

Re-activated dredge site in Awak has local residents concerned for community aquaculture project

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

August 14, 2021

Pohnpei—On Tuesday, August 11, a dredge site in Awak re-opened after a long hiatus. The dredging is supported by proper permits on land adjacent to, but not owned by the Falcam family. Access to the dredge site is the same driveway that leads to the Falcam home which led some to think that the Falcam’s own it, but that is not the case.

FSM President Peter Christian holds the permit for the dredge site which was legally issued by the Department of Land after a lengthy process.

The dredge berm is approximately 1000 feet from a community aquaculture project to raise rabbit fish supported by MERIP (Marine and Environmental Institute of Pohnpei). After dredging began, local farmers checking on the rabbit

See “Awak dredging” on page 9



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Vaccines bring us closer. Get yours today!

President Panuelo implements decree mandating all individuals & organizations receiving money from the FSM National Government to show evidence of COVID-19 Vaccination

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On August 10th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—signed a decree to implement mandatory COVID-19 vaccination pursuant to Congressional Resolution 22-33. As the Resolution mandated that all FSM citizens residing in the FSM must receive the COVID-19 vaccine, the President determined that the best way for the Nation to enforce the mandate is to require individuals and organizations to produce documentary evidence of their COVID-19 vaccination status in order to receive checks from the FSM National Government. Additionally, the decree instructs the FSM COVID-19 Task Force to develop and implement a means of vaccinating all eligible citizens, and to develop a strategy for vaccinating principals, teachers, and children aged 12-17 when appropriate.

From Monday, August 9th, 2021, all individuals and organizations receiving financial assistance from the FSM National Government—except for recipients of FSM Social Security checks, as detailed below—must provide evidence that they and every person in their organization has been vaccinated.

From Monday August 30th, 2021, all recipients of FSM Social Security

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Rotary club of Pohnpei announces annual scholarship awards

Rotary Club of Pohnpei runs an annual scholarship program. We fund raise during the course of the year and provide scholarships to deserving FSM students enrolled in college and post graduate courses.

We also wish to thank Vital Petroleum for its assistance in our scholarship program.

We received numerous applications and had to evaluate many deserving candidates.

The Rotary Club is proud to announce that it awarded \$10,000.00 in scholarships to 13 deserving students.

The amounts to each individual are provided to assist with either tuition expenses or to purchase necessary school books or supplies.

We know every bit helps and we want to congratulate the following winners.

Gabrina Garangmau/University of Scranton/Aerospace Aeronautical Engineer

Eliana Tinngig/University of Scranton/Forensic Chemistry

Hattie Peter/UOG/ Masters Elementary of Education

Lisa Nathan Dereas/UOG/ Masters Micronesia Studies

Rianna Richards/Eastern Oregon University/Psychology



Macmillan Willyander/Saint Louis University/Psychology

Mermey Yamada/Walla Walla/Business

Trevor Talimeluw/Saint Martins University/Mathematics

Marlin Nena Lee Ling/UH Manoa/STEM

Ramsey Narruhn/UOG/Business

Trinity Rove Edilyong Reichhardt/UOG/Chemistry/ Biology

Vince Perman/COM-FSM/Dentist and Doctors for Tomorrow

Yota Pacifico Oue/John Hopkins/Masters Energy Policy and Climate

We want to wish all of these scholars good luck in the upcoming school year and we encourage them to come back to the FSM to share their knowledge when they graduate.

The Rotary Club of Pohnpei is a big supporter of education and we want to support our students. Again we also want to thank Vital for their continuing support.

Please support the Rotary Club to help us continue our scholarships to these deserving students.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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FSM says farewell to FSM Supreme Court Chief Justice Dennis K. Yamase

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselelie Press

August 10, 2021

Pohnpei—This evening FSM Supreme Court staff members, members of the Pohnpei State Supreme Court, National and State government officials and others held a farewell reception for FSM Supreme Court Chief Justice Dennis K. Yamase. Several weeks ago, Chief Justice announced plans to retire due to health concerns.

He was first appointed to the FSM Supreme Court as an Associate Justice in June of 2002. He has served as the Chief Justice since July of 2015.

During his invocation, FSM Congress Director Suda Rayel quoted from the book of Matthew, “Well done good and faithful servant.” Other speakers highlighted the many years of Yamase’s legal influence in the Micronesia region.

Speakers included Associate Justice Beaulen Carl-Worswick who said that Chief Justice has always been mindful of the obligations of the court, including the timely administration of justice for all. She praised his four decades of serving the FSM, and said he was always a hard-working strong leader and mentor.

Ricky Cantero of the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs spoke on behalf of President David Panuelo who is still in quarantine in Pohnpei. He expressed his sincerest appreciation for his long and illustrious career, and many accomplishments in the region and particularly during his time as Chief Justice.

Senator Ferny Perman also thanked Yamase for his time saying that he believed that it was not always easy for him to have served the FSM.

Chief Justice Yamase said that though the FSM is a young nation it has grown far and fast and, in many ways, it is a wealthy nation containing many as yet unexplored resources. He said that one such resource is the talented young people of the nation who are the nation’s promise and future.

Emy Musrasrik-Carl, Supreme Court Director of Court Administration served as the Master of Ceremonies and outlined Chief Justice Yamase’s history in the FSM by reading his biographical information:

The Honorable Dennis K. Yamase is

a 1982 graduate of the University of Hawai’i Richardson School of Law, where he was a member of the law review. Chief Justice Yamase was nominated by President Peter M. Christian in May, 2015 and confirmed by the 19th FSM Congress on July 17, 2015. He was nominated by President Leo A. Falcam for the Associate Justice on April 9, 2002 and confirmed by the 12th FSM Congress on June 25, 2002.

During and following law school, Chief Justice Yamase served as an intern, law clerk, or attorney for the FSM Supreme Court, FSM Congress, and Supreme Court, Republic of Palau (ROP). His other legal work includes: Senior Senate Legislative Counsel, Olbiil Era Kelulau (ROP National Congress); Executive Secretary, ROP National Code Committee; attorney in private practice in Honolulu, Hawai’i; Legislative Counsel and Deputy Legislative Counsel, FSM Congress; legal staff, 1990 FSM Constitutional Convention; Special Legal Counsel, ROP Vice President and Minister of Administration; and Executive Director, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Law Revision Commission.

Chief Justice Yamase developed the FSM Legal Information System (LIS) website at <http://www.fsmlaw.org>, as a Consultant to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Improving Access to Laws project. He has completed or assisted on various codification projects for the: Yap State Code (YSC); FSM Code (F.S.M.C.); Chuuk State Code (CSC) (draft); Republic of Palau National Code (PNC) and Republic of Palau National Code Annotated (PNCA); and Commonwealth Code for the CNMI (printed and CD formats).

Chief Justice Yamase is a certified judicial trainer through the Pacific Judicial Development Programme (PJDP) Training of Trainers (TOT) program and is a member of the Pacific Judicial Strengthening Initiative (PJSI) Regional Training Team (RTT). He has conducted numerous trainings for high school and college students, court staff and judges within the FSM and in other Pacific



jurisdictions, and has taught classes in Constitutional Law, Contracts, and Torts for the College of Micronesia – FSM Certificate in Trial Counselor’s program.

Chief Justice Yamase has written on the FSM’s domestic application of human rights, the establishment and sustainability of the FSM’s posting of its laws and court decisions over the internet, the 25-year history of the FSM Supreme Court, and the State-Federal jurisdictional conflict

over the internal waters and submerged lands of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

The reception farewelling Chief Justice was held at the Hiway Bar and Grill.

President Panuelo has not yet nominated a potential successor. Any such nomination will require the advice and consent of the FSM Congress and appointment of the Chief Justice are for life.

...Vaccination mandate

Continued from front page

checks throughout the Nation must provide documentation of their completed vaccination status to receive their check.

From Monday August 30th, 2021, all individuals who work for the National Government in any capacity—as public servants, as political appointees, as elected officials, as consultants—must provide evidence of their COVID-19 vaccination to the FSM COVID-19 Task Force and the Office of Personnel. If such documentation is not present, then all individuals not vaccinated shall be placed on Leave Without Pay until such a time that they become vaccinated.

