Na Keiki O Ka ʻAina Summer Adventure Camps

A new generation of scientists has been born on Kaua'i!

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The time: First-time campers (late July) and Returners (early August)
The students: over 50 local elementary school students (ages 6 – 10)
The reason: to teach our keiki about the relationships between their actions on land and effects in the ocean, in addition to the cultural and ecological importance of good natural resource management.

What the First-timers campers did and learned:

- Explored the Lawa'i Valley from the waterfall to the ocean
  - How pollutants (particularly plastic debris and sediment) travel from the land to the sea
- Spent the day on the beach
  - Ocean food webs
  - Where microbes like to live and how they protect themselves (here the kids designed their own microbes out of pipe cleaners, beads, toothpicks, and trash)
- Discovered native Hawaiian species
  - The importance of biodiversity
  - How native Hawaiian vegetation reduce erosion to coastal waters

What the Returning campers did and learned:

- How to survive off the land here in Hawai'i
  - How water quality affects phytoplankton and how those effects are magnified going up the food chain
  - About nutrient cycling and its effects on primary productivity
- The cultural significance of water in Hawai'i
  - Why it is important to study science and preserve this important cultural resource for the years to come
  - How to bring cultural practices and science together to help keep their oceans clean
  - The effects of native plant restoration on the water they fish from

This camp previously had a botanical focus, but with the help of C-MORE we were given the resources and funding to expand our program to include oceanography. We utilized C-MORE activity kits in both camps and the money from the GEMS grant was used to buy waterproof journals and stainless steel water bottles for the students. These bottles helped reduce our camp's ecological impact by minimizing plastic bottle use, and the kids were able to write in their waterproof journals in the rain, by the ocean, and in the stream without losing their creative works.