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Andrea M. Bachmann

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The Island Earth Field Studio:

A High School Summer Program on Polynesian Voyaging in Hawaii

Andrea Bachmann

PIM 78

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of  
International Education at the SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

May 8, 2020

Adviser: Dr. Sora Friedman

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Student Name: Andrea Bachmann

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## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	5
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>My Story .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Historical and Cultural Context .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Program Provider .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Rationale .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Theoretical Foundations.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Adolescent Development .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Place-Based Education .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Needs Assessment.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Surveys – Continental United States .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Interviews – Continental United States.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Themes – Continental United States .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Interviews – Hawaii .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Themes – Hawaii .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Shared Themes – Continental United States and Hawaii.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Conclusions.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Limitations.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Program Overview .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Goals and Objectives .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Curriculum and Sequence.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Pre-Departure .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Oahu: Introductions and Grounding .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Maui: Experience and Connections.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Trip Closing.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Post-Trip Engagement.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Staffing.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Marketing and Recruitment .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Website and School Partners .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Targeted Email Outreach.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Face-to-Face and Virtual Connections.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Participant Selection .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Logistics .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Health and Safety .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Vetting Vendors and Services .....</b>	<b>38</b>

<b>Communications .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Health and Medical.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Supervision and Student Behavior .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Risk Management Training .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Program-Specific Considerations.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Crisis Management .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Budget and Scholarships .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Evaluation Plan .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Pre- and Post-Program Surveys .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Debrief Interviews and Informal Evaluation Data .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Final Report.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Conclusions and Implications .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Appendix A: Continental U.S. Adult Survey.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Appendix B: Continental U.S. Interview Guide .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Appendix C: Hawaii Ground Partner Interview Guide.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Appendix D: Program Leader Job Description and Qualifications .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Appendix E: Program Planning Timeline.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Appendix F: Sample Program Application Page and Criteria for Selection.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Appendix G: Budget and Budget Notes.....</b>	<b>78</b>

### Abstract

The Island Earth Field Studio is a ten-day program for high school students to learn about Polynesian voyaging in Hawaii as a framework to understand non-Western knowledge systems. The program design is grounded in research on the historical significance of voyaging and informed by current literature on adolescent development and place-based pedagogy.

To further refine the program, a needs assessment was conducted using a combination of surveys and interviews with parents and educators in the continental United States (mainland) as well as interviews with local partners in Hawaii. The assessment revealed that cultural learning and community building were viewed by potential mainland participants as the most beneficial elements of the program, and the focus on Polynesian voyaging made it stand out as a unique experience. Correspondingly, Hawaiian ground partners viewed the program as a worthy opportunity to share their mission of cultural and environmental sustainability.

Based on recommendations from the needs assessment, the program will recruit a diverse cohort of students with strong interest in indigenous culture and sustainability. The travel program will begin on the island of Oahu, where students will get to know the natural environment, history, and cultural context of Hawaii. Then on Maui, a specific hands-on focus on voyaging integrated with exposure to a wider variety of Hawaiian community initiatives will lend both depth and breadth to students' insights. As students gain knowledge and skills throughout the program, they will work together to develop ideas about how to use what they've learned to build stronger and more sustainable communities. This program design is intended to align with the mission of local partners while also allowing space for students to process their own growth as individuals and as a community of peers.

## **Introduction**

### **My Story**

I first learned to sail with my father on a simple two-person boat on a small lake in Missouri. He taught me enough that I was able to lead sailing clinics as a summer camp counselor a few years later, when I was 16. I worked three summers at that camp, with about a fifth of that time spent on sailboats, eventually advancing from leading a few clinics to overseeing the whole (albeit tiny and under-resourced) sailing operation at the camp. Sailing for me was challenging, empowering, and freeing. On the water I developed problem-solving skills and self-confidence unmatched in most other areas of my life. This stemmed in part from my heightened sense of connection to the lake and the environment around it; I knew where it got rocky or shallow under the surface, and when the water was high or low. Over time, I could read the ripples on the surface and know what kind of speed I'd get or which boat might be useless that day. My sense of security was also reinforced by building community - I formed lasting friendships with my fellow boathouse counselors as we spent long hours together working on the docks or enjoying the peace and sunlight out on the water. I grew immensely in that place, and it solidified my lifelong love for sailing.

Fast forward to last year, some fifteen or so years later, when I found new inspiration while leading a high school travel program in Hawaii. My students had come to the islands from New York to study Native perspectives on science and the natural world. As part of that objective, we learned about Polynesian voyaging, and the recent movement to revive this tradition among many Hawaiians and other Pacific islanders through sailing expeditions using traditional navigation and wayfinding. This resonated with me. I felt a sense of empathy for the way that sailing can be so deeply rooted in family and community tradition, so strongly attuned to the environment, and ultimately a great source of pride. In a similar way that I had experienced personal empowerment and relationship-building through sailing, Hawaiians today are working on a broader scale, within a much more complex political

legacy, to strengthen cultural autonomy and community identity through voyaging programs in Hawaii.

Realizing the potential for voyaging to serve as a meaningful framework to unpack complex issues, I began to wonder: How can I create a program that brings young people from the continental United States to Hawaii to learn about Polynesian voyaging, non-Western worldviews, and the human connection to the environment? This program design is my answer to this question within the scope of my professional position as Director of Education at Atlas Workshops, a third-party program provider.

### **Historical and Cultural Context**

The significance of Polynesian voyaging in Hawaii is rooted in ancient history. Early Hawaiians were part of a vast diaspora, the Polynesians, who began to spread across the Pacific from New Guinea beginning in 1500 BCE. These first voyagers expanded their territory gradually over centuries, sailing eastward into unknown waters to discover and settle new islands: first Fiji, then Samoa, Tahiti, and Rapa Nui (Easter Island), making it to Hawaii by 400 CE and finally Aotearoa (New Zealand) by 1000 CE. By that point, the Polynesian diaspora covered an area of 25 million square kilometers, with long-distance sea trade taking place between islands on a regular basis (Davis, 2009). Navigators – those who had been trained to find their way sailing on the ocean – held positions of high prestige in Polynesian society. They passed their knowledge from generation to generation through oral tradition and rigorous training of young apprentices, usually from father to son (Davis, 2009; Evans, 2011). Ocean voyaging was an essential part of Polynesian (and therefore Hawaiian) life, and the ability to traverse the Pacific was foundational to a proud, thriving civilization.

When Westerners (Europeans and North Americans) first made contact with Polynesians, a different story emerged. Many historians begin this narrative with Captain James Cook, the legendary British seaman and the first European to make contact with



Hawaii in the late 1700s. Cook had first spent time in Tahiti, where he met a navigator by the name of Tupaia, and was notably impressed by the native's abilities to recall maps of over 100 islands of the Pacific from memory, and to navigate great distances on the open ocean without any physical tools (Davis, 2009). Cook further noted strong linguistic similarities between nearly all the Pacific islands he encountered, and it became clear that there was a strong relationship between them. However, despite the obvious cultural ties and impressive seafaring skills demonstrated by the native Polynesians, Cook and other Westerners found it unbelievable that the islands of Hawaii and others like them had been settled intentionally, across incredibly formidable seas and unforgiving headwinds, without modern technology or a written language.

A theory developed among Westerners that the native people had come to inhabit these Pacific islands accidentally, by drifting off course, or as one 19<sup>th</sup>-century American missionary put it, "just as 'trees from foreign countries repeatedly land on their shores'" (Vowell, 2011, p. 25). This theory remained viable in Western scientific circles for centuries, further popularized in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the work of Norwegian zoologist Thor Heyerdahl, who famously, in 1947, set a balsa raft adrift off the coast of Peru on a 101-day journey to Tahiti to support his claim that the Pacific islanders had in fact drifted in from the east (Davis, 2009). His adventure yielded the best-selling 1950 novel *Kon-Tiki* and was made into an award-nominated major motion picture as recently as 2013 (Transmission Films, 2013). It was in direct rebuttal to the popular and scientific misconception fed by Heyerdahl and his predecessors that the Polynesian Voyaging Society was born.

**Voyaging and the Hawaiian Renaissance.** The Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) was established in Honolulu in 1973, in the midst of a broader movement often referred to as the Hawaiian Renaissance. Hawaiians had experienced almost a century of cultural suppression under American control; after the U.S. overthrow in 1893, the Hawaiian

language was banned in schools, and other customs like dance, music, sacred rituals, and small-scale aquaculture were discouraged or diluted by powerful American missionaries and businessmen. Generations later, Hawaiians in the 1960s and 70s had begun to collectively renew a sense of pride and ownership over their heritage by reviving these near-lost traditions (Hawaii State Department of Education [HIDOE], n.d.; Nakata, 2017). PVS joined the renaissance, setting out to prove that native people had deliberately, not accidentally, sailed across open oceans to settle Hawaii from the west using the remarkable skills instilled through traditional voyaging (Davis, 2009).

Under the tutelage of one of the only remaining master navigators (wayfinders) in the Pacific, Mau Pialug of the tiny island of Satawal in Micronesia, PVS launched its mother ship, the Hokule'a, in 1975 (Karjala, Lodes, Noe, Sikkink, & Leigh, 2017). Mau taught his apprentices how to read the stars, sun, clouds, wind, waves, and wildlife in order to determine sail course and predict incoming weather. Every small detail in the sky or the water provides clues to a navigator, and Mau, through a lifetime of training by his elders and an intimate connection with the ocean, was said to be able to “conjure islands out of the sea just by holding a vision of them in his imagination” (Davis, 2009, p. 53). With his guidance, the Hokule'a successfully completed its first deep-sea voyage from Hawaii to Tahiti in 1976 with only the use of traditional wayfinding. The voyage provided the proof that Hawaiians and fellow Pacific Islanders had been looking for – that centuries ago, the people of Polynesia employed the knowledge of their ancestors to accomplish a navigating feat that surpassed the skill or even the imagination of any 18<sup>th</sup>-century (and many a 20<sup>th</sup>-century) Western mariner (Karjala et al., 2017). As Davis poetically explains, “The Hokule'a brought everything back to life, as if the wind itself were whispers coming forward in time” (2009, p. 62).

**Voyaging today.** The great achievement of the Hokule'a's first voyage heralded a new energy around wayfinding in Hawaii and across the Pacific. Mau Pialug agreed to train

younger Hawaiian navigators who were inspired by the mission, including Nainoa Thompson, who is now president of PVS (PVS, n.d.-a). PVS's legacy continues to grow, as more islands institute their own voyaging societies, more traditional ships (usually called canoes) are built, additional wayfinding apprentices are trained, and the Hokule'a continues to sail. Notably, the Hokule'a and its sister ship the Hikianalia accomplished a worldwide voyage circumnavigating the globe from 2014 to 2017, again using only traditional wayfinding techniques but this time with a stated higher purpose, "Malama Honua," meaning "to care for our Earth" (PVS, n.d.-b). This mantra extended PVS's foundations in cultural revival to recognize a universal need for environmental sustainability in order to maintain and strengthen community traditions around the world. PVS today continues to work toward Malama Honua through voyaging, education, and environmental stewardship (PVS, n.d.-c). The program proposed below seeks to align with this mission in partnership with the Polynesian Voyaging Society.

**Program Provider**

The mission of Atlas Workshops is to inspire creative engagement with the world by connecting people across cultures and nationalities, exploring and sharing ideas, and generating insights about complex issues and questions.

Currently, Atlas acts primarily in the role of third-party provider, partnering with schools and institutions in the United States to coordinate short-term (one- to two-week) educational travel programs for groups of between eight to fifty students (although most groups are closer to ten to twenty students). Programs have taken place in over 25 different countries spanning five continents, but are primarily concentrated in Europe. In Hawaii specifically, Atlas ran one high school program in spring 2019 and is tentatively planning to run its second in the spring of 2021.