“In simple language,” President Panuelo said in a statement, “If you receive any money from the FSM National Government, you need to have proof that you are vaccinated against COVID-19. Whether you’re a business owner receiving FSM Economic Stimulus Package funding, a public servant waiting for Payday Wednesday, a retiree collecting Social Security—to continue receiving financial assistance, you need to show proof of your vaccination. It is my responsibility as your President to enforce the mandate given by the 22nd FSM Congress, and I intend to uphold it fully, because the vaccines are safe, the vaccines are effective, and the vaccines are how we will emerge from a COVID-19 free country to a COVID-19 protected country.”

As of August 10th, 2021, approximately 52% of the Nation’s eligible population is fully vaccinated, meaning that for the eight months the FSM has had access to COVID-19 vaccines approximately 31,000 out of 58,699 eligible individuals have been fully vaccinated. Millions of dollars have been spent on outreach and awareness programs, either directly or indirectly through grants to organizations, on the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine as the Nation’s means of emerging stronger from the Pandemic.

Although it remains the Nation’s intent to use the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines for vaccinating children when the vaccines become fully approved for such use, the FSM is expecting receipt of its first doses of the Pfizer vaccine—which is already authorized

for use in children—in the coming days, in addition to a three-member team from the United States of America who arrived in the State of Kosrae on August 10th. The Department of Health & Social Affairs has reported to President Panuelo that the Pfizer vaccine doesn’t require ultra-freeze capacity anymore, and so the FSM is advised that it can receive the Pfizer vaccine.

“I thank the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (US CDC),” President Panuelo said in a statement, “For their ongoing efforts in keeping our Nation COVID-19 free. I received the same briefings the U.S. President received on January 28th, 2020, about the novel coronavirus, and I am convinced that information has helped to keep us COVID-19 free. The FSM was one of the first countries in the World to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, and when we look at how countries without the vaccine are faring, I emphasize again the importance of taking the COVID-19 vaccine in keeping each of us safe.”

“The fact is,” the President continued, “Our internal quarantine systems are not perfect. Sooner or later they will buckle. We recently had a breach in the State of Chuuk, where two Chuuk State police officers went onboard a newly acquired vessel; the two officers are currently held in quarantine in Chuuk, and the National Government is reviewing further steps to ensure future breaches do not occur, including taking legal action against those who break quarantine protocols. Further, as my delegation to the United States and I are presently back in the FSM and now in quarantine ourselves, I am keenly aware of the groups of people gathering at the MMA facility in Pohnpei State—from the food brought last night where a dozen-some people within the MMA area ate together without wearing masks, to the groups of people smoking in front of the containerized isolation units kindly donated by the People’s Republic of China. The good news is that everyone who arrived in Pohnpei just yesterday have been tested negative again and are fully vaccinated—but unless EVERYONE gets vaccinated at the nearest opportunity, it’s only a matter of time before we see the virus come into our country. The vaccine is our best and most permanent way out of this Pandemic.”

The President’s decree may be found here: https://gov.fm/files/Decree_to_implement_mandatory_vaccination_pursuant_to_Congressional_Resolution.pdf

Bolstering food security in Marshall Islands

SPC

**13 August 2021
Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands** – Forty

schoolteachers and principals in the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) completed a five-day workshop last month equipping schools to play

a key role in strengthening the food security efforts in the country.

The participants of this workshop, who are part of the Public-School System (PSS) in RMI, covered key topics on agriculture science, nutrition and integrating social and governance dimension to agriculture in schools.

The workshop was supported by the Pacific Community (SPC) through funding partnership from USAID and the generous support of the American people under the North Pacific Food Security Governance project. It was facilitated in partnership with the Center for Getting Things Started (C4GTS) and the RMI PSS.

During the official opening, Assistant Commissioner for Secondary Schools, Junior Paul stressed the importance of the School Learning Garden and the support rendered to advance the work in this area.

A major focus of the workshop was on agriculture and food security in the context of rights and responsibilities to ensure the active participation of students in decision-making.

This approach builds a strong relationship between adults and young people when it comes to decision-making about the school garden and promotes social citizenry – an important life skill.

Lead trainer, Koh Ming Wei, who facilitated the training from Hawaii said, “it was very meaningful to be able to incorporate rights and responsibilities when addressing decision-making in the Agriculture Curriculum. One of the standards connected to the right to food and the right to grow food, ensures that food is



accessible to all, including vulnerable groups in the communities,” Ming Wei added.

The RMI PSS is committed to food security by having school gardens and farms in all the high school campuses and at least 25 of the elementary schools, where students got the opportunity to grow food for the cafeteria. PSS also focuses on the curricular to enable students to learn about agriculture – what they grow and nutritional facts – what they eat.

One of the results of the workshop was the identification of benchmarks and learning outcomes for agriculture science units.

Marshall Island High School Teacher Nancy Soriano stated that “linking human rights to our cultural values should be taught in schools and integrating it in the Agriculture Curriculum will help raise awareness in protecting our land and traditional agricultural practices.”

Ministry of Natural Resources and Conservation, Assistant Chief, Randon Jack and Agroforestry Director, Lakjit Rufus also shared similar sentiments and highlighted that linking human rights to cultural values and using it in traditional agricultural practices added tremendous value to the workshop outcomes. It also enables the school curriculum to align with national frameworks.

Rose Martin, North Pacific Food Security Governance Project Manager further noted that “building such life skills with young people and enhancing the role of the school in food security is a right step towards having a resilient and food secure country.”

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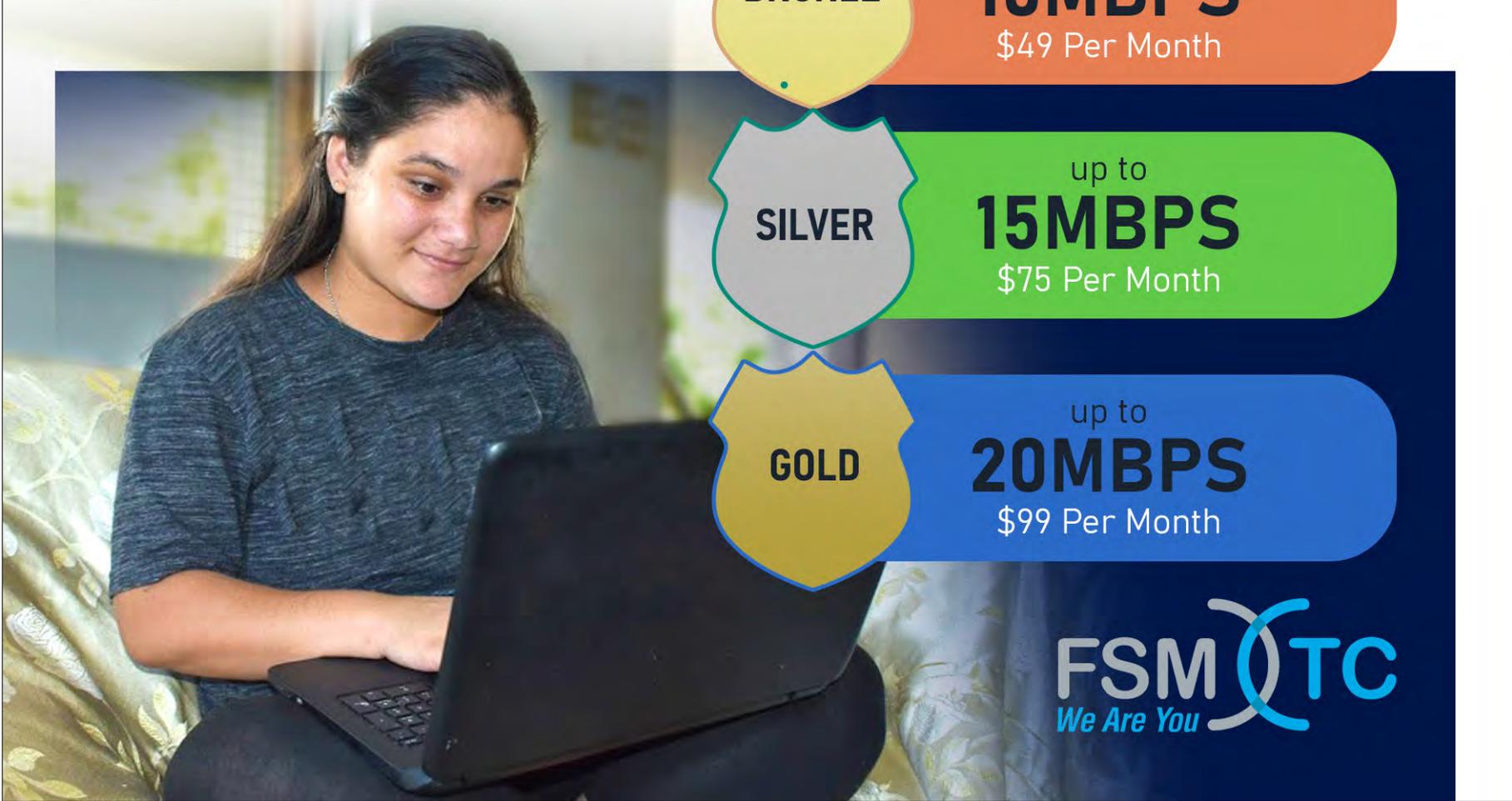
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FSM citizen a boon to Pohnpei infrastructure after JICA funded Civil Engineering Master's Degree

