

ODKF Celebrates Its 25th Anniversary

By Barbara Del Plano

OUTRIGGER DUKE KAHANAMOKU



For a quarter of a century, Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation has been a major supporter of athletes, sports teams and youth organizations in Hawaii, offering financial aid to hundreds of deserving individuals and groups.

ODKF, which celebrated its 25th anniversary on February 18, is actually the result of merging two separate organizations with similar goals; the Duke Kahanamoku Foundation, established in 1963, and the Outrigger Foundation, begun in 1981.

The Duke Kahanamoku Foundation came into being when a small group of Duke's friends and admirers, wishing to honor him during his lifetime, created a foundation to provide funding for individual athletes and teams who would perpetuate the great athlete's memory and legacy.

Well-known community figures Chinn Ho, Monsignor Charles Kekumano, and Gladys Brandt were the core group that made the idea a reality. Others, including Tom Lalakea, were soon added to the Board of Directors. Meetings were held monthly at Don the Beachcomber's on Ward Avenue, or Chinn Ho's downtown office.

Tom Lalakea remembers Chinn Ho as the most generous donor, writing a yearly check to the organization for \$4,000.

The Outrigger Foundation, on the other hand, evolved through the efforts of future OCC president, Ron Sorrell, in his efforts to supplement the growing financial demands of Outrigger's sports program. Increasingly more crews and individuals were traveling to the neighbor islands, as well as the mainland, to compete, stretching the Club's athletic budget to the breaking point. In order to make the trips, athletes themselves sold Portuguese sausage and sweet bread to raise money.

At the same time, the Club was seeking a way to establish a scholarship fund for children of Outrigger employ-

ees. With help from Club members Jeff Kissel and attorneys Bill Eggers, Dennis O'Conner, and Arthur B. Reinwald, details were worked out and an application sent to the IRS to obtain tax-free status.

In November, 1981, the committee's efforts resulted in a public institution called the Outrigger Foundation; solicitation of contributions followed soon after. Sorrell recalls spending most of a weekend in the Board Room folding and sealing over 1,000 letters soliciting donations to the fledgling organization. His efforts brought in \$23,000. By 1985, the Foundation had raised more than \$100,000.

Because many Club members were involved with both the Duke Kahanamoku Foundation and the Outrigger Foundation, and the goals of each were similar, the idea of merging the two organizations was proposed and talks began.

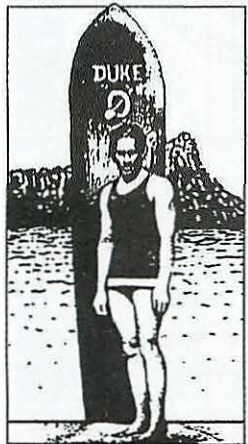
Outrigger Board member Ben Cassiday Jr. and Duke Foundation Board member Tom Lalakea spent countless hours working out details which were then approved by both Boards. On February 18, 1986, Outrigger President Rab Guild made the announcement: the Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation had been formally established, uniting the two non-profits and combining their assets which amounted to \$160,000.

It was a win-win situation for all concerned, especially the many athletes, teams, and scholars who have benefited from their assistance over the past quarter-century.

The first Board members of the foundation included Outrigger members Roy Kesner, Peter Balding, Ben Cassiday Jr., Tom Lalakea, Gerri Pedesky, and Rab Guild. Monsignor Kekumano, Gladys Brandt, and Chinn Ho came on board from the Duke Foundation.

Outrigger members, the general public, and a slew of corporate sponsors have been generous over the years. In addition to regular donations, there are eleven ODKF

OUTRIGGER DUKE KAHANAMOKU



FOUNDATION



OPPOSITE PAGE: The first Board of Directors of the ODKF included, seated: Chinn Ho, Gladys Brandt, Tom Lalakea and Roy Kesner. Standing: Peter Balding, Msgr. Charles Kekumano, Gerri Pedesky and Rab Guild.

LEFT: The first recipient of an ODKF grant was Debbie Wayman, shown with Ron Sorrell and Ben Cassiday of the Foundation grants committee. Debbie, now a retired fire captain, used the grant to enter paddleboard competitions in the 1980s.

Board Designated Funds: These include the Muriel Macfarlane Flanders Fund, which assists the annual Macfarlane Regatta, as well as funds named for Terrence McCarthy, Tom "Daddy" Haine, Kala Kukea, Cline Mann, Thomas M. Arnott, Henry Ayau, Kirk Smith, Rand Booth Carlson, and David and Keanuenue Rochlen. These funds were endowed by friends and families.

In addition to regular donations, fundraisers such as the sale of T Shirts at the Annual Walter Macfarlane Regatta provide additional income. Always a sell-out, the event has been organized by Gerri Pedesky and the Masters women paddlers for the past 25 years. In 2010, 2,000 shirts were sold.

Over the years, the foundation's financial aid has increased annually from a mere \$1,880 in 1987 to \$154,500 in 2010. During the past twenty five years, more than one-and-a-half million dollars has been disbursed.

Among the annual events ODKF sponsors are Duke's Ocean Sports and Fitness Day at Kailua Beach where more than 300 keiki and volunteers of the Boys and Girls Club spend a day participating in water sports.

Each year, Cadets (16-19 year old "at risk" youths) from The Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy enjoy a day of water sports at Duke's Ocean Sports Day at Ko Olina's lagoon.

For the past nine years, ODKF has sponsored Duke's OceanFest, a week-long sports festival held during the week of Duke's August 24 birthday. A major activity at Waikiki, the OceanFest draws competitors and fans from around the world to celebrate the man himself and the sports he loved so well. The event climaxes with an elaborate lei draping ceremony at Duke's statue and a luau on the beach.

Three years ago Title Guaranty funded a special award called the Duke Kahanamoku Ambassador of Aloha Scholarship.

The recipient of the prestigious \$10,000 Scholarship, chosen from a vast number of applicants throughout the state, is an exceptional individual who embodies the spirit and character of Duke Kahanamoku.

This year the scholarship was awarded to Tyler Amina, an honors graduate of Kamehameha Schools, who is also an outstanding water polo goalie, competitive swimmer, and Eagle Scout. Tyler will begin pre-med studies at Princeton University this fall.

The backgrounds of grant recipients are as widely diverse as the sports they are involved in. However, there is one thing they have in common; they are all grateful to ODKF for the help it provided.

Malia Kamisugi, a 1999 recipient, has given back by becoming actively involved in the foundation. She is presently completing an eight-year stint on the Board of Directors, has served as president, and is currently chairman of the scholarship committee. Malia says that the grant enabled her to devote the time needed for training and ultimately to qualify for the Olympic trials and the Pan American Team in 1991.

Another Club member and former recipient is three-time Olympic kayaker Tracy Phillips. Tracy says she is grateful for the financial assistance, and also for that extra confidence she gained knowing that ODKF had faith in her ability. She vows that when she wins the Publisher's Clearing House, she will donate her winnings to ODKF.

Duke would indeed be proud and honored at the success of the foundation that bears his name and of the many grant recipients that continue to carry out his own dreams and legacy.