

Children's Va'a (Outrigger) School, 2016

Taiohae, Nuku Hiva

After almost a year, the beautiful Marquesas stole our hearts. We looked for a way to "pay it forward" and make a contribution to a people and culture we came to love. "Enana au i oto otou ho'upo" Linda says to our local friends. ("I am Marquesan in my heart").

We are pleased to have found it!! Check out what we made possible in Nuku Hiva, Marquesas by sponsoring the new children's outrigger canoe (va'a) program. Our donation helped pay for the two new custom kid-sized canoes, the smaller paddles and life vests....and a chase boat. Since this is their national sport, it is tantamount to sponsoring a kids hockey program in Canada or a Little League baseball effort in the US where there was none previously. Hopefully this will allow the kids to be more competitive in French Polynesia when the races come around in Tahiti every year (it's a big national deal - they are reported live on the radio!). If nothing else, it will give the kids cultural pride and help keep them in healthier shape through exercise (obesity and diabetes are a big problem).

We are so proud!!!! We think it's great when cruisers just don't pass through but make a lasting contribution to the communities they visit.

In this video about the traditional "baptism" or inauguration ceremony of the va'a, watch for "Jacaranda" on the canoe!!

<https://youtu.be/TgzEnk0QakQ>

We were ecstatic to receive this personalized video with our very own greeting and thank you from Phillipe and our friends in Nuku Hiva!!!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXr6pRkiMAo&feature=youtu.be>