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

August 10, 2021

Pohnpei—As FSM's borders closed in March of 2020, 29-year-old Darin "Dayn" Iehsi completed a Master's degree in Civil Engineering at Hokkaido University in Sapporo, Japan. His studies were fully funded through a scholarship by JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency). Though Iehsi couldn't return to the FSM to take up an offered position with Pohnpei's Project Management Office (PMO), in May of 2020, he began working online for PMO. Last month, he planted his feet firmly back on the ground of the land where he was born and raised and immediately began work in person for the PMO.

A civil engineer analyses populations and the environment to plan and design infrastructure needs to support the population—infrastructure needs like water provision, sewage, educational facilities, roads, buildings, airports, tunnels, dams and many other infrastructure needs to support the population.

Iehsi said that JICA was extremely good to him. While earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering at the University of Illinois, which he completed in 2015, he constantly worried about his budget which detracted from his studies. During his Master's Degree studies, JICA never allowed him to worry about that. They took care of everything so that he could really focus on his studies.

He said that anyone who has the opportunity to participate in a JICA scholarship should jump at the chance.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, JICA continued to pay his living expenses after his graduation. It was an unusual circumstance but one that he is thankful to the government of Japan for providing to him.

Not all Pacific Islands students adapt well to life in Japan, particularly life in Hokkaido, which is the northernmost prefecture of Japan. It's not only the sometimes extremely cold weather and snow that makes the transition difficult for some Pacific Islanders. That adjustment also has to do with the

culture shock of living in a new place.

Iehsi said that the Japanese people are extremely respectful and that his upbringing in Pohnpei significantly prepared him for that culture. While he was sure that he sometimes did minor things that were inappropriate in the Japanese culture, never once did anyone from Japan ever tell him so. If anyone ever told him that he had made some sort of minor transgression, it was always an expat living there who pointed it out.

His studies were all taught in English so he never learned the language. He didn't have to. He added that the differences between the English that was used in the classroom by his Japanese teachers and the English he had learned sometimes made things challenging for him in the classroom setting. But that didn't keep him from earning his Master's Degree.

Iehsi is currently in the process of getting United States certification and has completed the first step with an intern license. He needs more work time of work experience and a

few other things before he qualifies to take the final examination for full certification. He is gaining that work experience while working at the PMO.

The fact that Iehsi is an FSM citizen, fully aware of the big infrastructures differences between those of the FSM and those of big cities like Sapporo where he attained his Master's Degree make Iehsi uniquely qualified to serve as construction manager for PMO.

He is currently overseeing five infrastructure projects in Pohnpei which are currently in design phase. PICS High School is expecting a new cafeteria, administrations building, and gymnasium on the grounds of the high school. Ohmine, Palikir, Lukop, Sokehs Powe Elementary schools will each be getting new school buildings, gymnasiums, and renovation of existing classrooms.

Iehse currently spends his days analyzing drawings and in meetings with PMO staff and developers.

Three FSM companies earn MSC Tuna Purse Seine Certification

Micronesia Shipping Commission

Three companies with significant operations in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) have earned MSC certification for Purse Seine fishing for three tuna species (Skipjack, Yellowfin and Bigeye) for fish caught in the FSM EEZ and the high seas of the WCPFC.

Liancheng Overseas Fishery (Shenzhen) Co. Ltd (SZLC), Caroline Fisheries Corporation, Inc., and DaYang Seafoods Ltd. with the strong support of the FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) completed an exhaustive 12month independent assessment by the MSC assessment body Control Union Co. and met the required scores to achieve MSC certification which is the gold standard for sustainable fishing.

The companies demonstrated their ability to meet the MSC's 3 principles for sustainable fishing of healthy stocks; species and habitats in the ecosystem remain healthy, and effective fisheries management.

Eugene R. Pangelinan, Executive Director of the National Oceanic Resource Management Authority of FSM said:

"It is a substantial achievement for the nation and its industry to be able to supply sustainably caught tuna products for consumers around the world, while working on the nation's own sustainability interests in line with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC).

The Federated States of Micronesia purse seine fishery proudly joins in as leaders of the sustainability efforts around the world fisheries to supply tuna products to consumers globally. The nation having become a leader in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing takes pride in its efforts for building a robust and sustainable fishery. The continued efforts and achievements promise a better future for the lives of future generations for the people of the Federated States of Micronesia and a way forward for global sustainability movements."

Caroline Fisheries Corporation, Inc. is a purse seine fishing company based in Pohnpei with substantial local

government equity operating 6 purse seine vessels, a net repair yard facility, and a shipping agency. One of the company's key strategies is to promote sustainable fishing practices.

Da Yang Seafoods Ltd. Is a purse seine fishing company base in Kosrae operating 6 purse seine vessels, a 1500mt cold storage and a loin processing plant, company set to vertically integrate and promote FSM tuna to the world. We believe what is best for the ocean is best for our company!

The fishery must undergo annual audits to prove that fish stocks are maintained sustainable as well as implement robust harvest control rules to manage the fishery. Stringent Chain of Custody and traceability documentation must be retained and organized at the highest level to maintain the MSC certification.

Liancheng Overseas Fishery (Shenzhen) Co Ltd. is heavily engaged in FSM with fishing and processing operations and land-based transshipping operations in Pohnpei, Kosrae, Yap and a boat repair hard in Chuuk. Liancheng

has been operating in FSM for over 20 years, and is the leader in sustainability in the Pacific Region, with current LL boat certifications in FSM, RMI and Cook Islands.

About the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an international non-profit organisation which sets globally recognised standards for sustainable fishing and seafood traceability. The MSC ecolabel and certification program recognises and rewards sustainable fishing practices and is helping create a more sustainable seafood market. The MSC ecolabel on a seafood product means it is fully traceable to a wild-catch fishery which has been independently certified to the MSC's science-based standard for sustainable fishing. Fisheries representing more than 17% of the world's wild marine catch are engaged in its certification programme and more than 18,000 different MSC labelled products are available on shelves across the globe. For more information visit msc.org

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USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance and IOM support Pohnpei Women's Council

International Organization for Migration

Since 2020, BHA has merged the resources of the USAID Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Food for Peace (FFP) to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance—including food, water, shelter, emergency healthcare, sanitation and hygiene, and critical nutrition services to people in need worldwide.

Thanks to the generous support by USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) through the "COVID-19 Response Strengthening Preparedness Across the North Pacific project", IOM supported significant upgrades to the Pohnpei Women's Council (PWC) over the past several months. PWC is a chartered NGO, based in Pohnpei, mandated to promote gender-related issues, health, and education across communities in the state. More than 30 member groups make up PWC, and it has a membership of 2,000 persons. This partnership allows USAID and IOM to directly support NGOs such as PWC that enjoy an extensive reach across Pohnpei and an in-depth understanding of local issues. USAID, IOM and PWC can work together to promote gender-based issues as well as COVID-19 vaccinations and prevention messaging.