Atlas has been in operation for seven years, and the volume of programming had grown significantly in that time – from an initial 2 to 5 programs per year, to 12 in 2018, 23 in 2019, and a projected 27 in 2020 – until an abrupt turn in February and March 2020, when the global spread of the COVID-19 virus led to the cancellation of the overwhelming majority of upcoming programs. Atlas is now in a phase of short-term re-evaluation. With the demand for high school-sponsored international travel expected to remain low in the coming school year due to lingering uncertainty and unpredictability, the leadership team has shifted focus to developing alternative regional and virtual program models.

One anticipated trend for 2021 is that high school parents and educators will find domestic travel programming more appealing as an option to mitigate some of the risks travelers experienced in the COVID-19 outbreak. While Hawaii is geographically far from the mainland, as a U.S. state it reduces the possibility of international quarantines, border closures, or restricted travel imposed by foreign government officials. Reliable medical care, if needed, is also typically easier to obtain in the United States without running into insurance issues or language barriers. Meanwhile the Hawaiian culture and island climate still offer a significantly different environment than other parts of the country, which is highly appealing to student travelers. These factors make a new program in Hawaii a viable option to explore for Atlas in the near future.

A second priority Atlas has identified in the short-term future is to devote more attention to establishing a “hub” network model. Hubs refer to places in the world where the company has cultivated particularly strong relationships, working regularly in partnership with locals to deliver programs and develop interesting strategies for addressing global issues. There is an expressed interest from the director in growing an Atlas hub in Hawaii; thus, a new program design for the islands is fitting with the company’s current objectives.

**Rationale**

A number of other educational travel providers currently offer high school travel programs in Hawaii for continental U.S. students (Adventure Student Travel, n.d.; Appleseed Expeditions, n.d.; Bold Earth, n.d.; EF Explore America, n.d.; National Geographic Student Expeditions, n.d.; Rein Teen Tours, n.d.; The Road Less Traveled, n.d.; Rustic Pathways, n.d.; Travel for Teens, n.d.; World Strides, n.d.). These fall broadly into two categories, with a lot of overlap between them: adventure travel, emphasizing outdoor activities and physical challenges; and traditional student travel, where the main challenge is to acquire and process new information or experiences. The latter are typically focused on environmental science, sightseeing, and often community service. All of these available programs advertise cultural learning to varying degrees, but in most cases their marketing materials pay significantly more attention to adventurous activities (e.g. surfing, snorkeling, zip-lining) or sight-seeing and tourism (e.g. landmarks, photo opportunities, shows, spectacles). Few programs for non-Hawaiian residents include sailing or voyaging, and those that do either do not make mention of cultural connections between sailing and voyaging (Bold Earth, n.d.), or only describe voyaging as a small piece of otherwise science-focused programming (Science Camps of America, 2020). This program design will address this gap in program focus, and will create a framework for significant, integrated cultural engagement throughout the program.

Voyaging summer programs do exist for local Hawaiian students in the form of different one-, two-, or four-week enrichment programs, offered through middle and high schools (Kamehameha Schools, 2020; Kohala Middle School, 2017; Punahou School, 2020). Nearly all of these programs are run in partnership with the same voyaging societies that the Atlas program would work with, the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) on Oahu and Hui O Wa'a Kaulua ("the Hui") on Maui. In addition, PVS and the Hui occasionally offer their own educational programs to local students (Polynesian Voyaging Society, n.d.-d). The proposed

Atlas program, however, would also provide opportunities for local students to share knowledge and ideas with peers from different backgrounds, gaining exposure to voyaging within a more national and global context. This program would be unique in that it offers a broader look at how voyaging can contribute to cultural and environmental sustainability both across the islands and around the world.

### **Theoretical Foundations**

As a program for high school students, the Island Earth Field Studio was designed in careful consideration of the developmental needs of this age group. Drawing from current research on adolescent health and psychology, the program design is further guided by place-based pedagogy to foster deep learning through a culturally appropriate curriculum.

#### **Adolescent Development**

According to guidelines published by McNeely and Blanchard (2009) at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, “At no other time except infancy do human beings pack so much development into such a short period [as adolescence]” (p.1). Adolescence is defined as the second decade of life, between the ages of 10 and 19. Beyond the obvious physical growth that young people experience during this stage, a significant amount of growth takes place inside the brain that drives changes in behavior and cognitive function.

UCLA Psychiatrist Dan Siegel explains that two important processes occur in the adolescent brain during the teenage years: pruning and myelination (Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, 2015). Pruning refers to the loss, or trimming, of seldom-used synapses and neurons that had built up in the brain throughout childhood. Myelination refers to the thickening of the protective layer between neurons that allows them to communicate more efficiently. Altogether, during adolescence, a young person physically sheds the parts of their brain they use the least so they can make room to strengthen and hone the areas they most want to reinforce. The structure of the brain changes, and it does so unevenly across the

brain. Steinberg (2008, as cited in McNeely & Blanchard, 2009, p. 22) notes that the limbic system, the center of emotion in the brain, develops much earlier in the teen years than the prefrontal cortex, the part associated with impulse control, long-term reasoning, and rational thinking. This asynchronous development may explain why adolescents, especially younger teens, sometimes behave in ways that confuse or frustrate adults. One example is that they often take more risks because their limbic system registers a higher reward in response to risk than that of an adult (McNeely & Blanchard, 2009).

As the pre-frontal cortex, and the brain as a whole, become stronger and more efficient, adolescents begin to think at higher levels. Cognitive development takes place in three main areas: advanced reasoning, in which teens begin to ponder multiple hypothetical answers to a “what if” question and imagine the results before acting; abstract thought, through which young people begin to understand complex intangible concepts like faith, love, and truth; and meta-cognition or thinking about thinking – being able to consider one’s own thoughts and feelings from the outside as well as how others might perceive them (McNeely & Blanchard, 2009). This aligns with literature on cognitive development in young adults, which describes a transition from absolutist (right versus wrong) ways of knowing to more multiplistic (understanding of subjectivity) and eventually evaluative thinking, in which one uses criteria to assess multiple points of view (Kuhn, Cheney, & Weinstock, as cited in King, 2016). Such development is fostered both through interacting with one’s environment, and through experiencing dissonance, or the reality that one’s established way of knowing is insufficient in a new context (King 2016).

The Island Earth Field Studio is designed for students to grapple with ideas about what constitutes the “right” or “best” ways of thinking about the world. High school students are typically in an ideal developmental stage for these types of cognitive and intellectual puzzles. Furthermore, working with a team of peers they have just met, tackling the physical

challenges of voyaging, and (for some) traveling independently to a new place will engage students' risk-reward drive, allowing them to channel their naturally active emotional center in a positive way. As students interact with an unfamiliar environment, consider different knowledge systems, and think about complex, abstract concepts, they will encounter a number of opportunities to flex new cognitive muscles in a focused context.

### **Place-Based Education**

*Place-based education* (PBE), sometimes also called a *pedagogy of place*, refers to an educational approach that aims to “connect learning to the local ecological, cultural, and historical contexts in which schooling itself takes place” (Elfer, 2011, p. 2). Elfer's concise description reflects the idea that the “place” in place-based education is not only physical or geographical but also social and personal. Other scholars have explained place as a multi-dimensional concept encompassing: location, meaning or attachment, and cultural identity (Agnew, as cited in Harper, 2018); one's sense of time, practice of skills, relationship with the environment, and awareness of, and engagement with, others and with one's surroundings through multiple forms of communication and literacy (Chambers, 2008); or “landscapes full of sociocultural and historical meanings to be engaged with” (Pipitone, 2018, p. 59).

In practice, PBE is a multi-disciplinary approach that seeks to build students' sense of place through observation, inquiry, storytelling, technical skill-building, and hands-on experimentation, all of which are practiced in the unique physical, social, and cultural environment to which they are connected (Chambers, 2008; Getting Smart, n.d.).

Contemporary PBE also frequently emphasizes school-community partnerships, service learning, and ecological conservation (Elfer, 2011; Getting Smart, n.d.).

Earlier writing on PBE focused on ties to geographically local places (Elfer, 2011; Sobel, as cited in Harper, 2018), but a growing body of educators have begun to apply the pedagogy as a strategy to help students understand the interconnected nature of local and



global contexts (Getting Smart, n.d.; Harper, 2018; Pipitone, 2018). Pipitone (2018) in particular recommends that international educators use an integrated approach to PBE when designing short-term study abroad programs. Such an approach would combine deep engagement with specific local spaces in the host country (space again being not only physical but social and cultural) with the support of tools and theories that apply to a more universal context, giving students a broader framework to think about how one particular context is related to a global human reality.

While PBE as a formal term is relatively new in the contemporary academic field of education (Elfer, 2011), its underlying philosophy and methodology have existed for centuries, or likely even millennia. As Pipitone (2018) notes, “Learning through experience, and with place, has been embraced by indigenous cultures across the globe long before it began to be woven into the tapestry of Western higher education” (p. 55). Many scholars have noted features of PBE that align with indigenous education, including emphasis on one’s connection with the natural world, relationality, the significance of oral tradition and storytelling, and practical, hands-on skill-building (Hart, 2010; Reagan, 2005). Polynesian navigation in particular was traditionally taught through a progression of stories and oral instruction, environmental familiarization and physical exposure (such as floating on the water to feel the changes in ocean swells), and eventually direct practice on a sailing canoe (Evans, 2011). The correlation between indigenous education and PBE makes the latter an even more relevant and appropriate approach in designing this program.

### **Needs Assessment**

In order to further guide and refine this program design, a formal needs assessment was conducted with stakeholders in both the continental (mainland) United States and Hawaii. The mainland evaluation sought to assess: stakeholders’ interest in and perceived value of the program as initially conceptualized; likelihood of participation for target program

participants (originally envisioned as exclusively mainland high school students with previous experience in sailing); desired outcomes; and potential to cultivate buy-in and partnerships in students' local communities. The Hawaii evaluation, meanwhile, was designed to engage with relevant local partners to gather their perceptions of the program concept, desired form of engagement with students, insight into local context, and recommendations for how to respectfully engage with indigenous communities.

### **Surveys – Continental United States**

The primary method of data collection in the mainland needs assessment was an anonymous online survey for parents and educators who were perceived to have a potential role in supporting students' participation in the proposed program (see Appendix A for full survey). Recruitment for the survey targeted participants who had a connection with high schools, high school sailing teams or programs, or other sailing education organizations. Recruitment began with email outreach to relevant organizations in the researcher's local community, and then employed snowball sampling to expand to a broader range of respondents.

In total, 31 people in the continental United States responded to the online survey. They represented roughly four regions of the country (nine states): Pacific Northwest (Washington – 13 people); Midwest (Michigan, Illinois, and Missouri – 6); South (Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina – 7); and Mid-Atlantic (Virginia and New York – 5). Around half of respondents were parents of children in or within two years of the target age group (13 to 18 years old). Nineteen were high school level educators, either in a formal school setting or as a coach or instructor on a high school level sailing program. Only four were both parent and educator of the high school age bracket.

**Interviews – Continental United States**

The second method of data collection in the mainland needs assessment consisted of interviews with four respondents who, via the survey, expressed willingness and interest in talking further about the program. Interview invitations were prioritized based on the frequency of the participant's interaction with high school students, as well as their involvement with an organization that had not already been represented in an interview. These criteria allowed data to be collected from those most likely to become stakeholders in the program, who best understood the target student participants, and who represented a variety of potential partner organizations. Interviews were conducted over the phone or in person, depending on participant preference. Continental U.S. interview guides are provided in Appendix B.

Of the four mainland participants interviewed, three were from Washington State and one from Virginia, two were male and two female, and all were sailing instructors or coaches who work regularly with high school sailors. Interviewees spoke from their experience with organizations that include the Seattle Sea Scouts, Tacoma Sea Scouts, Seattle Center for Wooden Boats, Sail Orcas, and Youth Sailing Virginia.

