

# Saladak students demonstrate skills learned in preservation of indigenous learning pilot program



By **Bill Jaynes**  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 26, 2021  
Saladak, U, Pohnpei—This

morning, students of Saladak Elementary School in U, Pohnpei held an event to display what they have learned through an innovative program in cooperation with PREL (Pacific Resources for Education and Learning).

The program for preservation of indigenous learning was made possible by a grant to PREL from the organization Nia Tero who used the funding to begin one pilot program in the FSM and one in the

Marshall Islands. The kickoff for the pilot program at Saladak Elementary school was held on November 10, 2020. Since

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## Civil Action filed in Chuuk names two FSM Senators alleging abuse of public project funds to influence elections

By **Bill Jaynes**  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 25, 2021  
Chuuk—This afternoon, Attorney Sabino Asor filed a civil action on behalf of six Plaintiffs at the Chuuk Trial Division of the FSM Supreme Court regarding alleged inappropriate actions regarding Chuuk election processes.

The Plaintiffs in the case (FSM CA 2021-1003) are Sabino Asor, Setiro Paul, Takamichy Mori, Johannes

Berdon, Maimichy Masis, and Simay Casro Karen. The named defendants are FSM Congress Speaker Wesley Simina in his official and personal capacities, FSM Senator Tiwiter Aritos in his official and personal capacities, Amando Marsolo as Mayor of Tol in his official and personal capacities, Alexander Narruhn, the FSM Department of Finance, the FSM Department of Justice, the Chuuk Statewide Development Authority, and the Faichuk Development Authority.

"This is a Civil Rights case brought: (1) to prevent the defendants from using the authorities and resources of the FSM National Government to commit voter oppression and violate voters' and citizens' civil rights for the purpose of influencing and controlling the outcome of political elections in Chuuk State, in ways contrary

See "Chuuk Civil Action" on page 6

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# FSM Government moves to dismiss complaint on the legality of FSM border closure

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 15, 2021

**FSM**—This evening, the FSM Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a motion at the FSM Supreme Court to dismiss the complaint of 13 Plaintiffs who had asked the Court for declaratory judgment that the FSM Government’s emergency declaration that sealed its borders after the world wide COVID-19 outbreak was unconstitutional. The plaintiffs in the case each reside in one of the four FSM states and had traveled outside of the FSM’s borders before the President acted to seal the country’s border. They were each directly affected by the action of the government and for the last year, they have been unable to return to their homes as is the case for many FSM citizens, residents, and even members of the diplomatic corps.

The DOJ motion’s first argument for grounds for dismissal of the case was for failure to name indispensable parties. It argues that each of the State governments also should have been named since each of the four States also issued their own emergency declarations. The argument specifically

names the Pohnpei State Government as one of the authorities in the nation that was adamant about its declarations that refused disembarkation of passengers at its port. “Although the FSM state of emergency covers borders control measures, the FSM States remains adamant in the disembarkation of persons from international travels,” the motion says. The motion to dismiss says that failure to name indispensable parties in a civil action is sufficient grounds for dismissal.

However, within the heading discussing that matter, the Assistant Attorney General that filed the motion then diverged from the main argument saying, “This is an extreme circumstance where members of the society is (are) divided in their views. While some plea for the FSM borders to open, some demand the closure to continue. It is understood that certain rights may be impaired at times like this. The society are (is) invoking their (its) civil rights, and no rights is(are) paramount than(over) others. Everyone is affected without one being singled out. There is a vital balance for rights and life in this circumstances (sic). This is a balance that only the government is constitutionally delegated to implement.”

The motion to dismiss then introduces its argument that the issues raised by the plaintiffs are “non-justiciable political questions”, the legal doctrine that an issue is so politically charged that the court which is typically reviewed as the apolitical branch of government, should not hear the issue. The FSM court will need to decide whether or not the long-debated doctrine that relates to separation of powers of the branches is applicable in this case. The DOJ is asking the court to consider in advance of hearing arguments on the matter whether or not there is a “textually demonstrable commitment of an issue to a coordinate branch of the government”.

