

Living up to his name and his culture

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 your name.’ She named me; she passed it on down.
 ”

John Keolamaka‘ainanakahuiokalaninokamehamehaekolu Lake
 Hawaii Living Treasure

□ For John Lake, his Hawaiian middle name defines his many roles

By Catherine Kekoa Enomoto
 Star-Bulletin

JOHN Keolamaka‘ainanakahuiokalaninokamehamehaekolu Lake is the senior statesman of the native Hawaiian people, says Kalani Meinecke.

Recently, Lake presided at the public conveyance ceremonies when the federal government returned Kahoolawe to the state of Hawaii. The 57-year-old Living Treasure of Hawaii was keynote speaker at the “Ka ‘Olelo Hawai‘i Ma Na Wahi A Pau” Hawaiian-language conference. And he was part of a Hawaii delegation to Belgium for last month’s pre-beatification homage to Father Damien deVeuster.

So Meinecke, director of the second annual Summer Institute in Hawaiian and Polynesian Studies, invited Lake to teach two courses central to Hawaiian culture — “Introduction to Hawaiian Chant and Hula” and “Traditions of the Ali‘i in History, Chant, Hula and the Great Epics.”

In Hawaiian culture, one’s name may be as significant as one’s genealogy — oftentimes, one’s name is one’s genealogy. Hence, Lake’s Hawaiian middle name — which means “for the life of the people and to the nation of chiefs, (a statement attributed) to Kamehameha III” — has predicated his mission as scholar, teacher, mentor and leader.

“The thing I’ve done in relation to my name is as a teacher,” says Lake, a Chaminade University instructor and retired 37-year teacher and dean at St. Louis School, “in reawakening the life of the people in general. I try to reestablish the wealth of the culture, to identify the richness of the culture.”

“The life of the people,” my grandmother said, “that’s your name.” She named me; she passed it on down” four generations, Lake says.

This mission has resulted in a string of accomplishments. Lake:

- Developed the unprecedented Hawaiian studies program at St. Louis.
- Served two years as a board member of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts.
- Served on the State Council on Hawaiian Heritage.
- Was a two-year president and founding member of Hui ‘Imi Na‘auao, a confederation of Hawaiian studies teachers and interested persons.
- Was a founding member of ‘Ahaui ‘Olelo Hawai‘i, formed in 1972 to revitalize and standardize Hawaiian-language use.
- Served three years on the University of Hawaii’s Committee for the Preservation of the Hawaiian Language, Culture and the Arts.
- Started the Hawaiian language program at Chaminade this past fall.
- Was honored when St. Louis School established the John K. Lake chair of Hawaiian studies in April.
- With his cousin Kahauanu Lake, started the year-old Hawai‘i Academy of Arts, Music and Dance/Halau Mele,



providing instruction in hula language, chanting, history, ukulele and guitar.

A Maui son, Lake graduated from St. Anthony High in Wailuku, where he helped tend 18 taro paddies. He earned bachelor’s and master’s in education degrees at the University of San Francisco, and finished a second master’s degree in linguistics in Spain.

His chanting and hula lineage includes study under the master, Ka‘ehukai Ka‘ae, followed by 26 years with Auntie Ma‘iki Aiu Lake.

Language undergirds his name, genealogy, accomplishments and hula background: “I spoke Hawaiian because of my grandmother, Abigail Kaluakini. She was there most of the time in my early days in Lahaina. She was a little schoolteacher, so I had to learn. She made it a point that I remembered not only language, but also stories, legends and genealogies.”

Lake says he speaks Hawaiian with “kaona” — hidden meanings, metaphor and poetic expression.

For example, when he asks, “Where are the waters of Kane? They spring from within, from the soul,” he is really saying, “Language makes us live,

interactive people.”

Accomplishments will continue for the senior statesman from Maui. He plans to translate the works of his grandfather, William Kauaha‘ao Kaluakini, a sheriff during King Kalakaua’s reign.

Lake will continue to teach at Chaminade and the Summer Institute and to be an emissary — as his Hawaiian name suggests — for “the life of the common people.”

Kumu hula Wayne Keahi Chang says Lake’s knowledge, research and experience make him preeminent in protocol.

“If I were going to New Zealand (for example), the person I’d want with me is John. The one to discuss proper protocol would be, without question, John,” says Chang.

Statesman Lake says, “Everything I’ve been doing over the years is because it’s important to maintain the identity that makes Hawaii what it is. The unique quality of our island state is key. No matter who you are, we work together to protect the values of the state — the values basically of a intermixed society. Sure, I’ll handle protocol for that.”

John Lake, who will be teaching an “Introduction to Hawaiian Chant and Hula” and “Traditions of the Ali‘i in History, Chant, Hula and the Great Epics” at Windward Community College’s Summer Institute in Hawaiian and Polynesian Studies, chants at the Pahua Heiau in Hawaii Kai.

By Terry Luke
 Star-Bulletin

Pacific explorations

The Summer Institute in Hawaiian and Polynesian Studies offers 14 courses, whose subjects span the Pacific, from Aotearoa (New Zealand) to Tahiti. Courses are 10 class sessions, each one hour, 50 minutes long.

■ **Place:** Windward Community College
 ■ **Time:** Weekdays, June 20 through July 1

■ **Cost:** \$95 per course until Monday, unless otherwise noted; \$145 after

■ **Information:** Call 235-7433

■ **Courses are as follow:**

- “The Hawaiian Masculine Mystique”: Instructors Sam Kaha‘i Ka‘ai and Kalani Meinecke, 8 a.m.
- “Intermediate Slack Key (Guitar)”: Ron Loo, 10 a.m. (\$140; \$180 after Monday)
- “Polynesian Prehistory”: (and the Role of the Marquesas in the Settlement of Eastern Polynesia) Robert Suggs, 10 a.m.
- “‘Avaiki Raro — The Cultural Heritage of the Cook Islands”: Jon Jonassen, 10 a.m.
- “Traditions of the Ali‘i in History, Chant, Hula and the Great Epics”: John Lake, 1 p.m.
- “The Hula in ‘An-Human Perspective”: Joann Keali‘inohomoku, 1 p.m.
- “Hawaiian Steel Guitar”: Jerry Byrd, 1 p.m. (\$140; \$180 after Monday)
- “The Cultural Heritage of Tonga”: ‘Inoke Funaki, Emil Wolfgang and Noli‘i Mateaki Funaki, 1 p.m.
- “Introduction to Hawaiian Chant and Hula”: John Lake, 3 p.m.
- “Samoa and Samoans in Hawai‘i”: Loia Fiaui, 3 p.m.
- “The Tahitian Cultural Heritage”: Therese Tero‘oatea Cummings, Thomas Cummings and staff, 3 p.m.
- “Polynesian Super Heroes”: Emil Wolfgang, Professor Rube‘lite Kawena Johnson and staff, 6 p.m.
- “New Zealand Maori Language and Culture — Challenge and Response to Change”: Wiremu Mangai Kaa and staff, 6 p.m.
- “Rapa Nui (Easter Island) — Past, Present and Future”: Sergio Rapu, 6 p.m.