and healthier native forests and watersheds due to HYCC assistance.

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\*Past Performance: HYCC cleared 8,822 acres of target invasive species in the State of Hawaii, exceeding the 6,000 acre target. A total of 720,542 acres were impacted due to this effort, exceeding the 30,000 target (partnering agencies having large areas of responsibility). \* d. MEMBER RECRUITMENT-HYCC has seen tremendous success in recruiting members and volunteers. In 2011, Kupu received 971 applicants for 227 positions and mobilized approximately 15,000 volunteers. 80% of applicants came from households classified as low income and about 75% were classified as minorities. Success has come from regular recruiting at high schools, colleges, and career/job fairs. HYCC also advertises via social media, email, e-newsletters, newspapers, and web postings, as well as by utilizing partners that advertise to their target groups such as Heroes for Hire which engages veterans. To engage the underrepresented population, Kupu works with counselors at schools and youth/employment programs in rural and underserved areas as well as past members. Kupu makes applications available through paper as well as web form, and accommodates persons with disabilities in providing materials. \* e. MEMBER TRAINING - Kupu conducts mandatory orientation and recurrent training to both site managers and members. It includes training on AmeriCorps required documentation, evaluations, rules and regulations regarding prohibited activities, Kupu policy, core values, and overall program expectation. For members who will lead youth as team leaders, they attend two weeks of training to prepare them. To ensure members are equipped to perform assigned activities, CPR/first aid and safety trainings are provided to each member within the first month of placement, and offered to site managers and staff at an additional fee. Site managers are also offered a series of Supervisor Training modules to improve their supervisory and mentoring skills. Member training continues throughout their term. In 2012 over 30 different types of trainings or certifications were provided by Kupu or partnering sites. Members receive on-the-job training in addition to program-wide trainings and service projects, usually held quarterly. Camps are organized to train members in areas including Red Cross Shelter Operations, Cultural Protocols and Oli (chants), and organizing community events so members are able to take their service beyond their term. Camps also develop a sense of camaraderie amongst members through ropes courses, service activities, and other bonding activities. An environmental fair is also organized to bring in possible employers and educators, allowing members to learn about and network with community organizations and educational institutions. Trainings provide members with a network of support and realize the bigger impact they are making together across the state and nation through AmeriCorps and it is their kuleana (responsibility) to make a difference. \* Site visits are conducted quarterly on average and provide one-on-one mentoring for members by Kupu Program staff. These visits provide time to learn

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about the members' experience, reinforce training, discuss their goals, and to go over program goals. With this information, the member, Kupu Program coordinator, and Career Counselor begin to design a career path for life after AmeriCorps. \* f. MEMBER SUPERVISION: Members receive support and supervision from multiple levels. The first is by HYCC program staff that provides training, do site visits, and regularly follow up with members and their site managers. The second is by sites where members are placed. These sites are reviewed rigorously to ensure project activities meet grant requirements and do not include prohibited activities and that returning sites had overall positive evaluations. Sites are selected based on applications, past performance, staff mentorship ability, and availability. Training is provided as described above. A program handbook is distributed that includes the Memorandum of Understanding, Member Contract including prohibited activities, a copy of the member handbook, reporting instructions, and contact information. Kupu communicates with site managers on a monthly basis by phone or email, in addition to site visits. Members also receive oversight from Kupu's third party HR/Payroll company which ensures legal compliance to HR laws, helps staff to ensure work sites are healthy and safe, and provides training and support to members. To enhance the supervisory skills of our site managers, a Supervisor Certificate Series is offered. Training topics include Diversity & Sensitivity, Fundamentals of HR, Supervisor Basics, Hiring & Interviewing Skills, Managing Performance, and Retaining & Developing Employees.