**Themes – Continental United States**

Overall, survey responses reflected a high level of interest in the program concept – on a Likert scale of one (not at all interested) to five (very interested), 24 out of the 31 participants marked a four or five. However, in their commentary, many highlighted cost as a significant factor in whether or not they would support their high school aged child or student's participation on the program, regardless of interest. Likewise, a common theme in continental U.S. interviews was that while sailing is an expensive sport, students and parents active in local sailing programs are only sometimes affluent enough to afford a costly travel program. Meanwhile, those who do have the means to travel typically have a wide array of

sailing-related experiences available to them. One interview participant explained, for example, that for roughly the same cost estimated for the Island Earth program, one could charter an island-hopping sailboat for over a week, which offers a very different experience but may appear to be a better value.

**Value and appeal for mainland high school sailors.** When asked about perceived benefits of the program for high schoolers, survey participants most frequently noted the appeal of two elements: cultural learning (15 out of 30 participants), and the opportunity to meet new people and develop teamwork skills (14 out of 30). Of those, cultural learning focused on Polynesian voyaging was highlighted in five instances as a strength that made the program unique in relation to others.

Unsurprisingly given the target audience of the survey, improved sailing skills were also frequently mentioned as a desired program benefit (10 out of 30). However, in some cases this priority actually made respondents less interested in a voyaging program. Three respondents explained that they would like to see more time or emphasis spent on sailing in the program description, rather than on other components that focused on building cultural or historic knowledge, or other less technical skills.

Interviews lent important context to understanding high school sailors' priorities. Three of the four sailing instructors interviewed commented on how the sport of sailing in high school, especially in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, becomes very competitive. Students who choose to stick with it are often aiming to compete as they move on to college, and may even be thinking about a trajectory that gets them to the Olympics. These students are typically seeking sailing programs that involve a lot of hands-on practice, advanced skill-building, and racing. They are likely to feel that a program examining sailing within a broader context, and using traditional alternatives to modern boating, is a waste of their time.

**Mixed understanding of voyaging.** Another underlying theme of conversations with continental U.S. sailors was a limited understanding of Polynesian voyaging and its current resurgence. While some respondents (at least two survey participants and one interviewee) did have a lot of up-to-date familiarity with the movement sparked by Nainoa Thompson and the Polynesian Voyaging Society, several others (at least five survey participants and two interviewees) still associated voyaging with ancient practices only, making reference to history and anthropology rather than the current cultural movement. One sailing instructor interviewed mistook the term canoe, which Hawaiians use to describe both rowing canoes and sailing canoes, as only the former, and therefore questioned why a high school sailor would find it a worthwhile experience.

### **Interviews – Hawaii**

Different interviews were also conducted with three Hawaiian ground partners representing: Camp Palehua on Oahu, the Polynesian Voyaging Society on Oahu, and Hui O Wa'a Kaulua (another associated voyaging society) on Maui. Hawaiian participants were two females and one male with personal and professional expertise in voyaging, environmental or place-based education, and/or business management. These participants were recruited via an email invitation sent to professional contacts who had previously established partnerships with Atlas Workshops, or who had been recommended by a previously established partner. These interviews allowed the researcher to better understand interests and educational methodologies important to this set of stakeholders, and to consider how to approach the ethical implications of a group of mainland students visiting Hawaii. Interviews were conducted over the phone. Hawaii partner interview guides are provided in Appendix C.

### **Themes – Hawaii**

Interviews with Hawaiian ground partners shed light on local priorities and opportunities for engagement with Hawaiian culture broadly, and voyaging groups more

specifically. Two important themes common across all three interviews were the organizations' environmental and cultural missions, and the bridging of Western and indigenous knowledge systems.

**Environmental and cultural mission.** Each Hawaiian partner spoke in their own words of two overarching long-term objectives for their work: the promotion of conservation, sustainability, and environmental stewardship; and the development of young leaders who would perpetuate and sustain cultural practices. Importantly, fostering youth leadership and education was not limited to Hawaiian students. Though many of the programs and initiatives described by these partners did focus on Hawaiian students, they all spoke of an inclusive desire to spread their mission and worldview to young people anywhere, from any background, and welcomed the idea of working with mainland youth.

As the original leaders of the voyaging movement, the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) would be a key partner in this program, so the interview with their representative was especially influential. Perhaps the most important understanding to come out of their input is that voyaging, to them, is not just the act of getting a canoe from one place to another, even considering the depth of knowledge and skill that this act requires. They speak also of a metaphorical canoe, which can represent one group or community but also the entire world, and a metaphorical voyage that describes the path the world is on. Their environmental mission is tied to this concept, that we can think of all of humanity as on a boat together, and we all need to work together to set the right course for our boat, the earth.

**Hawaiian and Western knowledge systems.** All three Hawaiian ground partners spoke frequently of the value in perpetuating indigenous knowledge systems (encompassing, among many elements, the Hawaiian language, oral storytelling traditions, spiritual relationship with the land, and vocational or place-based educational practices) alongside Western knowledge (in contrast valuing the English language, written histories, economic

and scientific relationships with the land, and formal, academic education). They hoped to show students, regardless of their background, that it is often beneficial to bring together ancient wisdom and modern technology, especially when tackling challenges of cultural and environmental sustainability.

There were, however, two notable points of potential tension between the two worldviews that ground partners anticipated in designing a voyaging program for mainland students. The first was a reaction to the statement that students would be introduced to the Polynesian star compass at the very beginning of the program. Both voyaging society representatives, independently and without prompting, honed in on this detail and recommended it be changed. Our Maui partner explained that when working with high school students on their own program, they spend a great deal of time first grounding themselves to place and to the canoe. They get to know the history and heritage of where they are, the layout and functions of the different parts of the canoe, and the connection between what they're doing and the land, sea, and skies around them. The technical skill of navigating comes later. This gradual advancement from grounding and connecting to place, to more active practice on the water, contradicts with the continental U.S. interviews, in which it was expected that mainland students, especially sailors, would want to get on a boat as quickly as possible, and might feel like time spent on other activities was wasted.

A second diversion between interviews with Hawaiian and continental U.S. respondents, reflective of a tension between indigenous and Western knowledge, was the topic of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). STEM skill-building was recommended by mainlanders as a key component to highlight in the program, a desirable benefit for potential student participants. Hawaiian partners however, and especially our partner interviewed at PVS, expressed caution around emphasizing STEM, at least in the way it is often conceptualized in contemporary educational settings. While they believe formal

(i.e. Western) science is invaluable in the mission of conservation and sustainability, trying to practice typical STEM skills, such as lab-style scientific research, on a voyaging canoe can be challenging. There is little ability to maintain controlled settings – the movements of the boat, the exact location of water sampling, etc. – in the way that most researchers would prefer. Data collection becomes challenging, and moreover, students lose focus of the central opportunity to instead learn about traditional forms of knowledge. As our partner at PVS phrased it, “Science and research is its own canoe,” again using the metaphor of the canoe to express that Western-style science may function better as a separate endeavor when it comes to skill-building on the water.

### **Shared Themes – Continental United States and Hawaii**

There were some areas in which continental U.S. and Hawaiian interview responses converged. The first was a common recommendation to consider broadening the scope of target participants. Three of the four continental participants thought that some less competitive or beginner-level high school sailors might be interested in the program, but because of the marginal difference between those sailors’ skill levels and that of a student with no experience, they saw little reason to make sailing experience a requirement for participation.

Sailing instructors in Washington State also recommended reaching out to native students on the mainland who would connect with the cultural empowerment aspects of the program. A similar idea was echoed in interviews with Hawaiian partners – why not involve more high schoolers from Hawaii, as full participants in the program rather than at occasional interludes as originally envisioned? Many Hawaiian young people still get only minimal exposure to voyaging or other cultural traditions in their schools or daily routines. This would be another opportunity for them to learn about indigenous knowledge in a unique way.



A final emergent theme common across all interviews, especially but not exclusively those with female participants, was gender dynamics in both sailing and voyaging. Four participants called attention to the fact that while there is a stated demand for more women in both circles, in practice female sailors and voyagers face more challenges. There is first a physical reality that on larger boats, crewing requires a certain level of strength that is easier for men to achieve – heavy sails need to be raised and tightened, and bulky equipment and large supply containers need to be moved around. And there is a second reality of less explicit exclusion or discrimination often experienced by women in these two fields. In one interview, a female voyager explained that master navigators have always been men, and working to break that tradition while maintaining others hasn't always gone smoothly. Similarly, the two female sailors interviewed described having felt underestimated, objectified, or singled out by male sailors on various occasions. Three out of the four females interviewed, mainland sailors and Hawaiian voyagers alike, brought up (without prompting) feelings of discomfort they'd experienced just through being present in their respective male-dominated spaces, making some of them question whether they should even be there.

## **Conclusions**

Surveys and interviews with parents and educators in the continental United States showed that a voyaging program could have wide-ranging appeal, but many are skeptical of the program's value when considering the high financial costs associated with travel to Hawaii. In order to solidify buy-in, the program design needs to demonstrate that the benefits of participation justify the cost and that the program offers a uniquely valuable experience that cannot be matched in other ways. Continental U.S. responses further show that cultural learning and team-building were understood as desirable outcomes of a program of this nature. Pursuing those outcomes through direct experience with Polynesian voyaging stood out as an approach that could not be duplicated in the same way outside of Hawaii. However,

many potential program participants in the continental U.S. appeared to not fully understand the modern significance of voyaging. This highlights the need to be clear and forthcoming in explaining the context of voyaging to potential participants so that they can more fully understand the opportunities the program presents. The same rationale may also help draw support from potential donors and funders to provide scholarships for less affluent participants.

Interviews with Hawaiian local partners revealed the deeper meaning of modern voyaging as a metaphor that transcends physical actions and practices to encompass a broader environmental and social mission. Thus, any educational program designed for students to learn about voyaging needs to rightfully incorporate not only the visible, tangible canoe but the invisible one, which is conservation and global community-building. Hawaiian ground partners also shed light on areas of possible tension between Western and non-Western value systems, a reminder to carefully and openly navigate the relationship between the two with students as an integral part of pre-program preparation and ongoing debriefs and discussions.

Finally, Hawaiian and continental respondents alike encouraged an open approach to program recruitment, focused on students' personal interests and values rather than previous sailing skill sets. This will be a key consideration in marketing and participant selection. Hawaiian and mainland interviewees also exhibited an underlying concern for unequal gender dynamics in sailing and voyaging. This theme is telling of possible challenges that students, particularly girls, may encounter while on a voyaging-focused program. It also highlights the importance of considering multiple power dynamics on this program, not only breaking down cultural or ethnic inequities but possibly gender inequality as well.

### **Limitations**

The needs assessment also included an attempt to collect input from continental U.S. high school students via an online survey similar to the adult survey; however, zero students

submitted a response. This is likely due to two factors: the extra required step of obtaining parental consent, and the lack of any personal relationship or network connecting students to the researcher. Due to the time constraints on this project, the survey design could not be revised in time to generate a higher response rate. Future program designers would greatly benefit from gathering additional feedback directly from high school students themselves.

Likewise, although many parents of high school-aged students completed the online survey, due to the limitations of time and coincidentally slower parent response rate, none of these parents were interviewed. Parents provide a distinct perspective on demand and perceptions of programs of this nature, so it would be ideal to follow up with more of them as well.

And finally, interviews with Hawaiian ground partners yielded rich insights into the context in which the program would take place. Additional interviews, as well as input from Hawaiian high school students, would add valuable perspective to further guide the program design.

