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National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Honors Trisha Kēhaulani Watson

Trisha Kēhaulani Watson of Honolulu, Hawai'i, a volunteer at Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, was one of the 14 volunteers honored at the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's 11th Annual Leadership Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C., last week. The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is a private, non-profit organization that assists national marine sanctuaries with education and outreach programs designed to preserve, protect and promote meaningful opportunities for public interaction with these special places in our ocean and Great Lakes.

From serving on advisory councils, to removing marine debris, to documenting whale behavior and educating school children, volunteers for NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries perform a variety of critical functions and have donated more than one million hours of community service to help conserve the country's ocean and coastal treasures for future generations.

Watson serves as the Native Hawaiian representative on the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council and also serves as chair of the sanctuary's first Native Hawaiian subcommittee. Last year, Watson was responsible for bringing together a diverse group of experts to discuss ways to effectively incorporate Native Hawaiian cultural management practices and Western scientific knowledge into the sanctuary's management approach

"Dr. Watson has been a proactive volunteer, serving the sanctuary through her efforts to protect cultural and marine resources while ensuring that Native Hawaiian management practices are considered," said Malia Chow, sanctuary superintendent. "The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary is proud to recognize Trisha Kēhaulani Watson as our volunteer of the year."

"Dr. Watson has been an exemplary member of our Sanctuary Advisory Council – working countless hours to help move our management plan review process forward and providing innovative solutions to ensure that communities and agencies are working side-by-side to better manage Hawaii's marine resources," said Elia Herman, sanctuary co-manager, Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

The sanctuary is administered by a partnership of NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the State of Hawai'i through the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). The sanctuary works to protect humpback whales through research, education, conservation and stewardship. Join us on [Facebook](#).

DLNR's mission is to enhance, protect, conserve and manage Hawaii's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of visitors and the people of Hawai'i nei. Join us on [Facebook](#).

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our other [social media channels](#).

On the Web:

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary: <http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov>

NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources: <http://dlnr.hawaii.gov/>