

Youth-4-Change hosts Congressional Candidates Forum for Pohnpei candidates



By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

February 27, 2019

Pohnpei, FSM—On March 5, voters will decide who will occupy each of the 14 seats in the FSM Congress. In Pohnpei, “Youth 4 Change” sponsored a congressional candidates forum on February 27 in the Pohnpei State Conference Room.

The conference room was packed, with the majority of attendees being students. State radio Commissioner Peterson Sam said that the radio station had intended to air the forum live

but could not establish a sufficient internet connection in time to do so. He said that the radio station did record the event and aired the forum several times after it was completed.

Of the 10 candidates running for Pohnpei’s four congressional seats, only two were unable to participate.

The forum was divided into two sections. At 11:00 in the morning, President Christian and Senator David Panuelo answered the moderators’ prepared questions. They then took some questions from the attendees but only from students.

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Pohnpei files two sets of criminal charges against Genesis Corporation and its sole stock holder

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

February 27, 2019

Pohnpei—On February 12, 2019, the Pohnpei government filed criminal charges against Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso, sole stockholder of the Genesis Corporation and all of its businesses, on charges related to alleged labor law violations. Charges included a misdemeanor criminal charge of violation of Pohnpei Wage and Hour laws, three counts of Pohnpei State Human Trafficking and Criminal Exploitation laws, and one count of Forgery and Possession of Forged Writing on employment contracts. On February 18, the

Pohnpei State Attorney General filed a second set of criminal charges against Dr. Abello-Alfonso alleging Obstruction of Justice for tampering with witnesses.

The charges contained in both sets of criminal information are allegations and Dr. Abello-Alfonso is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

According to documents filed at the Pohnpei State Supreme Court, the charges were the culmination of an eight month long investigation by the White Collar Crime Investigation Unit of the Office of the Attorney General in cooperation with the Division of Personnel, Labor and Manpower Development of the Department of Treasury and Administration.

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Pohnpei cancels Okeanos contract but is working to negotiate a new one

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

March 1, 2019

Pohnpei—According to Pohnpei’s Attorney General, the Pohnpei government is pushing forward to negotiate a new, legally sufficient contract to keep the beautiful twin hulled single mast “Vaka Motu”, Okeanos Messenger, a sailing canoe, in Pohnpei in order to serve Pohnpei’s outer islands.

The vessel is capable of carrying up to seven passengers and up to 3000 pounds of specific types of freight.

Last week, Okeanos Foundation for the Sea, Pohnpei Branch Managing Director Jack Yakana told The Kaselehlie Press that the Okeanos Messenger has taken four trips to Pohnpei’s outer islands at the request of the Pohnpei State government. Invoices sent to the State have not been paid.

Yakana said that Okeanos Foundation for the Sea Chief Operating Officer Dena Seidel wrote to the Pohnpei government saying that Okeanos will not be able to continue in Pohnpei if their invoices are not paid.

Pohnpei’s AG said that he has authorized payments of Okeanos invoices on a per trip basis. Currently the sticking point is that some of the funds that were reprogrammed to finance the acquisition of the Okeanos Messenger were Compact Sector Education Grants and would require approval of the US Office of Insular Affairs.

According to the professional opinions issued by the Pohnpei’s Public Auditor and its Attorney General, there were legal problems with the first contract and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Pohnpei government and the Okeanos Foundation. Both of the opinions offered suggestions on how a new, legally sufficient agreement could be reached, and the government is currently pursuing those suggestions.

One of the problems with the initial contract was that the Pohnpei State Legislature was not consulted and so was not able to act to properly appropriate funds for the agreement. Instead, line item funds were inappropriately and potentially illegally “re-programmed” from the Office of Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) and the Department of Education (DOE).

Regarding the first contract, which was canceled for cause, the auditor wrote that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Okeanos Charter Agreement/Contract are both silent on the ownership of the vessel and related assets at the end of the three year chartering services term.

The auditor recommended that if the Pohnpei leadership chooses to proceed with the project, responsible management officials should take immediate action find relevant funding sources to make sure that funds are properly authorized within the Pohnpei Government budgetary and financial legal frameworks and processes.

The AG alleged in his legal opinion that after the contract agreement was signed by all parties, the Pohnpei State Government Contracting Officer, Jack Yakana substituted a page or pages



into the contract.

On September 3, 2018, Pohnpei State Government Contracting Officer, Jack Yakana submitted his resignation from T&I effective at the end of that month, the AG wrote in his opinion. On September 24, Yakana submitted an Annual Cost Estimate for the Vaka Motu that included a salary of \$32,000 per year for a Managing Director. Yakana also signed the Charter Agreement authorizing use of T&I funds in the amount of \$70,000. After leaving office, he became the Okeanos Managing Director, directly benefiting from the contract. The AG alleged that Yakana had violated the Pohnpei laws regarding conflicts of interest (9 PC 8-110) and regarding Contracts (9 PC 8-111).

The law regarding contracts (9 PC 8-111) says that a State agency cannot enter into a contract with any person or business that is represented in the matter by a person who has been a public officer of that agency within the preceding 12 months and who participated in a material manner in the matter with which the contract is directly concerned.

The AG’s legal opinion on the original contract said that Yakana’s actions made the original contract null and void. It said that if Pohnpei State Government intends to enter into a new contract with the vessel owner, Yakana is legally “barred from participating or benefiting in the contract”.

For the last few weeks, the Okeanos

See “Okeanos” on page 7

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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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Chuuk State Commemorates 75th Anniversary of Operation Hailstone

FSM Information Services

WENO, Chuuk—On February 18th, 2019, representatives of Chuuk State Government, the National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and the Government of the United States of America (USA), gathered at the Blue Lagoon Resort on Weno Island to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Operation Hailstone. Operation Hailstone was a World War II operational campaign launched by the United States against the Japanese Imperial Navy based in the Chuuk Lagoon.

Among those in attendance at the commemoration were the Honorable Lorin S. Robert, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and representing His Excellency, Peter M. Christian, President of the FSM; the Honorable Wesley Simina, Speaker of the Congress of the FSM; the Honorable Innocente Oneisom, Speaker of the Chuuk State House of Representatives; Mr. Nickson Bossy, representing the Office of the Mayor of Weno Municipality; U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Heather Coble; the Honorable Douglas Domenech, Assistant Secretary for the Department of Interior; General Charles Q. Brown, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Air Forces; Rear Admiral Kevin E. Lunday, Fourteenth District Commander of the U.S. Coast Guard; Director Nikolao Pula of the U.S. Office of Insular Affairs; and Dr. Dianne Strong, historian and author.

The commemoration began with the reception of guests and an invocation by Father Dennis Baker, S.J. This was followed by the introduction and recognition of dignitaries and officials.

Speaker Oneisom, after welcoming the attendees, said “Operation Hailstone’s aerial attack started at 21:00 [9:00pm] on the 17th of February, and ended after midnight on the 18th of February, 1944.... Chuuk State joins the FSM National Government and the U.S. Government

in recognizing...the loving memories of all those whose lives perished.” The FSM, USA, and Japan all experienced significant loss of life during this military campaign. Continuing, Speaker Oneisom said “And it is an opportunity for us to reflect...and hope...that their souls rest in peace and there will never again be war and conflict in our islands.... This commemoration is not only for victory from war, but also for victory achieved in attaining and retaining peace.”

“Today, the FSM, the USA, and Japan are very close allied countries, and this ceremony brings us all together....” Speaker Oneisom spoke in detail about how the unique relationship between the FSM and the USA is realized through partnership and cooperation, though Speaker Oneisom also added “It is our hope that in 2023...the accompanying financial assistance will not significantly change.” FSM National Government officials and the U.S. delegation had an opportunity to meet prior to the commemoration activities. FSM officials included in this meeting were Joses Gallen, Secretary of the Department of Justice, and Andrew Yatilman, Secretary of the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management. During this meeting, officials engaged dialogue in matters of mutual interest concerning economic and security stability throughout the region. This included some discussion surrounding the status of the Amended Compact of Free Association as it relates to the expiring provisions scheduled to take effect in 2023.

