



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**Thursday, May 14, 2015**

### **Hawaii P-20 Launches Pledge Campaign for "55 by '25" to strengthen state's workforce through higher education**

*Parents, educators, businesses and community organizations statewide urged to join together to achieve Hawaii's education goal*

**HONOLULU** –[www.p20hawaii.org](http://www.p20hawaii.org) – Hawaii P-20 is launching a 55 by '25 Campaign pledge drive to grow online pledges to 5,000 supporters this summer, kicking off with public events on **Friday, May 15 and Saturday May 16, 2015**. In order for the state to meet the challenges of an increasingly global economy, Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education (Hawaii P-20), a statewide partnership led by the Executive Office on Early Learning, the Hawaii State Department of Education, and the University of Hawaii System, launched the 55 by '25 campaign to raise awareness, create urgency, and invite community-wide participation to achieve Hawaii's education goal: for 55 percent of Hawaii's working age adults to have a two- or four-year college degree by the year 2025.

"We will have events on Oahu and Neighbor Islands on May 15 and 16 where people can learn more about this important campaign, while making a pledge online or via their mobile devices to show their support," explains Executive Director Karen Lee. "Also, those who visit our site at [www.55by25.org](http://www.55by25.org) any time in May can take a three-question scavenger hunt quiz on the site, and be entered to win a variety of education-related prizes including trips for two to Seattle and San Diego, perfect for visiting college campuses and a MacBook Pro, perfect for studying."

This is a symbolic pledge — no money or time is required. Currently, over 1,800 have pledged their support to the 55 by '25 campaign. P-20's goal is to reach 5,000 pledges this summer. The public is encouraged to visit one of the Pledge Drive events to learn more about 55 by '25 and pledge their support here:

#### **Friday, May 15**

- Oahu: Tamarind Park, Downtown, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Oahu: Fort Street Mall – Open Market, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- Maui: Queen Kaahumanu Center, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- Kauai: Kukui Grove Shopping Center, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

#### **Saturday, May 16**

- Hilo: KTA Puainako 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

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“Education is more important than ever to our economic success in Hawaii and the nation,” said Hawaii Governor David Ige. “Studies show that by 2020, 70 percent of the jobs in this state will require some college education and more. In Hawaii for example, there is currently a critical demand for workers with IT or STEM degrees. As a state, we must increase the number of adults with two-year or four-year college degrees to meet these workforce demands.”

Growing awareness about the 55 by '25 goal is important for Hawaii: As of 2013, only 44.3 percent of Hawaii's working age adults (ages 25 – 64) held a two- or four-year degree, according to U.S. Census data. Hawaii residents with bachelor's degrees earn on average \$27,000 more per year than residents with only a high school diploma, and are far less likely to be unemployed, even during a recession, according to Census data. As a person's highest level of educational attainment increases, median wages increase and unemployment rates decrease. For full-time workers age 25 and older, 2013 median wages for those with a Bachelor's degree was 70 percent higher than median wages for those with a high school diploma.

Join the thousands of educators and others in Hawaii who are working hard to achieve the 55 by '25 goal. Pledge now at <http://www.55by25.org/action/pledge/>.

#### **About the Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education**

Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education is a statewide partnership led by the Executive Office on Early Learning, the Hawaii State Department of Education and the University of Hawaii System that is working to strengthen the education pipeline from early childhood through higher education so that all students achieve career and college success. For more information, please visit [www.p20hawaii.org](http://www.p20hawaii.org).

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