

Kupu Receives \$20M Grant To Expand Tree Canopies

Honolulu-based nonprofit Kupu, the state's largest youth-focused conservation and sustainability nonprofit recently received a \$20 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Urban and Community Forestry Program.

The funds will help expand tree canopies, combat extreme heat and improve access to green space in communities statewide over the next five years.

The money will specifically fund Kupu's MALU (Meaningful Arboriculture to Limit Vulnerability in Urban and Community Areas) proposal. In 'olelo Hawai'i, malu means shade, cover, protection and rehabilitation.

The MALU project will

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provide funding, technical assistance and support to multiple local organizations working to increase tree cover in disadvantaged areas.

Consistent with Kupu's focus on youth develop-

ment and environmental restoration, special emphasis will be placed on improving the well-being of people and places at the same time.

"Kupu is humbled by this opportunity to bring these resources home to the islands," states Kupu CEO John Leong. "This program will provide resources, support and technical assistance to a community of partners who will put these federal funds to good use across the islands.

"Kupu's network includes hundreds of partners that we have grown with over the past 16 years. We are excited to support and empower communities with opportunities to make their neighborhoods and public



Youth-focused nonprofit Kupu was recently awarded a \$20 million federal grant to expand tree canopies in urban areas, including Honolulu. Kupu volunteers (above) clear land for a lo'i. PHOTO COURTESY KUPU

spaces more resilient to climate change."

USDA's Urban and Com-

munity Forestry Program is the only federal program dedicated to enhancing and

expanding the nation's urban forest resources.

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“This funding will help expand our urban tree canopy and mitigate the effects of extreme heat — all while providing job training opportunities to those who need it most,” states U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz of Hawai‘i.

Adds U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono of Hawai‘i, “As we work to mitigate the impacts of climate change and promote sustainability, this funding brings us one step closer in creating healthier, more equitable communities across Hawai‘i.

“This historic investment in urban forests will help ensure people in Hawai‘i have access to quality outdoor spaces, no matter where they live.”



Kupu volunteers work on a lo‘i patch. A federal grant will help fund the nonprofit’s Meaningful Aboriculture to Limit Vulnerability in Urban and Community Areas program. PHOTO COURTESY KUPU

The Urban and Community Forestry Program awarded more than \$1 billion nationwide to fund community-based organizations, tribes, state and local agencies, public colleges and universities,

and nonprofits working to provide equitable access to trees. Of that \$1 billion, more than \$42 million were awarded to organizations in Hawai‘i, with the largest award in the state going to Kupu.

HONOLULU

Pet of the Week

PONCHO KATSUYUKI SHIGAKI

Poncho Katsuyuki Shigaki is an 18-month-old domestic shorthair tabby who was born in Honolulu and adopted by his humans from Pounce Hawai‘i when he was only 2 months and 10 days old. He loves to join in when his mom does yoga.



PHOTO COURTESY TEE SHIGAKI



‘Honolulu Voice’ is accepting photos of your furry (or scaly or feathered) friend for its Pet of the Week feature. Send your photo to kiwamoto@midweek.com and be sure to include your pet’s name, age, the area of Honolulu you live in and any fun fact you’d like to share with readers.

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