

## THE CURRENT

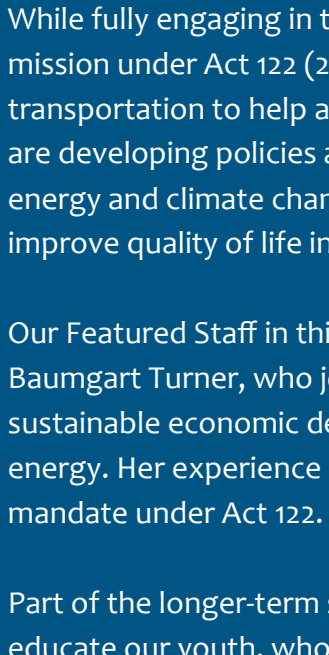
### Hawaii State Energy Office Clean Energy Update

Spring 2020

**THE CURRENT** serves Hawaii's communities, businesses, and policy makers in making informed decisions about clean energy investments and policy. Hawaii's clean energy sector is a significant driver for economic development to replace fossil fuel expenditures with home-grown industries that stimulate smart economic growth for future generations of Hawaii.

### COVID-19: WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

*Scott J. Glenn, Chief Energy Officer*



With the spring issue of *The Current*, it is increasingly clear that the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak will be with us well into the future. During these trying and uncertain times it is critical to stay focused and keep working together in our response and recovery efforts. As we continue to navigate the crisis, I want to share what the Hawaii State Energy Office is doing to support Hawaii's energy sector in the near term, and how the Office is poised to contribute to the state's economic recovery over time.

The HSEO swung into action early in the crisis coordinating interagency support for response to emergency incidents impacting Hawaii's energy supplies and distribution. Using this authority, the HSEO has been working with its partners to ensure all essential energy and fuel infrastructure workers in Hawaii are able to carry out their duties safely and efficiently.

While fully engaging in the COVID-19 response, we are moving forward on our recently expanded mission under Act 122 (2019) to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation to help achieve a resilient, clean energy, decarbonized economy. Toward this end, we are developing policies and programs, including broader community engagement, to achieve our energy and climate change goals while identifying strategies that create jobs, lower costs, and improve quality of life in Hawaii.

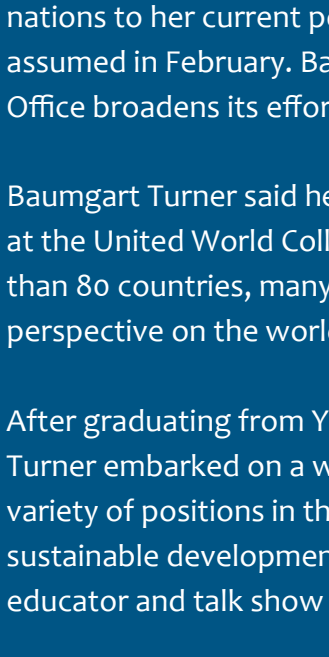
Our Featured Staff in this edition of *The Current* is the latest addition to the HSEO team. Kirsten Baumgart Turner, who joined the Office in February, has more than thirty years' experience in sustainable economic development policy, planning, and project development, including renewable energy. Her experience is invaluable as the HSEO works to integrate the broader carbon free economy mandate under Act 122.

Part of the longer-term strategy for achieving Hawaii's clean energy and decarbonization goals is to educate our youth, who will be the environmental stewards of tomorrow. Our feature story details how the HSEO and the local chapter of the U.S. Green Business Council teamed up to compile a resource guide to help educators and parents teach sustainability concepts through distance learning while classrooms are closed due to the COVID-19 crisis. It is encouraging to see the breadth and depth of lessons and activities that are available to keep our K-12 children engaged during this difficult time.

We regularly engage with stakeholders who provide valuable input for our policy and program development. As we re-open our economy and look to recovery, we welcome your ideas for how the energy sector can be transformational for a better Hawaii. Please reach out to us directly or through [dbedt.energyoffice@hawaii.gov](mailto:dbedt.energyoffice@hawaii.gov) to share your ideas and recommendations.

