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The mission of UTOPIA (United Territories Of Pacific Islanders’ Alliance) is to provide sacred spaces to strengthen the minds and bodies of QTPIs (Queer and Trans Pacific Islanders) through community organizing, community care, civic engagement, and cultural stewardship.

Our vision is to create a world of cultural wealth, dignity, healing and liberation for QTPIs that honors our ancestors and supports future generations and ourselves.
2020 was a year of remarkable challenge for our community that gave rise to tremendous community resilience, connection, and power building. We dedicated ourselves to providing frontline support and advocacy to guard the health, safety, and wellbeing of queer and trans Pacific Islanders in Washington whose lives and livelihoods have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

UTOPIA also showed up with our partners in the Black community to join the chorus of movement towards Black Lives Matter and to advocate for an end to police violence. Placing the most marginalized at the center of our work means more than just solidarity, it means that our liberations are all interconnected and that as non-black communities of color, queer and indigenous people, we have a duty to use our voices & resources to resist systemic/institutional racism and to create culture shift that prioritizes the needs of those most impacted by it. It also means more than just showing up when there is an uprise around the country, we aim to practice anti-colonial organizing to dismantle white supremacy structure and build a culturally competent space grounded in resilience of our communities.
PANDEMIC RESPONSE WORK

Existing health disparities and the exponential impact of racism, xenophobia, economic equality, and trans- and homophobia are taking a tremendous toll on our community in the pandemic; Pacific Islanders have the highest rate of COVID-19 cases of all ethnic groups. UTOPIA has been working to provide essential health and safety resources, financial assistance, and community connection with QTPI across Washington.

In 2020 UTOPIA distributed:

- $231,000 in food vouchers to Queer, Trans, Black & Indigenous People of Color
- $44,000 in food gift cards to Trans & Gender Diverse Sex Workers
- $174,000 in financial assistance to QTBIPOC communities & Sex Workers
- 120 care packages for Trans & Gender Diverse Sex Workers
- 9,675 boxes of food over the span of 17 weeks
- 2 COVID-19 mobile testing clinics - 300+ Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders
“Celebration of the Diversity of our Community”

UTOPIA is led and founded by Pacific Islander women who identify as unapologetically transgender and/or Fa’afafine. We are authentically community led, and all of our programming comes directly from the needs of our community. Our strength as a community is in our diversity of stories, experiences, and identities. As Fa’afafine, Mahu, Leiti and Tagata Tapu, our identities and our very beings are by nature intersectional and our work cannot help but be so as well.

“Fa’afafine/Fa’atane” / “In the manner of a woman/of a man.”

Fa’afafine are people who identify themselves as having a third-gender or non-binary role in Samoa, and the Samoan diaspora. A recognized gender identity/gender role in traditional Samoan society, and an integral part of Samoan culture, and can be understood as the journey between the masculine to the feminine.

WHO WE ARE

Taffy Johnson  
Executive Director

Donato Fatuesi  
Operations Manager

Tepatasi Vaina  
Community Engagement Manager

Tweetie Fatuesi  
Community Organizer

Adrianna Sulual  
Community Engagement Coordinator

Fania Sipili  
Community Organizer

Diana V. Krishna  
COVID-19 Response Coordinator

Jaron Goto  
Communications Manager
Pasifika Community & Liberation

From the very start, our work has been steeped in the barriers, challenges and experiences of Pacific Islander members of the LGBTQI community who face pervasive racism, homophobia and transphobia in ways that impact their safety, health, sense of wellness, and their desire to build a positive future. UTOPIA works to create a vibrant space for members of our community to address basic needs, build pathways toward new expanded career and life opportunities, foster a sense of common purpose, and advocate for social justice, education and overall wellness among members of the QTPI community in Washington.

Sex Worker Empowerment Initiative: The program works to improve the safety and welfare of QTPI with lived experience in the sex trades by focusing on public education, safety, healing, and advocacy for policies and practices grounded in community-determined priorities. The work of the Sex Worker Empowerment Initiative includes:

- 1 on 1 case management support for current and former sex workers
- Street outreach services to provide queer and trans folks engaged in sex work with HIV prevention resources, safer sex supplies, survivor resources, PPE, and other harm reduction supplies; Sexual health services including HIV testing, prevention resources, and PrEP clinics;
- TransAction support group for TGNC (trans and gender non-conforming) folks, serving as a safe space to build community and provide peer support the impact of violence and trauma
- New Possibilities, a gender affirming clothing closet providing free clothing, make up, and other resources;
- Legal clinics to support amending legal documents, name changes, medical records support, and other gender affirming legal support;
- Sex Work is Work: Our campaign organizing work focusing on the long-term safety and security of sex workers and survivors. This work includes:
  - The Shalimar Sex Workers Toolkit for frontline personnel, providers, advocates, and organizations who interface with sex workers to train them on how to support and be a trusted partner to sex workers. Sex worker story collection, which archives real stories from trans and gender diverse sex workers on their experiences navigating sex work and how the stigma, criminalization, and violence against sex workers impacts them;
  - Organizing, public education and advocacy for decriminalizing sex work, including our Tautua QTPI leadership cohort;
  - DecrimWA, a collective of queer and trans BIPOC-led organizations working to decriminalize sex work and create more rights and safety for sex workers.
WHAT WE DO

Community Organizing Program: Leadership development, civic engagement, advocacy, and systems change work for trans and POC liberation and justice. UTOPIA is concerned with addressing both the immediate physical safety of our community and the systems, policies, and beliefs that make us unsafe.

