

NORTHWESTERN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEM RESERVE
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Resolution Expressing Support for Honoring Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott at NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary System Memorial Garden

September 10, 2015

The Reserve Advisory Council notes the following:


1. Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott served for ten years on the Advisory Council for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve (now part of Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument). During this time, she also conducted groundbreaking research on the biodiversity of marine algae from the NWHI, including the description of several new species, and documentation of the first invasive algae bloom.
2. Dr. Abbott was the first person of Native Hawaiian ancestry to earn a Ph.D. in science and the first woman on the biological sciences faculty at Stanford University, during which time she became the leading expert on Pacific algae. More than 200 algae owe their discovery and scientific names to Dr. Abbott. Several species were named after her, along with an entire genus – *Abbottella*, which means "little Abbott."
3. Dr. Abbott was an educator, phycologist and ethnobotanist from Hawai'i. Known in scientific circles as the "First Lady of Limu" (limu is Hawaiian for seaweed), she was the preeminent marine botanist of the Pacific region for more than 50 years and was considered the foremost expert on central-Pacific algae.
4. During her time in California, Dr. Abbott studied the algae of the California coast, which led to her literally "writing the book" on California algae, "Marine Algae of California," which, to this day, is considered to be the definitive description of marine algae along the Pacific coast. She went on to author the landmark monographs "Marine Red Algae of the Hawaiian Islands," "Marine Green and Brown Algae of the Hawaiian Islands," "Hawaiian Reef Plants," "La'au Hawai'i: Traditional Hawaiian Uses of Plants," and more than a hundred other publications.
5. In 1997, Dr. Abbott was awarded the Gilbert Morgan Smith medal - the highest award in marine botany - from the National Academy of Sciences, for excellence in published research on algae. She was also recognized by the Botanical Society of America, was named a Living Treasure by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i, and received the University of Hawai'i Distinguished Alumni Award in 1994.

6. In 2004, Dr. Abbott named the newly commissioned NOAA research ship Hi'ialakai, which means "embracing or searching the pathways of the sea." The Hi'ialakai continues to serve as the vessel aboard which scientists conduct research in the Monument and beyond.
7. Former NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco issued a statement at the time of Dr. Abbott's death, saying "Izzie was a font of knowledge and a beacon of inspiration for generations of marine biologists around the world... Izzie has been central to many of NOAA's stewardship responsibilities in the Pacific, especially in understanding the wealth of marine life in Papahānaumokuākea, our Marine National Monument in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands."

The Council recommends that:

The NOAA National Marine Sanctuary System Memorial Garden bear a plaque in honor of Dr. Isabella Aiona Abbott in recognition of her years of service to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve as a Representative on the Reserve Advisory Council, for her immeasurable contribution to the field of marine biology, and to acknowledge her longtime role as an advocate for protection of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

ADOPTED by the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council at its regular meeting on September 10, 2015.



Timothy E. Johns, Chair