### FEATURED STAFF: BAUMGART TURNER BRINGS WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE TO NEW POST AT THE HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE

*Kirsten Baumgart Turner  
Special Advisor to the Hawaii Chief Energy Officer*



Having spent most of her career advocating for sustainable development, Kirsten Baumgart Turner speaks with some authority when she says the people of Hawaii have a greater appreciation for the concept than most.

"Our people are much more oriented toward a sustainable lifestyle," she said. "I think they have an intuitive understanding of systems and the intricate fabric between environmental integrity and our quality of life."

Baumgart Turner said that was evident in the 1980s when she worked with then Kauai Mayor Joann Yukimura on the county's first Overall Economic Development Plan. Drafted with input from multiple focus groups, the plan represented the entire community's vision for the future.

"The plan reflected sustainability as we know it today in terms of the understanding that if we do not care for and maintain our resources today there will not be enough resources for people to survive tomorrow," she said.

Sustainability is a central theme in Baumgart Turner's career from her early days as a desk officer at the U.S. International Trade Administration helping develop export industries for developing nations to her current position as Special Advisor to the Hawaii Chief Energy Officer, which she assumed in February. Baumgart Turner's addition to the HSEO team comes at a pivotal time as the Office broadens its efforts to decarbonize Hawaii's economy under a new legislative mandate.

Baumgart Turner said her interest in sustainable development was sparked while studying abroad at the United World College in Great Britain. Living and working with other students from more than 80 countries, many of which were developing nations, provided her with an invaluable perspective on the world, she said.

After graduating from Yale University with a master's degree in International Relations Baumgart Turner embarked on a wide-ranging career that took her across the U.S. and overseas, serving in a variety of positions in the private, public and nonprofit sectors. She has applied her passion for sustainable development as a business owner, executive, consultant, senior congressional aide, educator and talk show host.

Baumgart Turner said one of her highlights was serving as the consulting lead for the DOD National Defense Center for Energy and the Environment's groundbreaking Installation Sustainability Planning process in Hawaii and developing the DOD's first Joint Service Regional Sustainability Planning process.

Baumgart Turner also contributed to the development of the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative, and served on the HCEI Energy Efficiency and End-Use, and Fuels Working Group. In addition, she helped guide strategy for the establishment of Hawaii Green Growth and served on its first Steering Committee, Legislative Committee, and continues to serve on the Local-Global NextGen Pathways Working Group.

Despite the challenges facing humankind in terms of its impact on the natural environment, Baumgart Turner said she remains a "sustainability optimist."

"We have a real crisis of values nationally. We need to teach the value of caring for one another and caring for the environment. We have had in the last few generations, and one might argue the last century, a focus on individual gain. We really need to instill the understanding—and it is a very Native Hawaiian perspective—of 'ohana. We are all one family and we need to understand the impacts on one another. Then we can then engage in more value-based decision making."

**Q:** What made you decide to join the Hawaii State Energy Office?  
**A:** While working on the Caribbean Basin Renewable Energy project, and later helping local startup ClearFuels Technology obtain and manage ARRA funds to construct its demonstration integrated biorefinery plant, I became acutely aware of government's potential to support successful private sector renewable energy infrastructure development. I was excited to partner with Chief Energy Officer Scott Glenn—and some of the staff with whom I've worked over the years—to help realize that potential.

**Q:** How do you view the HSEO's role in helping Hawaii reach its clean energy economy and decarbonization goals?  
**A:** Act 122 helped clarify and strengthen the HSEO's mission by making it a separate agency and giving it the overall goal of achieving a carbon free economy. That requires us to see our 100 percent energy goal as the center of the state's drive to achieve the Governor's Sustainable Hawaii Initiative and the Aloha Plus Challenge—as well as UN Sustainable Development Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy. As such, our job is to provide a trusted team of technical experts and project managers, to support objective project, policy, program and regulatory decision making to increase and accelerate investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy development that improve the quality of life for everyone in Hawaii. This means collecting and analyzing data, engaging stakeholders and impacted communities for improved decision making, assisting individual projects as they move through the planning and development phases, and enhancing energy assurance and resiliency to future threats (e.g., a second COVID wave, hurricanes, tsunami, etc.). We also have an important role to play in helping develop energy sector educational opportunities including training and apprenticeships to ensure Hawaii has an enviable green workforce that will attract investment and assist more of our workers to qualify for new clean energy jobs.