IOM increased the operational capacity of PWC to address gender-based issues by providing office equipment, including one laptop and one desktop computer, as well as three office chairs and one office desk. Ms. Emeliana Musrasrik-Carl, President of PWC, accepted the donations on behalf of PWC.

In addition, IOM improved the PWC's nahs — a traditional community building — by completely reconstructing the structure's roof and guttering, as well as installing a 1,500 gallon water tank and accompanying handwashing stations. The increased water supply will ensure that PWC members and all who attend events at the nahs are able to follow COVID-19 safe hygiene practices. The nahs of PWC will function as a platform for disseminating COVID-19 messaging to all community members in an inclusive manner, as was the case during the opening ceremony. The nahs will also be used for training on traditional knowledge, gender equality, domestic violence, health, education and environment.

The handover ceremony for the nahs was conducted on July 30 and drew approximately 100 participants, the majority of which were women. Speakers included traditional leaders and representatives from IOM, the U.S. Embassy, state government and PWC. Speakers stressed the importance of gender inclusion across all aspects of life, as well as the importance of COVID-19 vaccinations in promoting a healthy community. Vaccines were available on-site during the event for participants, and the Pohnpei State Public Health was present to provide the COVID-19 vaccination to those in need. The PWC provided incentive awards to those who received the vaccination.



Ms. Emeliana Musrasrik-Carl, on behalf of the PWC, thanked the U.S. Government, USAID and IOM for their continued support to the PWC.

"The PWC is a beneficiary of the good relationship between the Federated States of Micronesia and the United States of America," Ms. Musrasrik-Carl said. Speaker of Pohnpei State Legislature, Mr. Stevick Edwin, echoed the sentiment by Ms. Musrasrik-Carl and thanked the US Government for its support to the PWC.

Youth workshop on the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) of waste management

FSM DECEM

On July 29, 2021, Forty Youth Leaders and some members from Pohnpei's municipalities gathered at the Central Facilities Building on the FSM national grounds from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to attend a Youth Workshop on the 3Rs of Waste Management. The Workshop was sponsored by the Micronesia Clean Up Day Planning Committee which comprises of key FSM national department representatives such as the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management (DECEM), Department of Resources and Development (R&D), Department of Health & Social Affairs (DHESA), Department of Transportation, Communications, and Infrastructure (TC&I), Project Management Unit of TC&I, Department of Education (DOE), and Department of Finance and Administration (DOFA) in collaboration with State Environmental Protection Agencies, and Kosrae Island Resources Management Authority (EPAs/KIRMA), Secretariat of the Pacific

Community (SPC), Japan International Cooperative Agency (JICA), Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM), and VITAL.

The purpose of the Workshop was to encourage Youth Leaders around Pohnpei State to consider implementing or supporting a 3Rs program in their communities through a "train the trainer" workshop. Presentations from key line departments and organizations included Pohnpei State EPA's explanation of the Littering Law, the Importance of 3Rs and the 7 types of plastics by DECEM, the presence of a 3Rs curriculum by FSM DOE, and Repurposing of plastics by Pohnpei State Girl Scouts Group. The Girl Scouts presented on their works of art made of plastic bottles. They demonstrated how to make necklaces, earrings, etc. out of plastic bottles and other items deemed to be reusable. The 3Rs stand for REDUCE, REUSE, and RECYCLE. The reason for the emphasis on the 3Rs is the fact that it is the

basis for effective waste management. In fact, Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle assist in the minimization of waste we throw away. They help us conserve our natural resources, landfill space, and energy. It is believed that when a society implements a 3Rs system, the idea of having a landfill in place does not become an option anymore as expressed in the Waste Management Hierarchy:

After the presentations, Youth participants engaged in a discussion which led them to present their ideas on what it means to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle in Pohnpei. The participants recognized waste as an issue and proposed ways to address it. Additionally, the participants viewed several awareness video clips and were introduced to the Micronesia Clean Up Day activities.

Towards the end of the workshop, participants were given the opportunity to evaluate the workshop by writing one positive statement about it and what needed to improve. The participants included Youth Leaders from Pohnpei

Girls Scout, Nett Municipal Government, Youth 4 Change, Pacific Missionary Aviation (PMA) Church, Upward Bound Program, Educational Talent Search Program, Kolonia Town Government, Seventh Day Adventist School Youth, Sokehs Municipal Government, Kapinga/Nukuoro Youth Group, and Every Home Youth Group. Presenters included Ms. Justleen Alisoma who served as MC, Pohnpei EPA Acting Director Francisco Celestine, MCD Chair & DECEM Staff Patricia (Patti) Pedrus, FSM DOE Staff Mario Abello, Ms. Tanisha Sharma, OLM Student and Girls Scout Leader, and Mr. Bermance Aldis as MCD Vice Chair and R&D Staff. Other Micronesia Clean Up Day members included Ms. Shirley Ann Pelep representing Micronesia Conservation Trust, Mrs. Kesusa Yaropiy representing FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs, and Mr. Quinton Lawrence representing Pohnpei EPA.

A follow up with the Youth Leaders will be made periodically to ensure the application of the 3Rs among the youth members.

KEEP FSM CLEAN

Introducing the "DO'S AND DON'TS"

DO'S

- DO REDUCE** - Buy only what you **NEED**.
- DO REUSE** - Use what you have used **AGAIN** in another way.
- DO RECYCLE** - Take your cans to the recycling center. Ask the recycler which item they can recycle.

DON'TS

- DO NOT LITTER.** Stop throwing trash anywhere at any given time.
- DO NOT BURN PLASTICS** or mixed waste in open fires.
- DO NOT DUMP TRASH** into water and water ways.
- DO NOT MIX hazardous and non-hazardous materials.**

A message brought to you by:

Micronesia Clean Up Day, Pacific Community Communauté du Pacifique, JICA, and other partners.



...Awak dredging

Continued from front page

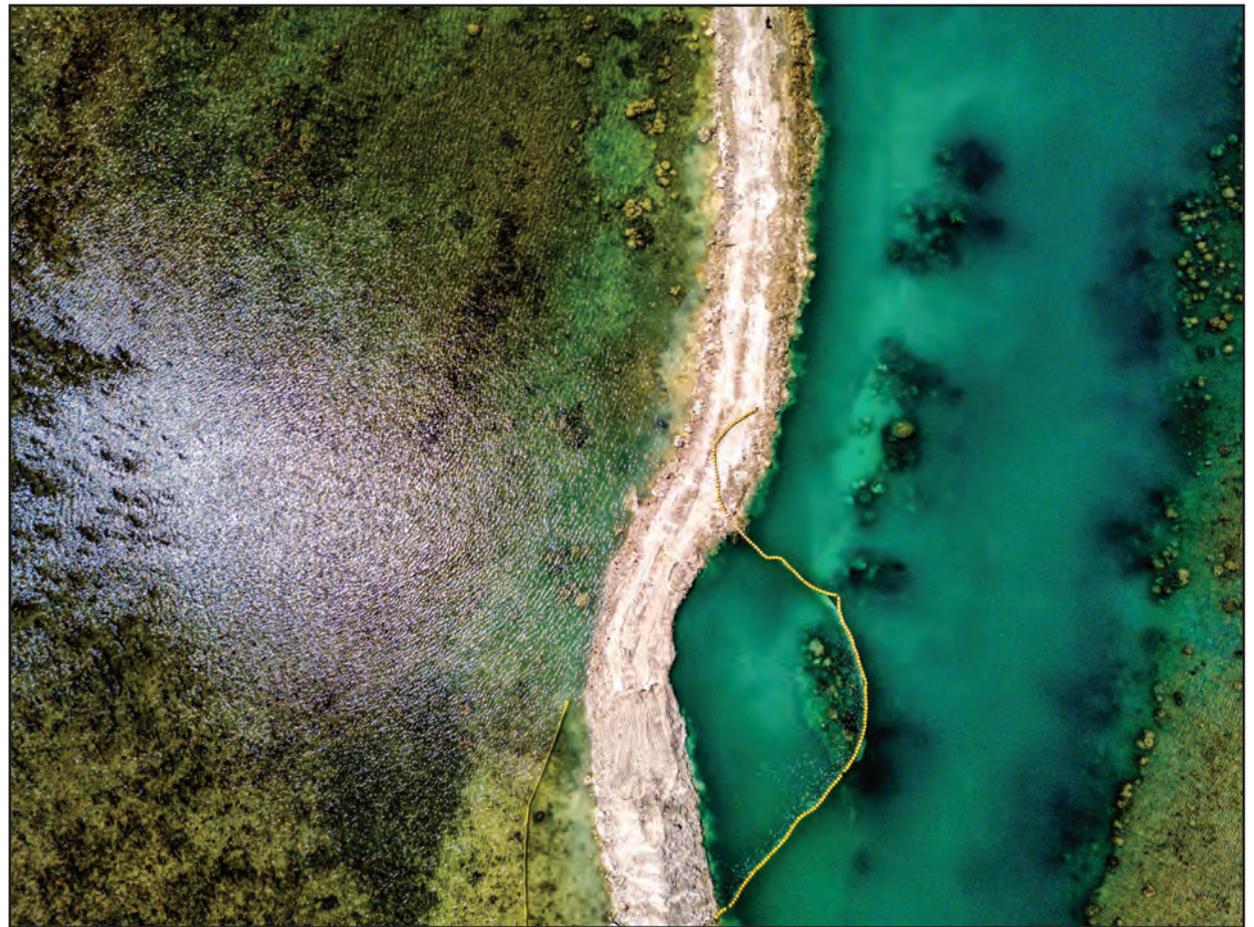
fish cage reported heavy siltation inside the pen that could endanger the lives of the fingerling rabbit fish.