U.S. Deputy of Chief Mission (DCM) Coble also spoke: “I am very honored to be here and part of the group...I think the theme that has been presented is something very important.... I think celebrating peace and partnership is something we do not do as much as we should...peace and cooperation...should be celebrated.”

“I hope everyone... understands the significance of not only the people who passed away,” said DCM Coble, “But of the marvelous cooperation we have...as allies with the Japanese and FSM. We work very well with the Japanese, not only here but throughout the [Freely Associated States]...and this is such a great thing to see.”

Dr. Dianne Strong, author of *Witness to War: Truk Lagoon’s Master Diver Kimiuo Aisek*, spoke next. Dr. Strong shared a detailed account of Operation Hailstone from her research and interviews, with emphasis on the idea that, though World War II was traumatic for all parties, Chuukese innovation and leadership through Kimiuo Aisek resulted in “the world’s greatest underwater museum.”

General Brown provided the keynote speech. “The FSM is a key partner with the USA to keep a free and open Pacific... and this ceremony serves as a reminder... that a small set of allies can have a big impact....The USA is an enduring Pacific power...and our ongoing presence demonstrates our commitment... [to] security and partnership, and collaboration: not domination.” General Brown recounted US assistance in a variety of arenas, including support following recent typhoons and other natural disasters through the broader Pacific region, and discussed Operation Christmas Drop which delivered “62,000 pounds of toys and food” to 56 islands throughout the greater Micronesia region, including the FSM. Operation Christmas Drop is the United States’ longest running humanitarian assistance operation.

Representing President Christian was Secretary Robert of the Department of Foreign Affairs, who provided special remarks. “Today we gather here not so much to dwell on the narratives of the past and the atrocities of wars, but most importantly to commemorate the victory of peace—the victory for the respect and dignity of our common humanity.... I think you will agree with me that the preamble of our national constitution says it all: ‘Having known war, we hope for peace. Having been divided, we wish for unity. Having been ruled, we seek freedom.’ Going forward today, let us promote friendship, partnership, and cooperation in our strength for the future.”

“I think you will agree,” Secretary



wreath-laying ceremony

Robert continued, “That we have enough common enemies to keep us busy. I am referring to climate change, sea level rise, poverty, hunger and famine, illiteracy, genocide, trafficking...these are the challenges of today.”

Closing his remarks, Secretary Robert said “We are indeed humbled and grateful for all the American assistance and support to our Nation building...we are thankful for the programs and grants... and hope for support and cooperation in the years to come.”

Following the speeches, the respective delegations proceeded onto small boats to place wreaths upon the water where, below, lay the reminders that the cost for peace has already been paid. Through these tokens of respect and remembrance, and active recognition that peace, civility, and respect for one another are as much choices people make as they are feelings and beliefs, it is the hope of the Nation that the FSM, the greater Pacific region, and the world at large will know and exemplify peace and partnership.

The FSM is dedicated towards producing positive and peaceful relationships with all countries and peoples throughout the world. The Nation’s relationship with the USA is both special and unique, and it is the hope of the FSM National Government that the FSM and USA will always have such a special partnership.



FSM & US Government Officials emphasizing our special relationship over a meal

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF
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WILL BE RELEASED ON:
March 18, 2019**

**Deadline for submission of articles or
advertisements for this issue is
the end of working hours on:
Wednesday, March 13, 2019**

...Genesis

Continued from front page

On the first set of charges, the Office of the Attorney General asked the Court to issue a summons requiring Dr. Abello-Alfonso to appear for a hearing. On the second set of charges, the AG asked the Court to issue an arrest warrant. After two days of deliberation, Associate Justice Ekiek issued the warrant for arrest based on a finding of probable cause. Police officers arrested Dr. Abello-Alfonso on the same day. Dr. Abello-Alfonso wrote in a social media post that she spent 22 hours in jail before she was released after a hearing for pre-trial release.

Dr. Abello-Alfonso broke the news of the initial criminal charges against her in a social media post on February 16. She called the criminal charges “dirty politics at its best”.

“One would think that such a high government unit that is tasked with protecting its citizens and ensuring justice for all would conduct itself in an ethical and moral manner and follow due process of law to allow me the courtesy to respond before hastily filing such ill-prepared, crappy charges!”, her February 16 post continued. She called the charges a “well-orchestrated plot” to ruin her chances in the March 5 election for the District One seat in the FSM Congress.

“I was never given an opportunity to respond and due process was not followed at all,” she wrote.

Last year, Pohnpei’s Chief of the Division of Personnel sent subpoenas to the four largest employers of expatriate employees, including Genesis. The subpoenas required the companies to submit employment contracts and other documents. Genesis complied.

On January 29, 2019, the White Collar Crime Investigation Unit sent a letter to Dr. Abello-Alfonso and the Genesis companies outlining alleged violations of law. The letter gave 10 days for Dr. Abello-Alfonso and Genesis companies to agree to pay any back wages they might owe and to commit to future compliance or face legal action.

Through their attorney the Genesis companies and Dr. Abello-Alfonso sent a letter on February 7 denying any violation of the law.

The Office of the Attorney General then prepared and filed charges at the Supreme Court on February 12.

In addition to charges surrounding the alleged nonpayment of overtime hours, the State also accused the defendants of having brought in employees from the Philippines using master employment contracts that “had forged stamps, seals and signatures of the Philippine Consulate General, Agana, Guam, and forged stamps, seals and signatures of the POEA (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration).”

The prosecutor has accused the defendants of criminal violation of the Pohnpei State Wage and Hour Law, a misdemeanor offense punishable by a fine of not less than \$500, and/or by imprisonment of not more than one year along with a liability to employees for any unpaid minimum wages or unpaid overtime compensation. The charging document says that the defendants violated 19 PC 3-105 of the Pohnpei code by requiring employees to work in excess of 40 hours without the payment of overtime compensation at time and a half. The code also says that the law cannot be “in any way contravened, waived or set aside by private agreement.”

The language of the master employment contract and an addendum regarding definition of hourly compensation that Genesis uses for its expatriate workers was listed in the criminal information. The prosecution has interpreted the language to mean that under the contract, an employee would need to work 124 hours in one week before reaching the threshold of eligibility to receive overtime pay.

The criminal information also says that the provisions of an addendum to the work contract that some employees additionally signed are inconsistent with the master employment contract regarding working hours and overtime pay. The prosecutor will have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the language of the contract and the actual practice resulted in no overtime having been paid to employees.

Counts two through four of the charges are for alleged criminal violations of Pohnpei State’s Human Trafficking and Criminal Exploitation laws for separate but related reasons.

A person convicted of human trafficking would face a penalty of 10 years imprisonment, and/or a fine of \$10,000. A business convicted of the crime would face a fine or \$50,000, loss of permits to conduct business, and asset forfeiture. A convicted business could also be liable, subject to orders of the Court, to provide restitution to employees.

Count five of the criminal information is for alleged “Forgery and Possession

of Forged Writing”. Prosecutors allege that after the April 2018 “hold” on further employment contracts implemented by the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, but before the POEA ban of Filipino labor coming to the FSM was implemented in September of 2018, Filipino employees were allowed to leave the Philippines in order to work for Genesis based on fraudulent stamps that purported to authorize the emigration.

An affidavit by Attorney General Dana Smith that accompanied the Application for Warrant of Arrest on obstruction of justice charges claimed that during a mandatory meeting with Genesis employees on February 16, Dr. Abello-Alfonso told employees that she would take action against their professional licensures in the Philippines if they testified or supported the State in its case against her.

Smith’s testimony on the meeting was based on a digital recording.

Smith wrote that “the chilling effect was immediately evident” when one employee witness informed him that the employee no longer wanted their signed affidavit to be used in support of probable cause.

The State’s memorandum in support of an order for special conditions for pretrial release alleges that Dr. Abello-Alfonso communicated with Alex O. Vallespin, Vice Consul for the Republic of the Philippines that allegedly caused him to change his allegations regarding forged stamps and signatures on employment contracts.

The memorandum also alleges that Mercy Syne Martin, a Genesis employee and one of Dr. Abello-Alfonso’s campaign managers assaulted and threatened a fellow employee who had sworn an affidavit in support of the State’s case. The memorandum claims that the witness was so frightened by the confrontation that she moved out of the residential quarters and won’t return to work.

