



PAPAHĀNAUMOKUĀKEA
Marine National Monument

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Uncle Mac Poepoe to Receive 2013 Umu Kai Award

(Kaunakakai, Moloka'i) On January 24, the 2013 Umu Kai Award will be presented to Uncle Mac Poepoe for a lifetime of conservation management along Moloka'i's northern coast. The presentation will coincide with *E Molo Nā Ka'i o Nā Kai Molo*, a public lecture on ocean awareness and conservation at the Kūlana 'Ōiwi Kauhale in Kaunakakai, Moloka'i, organized by Ka Makahiki Moloka'i.

The Umu Kai Award, established by NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Pacific Islands Region, is presented to a Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner who "invokes the spirit of traditional fishing practices and management while adapting to modern fishing environments," says Keoni Kuoha, Native Hawaiian Program Coordinator for Papahānaumokuākea.

The award, named after the traditional Hawaiian practice of enhancing fish habitat, honors the legacy of the late Uncle Eddie Kaanaana, a Native Hawaiian cultural treasure who was the first recipient of the award in 2008.

Other past recipients of the Umu Kai Award include Hawaiian Navigator and former Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Kamehameha Schools Nainoa Thompson, Department of Land and Natural Resources Chair William 'Ailā, and Mahina Paishon-Duarte, the principal of Hālau Kū Mana Public Charter School in Mākīkī, O'ahu.

A fisherman, educator, Vietnam veteran, and conservationist, Uncle Mac has inspired generations of natural resource managers throughout the State of Hawai'i. Through partnerships with organizations like the Castle Foundation, Nā Pua No'eau, the National Park Service, and the University of Hawai'i, Uncle Mac has developed resource materials, programs and curriculum that have in many ways set the standard for small-scale conservation management today.

For instance, his data collection and creation of the *2008 Pono Fishing Calendar* – a localized guide on the lifecycles of fish and other natural resources of Mo'omomi, Moloka'i – has inspired communities on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Hawai'i to develop similar calendars for their designated areas and to adopt many other aspects of Uncle Mac's conservation model.





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“I can’t think of a single person who doesn’t really admire him for the kind of knowledge he has and what he’s accomplished, and what he means in terms of inspiring other folks,” says Eric Co, Program Officer for Marine Conservation at the Castle Foundation.

The evening will kick-off at 5:00 p.m. with a Marine Resource Fair. At 6:00 p.m., Uncle Mac himself will give a lecture on ocean awareness and conservation. Immediately after his talk, Papahānaumokuākea staff will present Uncle Mac with the 2013 Umu Kai Award for his outstanding efforts in marine conservation, along with a gift of a *papa ku’i ‘ai* (poi board). A 10-minute congratulatory video will be shown, featuring friends, family, conservation leaders, and students who have been touched by Uncle Mac, and who share their experiences in the Hawai’i conservation community. The festivities are free and open to the public.

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Papahānaumokuākea is cooperatively managed to ensure ecological integrity and achieve strong, long-term protection and perpetuation of Northwestern Hawaiian Island ecosystems, Native Hawaiian culture, and heritage resources for current and future generations. Three co-trustees - the Department of Commerce, Department of the Interior, and State of Hawai’i - joined by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, protect this special place. Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was inscribed as the first mixed (natural and cultural) UNESCO World Heritage Site in the United States in July 2010. For more information, please visit www.papahanaumokuakea.gov.

