



Island Insurance presents a check for \$50,000 to Farrington High's Project EAST program, one of three new school's on Oahu with the Project EAST program.

Project based learning teaches real-world applications

Finding solutions to real problems

Project based learning works because it strategically involves students in meaningful, "real-world" tasks. Students are given open-ended projects with more than one approach or answer, involving real or simulated professional and community situations. With the teacher in the role of facilitator or coach, they collaborate as a team on relevant community projects and are en-

couraged to seek out multiple sources of information. Maui Economic Development Board's Women in Technology (WIT) Project has been vital in establishing and supporting a number of project based learning programs at many middle and high schools across Hawai'i. To ensure the quality and cutting-edge nature of these programs, WIT is currently exploring new partnerships with organizations in other states,

sharing experiences and developing best practices to strengthen Hawai'i's education to workforce pipeline.

Gaining knowledge through service

Recently, WIT and the Engineering Projects In Community Service (EPICS) High School at Purdue University have been looking at ways to enhance student exploration and interest in engineering careers. Through this collaboration, local high school students will soon be offered a useful engineering project based curriculum within a service-learning context.

Ultimately, the goal of the EPICS High School program is to enable high school students to connect engineering with community needs. While interest in engineering has been declining, civic engagement among teenagers is near historic highs. Of high school seniors, 83 percent entering college have participated in some type of community service or service-learning. EPICS High is providing an opportunity to tap into this wave of volunteerism while working to interest more students in STEM fields.

Expanding project based learning

The EPICS collaboration will be adding exciting new components to existing project based learning programs - Project EAST. Project EAST or the Environmental and Spatial Technology is a project based, service-learning program that provides students with the most current, high-end technologies available in the emerging 21st Century economy. Through a state appropriation to the Economic Development Alliance of Hawai'i (EDAH), including private sec-