

Keynote Address

Time: 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM / **Saturday** - 1/11/2014 / **Room:** Kona Moku (Marriott)



Hula and the Natural World

Hula is far more than a dance form from Hawai‘i. It is an expression of the relationship of Hawaiians to the natural elements of the Islands and to each other. In turn, the natural world is the source and foundation for the hula art form. Celebrate Hawaiian culture with Dr. Sam Gon as he explores the symbology of the ornamentation and Hawaiian musical instruments inherent in hula, and the spiritual underpinnings of the ecosystems and plants of land and sea, and how they shaped the undeniably Hawaiian dance called hula. Sam has over 35 years of experience in Hawaiian ecology and he is also versed in Hawaiian culture, history, and language, studying traditional Hawaiian chants, hula and cultural protocols. His presentation combines his knowledge of Hawaiian culture and history.



"...Indigenous Geography at its best — an amazing display of Native knowledge (including the use of Hawaiian language and chants), scientific scholarship, and traditional storytelling"

- Tim Johnson, Associate Director for Museum Programs, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian

Dr. Samuel M. 'Ohukani'ōhi'a Gon, III
Senior Scientist and Cultural Advisor

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai‘i

From the mountain to the oceans, The Nature Conservancy works with local communities, businesses and people to protect Hawaii's best natural lands and waters. Since 1980, they have established a statewide system of Conservancy preserves, helped create new wildlife refuges and expand national parks, forged partnerships to protect our most important watershed forests and coral reefs, and led efforts to stem the tide of invasive species entering the state. As a part of the Conservancy staff for over 25 years, Sam has brought his expertise to the organization in a variety of capacities. As Ecologist for the Hawaii Natural Heritage Program of he conducted biological inventories, reports and management recommendations; and as Director of Science he guided the science behind the vision and operations of The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii. In his current role as Senior Scientist and Cultural Advisor, Sam maintains his science guidance, and adds his cultural expertise to enhance the mission of The Conservancy.

Sam received his bachelor's degree in Zoology at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and his masters in Zoology and doctorate in Animal Behavior at the University of California, Davis. He holds an affiliate faculty post with the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Hawai‘i.