Duke’s OceanFest 2014
Waikīkī’s Premier Ocean Sports Festival

By Dr. Richard Kelley

For nine days this month, the beaches and waters at Waikīkī were the center of lots of action as kama‘āina and visitors gathered on the sands and in the warm Pacific surf to watch and participate in a number of events and ceremonies that honored the memory, spirit and legacy of Duke Paoa Kahanamoku.

An inspiring lei procession kicked off this year’s Duke’s OceanFest. It started in the lobby of Outrigger Waikiki on the Beach, just a few feet from where Hawai‘i’s legendary Olympian stored his surfboard and outrigger canoe as recently as the 1960s. Volunteers strung magnificent plumeria and orchid lei. Robert McConnell, Ethan Chang, Robert Uchida, Jo-Ann Yonamine, Herman Lam, Uncle Wally Ching and others carried these floral tributes down Kalākaua Avenue to Kūhiō Beach and draped them around the neck and outstretched arms of Duke’s iconic statue.

Standing at the foot of the statue, Dr. Chuck Kelley spoke to an enthusiastic crowd of supporters and sincerely thanked the Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation for organizing the event for the 13th consecutive year. He noted the importance of Duke’s legacy, which not only celebrates water sports, but also speaks to the essence of gracious hospitality, which is so vital – and so central – to our Island culture.

**Duke’s Personal Creed**

(Printed on the back of his business card.)

In Hawai‘i we greet friends, loved ones or strangers with “Aloha” which means with love. Aloha is the key word to the universal spirit of real hospitality, which makes Hawai‘i renowned as the world’s center for understanding and fellowship. Try meeting or leaving people with Aloha. You’ll be surprised by their reaction. I believe it, and it is my creed. Aloha to you.

The focus then quickly changed to serious competition for those participating in a number of team and individual challenges. A particularly interesting event was the Outrigger Resorts’ Lifeguard Challenge, which featured competition between teams of dedicated ocean safety professionals trained to save lives. These exciting...
races took place both on the beach and in the waves right in front of the Outrigger Waikiki on the Beach with four four-person teams representing the City and County of Honolulu, County of Kaua‘i, Aloha Surf Lifesaving and Los Angeles County. Aloha Surf Lifesaving swam, paddled and sprinted away with first-place honors.

The Media Surf Challenge teamed up well-known Hawai‘i personalities with representatives of Hawai‘i’s media corps. This year, the team of surfing legend Paul Strauch and Keahi Tucker of Hawaii News Now took first place. Dr. Chuck Kelley and Taizo Braden of KHON-TV2 nabbed second place while former Honolulu mayor Peter Carlisle teamed up with Andrew Pereira of KITV4 to capture third place.

In the evening, Outrigger Resorts joined with Quiksilver Waterman’s Collection™ to host a wonderful reception under the stars at Waikiki Beach Walk™. It was the perfect venue to celebrate Duke’s OceanFest and also marked the grand opening of the Quiksilver Waterman Collection™ store at Waikiki Beach Walk™.

Many more events took place in the following days. The Hawaiian Airlines Legends Surf Classic, always a fun competition that features recreational surfers teamed up with legends of the sport, was made even more interesting this year by the challenging waves delivered by a well-timed “south swell.” Outrigger entered two teams in the Classic:

• Outrigger Team #1 brought together Dr. Chuck Kelley; his son Robby Kelley; Kitt Doucette, a freelance travel writer; David Barbeler, a writer with the Australian Associated Press; and Hawai‘i Surfing Legend Paul Strauch.
• Outrigger Team #2 featured three current members of the Outrigger ‘ohana – Kimo Migueland Tania Morrill (OHANA Waikiki East) and Skip Boyce (Outrigger Waikiki on the Beach) – plus my granddaughter, Maile Heyer, teaming up with Hawai‘i Surfing Legend Lynn Boyer.

Both Outrigger teams did pretty well, finishing in the top half. In fact, it turned out to be essentially a dead heat between the two Outrigger entries with just one-tenth of a point separating the scores of Teams 1 and 2.

This year’s Duke’s OceanFest was seen by a worldwide audience thanks to the efforts of Oceanic SURF Channel, which broadcast and “live-streamed” three days of ocean activities from Kūhiō Beach.

Among the events that were broadcast:
• ITSA Tandem surfing
• ASP Pro/Am Longboard surfing
• AccesSurf Hawai‘i’s competition for challenged athletes
• Papa He’e Nalu Alaia
• Hawaiian Airlines Duke’s Legends Classic

The final Duke’s OceanFest events took place on August 24, the 124th anniversary of Duke’s birth. Duke’s OceanFest supports the mission of the Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation, a public, nonprofit foundation established in Duke’s honor in 1986. ODKF is the successor to two other foundations.

• The Duke Kahanamoku Foundation, which Duke’s many friends founded in 1963, while Duke was still alive, to perpetuate his name and assist young people in his areas of interest - water sports, police work and international relations.
• The Outrigger Foundation, founded in 1981 by the Outrigger Canoe Club to formalize a program of grants for participants in sports.
Duke’s OceanFest... << From 2

These two foundations merged on February 18, 1986, into the Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation. Since then, net proceeds from Duke’s OceanFest have helped fund $2 million in scholarships and grants to 1,349 recipients, including $150,000 to 72 recipients in 2013.

Thanks to all the sponsors of Duke’s OceanFest 2014, especially Kona Brewing Co., Duke’s Waikiki, Hawaiian Airlines and the Honolulu Star-Advertiser, which all joined Outrigger Resorts as lead sponsors of this inspiring and memorable event. My personal, special thanks to the hundreds, if not thousands, of other individuals and companies that generously donated their resources, time and spirit to perpetuate the wonderful, enduring legacy left to us by the extraordinary son of Hawai‘i, Duke Kahanamoku.

For more details and photos of Duke’s OceanFest 2014, see: www.dukesoceanfest.com

For more information about Duke Kahanamoku’s life and accomplishments, see:

Articles previously in Saturday Briefing, which describe my personal contacts with Duke Kahanamoku:
http://saturdaybriefing.outrigger.com/dr-kelleys-weekly-briefing/duke/