That morning, Willy Kostka of the Micronesia Conservation Trust sent an email to Francisco Celestine enquiring about the legality of the re-started dredge site. The email informed Celestine about the close proximity of the community aquaculture project. Celestine said that the permit was legally obtained and sent EPA inspectors to the site to be sure they were following all of the requirements of the permit.

They discovered that there were no nets installed around the site to ensure that siltation is kept to a minimum. They shut the site down until dredgers could install the required nets, which was accomplished by the middle of the next morning. Dredging began again by that afternoon.

“I think they put that cage there to stop the dredging,” Christian said. “You just have to ask the question, ‘which came first’. They just don’t want dredging. I guess they don’t want roads in Pohnpei.”

He said that the permit allows them to dredge only between the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and then only at low tide. He said they are complying with that.



Later in the week, the local farmers reported decreased siltation in the rabbit fish cage.

Celestine said that EPA inspectors will continue to monitor the dredging operation.



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Aug 21

Operation Island Chief continues protection of Pacific from illegal fishing



Forum Fisheries Agency

HONIARA, 5th August, 2021 – Operation Island Chief, a Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency-led surveillance operation covering 18.4 million square kilometres, came to a successful closure today (Friday 6th August 2021).

FFA Director Fisheries Operations, Allan Rahari said that despite the 10-day Operation covering a substantial area it was bolstered by local knowledge and expertise.

“Island Chief, one of four operations conducted annually, is a massive operation that covers the Pacific waters of 11 participating FFA member nations - Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu,” said Mr Rahari.

The operation involved close to 500 personnel from the navy, police, air force and national fisheries bodies in the Pacific. Papua New Guinea also chartered an aircraft and two vessels to conduct surveillance.

The FFA Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC) team, supported by seven officers from the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF), Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, and Australian Defence Force (working remotely due to COVID), provided intelligence gathering and analysis, supplementing targeted information before and during the operation in order to support surveillance activities by Member countries.

“Regional collaboration, the sharing of resources and intel, and the ongoing training and strengthening of local expertise is a critical cornerstone of the success of our surveillance operations.

“The capacity building that has been ongoing over the last four decades, has meant we have some real depth in expertise in our Pacific personnel,” Mr Rahari continued.

“We’d also like to thank and acknowledge our international partners who have a long history of support for these important Pacific

surveillance operations.”

Pacific QUAD partners, Australia, New Zealand, France and the United States, provided support through aerial and surface surveillance, alongside the FFA Aerial Surveillance Programme aircraft, further enhancing the maritime surveillance coverage during the operation. 12 ships, eight aircraft and dark vessel detection technology rounded out the assets included in this complex operation.

FFA has been conducting surveillance operations in partnership with its Member countries and partners for over forty years. The Operations have seen increasing levels of success with actions to tackle IUU evolving from previously being about protecting against illegal boats entering the fishery to being more around policing the operations of licensed vessels who haven't followed the rules and regulations governing their activities. The Pacific region is a vast expanse and collaboration across the many partners, providing personnel and assets, is crucial to ongoing success.

FSS Micronesia, Commanding Officer LCDR Paulino Yangitesmal, participated in the operation and patrolled some 20,000 nautical miles of FSM's Exclusive Economic Zone during their time at sea. LCDR Yangitesmal stated “it is very important that we take a pro-active approach to ensure that vessels fishing within our EEZ are licenced to operate and that they are also fishing responsibly so that we ensure the continued viability of our precious fish resources. We thank Australia, through the Maritime Surveillance Adviser, LCDR David Perry RAN, for providing the funding and support to make this patrol occur. It is through partnerships like this between FSM and Australia that we continue to provide effective surveillance of our EEZ”. During this patrol over seven fishing vessels were encountered with details taken with regards the vessels origin, Captain, crew and the amount of fish caught.

BRMC scholar receives Judis Doctor Degree

Micronesia Conservation trust

Mr. Rockyner Hadley of Pohnpei, FSM, one of the Bill Raynor Micronesia Challenge (BRMC) Scholars, received his Judis Doctor degree at the University of Hawai'i -Manoa. He is the first law student to receive the BRMC Scholarship.

In 2019, Rockyner interned for the Pacific Islands Managed and Protected Areas Community (PIMPAC), a peer learning network focused on supporting conservation action in the Pacific Islands, co-coordinated by the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). During his internship, he advocated for the creation of Environmental Courts within FSM's Judiciary systems. The internship took him to Pohnpei, Kosrae, Guam, and eventually Yap where he presented to the 2019 FSM Judicial Conference. “I aspire to become a lawyer and hope to contribute to the conservation efforts on our islands. There currently exists a gap between the implementation of already existing environmental laws and enforcement. I want to help bridge the gap and help build capacity through training and by incorporating custom and tradition in the modern-day practices of dispute resolution”, says Rockyner.

Mr. Hadley hopes to return home to continue the Environmental Courts work he started during his internship and contribute to the environmental laws and enforcement to promote conservation efforts in Micronesia. Thus far all of our students who have received the BRMC scholarships have returned to Micronesia and leading programs in the environmental field in their jurisdictions.



US Rep. Case: Pacific Islands Regionalism critical amid geopolitical ‘Contest of Wills’

Case tells Pacific journalists, US needs to ‘show up’ more in region

East West Center

Aug. 12, 2021

HONOLULU – Amid a regional rift among the countries of the Pacific Islands Forum and increasing great-power competition between the United States and China, US Rep. Ed Case (D-Hawai‘i) said in a virtual news conference with Pacific Islands journalists yesterday that it would be a “terrible tragedy” if the Forum were to split up. Five Micronesian states have announced plans to withdraw from the Forum over a dispute about the regional rotation of the body’s Secretary-General post.

“It’s up to the countries and jurisdictions of the Pacific Islands to decide how to maintain regionalism,” Case said. “But I will say very directly that I believe that regionalism is not only an advantage for the Pacific Islands, but it’s really the only way forward. ... There are many countries in the world that would prefer the Forum to not work—and that’s not in the interests of the Pacific Islands, it’s in their own interests. So I don’t think you want to let that happen.”

Presented by Honolulu’s East-West Center (EWC), the press conference was held as part of a partnership between the Center and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), with funding from the US State Department, that aims to help build news media capacity in the Pacific.

US needs to ‘show up’ more

Rep. Case has taken a leading role in Congress on matters related to the Pacific Islands. He co-founded the Congressional Pacific Islands Caucus and has introduced legislation aimed at increasing US engagement in the region. He acknowledged that in the decades after the 9/11 attack, American engagement “lagged” in many areas of the world, including the Pacific Islands. “To have a good partnership, you’ve got to show up,” he said.

As a result, Case said, the caucus

members “want to make sure that we magnify the importance of the Pacific Islands within the halls of Congress and make sure that our national policy is consistent with our belief in the importance of the Pacific Islands. ... We want to facilitate communication between our countries on issues of shared interests, whether they be development, trade, regional stability and security, or climate change. And finally, to assist in the formulation of sound national policy.”