Pohnpei prosecutors have charged Martin with assault, disorderly conduct, and Obstruction of Justice.

Before recusing himself from the case because he is related to one of Dr. Abello-Alfonso’s attorneys, Associate Justice Eneriko M. Ekiek ordered pretrial release conditions for the defendant. The order required her to post a \$50,000 surety bond within seven days and to obey all laws of government entities. It did not confiscate her passport as the prosecutor had asked but ordered her not to leave Pohnpei without giving the Court

notice in writing of her destination, accommodations while traveling, date of departure and return. It also ordered that she not extend the itinerary for any travel without providing written notice to the Court 24 hours in advance of any change. It ordered her not to “harass, threaten, or intimidate any potential employee or witness with reprisal or other repercussion for testifying in the matter or any other criminal matter, nor direct any agent or other persons under her control to do so.” It also ordered her appearance at all Court proceedings.

Dr. Abello-Alfonso’s initial Court appearance was scheduled for February 26. The presiding justice nearly threw out the entire set of charges after the AG’s staff prosecutor failed to show up for the hearing, apparently due to an internal communication error within the AG’s office. After another State prosecutor who was in court for a previous hearing said that he represented the State but was not familiar with the content of the case, the Justice continued the hearing for another day.

Again, the charges contained in both sets of criminal information are merely allegations and Dr. Abello-Alfonso is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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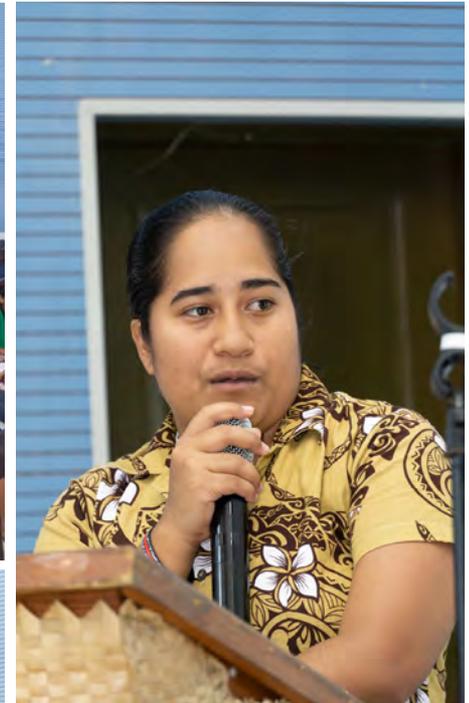
...Forum

Continued from front page

At 2:00 in the afternoon, six of the candidates for the two year seats in Pohnpei's three election districts participated in the forum. Senator Ferny Perman and Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso participated as the candidates for District 1. Herman Semes, Jr. and Quincy Lawrence participated as the candidates for District 2. Senator Dion Neth and Berney Martin were unable to participate. Senator Esmond Moses and Marstella Jack participated as the candidates for District 3.

The Youth-4-Change organizers prepared four questions for the candidates that were presented by moderators that had been chosen because they would be neutral. The candidates had a set amount of time to answer the questions.

Each of the candidates was first asked to define their platforms. They were each then asked what plans they have to provide opportunities for FSM's young people. Incumbents were then asked why people should vote for them and what their plans are to improve communities. Challenging candidates were asked why people should vote for them over other candidates and what their new plans are to help FSM communities. The last question from the moderators regarded the end of ongoing financial provisions under the Compact of Free Association with the United States. Moderators wanted to know the level of knowledge that the candidates possessed regarding the Compact and what their plans are to prepare the FSM for the end of ongoing financial provisions in 2023.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOLICITATION NO. : USAID-2019-09
PIID# 72049219R10009
ISSUANCE DATE : 08 February 2019
CLOSING DATE/TIME : 25 March 2019 / 11:59PM

SUBJECT: Solicitation for a Cooperating Country National Personal Service Contractor (CCN PSC) under Local Compensation Plan

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. SOLICITATION NO. : USAID-2019-09
2. ISSUANCE DATE : 08 February 2019
3. CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS : 25 March 2019 / 11:59PM
4. POSITION TITLE : USAID Project Management Specialist (Resilience), FSN-11
5. MARKET VALUE : USD 25,304.00 – USD 40,484.00 gross p.a. equivalent to FSN-11, in accordance with AIDAR Appendix J and the Local Compensation Plan (LCP) of the U.S. Embassy Kolonia. The salary offer will be based on a combination of the candidate's salary history and of the U.S. Embassy Kolonia's LCP, and will be within the annual range listed above.
6. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE : The position is based in Kolonia, Federated States of Micronesia.
7. STATEMENT OF DUTIES :
The USAID Project Management Specialist (Resilience) serves as the primary staff for the USAID Pacific Islands sub-office in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) which covers the following countries: FSM, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Palau. The Specialist performs a variety of research, analyses, reporting, coordination, monitoring, outreach and administrative functions in support of USAID's Pacific Islands Main Office located in Manila, Philippines. The Specialist supports and closely advises the General Development Officer (GDO) and USAID/Philippines technical and support offices to help achieve the following objectives in the Pacific: to support the U.S. Government's (USG) broader foreign policy objectives in the region; to address regional and country priorities; to complement other donor efforts; and to report on the latest news, developments, and perspective from the field and advise on how the portfolio can be adjusted accordingly.

For more details, visit <https://www.usaid.gov/pacific-islands/careers>.

II. HOW TO APPLY:

1. Interested applicants are required to submit an application letter and a comprehensive resume
2. Applications must be received by 25 March 2019 / 11:59PM, and submitted via email to aidmnlhr@usaid.gov
3. All applicants are requested to prominently indicate the following:
 - a. solicitation number (Solicitation No.: USAID-2019-09) in the subject line of their email submission;
 - b. source of the vacancy announcement (e.g. name of newspaper, website, social media)



SAMSUNG

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Galaxy Note 9

Galaxy S10e

Galaxy S10

Galaxy S10+

Regional cooperation takes centre stage in FFA DG's address to 19th Micronesian Presidents' Summit

Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency

22 February 2019

KOROR, Palau – FFA Director General, Dr Manu Tupou-Roosen has made her inaugural address to the 19th Micronesian Presidents' Summit, with a commitment that the FFA will build mechanisms for closer cooperation between FFA Members.

“Bringing our people together, to achieve together, is the power of cooperation,” Dr Tupou-Roosen told Micronesian presidents and leaders attending the Summit. “To embrace cooperation, to listen and consult with our Members is at the forefront of what we do.”

However, Dr Tupou-Roosen signalled that one of her priorities as Director General is to develop mechanisms that will lift cooperation between FFA Members, as a platform for ensuring economic returns on fishing are maximised and social benefits for local communities are improved.

“Throughout 2019, the FFA will actively

consider how our stakeholders can dialogue with each other more regularly and effectively,” Dr Tupou Roosen said. “I would also like the FFA to bring a wider lens to discussions on key regional issues. Fisheries policies don't sit in isolation but are part of the broader geopolitical landscape so we need to use our influence to drive progress on issues such as food security, addressing NCDs, mitigating the effects of climate change and alleviating poverty,” Dr Tupou Roosen added.

The Summit discussed issues surrounding climate change, fisheries and NCDs, among others. It was also an opportunity to promote the FFA's 40th anniversary, which will be celebrated with a programme of activities, to be announced shortly.

The Micronesian Presidents' Summit is an annual gathering of the presidents and leaders of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru and Kiribati. This year it was hosted by Palau from February 20-21.

...Okeanos

Continued from page 2

Foundation for the Sea has hosted promotional sailings of its traditional sailing Vaka Motu. Yakana has invited many government officials and members of the media to take short sailing excursions on the impressive vessel. On February 1, Lt. Governor Reed Oliver and members of his family were aboard the vessel along with Okeanos Foundation for the Sea Chief Operating Officer, Dena Seidel and Yapese Traditional Master Navigator Ali Haleylur who was in Pohnpei for more training of the local crew.

Yakana says that Okeanos also plans to offer paid “sunset cruises” and paid charters to Ahnd and Pakin in the future. Pricing for those excursions and when they will be available has not yet been decided.

Rather than a three year charter agreement, the

government is attempting to negotiate a 10 year contract with substantially lower annual payments and without the management of a local non-profit. Those negotiations are in process.



