

Maya Knowles

Schooling

Knowles attended Pacific from 2009-2012 and then finished her degree at James Cook University in Queensland, Australia.

One fun fact about herself

Knowles loves singing and has been doing it ever since she was little. She has a Youtube channel for her music and her favorite song to sing is “Crazy For You” by Adele.

Current environmental work

Knowles currently works as the marine biologist for Down Under Cruise and Dive, a company based out of Queensland, Australia. Her job consists of guiding Great Barrier Reef snorkel and semi-submersible boat tours for up to 160 people per day. On these tours she identifies native species of plants and animals and the roles they play in the environment. She also provides commentary about the Great Barrier Reef as a system, its size, how it was formed, what species comprise it and how humans are impacting it. She also educates people about corals, their symbiotic relationship with zooxanthellae and the current environmental impacts of coral bleaching. Knowles states that this educational aspect is of critical importance because there is a lot of misinformation surrounding coral bleaching, global warming and the environment. She believes that by getting people to care about nature, they will want to learn more and take steps to protect it.



Upcoming projects in the area of the environment

Knowles' main goal for the present and future is to educate as many people as possible and spread the word about climate change, especially mass coral bleaching events. She stresses that the future of Great Barrier Reef is in serious jeopardy however the coral is not dead yet so we can still make changes and put pressure on government and corporations. Coral bleaching is a phenomenon that is not just happening in Australia, but also around the world. We must all do our part to help encourage preservation measures.

How Pacific influenced her journey

Knowles attributes her passion for environmental causes to Dr. Deke Gunderson's inspirational attitude and excellent teaching. Additionally, in her time at Pacific she took a tropical conservation biology trip to Belize which inspired her love of outdoor education. This trip helped her decide to combine her love of snorkeling, the environment and education into a career.

Advice for Pacific students wanting to pursue careers in sustainability and the environment

According to Knowles, "The key to success is passion. What you're passionate about is the field you'll be successful in. Find the area that you're passionate about, study it as in-depth as possible, and find out what's needed in that area."