HYCC staff use the following "pulse checks" to see how members are doing in various areas such as hours completed, performance, how members are meeting performance measures, amount being learned, and overall experience. These include member journals, mid-term/final evaluation forms, pre/post testing, timesheets, bi-weekly data forms, supervisor evaluations, regular calls and site visits, individual projects (to gauge amount being learned), and performance reviews. \* g. MEMBER EXPERIENCE- Kupu is intentional about making the member experience memorable. This includes trainings and induction where members "set the table" so their attitudes are pono (right) as they enter into their term of service. They are also introduced to Kupu's many programs so they can understand the career pathway opportunities ahead and about AmeriCorps and the larger service family. As mentioned above, Kupu has developed systems to hand-pick the best sites to ensure members have a positive and safe service experience. HYCC members also learn and act as community leaders by leading volunteers on a daily and long-term basis, including disaster preparedness training. This has been very important training in light of recent disasters such as Hurricane Sandy. Past members helped with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts which not only engaged them, but allowed them to realize the bigger AmeriCorps and service family they belonged to. Members participate in service trips

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together and use social media and journals to share their experience. Most programs also have a graduation where member accomplishments are reviewed and families and friends can celebrate the year of service and new chapter that awaits them. The HYCC has a strong alumni network of over 2,000 individuals. Alumni are kept abreast of current program activities, volunteer and job opportunities, and other happenings via social media, program website, and newsletters. There are also regular service days like MLK day where there were over 250 volunteers engaged in service this year. All of these actions have culminated in making the member experience something that will impact the rest of their lives as data shows.

Some members have also been recognized nationally. Past HYCC members were awarded The Corps Network (TCN), Corpsmember of the Year award in 2008, and 2011, which really reflected quality experiences which led to changed lives. As a 2011 member stated, "HYCC has changed my life in an unexplainable way. I am blessed to have gone through this great program and to gain so much knowledge." Kaanihi Sills. \* h. VOLUNTEER GENERATION- Staff recruit volunteers through school visits, social media, leveraging partners, and various other means. HYCC also uses members to engage their families, friends, and communities to develop volunteers. Overall, members are highly visible in the community and effective in recruiting volunteers. With just less than 100 MSY last year, there were over 15,000 volunteers or 150 volunteers per MSY. Hawaii Humpback Whale Watch for example, uses one intern to generate nearly 2,000 volunteers as well as lead school groups regularly. Members are trained as to what volunteers can and cannot do and volunteers sign a waiver that states the type of work they are prohibited to perform. Only government and non-profit sites with similar focuses as HYCC are selected as volunteer work sites. \*i. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT TO AMERICORPS IDENTIFICATION - Kupu brands national service by placing AmeriCorps logos on member uniform shirts, gear, and AmeriCorps publications. Kupu will continue to require placement sites to use the AmeriCorps name on public material including websites, brochures, annual reports, and on-line posting. All training includes information on AmeriCorps so sites, members, and family/friends understand what AmeriCorps is. Most recruitment material also bears the AmeriCorps logo and representatives share with prospective applicants about the program and what AmeriCorps is about. HYCC organizes community service days like during AmeriCorps week. Furthermore, Kupu has produced videos and public service announcements that display the AmeriCorps logo which reaches homes daily and that are shown at almost all of the high schools in Hawaii. This public recognition combined with successful programming has helped to deepen the knowledge of AmeriCorps in our local communities and globally, as will be described in the next section.

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## Organizational Capability