The congressman pointed to remarks offered by US President Joe Biden at the Fifty-First Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Retreat on August 6 as “a statement by him of the United States’ belief that we are and always will be a Pacific country, and we intend to fulfill our responsibilities and assist as we can with the development of the Pacific.”

Case listed some of the goals he and the caucus are backing as including:

- Pandemic recovery and climate change assistance
- Increased development aid
- Maritime security and illegal fishing enforcement
- Improved disaster preparedness and response
- Return of a more robust Peace Corps presence in the region
-

Recognizing that the Pacific Islands face “not just an inconvenience but an existential threat” from climate change, Case said that under the Biden administration the US once again “comes to this not only from a position of the expectation of world leadership on climate issues, but from the fact that we are one of the major carbon emitters in the world. ... This is a matter of grave significance to the human race, not to mention the rest of our natural world. And so we’re pushed by necessity, and we’ve lost a lot of time already.”

‘Contest of wills’ with China

Case acknowledged that it is impossible to discuss regional issues without “recognizing that our country views China as a real concern in the Pacific Islands.” He

described the friction between the two powers as “a contest of wills as to who can really present the best alternative to all of the world ... in terms of which forms of government will succeed and prosper over time.”

In terms of defense, he said, “Our goal here is simple—to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific where no one country can dominate and exert malign influence on any other country; where we do project the values and principles that we believe are the best way forward for our country and the world; and where we can, where necessary, assist with military endeavors in countries that need help and welcome our help, as we are doing with several countries in the Pacific Islands.”

Pressed by a journalist who said that broad, “cookie cutter” approaches to foreign engagement have previously failed in the Pacific due to the region’s diversity, Case said the legislation he and his colleagues have put forward “doesn’t try to micromanage how the actual assistance and programs are applied. We’re not trying to do a one-size-fits-all approach. ... The idea is to re-engage in the Pacific Islands on the terms that each of them needs.”

About East-West Center’s Pacific Media Initiatives:

Since October 2020, 16 media outlets across 11 Pacific Island countries have been able to use content from The New York Times to supplement their local news coverage as part of the partnership between EWC and IWPR. In addition, all members of the Pacific Islands News Association were provided with online subscriptions to The New York Times and invited to the news conference with Case and other exclusive webinars. This successful initiative expanded in April 2021 in collaboration with National Public Radio’s Next Generation Radio Project to include funding and activities to help build capacity for journalism faculty and students at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji.

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SIDS Solutions Forum coming soon

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

6 August 2021, Apia, Samoa- Planning for the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Solutions Forum, scheduled for 30 – 31 August 2021, is underway.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has invited world leaders from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific, African, Indian Ocean and Caribbean, as well high-level participants from donor and SIDS friendly countries and heads of global organizations; many of whom will headline the forum.

Hundreds of public policy makers and practitioners, community leaders, farmers, entrepreneurs, private sector stakeholders are also invited to register.

The challenges posed by COVID-19 are no secret, but they also present an opportunity for innovation and creativity in efforts to defeat hunger and malnutrition for all. This is where the SIDS Solutions Forum can play a leading role.

The special case for a SIDS Solutions Forum

While COVID-19 has impacted lives and livelihoods the world over, SIDS countries have been especially hit hard. Many economies that relied heavily on tourism were forced to close their borders, losing badly needed revenue.

The SIDS Solutions Forum creates a space for government leaders, development partners, farmers, fishers, community development practitioners and leaders, entrepreneurs, women and youth to discuss, share, promote and encourage home-grown and imported solutions to respond to the challenges posed by COVID-19 and several of those that pre-existing the pandemic. The ultimate goal is to accelerate the achievement of the agriculture; food and nutrition related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in SIDS.

“Innovation and digitalization have, together, become an important driving force for rural and agri-food systems transformation. They’ve created new opportunities for farmers and rural people,” said Xiangjun Yao, FAO Coordinator of the Subregional Office, based in Samoa.

“But our global food systems continue to face considerable challenges in being able to produce sufficient, safe, nutritious and healthy food in a sustainable manner to feed an ever-growing population. Small Island Developing States, or SIDS, in particular, share these challenges.

“The good news is that digital technologies offer unique opportunities for improving food production and trade, especially to smallholder farmers, and can help to achieve food and nutrition security and poverty alleviation globally as well as for SIDS. That’s why this Forum is so important – it will provide an opportunity to learn

from each other and regain momentum to reach the SGD targets by 2030,” Yao added.

The Forum is being convened virtually by FAO in partnership with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). The Government of Fiji is the co-host.

Key speakers will be announced by early next week.

ABOUT THE FORUM

Why are innovations and digitalization so important to SIDS’ solutions?

SIDS, in particular, share challenges such as frequent natural disasters, limited arable land, dependence on small-scale agriculture, and high-priced imports.

The mobility of digital technologies are transforming agri-food systems, and while this is an important development for food systems everywhere, this mobility is of great importance to remote areas, such as SIDS.

The spread of mobile technologies, remote-sensing services and distributed computing are already improving smallholders’ access to information, inputs and markets, increasing production and productivity, streamlining supply chains and reducing operational costs.

In the real world, robotics together with artificial intelligence are examples of how digital innovation supports the farmer in the management of herds and crops while real-time information helps with water and soil needs. Digital innovation holds the potential to unlock employment opportunities, bridge the rural divide and empower youth and women to access information, technology and markets.

Sharing these rapidly evolving digital innovations will accelerate progress toward achieving the SDGs in SIDS. It is within this context that the SIDS Solutions Forum will launch a knowledge exchange platform to incubate, promote, scale up and replicate locally grown ideas to accelerate the achievement of agriculture, food, nutrition, environment and health.

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Innovation and digitalization have become an important driving force to help SIDS deal with the challenges brought by COVID19. Photo: FAO/Kevin Hadfield



The SIDS Solution Forum offers an opportunity to improve food production and assist farmers to help their nations achieve food and nutrition security. Photo: FAO/ Kevin Hadfield



WASH Officer, No1, UNICEF Pacific Multi-Country Office: Pohnpei, Micronesia

The UNICEF Pacific Multi-Country Office is seeking qualified candidates for a position as ‘WASH Officer’ at the No1 level in Pohnpei, Micronesia.

Location: Pohnpei, Micronesia

Deadline: 20 Aug 2021 11:55 PM Fiji Standard Time

To apply and for more information: <https://bit.ly/3iCYbbO>

PURPOSE OF THE JOB

This position will provide technical, operational and administrative support in development, implementation and monitoring to Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) programmes. Specifically, this position will support planning and implementation of the immediate and critical need for improved WASH in Health Care facilities and COVID-19 response and recovery.

Summary of key functions/accountabilities:

1. Programme development and planning
2. Programme management, monitoring and delivery of results
3. Technical and operational support for programme implementation
4. Humanitarian WASH preparedness and response
5. Networking and partnership building
6. Innovation, knowledge management and capacity building

To qualify as an advocate for every child you will have...

- A university degree in one of the following fields is required: public health, social sciences, behavior change communication, sanitary engineering or another relevant technical field.
- Additional relevant post-graduate courses that complement/supplement the main degree are a strong asset.
- DEVELOPMENTAL: a minimum of one year of professional experience in WASH-related programmes for developing countries is required.
- A good understanding of national government WASH related policies plans and strategies, and institutional arrangements is required.
- Knowledge of latest guidance and best practices for WASH programming in the Pacific context especially WASH in health care facilities will be a valuable asset.
- Fluency in English and local language of the duty station

APPLICATION PROCESS

All applications must be submitted through UNICEF's online recruiting system using the following link <https://www.unicef.org/about/employ/> Search **Requisition #: 543588**

Suitable Candidates must include the following in their application:

1. Cover Letter explaining interest to the position
2. Most Updated CV/Resume
3. Names and details of 3 most recent supervisors or referees
4. Copy of your Academic Certification

UNICEF and Government of Japan announce US\$20.8 million partnership to boost ongoing COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts in the Pacific region

UNICEF

26 July 2021

SUVA, FIJI – This week, UNICEF and the Government of Japan announce a new US\$20.8 million partnership to support Pacific Island governments with their COVID-19 preparedness and response efforts, including Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

This support, in collaboration with UNICEF, follows the declaration earlier this month by the Prime Minister of Japan, His Excellency Yoshihide Suga, at the 9th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) to support COVID-19 measures for the Pacific Island countries.

