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Aia Nā Ha'ina I Loko O Kākou (The Answers Lie Within Us)

"The wa'a or canoe and the rivers on which it navigates represents life for Indigenous people.

The stern or moamoa of the wa'a depicts our past and has a background of hala.¹

The last paddler steers our course as have our ancestors before us.

The fifth paddler will also bail, providing the kōkua or assistance to keep the canoe in order.

The 'ohe or bamboo background of the middle image represents the present.

The paddlers who sit in the ka'ele, in the third and fourth seats provide the energy,

The power to propel the canoe forward.

The manu ihu or bow is represented by 'ulu,² our hope for the future.

The first paddler must set the pace for the stroke while the second paddler keeps the cadence, or timing.

Everyone in the wa'a must work together in order to move forward,

Just as we must work together to move ourselves effectively into the future."

The image above was designed by the Hawaiian artist Craig A. Neff to depict the theme of the 1999 World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education held August 1 - 7 in Hilo, Hawai'i. The image and accompanying text have been reprinted with the permission of 1999 WIPCE Hawai'i.

¹ Leaf of the Pandanus tree.

² Breadfruit.