a. ORG BACKGROUND AND STAFFING: In 2001, the principal coordinating staff from Kupu was contracted by DLNR to manage a YCC program that soon became known as the HYCC. From 2003-2009, HYCC managed AmeriCorps programs via DLNR including a competitive grant in 2007 and ARRA funding in 2009. The DLNR and Kupu determined that the HYCC program would be better fit under a non-profit, therefore Kupu was formed in 2007 and it became the prime grant recipient of AmeriCorps funds in 2009. Kupu has expanded the HYCC from a single summer program to five programs serving the community statewide offering an increased number of positions by securing diverse funding. DLNR continues its support annually as a large partner (approximately \$300,000 annually) and recipient of aid from AmeriCorps members. The HYCC mission is to provide a healthy and hands-on educational experience to Hawaii's youth in order to encourage the development of natural resource managers, cultural awareness, personal growth, teamwork, leadership skills, and an environmental mindset that participants will carry with them throughout their life. \* As mentioned, Kupu has exhibited the ability to manage the largest statewide AmeriCorps program in Hawaii, exceeded performance measures, grown funding, increased positions available, deepened community impact, while the cost of MSY has gone down. Due to the replicable systems and structures in place, and because of the measured demand and support in the community, Kupu feels confident with the request to increase programs. Kupu is requesting 171.69 MSY. In 2009, there were approximately 50 MSY from AmeriCorps, which was successfully increased to current levels of 96.4 MSY (about a 94% increase), showing the capacity to scale programs to easily manage the additional 75% increase in positions requested. PRINCIPAL STAFF: Kupu has developed a strong administrative and programmatic staff with over 50 years of combined AmeriCorps management experience. This includes overseeing various aspects of the HYCC programming including finances, reporting, and operations. The executive team includes: \*John Leong - Executive Director, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, B.S. Economics. Mr. Leong helped to develop the HYCC program and founder of Kupu. John has received the Bank of Hawaii Community Leader of the Year in 2010, Pacific Business News, 40 under 40 Award, and Hawaii Business Magazine 20 for the Next 20 Award in 2012 and is a Council Member of The Corps Network (TCN). \*Matthew Bauer - Director of Operations, University of Washington B.S. Political Science. One of the founding staff and has overseen programming since 2001. Matthew manages operations of all Kupu programs and has helped with partnership development and operational oversight. \*Cammie Russell - Director of Finance, Claremont McKenna College, B.A. in Economics - Accounting, Certified Public Accountant.

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Cammie is a former auditor and provides fiscal oversight and manages financial reporting. This includes managing accounts receivable and payable, payroll, budget development and tracking, financial reporting, and working with Kupu's external public accounting firm and payroll company.

\*Katrina Ogata - Deputy Director of Operations, University of Hawaii, B.A. in Communication, minor in Business Administration. Katrina, a former HYCC member, has been on staff since 2007. She provides leadership over all programming and oversees program directors and staff.

\*AmeriCorps supported staff: The following team has successfully directly managed the AmeriCorps grants Kupu has received for several years and have developed a deep understanding of the grant requirements. Should AmeriCorps provide the funds requested an additional four FTE coordinators/staff will be supported by CNCS.

\*Gina Carroll-AmeriCorps Program Director. Gina has been on staff for three years. She provides program leadership, oversight, procurement management, partnership development, site reviews, member reviews, and various other attributes of the program.

\*Program Coordinators (Noah Coombs, Rebecca Beralas, Ashok Kurian, and one vacant position): Noah has served as a coordinator since 2007, Ashok has a Master's in Education and is a former teacher, and Rebecca was a former HYCC TL and now on staff since 2011. They help to manage oversight of programming including logistics, recruiting and selection, program scheduling, developing curriculum, reporting, coordinating events, outreach, and other programming items. The position requires a bachelor's degree along with 3-5 years experience, strong character, team commitment, and ability to lead others.

\*General Program Staff (Emma Panui & Kim Matsukawa): Emma and Kim have a combined 8 years of experience working with Kupu. Staff assists coordinators in managing member files, timesheets, member background checks, eGrants, grant compliance, and other administrative program functions. The position requires a bachelor's degree, two years experience in a related field, and high level of administrative organization capacity.

\*Board Description and Roles: Kupu's Board consists of community leaders. 86% of the board are minorities. Their wide range of knowledge, legal, financial experience, and reach into the community are an asset to Kupu as well as provide governance, oversight and accountability. In addition to quarterly meetings, board members serve on committees to help guide Kupu staff. The board votes on all major issues and has put into place controls to require accountability.