OLMCHS students accepted for JSA summer 2019 at Stanford and Princeton, two with full scholarship



OLMCHS

A total of eight students from Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School (OLMCHS) are accepted to the Junior State of America (JSA) Summer Programs 2019. Six are accepted at Princeton University in New Jersey. They are Caitlin Danila, Deitra Helgenberger, John Hegileirig, Sergio David (all 11th Graders) and Saya Shigeta and Jade Togonon (both 10th Graders). Two more 10th Graders are accepted at Stanford University in California - Yrra Peñascosa and Leila Jade Lane. The summer courses offered are AP US Government, AP Macroeconomics, International Relations, and Speech & Political Communication, aside from the Debate Workshop. Mr. Russell Figueras, the OLMCHS JSA Club Advisor, stated that: "These eight students deserved it as they worked hard in their applications, from their personal essays to their analytical and argumentative essays."

OLMCHS has been sending students to this program since Summer of 2012. The school would like the students to experience the JSA Summer School advantage. Attending the program, the students will be more prepared for the challenges of college life, create lifelong friendships, build leadership skills, and learn from respected professors from high caliber universities in the U.S. All OLMCHS students who attended the program came back to the school with great leadership skills and high self-confidence. OLMCHS has so far 16 JSA Alumni from Stanford University, Princeton University, Georgetown University, and Beijing Diplomat Program.

On February 21, 2019, JSA Senior Program Director Ed Banayat announced that of the eight accepted students, two were awarded full scholarships which include tuition, housing, meals, textbooks,

and other academic expenses including airfare. The two scholarship recipients are Caitlin Danila and Deitra Helgenberger. The other six will explore other ways and means to be able to attend the program. Sr. Krista Namio, MMB, Principal of OLMCHS, thanked all the teachers who shared extra time in guiding the eight students in the application process.



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Students in Yap Prepare to Swim with the Sharks

Manta Ray Bay Resort

February 17

Colonia, Yap—Did you know that sharks kill fewer than four humans on average each year, while humans kill an estimated 100 million sharks annually? That you're more likely to be killed by a lightning strike, bee sting or while sitting on the toilet?

The ten students from Yap High School sat rapt in front of the overhead screen as Cheryl McCarron, outreach director for the New York City-based nonprofit organization, Shark Angels, taught them about sharks during the Skype-in-the-Classroom lesson. Most had seen the popular horror movies about the massive animals and believed the ones found around their remote island home were dangerous and should be killed. The facts cited by McCarron were surprising, said YHS Principal John Tamngin.

Manta Ray Bay Resort, Micronesia's premier dive resort, co-hosted the lesson as part of a yearlong program to highlight shark conservation and awareness among both scuba divers and local students. The culmination of the first year of what will become an annual event will be held October 12 – 26, 2019 when divers from around the world are expected on the Micronesian island for a two-week-long program titled Yap Divers 4 Sharks to learn about international shark conservation and marine ecology from well-known conservationists, and to swim with the resident sharks that inhabit the island's protected reef.

Micronesia has the second largest shark sanctuary in the world, McCarron explained, and six of the twelve species are

endangered. In some parts of the world, up to 90 percent of sharks have been decimated due to pollution, commercial fishing and "human diets," she added. Shark fin soup, a traditional Chinese delicacy associated with prosperity, honor and good fortune, is served at banquets, weddings and other important celebrations. The popularity of shark fin soup requires the collection of fins from live sharks that are tossed back into the ocean where they suffocate and die. A bowl of shark fin soup, she explained, can cost up to \$100 and is often served to show off how wealthy the host is. But the fin is made of cartilage that has no actual taste, which requires the addition of fish or chicken broth, and contains high levels of mercury. "So, the soup is poisonous, as well," she said.

The value of sharks is not in killing them, McCarron told the students, but in using them to stimulate local economies through tourism. Why kill one shark for a bowl of soup when that same shark can bring in several million dollars of revenue from dive enthusiasts over its lifetime. But the main reason is for the maintenance of a healthy, balanced marine environment and the students can help, they were told, by talking with people about sharks, being careful to control pollution and eliminating the use of plastics that get into the ocean.

At the end of the lesson, the students took a ten-question test. Those who got 95 percent correct would be invited to go snorkeling in October during the event announced Ruud van Baal, general manager of the resort. Just before boarding the bus to go back to school, they were excited to learn that they all will be going snorkeling later this year. The snorkeling trip will be conducted by



Photos by Joyce McClure

John Tamngin, Principal, (L) and Angie R. Yanruw, Administrative Officer (R) award Certificates of Completion to Yap High School students for participation in Shark Angels Skype-in-the-Classroom lesson at Manta Ray Bay Resort.

the Divers 4 Sharks Foundation under the supervision of Paulo Guilherme, one of the most renowned environmental activists and a co-founder of the Onda Azul Marine Studies Center in his home country of Brazil.

commitment to marine conservation.

For more information about Yap Divers 4 Sharks, go to www.mantaray.com/package/yap-divers-for-sharks/

The students also received certificates for their participation in the class and a pizza lunch in the resort's popular restaurant, Mnuw, that's located on an old Indonesian schooner. Other schools scheduled to participate in the Shark Angels program include Yap Catholic High School and Yap Seventh-day Adventist School. "It starts with the people who live on these islands," van Baal told the students, "and with the youth who are the future. That's why it's so important for you to be knowledgeable about sharks and other marine life right here in Yap." It is hoped that at least one student of those attending the class will become a marine scientist and return to Yap in the future to continue the island's strong



Yap High School students participate in Shark Angels Skype-in-the-Classroom lesson at Manta Ray Bay Resort.

Israel responds to PUC request for cleaner water for parts of Pohnpei State

In November of 2017, PUC and Pohnpei State Government reached out to the Israeli Ambassador to FSM and Pacific Islands, His Excellency Tibor Shalev Schlosser, to request a project based grant entitled "Water Resource Rehabilitation and Improvement" to build a new Iron Removal plant or "MO plant" in Nett to improve filtration and water quality in PUC water that services the people of Pohnpei, especially at the State Hospital and toward Nett and U municipalities. This part of the island has an issue in water quality from the MO deep wells and the treatment plant is not able to fully clean the water injected into the lines that service these communities. This affects a significant amount of PUC customers. This upgrade to the existing MO plant will solve this issue and will cost around \$350,000.

The government of Israel has sent technical expertise to Pohnpei to make an assessment of the existing plant and make recommendations on the way forward for the project. Ambassador Tibor arrived in Pohnpei on February 18 and brought Mr. David Kalush to do the field visits and final collection of data in order for Israel to render the decision if they will support PUC's request.

The proposal submitted by PUC to Israel was extracted from a package to rehabilitate the entire PUC water system which will cost up to \$19 Million USD. PUC wants to thank H.E. Tibor for his visit to Pohnpei State and for bringing Mr. Kalush to do the field visit. We look forward to the outcome of this visit.



Lt. Governor Hon. Reed Oliver, Robert Hadley AGM Water & Sewer, Daisy Cantero CFO, GM Nixon Anson, Mr. David Kalush, H.E. Tibor Shalev Schlosser, Israel's Ambassador to the FSM Alex Nanpei AGM Engineering Services.



COM-FSM Nursing Program

In response to the shortage of nursing personnel throughout the FSM, the college started the Nursing Program to fill this need. The multi-entry, multi-exit program educates students for work as a Nurse's Assistant (NA), Practical Nurse (PN), or Associates of Science degree in Nursing (ASRN). Graduates of the programs are qualified to apply for licensing with the FSM Board of Nursing in order to practice in the FSM. Students interested in a nursing career may begin college course work at any COM-FSM campus following general admissions procedures. Acceptance into the nursing program includes per-requisite courses and other requirements.