The new project will promote water, sanitation, and hygiene in healthcare facilities through better access, improved infection prevention training and distribution of essential supplies including environmental cleaning and

basic non-medical personal protective equipment.

In addition to water, sanitation and hygiene support, this project aims for a strong routine immunisation programme that will lead to a more effective COVID-19 preparedness and response plan. Health workers will be supported through essential trainings to deliver COVID-19 vaccines and maintain cold chain equipment and in-country distribution of vaccines.

Through this funding support, Pacific Island countries will engage communities on the importance of being vaccinated to save lives as well as tackle misinformation. Healthcare workers will also be provided technical support in using digital tools to help in the reporting and monitoring of the COVID-19 vaccination.

This four-year project continues the strong partnership Japan has with UNICEF to improve the lives of all children and their families living throughout the Pacific region.

Tokelau stands by its mandatory vaccination program. Second Pfizer dose roll-out next week.

Pacific News Leaders

July 8, 2021

Atafu - Tokelau will roll-out the second dose of its Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination program next Tuesday. It follows the successful administration of the first inoculations on 20 July 2021.

“Tokelau has vaccinated 99% of her population against COVID-19 in the first round of vaccinations and the leadership are very proud of that achievement,” stated the Ulu o Tokelau, Hon Kelihiano Kalolo.

The program is mandatory for all eligible members of the population. While individuals with medical contraindications are exempted.

The mandatory status of the program See “Tokelau vaccination” on next page

and self-isolation imposed on the few individuals that refused vaccination has created a small social media storm by a few people criticising and spreading misinformation about Tokelau’s vaccination program.

“We are surprised and saddened at the small group of people spreading misinformation about the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccinations. This has become a world-wide trend that we would encourage people not to be part of,” said Hon Kelihiano Kalolo.

“In addition, we are disappointed with the unsubstantiated statements made against some of our Tokelauan leaders, and Administrator Mr Ross Ardern, who collectively have been

Board of Land Surveyors Examiners Oath of Administration

By Pohnpei Enginkehlap

August 12, 2021

Peilapalap, Kolonia- Congratulations to Joycelynn Anson-Ehsa! Governor Oliver administered the oath of administration to Mrs. Anson-Ehsa as the newest member of the Board of Land Surveyors Examiners.



In his brief remarks, Governor Oliver acknowledged the urgent need to map, survey, and certify land titles across Pohnpei that have been backlogged for years. He conveyed his gratitude and appreciation to the Director of the Department of Land, Wasahi Sokehs, Mr. Peter Lohn, for the work already accomplished and thanked Mrs. Anson-Ehsa for undertaking this very important role. Governor Oliver thanked Speaker Edwin and the 10th Pohnpei State Legislature for their support to confirm Mrs. Anson-Ehsa to the Board of Land Surveyors.



Mrs. Anson-Ehsa expressed her gratitude for her nomination and confirmation. She noted her educational background in surveying and mapping expressing her appreciation to be a part of the Board of Land Surveyors Examiners. She pledged to do her best to help with the important work at the Department of Land.

Master of Ceremonies for the event was Public Affairs Officer, Mr. Peteriko Hairens. Election Commissioner, Mr. Heinrich Stevenson, performed the opening prayer. Also present to witness the oath of administration was Chairman of the Board of Public Lands, Mr. John Nakanaga, Chairman of the Board of Land Surveyors Examiners, Mr. Marcelino Actoucka, Director of the Department of Treasury and Administration, Ms. Christina Elnei, and employees of the Department of Land and Governor's office.

...Tokelau vaccinations

Continued from previous page

working tirelessly to ensure the safety and security of all of those that live in Tokelau during these difficult times.”

Hon Kalolo added that mandatory vaccination is already in place in various countries around the world

and it is gathering more support. He referred to Tonga's parliament passing a mandatory vaccination bill through its first reading 17 to nil earlier this week. When passed into law, vaccination refusal in Tonga will be a crime; with parents held responsible if their children refuse.

“Tonga, like Tokelau, is one of only eight countries in the world that is COVID-19 free. COVID-19 has not landed or arrived at our borders. But we believe that COVID will arrive. Our only hope is to make sure everyone is

Pohnpei Department of Public Safety receives four brand new police motorcycles and two police vehicles

By Pohnpei Enginkehlap



Governor Oliver delivered remarks today at the Department of Public Safety to mark the receipt of four brand new Police motorcycles and two Police vehicles.

Joining Governor Oliver today at the ceremony was Speaker of the 10th Pohnpei State Legislature, Hon. Stevick Edwin, Vice Speaker Hon. McGarry Miguel, Senator Hon. Ricky Carl, Mr. Gustin Harris representing the Chief Justice of Pohnpei Supreme Court, and Director of the Department of Treasury and Administration, Ms. Christina Elnei.



Police Academy cadets stood in formation during the ceremony while the Governor and Speaker conducted a quick inspection of the new vehicles. Both Governor Oliver and Speaker Edwin expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the important work of the Department of Public Safety to keep the peace, enforce state laws and manage the increasing traffic situation in Pohnpei. They both encouraged the use of the new vehicles as tools to enhance current law enforcement efforts.

Director Carl noted that according to

Public Safety vehicle registration records, there has been a considerable increase in newly registered vehicles on the roads in the last year, and these motorcycles and police cars will help greatly with traffic congestion.

Captain Rodriguez delivered welcoming remarks and Captain Ioanis started the ceremony with an opening prayer.

The motorcycles were purchased and not donated, through public funds made possible by the Joint Law Enforcement Agreement with the National Government.

More information on the event will be provided at <https://pohnpeistate.gov.fm/> and a video of the event will be available on Pohnpei Public Broadcasting Corporations Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/.../PohnpeiPublicBroadca.../featured>

vaccinated. It is a matter of life and death for our 1500 people. That is why vaccination is mandatory for Tokelau.” Ahead of the second roll-out, the Ulu o Tokelau will address the nation this weekend. He will provide an update on the general success of the first round of vaccinations; reconfirm details of the second roll-out expected to take place on 10 August 2021; and summarise the journey for a solution that started in March 2020.

The Ulu will also acknowledge the tireless work of health professionals

and partners in the delivery of the vaccination program across the atolls of Tokelau.

A notice will be issued on the Government of Tokelau facebook page to confirm the date and time of the Ulu's address.

For more information contact: Mr Aukusitino Vitale, General Manager, National; and Chair of the Advisory Committee to NEBDCER (National Executive Board for Disease Control and Emergency Response).

KPress Perspective

Correct information plays key role in battling pandemic

The 1918 influenza pandemic infected 500 million people, 1/3 of the world population at that time. It killed at least 50 million of them. That year, the virus killed more soldiers than were killed in battle during World War I. Avian in origin, the H1N1 pandemic of 1918 is still by far and away, the most devastating pandemic in the last 100 years including the COVID-19 pandemic.

“In 1918, there were no flu vaccines, antiviral drugs, antibiotics or mechanical ventilators. Treatment tools were basic and limited to supportive care and unproven remedies,” a short documentary from the Centers for Disease Control says. “...control efforts worldwide were limited to non-pharmaceutical interventions, such as isolation, quarantine, good personal hygiene, use of disinfectants, and limitations of public gatherings which were applied unevenly.”

There was also no reliable and widespread way of sharing health information world-wide.

Much has changed since 1918, most of it for the better, though certainly not all. The medical advances in the last 100 years have been nothing short of astonishing. We are now more equipped to deal with a pandemic than at any other time in history, at least in terms of scientific development. In terms of the handling and reception of information, we seem to be less equipped in 2021 with all of our abilities to share information than we were in 1918 when the telegraph was the fastest tool to disseminate information. Nowadays we have the ability to reject information faster than it could even go out in 1918, and we do.