Taken to its extremes, the doctrine of non-justiciable political questions would mean that no government action taken by any official operating under a law empowering the government to do so could ever be questioned or reviewed in any court and no action could ever be declared to be illegal. It’s part of the reason that the doctrine itself has been so heavily debated within the legal community and within case law.

“In this present matter, the issue is whether or not FSM National Government or the President exercised its delegated constitutional powers over and beyond the scope of authority provided under Article X, Section 9 of the FSM Constitution,” the DOJ motion to dismiss says.

That is precisely what the plaintiffs are asking the court to do.

The motion then diverges from its discussion of non-justiciable political questions with a discussion of its estimation of the validity of the decisions made regarding COVID-19.

“Constitutional rights or civil rights are fundamental, but not absolute. Lives matter. Imagine what the FSM would face without the lock down of the FSM borders,” it says. “Imagination can be easily confirmed or drawn by referring to the statistical report by World Health Organization or other globally recognized Health Organizations or Agencies. This is not a fiction story. Lives are at stake globally, and the society is relying on the Government to react swiftly and sharply. FSM National Government is doing exactly that, and in accordance with the constitutional provisions. Article X, Section 9 of the FSM Constitution demands a joint role from both the Executive and the Congress. That provision clearly and demonstrably textually commits the preservation of public peace, health, or safety, at times of extreme emergency caused by, inter alia, natural disaster to the President and the FSM Congress. The fundamental factor taking into consideration in the textually demonstrable commitment is the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety in this country.

“The FSM is still fortunate to remain COVID-19 free to this day. This is not the result of good fortune or luck, but a result of the state of emergency issued by the FSM Government or the President. Countries that have spiked numbers of COVID-19 cases are also the result of inability to combat the virus due to lack of preparedness and political reactions. Border closure is necessary at times like this. This is a good policy, which is pivotal towards preserving public peace, health and safety.”

At press time, the FSM Supreme Court had not yet ruled on the government’s motion to dismiss.



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Bill Jaynes  
Managing Editor

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THE KASELEHLIE PRESS  
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# Japan Government provides funding for Pohnpei Port security

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

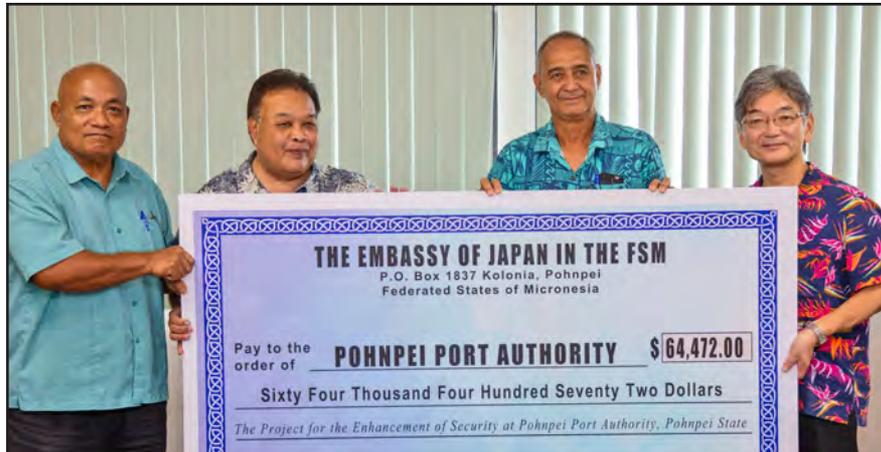
March 19, 2021

**Pohnpei**—On Friday, March 19, Ambassador of Japan to the FSM Sobashima Hidenobu met with Governor Reed Oliver and members of the Pohnpei Port Authority administration and board to formally sign the paperwork for a grant to enhance security at the Pohnpei Port. The grant amount is \$64,472.

During his speech, Ambassador Sobashima described the project that the government of Japan had decided to fund. He said that Pohnpei Port is the main gateway of the FSM and is an important venue for business activities with huge inflows and outflows of people and goods. He said that because of that it is susceptible to various possible crimes including smuggling and human trafficking.

