

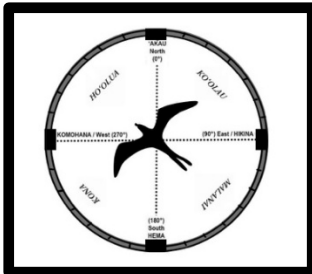
Charles Nainoa Thompson

(b. March 11, 1953)

**CEO and Navigator,
Polynesian Voyaging
Society**

Hawaiian American
Place of Birth:
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Invention: Modern
Star Compass



Burke Nguyen (SFSU 2024)

Nainoa grew up in a family that did not believe in competition. He was introduced to the ocean at age five by a milkman who took him on trips to the streams or on the reefs. In the 1970s, Nainoa invented and popularized the modern star compass that helps navigators know the direction and position of rising stars. He wants to preserve his native culture by tying ancient Hawaiian wayfinding principles to modern-day science. Nainoa received many awards, including the National Geographic Society's 2017 Hubbard Medal and the National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation's 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award.