



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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Hawaii's "In The Wake of Giants" Wins at BLUE Ocean Film Festival
Film Chronicles Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Whale Disentanglements

MONTEREY, CA, August 30, 2010 – "In the Wake of Giants" by Akua Films won the BLUE Ocean Film Festival Award for the category of "National Marine Sanctuary Short."

BLUE is a one-of-a-kind film industry and community event bringing together films, filmmakers and leaders in ocean research and conservation. More than 100 films were screened at the six-day event, and "In the Wake of Giants" received one of twenty awards given to exceptional ocean films from around the world.

Grass Valley, CA documentary filmmaker Lou Douros wrote and directed the film, narrated by Ed Lyman, whale rescue expert with NOAA Hawaiian Islands National Marine Sanctuary. The film follows the sanctuary's whale rescue efforts as they work with their trained network partners to disentangle humpback whales trapped in ropes and fishing nets.

NOAA's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary's rescue experts are some of the few that are experienced and authorized to free large whales of entangling gear.

Much of the footage showing the dangerous nature of the effort was filmed within arm's reach of the distressed mammals from helmet-mounted cameras. The 40-ton mammals often drag gear for thousands of miles to Hawai'i and the sanctuary where more than 10,000 humpback whales migrate every year. Entanglement is one of the primary human-caused sources of serious injury and mortality to whales and dolphins with an estimated 300,000 dying world-wide every year.

"The idea to make this film came from Mara Kerr and Mark DiOrio, the Executive Producers of In the Wake of Giants," said Douros, who has 30 years of experience in bringing stories to life through film and video. "Mara had just finished writing her novel, Oceanus. When she met with the sanctuary's rescue staff who use modified whaling techniques from inflatable boats to save whales, she really wanted to tell their story too."

DiOrio works with the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, and proceeds from the film will support the HIHWNMS whale entanglement efforts. Information may be found on www.akuafilms.com.

Douros' eldest son, Blaise, an accomplished composer for independent films and computer games, scored the film, which also was a finalist in "Original Musical Score" and "Emerging Underwater Filmmaker."

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