

Hawaii 24/7

Hawaiian Youth Leader Speaks at APEC Voices of the Future Summit

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Taylor Wainani Traub proudly represented Hawaiian youth and took another step toward her dream of becoming a leader on her island. The 17-year-old student from West Hawaii Explorations Academy was a featured speaker at the prestigious APEC Voices of the Future Summit.

Hosted by the Kamehameha Schools, the APEC Voices Summit Opening Ceremonies began with a procession of the 120 youth delegates from 21 countries.

Impressive Hawaiian cultural dances were performed, accompanied by native instruments and the Kamehameha choir sang beautiful Hawaiian songs. Presentations by dignitaries included Gov. Neil Abercrombie, Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle, Congresswoman Mazie Hirono and APEC Chairman James Soh encouraged delegates to maximize this learning opportunity, and develop friends and collaborations between their countries.

The APEC Voices conference's objectives are to provide a platform for interaction and networking for youths from the 21 APEC economies that will encourage mutual understanding and cooperation; encourage the active participation of young people on APEC-related issues and policies; provide learning opportunities for youth to interact with APEC leaders and business leaders.

Youth delegates presented Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, United States of America and Vietnam.

The APEC CEO Summit begins Friday with 1,300 participants and world leaders including President Obama and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Founded in 1989, APEC aims to support sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the Asia Pacific region.

Keynote speaker Nainoa Thompson of the Polynesian Voyaging Society shared his inspiring journey with the Hokulea and renewing pride in the Hawaiian culture through his far-reaching educational programs to schools and the community.

His next three-year adventure around the world begins in 2012. In April, he will launch the statewide journey at the Big Island of Hawaii.

Moderated by Teng Theng Dar, ABAC Singapore, the APEC Voices panel featured Noel Gould, VTM Foundation International, Marianne Larned, the Stone Soup Leadership Institute and Wainani Traub.

Traub shared her dream for her life, her island and for the world and spoke about her life-changing experience at the Institute's 7th Annual Youth Leadership Summit for Sustainable Development.

During this weeklong intensive training, she worked along side youth leaders from five other islands who are developing a vision and a plan for creating sustainable development projects with their communities.

"I've always been a proud Hawaiian," she said. "Sharing my culture, my traditions, my island's green initiatives with other islands inspired me to want to share them with others."

Traub will help lead the Institute's Sustainable Hawaii Youth Leadership Initiative in partnership with the West Hawaii Explorations Academy's Green Team. She closed with a Hawaiian proverb "OÂ- lelo Noeau: Malia paha he iki unu, paa ka pohaku nui aole e kaa: Perhaps it is the small stone that keep the big rock from rolling down."

Larned spoke of the vision and actions of youth from other islands including the Martha's Vineyard Youth Leadership Initiative, Vieques Youth Leadership Initiative, Virgin Gorda Youth Leadership Initiative and Nantucket Students for Sustainability.

"We are pleased that one of the three APEC CEO Summit priorities is promoting green growth," she said.

Larned encouraged the youth delegates to give of their time and talents to building a better world. She also challenged them to invite their countries leaders to join The Giving Pledge. Championed by Warren Buffet and Bill Gates, there are 65 billionaires who've pledged half their wealth to philanthropy.

The Institute is a 501(c)3 educational organization that develops tools, programs, Youth Leadership Summits and youth-community initiatives using the educational curriculum, Stone Soup for the World: Life-Changing Stories of Everyday Heroes to build a more sustainable world.

In 2008, the Institute presented at the APEC Youth Summit in Peru the VYLI 2020 Report on Sustainable Development developed by youth leaders from the Institute's four-year bi-lingual demonstration project in Vieques, Puerto Rico.

Learn more:

Sustainable Hawai'i Youth Leadership Initiative shyli.org