**Q:** How has the COVID-19 crisis impacted that role?  
**A:** The pandemic has illustrated to me the critical importance of the HSEO's responsibility for energy assurance for our state. As the lead agency responsible for state Emergency Support Function 12- Energy, HSEO provides information and analysis of sector impacts and potential solutions through outreach to businesses and secures internal agency operations. The pandemic has strengthened our fervor to help Hawaii recover by securing clean energy's role in a more diversified economy. This means clearing the way for projects to move forward and people to be hired.

**Q:** What do you think are some of the obstacles to achieving a clean energy economy in Hawaii, and what can be done to address or overcome them?  
**A:** One of the challenges is ensuring access to energy efficiency opportunities for low-income communities. Another is ensuring the benefits of renewables—especially at utility scale—can be reaped by everyone without negative impacts to communities. The HSEO is taking a proactive approach to improve our stakeholder and community education, outreach and collaborative engagement across the energy ecosystem that will capture Hawaii's collective energy vision for more effective project development outcomes. Another major challenge is the lack of private capital in Hawaii for much-needed investments. COVID-19 has made this an even bigger challenge, which is why the HSEO is actively pursuing federal grant applications to continue providing the data and scenario analysis that supports private investor decision-making and facilitates public-private partnership solutions. And finally, in order to facilitate private capital investment, we need to identify ways to better incorporate community concerns early in the development of renewable energy projects so that permitting is timelier and more effective.

**Q:** Meeting Hawaii's ambitious goals in the electricity sector will require people to conserve energy and use it more efficiently. That, in turn, will require a certain amount of behavior change. Do you think this is possible?  
**A:** Absolutely, which is why we are working with public and private stakeholders to expand existing and support new curriculum and professional development opportunities for energy conservation and clean energy education. As we all know our children are often our best teachers. Their influence as well as their realization of the myriad of job opportunities that come with carbon free economic development will affect even greater change.

**Q:** What can progressive states like Hawaii do in the face of a failure of climate leadership at the federal level?  
**A:** Hawaii can continue to lead the way by upholding the Paris Climate Agreement and investing in green economic development innovation that creates and retains living wage jobs while enhancing environmental and social justice to improve the quality of life for everyone in Hawaii. Imua!

### OUR VISION

A Hawaii-powered clean energy economy.

### OUR MISSION

The Hawaii State Energy Office is committed to promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation to help achieve a resilient, clean energy, decarbonized economy.

### LEADING THE CHARGE

#### *Informing the Community About Renewable Projects*

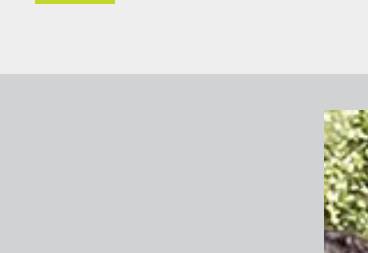
The HSEO has launched a web page to provide information on the 13 solar-plus-storage and three standalone storage projects planned by the Hawaiian Electric Companies as part of the largest renewable energy procurement ever undertaken in Hawaii. This web page is part of the HSEO's ongoing effort to keep Hawaii's communities better informed about renewable energy projects from the early stages of their development.

#### *Energy Code Compliance Training*

The HSEO and allied professional organizations sponsor free training sessions on energy building code requirements. Topics ranging from energy modeling to envelope and systems requirements provide architects, engineers, and contractors vital information on meeting energy performance goals. Training material is available on the HSEO website.

#### *Updates and Resources from the Hawaii Green Business Program*

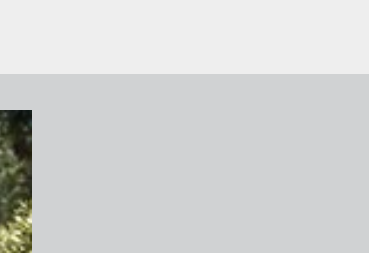
Safety is the Hawaii Green Business Program's top priority during the COVID-19 pandemic. For that reason the program has extended the deadline for the checklist submission to June 30, 2020 (extended from March 31, 2020). The extension will give more time for businesses to "assess their green practices and policies. The HGBBP is also supporting its network of businesses with "teleworking from home" tips from saving energy to cleaning and disinfecting.



