

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 21, 2012



## NIU FESTIVAL AT GRAND WAILEA ANNOUNCES LINE-UP

*Hawaiian Cultural Celebration of Coconuts  
to Benefit Hui O Wa'a Kaulua*

### «Organization»

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WAILEA, HAWAII---The Grand Wailea will welcome Maui's inaugural Niu Festival from 10 am to 3 pm, on Saturday, July 21. Niu is the Hawaiian word for coconut; the festival celebrates the cultural importance of the coconut plant to the Hawaiian people and its prominence in the area now called Wailea. Festival proceeds will support the nonprofit *Hui O Wa'a Kaulua*, the only Maui organization with a traditional double hull voyaging canoe. Admission is free.

Pre-festival activities begin on Friday, July 20 at 11 am with an Awa Ceremony on the Chapel Lawn, commemorating Lolopua (also called Lahaina Noon). As a sacred celebration of the sun's apex, participation in the ritual is by invitation only. Spectators will be invited to taste awa immediately following ceremony.

At 7 pm in Haleakalā Ballroom 2&3, there will be a free screening of *Papa Mau: The Wayfinder*, a feature-length documentary about the revival of non-instrument navigation in Hawai'i, rooted in the knowledge of Mau Piailug, a native from the tiny atoll of Satawal in Micronesia. Filmmaker Anthony Na'alehu will answer questions from the audience following the film.

On Saturday, July 21, at 10 am, the festival opens with chants, cultural protocol and a welcome from Maui mayor Alan Arakawa and Grand Wailea managing director Matt Bailey.

Entertainment begins at 10:15 am with musicians from the UH-Maui Institute for Hawaiian Music. At 11:30 am, Kevin & Sheldon Brown will share their special style of Kī hō'alu (Hawaiian slack key). Dancers from Tihati Productions will shake things up with an exciting 'ōte' a (Tahitian dance) performance at 12:45 pm. Headliner, Hawaiian falsetto singer Kamakakehau Fernandez, will close the festival at 2 pm. All performances will be on the Main Stage of the Molokini Lawn.

Maui's top amateur chefs will battle it out at the Coconut Cook-off with sample dishes to be rated by Celebrity judges: Pamela Young of KITV; Chef Alan Wong, and Grand Wailea's executive chef Eric Faivre. Judging will begin at 11:30 am and winners will be announced at 1:45 pm. First prize in each category (entree

(more)

or dessert) includes the Royal Niu Treatment for Two at Spa Grande, weekend accommodations for two at Grand Wailea, Dinner for Two at Humuhumunukunukuapua‘a oceanfront restaurant. Judging will take place in the Cook-Off Tent, winners announced on the Main Stage. Entry forms can be downloaded at [www.niufestival.com](http://www.niufestival.com).

Attendees will learn from experts in their field during three Lecture/Demonstrations to be held in Humuhumunukunukuapua‘a Restaurant. Hatota Tehiva will speak at 10:30 am about many uses of coconut throughout Polynesia; at 12 noon Anela Benson will discuss the symbiotic relationship between canoes and coconuts; and at 1 pm, Kahunali‘i Bula Logan will teach about the many medicinal properties of the coconut plant. Interactive cultural demonstrations by some of Maui’s most respected cultural practitioners will be ongoing throughout the day on Molokini Lawn. Guests are encouraged to learn coconut frond weaving, sennit-braiding and have a try at traditional shucking.

Grand Wailea’s coconut-themed food booths will keep attendees well-fed throughout the festival. *Hui O Wa‘a Kaulua* will sell coconut water *au natural* (in the shell) and offer outrigger canoe rides as fundraisers. The Coconut Marketplace, open all day, will feature Hawaii-made coconut arts and crafts by local artisans.

The Hawaiian Cultural Advisory Council of Grand Wailea is providing cultural direction for the festival. Niu Festival’s host sponsor is Grand Wailea with support from the County of Maui. Supporting sponsors are the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association and Pyramid Project Management. ‘Ohana sponsors include Tihati Productions, Anheuser Busch, Ala Lani Bath & Body, Swank Audiovisuals, and Munekiyo & Hiraga. E Ola Pono, LLC is the event producer. For more information, visit [www.niufestival.com](http://www.niufestival.com) or phone Kainoa Horcajo at (808) 283-9419.

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