

Leeward Theatre



2020

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PROGRAM DATA



UNIVERSITY of HAWAII®
LEEWARD
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

1. Program or Unit Description

Leeward Theatre was founded in 1974 as a gathering place for arts and culture in Central Oahu. The mission of Leeward Theatre is to facilitate cultural dialogue by presenting and developing the work of local, national, and international artists and sponsoring educational and community performances. We are advocates for the cultural sustainability of our community, with a special commitment to local artists and Native Hawaiian culture. The Leeward Theatre is the only major arts presenter and arts education center in the Leeward and Central Oahu communities.

Theatre programming is broken down into three areas: Campus Events, Leeward Presents, and Rental Events.

- **Campus Events** consist of plays, concerts, and recitals organized by the Arts and Humanities Division, as well as events sponsored by the Chancellor's office and other college departments.
- **Leeward Presents** are professional touring productions, local artists, and Leeward Theatre sponsored plays and events that are presented to the public as part of a main stage series.
- **Rental Events** are community groups, schools, and local companies who rent the theatre facilities for private or public performances, seminars, or workshops.

The revenue that is generated for the theatre through rental fees and ticket sales are used to fund expenses related to Leeward Presents events, including supplies, artist fees, and technical personnel.

The Theatre was closed for renovations from May 2016 until January 2019. This closure put a hold on rental income, programming, and community service initiatives that were previously undertaken by theatre management. With the reopening of the theatre in early 2019, the goal was to build the facility back into a hub of arts and culture for the Leeward campus and Central Oahu communities. However, COVID-19 forced the closure of all UH campuses to the public, effectively halting all future artistic and community building planning until further notice.

2. Analysis of the Program/Unit

Program Participation

Due to the closure of the Theatre from COVID-19, program participation was not able to rebound back to pre-renovation levels. All campus and revenue generating events were discontinued from March 2019, and will likely continue until the end of FY2021. Planning for future seasons and contracting rental customers has necessarily been put on hold.

Despite the closure, available data indicates that Total Attendance and Leeward Student Attendance at Campus Events peaked in FY2020 compared to the previous four years. This can primarily be attributed to an increase in community outreach events sponsored by Career and Technical Education and Math and Sciences units.

Table 1: Service Area Attendance

	Leeward Presents		Rental Events		Campus Events	
	Leeward Students	Total Attendance	Leeward Students	Total Attendance	Leeward Students	Total Attendance
2015-16	233	3,441	0	4,434†	††	1,073
2016-17*	304	599	0	0	43	90
2017-18*	428	880	0	0	107	353
2018-19**	††	2,966	††	13,274†	††	698
2019-20***	169	363	††	6,675	140	1,267

*Theatre closed entire season

** Theatre closed first half of season due to renovations

***Theatre closed second half of season due to COVID-19

† Total participation (including performers)

†† Data not available

Rental Revenue

While rental revenue remained relatively static from FY2019 to FY2020, the lasting impact from COVID-19 will be felt for years to come. Estimated gross revenue losses for the last quarter of FY2020 are \$80,900. If the campus closures continue through the end of FY2021, the Theatre will not realize potential gross revenue of \$126,000. This will severely limit future planning capabilities for Leeward Presents productions for the near future.

Service Unit Metrics

As the scheduling demands of the Theatre increases, it will be necessary to strike a balance between the three service areas. Although there will be some overlap, each area serves different customers and demands for the Theatre and the campus at large.

The following is a detailed description of each of the three service areas, primary customers, nature of demand, and metrics for measuring success. One of the primary goals of the Theatre is to serve a large number of Leeward students in a diversity of programs. This goal can be achieved through any of the following service areas.

CAMPUS EVENTS

Leeward Theatre is available to college departments and divisions on a space-available basis. These events generally require minimal technical and staffing needs and are completely funded by the requesting department/division. The primary customers and metrics for success vary depending upon the nature of the event and the goals of the department. Events that serve Leeward students and are aligned with the missions of the Theatre and the College will be given priority in scheduling.

LEEWARD PRESENTS

Leeward Theatre has a long tradition of presenting professional touring acts in a variety of genres such as classical, world, and folk music, dance, and theater. Leeward Presents productions are the primary driver of new audiences to the Theatre and to the campus. These events are intended to serve a large segment of the Leeward and Honolulu metropolitan areas in order to introduce new audiences to the Leeward campus and promote arts and culture in Hawaii.

The following metrics will be used to evaluate the success of this program:

- Attendance and ticket sales
- Repeat sales
- Donations to the Theatre's UH Foundation account

Customer demand for Leeward Presents events will be driven by creating a season of diverse programming that will appeal to a wide range of customers, while maintaining high artistic standards.

