

Jan and Tony Carreira
Rell Sunn Education Foundation
13 Chaumont
Mission Viejo, CA 92692

Dear Jan and Tony,

On behalf of Te Lumanaki o Tokelau i Amelika, I want to express our enthusiastic appreciation for the opportunity granted to our school by the Rell Sunn Foundation Education Foundation. On December 13, 2008, we were privileged to view *Hawai'i Message in the Waves*, and to visit Hawai'i Adventure Waterpark where we received additional education on the importance of conserving and keeping our water clean and enjoyed the facility's water rides.

Before viewing the video, the viewers (students age 3-45 and parents and grandparents) were asked to consider some issues and questions concerning our ocean. (copy of questions attached). The post-video discussion is a testament to how well the planning, content—graphics and text, and scope of the video's production combined to convey its message with profound urgency. The following are comments from some of the viewers.

"People have grown ignorant and careless to the condition of the ocean" (18)

"When you go to the store take a cloth bag with you" (8)

"Whatever we leave lying around will eventually lead to the ocean" (18)

"Use metal bottles so we can lower our plastic bottles [use]" (12)

"I learned that the rubbish we throw in the ocean kill animals" (13)

"I learned that the ocean belongs to everyone" (7)

"Reduce, reuse, and recycle...helps our economy...and our ocean" (16)

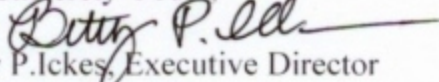
"Always knew there was problems with pollution but never knew how bad it has become...and how its affecting sea life and us too" (43)

The students were especially concerned with the effects of human carelessness on our animal population; the graphics on the contents from the stomachs of the starved albatrosses was a powerful reminder. In addition, we all appreciated how the video promoted the value and wisdom of the Hawaiian ancestors; because for too long, indigenous knowledge has been dismissed as backward and detrimental to progress. This video shows that one culture's idea of progress has been unrestrained exploitation resulting in destruction to our habitat, while another culture sees progress as living in harmony with our environment resulting in resource sustainability. Our Tokelauan ancestors utilized similar practices to protect and sustain their atoll environments. To Tokelauans, the environment was not a separate entity rather; the environment defined our culture, customs, and traditions, and thus, our identity and lifestyle.

Our school uses water coolers and we recycle appropriate containers. However, the video has made additional and tangible impacts on our community's consciousness. One family has discontinued using plastic bags; for Christmas, they purchased reusable cloth bags for each of the Lumanaki families. Our school has also purchased reusable light-weight plates, and will no longer use foam or disposable plastic plates and cups. In addition, many of the critical issues in the video will be integrated into our curriculum so that future students can benefit from its wisdom.

It is our hope that this video is distributed and viewed by as wide an audience as possible. In closing, I cite one of our writers, "this day has been very educational."
"Mahalo Sistah Rell! Your passion and legacy lives on!"

Sincerely Yours,



Betty P. Ickes, Executive Director
Te Taki Tokelau Community, Inc.