

Voyagers Make Historic Journey Across the Pacific Ocean

Raise Awareness for Environmental Issues

San Francisco, CA (July 19, 2011) - In April, 2011 seven traditional Polynesian ocean-going canoes (vakas) set sail across the Pacific Ocean on a historic expedition. The double-hulled vakas, crewed by a pan-Pacific network of Voyagers from Aotearoa (New Zealand), Cook Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Tahiti, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu, and Tonga, will travel 15,000 nautical miles by celestial navigation propelled by the wind and sun, using solar electrified motors. This journey reconnects the crews with their ancestors and their environment, while raising awareness for the issues threatening our greatest ocean -- the Pacific. On August 6, 2011, six of the vakas will land in San Francisco for a week of events that will celebrate these voyagers not only as sailors, but as stewards. Drawing on the lessons of their past to propel us all forward, these navigators are charting a bold new course, steering us all toward a sustainable future.

WHO: 6 Vakas with 16 member crews from Aotearoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, Hawaii, Pan Pacific, Samoa and Tahiti.

WHAT: Meet and Greet with the Crews and Welcome Ceremony. Learn about environmental issues threatening the Pacific Ocean and the ancestral history that brought the Pacific Voyagers to the U.S.

**WHEN: Meet and Greet: August 6, 2011, 10am -4pm
Welcome Reception: August 7, 2011, 1pm**

WHERE: Treasure Island Building, 180 Lot California and Avenue C

The current state of the Pacific Ocean's environment impacts not only the Pacific Voyagers, but all of us in real ways. The Pacific Ocean sustains livelihoods, supports enormous biological diversity, and hosts complex ecosystems. The ocean-based economies produce a wealth of resources for over 3 billion people in 56 Pacific Island and Pacific Rim countries and territories. Through trade links and consumption, this network of islands affects billions more around the globe. As the engine of our planet, the Pacific is our breath, our life, our future. The message these voyagers carry is that we are all in one canoe, and together we have the power to shift tides.

You can follow the vakas via the official voyage and project website at www.pacificvoyagers.org.

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