



Newswatch
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SHINING STARS

Kahakui wins environmentalist honor

Hawaiian outrigger canoe paddler and environmentalist Donna Kahiwaokawailani "Kahiwa" Kahakui was honored this month as the U.S. winner of an international award recognizing women who do good things for the environment.

Kahakui was the American first-prize winner in the Yves Rocher Foundation's "Women of the Earth" awards, which recognized women who have made significant contributions to preserving nature. She attended the foundation's award ceremony in France earlier this month.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann proclaimed March 23 Donna Kahakui Day, and the state Legislature also recognized her work.

Kahakui is the founder of Kai Makana, which translates as "gift from the sea," an organization dedicated to the educating people about preserving the ocean and marine life. Projects have included beach and reef cleanups, educational events and awareness-raising events. Kahakui has made multiple long-distance paddles in a one-person outrigger canoe to draw attention to Kai Makana's programs and its goal of protecting the ocean.

Her paddles have been in the Hawaiian Islands, Tahiti, New Zealand and New York. More about the Kai Makana program can be seen at www.kaimakana.org.