



## Ikaika Hawai'i to Compete in Head of the Charles Regatta:

First Crew to Represent Hawai'i in a Mainland Rowing Regatta in Over 50 Years.

### NEWS RELEASE

**Honolulu (August 30th, 2022)**

In October 2022, 10 athletes from Ikaika Hawai'i, a non-profit organization operating out of the Hawaii Yacht Club in Honolulu, will travel 5,000 miles to Boston, Massachusetts to compete in the world's largest two-day rowing regatta, the Head of the Charles. This prestigious event, which hosts over 11,000 athletes and tens of thousands of spectators each year from all over the globe, has never had a crew from Hawai'i represented.

[Ikaika Hawai'i](#)'s mission is to perpetuate aloha and Watermans culture through positive watersport activity for the youth of Hawai'i. We educate keiki as young as 6-years-old in ocean safety, skills, and stewardship and provide pathways for them to holistically develop into great young waterman. One of these pathways is our rowing program, which aims to transition great outrigger paddlers, canoeists, and kayakers to the sport of rowing so they can maintain their positive connection to the water on the mainland during their college years.

Two-time Olympian Shelley Oates-Wilding, who founded Ikaika Hawai'i 10 years ago and is also the Head Coach of the US National Sprint Canoe and Kayak Team, started the rowing program of Ikaika so that young waterman of Hawai'i can access collegiate opportunities. Since the program started in 2012, Ikaika has sent nearly 40 athletes on to row collegiately. Ikaika Hawai'i is the only youth rowing program in the entire state, and we practice using the only 4+ shell on the island. Ikaika rowers are talented and dedicated athletes but have been training for years without any racing opportunities.

"With newly appointed Program Director and Head Rowing Coach, Rylie Hager, our program is breaking all barriers. Rylie rowed at Temple University in Philadelphia and is now nurturing an amazing, growing program to bring back the historic positive Hawaiian rowing culture of the past" said Coach Shelley.

The sport of rowing was popular in Hawaiian waterways for over 100 years from the late 1800's to late 1900's. King Kalakaua celebrated his birthday starting in 1875 by hosting grand regattas during which he admired the rowing events. By the 1950's, rowing was an organized interscholastic sport. 'Iolani high school became the first high school in America to make the finals at the Olympic trials; in 1964, they finished 6th place in a field of college and former olympic crews, including the winner Harvard University. In the 1990's, US rowing sanctioned the

Royal Hawaiian Rowing Challenge on the Ala Wai Canal in Honolulu which was attended by some of the nation's fastest collegiate teams including Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Washington State, UC Berkeley, and Yale, as well as international teams from British Columbia, Kyoto, Japan, and Brisbane, Australia. Since then, there has been no competitive rowing in Hawai'i. More than 50 years have passed since a crew from Hawai'i competed in a mainland rowing regatta.

Our rowers are looking forward to representing Hawai'i, their communities, their ohana, and themselves at Head of the Charles this fall. "The amazing thing is, the rowers' level of commitment to training and to one another has changed very little since I told them we were competing at Head of the Charles - it hasn't needed to. The sportsmanship, humility, love for the sport, work ethic and drive to better themselves each day were all there long before we ever thought of trying to get to a race. This is an extremely special crew, and I'm honored to be part of their journey." - Coach Rylie

We humbly ask for support to make this journey possible! You can donate to our fundraiser by clicking [HERE](#) or scanning the QR code below! The team is doing a Row-a-Thon on September 17th, 2022 on [Magic Island at Ala Moana Park](#) from 6am-6pm! Please [fill out this form](#) to pledge your support to one of our athletes to help the team travel to Boston!

**Please support these athletes on their journey!**

Alana Lei Uehara (Dwight Global '24)  
Carlee Inuma (Laurel Springs '25)  
Danilla Monk ('Iolani '24)  
Jenna Jaffe (Les Jardins '23)  
Kana Barlag (Sacred Hearts '24)  
Kate Bartholomees (Mid Pacific Institute '24)  
Lilinoe Wilson (Punahou '26)  
Phoebe Reilly (Punahou '24)  
Sabrina Graves (La Pietra '24)  
Sophia Smith (Mid-Pacific Institute '25)



**Learn more about Head of the Charles - [HERE](#)**

**Learn more about Ikaika Rowing - [HERE](#)**

**Learn more about the history of Rowing in Hawai'i - [HERE](#)**

**Watch 'Iolani take on Green Lake School on the Ala Wai 1959 - [HERE](#)**

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