### **Program Overview**

The Island Earth Field Studio will take place over the course of ten days in July 2021 on two islands: Oahu and Maui. It will be open to high school students from anywhere in the United States entering grades nine to twelve; however, recruitment will specifically target three regional areas: Hawaii and U.S. Pacific territories; Pacific Coast (Washington, Oregon, California, and Alaska); and Northeast (New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire). Oahu and Maui were selected because these islands are each home to a prominent voyaging society as well as a number of already-established Atlas Workshops partners. The two continental U.S. recruitment regions were also selected based on the location of established Atlas partner schools and Atlas offices. Hawaii and the Pacific was selected as a third recruitment region to promote a culturally-integrated and diverse

program community. The final student group will be comprised of 12 to 16 students, 4 from each regional group plus up to 4 from other regions in the United States.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The overarching goal of this program is to expose students to different forms of knowledge using concrete examples and experiences, and to provide students with an opportunity to think about how both Western and indigenous knowledge systems can help people better address social and environmental issues. Polynesian voyaging will serve as the primary framework for students to consider different worldviews, increasing their ability to think about problems in multiple ways and developing a greater sense of inquisitiveness about cultural connections to sustainability. These objectives align with Atlas Workshops' mission to cultivate creative insights about global issues.

The specific target outcomes and learning objectives for students are:

- Students will develop a greater understanding of important elements of Hawaiian culture: language, oral tradition, spirituality, relationship with the land, history, traditions and customs.
- Students will gain knowledge and skills related to Polynesian voyaging, including a foundational understanding of the Polynesian star compass, celestial and other non-instrument navigation, structure and design of the voyaging canoe, history of voyaging, and sail mechanics and steering.
- Students will think critically about their own worldview and knowledge systems.
- Students will increase their ability to think about issues, problems, and ideas from multiple perspectives.
- Students will think critically about their role as members of a community at multiple levels: globally, nationally, within their peer group, and locally in their hometown.

- Students will develop and propose ideas about how to bridge Western and non-Western knowledge to better address social and environmental issues in their communities.

### **Curriculum and Sequence**

Program curriculum will be carried out in four phases: Pre-Departure, Introductions and Grounding (Oahu), Experience and Connection (Maui), and Trip Closing (Maui). As students gain more knowledge and skills throughout the program, they will also work together to synthesize what they are learning and generate their own ideas about how to bring knowledge systems together in creative and positive ways. Each phase of the program is further described below.

#### **Pre-Departure**

Prior to the program, students will be asked to participate in two synchronous online meetings to help them prepare for the program. One meeting will also include parents and will review the general program itinerary, health and safety policies and concerns, and communications processes for the trip. The second meeting will serve as a way for students to meet each other and the Atlas staff in advance, begin discussing the theme and purpose of the program, and, as recommended by Hawaiian ground partners, give students an initial introduction to Hawaiian cultural protocols. Atlas will also provide recommended resources to students and parents prior to the program, such as readings and videos, should they wish to learn more about Hawaii before arrival. These pre-arrival activities will help students know what to expect on the program and begin to build a knowledge base from which to grow.

#### **Oahu: Introductions and Grounding**

Students' time on Oahu is dedicated to two priorities: 1) relationship-building and positive group dynamics; and 2) connecting students to place by helping them grow familiar with their surrounding environment and the Hawaiian cultural context. The former will

establish a community among students and leaders so that they can work well together throughout the program. The latter was a key recommendation from Hawaiian ground partners and is essential to the program's place-based approach, encouraging students to be mindful of the physical and cultural place that they are occupying. It is just as important for Hawaiian students to take part in this grounding, even though they may begin with more background knowledge than students from the continent, as it will lay the foundation for group discussions and deeper analysis later in the program.

Once the full group has gathered on Oahu, Atlas program leaders will facilitate icebreakers, norm-setting, and teambuilding with the student group. These processes will begin to foster the strong relationships critical to the community aspect of voyaging, and will provide a structure for students to process being in a new place and social setting. This learning will be both strengthened and woven into the content through activities facilitated by the camp staff: a Hawaiian values-based low ropes course, which both helps the group form a stronger community and exposes them to concept of *Malama* (to care for) that is central to contemporary voyaging; and a hike to a viewpoint overlooking "Maui's fishhook" which will introduce students to Hawaiian talk-story (oral storytelling), a key component of Hawaiian knowledge systems and example of the spiritual relationship with the land. Such activities align with place-based pedagogy by engaging with Hawaiian values and stories within the physical environment to which they are connected (Chambers, 2008; Getting Smart, n.d.).

The following day, at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, students will learn more of the history of Hawaii, expanding their understanding of the local sociocultural context. They will also view a planetarium show explaining how ancient Polynesians in Hawaii used the stars to navigate and track the seasons. This offers a segue from more general context to the specific focus of the program, in line with the integrated place-based approach recommended by Pipitone (2018). A brief visit to Iolani Palace, the site of the U.S. overthrow of the

Hawaiian Kingdom, gives an additional physical reference to support students' understanding of the Hawaiian context. Then the group will visit the Polynesian Voyaging Society itself for a first-hand look at the headquarters and discussion of the Malama Honua ("Care for our Earth") mission. PVS staff will explain the metaphorical concept of the canoe as an island in their own words in order to build students' thinking about the multiple meanings behind voyaging. Students will finally put their new knowledge to use that evening during a stargazing workshop with trained navigators, who will review Hawaiian terminology for the stars and show students how celestial navigation might look in practice. At this point, students will likely start to notice some experiences of dissonance key to cognitive development (King 2016), as they work to understand a way of knowing about the stars that is different from what they would have typically studied in school.

On their last morning on Oahu, students will meet another relevant group, such as the State Office of Hawaiian Affairs or University of Hawaii School of Ocean Science and Technology (SOEST). This meeting will provide an additional example of the ways that Hawaiians today use both traditional and modern knowledge systems to understand the world and work to protect it, giving them multiple perspectives to consider and further fostering cognitive development.

Each night of the program, students will participate in a group meeting to discuss and process their experiences and synthesize their learning. Group meetings will be conducted by program leaders using a variety of structures to facilitate reflection, including whole- and small-group discussion, anonymous notecard responses, journaling, drawing, and short-answer response prompts. The variation in structure helps to engage students with different processing needs, and the regular, facilitated reflection helps deepen learning, bring out new insights, and illuminate connections between ideas and experiences. These meetings will continue as the group moves on to Maui.

By the time they leave Oahu, students should have begun to form bonds of trust and respect between each other, and should have developed a basic understanding of the Hawaiian cultural and historic context, and complicated relationship with the West.

### **Maui: Experience and Connections**

On their fourth day, students will fly to Maui to begin their direct experience with Polynesian wayfinding. After getting situated, students will spend the next four mornings on the water learning about the many facets of voyaging, including vocabulary, seamanship and sailing, and wayfinding with the Polynesian star compass. This regular, focused experience with voyaging again provides the specific local space recommended by Pipitone (2018) through which students can make connections to broader concepts about indigenous and Western knowledge systems.

In the afternoons, students will spend time meeting with Hawaiian cultural organizations and conservation groups, such as the Pacific Whale Foundation, Maui Cultural Lands, and Hawaiian Islands Land Trust. These afternoons are intended to sequence from an overview of issues on Maui on Tuesday (with emphasis on students' immediate surroundings in West Maui and Lahaina), sea and shore projects on Wednesday, land on Thursday, and sky on Friday. This sequence is intended to help students use the tangible geographic connection of sea-land-sky to think about the connections between different elements of place (environmental or socio-cultural) on a deeper level.

### **Trip Closing**

The second-to-last night of the program transitions into the trip closing. On this night, students will visit the summit of Maui's Haleakala volcano for sunset, and will remain after for a later night of stargazing. This will give students organic opportunities to reflect on their experience and to make a self-guided attempt at identifying celestial wayfinding markers used in voyaging, utilizing the knowledge and skills they've built over the course of the trip.



On the final full day, program leaders will facilitate a closing workshop, in which students will work in a mix of whole-group and small-group discussion formats to take the insights they recorded throughout the program and apply them. Students will generate ideas for how to use what they've learned about indigenous and Western knowledge to continue their metaphorical voyages in the future. This process provides a structure for students to process and synthesize their learning, especially honing their capacity for the types of subjective and evaluative thinking described in the research on adolescent development (Kuhn, Cheney, & Weinstock, as cited in King, 2016).

Students will then take some time to prepare for a closing celebration with guidance from Hawaiian cultural educators who will teach them the arts of lei-making and hula dance. In addition to helping students begin to mentally and emotionally end their time with each other, these activities provide them with one more experience practicing Hawaiian traditions in conjunction with nature and spirituality. With the speakers and instructors they have worked with as invited guests, the group will enjoy a final barbecue dinner together at sunset by the beach. Just after dinner, program leaders will facilitate a final reflection intended to support emotional and social closure as students express their appreciations for one another and final takeaways from the whole experience.

### **Post-Trip Engagement**

Atlas encourages students to continue seeking opportunities to share their ideas and stay engaged in any work that they have found inspiring during their program. For the Island Earth program, this engagement may take the form of students doing additional research on different knowledge systems, giving a presentation back at school or at a local community organization, getting involved in local environmental or indigenous rights organizations, or enacting projects to help advance the theme of Malama Honua in their home community. Atlas will work with students on an individual basis to support self-driven initiatives

wherever and whenever possible, especially by helping them stay in touch with like-minded thinkers via the Atlas Virtual Hub. The Virtual Hub is an online space intended to keep the Atlas network connected by offering additional program options and sharing tools, ideas, and resources for creative projects.

### **Staffing**

The Atlas Workshops headquarters team (three full-time, salaried personnel) will administer recruitment, logistics, planning, operations and support for this program. The program itself will be staffed by two Atlas program leaders from the continental United States and one Hawaiian local leader. One program leader will be a member of the full-time headquarters team, and one will be on a two-week, full-time contract. Program leaders will facilitate student programming, manage on-the-ground logistics and vendor relations, and take charge of students' health and safety needs. The Hawaiian local leader will also accompany the group for the entire duration of the program and support the program leaders in managing and addressing student needs and facilitating activities and discussions throughout their time in Hawaii. The other headquarters staff will provide administrative and emergency support to leaders throughout the program.

Because the program is new and Atlas is still solidifying relationships in Hawaii, the placement of a full-time staff member as a program leader will help to strengthen local connections, orient co-leaders to the area, and introduce them to Atlas partners. This staff member will most likely be the team member who has been the primary point of contact in coordinating the program and communicating with ground partners in Hawaii; however, the team will also consider the cohort of students who have applied and their anticipated needs, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the other two leaders and how to balance those to build a strong and cohesive team.

The second, contracted Atlas program leader will be recruited from Atlas's network of pre-qualified experiential educators. This network consists of approximately twenty professionals who have been trained in Atlas risk management policies and procedures, as well as mission and programmatic approach. Leaders are required to submit a background check, maintain an updated First Aid/CPR certification, and demonstrate strong program facilitation and leadership skills with high school student groups. Additional program leader qualifications specific to the Island Earth Field Studio can be found in Appendix D.

The local leader will be recruited through Atlas's pre-established partner network in Hawaii. This network includes educators, community organizers, volunteer organizations, and local guides. The local leader will be required to complete an introductory, remote training in Atlas policies and programmatic approach, but will have fewer responsibilities related to logistics, budgeting, and student management. Additional local leader qualifications for to the Island Earth Field Studio can be found in Appendix D.

### **Marketing and Recruitment**

Student recruitment will begin in the fall of 2020, with applications accepted on a rolling basis until February 15, 2021. Accepted students will be notified no later than March 15, 2021 with program deposits due on March 31. Meanwhile, logistical preparations (accommodations, transportation, staffing) will begin in the early fall of 2020 and will later be finalized upon the final student acceptance and submission of deposits. A complete detailed timeline is provided in Appendix E.

Marketing and recruitment for this program will be conducted online via the Atlas Workshops website as well as e-mail outreach to relevant groups, prioritizing the three target regional areas: Hawaii and U.S. Pacific territories; Pacific Coast (Washington, Oregon, and California) and Alaska; and Northeast (New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire). Relevant groups for outreach may include: youth

sailing associations and high school sailing teams (to foster the connection between Western-style sailing and Hawaiian voyaging); native tribes and American Indian groups (to foster connections between native peoples in different regions); environmental groups (building connections on themes of sustainability); and current Atlas partner schools as well as affiliated high schools with strong global education programs. When feasible, outreach may also be conducted in person by tabling or making announcements at events and conferences, or virtually via webinars and online information sessions. More detailed marketing and outreach activities are described below.