\* Staff Training: Each new staff goes through initial orientation and training to help them understand programs, financial and programmatic accountability, job-specific needs. Kupu provides recurrent and regular training internally and budgets for external workshops, experts, and conferences, including the AmeriCorps conference, supervisor/management workshops, technical training (i.e. MS Office), financial training,

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HR workshops, and CPR/first aid certifications. \* Training/Technical Assistance to Members and Managers: As aforementioned, Kupu has developed very specific and successful regular trainings for its staff, members, and sites. Kupu has built on knowledgeable staff to lead or organize trainings/workshops/orientations, a strong network of outside guest speakers/instructors, vendors such as an external HR/payroll company who provide trainings and consultation, expert site managers for on-the-job training, replicable systems based on past successes, and constant evaluation and improvement.

External Evaluation: Kupu has shown previous capacity to provide an external evaluation as a participant in a CNCS approved study on Youth Corps by Associates/Brandeis University Study(ABT). Kupu is a long-time member of TCN, which provides the Excellence in Corps Operations (ECO) program, an approved external evaluation tool by CNCS. \* Past Performance: Kupu has shown strong financial performance and in particular has strong experience managing federal grants. The organization has a track record of exceeding goals and meeting requirements. About 58% (approximately \$2M) of Kupu's 2012 revenue was federal and all A133 audits have shown Kupu to be in compliance without any findings. \* Kupu has not only grown its level of funding support from AmeriCorps, but also from a variety of 80 different partners. During the last competitive cycle, Kupu received about \$1.2 MM in annual funding from CNCS, which it multiplied to exceed match for HYCC and more than double AmeriCorps funding received (HYCC budget was \$2.7 million in 2012). All slots awarded were filled and retention was 91.4%. Kupu also had to request 25 additional slots from TCN's Education Award Program to help meet demand for positions. \* b. SUSTAINABILITY: Over the past few years since HYCC received AmeriCorps funding, programming has grown tremendously, with 157% increase in positions since 2006. Not only has Kupu utilized existing funding from AmeriCorps, but it has also received partner funding and aid to provide a stronger and larger program. The following are some of the data that supports sustainability and HYCC's ability to gain a broad range of support and financially stable base: \*Continuous Growth: Since 2001, the HYCC program budget has grown from \$23,000 to over \$2.7 million dollars in 2012 (a 3200% increase). In 2003, the HYCC successfully received a Formula State AmeriCorps grant through DLNR. Historically, HYCC has received over \$7 million from CNCS to benefit Hawaii. \*Community recognition: In 2010, ARRA Project of the Year Award from TCN for AmeriCorps programming, and in 2011 AmeriCorps Service Commission, Innovation in Civic Participation Award. Kupu has also been recognized in local and national media as well as a video being displayed on Hawaiian Airlines flights globally each day.\*Currently, Kupu has a diverse portfolio of over 77 organizational funders \*Demand: Kupu has

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increased the number of positions available since 2010 by 80% to respond to an growing community demand. This is partnered with high applicant numbers, with HYCC turning away as much as 70% of youth. The community continues to request more HYCC aid and Kupu is aiming to meet this demand on seven of the eight Hawaiian Islands. \*Collaboration: The HYCC has assist over 80 government agencies and NGOs. There are several national and international partnerships as well, which include other corps nationwide. \*Community Support: Communities have taken advantage of the education award program Kupu offers because of AmeriCorps to build up volunteer base as well as use members to develop and enlist volunteers to provide a tremendous amount of in-kind support. Volunteers generated by HYCC served approximately 80,000 hours. This is a tremendous support that has helped local communities today, but also builds a database of volunteers for tomorrow. In addition, surveys show that 70-80% of members continue to volunteer once their term ends, demonstrating continued involvement. \*Increased Partner Demand: Each partner site also contributes matching funds for their members. This makes continued growth more plausible as federal funding is leveraged by each additional partner site. In 2011, there were requests from sites for 36% more positions within our partnering agencies than Kupu had available. Further, survey results from current and potential site managers show that the level of aid requested in this application will be more than adequately utilized, and that sites can afford the matching funds required of them. \* In addition, Kupu has increased non-CNCS funds by 59% over the last three years, some of which could help to sustain programming should CNCS funds be unavailable. Diverse Funding Sources and Support: Community stakeholders and partners include state agencies such as DLNR and Federal partners such as the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, and the Army National Guard. Private organizations include Kamehameha Schools, Castle Foundation, and Hauoli Mau Loa Foundation among others. In 2012 HYCC calculated that it received approximately \$600,000 of revenue from site contributions which is up from around \$100,000 three years ago, showing an increase in community support. This is a tremendous amount of support from communities statewide which includes aid with housing, transportation, administrative costs, food, educational speakers, facility usage, gear/equipment, tools, vehicles, site manager time, and training. Families have also shown their support and appreciation for the HYCC by providing meals for teams, gear, and much more. The giving of in-kind services is very diverse and is not reliant on one organization. Without CNCS support, the HYCC program could exist however, with less effectiveness and of lesser quality than what the community and its stakeholders have come to expect from Kupu and its AmeriCorps members. Kupu, however, has secured annual funding from

