

Founders 2022

10.26.22

Lehua Kamalu 2022 NextGen Awardee

SeaKeepers welcomes captain and navigator Lehua Kamalu as the 2022 NextGen Awardee. Presentations will be held at the Annual Founder's Event during the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show.



Lehua Kamalu | Photo Credit: Polynesian Voyaging Society

Lehua Kamalu is a Captain, Navigator, and the Voyaging Director at the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS), a non-profit and educational organization supporting the ongoing voyages of the double-hulled canoes Hōkūleʻa and Hikianalia. Lehua is dedicated to perpetuating the practice of traditional Polynesian voyaging and non-instrument navigation, where wayfinders find their way across hundreds of miles of open ocean with thousands of minute observations of stars, moon, waves, clouds, and sea birds, not with compasses or GPS or any other instruments. As Lehua says, *"The navigator is the instrument."*

Lehua embodies many of the values resulting from the Hawaiian cultural renaissance sparked by the first voyages of Hōkūleʻa in the 1970s. When Hōkūleʻa first sailed, fewer than 100 people spoke native Hawaiian fluently. Now the number is closer to 20,000. When Lehua started school, the Hawaiian language had become part of the curriculum, and she speaks it fluently. And while she practices traditional navigation and wayfinding, she is the daughter of a Navy nuclear submariner and graduated from the University of Hawaii with a degree in Mechanical Engineering.



Lehua Kamalu | Photo Credit: Polynesian Voyaging Society

Lehua is currently working on the plan for PVS' most ambitious voyage: Moananuiākea, the circumnavigation of the Pacific Ocean to inspire Pacific nations and communities to raise their VOICES (Voyaging, Ocean Sustainability, Indigenous Ingenuity, Community & Culture, Education, Storytelling) and come together for the health of their Ocean.

She was just named a National Geographic 2021 Emerging Explorer, and was recently a Director's Fellow at the MIT Media Lab. In November 2019, Lehua was also named a Dial Fellow by Emerson Collective. Prior to that, she was a fellow in the First Nations' Futures Program.

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We look forward to presenting the 2022 NextGen Award to Lehua Kamalu.

For more information, please contact Melissa@SeaKeepers.org.

Founders Event 2022

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