Opinions on both sides of the vaccination issue are understandably strong and tempers hot on each side. FSM President David Panuelo issued an executive order earlier saying that anyone who receives money of any kind from the FSM government will first have to provide proof of vaccination, including senior citizens not otherwise medically excluded. It was his effort

to provide some sort of enforceability for Congress’s requirement that all FSM citizens must be vaccinated that esteemed body did not build in. For that action, one person posted a threat against the President’s life. Tempers are hot.

This editorial has been extremely difficult to put together precisely because I have my own strong opinions on whether or not people should be vaccinated and whether or not, if they haven’t chosen to do so, the government should be able to step in for the good of the entire community. It would be easy for me to lambast skeptics as being willfully ignorant, belligerent, or just plain contrary for the sake of contrariness.

Because I am one of those people who has underlying health conditions, specifically emphysema, I got the vaccine as soon as I was allowed to get it and considered myself very fortunate to have access. I knew that the likelihood was high that I would die if I contracted COVID-19. It was months after we received the vaccine that my elderly parents could finally get access to the vaccine and I worried about them the whole time they went unvaccinated. Despite my trying to listen to arguments on both sides, I do feel strongly that as many people as possible should be vaccinated and any decision not to be vaccinated should be medically based.

But I’ve been trying to listen to some of the arguments the anti-vaxxers have. A few of them make sense to me.

One mother has serious concerns based on her having tragically lost a child, apparently due to a rejection of another type of vaccine. She has flatly stated that none of her family will ever take the vaccine. She rightly says that science is not fool-proof or infallible. Frankly, though her family is healthy, I think she should be given a pass based on her history.

I know of one retiree in Pohnpei whose doctor told him that he should not get the vaccine due to medical reasons. I don’t know what those reasons are

but that was his doctor’s professional opinion and that doctor certainly knows more than I do no matter how much time I might have spent on Google.

Some in Pohnpei will, whenever asked, offer their conviction that the vaccine is actually the “mark of the beast”, “666”, the Biblically prophesied mark mandated by the anti-Christ in order to buy and to sell. However, most thoughtful Biblical scholars say that a Christian cannot be tricked into taking the “mark of the beast”. It can’t be accidentally taken. “If there is some future mark imposed on people by some nefarious person, then to take that mark, you’ll know exactly what you are doing—namely, cursing Christ and pledging devotion to his enemy,” wrote Matthew L. Halsted, PhD, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Eternity Bible College in an article entitled, “The Covid Vaccine has 666 Written All Over It...and Why that Doesn’t Matter According to Revelation”.

Some claim that the vaccine contains a computer chip to track people. No, it doesn’t. Don’t know how else to say that. Yep, epidemiologists need to track contacts in order to contain the pandemic, if at all possible, but there is no chip embedded in the vaccine to help them do that—never has been.

Many say that it is communism for a government to remove personal choice from decisions about its people’s health, even when that government was democratically elected and is operating within the bounds of its Constitution. Maybe it is. I tend to think not. Governments remove personal choice of their citizens all the time. For instance, on some rare occasions, I think it would be great if I could smack the crud out of someone who has offended me, and I suppose that I actually do have the choice to do that, but if I do, the government can and should jump in and make me pay for that particular choice. Democratically chosen governments are mandated to serve the good of the community, and though, there is no question that corruption can and does happen, I would be hard pressed to find an evil intent in the government’s acting to protect the health of its people. Are they doing it right? I don’t know, but they are acting based on the best information they have and so far, at least in the FSM, it is working.

What I DON’T understand, and never will, is the flat-out evil of people who PURPOSELY twist facts to spread an anti-vax message when, even though science is NOT infallible, is still the best tool we have to combat the pandemic and to save lives. To me, intentionally spreading blatantly false information on the vaccine seems like conspiracy to commit murder on a vast scale.

One such viral (to coin the term) internet posting claimed that vaccinations caused the 1918 H1N1 pandemic. It claims that “more of our men (in the armed forces) were being killed by medical shots than by enemy shots from guns. That is absolute hogwash. In fact, it was influenza and pneumonia that killed those soldiers. That is not revisionist history and there was no vaccine at the time.

Anyone can find anything online to support whatever it is that they believe. It reminds me of the cartoon I occasionally see on social media of a man sitting at his computer, his wife walking away from him. He turns and says something to the effect of “Wait, honey, you have to see this! I just discovered something that none of the doctors and experts have ever discovered.” The hubris of that statement is appalling.

Rumors, or the unintentional spreading of misinformation is, I suppose, less damnable than intentional spreading of “fake news” and “false facts” but equally dangerous. Rumors currently abound in Pohnpei that a person who recently was buried died because that person received the vaccine. Another rumor is circulating regarding the hospitalization of a high traditional leader saying that his receiving the vaccination caused his illness. HIPAA laws preclude Health Department officials from saying what he was in fact admitted for, but according to medical publications, there does not seem to be a correlation between vaccination and the kinds of symptoms he had.

One of the many things I can’t wrap my head around is why it is that no government in any other Micronesian nation or territory was forced, due to low vaccination rates, to adopt mandatory vaccination on its citizenry. Whose fault is that?

*Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor*



College Vaccination Directives

Please read the following directives from the COM-FSM President's office in response to FSM Congressional Resolution 22-33 on mandatory vaccinations and the Implementation Decree mandating all individuals and organizations receiving money from the National Government to show evidence of COVID-19 vaccination.

DIRECTIVES – COM-FSM Vaccination Information

- Congressional Resolution 22-33 states it is mandatory for all FSM citizens to be COVID-19 vaccinated. This includes students above the age of 18. Students should submit copies of their vaccination card to the college nurse by August 30, 2021. Students may request a medical or religious exemption by following the same steps as employees described below. A student choosing not to get vaccinated and with no exemption will be asked to move to online courses.
- FSM President Panuelo has decreed all organizations receiving money from the National Government to show evidence of 100% employee vaccination rates. The college receives both compact and general revenue funds from the National Government. Therefore, each eligible employee at the college must show proof (submit copy of vaccination card to college nurse) of full COVID-19 vaccination by August 30, 2021, unless that employee has an approved medical or religious exemption for not getting vaccinated. Any other employee who does not show proof of full vaccination will be subject to leave without pay



Definitions:

- Fully vaccinated – 2 doses of Moderna or Pfizer; one dose of Johnson & Johnson; or required dose(s) of other available vaccine
- Eligible person – person age 18 and over unless otherwise indicated by FSM public health (Pfizer is approved for 12 years old and up)

Employees/Students requesting a medical or religious exemption should:

Medical Exemption

1. Person obtains a written statement from a licensed physician stating the present condition of the person is such that the required immunization(s) would endanger the life or health of the employee.
2. Person submits the medical statement to the college nurse for review.
3. The college nurse approves the request for exemption; files the request in the person's medical file and informs the person and supervisor of specific restrictions to follow while on a college campus OR the nurse denies the request and informs the person of the reason.
4. If the request is denied, the person has one opportunity re-submit a request with further justification within one week of the denial. The person may re-submit only one time.

Religious Exemption

1. Person provides a written statement explaining the religious conviction against immunization(s) signed by the local senior leader of the religious institution.
2. Person submits the statement to cabinet by email (president@comfsm.fm) or brings the document to the executive secretary, president's office at National Campus.
3. Cabinet will review the request within 3 working days.
4. Cabinet approves the request for exemption; files the approved request in the person's file and informs the person and supervisor of specific restrictions to follow while on a college campus OR Cabinet denies the request and informs the person of the reason(s).
5. If the request is denied, the person has one opportunity to re-submit the request with further justification within one week of the denial. The person may re-submit the request only one time.

College Employee of the Month

Lorenzo Il Hernandez Rull moved to Pohnpei from Chuuk six years ago. His passion for cooking started at a very young age. This coming August will be his 4th year serving the college as the Dining Hall Manager. "My love for cooking started when I was really young. I used to watch my mother prepare food for our family. I have 5 other siblings, so we have a big family". Lorenzo worked as a line cook in Macau, China for three years, before coming to Chuuk where he worked as a chef at a local restaurant. He also worked as a chef in a local restaurant in Pohnpei before working for the college. "Working as a Dining Hall Manager for the college is a very demanding job. On a regular school day we serve and satisfy close to 300



customers. At the end of the day, as long as I see the students, faculty and staff happy and full from their meals, all of my team's hard work is already paid off."