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private foundations, other grants, and corporations to allow programming to move forward. Please refer to the Cost Effectiveness Section for further explanation of funding sources. \* c.

COMPLIANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY: Integrity and sound management are integral in Kupu's fiscal management. As aforementioned, Kupu's stewardship of funds has grown close to 12,000% since the first HYCC program its core staff managed in 2001. This growth is due in part to a sound track record of fiscal management. The following are some factors which speak to the organizations capacity to ensure compliance and accountability. \*Kupu undergoes external reviews for programs and finances. These include A133 Single Audits, external evaluations, reviews by local and national CNCS representatives, and by a third party HR organization that ensures quality work environment \*Kupu has successfully developed systems and structures to ensure high levels of operational efficiency, accountability, and accuracy. Many systems are tailored specifically for the AmeriCorps grant and to be in compliance in general. Kupu has invested staff time in several meetings, trainings, and trips to other successful youth corps in other states to develop a strong set of systems as mentioned above and create more IT based systems. \*External payroll and HR to ensure replicable, legally sound, and high level systems and support. Member or site issues that arise are routed through the HR department who works with Kupu staff to resolve issues appropriately \*Kupu's Director of Finance is an experienced auditor and CPA \*Training: As mentioned above, Kupu emphasizes that all staff, sites, and members receive trainings and does regular reviews to make sure training is implemented and effective. \*Awards: Regular awards are used to recognize and model excellence in operations, performance, and accountability \*Kupu has built strong internal controls to ensure top quality program oversight. Staff is kept current in trainings and information. The HYCC also utilizes the expertise of host site managers to help supervise members and volunteers. \*As mentioned previously, Kupu also considers the capacity of sites to manage members and provide a healthy, working environment with proper mentorship. \*Kupu staff review site applications, conduct site visits, and analyze data and evaluations to ensure members and sites are meeting standards. Sites receiving poor evaluations by their members or staff may not receive aid or put on probation until problems are corrected. If there is a major problem at a site, members are moved to another site during investigation period. \*Since 2009, Kupu has integrated AmeriCorps VISTA to refine internal systems. \*Strong Communication: Regular web, email, and phone-based updates are used to connect and inform sites and members statewide. \*Special Circumstances: The HYCC is statewide, impacting communities with BEALE codes of up to 9, such as Kalaupapa on the island of Molokai which has only about sixty residents. These are rural communities that are challenged financially and have a

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population of less than 2,500. \*Demonstrated Compliance: No compliance issues. \*Enrollment: 101.5% Enrollment rate, MSY utilization is 99.8%. Kupu also successfully enrolled and exited an additional 25 slots awarded us from TCN. \*Retention: 91.4% retention rate. Of the 197 enrolled, 17 were exited without an education award. Of the 17, 4 members were terminated due to personal misconduct against company policy; 13 members resigned due to personal need (personal hardship, medical or family emergency).

### Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

a. COST EFFECTIVENESS: Kupu is applying for its second cycle as a competitive grantee, showing strong stewardship in the first cycle. Due to program success, program growth, and funding partner development, Kupu has proposed to broaden its program, have a deeper impact in communities, yet is leveraging more non-CNCS resources and still has a very competitive cost per MSY with an increased ROI and decreased cost per MSY. The cost per MSY for the last awarded AmeriCorps grant was \$12,967. This year's cost per MSY is lower at \$12,925, due to increased demand and financial support. Over the last grant cycle Kupu has over-matched federal funds providing more than 50% in non-CNCS funds (while only 24% was required). This year, although we are only reporting 30% of the match as part of this proposal (so remaining funds can leverage other grants), our actual budget for HYCC is projected at \$4.2 million, of which \$2.2 million is being requested from CNCS (or close to 50% in cash non-CNCS support, and above 50% when in-kind support is considered). The increase in funding comes from a diverse set of host site contributions per member, multi-year grants, and other funding; showing great statewide support and ability to leverage CNCS's funds to create impact. Kupu is also broadening its reach as and meeting demands in very rural economically distressed areas that are hard to access (all islands are separated and flights are necessary for interisland travel). Despite inflation and rise in health care, new background check requirements, fuel, and other costs rising since our last competitive grant award with an average national inflation of about 2% per year (6% over three years) and our cost per MSY has decreased.

The HYCC program is anticipated to develop funding from non-CNCS support totaling at or above \$2,000,000 in cash of which 30% or \$951,521 will be assigned as cash match to CNCS. Each agency which receives an EIP member contributes approximately a \$13,000 cash match per member (over \$1.4 million in revenue), not to mention additional in-kind contributions (which have been several hundreds of thousands of dollars on average). Revenue from site contributions has increased 600% over the last 3 years and would only need to increase 100% to meet program budget needs in `13-14. Feasibility research has shown that existing and new sites will be able to provide this revenue. Kupu

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also receives partnership funds from various organizations and receives grants from local and national foundations such as Hauoli Mau Loa Foundation, State Department of Land and Natural Resources, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Castle Foundation and National Park Service among others. In addition, Kupu has received increased funding from institutions like Kamehameha Schools that provide several hundreds of thousands of dollars per year on a multi-year commitment. Partnership and grant funds are anticipated at the \$600,000 level next year. Kupu also receives monetary and other donations on the programs' behalf and revenue from fee-for-service projects. The requested budget has been calculated based on research done within the community through surveys and discussions, based on past application results for aid from Kupu, and based on present funding. Due to a successful track record and experience in replicating program size and impact, Kupu is confident in its ability to continue highly leverage CNCS funds while increasing impact and ROI. Kupu anticipates that while CNCS would provide \$2.2 million in funding, the anticipated benefits will be between \$12-15 million per year or a 600-700% ROI (currently at 500%). While CNCS funds would be higher, due to economies of scale, the realized impact would scale at a higher rate and allow for more communities to benefit. \* Kupu has demonstrated the ability to continually diversify funding and decrease reliance on CNCS support for the HYCC program. In the first year of the last competitive cycle the program budget was \$1.7 million from 39 funding sources (about \$1.2 million from CNCS). By Year 3, the budget had increased 59% to over \$2.7 million with the same level of CNCS support and 77 funding sources. As stated, the increase in funding request is anticipated to be met with almost a 1:1 level of cash support, although the request is almost \$1 million higher than the previous three years. If CNCS support were to remain at previous levels, Kupu would continue to decrease CNCS's percentage of the budget significantly due to increased fiscal support. However, based on high demand, proven replicable programming, need in the community, and funds available, Kupu has decided to leverage program success and garnered support to deepen the impact AmeriCorps is having in Hawaii through the HYCC programs by increasing its funding request appropriately.

b. BUDGET ADEQUACY: The following section will discuss our budgetary needs and how each section has been adequately calculated to fit these needs. Kupu has done a feasibility study to ensure that the requested positions will be filled and within reason for sustainable growth and management. As stated, Kupu has exhibited this ability to raise funds beyond the necessary amounts by being able to provide an estimated 30% of our anticipated budget to be used as cash match towards CNCS funds (not including in-kind) which is well above the required 26% for year 1 (although actual funding

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would be approximately 1:1 with CNCS). The following is a brief description of some key budget items.

