Hōkūleʻa makes history as she sails into New York City

By Dr. Richard Kelley

After sailing 26,000 nautical miles across five oceans with port calls in 27 countries, the Hōkūleʻa sailed into New York City’s North Cove Marina on the Hudson River last Sunday, June 5, under a heavy blanket of clouds and rain, about 16 hours ahead of schedule due to forecast thunderstorms and strong currents.

The inclement weather failed to deter the hundreds who witnessed Hōkūleʻa’s arrival in the Big Apple, three years after she left Hawai’i on her Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage.

Launched by the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) in 1975, Hōkūleʻa was formally greeted the next day, June 6, with a traditional ceremonial welcome by First Nations (Native American tribes) from the area followed by a traditional Hawaiian ohana, or awa ceremony, by Hui Kipoepe of New York. Hula halau from New York and Hawai’i marked the historic occasion with performances.

On June 8, World Oceans Day, Hōkūleʻa voyaged around the tip of Manhattan and up the East River where she docked across from United Nations headquarters as a focal point for World Oceans Day events hosted by the UN that evening. The Empire State Building was lit up in colors of white, blue and purple, representing the different layers of the ocean, to bring awareness to all within sight of New York’s quintessential icon.

The mission of the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage is to engage all of Island Earth in practicing how to live sustainably while sharing Polynesian culture, learning from the past and from each other, creating global relationships and discovering the wonders of the precious place we call home.

Hōkūleʻa’s mission and World Oceans Day offered an opportunity to raise global awareness of the benefits we derive from our oceans and the current challenges we face in connection with them – a perfect tie-in to Outrigger’s global conservation initiative, OZONE (short for Outrigger’s ZONE), which focuses on protecting coral reefs. Themed “Healthy Oceans, Healthy Planet,” World Oceans Day emphasized our individual and collective responsibility to interact sustainably with oceans in order to meet current needs without compromising those of future generations.

As a longstanding partner of PVS, Outrigger Resorts was pleased to host media during Hōkūleʻa ceremonies aboard Blue Note’s yacht. My daughter Bitsy Kelley (Outrigger’s vice president of corporate communications) was on board to discuss Outrigger’s OZONE initiative and our efforts, combined with those of PVS, to perpetuate the health and vitality of the land, sea and inhabitants of the living world, and the Hawaiian concept of mālama ʻāina: caring for Earth’s natural resources.

Mahalo to our partner Blue Note Jazz Club for the use of its yacht for media, PVS members and Hōkūleʻa supporters.

Dr. Richard Kelley

Bitsy Kelley represents Outrigger at Hōkūleʻa’s historic arrival to NYC

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global movement for a more sustainable world. Her quest is in line with the Outrigger value “Place” – to protect, care for and live in harmony with the land in the destinations where we do business. As we continue to grow globally and involve our guests in this important effort, we can be proud to be doing our part.

As her journey continues, so will Outrigger’s ongoing support and our efforts to share the message of Mālama Honua, “to care for our Island Earth.” We wish her safe sailing through 2017 as a new generation of navigators takes the helm and guides her back home to Hawai‘i after circumnavigating the globe. A hui hou. 58

The Outrigger Resorts flag flies off the bow of Blue Note’s yacht as Hōkūleʻa sails into North Cove Marina

Two worlds come together

Bitsy Kelley and Greg Shaw