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FSM delegation meets with FSM citizens in Palau—discusses education & passports

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—After the first day of the 19th Micronesia Presidents' Summit held in Koror, Palau, on the 20th and 21st of February 2019, representatives of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) found time to meet at Palau Community College (PCC) with FSM citizens residing in Palau. Among the Government's representatives included the Honorable Lorin S. Robert, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Honorable Andrew Yatilman, Secretary of the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management, the Honorable Joses Gallen, Secretary of the Department of Justice, and Leo Falcam Jr., Chief of Staff to His Excellency Peter M. Christian, President of the FSM. Organized by Honorary Consul Changeina Masang, in partnership with Dr. Patrick U. Tellei, President of Palau Community College, the meeting was attended by approximately forty FSM citizens hailing from all four states, though the vast majority came from Yap State.

"It's my pleasure to visit you, to see our citizens," said Secretary Robert. "We encourage you to study hard and to work hard...while you're here, you represent the FSM as our student ambassadors.... We are primarily here to say hello, to see how you're all doing, and to help answer any questions you may have about any topic. My colleagues and I are in your hands."

The first half of the conversation focused

largely on education and employment opportunities. The attendees—mostly students—revealed what they were studying at PCC. While there was a mixture of subjects being pursued, including auto-mechanics and health, a disproportionate amount of FSM students in Palau advised that they're studying agriculture.

"There is nothing I've heard so far that we don't need in the FSM," said Chief of Staff Falcam. "We can use all of that...." Secretary Gallen echoed Chief Falcam's remarks. "The FSM as a country is facing a very big problem: labor demand... the number of people in the states is decreasing. So what I want to share with you is to please finish your school and come back....Your family needs you; your state needs you; your country needs you. FSM cannot grow without you."

The second half of the conversation was focused on passports and immigration. "What is the process of renewing my passport?" one citizen asked; "If I get a Palau passport, can I still have an FSM passport?" another citizen asked.

Regarding the latter, FSM doesn't recognize dual citizenship and therefore an individual cannot be the citizen of the FSM and a separate country. An FSM citizen, who chooses to take on a different citizenship, such as a U.S. citizenship or a Palauan citizenship, immediately becomes an FSM National. Per the FSM Constitution, FSM Nationals can live and work in the FSM but cannot vote in state or national elections and cannot own property.

U.S. Department of Labor finds extensive overtime, minimum wage, and child labor violations at Hawaii malls

US Department of Labor

HONOLULU, HI – The U.S. Department of Labor announced today that an education and enforcement initiative by its Wage and Hour Division (WHD) focused on retail mall employers in Hawaii, recovered \$698,120 in back wages and liquidated damages for 339 employees, and led WHD to assess \$59,523 in civil penalties for child labor violations during Fiscal Year 2018.

The investigations completed as part of this initiative found that more than half of businesses investigated failed to pay retail employees legally required overtime when they worked beyond 40 hours in a week. WHD investigators also found that more than half of the retailers that employed minors at mall locations violated Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) child labor provisions when they allowed the minors

to engage in work prohibited for workers under 18 years old, such as loading or operating trash or cardboard compactors.

"The U.S. Department of Labor remains committed to educating employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities so that young workers remain safe on the job, all employees get paid what they have legally earned, and employers compete on a level playing field," said Wage and Hour Division District Director Terence Trotter, in Honolulu. "We encourage employers to view the results of this enforcement and education initiative as an opportunity to review their own practices, and to make any corrections necessary to come into compliance."

Outreach and education efforts conducted as part of this effort included meetings with school counselors, training mall tenant

"Your passport is more important than your driver's license," said Secretary Gallen. "It's your most important document when you're away from the FSM.... You must first complete the application page, which includes basic information about you and your family. You must attach a passport-sized photo whose size is on the form."

"What if my passport is lost?" one citizen asked.

"Attach a note to the Department of Justice saying that you lost it...if you don't remember the number, we'll find it. But lost or damaged passports are a bit more expensive at \$75," Secretary Gallen said. A regular passport is \$50.

"One of the biggest problems," Secretary Gallen continued, "is when we get an application with wrong information or

incomplete information...so what they do is try to send it back. One of the best ways to make sure that your application has complete information is to speak with Department of Justice or Department of Foreign Affairs representatives, including the Honorary Consul here or the embassies if you're abroad, before sending in your application." Secretary Gallen also recommended that prospective passport applicants include their return mailing address.

"Only three countries," said Secretary Robert, "have the privilege to live and work and study in the U.S.A. without a visa. And those three countries have such a close relationship with each other. Those countries are the Freely Associated States, FSM, Palau, and the Marshall Islands. So please treat your passport with respect and keep it safe."



FSM citizens answering the question "Who here is from Yap?"

representatives, and providing compliance assistance directly to mall management companies.

Notable results of the WHD's FY2018 initiative in Hawaii include:

- \$239,889 to 44 employees after investigators found that six Ramen-Ya restaurant locations in Honolulu, Kapolei, and Pearl City and one in Kahului failed to pay overtime when employees worked beyond 40 hours in a workweek;
- \$89,565 to 12 employees after four Regal Food Inc. locations in Honolulu malls failed to pay the required minimum wage and overtime. The employer also failed to maintain adequate time records;
- \$33,346 to five employees after Julie Z Restaurant Filipino Home Style Cuisine at Kapolei Marketplace in Kapolei failed to pay overtime for hours worked beyond 40 in a week;

- \$76,932 to 10 employees after three Thai-Lao Restaurants locations in Honolulu, Pearl City, and Kapolei failed to pay overtime to kitchen staff; and
- \$7,060 in penalties were assessed to Gyu-Kaku Japanese BBQ at Windward Mall in Kaneohe for allowing four minors to load a trash compactor.

Employers that discover overtime or minimum wage violations may self-report and resolve those violations without litigation through the PAID program. For more information about the FLSA and other laws enforced by the Wage and Hour Division, contact the Division's toll-free helpline at 866-4US-WAGE (487-9243). Information is also available at <https://www.dol.gov/whd> including a search tool to use if you think you may be owed back wages collected by the Division.

The 19th Micronesian Presidents' Summit: Continuing commitment to cooperation

FSM Information Services

KOROR, Palau—The 19th Micronesian Presidents' Summit (MPS) took place February 20th to 21st 2019 at the Ngarachamayong Culture Center. All five sovereign nations in the Micronesian region—the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of Palau (Palau), Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Republic of Nauru (Nauru), and the Republic of Kiribati (Kiribati)—attended the annual meeting with high-level delegations comprised of Heads of State/Government and cabinet-level Ministers, Secretaries, and support staff.

Though His Excellency Peter M. Christian, President of the FSM, was unable to attend the MPS due to important obligations in the FSM, the FSM delegation in his place consisted of the Honorable Lorin S. Robert, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Honorable Andrew Yatilman, Secretary of the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management, the Honorable Jose Gallen, Secretary of the Department of Justice, and support and advisory staff.

After the official opening presentations and national anthems, each President and/or Head of Delegation provided their opening remarks. The first to speak was His Excellency Taneti Mamau, President of Kiribati. "While our family name Micronesia means micro or small, we must be reminded that we are large ocean states with influence and power," President Mamau said, in reference to Micronesia's capacity to shape and focus regional and international conversations on topics ranging from climate change to fisheries. "Our resources have long been compromised to the extent that there are others who are living better lives at the cost of our peoples' livelihoods. We should not allow history to repeat itself.... It's time that we remain united to play our cards well, and better, this time and tomorrow."

Following President Mamau's remarks, Secretary Robert provided the opening statement from the FSM. "We look forward to sharing news and updates on...issues such as maritime surveillance, transnational crime, and airspace management, as mentioned by President Mamau.... These are important issues that must be in the forefront of our regional discussions given the challenges we continue to face.... [We must] protect our most important national resources that we have."

The Honorable David Adeang, Minister in Assistance to the President, represented His Excellency Baron Waqa, President of Nauru, in his absence. "The challenges that are faced by small island countries represented here means we have to provide all the functions, and we have to meet all the expectations and needs, aspirations and dreams, of our own

people.... And in this respect we thank very much all the development partners here who are able to support us in...issues [such as]... environment, climate change, fisheries, and resource management...perhaps these can be made easier if we work together."

Her Excellency Dr. Hilda Heine, President of the RMI, spoke next. "It's always a pleasure to renew friendships and create new ones...and this 19th summit is such an opportunity.... In recalling our solidarity, the RMI proposes several items for discussion. Our candidatures to the Human Rights Council are one such issue."