Kupu's HYCC program is a statewide program that requires interisland travel and communication.

Despite this geographic challenge, Kupu's staff have developed programs that are effective in reaching into local communities to provide aid through members, yet operate on a very cost-effective and responsible means with high measurable impact.

A. Personnel Expenses and Fringe Benefits: The principal coordinating staff dedicated to AmeriCorps includes 13 individuals as indicated below: 1.

Program Director (1) 2. Program Coordinators (8) 3. Staff/Program Assistants (4). Kupu also receives consistent local funding that helps to compensate for the matching needs as well as pay for

administrative and support staff. Increase in staffing commensurate with program growth. The fringe

benefits include local health care rates of \$350 per person per month. B. Travel (Staff Travel): Staff

travel has been budgeted for 15 interisland trips at \$500 per round trip and three trips to the mainland for conferences/events that support CNCS programming at \$2,000 each. This includes airfare, ground

transport, lodging, parking, per diem, and fuel among other related items. Staff travel is for regular

site visits, interviews, graduations, and other program travel needs to each of the six outside islands.

\*Member Travel: Travel is for daily transportation on-island as well as training and service trips

between islands (231 total inter-island trips). This includes travel for an annual service trip for full

time members and travel for a week-long training for summer members and leaders. Other costs such

as travel for leadership training, travel for a service trip, and other travel costs will be paid for by other

grants and/or in-kind donations not listed in this budget. C. Supplies: Calculations in the budget show

an \$82.67 cost per member which may include a backpack, water bottle, safety glasses, notebook, t-

shirts, rain gear and allotment for boots or other supplies members may need at their site. There is

also a request per FTE staff funded by CNCS funds to help with office supplies, computers, work gear,

phones, and other related work costs (\$600 each). D. Staff Development: Staff development includes

facility rentals, registration fees, training materials, speakers, first aid & CPR, and other course costs.

\$400 per FTE staff member budgeted. E. Member Training: The training provided is to orient

members and to provide them with essential skills such as team building, communication, leadership,

and respect. Member training costs has been calculated at \$97.26 per member, 401 members. This

includes the costs of pre-hire costs, CPR/first aid, instructor fees, facility rentals, and training supplies.

Training for EAP members is conducted as an in-kind match by the sites they are assigned to and are

therefore not a part of this calculation. This category also includes the cost for staff to travel for

member orientation and training: 12 trips including air, ground, parking, fuel, and per diem at \$375

per trip. Additional funds required for training beyond this request will be provided by outside funding

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sources.\* F. Evaluation: As part of the Excellence in Corps Operations by TCN: \$5,000 G. Other Program Operating Costs: FBI Background Checks: \$25 per person at 195 members and 13 staff requiring this check, covered by in-kind site fees. \*Outsourced payroll service: 3% of living allowances or \$46,620. H. Living Allowances: FT members will receive a maximum of \$15,000 each (94 with support from CNCS and 16 supported by other funding sources) team leaders (21 MT) will receive \$4,000 each, and Frontiers members (60 MT) will receive \$1,000 each. EAP participants will not be paid a living allowance. All living allowance rates reflect the high cost of living in Hawaii. I. Member Support Costs: 7.65% was used to calculate FICA and 5% for workers compensation. Health care costs at \$300 a month, a competitive rate for Hawaii. J. Corporation Fixed Expenses: 5.26% rate utilized. \* Overall, the budget has been designed to meet all major fixed and variable costs HYCC might face. In addition to AmeriCorps funds, supporting funds from other organizations will help to pay for other operating expenses. Budget has been calculated so that there is enough to cover operating expenses, but also track record has shown a decreased dependence on AmeriCorps funds over time with an increase in non-CNCS funding and community benefits as program grows.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

Kupu plans to participate in the Excellence in Corps Operations evaluation for 2013

### **Amendment Justification**

N/A

### **Clarification Summary**

N/A

### **Continuation Changes**

N/A