

Kialoa Student Paddle Award

From a young age I learned to appreciate and respect this place I am able to call home. Being born and raised on the island of O‘ahu, I found my happiness in the island lifestyle. I am fortunate to have parents that see the value in what the ocean can teach us so the water has been an important aspect of my life since the very beginning.

I started paddling in fall of 2017 and it’s one of the best things I have done so far. When I first joined the sport I noticed lots of similarities between paddling and hula. Prior to joining paddling, I had been dancing hula for 10 years. Hula and paddling share the same cultural as well as mental characteristics. When it came to getting to know more about paddling, I had an easy time adjusting and respecting what my coaches were trying to instill in us. As I became more familiar with paddling, it made me appreciate both of my sports more because they go hand in hand.

Laulima, lokahi, and ha’a’aha are all values that have been a foundation for my everyday life. Laulima and lokahi is to have cooperation and be unified. Personally I feel these are the most crucial to remember while paddling. In a boat of 6 individuals the bond needs to be “pili”. In the boat I see paddling as a dance,

timing is everything. You can have the best paddlers but without the strong bond and the togetherness, the boat will not work sufficiently.

Ha'a'aha or humility is one of the greatest lessons paddling has taught me. When paddling on the water and especially in open ocean, it is important to remember that you are in no comparison to mother nature. The ocean is an unpredictable place that can throw anything at you so it is important to be 'eleu (aware). Whether it be a change in winds, or a back set that can take you out in an instant, you should respect the ocean.

Paddling is a physical sport like no other. One of the many benefits of paddling is how active it keeps me. It may not seem like it, but paddling is a full body sport.

While in the boat, from the top of your head down to the tip of your toes are paddling. Having good "ola" is always important, and I found a way to keep healthy without it feeling like a job.

The most important and my personal favorite values of paddling are ohana and le'ale'a. Ohana and le'ale'a are what keep me coming back to practice, even after brutal practices that may have left me feeling discouraged. Yes paddling is one of the toughest sports, but it's definitely worth it if you enjoy who you paddle with. My younger brother and I paddle together, but I also feel like I have so many

other siblings, aunties, and uncles even if they may not be biological. There are so many great memories I have even on regular practice days and I owe that all to my paddling ohana. There is never a dull moment while you paddle with the people you love.

Paddling has taught me lots of things that I can apply to my everyday life. This sport has allowed me to grow as an individual and I am forever thankful to my coaches and the sport of paddling itself.