**Informing the Community About Renewable Projects**



**Energy Code Compliance Training**



**Updates and Resources from the Hawaii Green Business Program**



### HSEO TEAMS UP WITH USGBC HAWAII ON DISTANCE LEARNING RESOURCE GUIDE

The Hawaii State Energy Office (HSEO) has collaborated with the local chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to develop a [resource guide](#) for distance and at-home learning that K-12 educators and parents can use to teach sustainability and other green practices while school campuses are closed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The HSEO is involved in the project through its leadership role in the Hawaii Green Business Program (HGBBP). The USGBC is participating through its Hawaii Green Schools Committee.

"With so many students across Hawaii having their education disrupted by COVID-19 we felt it was important to provide teachers and parents with resources that will allow students to continue learning about things like energy conservation and waste reduction," said Gail Suzuki-Jones, HGBBP program manager. "We are fortunate to have such a rich collection of online educational materials from the USGBC and others to draw from," Suzuki-Jones said.

The anchor program in the resource guide is the USGBC's Center for Green Schools Learning Lab, which offers nearly 50 different classes, each tailored to a specific age group.

"Learning Lab offers lessons and activities that are well-suited for distance learning, and many that are ideal for implementing at home, while being academically rigorous and fostering sustainability literacy," according to the Learning Lab website. "Additionally, many Learning Lab Partners have mobilized to provide training and experiences to help educators and parents succeed for the sake of students."

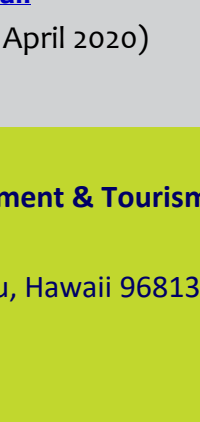
Many of the Learning Lab's classes, such as "Water Quality & Conservation: Climate Change Effects," are free with a Learning Lab or USGBC account. The entire suite of lessons and activities can be accessed with a \$40 annual subscription.

Other businesses and organizations participating in the resource guide include the Honolulu Board of Water Supply, Blue Planet Foundation, Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation, Island Energy, Hawaiian Electric, the Environmental Protection Agency, Kupu, Engle Services and Hawaii Energy.

Project Wet, a Montana-based nonprofit that develops water education resources for a global audience, operates locally as "Project Wet Hawaii." The organization, which has organized popular in-person workshops in Hawaii and elsewhere, said it has moved many of its resources online during the COVID-19 crisis "to ensure that water education for people of all ages."

Hawaiian Electric's online Teachers Resource Center provides educators with free literature, videos, hands-on material and school presentations to conduct lessons on electricity-related topics such as renewable energy, energy conservation and electrical safety.

The Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation, a nonprofit that supports environmental education in the schools and communities of Hawaii, has several lessons available on the resources section of its website that can be adapted for online learning. In addition, Blanche Pope Elementary teacher Lily Uta'i, who participates in the Kōkua Hawai'i Foundation's 'Āina in Schools program, continues to engage her students through virtual field trips and tutorials posted on Facebook and Instagram.



### ENLIGHTENING NEWS & UPDATES

[Moving towards 100% renewable power in Hawaii \(with a little help from sheep\)](#)  
(UN News, 5/10/20)

[Room to Grow: COVID-19 Pandemic Raises Awareness of Food Sustainability in Hawaii!](#)  
(Pepperdine University Graphic, 5/08/20)

[American Lung Association rates Hawaii with some of nation's cleanest air](#)  
(Honolulu Star-Advertiser, 4/24/20)

[Hawaii groups see role for DERs in economic recovery from COVID-19](#)  
(Utility Dive, 4/08/20)

[Lessons Learned from Hawaii](#)  
(Public Utilities Fortnightly, April 2020)