

Orange County Makapo Aquatics Project Receives \$50,000 Grant from The Hartford

Company surprises local athlete with custom-fit sports equipment

NEWPORT BEACH, CA, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Orange County Makapo Aquatics Project, a non-profit organization based in Irvine, California, was recently awarded a \$50,000 grant from The Hartford for new adaptive sports equipment.

The grant enabled Orange County Makapo Aquatics Project, a member of the Move United member network, to purchase adaptive sports equipment, including two six-person Hydra canoes custom-made with adaptive features that will be used for Ohana Days Paddling Experience events and for Makapo competitive outrigger racing teams. These two canoes can also be connected to create a 12-person canoe providing more access to paddlers of all abilities.



Janet Wu is surprised with her own adaptive sports equipment thanks to a grant from The Hartford

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*Makapo Executive Director RJ
De Rama*

The Hartford also surprised Janet Wu, a 46-year-old athlete who participates in the NAC/Makapo Para Outrigger Team and trains using a Fai Va’a 4si rudderless canoe, or V1. The canoe has been modified to attach a second outrigger and has custom mounting points throughout the cockpit to secure adaptive seating. This type of canoe, along with a ruddered OC1 canoe, allows paddlers to hone their skills on a one person craft, and opens the door for additional competitive opportunities in addition to competing in six-person outrigger canoes, OC6.

“Being able to train in a rudderless canoe will enhance my

skills to participate in future international races,” says Wu. “It will allow me to become a better

paddler by learning the additional skill of steering without a rudder.”

“The sport of outrigger paddling is experiencing remarkable growth in participation, attracting athletes of all abilities who are drawn to the water and the Island culture that welcomes everyone. Makapo is blessed to be able to use the grant to get more people on the water,” shares Makapo Co-Founder and Executive Director RJ De Rama.

Orange County Makapo Aquatics serves roughly 500 people with disabilities and their families annually through programs like Ohana Days, where families paddle together and experience the joy of being out on the water.

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