### **Website and School Partners**

A page featuring the Island Earth Field Studio will be added to the Atlas Workshops website and linked to relevant pages throughout the site, including the home page, to boost traffic. Then a series of announcements will be made to the Atlas E-list, which is comprised of approximately 50 school partners, primarily global programs administrators at independent high schools. The announcements will include a description of the program, encouragement to share with fellow educators and students, and links to the application page. Atlas will also mail printed promotional materials such as posters and fliers to any partners who express interest, to be displayed in the school. Likewise, Atlas will provide similar materials when reaching out to new groups both online and in person.

### **Targeted Email Outreach**

Atlas administrators will also send cold outreach emails to relevant groups throughout the target regional areas, including: high school global education offices, sailing teams or associations (with emphasis on youth programs and high school level teams), yacht clubs, environmental groups, and native tribes or indigenous rights groups. Similar to the e-list announcement, emails will include a description of the program and link to apply. When emailing an organizational representative, the message will also include a request that the

information be shared with the organization's listserv and an offer to send hard-copy promotional materials.

### **Face-to-Face and Virtual Connections**

When feasible, Atlas team members may also promote the program in person at local and regional area events. Such events may include sailing association meetings, community events or culture festivals, high school summer activities fairs, and meetings with other relevant groups. Atlas Workshops also attends the Global Education Benchmark Group (GEBG) and The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS) conferences each year, during which this program would also be highlighted at the Atlas exhibit table.

In order to reach a wider face-to-face audience and provide more opportunities for interested groups to engage with the program theme, Atlas will also conduct virtual webinars and information sessions. Virtual information sessions will focus on the details of the program itself, as an opportunity for parents, students, and educational administrators to ask questions and get more familiar with Atlas. Webinars, meanwhile, will place more emphasis on voyaging, the history of Hawaii, and interviews with ground partners, briefly mentioning the Island Earth program as a way to engage further. These webinars are designed to share the mission of the program with interested groups, such as students, educators, and community organizations, even though many may not be able to participate on the travel program. The webinars demonstrate Atlas's commitment to sharing ideas and insights around the world by making connections in numerous ways, including but not limited to travel.

### **Participant Selection**

Interested participants will apply online through a form on the Atlas website. Strong applicants will be contacted to request an interview (preferably via video conference) and reference letters. Applicants will be reviewed and accepted on a rolling basis. Once the program is full, new applicants will be notified that there is no more capacity on the program

and added to a waitlist. The sample application page and criteria for student applicants can be found in Appendix F.

### **Logistics**

Participants will be responsible for booking their own round-trip airfare into Honolulu (Oahu) and out of Kahului (Maui), arriving on the program start date and departing on the scheduled end date. Atlas will provide extra guidance and support to families in the event that unaccompanied minor service is needed for the student to fly alone (many airlines will require this if the student is 13 or 14 years old).

Upon arrival at the Honolulu airport, participants will be met by one of the Atlas leaders who will guide them to their provided transportation. Transportation for the Oahu portion of the program will consist of private vans and/or mini-buses provided by two vetted agencies: Roberts Hawaii and Royal Star. All meals, beginning upon arrival and ending upon departure, are included in the program tuition.

On Oahu, the group will stay at Camp Palehua, which provides cabins with shared bathrooms and bunk beds, as well as kitchen facilities, and an outdoor pavilion and grill. Cabins will be designated by gender (or gender identity for trans students) and students will sleep two to four per room. Students who identify as non-binary will be roomed where they feel most comfortable. Each leader will have a private room in an adjacent cabin, and leaders will share a private adults-only bathroom. Atlas leaders will purchase groceries prior to the students' arrival, and the group will cook all their meals together, with students taking turns assuming duties of food preparation and clean-up. On the days that students spend in Honolulu, lunch will be provided on site wherever they are, in cafeterias or food courts.

The inter-island flight from Oahu to Maui is also included in the program tuition and will be arranged by Atlas Workshops. Transportation for the Maui portion of the program will consist of private vans and/or mini-buses provided by the previously vetted Akina Tours

and Transportation, as well as the local public bus when visiting Lahaina. In Maui the group will stay at Camp Olowalu, with students two to four per cabin, and leaders in their own next-door cabins; however, leaders of the same gender (or gender identity) on Maui will share a cabin. Most meals for the time on Maui will be cooked or prepared at the camp. The camp provides coolers for food storage, and Atlas will supply a camp stove and other cooking supplies. Some lunches and dinners will be provided at local restaurants, markets, or food courts.

### **Health and Safety**

The Island Earth Field Studio will follow Atlas Workshops' standard risk management (RM) policies and procedures, along with specific RM policies determined for this program and location. Standard policies and procedures include: thorough vetting of local vendors and service providers; communications plan; health and medical needs management; supervision policies; and mandatory risk management training for Atlas leaders. Specific policies related to this program will address the added risks of water recreation and environmental risks in Hawaii.

### **Vetting Vendors and Services**

Atlas Workshops will visit all program accommodations and activities providers (e.g. boating instructors, camp facilities) prior to the program. Overnight accommodations are assessed based on the quality of facilities and amenities, location and distance from professional medical care, staff experience and professionalism, accessibility of emergency exits and fire alarms, privacy and security of room and building entrances, overall cleanliness, and ratings and reviews available on Trip Advisor, hotels.com, and Google. Likewise, activities providers are assessed based on ratings and reviews, recommendations from local partners, years of experience working with high school groups, company safety policies and procedures, and quality and maintenance of gear and facilities.

Transportation companies are vetted using a detailed questionnaire reviewing maintenance and quality of vehicles, company safety records and incident history, and driver qualifications. Atlas has a list of two to three transportation providers on each island that have been vetted and hired for previous programs with positive results.

### **Communications**

All Atlas leaders are provided with a smart phone and data plan. While running a program, leaders regularly update headquarters staff via a dedicated WhatsApp group, referred to as the Trip Feed. Required regular updates are sent to the Trip Feed whenever the student group is in transit, as well as whenever issues or incidents arise. Headquarters staff provide remote support, such as calling service providers, looking up resources, and advising program leaders in how to respond to an incident or concern. They are also able to verify the group's safety and movement throughout the trip, and manage communications with parents.

Students on the program are provided with emergency contact information should they find themselves separated from the group. This includes numbers to reach leaders, the Atlas emergency hotline, and other relevant local contacts including the front desks of camp offices. Parents likewise are provided with the Atlas emergency hotline number, which reaches a member of the headquarters staff who is on call 24/7.

### **Health and Medical**

Students participating on this program will be required to complete a health and medical form asking that they disclose any health conditions or history that may affect their experience on the program, as well as any medications they will be taking. Students will be responsible for managing and administering their own medications, with regular reminders from program leaders. Other relevant information includes any history of depression or anxiety, physical limitations, allergies, dietary restrictions, and chronic illness. Atlas will review all medical and health information submitted and speak with students and parents



individually as needed to discuss how specific health and safety needs will be managed on program. All students and parents will also be asked to sign a waiver consenting that medical care be given in the event it is needed during the program.

Atlas will determine the location of the nearest medical facilities to each accommodation site prior to the program and will provide program leaders with contact information for these facilities. Atlas will also assess all restaurants and food vendors to ensure they can accommodate food allergies. From a legal perspective, Atlas will also require all program participants to sign a waiver releasing the company from liability in the event of any incident related to health and safety that may occur on the program (with exceptions for gross negligence on behalf of Atlas personnel).

### **Supervision and Student Behavior**

In addition to medical and liability waivers, students participating on this program will also be required to sign a form acknowledging their understanding of Atlas's behavior policy. The baseline rules for students include:

- Students may not enter a cabin room that is not their own.
- Students may not smoke, consume alcohol, or use recreational drugs.
- Students may not drive any motorized road vehicles while on program (with a possible exception for a local student on a case-by-case basis).
- Students are expected to participate in all program activities, except in the event of prohibitive illness or injury.
- Students are expected to comply with instructions given by Atlas staff and local activities instructors.
- Students are expected to abide by any additional rules and policies of facilities that they are visiting (such as camps, museums, etc.), as well as city, state, and federal laws.

Students and parents will be made aware that the consequences for breaking this policy may include a reduction of privileges or removal from the program. In the event that a student falls short of behavioral expectations during the program, program leaders will consult headquarters, and in some cases the student's parents, to determine an appropriate response. Students will also discuss and create their own group norms at the beginning of the program in order to take more ownership of setting their own rules and boundaries.

During the program, program leaders will accompany students on all activities and will remain present in common spaces during free time. Free time will be provided at the camp and in some public spaces, with specific boundaries and time limits given at each interval. Program leaders will also enforce lights-out hours for each night during which students are expected to stay in their own room or cabin. Program leaders may conduct room checks to ensure students are complying with this expectation.

### **Risk Management Training**

All Atlas leaders receive an initial formal training in risk management conducted by senior staff (usually the executive director), as well as location-specific training prior to each program. Training includes a review of policies and procedures and a thorough discussion, and sometimes a step-by-step walk-through, of typical risk scenarios.

In addition to understanding Atlas risk management policies and procedures, during their training leaders review policies related to their own role and behavior, including:

- Staff should never be alone with an individual student. If one-on-one privacy is needed, they should take the student aside somewhere in a public setting or in view of other group members.
- Staff may not enter a student room except in the event of significant illness or emergency.
- Staff may not consume alcohol or any recreational drug during a program.

- Staff should not smoke cigarettes in front of students.
- Staff should not divulge sensitive personal information with students.
- Staff may never give students their personal contact information.

To further protect students' physical safety, all leaders are required to have a valid, up-to-date CPR/First Aid certification. On the Island Earth Field Studio in particular, Atlas will also include open water lifeguard certification (or willingness and ability to obtain certification) as a priority qualification.

### **Program-Specific Considerations**

**Water recreation.** The Island Earth Field Studio will involve both swimming and boating activities in unfamiliar ocean waters, increasing the level of risks related to drowning and severe injuries. Thus, each activity will be carefully considered for its value in relation to the program goals, and water recreation will only be allowed under the condition that it contributes to that purpose.

Boating activities will only be conducted under the supervision and instruction of experienced, vetted professionals, and students will be briefed before all boating activities to review the serious nature of safety precautions on the water. The primary partner in facilitating these activities is Hui O Wa'a Kaulua on Maui. The large voyaging canoe used for their programming is compliant with USCG regulations and travels with a Coast Guard escort. Crew are trained in man overboard procedures and are always accompanied by at least one of their certified lifeguards who are specifically familiar with voyaging canoes. Students are required to wear personal flotation devices on all Hui programs, and staff review a boat plan with students before leaving the beach.

Swimming, when not within voyaging or canoeing workshops, will only take place in designated swimming areas with a certified lifeguard (one of the program leaders or the local leader) present. This will begin with a mandatory swim evaluation when students arrive on

program, at Camp Palehua's swimming pool. Students who do not pass the evaluation at the highest level will be allowed only at the shallow end of the pool, and in ocean water only half a foot deep or less (or "just above the ankles" for student reference). The program lifeguard will review swimming expectations and specific area risks with students at each new location (Camp Palehua, the beach near Camp Olowalu) before they are allowed to enter the water. Any behavior outside of the boundaries will result in removal of swimming privileges.

For all water-related activities, program leaders will also consider how elements of inclement weather (such as high winds, storms) may affect student safety and will make daily decisions, with approval from headquarters staff and in consultation with local professionals, about whether or not the activity should proceed as planned. Students and parents will be made aware of the specific risks related to water recreation prior to the program, and those risks will be included in the behavior acknowledgement and liability waiver.