While many of President Heine's opening remarks echoed the other Micronesian Presidents, there was a particular focus on gender equality and women's rights. "We are working on a gender equality bill...and [hope to] introduce it in our parliament... your endorsement will be deeply welcome.... Your support is also sought for the Pacific Women's conference...."

His Excellency Tommy Remengesau Jr., President of Palau and chairman of the 19th MPS, gave the final opening remarks. "We will...like to give a special welcome to the Nauru and Kiribati delegations, who are visiting Palau for the first time in the context of the MPS," President Remengesau said. Kiribati and Nauru joined the MPS as permanent members during the 18th MPS in 2018. "With our new members...the MPS now has the majority of the [Small Island States] within the larger [Pacific Island Forum]...this summit has therefore taken on greater importance for our Micronesian people and our Micronesian region. Together, we must demand a stronger voice in regional planning and negotiations...."

During the afternoon of the first day (the 20th), the Presidents and Heads of Delegation conducted meetings between themselves on matters of national and regional interest and significance, so as to come to agreement when presenting on such issues in the second day (the 21st) and the content of the Joint Communiqué. (A Joint Communiqué is a formal, written policy, treaty, or official statement developed by two or more parties.)

Meanwhile, the delegations received presentations from the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific, also known as the CROP Agencies. These agencies include the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIF), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Power Association (PPA), Pacific Aviation Safety Organization (PASO), and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP).

The second and final day of the MPS began with the CROP agencies summarizing their

report through the FFA Director-General, Dr. Manumatavai Tupou-Roosen. "Within the CROP family, whatever hat that we wear, we have one clear vision: that is that the work we do, the service we provide, must be making a positive difference in the lives of our people.... And we calibrate around this vision with four key themes: to ensure that we continue to enhance regional solidarity, to maintain that platform of cooperation. To find innovative ways to strengthen our engagement with you, our members, and key partners, and enable more regular consultation. To ensure that we meet your priority goals and strategies set out in the outcomes from this important summit."

PIF reaffirmed its support to the Boe Declaration (which can be seen here: <https://www.forumsec.org/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/>), and committed to submitting a Micronesian representative to the Pacific Steering Committee for Sustainable Development prior to March 1st, 2019. SPC promised to "make the fight to eliminate violence against women and girls a priority", and SPREP endorsed "the proposed strategy for making a [Northern Pacific] office."

PASO endorsed a proposal for a regional aviation ministers meeting, FFA discussed strengthening outcomes through cooperation—including celebrating FFA's 40th anniversary—and PPA emphasized that private sector investment in electrical utilities is crucial. (All utility corporations in the FSM are state-owned enterprises).

The CROP agencies openly endorsed their support for the FSM's Technology for Tuna Transparency (T-3) Challenge, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, as well as demonstrating their collaborative support for Palau's National Marine Park Sanctuary, RMI's goal to eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing by 2023, and Kiribati's KV 20—the strategic development plan for Kiribati from 2016 to 2036, which has a heavy focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The afternoon discussions during the second day of MPS focused on various presentations and discussions on regional and country-specific initiatives. They included agreement from the Presidents and Heads of Delegation to stress the need for coordination with regards to sustainable transportation, including support from the Green Climate Fund (GCF); that the 7th Our Ocean Conference to be held in Palau in 2020 focus in part on designating and committing to marine protected areas; that Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) be addressed throughout the region (e.g. Palau, whose Ministry of Health suggests 72.5% of its population is overweight or obese, has banned canned meat and ramen



Micronesian Presidents and Heads of Delegation sign the Joint Communiqué

in its schools); and the establishment of a United Nations Multi-Country Office in the North Pacific and specifically in one of the five MPS states. (Its exact location is still to be finalized).

Complete details of the discussions and agreements can be found in the Joint Communiqué (found here: https://pio.gov.fm/files/Public%20Notices/2019-19th-Micronesian_Presidents_Summit_Joint_Communique_reduced_size.pdf), and all FSM citizens are strongly encouraged to read through it so as to be aware of the outcomes that are of the most relevance, importance, or interest to them.

It was agreed that Nauru would become the host for the 20th MPS.

Each President and Head of Delegation gave closing remarks at the conclusion of the 19th MPS. Each nation emphasized mutual respect for one another and a commitment to cooperation. "The issues that we discussed here are very dear to our hearts," Secretary Robert said. "Some of them are big challenges, like the issues on climate change, IUU, and other issues...[but] they are proof of our living in the Micronesian family."

"Micronesia has a rare opportunity to appoint the next Secretary General of the PIF," said President Remengesau of Palau, "there is no greater voice than through the leadership of this forum...but this is about more than just issues and projects.... It is also about the maintenance and development of friendships, and the continuation of Micronesian cultural bond...it has been my great honor, and the honor of the people of Palau, to hold this 19th MPS....Let us always remember, the ocean does not separate us; it connects us together."

The FSM National Government recognizes, appreciates, and commits to its Micronesian neighbors—in the words of President Christian—"Genuine, honest-to-goodness respect", and dedication to peace and partnership. Though the issues facing our nations and our region at this time are significant, the FSM National Government is committed to tackling these issues with the importance that they deserve so as to improve the lives of the citizens of the Nation and the region.

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Letter to the Editor

The filing of criminal charges against a political candidate, Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso on February 12, 2019 raises a lot of interesting and intriguing facts. I have been closely following the unfolding of this scenario and am compelled to share my observations on this matter because it is deeply troubling and has shaken my trust in our Government system. Everything about this issue with Genesis Corporation and Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso raises the question of motives for this. Is it personal or political?? Regardless of the motive, it is without question very malicious, vindictive, and sickening.

Timing appears suspicious and seem aimed to affect her candidacy for the March 05, 2019 upcoming Congressional election. Everything that has occurred did not follow due process since day one. No opportunity was given for her to respond to the charges that were filed against her. Barely two weeks before the election, on February 12, 2019, the Pohnpei State AG, Mr. Dana Smith hastily filed criminal charges of human trafficking, violation of Pohnpei Labor Wage Law, and forgery among other things against Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso and Genesis Corporation. All these charges simply do not fit the personality and person that everyone knew. The charges are so ridiculous I am in disbelief!

The stated charges were more civil rather than criminal in nature. These were labor issues and Pohnpei State Labor Office is the right division of government that should deal with these. The right process would be an administrative hearing to determine the information gathered and compliance imposed on the entity involved should there be a need to. So why is the Pohnpei State AG office directly handling and running everything on this case? Furthermore, investigations, interrogations were conducted by the State AG himself, Mr. Dana Smith and his lady staff Tracy Ardos.

On the facts, it appears that on August 7, 2018, Ms. Malpigna Nelper, Chief of Division of Personnel, Labor and Manpower development Pohnpei State did issue a letter to Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso/Genesis Corporation requesting for the following information. Employee name, address, date of birth, legal resident, citizenship, country of origin, expiration of entry permit, job title, wage, employment benefits, payroll records, employees education, number of employees and type of injury or illness if any, and copies of current contract and extension. That is a lot of information to request and very burdensome to submit considering there are more than fifty some employees under Genesis Corporation. That letter specifically stated "these information are important and to be used for our survey." Illegal? No, not really as Pohnpei State Labor does have authority to request such information. Unusual? Yes, it was the first time such voluminous information was requested and Genesis did take its time

responding due to the amount of work it entailed. But obviously the reason stated that it was for a survey was untrue. So why the deceit in requesting such information?

And a even bigger question is why is the Pohnpei State Labor Office not doing the investigation itself. Pohnpei State Prosecution office had none to minimal participation. Everything was done at AG by Mr. Dana Smith and Tracy Ardos. The other two attorney staff had been kept in the dark and clueless of what was happening. No opportunity was given for Dr. Merlynn Abello-Alfonso to respond nor was she asked about anything. What forces are working in our government to allow such actions to be tolerated? The charges did not even have a single document attached to it to support charges filed against her

and was very poorly presented. Any one with basic legal background would know it did not constitute much, was nonsensical, and was not going to hold up in court.

On the afternoon of February 20, 2019, the doctor was served an arrest warrant for "obstruction of justice" for a general staff meeting she had which was taken out of context. Again no due process was followed as she was read her rights and questioned only after she was released from nearly 22 hours in custody. Another obvious blunder! Interesting to note was that she has not even received a summons for that particular case in her individual capacity so how could there be obstruction of justice for a non-existent case?