RENTAL EVENTS

Rental Events are the primary funding source for Leeward Presents events and the source of income for the Theatre Special Funds account. Leeward Theatre has many longstanding relationships with area dance, music, and private schools. Our oldest rental client, Alphabetland Preschool, has been renting the theatre for their annual Holiday pageant for over forty years. Other regular rental clients include Pas de Deux Hawaii, Hawaii Ballet Theatre, UH Outreach College, and Ballet Hawaii. Clients pay a daily rental fee as well as staffing and equipment rental costs, and they sell their own tickets and retain all sales revenue.

The primary customers and customer demand are determined by the individual rental organizations and the nature of the event. Success in this area will be evaluated using the following metrics:

- Number of renters and rental income
- Number of repeat renters
- Diversity of rental clients and cultural programs

While rental rates increased in January 2020, our rates will remain competitive or less expensive than many comparable venues on Oahu. Maintaining relationships with our current renters and developing new client relationships will be vital to the long-term success of the Theatre.

Strengths

Leeward Theatre has a long history of high-quality programming and community engagement. As it relates to Leeward Presents programs, the Theatre benefits from being the only major arts venue to serve Central and West Oahu. This also makes the Theatre a valuable resource for campus and community groups looking for a performance venue. Based on the Total Attendance figure for Rental Events from the second half of the 2018-19 alone, we can see that there is strong demand among community groups and organizations for the facilities and services that Leeward Theatre

offers. As soon as the Theatre is able to become fully operational again, we will be able to continue strengthening these ties to our longtime renters while increasing outreach to potential new renters.

Weaknesses

The closure of the Theatre and the resulting decline in revenue and audience participation continues to be the most pressing weakness faced today. It will be incumbent on us to reestablish the Theatre as a prominent place for arts and culture in the region and to increase our marketing efforts to inform the public that we are open for business. Another weakness is our perceived distance from Honolulu. People who are not familiar with Pearl City or Central Oahu may feel that it is too far to drive for an evening performance. We must dispel this myth by presenting compelling programs for people to be willing take the risk of traveling to a new place in order to overcome this barrier. Finally, our minimal number of staff members working in the Theatre will be a weakness as we increase our programming. We will need to build a roster of qualified technicians who know the inner workings of the Theatre to keep up with the scheduling demands.

3. Program Student Learning Outcomes or Unit/Service Outcomes

The service area outcomes of the Theatre are closely aligned with the following institutional learning outcomes of Leeward Community College:

- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving** – Participation in theatre, music, dance, and other forms of art have been proven to improve critical thinking and problem-solving skills for students. Arts education also creates a more well-rounded educational experience.
- **Written, Oral Communication and Use of Technology** – The performing arts can often be correlated with curriculum in other disciplines such as English, literature, math, and science. Technology plays an important role in modern theatrical productions and can be learned in a hand-on approach through student employment opportunities and courses being offered in the theatre.
- **Values, Citizenship, and Community** – The performing arts are an excellent way for students to be exposed to other cultures and points of view. Leeward Theatre will continue to present a variety of cultural programming to the campus and the Leeward community, placing a high value on promoting and preserving Hawaiian culture and furthering Hawaiian art.

Prior to the campus closure, Theatre staff managed and produced many successful rental events, further cementing our reputation as a top rental venue on Oahu. We also refined our rental procedures and price list, and improved our communication protocols with potential renters.

Following the closure, Theatre staff undertook an extremely large facility cleanup effort. Due to the high demand of the Theatre when we reopened after renovations in early 2019, the move back into

the theatre commenced quickly and without adequate time to organize and dispose of unnecessary items. We have used the downtime in producing events to thoroughly clean and organize all theatrical lighting and sound equipment, scenery, props, costumes, and shop supplies.

4. Action Plan

Many of the action plan items from last year were not able to be fully implemented due to the closure of the theatre and an inability to plan and market future Leeward Presents seasons. All casual hire and student worker positions, as well as one 0.5 FTE position, were cut following the pandemic crisis, and staffing is currently extremely limited to realize the desired goals and outcomes.

The action plan for the coming year will focus on continuing to improve internal policies and procedures, organizing and maintaining theatre equipment, and planning for a promising reopening of Theatre programming by the Fall 2021 semester.

- Continue to work with other Hawaii presenters to plan and implement a 2021-2022 Leeward Presents Season. Plan marketing initiatives and community engagement efforts to increase ticket sales and overall visitation to the campus.
- Rehang theatrical lighting on main stage and in Lab theatre and create a detailed light plot using Vectorworks.
- Continue organizing and maintaining theatre equipment, creating an inventory and technical packet to be distributed to all potential rental customers.
- Complete staff training on digital audio and lighting consoles.
- Digitize all past theatre records, including programs, agreements, and existing attendance records.

5. Resource Implications

Upon reopening of the Leeward campus to the public and the resumption of theatre programming, the Theatre will require funding to restore staffing to pre-COVID levels. However, given the budgetary limitations and apparent unlikelihood of reopening before the end of FY2021, we will defer all resource requests to the following year.

✓ I am NOT requesting additional resources for my program/unit.