**Environment.** Hawaii also presents some significant natural disaster risks – specifically, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions. All parties involved will be briefed on these risks prior to the program. Atlas leaders will be informed of the locations of emergency evacuation routes and zones, and will note them in their surroundings upon arrival to new areas. The volcanoes on Oahu and Maui, where the program will take place, are not active, but an eruption on the neighboring Big Island, which has two active volcanoes, may have the potential to affect air quality or travel infrastructure on the other two islands. Staff and students will be made aware of this possibility in advance. Further plans for responding to a natural disaster in Hawaii are outlined in the Crisis Management section below.

### **Crisis Management**

In the event of a serious incident or emergency, Atlas leaders will immediately notify on-call and headquarters staff via the WhatsApp Trip Feed, and continuously thereafter with updates on the situation as they are able. In incidents involving one or a few individual

students, one program leader will address the incident with the individual(s), while the other program leader takes charge of the group. This type of incident will most typically include a serious illness or injury, or the occurrence of a crime perpetrated either against the student or by them. Correspondingly, typical leader responses will likely include seeking professional medical care and working with local authorities or law enforcement to address the incident. Meanwhile, the on-call headquarters staff who are apprised of the situation will contact the parents of the student involved to inform them and, if necessary, discuss their options for how to get involved. For this program, leaders will also be equipped with waterproof cases to carry their phones in case of emergency during water activities.

In the event of an emergency affecting the group as a whole, such as an accident, natural disaster, or incident of violence, Atlas leaders will use all resources available to move the group to a safe location, make sure all students are accounted for, and care for injuries if needed. Staff will also contact headquarters via the WhatsApp Feed at every interval possible to let them know the status of the group, and of individual students.

If for any reason the WhatsApp Feed is not accessible or in service through the cell phones of all three leaders, staff may contact headquarters through any additional means available to them, such as calling from a local phone, emailing from their laptop or a local computer, or if necessary and with permission, calling from a student's cell phone.

### **Budget and Scholarships**

The total cost of the program per student will be \$3700, plus airfare to and from Hawaii. A detailed budget and budget notes are provided in Appendix G. This cost is the same regardless of whether the student is local to Hawaii or from the mainland, because local students are also expected to participate in the residential portions of the program as full members of the program community.

Atlas administrators will actively seek scholarship funding for students on this program, again prioritizing the three target recruitment areas. Scholarship providers may include universities, yacht club foundations, environmental science institutes, native cultural coalitions, and other relevant interest groups and small grant-giving foundations. Specific organizations that Atlas is already seeking out based on recommendations from the needs assessment are: Sealaska, the Seattle Yacht Club Foundation, Keen Effect Grant, and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

### **Evaluation Plan**

Evaluations for this program will seek to determine: the extent to which target learning outcomes were achieved; which aspects of the program were effective or ineffective in achieving those outcomes; and how students, parents, and field staff perceived the program. Formal evaluations will be conducted via pre- and post-program student surveys, pre-and post-program parent surveys, and post-program debrief interviews with field staff. The Atlas headquarters team will oversee the collection and analysis of data. The evaluation will also draw from data collected more informally, such as student or staff observations expressed throughout the program, likely conveyed via the WhatsApp Trip Feed or during occasional check-in phone calls with program staff.

#### **Pre- and Post-Program Surveys**

All student and parent surveys will be administered online using Google Forms. A link and request to complete the pre-program surveys will be emailed to students and parents along with the necessary forms and waivers that are required to enroll in the program. The survey itself will not be required, but families will receive one or two additional email reminders requesting that they complete the survey prior to the program in order to help Atlas continue improving program quality.

The link to complete post-program surveys will also be sent via email the day after students have completed the program, along with a message thanking students for their participation and parents for their support. A reminder email will be sent approximately one week later, and a final reminder around 20 days later. One month after the program, surveys will close.

Survey data collected will include Likert scale questions regarding relevant skills and knowledge, as well as open-ended questions for students and parents to further elaborate on their understanding of program content, expectations, and impressions of program activities and outcomes.

All survey participants will have the option to remain anonymous; thus, quantitative data gathered from Likert scale questions will be evaluated cumulatively for the whole group, rather than based on change for individual students. The qualitative open-ended responses will then provide more details on individual perceptions that may explain the quantitative outcomes.

### **Debrief Interviews and Informal Evaluation Data**

One member of the headquarters team will also conduct a debrief interview with each program staff member within one month after the program. The interview will cover: staff perceptions of whether or not the program met its goals; which elements of the program were most or least effective in meeting those goals; and how they believe program goals could be more effectively met in the future. Notes from each phone call will be compiled into one Google document, highlighting themes between the three. The team will also cross-check interviews with staff observations noted in the WhatsApp Trip Feed during the time the program was taking place, looking for additional details to support or explain the outcomes and perceptions staff members have expressed.

## **Final Report**

One month after the program is complete, the survey window will have closed and the post-program staff interviews will have been conducted. The Atlas team will then compile both quantitative and qualitative data from all of the above sources into a report, noting:

- Extent to which program outcomes were achieved, expressed as:
  - Percentage of increase in relevant skills, knowledge, and understanding of program content
  - Survey responses and staff observations indicating increased critical thinking relevant to program activities and content
- Elements of the program that were most, and least, effective in meeting program objectives, expressed as:
  - Number of instances a given element was mentioned as effective or ineffective in post-program surveys and staff interviews
  - Survey responses and staff observations recalling that a given element strongly aided or strongly impeded student progress toward program objectives
- Outlying data or unexpected outcomes
- Recommendations for future program design

## **Conclusions and Implications**

The Island Earth Field Studio will provide students with an opportunity to better understand Hawaiian and non-Western worldviews through a place-based experience. This program is unique to others in Hawaii in that it emphasizes the connection between the specific activity of voyaging with a deeper consideration of how cultural practices and ideologies impact the way humans relate to the world around them. By introducing challenges that combine technical skills, community-building, intercultural learning, and



intellectual dilemmas, the program pushes students to consider different ways of knowing, ultimately helping them to think in more creative and complex ways.

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## Appendix A: Continental U.S. Adult Survey

# Hawaii Sailing Program Design Study: Adult Survey

Welcome Educators, Parents, and Sailing Enthusiasts.

Thank you for your help with my capstone study. The main purpose of this project is to create a proposal for a short-term educational travel program for high school students, especially those interested in sailing, to study Polynesian voyaging in Hawaii.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time. Any information or responses gathered will be used solely for the purpose of this project. There is no known risk to you in participating.

Should you choose to participate, please complete the survey below. Thank you for your time and consideration.

## Background Information

1. In what state or territory do you live?

---

2. How frequently do you go sailing?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Rarely or Never
- ☐ 5 to 20 Times a Year
- ☐ Around Twice a Month
- ☐ Once a Week or More

3. Are you on a sailing team?

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. Are you a member of a yacht club or sailing association?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Are you a parent? If so, what are the current age(s) of your child(ren)?

---

6. Are you a teacher or educator? If so, which of the following options best describes the educational setting(s) in which you work or volunteer? Please check all that apply.

*Check all that apply.*

- ☐ No, not an educator
- ☐ Public Elementary School
- ☐ Public Middle School
- ☐ Public High School
- ☐ Private Elementary School
- ☐ Private Middle School
- ☐ Private High School
- ☐ University
- ☐ After-School Enrichment Program
- ☐ Sports Program
- ☐ Scouting Program
- ☐ Outdoor Camp
- ☐ Sailing Program (Any)
- ☐ Sailing Program (High School Level)
- ☐ Student Travel (Any)
- ☐ Student Travel (High School Level)

Other: ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

### Program Interest

Please read the following description of the proposed program and then respond to the questions below.

The proposed Sailing the Island Earth program is intended to bring high school students from the continental United States to Hawaii to learn about Polynesian voyaging, Native Hawaiian culture, and the human connection to the environment. It will be open to students from anywhere in the continental United States entering grades 9 to 12 who have a demonstrated interest in sailing. Students who participate will travel to Hawaii and spend time on two islands: Oahu and Maui.

The program will begin with team-building and introductory experiences, including the group's first exposure to the Polynesian star compass and history of voyaging. Then they'll begin to experiment with navigation techniques themselves through hands-on challenges and skill-building on and off the water, with coaching from local instructors. Local Hawaiian groups will also share their perspective on relevant issues important to them, especially related to cultural revival, conservation, and sustainability. Students will have opportunities to engage with local organizations on projects related to these issues.

Throughout the program, students will also spend time getting to know one another and contributing to group meals, meetings, and workshops. As they move between and across the



islands, the group will stay in a mixture of camp-style cabin lodging and more traditional 2.5- or 3-star hotels. Students will also have the chance to go hiking in important natural areas, visit key historic sites, and learn about other elements of Hawaiian culture such as language, dance, and cooking. At the end of the program, students will have a day to reflect on their experience and think about how the ideas they've learned will stay with them when they go home.

Based on this description, please answer the following:

7. On a scale of 1 to 5, how interested would you be in having your high school-aged child or student participate in this program? (If not applicable, please skip) *Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely interested

8. What do you view as the potential benefits of your (or any) high school-aged child or student participating in a program like this?

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9. What do you view as the potential drawbacks of your (or any) high school-aged child or student participating in a program like this?

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10. What else would make you more likely to want your child or student to participate?

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11. Are there other similar programs that you are familiar with? If so please name them or briefly describe them.

---

12. How would you describe the strengths and weaknesses of this program in comparison with other similar programs that you are familiar with?

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13. What questions would you have about this program in order to better understand it and form an opinion about it?
- 

### Details and Feasibility

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Some additional details on this program as it is currently proposed include:

Duration: Nine days total

Dates: Mid-July 2021, exact dates TBD

Estimated cost per participant: \$3500-3900 plus airfare (includes all accommodations, meals, ground transportation, tuition and programmed activities)

14. Based on these details, please rank your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale of 1-5 (1=disagree strongly, 3=neutral or not sure, 5=agree strongly):

Mark only one oval per row.

	1 (Disagree Strongly)	2	3 (Neutral or Not Sure)	4	5 (Agree Strongly)
Nine days is a feasible amount of time for my high school-aged child or student to travel and be away from home.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my high school-aged child or student were to participate, I would prefer the program to be shorter than nine days.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my high school-aged child or student were to participate, I would prefer the program to be longer than nine days.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
July is a good time for my high school-aged child or student to travel and be away from home.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The estimated cost is a reasonable price for this program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I could afford to pay for this program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would support my high school-aged child or student participating on this program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. Would there be other barriers or limitations to your child or student's ability to participate on this program? Please describe them.

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16. Would there be other conditions on their participation? (I.e. "They could only participate if....")

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#### Final Comments

17. Please share any additional comments that you believe would be relevant or helpful to this project.

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18. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview over the phone to share some more information about yourself and your recommendations for this program? If yes, please share your first name and preferred email address for me to contact you (Email is required so that I may send you an informed consent waiver. I will not use your email address for any other purpose but to send the waiver and schedule a time for the phone interview):

---

## Appendix B: Continental U.S. Interview Guide

### Part I: Background

1. [For those who expressed that they are involved in sailing] Tell me more about your experience with sailing.
  - a) How long have you been a sailor? And/or, how did you learn?
  - b) Do you own your own boat? And/or, do you compete?
  - c) Do you go sailing often with your family?
2. You indicated that you are involved in [name educational setting]. Could you tell me more about that? (i.e. What do you teach? Do you coach full-time and what does that entail? Etc.)

### Part II: Educational Setting

#### Teachers/School-Employed Coaches:

- a) Does your school have a sailing program? If so, are you involved in it and to what extent? If not, do you know if students are involved in sailing groups outside of school? What are those like?
- b) Does your school offer student travel or global education programs? If so, what is the structure? Are you involved in these programs in any way and if so, how?