After all the efforts exerted to file charges against Genesis Corporation and the doctor candidate, February 26, 2019 nobody showed up from the opposing party! So one is left to wonder, what EXACTLY is going on??

This certainly seems weird. Or perhaps maybe not after all. It could be an attempt to shred the reputation of a woman who has recently lost her husband and has led a life of service to the people of Pohnpei most of her life. No justice in all this as she is one of the kindest soul I know, Always ready to lend a hand and has served Pohnpei and its people, from all walks of life- students, youth, churches, women organizations, schools etc. I would not be surprised if she does turn around to sue our already poor government for all that it has put her through. We are certainly now a circus with puppets bending over. I am shocked at how everything has played out. It is alarming how our law officers and one of the highest government office trusted to protect its citizens has done such unlawful acts. It is scary, dirty and ugly and should not be tolerated. What forces lie behind these acts?

I shall leave the public to judge for themselves. Have we become such monsters??

Milo S. Abello

2019 Department of Interior scholarships awarded to outstanding high school students in the FSM for JSA summer programs

The Junior Statesmen Foundation

The U.S. Department of the Interior and The Junior Statesmen Foundation proudly announce the winners of scholarships to the 2019 Junior Statesmen Summer School.

The scholarships, funded by the Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs, cover all tuition costs and round trip transportation to the JSA Summer Schools in the USA.

THE 2019 DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS ARE:

Caitlin-Rose Danila, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Deitra Helgenberger, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Grace Lynn Pangelinan, Pohnpei Seventh Day Adventist School, JSA Summer School located at Princeton Ike Solomon, Xavier High School, JSA Summer School located at Princeton

In addition to the recipients of the Department of Interior Scholarships, the following students have been accepted to 2019 JSA Summer Programs:

Maryjae Ardos, Xavier High School, JSA Summer School located at Princeton Gorrina Booth, Calvary Christian Academy, JSA Summer School located at Princeton Sergio David, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton KM Edwin, Xavier High School, JSA Summer Program located at Georgetown Leann Gabriel, Pohnpei Seventh Day Adventist School, JSA Summer Program located at Stanford John Hagileirig, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Bryanne Laamuut Fenenigog, Yap Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Leila Jade Lane, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Stanford Jovendra Mogolgad, Yap Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Shaquille Nimea, Pohnpei Seventh Day Adventist School, JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Mercedes Olter, Calvary Christian Academy, JSA Summer Program located at Georgetown Yrra Penascoza, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Stanford Marjory Serrano, Pohnpei Seventh Day Adventist School, JSA Summer Program located at Stanford Frances Sharma, Pohnpei Seventh Day Adventist School, JSA Summer Program located at Stanford Saya Shigeta, Our

Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Kilani Stinnett, Xavier High School, JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Trevor Talimeluw, Yap Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Jade Togonon, Our Lady of Mercy Catholic H.S., JSA Summer Program located at Princeton Calvin Warly, Yap Catholic High School, JSA Summer Program located Princeton Mayren Wichep, Calvary Christian Academy, JSA Summer Program at Princeton Zedikiah Young Uhk, Yap Catholic High School, JSA Summer Program at Princeton

SUMMER SCHOOL SESSIONS

Three sessions of the Junior Statesmen Summer School are conducted on the prestigious university campuses of Stanford (near San Francisco), Princeton (in central New Jersey), and Georgetown (in Washington, D.C.).

Summer School students take college level courses in Government and Speech, while they develop and polish their leadership skills. Highlighting each Summer School session is a high-level speakers program, which gives students a chance to meet and question elected officials, judges, reporters, political campaign consultants, and others in the political arena. Each night, Summer School students debate controversial political issues in JSA Debate Workshop, which is a simulation of the debates held in the United States Congress.

Admission to JSA Summer Schools is very competitive. Admission decisions are based on an applicant's academic achievement, leadership, and interest in politics or government. To apply, students submit an official high school transcript, personal essays, and a letter of recommendation from a counselor or an academic teacher.

Tuition, which covers all academic expenses, housing and meals for the month, is \$5,650 for the JSA Programs located at Georgetown, Princeton and Stanford. Transportation to the summer school is not included in the tuition.

For the past twenty-eight years, the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs has offered full tuition and transportation scholarships to the Junior Statesmen Summer School to outstanding high school students in U.S. territories and Freely Associated States.

His Excellency Carlos Manuel Rojas Lago Presents Credentials to President Christian

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On February 25th 2019, His Excellency Peter M. Christian, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), met with His Excellency Carlos Manuel Rojas Lago to receive his Presentation of Credentials as the first accredited ambassador from the Republic of Cuba to the Nation.

"We want to thank you for travelling to visit us," said President Christian. "It's been awhile since I met the Cuban Ambassador to New Zealand in [Papua New Guinea].... We talked about establishing relations, and so here we are. This is historic for us; we've been wanting to accomplish this for a long time. Thank you very much and welcome to the FSM."

Continuing, President Christian said "You have your own political interests, some are like ours and some are not; we have our own interests, and we push for some global issues that are different than the way you push yours...but the point is to foster better human treatment of people by our governments."

Among other issues, President Christian and

Ambassador Lago discussed the ongoing situation in Venezuela. President Christian emphasized that his primary concern in that country is "that there are children who need help," and so he requested that Ambassador Lago convey this message to the people and Government of Cuba.

"We're hoping," said President Christian, "that after we establish this higher-level relationship that we might...have our Department of Health and our Department of Education approach your government for assistance in development of our capacity to deliver services."

"I have with me a draft proposal for cooperation for medical services," said Ambassador Lago. "It's with me now."

"I look forward to our [Department of Health & Social Affairs] aggressively pursuing...the possibility of Cuba coming out to look at our diabetes program...there's a lot to be done," President Christian said.

The FSM is committed towards developing positive and peaceful relations with all countries throughout the world, and looks forward to this historic new partnership with the Republic of Cuba.

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02/18/19

Public Announcement

"The Pohnpei Port Authority wishes to advise its stakeholders that it is in the process of establishing its budget for fiscal year 2020.

Amendments to the Pohnpei Port Authority Act made by State Law Number 8L-86-15, requires the budget to be made available to Stakeholders (defined as companies and organizations directly doing business with PPA) who shall be given 30 days to submit written Comments to PPA's Board of Directors.

For stakeholders interested in submitting comments to PPA, a copy of the proposed budget can be obtained from PPA's headquarters adjacent to the airport terminal in Dekehtik.

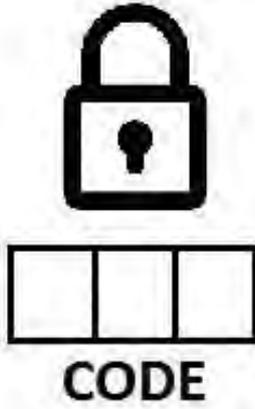
Comments may also be submitted at PPA's website. www.ppa.fm, where a digital copy of the proposed fiscal year 2020 budget is also available.

The deadline for submitting comments shall be March 20, 2019."