• Tautua Leadership Cohort: A core of deeply committed QTPI, many of whom are survivors with current or former experience as sex workers, who are leading our campaign organizing work to challenge the criminalization of sex workers in Washington as a strategy to support sex worker safety, rights, and self-determination. Tautua is a Samoan word that means “to serve” because the concept of servant leadership resonates strongly with our collective.
• Trans Economic Empowerment Coalition
• Alphabet Alliance of Color
• Voter and Census Engagement, and Citizenship access
• Reproductive Justice policy cohort
• Climate Justice: King County Climate Equity Taskforce

Cultural Empowerment Program: Celebrating and lifting up QTPI cultural identity via community connection.

• Real Talk Support Group for QTBIPOC
• Talanoa Dialogues series
• QTPI Retreats
• Trans Day of Remembrance and Trans Awareness Week celebrations
• Language Revitalization program
OUR IMPACT IN 2020

2020 was a year of adaptation, challenge, and growth for UTOPIA.

In 2020 UTOPIA:

- Provided 300 QTPI and other queer and trans people of color with essential health and safety resources through our street outreach and other work.
- Served over 100 Trans & Gender Diverse Sex Workers
- Hosted 6 Virtual Talanoa Events: Talanoa with Cindy of Samoa (legendary Fa’afafine entertainer), Talanoa with Joey Matele (Transgender/Leiti activist), Sex Worker Is Work, QTPI the Census, Mental Health Counts, and Understanding Mental health in the Transgender Community.
- Held 9 Monthly TransAction support group for Trans & Gender Diverse current and former Sex Workers
- Held 9 monthly Real Talk support group for Queer & Trans Black, Indigenous, People of Color.
- Provided COVID-19 testing to over 300 Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders.
- Provided direct assistance to over 1,000 families/individuals through financial, rental or food assistance.
- Developed the leadership and organizing skills of 32 QTPI through a series of workshops and retreats.
- Held 14 sexual health testing clinics throughout the year including HIV/STI testing, PrEP Services.
- Hired SWEI Coordinator, Community Engagement Coordinator, COVID-19 Response Coordinator, Communications Manager, Cultural Community Organizer.
- Promotions: Donato Fatuesi Operations Director, Tepa Vaina Program Director, Tweetie Fatuesi Civic Engagement Manager.
Like many others in my community, I grew up fearful to live authentically and as a result I resorted to “playing it safe” so that I would not have to face the harsh ridicule and discrimination of society regarding my identity. For many years I was silent about who I am because of the fear of rejection. Every story has a magical ending, and although I have yet to discover that magic, I am convinced that this journey that I am on, is off to a great start. Allow me to share my story and the successes I have achieved along the way.

I moved to Seattle, WA, in the year 2015 to cross the threshold of being a fisherwoman. During my first season in the industry, I encountered prejudice and bigotry from white men for being Transgender. In that same year, I was introduced to an organization that was specifically designed to assist and support queer and trans Pacific islanders. Many of the members were familiar faces from back home in American Samoa. That organization was UTOPIA WA. Through the various programs and events that UTOPIA provided I was able to find guidance and courage to live my life as the individual I aspired to be.

UTOPIA WA’s philosophy helped me persevere in achieving untapped comfortability in my own skin. Growing vocal to whatever and whomever threatens my existence as a human being, as a Transgender woman of color. The work at UTOPIA has made me emotionally “woke” to the liberating feeling of emancipating mental slavery, recognizing internalized oppression, and unpacking systemic racism. The mission of UTOPIA is to strengthen the minds and bodies of Queer Trans Pacific Islanders. I proudly state that I am a product of the work of UTOPIA. This organization has not only been a lifeline or resource for me, but they have been my family. I have engaged in workshops, retreats, Ed 101 on philosophy in fulfillment of QTPI-LGBTQIA to further my understanding.
I have found my voice in the fight for equality, and I have built my individual advocacy. None of these opportunities would have been possible if not for UTOPIA. I have lived in fear all my life but through the work of UTOPIA I am proud to say that my name is Jaynah Ioritana Muao, an unapologetic fa’afafine from American Samoa. I now serve as a board member of the United Territories of Pacific Islander Alliance - Washington. My goal is to further the work that UTOPIA has instilled in me by impacting the lives of individuals that share the same struggles as myself. My personal journey is far from reaching its end, but I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that I am exactly where I need to be at this given time. Thank you, UTOPIA, for continuing to provide opportunities for queer and trans Pacific islanders like myself to thrive.

If you are reading my story and you are in search of inspiration, I would encourage you to annihilate your fears, feed your purpose, and continue to love.
UTOPIA Growth 2016 through 2021

- Income
- Expenses
FINANCES

(ACCESS ANY SPREADSHEET TO CHANGE CHARTS BY CLICKING THE LINK ICON IN THE UPPER RIGHT CORNER AND SELECTING OPEN SOURCE)
UTOPIA offers our most sincere thanks for all the generous community and foundation support invested in our work in 2020. We are honored and humbled to be stewards of these resources and have seen them make such an enormous difference in our community. Thank you all!