

Maui Film Festival *Wailea*

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EDDIE AIKAU AND NAINOA THOMPSON TO RECEIVE VISIONARY AWARD AT 2013 MAUI FILM FESTIVAL AT WAILEA

Wailea, HI (May 28, 2013) – **Eddie Aikau**, represented by his family, and **Nainoa Thompson** will receive 2013 Maui Film Festival Visionary Awards, it was announced today by Barry Rivers, Director of the event, which will be held June 12-16, 2013, at the Wailea Resort in Maui. The Maui Film Festival Visionary Award is being presented to this year's honorees for living lives beyond limits, outside of fear. The awards will be presented at the Celestial Cinema located at the Wailea Gold & Emerald Golf Course on June 12, 2013 before the screening of *HAWAIIAN: THE LEGEND OF EDDIE AIKAU*. Tickets and passes are available at www.mauifilmfestival.com.

"The Maui Film Festival is deeply touched to have the privilege to present 2013 Visionary Awards, given previously to only H.H The 14th Dai'i Lama, to both the Aikau 'ohana in memory of Eddie Aikau and to Nainoa Thompson," Said Rivers. "Both men have helped guide not only the mission of the Maui Film Festival, but even more importantly, people all over the world to navigate their personal life journeys in service to the great good."

Aikau is one of the most respected names in surfing. He was the first lifeguard at Waimea Bay on the island of Oahu. He saved many lives and became well known as a big-wave surfer. Aikau was a true symbol of Aloha. Born on the island of Maui, Aikau later moved to O'ahu with his family in 1959. In 1968, he became the first lifeguard hired by the City & County of Honolulu to work on the North Shore. Not one life was lost while he served as lifeguard at Waimea Bay. Aikau braved surf that often reached 20 feet high or more to make a rescue. He became very famous for surfing the big Hawaiian surf and won several surfing awards including First Place at the prestigious 1977 Duke Kahanamoku Invitational Surfing Championship. The local saying, "Eddie Would Go," refers to his stoke to take on big waves that other surfers would shy away from and his courage to make a rescue in impossible situations. Aikau became involved in perpetuating his Hawaiian heritage. In 1976, the Polynesian Voyaging Society sailed the Hokule'a on a successful 30-day, 2,500-mile journey following the ancient route of the Polynesian migration between the Hawaiian and Tahitian islands. In 1978, a second voyage of the traditional sailing canoe was planned. At 31 years of age, Aikau was selected for this voyage as a crewmember. The Hokule'a left the Hawaiian Islands on March 16, 1978. The double-hulled voyaging canoe developed a leak in one of the hulls and later capsized in stormy weather about twelve miles south of the island of Molokai. In an attempt to get to land to save his crew and the Hokule'a, Aikau paddled toward Lanai on his surfboard. Hours later a commercial airplane spotted the Hokule'a and the rest of the crew were soon rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard. Aikau was missing at sea. Despite great search efforts he was never seen again.

Over the past 35 years, **Thompson** has inspired and led a revival of the traditional arts associated with long-distance ocean voyaging in Hawai'i and throughout Polynesia. He developed and teaches a system of wayfinding, or non-instrument navigation, synthesizing traditional principles of ancient Pacific navigation and modern science. He is the first Hawaiian to practice the art of wayfinding on long distance ocean voyages since such voyaging ended in Hawai'i around the 14th century. Thompson continues to develop and implement a multi-disciplined, culturally relevant educational program focused on teaching children of Hawai'i the values of Polynesian voyaging. The program

emphasizes both traditional and modern scientific knowledge about the environment, and stresses the importance of eco-cultural principles for ensuring the conservation of resources and a safe, healthy, sustainable future for Hawai'i and Island Earth. Thompson is the recipient of numerous community awards, including the Unsung Hero of Compassion, which was in 2012 awarded by the Dalai Lama on behalf of the organization Wisdom in Action; and the Native Hawaiian Education Association's Manomano Ka 'Ike (Depth and Breadth of Knowledge) Educator of the Year Award. Thompson is a graduate of Punahou School and the University of Hawai'i, where he earned a BA in Ocean Science.

ABOUT THE MAUI FILM FESTIVAL

Barry and Stella Rivers founded the Maui Film Festival in 2000 as a jewel box festival committed to the celebration and exploration of cinema at the intersection of smart and heart. The Festival's mission has always been to share exceptional cinematic vision in the service of compassionate and transformative storytelling with a diverse audience who call Maui both their home and their home away from home.

Since its inception, the Maui Film Festival has screened more than 550 narrative and documentary feature length and short films from around the world to a diverse audience of industry luminaries, filmmakers, cineastes and movie lovers of all ages. Over the last 13 years the festivals has been fortunate to honor such talents as Joan Allen, Elizabeth Banks, Adrien Brody, Pierce Brosnan, Tim Burton, Claire Danes, Zooey Deschanel, Clint Eastwood, Zac Efron, Andrew Garfield, Jake Gyllenhaal, Woody Harrelson, Garrett Hedlund, Helen Hunt, Mike Myers, Dennis Quaid, Owen Wilson, Olivia Wilde, among many others.

The 2013 Maui Film Festival Wailea is made possible by the tremendous and continued support of a number of local, national and international organizations. As of May 20, 2013, this year's Official Sponsors include: Signature Sponsors: Hawaii Tourism Authority, Hawaiian Airlines, Praise Genius, SunRun; Major Sponsors: Andaz Wailea Resort, Destination Resorts Hawaii, The Fairmont Kea Lani Maui, Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea, Grand Wailea, Hotel Wailea, The Shops At Wailea, Wailea Beach Marriott Resort and Spa, Wailea Gateway Center, Wailea Golf Club, Wailea Beach Villas; Community Sponsors: Enterprise, Rent-A-Car, MediSpa Maui, Rising Sun Solar + Electric, Whole Foods; Sponsorship Ohana: Capische?, Mana Foods, Maui No Ka Oi Magazine, PAU Maui Vodka, Spago, Stella Artois; Industry / Sponsors: Getty Images, Modern Luxury Hawaii, Reel Maui / Maui Film Office, Picture Mill, WHERE Hawaii, The Works Creative Group; Kama'aina Ohana: Akina Aloha Tours, Art to Print, County Of Maui Office of Economic Development, Gannon's, Hale Ho'Ho'omana Spa, KAOI Radio Group, Maui Economic Development Board, Maui Arts & Cultural Center, The Maui News, MayaRivers.com, Paradise Self-Storage, Paradise Television Network, RiversToTheSea.com, RiversToTheSurf.com, TEDxMaui, Wailea Resort Association.

The 2013 Maui Film Festival at Wailea will be held June 12-16, 2013. For additional information, call the Film Festival Headquarters at 808-579-9244 or visit www.mauifilmfestival.com.

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