NOAA Awards Nearly $1 Million for Fisheries Projects in the Western Pacific Region

In May 2020, the Saltonstall-Kennedy (S-K) Grant Program announced the awarding of more than $8 million to fund projects that address the needs of fishing communities, optimize economic benefits by building and maintaining sustainable fisheries and increase other opportunities to keep working waterfronts viable. Program priorities focused on promotion, development and marketing, and science or technology that promotes sustainable US seafood production and harvesting. Of the 146 proposals that were submitted, four were selected for funding from the Western Pacific Region totaling $915,563. These projects were funded:

- *Community Ideas and Projects for Ahi, Yellowfin Tuna, Landed on Kaua'i.* Pacific Islands Fisheries Group.

  Yellowfin tuna (*'ahi*) is a key species in the Hawaiian diet, the local economy and visitor culinary experience. Kaua'i is dominated by part-time anglers, most of them trollers, whose catch generally supplies the local Kaua'i market. The objective of this proposed work is to identify and evaluate a range of possible approaches to diversify or increase market share and business opportunities for the Kaua'i small boat *'ahi* (and other species) fleet and the community's goals and preferences related to diversification.

- *Advancing the Promotion, Development and Marketing for Hawai'i's Local Sustainable Fisheries.* Conservation International Foundation.

  The goal of this project is to strengthen the viability of Hawai'i's local seafood industry by creating a scalable market-based model that promotes better business practices and marketing strategies to increase production and market demand for local and sustainable fish species. To do this, the project proposes to develop a "Pacific Chef Network" pilot initiative targeted at increasing the market demand for bluestripe snapper, or *ta'ape*.

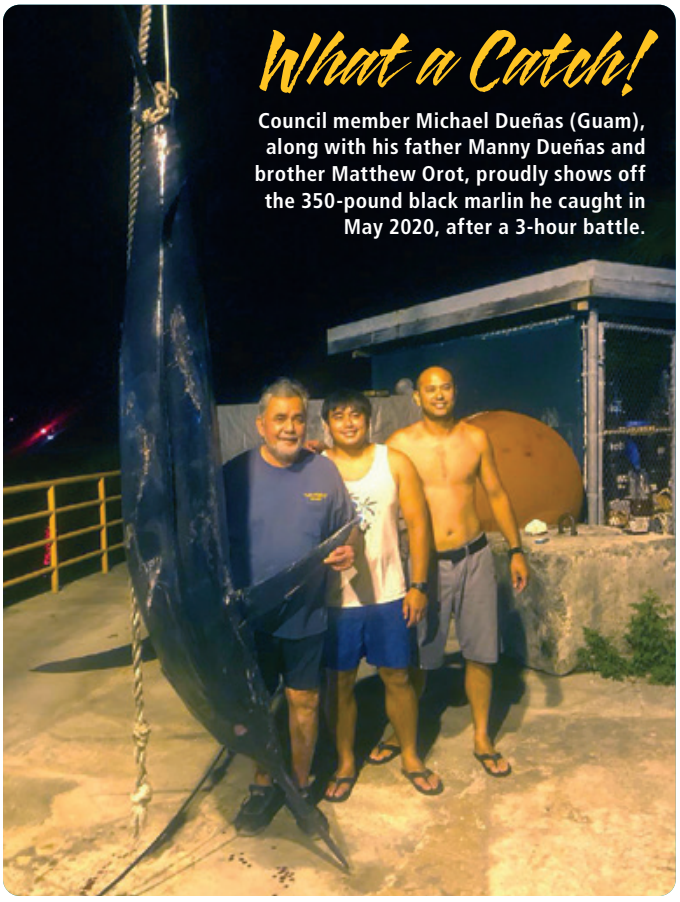
- *Building Resiliency in Hawaiian Fishing Communities: A Pilot Project Assessing the Feasibility of Developing a Local Fishmeal Plant.* Hawaii Feed & Fertilizer, LLC.

  One of the biggest barriers to the growth of aquaculture in Hawai'i is the high cost of imported aquafeed. Producing aquafeed locally would remove that barrier and help aquaculture to be sustainable and grow throughout Hawai'i. This project proposes to create and test fishmeal made from Hawaiian fish processing waste to produce locally sourced aquafeed that can be used for local aquaculture farms as well as pet feed, fish bait and fertilizer.

- *Determining Patterns and Drivers of Life-History Variation to Inform Present and Future Fishery Management in the US Pacific.* University of Guam.

  Knowing the life-history traits of coral reef species can help scientists and managers predict and interpret population dynamics used in stock assessments and management. This project proposes to determine life history traits for commercially important fish species in the Mariana Archipelago to determine the relationships between the environment and fish biological traits. This will help to project and forecast fishery yield under future climate variability and better inform management of those species.

The Saltonstall-Kennedy Act of 1954 established a program to provide financial support for research and development of commercial fisheries. A portion of import duties on fish and fish products is provided to a fund that finances this research and development. Some of these funds are used to support the annual competitive S-K Grant Program. For more information, visit www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/saltonstall-kennedy-grant-program.



Council member Michael Dueñas (Guam), along with his father Manny Dueñas and brother Matthew Orot, proudly shows off the 350-pound black marlin he caught in May 2020, after a 3-hour battle.