



NEWS RELEASE

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Polynesian Voyaging Society and RoboNation Partner to Bring Awareness to Maritime Environment via Technology and Robotics

(HONOLULU, HI) – The Polynesian Voyaging Society and RoboNation, an international robotics organization, are working together to use an upcoming robotic boat competition to raise awareness of the maritime environment and demonstrate how technology can be used to care for and better understand the ocean. The Maritime RobotX Challenge, an international competition, will be held on Sand Island, Honolulu, Hawaii, Dec. 11-18, 2016. The competition requires university student teams to build autonomous robotic systems that operate in the maritime domain, while emphasizing the science and engineering of autonomy.

More than 200 students hailing from 13 universities in Australia, Singapore, Korea, Japan and the United States will compete in the second edition of RobotX. Student teams are required to use a common boat platform for the competition. They must outfit their boat with sensors, propulsion system, buoyancy pads and software, among other elements, in order to complete a multitude of maritime-related tasks.

Miki Tomita, director of the Polynesian Voyaging Society Learning Center, will address the student teams about how ancient technologies and perspectives like Polynesian wayfinding can help people understand and face the challenges of today's environment, and will discuss how initiatives such as RobotX can help change the course of the world and its maritime atmosphere.

“The relationship between RoboNation and the Polynesian Voyaging Society is a natural pairing, as PVS has a longstanding reputation of caring for the ocean, the island and its inhabitants,” said Miki Tomita, director of the PVS Learning Center. “In its quest to connect the ancient art and science of voyaging with modern-day ocean protection and wayfinding, PVS is creating a community of people passionate about exploration, innovation and conservation,” Tomita added.

On the partnership, Daryl Davidson, Executive Director of RoboNation said, “All RoboNation events focus on educating students about the use of robotic technology to better our world in a variety of ways. RobotX is unique in that the robotic boats are larger and better suited to open-ocean activities. The students in RobotX 2016 will not only gain knowledge through the

competition but they will have the opportunity to understand and embrace the broader global mission represented by PVS. We want them to leave Hawaii inspired to more effectively use the technology to protect the ocean.”

The public is encouraged to attend. Visitors will have the opportunity to interact with student teams, watch the competition and explore the field of robotics, and participate in fun and engaging activities like SeaPerch, SeaGlide and THINKit. The best days to attend are Saturday, Dec. 17, and Sunday, Dec. 18.

To learn more about the event, visit robotx.org

About RoboNation

RoboNation was created by the AUVSI Foundation, a nonprofit, charitable organization established to support the educational initiatives of the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI).

RoboNation is a robotics community built to represent the force behind the next generation of builders, creators and engineers. RoboNation reaches all levels of robotics by offering a wide range of educational and interactive opportunities. From hands-on educational programs to multi-disciplinary robotics competitions, students create and experiment while learning; they wonder what is possible, and test the limits of the imagination. (www.robonation.org)

About Polynesian Voyaging Society

The Polynesian Voyaging Society was founded in 1973 on a legacy of Pacific Ocean exploration, seeking to perpetuate the art and science of traditional Polynesian voyaging and the spirit of exploration through experiential educational programs that inspire students and their communities to respect and care for themselves, one other, and their natural and cultural environments.

Hokulea first set out on the Pacific Ocean in 1975. Since then, she has traveled to multiple countries across the globe, reawakening a Hawaiian cultural renaissance in the process through reviving the traditional art of wayfinding - navigating the sea guided by nature using the ocean swells, stars, and wind. She is currently on her Malama Honua Worldwide Voyage. Voyaging from Hawaii in 2013 with an estimated sail conclusion date of June 2017, the Worldwide Voyage is taking the iconic sailing vessels Hokulea around Island Earth and her sister canoe Hikianalia around the Pacific and the Hawaiian Islands to grow a global movement toward a more sustainable world. The voyage seeks to engage all of Island Earth - practicing how to live sustainable while sharing Polynesian culture, learning from the past and from each other, creating global relationships, and discovering the wonders of the precious place we call home.

Since departing Hawaiian waters in May 2014, Hokulea has sailed more than 26,000 nautical miles and made stops in 14 countries and 70 ports, weaving a "Lei of Hope" around the world. Along the way, more than 200 volunteer crew members have helped to sail Hokulea to spread the message of malama honua (or taking care of Island Earth) by promoting sustainability and

environmental consciousness, as well as exchanging ideas with the countries she has visited. To learn more about Hokulea and this historic voyage, view: <https://youtu.be/tRHtu8rCAC0>

For more information about the Polynesian Voyaging Society and the Worldwide Voyage, visit www.hokulea.com or find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [Google+](#).

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