#### Other Coaches/Instructors/Out-of-School Programs:

- a) What is the mission or main objective of the group/program?
- b) Is the program/organization associated with a school in any way? What is that relationship like?
- c) What are the main activities or events this group organizes?
- d) How many high schoolers are involved in this group/program? In what way?
- e) What is the structure of the program for high school students?

- f) How is the group/program funded?

### **Part III: Program Interest**

I'd like to ask some questions regarding the proposed program design on which I'm working. I'll start by re-reading the program description:

The proposed Sailing the Island Earth program is intended to bring high school students from the continental United States to Hawaii to learn about Polynesian voyaging, Native Hawaiian culture, and the human connection to the environment. It will be open to students from anywhere in the continental United States entering grades 9 to 12 who have a demonstrated interest in sailing. Students who participate will travel to Hawaii and spend time on two islands: Oahu and Maui.

The program will begin with team-building and introductory experiences, including the group's first exposure to the Polynesian star compass and history of voyaging. Then they'll begin to experiment with navigation techniques themselves through hands-on challenges and skill-building on and off the water, with coaching from local instructors. Local Hawaiian groups will also share their perspective on relevant issues important to them, especially related to cultural revival, conservation, and sustainability. Students will have opportunities to engage with local organizations on projects related to these issues.

Throughout the program, students will also spend time getting to know one another and contributing to group meals, meetings, and workshops. As they move between and across the islands, the group will stay in a mixture of camp-style cabin lodging and more traditional 2.5- or 3-star hotels. Students will also have the chance to go hiking in important natural areas, visit key historic sites, and learn about other elements of Hawaiian culture such as language, dance, and cooking. At the end of the program, students will have a day to reflect on their experience and think about how the ideas they've learned will stay with them when they go home.

1. You expressed that you would have X level of interest in this program, and that you were most interested in X. Tell me more about that.

2. You expressed that a barrier/limitation to your students' ability to participate in this program would be X. Tell me more about that.
3. Tell me more about your thoughts on the cost estimate of this program. Why do you believe this is worth/not worth the value of the program?
4. If cost were not a factor, would you want your students to participate on this program?  
Why or why not?
5. If cost were not a factor, do you think your students would want to participate on this program? Why or why not?
6. Is there anything that would make this program more appealing to you as an educator?
7. Do you think other families or young people in your community (either your school/organization or your own social network) would be interested in participating in this program? Why or why not?
8. Do you think this program would be something that your school/organization might be interested in offering to students? If so, how would that work?
9. How would you recommend this program be marketed to high school students and families?
  - a) What about the program should be highlighted?
  - b) Who should be contacted?
  - c) How should it be advertised? Through what method or platform/publication?
10. Do you have any other recommendations for me?

## Appendix C: Hawaii Ground Partner Interview Guide

### Part I: Background

Tell me a little about your own background:

- a. Where did you grow up? And where do you live now?
- b. Tell me about your family background (anything that comes to mind that you care to share)
- c. Do you identify as Native Hawaiian? If so, to what extent is it part of your identity? (i.e. Does it have a significant impact on your day to day life?)
- d. What is your educational and/or professional background?
- e. How did you get involved in your organization, or doing the work that you are doing with cultural education/activism/voyaging?

### Part II: Professional Organization or Educational Setting

Tell me a little about this program/organization:

- a. What is the mission or main objective of the program/organization?
- b. What is your role?
- c. What are the main activities this group organizes?
- d. Is the program/organization associated with a school in any way? What does that relationship or partnership look like?
- e. How many people are involved in this program/organization? In what way? What different age groups?
- f. Are high school aged students involved in the program/organization in any way? If so, what is the structure of the program for high school students? What are the objectives?

### Part III: Program Interest

I'd like to ask some questions regarding the proposed program design on which I'm working. I'll start by re-reading the program description:



The proposed Sailing the Island Earth program is intended to bring high school students from the continental United States to Hawaii to learn about Polynesian voyaging, Native Hawaiian culture, and the human connection to the environment. It will be open to students from anywhere in the continental United States entering grades 9 to 12 who have a demonstrated interest in sailing. Students who participate will travel to Hawaii and spend time on two islands: Oahu and Maui.

The program will begin with team-building and introductory experiences, including the group's first exposure to the Polynesian star compass and history of voyaging. Then they'll begin to experiment with navigation techniques themselves through hands-on challenges and skill-building on and off the water, with coaching from local instructors. Local Hawaiian groups will also share their perspective on relevant issues important to them, especially related to cultural revival, conservation, and sustainability. Students will have opportunities to engage with local organizations on projects related to these issues.

Throughout the program, students will also spend time getting to know one another and contributing to group meals, meetings, and workshops. As they move between and across the islands, the group will stay in a mixture of camp-style cabin lodging and more traditional 2.5- or 3-star hotels. Students will also have the chance to go hiking in important natural areas, visit key historic sites, and learn about other elements of Hawaiian culture such as language, dance, and cooking. At the end of the program, students will have a day to reflect on their experience and think about how the ideas they've learned will stay with them when they go home.

1. I'd love to know your thoughts on this program concept. What about it sounds positive or beneficial to you? Is there anything about it that sounds problematic, and if so, what?
2. Do you think this program would be something that your organization/program might be interested in being involved in? Or, do you think your organization or program would ever consider working with high school students visiting from the mainland? If so, what might you want that to look like?

3. Do you think other groups or educators in your community would be interested in being part of this program? Why or why not?
4. How would you recommend this program be designed so that we help students develop an understanding of Hawaiian history and culture?
5. How would you recommend this program be designed so that we help students develop an understanding of Polynesian voyaging and wayfinding?
6. How would you recommend this program be designed so that we and our students treat Hawaiians and Hawaiian culture with respect?
7. How would you recommend we work with local and/or Native Hawaiians in a way that is mutually beneficial and respectful?
8. One idea for a portion of this program is to have mainland U.S. students meet Hawaiian students of the same age (fellow high schoolers) and either do some kind of cultural exchange, or do a project together. Is that something you would be interested in being part of? What thoughts or ideas do you have about that?
9. Do you have any other recommendations for me? Or are there other questions you think I should be asking?

## Appendix D: Program Leader Job Description and Qualifications

As part of its mission to promote creative engagement with the world, Atlas Workshops designs short-term educational travel programs for high school students. Each program is overseen by an Atlas Leader (or team of leaders) who manages group travel logistics, facilitates project work, and encourages creative thinking, curiosity, and problem solving.

Atlas Leaders are the center point of all of the logistics of the trip, making sure everything runs smoothly and working with co-leader(s) to make the program a success. With remote support provided by the Atlas Headquarters, leaders oversee meals, organize transit, facilitate activities and workshops, manage student needs, coordinate with local partners, and respond to emergencies as needed. Leaders are expected to be either on-call or on-duty 24/7 for the entire duration of a program (typically one to two weeks).

We are always looking to expand our network of Program Leaders. We seek people with experience in global or experiential education (especially at the secondary level), travel or living abroad, and international or intercultural projects. Background checks and First Aid/CPR certification are required; other certifications such as Wilderness First Aid and Lifeguarding are preferred.

Interested applicants please submit a CV/resume by email to [\[link to email\]](#) and we will contact you with more information.

(Internal) Criteria for selecting a program leader for the Island Earth Field Studio will include:

- Previously trained and vetted program leader in the Atlas network
- Gender (Atlas prefers to assign at least one male and one female program leader to every program)
- Prior expertise in program content areas, including sailing/voyaging, environmental issues, biology or natural sciences, and/or indigenous rights and issues
- Prior experience traveling in Hawaii
- Expertise in facilitating team-building and managing group dynamics
- Open Water lifeguard certification and/or experience (At least one member of the team must be certified)
- Ability to travel on the scheduled program dates and work 24/7 the entire duration of the program

(Internal) Criteria for selecting a local leader for the Island Earth Field Studio will include:

- Recommendations from trusted local partners
- Experience in place-based and experiential education for high school students
- Experience in student travel programming
- Open Water lifeguard certification and/or experience (At least one member of the team must be certified)
- Ability to work or be on call 24/7 during the entire duration of the program
- (Preferred) Previous work with Atlas programs and students, demonstrating skills in facilitation and student management
- (Preferred) Experience with or knowledge of traditional voyaging and wayfinding

## Appendix E: Program Planning Timeline

**September-November 2020:**

- Recruitment begins:
  - Publish application page on website
  - Announce program via e-list
  - Compile email list of prospective participant groups/networks
  - Design and print informational handouts to share at presentations and conferences and mail to interested schools and organizations
  - Present program at prospective participant group meetings in leadership teams' local areas (e.g. local high school clubs, classes, and teams in Seattle, New York, and Boston)
  - Begin scheduling and conducting webinars on Hawaii and Polynesian voyaging with interested schools or organizations; coordinate based on their curriculum or programming
  - Promote program at exhibit table at GEBG (October) and TABS (November) conferences
- Program logistics initial steps:
  - Place hold on regional flight
  - Make initial reservations with Camp Palehua and Camp Olowalu
  - Reserve program dates with Hui O Wa'a Kaulua
- Initial review of program leader qualifications and availability of eligible leaders in Atlas network
- Begin seeking scholarship funding in target regional areas via:
  - Email outreach to prospective donors
  - Meetings and phone calls to discuss further

- Small grant applications where applicable

**December 2020/January 2021:**

- Recruitment:
  - Begin conducting monthly virtual information sessions:
    - Second week of each month, December 2020-February 2021
    - Wednesday and Thursday evenings
    - Two sessions each day, one at 7pm EST (4pm PST/2pm HST) and one at 7pm PST (10pm EST/5pm HST)
    - Approximately 30 minutes per session, 10 minutes presentation of program and 20 minutes for questions
    - Session schedule may change or additional sessions may be organized after polling interested participants on availability
  - Continue presenting program at prospective participant group meetings in leadership teams' local areas
  - Continue conducting webinars on Hawaii and Polynesian voyaging with interested schools and organizations
  - Apply for booths or presentations at high school summer activity fairs in target regional areas
  - (January) Send first wave of cold email outreach to list of prospective participant groups/networks
  - (January) Send another reminder to e-list about the program
  - Interview applicants and collect reference letters on a rolling basis
- Begin scouting local leaders through outreach to Hawaiian partners, schedule video calls with strong leads.
- Continue seeking scholarship funding in target regional areas.

**February:**

- Final Recruitment and Application Review:
  - Present program at high school summer activity fairs in target regional areas
  - Send second wave of cold email outreach to list of prospective participant groups/networks
  - Conduct scheduled webinars and virtual information sessions
  - Send final reminder to e-list about the application deadline
  - Interview applicants and collect reference letters on a rolling basis
  - Close applications on February 16.
- Narrow down preferred program leaders within Atlas network, schedule phone calls with top three choices
- Scouting trip to Hawaii – visit hotels, vendors, activities providers etc.
- Identify preferred local leaders, meeting with top two choices during scouting trip to Hawaii.
- Confirm and solidify scholarship funding in target regional areas.

**March:**

- Final Participant Selection:
  - Interview applicants and collect reference letters by March 13
  - Notify accepted and waitlisted applicants by March 15
  - Enrollment and deposits due by March 31
- Selection program leader and local leader, notify them and collect any necessary documentation including copies of identification, background checks, First Aid/CPR certification, and lifeguard certification.

