



Uplifting the Nation

Hui Mālama Ola Nā 'Ōiwi
Native Hawaiian Health Care System

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND ALASKAN MEN "TALK STORY"
Men's Cultural and Programmatic Exchange Finally Happens

Summer's coming a little early for 9 men visiting Hawaii from Anchorage, Alaska. They are part of Southcentral Foundation's "Family Wellness Warriors Initiative" program. They will be visiting the island of Hawai'i through a goodwill exchange program with men from a Native Hawaiian men's health initiative, the Kaho'okane Project, coordinated by Hui Mālama Ola Nā 'Ōiwi.

Hui Mālama Ola Nā 'Ōiwi, the federally established Native Hawaiian Health Care System for the island of Hawai'i, will be hosting these Alaskan visitors to share cultural ideas and practices that address issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse, and the role of indigenous men in today's society.

"I had a chance to visit Alaska over five years ago, and was moved by the positive and creative programs started through this men's group," said Kaloa Robinson, Chief Executive Officer of Hui Mālama Ola Nā 'Ōiwi. "Many parallels can be drawn between challenges indigenous Alaskan men and Native Hawaiian men deal with. We all believe that culture plays a significant role in helping us find our ways to being more positive role-models to the next generation of native men."

"Being that voyaging played a significant role in the history and lives of Hawaiian men, we have experienced success in proving the positive impact this makes in their lives," mentioned Kaleo Pilago, Director of Hui Mālama's Kaho'okāne Project. "In addition to getting on the canoe, participants learn about protocol, genealogy, and spiritual aspects of cultural practices. Both the Alaskan and Hawaiian men feel spirituality helps us all stay on track to understanding our personal responsibilities, *kuleana*, to our communities."

Part of the itinerary during the Alaskan Men's visit includes learning lua exercises, breathing techniques, and 'oli. They will experience techniques incorporated into the Kaho'okane after-care, substance abuse treatment program, as well as visiting significant cultural sites such as the Pu'ukohola Heiau National Park.

Somewhere during the warm months in Alaska, participants from the Kaho'okāne Project will be hosted in Anchorage to understand what cultural aspects they use in dealing with similar issues of domestic abuse and alcoholism. "It's always exciting when men get to talk story about men's issues," said Robinson. "Both our cultures will benefit greatly and realize the many similarities we have in common, and moreover, how we all can become not only better men, but also better husbands, fathers, sons, and so on."

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If you'd like additional information involving these programs, or to visit the planned activities of the week, please call Kaloa Robinson at 990-2442 or e-mail Kaloa: kaloa@huimalamahawaii.com