Thank you,

Pius Roby
 General Manager
 Pohnpei Port Authority

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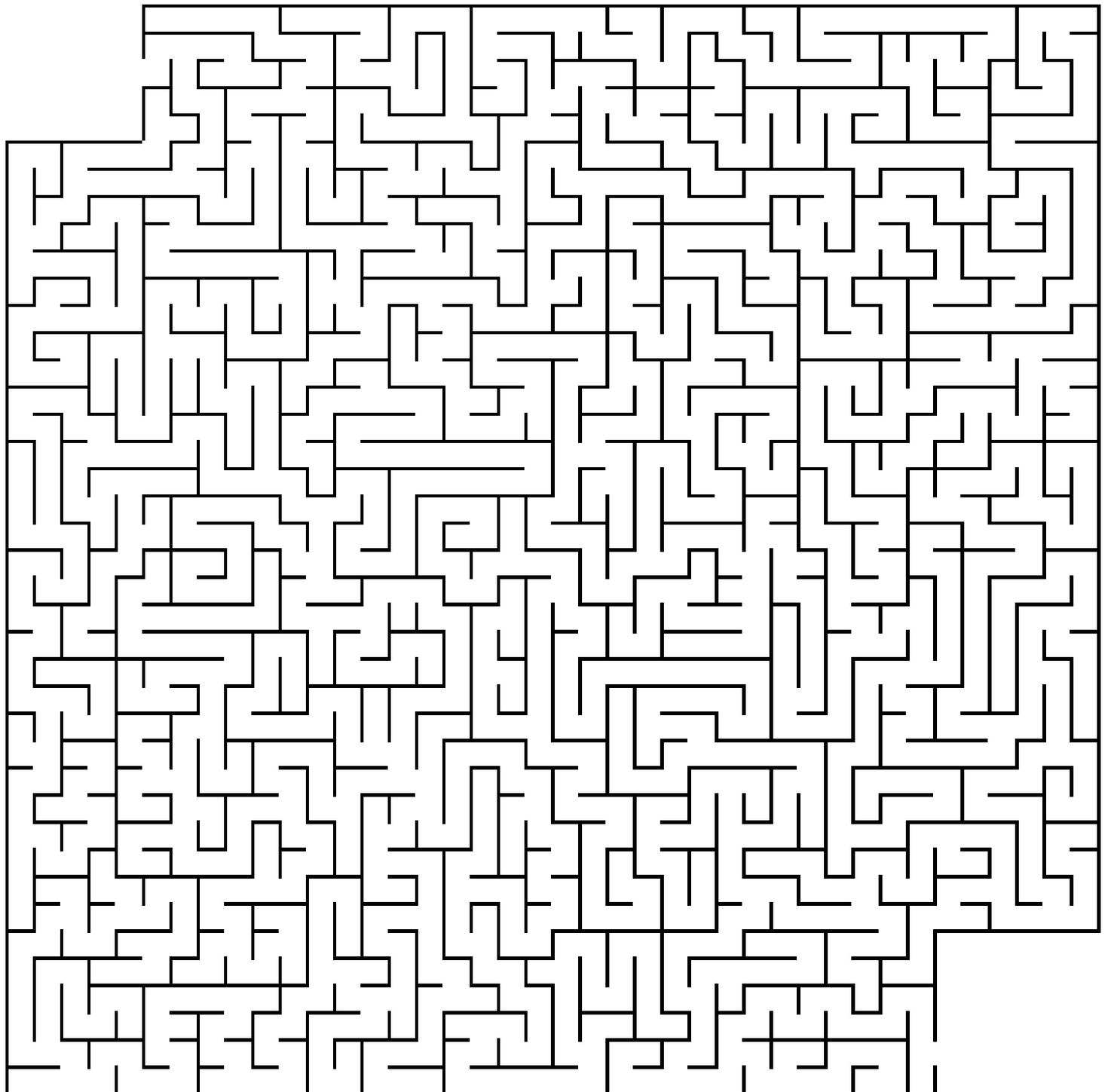
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NOAA Chuuk Station holds ribbon cutting ceremony for newly renovated building

Embassy of the United States of America Kolonia

On February 15, 2019, the U.S. National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) substation in Weno, Chuuk held a ribbon cutting ceremony for their newly refurbished building. The facility served as a working station for over 10 staff members. The refurbishment included a kitchenette, office space, a conference room, toilet facilities and additional space for data equipment.

Economic/Consular Officer, Anthony Alexander delivered remarks on behalf of the American Embassy. In his remarks he stated “the weather station underscores our partnership with Federated States of Micronesia to improve the lives of its people” and also commended Mr. Perry Killion, who served more than 20 years at



Economic/Consular Officer Anthony Alexander, Chief Operations Officer NOAA Washington D.C. John Murphy, Warning Coordination Meteorologist Charles Guard, Official in Charge Pohnpei Weather Office Eden Skilling and Secretary Department of Environment Climate Change & Emergency Management Andrew Yatilman

the Chuuk station. The Honorable Chuuk State Governor Johnson Elimo stated “it is important to have a full operational weather station because data entry and monitoring does not only benefit the people of Chuuk but the whole world.” Governor Elimo spoke from his own experience when he served at the NOAA Chuuk Sub-station. Also in attendance of the ceremony John Murphy, Chief Operating Officer representing



Mr. Ray Tanabe, Director NWS Pacific Region, Honolulu Hawaii, Chuuk State Governor Johnson Elimo, Secretary Department of Environment Climate Change & Emergency Management Mr. Andrew Yatilman and Chief Operations Officer NOAA Washington D.C. Mr. John Murphy cuts the ribbon for the newly renovated Chuuk Weather Station Office.

the NOAA Main Office in Washington D.C., Ray Tanabe, Director NWS Pacific Region, Honolulu Hawaii, Charles Guard, Warning Coordination Meteorologist from Guam Station, Secretary Andrew Yatilman Department of Environment Climate Change and Emergency Management, Chuuk State Governor Johnson Elimo, President Mark Mailo House of Senate, Former FSM Vice President Redley Killion and Mr. Johannes Berdon Official in Charge Chuuk Weather

Station Office.

During the ceremony Charles “Chip” Guard announced that one of the biggest challenges for the state of Chuuk was the inter-island travel. One of the services they hope to provide citizens of Chuuk is wave data within the lagoon and hopefully in the future add data outside the lagoon. This service will benefit boat operators and travelers and promote safe commutes to the outer-islands.

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 FSM National Government
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 Palikir, Pohnpei 96941
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 •Fax: (691) 320-5263

FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs Position Description

Operations and Finance Officer

- Reviews and accounting transactions for accuracy and compliance with FSM Feral management regulations and CDC regulations as defined in relevant Notices of Grant Awards.
- Generates quarterly encumbrance and expenditure reports for action.
- Ensure all interim and final Federal Financial Reports are generated within specified timeframes.
 - o Other duties as assigned.

I. Introduction

An Operations and Finance Officer is required for Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity and Crisis Response Projects within the Department of Health and Social Affairs. The operations and finance officer will work closely with project coordinators for these projects to ensure that financial and monitoring obligations under relevant Cooperative agreements that fund these projects are met

II. Control over Position

The Operations and Finance Officer reports to the Chief of EH and Preparedness via Opioid Crisis Response and ELC Project Coordinators.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the Operations and Finance Officer include the following:

- Provide Secretarial support and leads organization of meetings for Project Steering Committees
- Liaise with stakeholders in Chuuk, Yap, Kosrae and Pohnpei State Health Services to facilitate payment for goods and services required to support implementation of program activities
- Ensures all project documents pertaining to activities in each state are maintained for project auditing and monitoring
- Ensures that all invoices are recorded, tracked, and paid.
- Processes vendor payments, matches purchase orders, receiving reports, and invoices.
- Maintains spreadsheet on program funds
- Ensures that all monetary funds are in balance, and reconcile with dept of Finance and Administration Department records

IV. Qualification Requirements

Minimum requirements: Associate degree in accounting or business administration from an accredited institution.

A minimum of 3 years experience in financial management, project coordination or administrative roles

Preferred requirements: Bachelor’s degree in accounting or business administration from an accredited institution. A minimum of 5 years experience in financial management, project coordination or administrative roles, with at least 2 years of supervisory experience.

V. Salary and Benefits

This position is for 12 months and will be on a special services contract. Depending on experience and education a salary ranges from \$10,000- \$15,000 per year will be offered.

Prepared by: Lisa Barrow, ELC Coordinator

Reviewed by: Moses Pretrick, Chief Environmental Health and Preparedness

Approved by: Magdalena A. Walter, Secretary DHSA



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Chuuk's Premier Traveler's Destination



L5 Hotel



"I've stayed at L5 for quite some time now and am always impressed by the customer service and how the staff are always up to ensuring your stay is more than you would expect." - Sep 6, 2016

"My family and I have stayed here 3 times during our visits to Chuuk. The staff welcome you with gleaming smiles and are always helpful and upbeat. Our take away from this hotel is the feel of its family atmosphere." - Jan 22, 2016

"So glad this place has re-opened and is where I will stay from now on in Chuuk." - Apr 6, 2016

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www.l5hotel.fm



Proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer

Happy International Women's Day

March 8th, 2019



#womenarevital #balanceforbetter