**April:**

- Logistics:
  - Based on final cohort, confirm details (number of travelers, exact cost, accommodations needed) with airlines, camps, and the Hui
  - Begin outreach to community organizations and speakers in Hawaii:
    - Polynesian Voyaging Society on Oahu
    - University of Hawaii
    - State Office of Hawaiian Affairs
    - Lahaina Restoration Foundation
    - Pacific Whale Foundation
    - Maui Cultural Lands
    - Hawaiian Islands Land Trust
  - Make other necessary advanced reservations:
    - Bishop Museum
    - Haleakala Tour
    - Bus Transportation on both islands
    - Kō'ie'ie Fishpond Educational Program
    - Living Pono Cultural Program
- Support students and families:
  - Send email communications to families outlining a timeline of what to expect before, during, and after the program, highlighting key dates and deadlines in the pre-program stage.
  - Provide support (informational materials, coaching, strategizing) to help students seek additional funding opportunities in their local areas
  - Conduct first pre-departure video call focused on details, safety, and logistics



- Program leadership:
  - Conduct training call with local leader and program leader
  - Secure leader flights
  - Confirm all documentation is completed and up to date

**May/June:**

- Support students and families:
  - Send regular communication about program updates as more details are confirmed and as key dates and deadlines approach
  - Continue providing fundraising support
  - Review all individual student information and collect additional details as needed, including allergy and health concerns and flight schedules
  - Final program payment due May 31
  - (June) Conduct second pre-departure video call focused on program theme and content, include program leaders
  - Mail luggage tags and pre-departure packets
- Continue finalizing meetings, activities, and logistical details with Hawaiian partners; make payments and deposits according to deadlines given by vendors

**July:**

- Confirm any remaining tentative speakers or meetings in Hawaii
- Conduct final training and planning call(s) with program and local leaders
- Secure cell phones and coverage for all leaders
- Maintain ongoing and frequent communication with students and families via email and phone to answer questions and manage individual needs
- (July 22) Program leaders arrive on Oahu one day early, check in with staff at Camp Palehua and purchase groceries and supplies for the group.

- (July 23) Students arrive and program begins!

## Appendix F: Sample Program Application Page and Criteria for Selection

### **Island Earth Field Studio – Summer 2021**

How do you know what you know? For centuries, scientists believed that ancient Polynesians arrived in Hawaii by accident, until a new generation of voyagers proved them wrong. Now, voyagers in Hawaii are on a mission to bring together the wisdom of their ancestors with modern knowledge in the hopes of making the islands, and the whole world, stronger.

This summer, we are gathering a cohort of high school students from across the United States to join this mission. Through training in Polynesian voyaging and engagement with other important elements of the local culture, this select team will consider how Hawaiian ways of knowing the world can provide a valuable perspective to help us, and the world, set a sustainable course for the future.

#### **Program Details**

Dates: July 23-August 1, 2021

Where: Oahu and Maui, Hawaii, USA

Who: High School Students

Cost: \$3,697 per student plus airfare (financial aid may be available)

#### **Program Overview**

The Island Earth Field Studio will take place over the course of ten days in July 2021 on two islands: Oahu and Maui. The program will begin on Oahu with team-building and introductory experiences such as a talk-story hike in Kapolei, visits to key neighborhoods of Honolulu, and a first meeting with a trained voyager. This opening phase will help us get to

know one another, and start to build an understanding of the context into which we are entering on Hawaii.

Then on Maui, our team will practice voyaging ourselves through an in-depth program with Hawaiian instructors in partnership with the local voyaging society. We will train in the mornings, and in afternoons and evenings explore other facets of Hawaiian culture such as agriculture, conservation, and spirituality. Local Hawaiian groups will also share their perspective on relevant issues important to them, especially related to cultural revival and sustainability. Ultimately we will work together to uncover themes about how the knowledge handed down to Hawaiian people by their ancestors might be perpetuated for the good of both local and global communities.

Throughout the program, we will stay in camp-style cabins and will cook most of our meals together at camp. We will occasionally have time to eat out and shop in a few towns around the islands. On our final day on Maui, we will celebrate with a Hawaiian-style barbecue on the beach!

### **Who Should Come and How to Apply**

The program is open to high school students from anywhere in the United States entering grades nine to twelve in the fall of 2021. We are looking for students with an interest in sustainability, indigenous rights and culture, sailing or voyaging, and community development.

Students are expected to display an appropriate level of maturity as the program will include some intense group travel and intercultural learning. We will ask everyone to agree to shared group norms and behavior expectations to create the trust and accountability necessary for this type of program. Students should also be prepared to spend much of their time outdoors and contribute to team responsibilities. Students will be supervised by trained Program Leaders for the entire duration of the program.

Interested students should contact us using the form below. We will follow up with applicants on a rolling basis to request additional information, references, or schedule an interview. As space is limited, students with any concerns or conflicts should contact us immediately.

**Program Costs and Financial Aid**

The program fee is all-inclusive and will cover all local travel, accommodations, activities, meals, and daily expenses in the region. Travelers are responsible for their own travel insurance, personal expenses, and air travel to and from the region. A program staff member will meet the students upon their arrival in Honolulu and will accompany them until they depart from Kahului, based on onward flights.

A deposit form will be due upon enrollment for \$500. Financial aid may be available on a case by case basis based on demonstrated need. If interested, students should apply and note that they are also requesting financial aid.

**Sample Itinerary:** [click here.](#) [Include hyperlink]

**Island Earth Field Studio Interest Form:**

Basic contact and personal information (name, birthdate, address, phone, e-mail, name of high school and grade level entering)

Why are you interested in this program? (one to two paragraphs)

What values would be important to you as a member of the community on this program? (one to two paragraphs)

(Internal) Criteria for acceptance on the program will include:

- Grade level (students must be entering grades nine to twelve in the fall of 2021)
- Demonstration of understanding of the purpose of the trip, and interest in working toward program goals (based on initial interest form, interview, and recommendation letters)
- Documented approval from parents or guardians
- Recommendation from a teacher, coach, or other educator describing their experience working with the student, student's strengths and areas of challenge, and why they would be a valuable member of the cohort

## Appendix G: Budget and Budget Notes

Island Earth Field Studio - Program Budget						
Expense Area	Base Cost	Multiplier (M) 1	M1 Type	M2	M2 Type	Total Estimate
1. Program Activities (tickets and individual fees)	\$100	15	Person	1	Trip	\$1,500
2. Supplies and Materials	\$500	1	Trip	1	Trip	\$500
3. Speaker Fees and Meeting Space	\$600	1	Trip	1	Trip	\$600
4. Voyaging Program with the Hui	\$7,150	1	Trip	1	Trip	\$7,150
5. Haleakala Summit Tour	\$2,300	1	Trip	1	Trip	\$2,300
6. Meals and Snacks	\$35	15	Person	10	Days	\$5,250
7. Accommodation Expenses - Oahu - Student Bunks	\$240	1	Bunkhouse	3	Nights	\$720
8. Accommodation Expenses - Oahu - Leader/Common Space	\$260	1	Cabin	3	Nights	\$780
9. Accommodation Expenses - Maui - Students	\$30	12	Student	6	Nights	\$2,160
10. Accommodation Expenses - Maui - Leaders	\$160	2	Cabins	6	Nights	\$1,920
11. Local Transport (fixed)	\$1,000	10	Days	1	Trip	\$10,000
12. Local Transport (individual)	\$100	15	Person	1	Trip	\$1,500
13. Continental Leader Flights	\$700	2	Leader	1	Trip	\$1,400
14. Local Leader Flight	\$100	1	Leader	1	Trip	\$100
15. Scouting and Preparation	\$2,000	1	Fixed	1	Trip	\$2,000
16. Leader Taxis and Incidentals	\$200	3	Leader	1	Trip	\$600
17. Leader Stipend	\$170	2	Leader (Contract)	9	Nights	\$3,060
18. Communications	\$100	1	Trip	1	Trip	\$100
19. Basic Travel Insurance	\$6	15	Person	1	Trip	\$90
<b>Total Expenses</b>						<b>\$41,730</b>
20. Indirect Costs at 6%						\$2,504
<b>Total Budget</b>						<b>\$44,234</b>
<b>Per Student Price (12 Students)</b>						<b>\$3,686</b>

**Budget Notes:**Item 1: Program Activities (Individual)

Per person activity costs include museums, camp activities, and cultural programming. Taxes are included.

Item 2: Supplies and Materials

This includes printed materials and notebooks for students and leaders, first aid kits, luggage tags for all travelers, camp gear such as spare bedding and cooking supplies, and group meeting materials such as adhesive notes and flipchart paper.

Item 3: Speaker Fees and Meeting Space

This covers fees for meeting space and guest speakers at the Pacific Whale Foundation in Lahaina (Maui) and one speaker in Honolulu (Oahu).

Item 4: Voyaging Program

Our partners on Maui will provide four days of educational programming on Polynesian voyaging. This fee will cover instruction from local voyagers, a lifeguard with voyaging expertise, Coast Guard escort, use of the Hui's voyaging canoe, and all necessary materials and supplies, including personal flotation devices. Taxes and gratuity are included.

Item 5: Haleakala Summit Tour

This ten-hour private tour includes private transportation to, from, and around Haleakala National Park, entrance fees to the park, a designated guide, and taxes and gratuities.

Item 6: Meals and Snacks

The program includes three meals a day beginning upon arrival and ending upon departure for the airport, plus an average of two non-perishable snacks per day. Most meals for this program will be cooked as a group, thus meal budget covers food purchases at grocery stores.

Item 7: Accommodation Expenses – Oahu – Student Bunks



At the camp on Oahu, all students will stay in a bunkhouse (large dorm-style cabin) with private rooms that sleep two to four students each, with designated halls and bathrooms for each gender (identity). The program will rent the entire bunkhouse. Two leaders, one male and one female, will also stay overnight in the bunkhouse. Taxes are included.

Item 8: Accommodation Expenses – Oahu – Leader/Common Space

At the camp on Oahu, the third leader will stay in an additional cabin next to the student bunkhouse. This cabin will also house the leader-designated bathroom, an indoor group common area in case of inclement weather, and a small kitchen for cooking group meals. Taxes are included.

Item 9: Accommodation Expenses – Maui – Students

This is the per-person cost for one student in a two- to four-person raised-platform tent at the camp on Maui. Taxes are included.

Item 10: Accommodation Expenses – Maui – Leaders

This is the per-unit cost for one two-person raised-platform tent for adults at the camp on Maui. Leaders of the same gender (identity) will share a cabin. Taxes are included.

Item 11: Local Transport (Fixed)

Vetted private charter buses will be used on both islands for airport transfers as well as transfers between camp accommodations and program activities. On Oahu, this cost also includes a rental car for program leaders to run errands and get supplies as needed, or in case of emergency. Taxes and gratuity are included.

Item 12: Local Transport (Individual)

Individual transportation costs include: one inter-island flight from Honolulu (Oahu) to Kahului (Maui) on Hawaiian Airlines; and the public bus used to transfer between Hui program activities and Lahaina on Maui.

Item 13: Continental Leader Flights

This estimate is based on average round-trip flight costs from four major cities in the mainland United States (Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, and Boston), arriving in Honolulu and departing from Kahului.

Item 14: Local Leader Flight

The local leader will be based in either Oahu or Maui. This estimate is based on average one-way airfare between the two islands on Hawaiian Airlines.

Item 15: Scouting and Preparation

This represents the total cost for one member of the Atlas headquarters team to visit Hawaii in advance of the program for three days total. The estimate includes round-trip flight, accommodations, meals, and transportation. This cost also covers program leaders arriving on Oahu one day early to make final preparations before the group arrives.

Item 16: Leader Taxis and Incidentals

The leader taxi budget is provided for airport transfers and other errands as needed, to be used sparingly. This allowance may also be used to cover small purchases for the well-being of the program, such as extra sunscreen for the group or coffee for a local partner.

Item 17: Leader Stipend

This represents Atlas Workshops' standard rate for contracted program leaders. This program will have one program leader and one local leader paid at the same rate. The headquarters team member who also functions as a leader does not receive an additional stipend.

Item 18: Communications

This represents Atlas Workshops' fixed standard fee for leader cell phone coverage.

Item 19: Basic Travel Insurance

All travelers on this program (students and leaders) are covered under the Student Protection Plan provided through Travel Insured International.

Item 20: Indirect Costs

Overhead costs include administrative support, contribution to leadership team salaries, and program marketing and recruitment.