To address that problem, the Pohnpei Port Authority formulated a proposal to construct a traffic monitoring facility equipped with gates, exclusive lanes and sign boards as well as sets of security cameras on the causeway to the port. The Port solicited a grant from the government of Japan to finance construction of the facility except for the gates which will be constructed by Pohnpei Port Authority with its own financial resources. The government of Japan responded positively to the grant request.

“In conclusion, I hope that this project will proceed smoothly and will improve the security and safety of Pohnpei Port and Pohnpei State, benefitting its population of about 36,000 people, and thus will contribute to the AOI (a cooperation between Japan and Pacific Island Countries for a future that is Active, Opportunity-filled, and Innovative) future of the Federated States of Micronesia,” he said.



# Ausen Lambert petitions Election Office for re-vote of special polling places and absentee ballots in ED1 Congress election

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 25, 2021

**Pohnpei, FSM**—Ausen Lambert, candidate for the two-year seat for Pohnpei’s Election District 1 in the FSM Congress, has filed a petition to the National Election Office asking for a revote of the recently concluded election for special polling places or absentee voters.

The National Election Office has officially certified the results of that election, announcing Ferny Perman as the winner by 117 votes over Ausen Lambert. Lambert points out several discrepancies regarding absentee ballots.

His petition argues that Acting National Election Director Ioanis Sahn acted without authority when he closed the polling places in Guam and Honolulu. It says that FSM law requires the National Election Director to designate the locations of special polling places with one each in Guam and Honolulu not less than 60 days

prior to a general election, or 45 days prior to a special election. Lambert says that he searched the FSM Congress website and did not find an amendment closing down the polling places.

The petition claims that when the government announced on December 3, 2020 that the polling places in Guam and Honolulu had been suspended, the announcement did not give the voters adequate time to request absentee ballots because the deadline was January 21, 2021. He claims that fact usurped the voter’s ability to vote.

Lambert claims to have information that the National Election Office failed to strike out the name or names of absentee voters from the signature list of that voter’s regular polling place as they were required to do.

He claims discrepancies in the verification of registration of absentee ballots. He said that many voters from overseas signed their registration forms and then sent them over to the Election office for notary but since the person signing and the notary public witnessing the signature were not present together in the same place, that process was against the law.

Lambert claims that the National Election Officer denied his request for a copy of the signature list for Sapwuahfik with the crossed-out names of absentee voters. He theorized that the reason for that denial was that the office had not deleted the names as required.

He said that the National Election Office rejected at least 30 votes in his favor because they came bundled in a manila envelope in individually sealed envelopes. He says that the law requiring ballots be rejected if they are received bundled with other ballots does not apply to ballots that are individually enveloped and bundled together.

Lastly, Lambert claims that five votes for him were voided because the voter had checked off on his name but also wrote his name in the “write-in” section. “Why were the ballots voided when it was clear who the voter had intended his candidate to be? 9 FSMC 713 (4) states that ‘a ballot shall not be rejected for any technical error which does not render it impossible to determine the voter’s choice, even though the ballot is soiled or partially defaced’. You do not void a ballot simply because a person clearly indicated on there who the choice of candidate is,” he wrote.



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## Pohnpei Supreme Court rules that removal of C-Star case to FSM Supreme Court lawful

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 19, 2021

**Pohnpei**—On March 19, 2021, Pohnpei Supreme Court Chief Justice Nelson A. Joseph ruled against a motion filed by members of the Setik family that argued that the removal to the FSM Supreme Court of their case (PCA No. 35-21) against Feliciano Perman and Pohnpei State was unlawful. Their motion also argued that the FSM Court lacks jurisdiction in the matter because an interest in land is at issue, which is a State matter.

The ruling said that the Plaintiffs neglected to mention that both of those issues had already been determined by the FSM Supreme Court in a 2016 case involving the same subject matter. At that time the FSM Supreme Court thoroughly analyzed the removal process and the limits of the FSM Supreme Court's jurisdiction in cases involving an interest in land. It said that the trial division found then that removal to the FSM Supreme Court was appropriate and that the Setiks' opposition to the removal was without merit. In 2018, the Appellate Division affirmed the Trial Division's decision.

The ruling continues saying that the Plaintiffs further ignored the fact that the Pohnpei Supreme Court twice denied their attempts to seek entry of default after a case was removed to the FSM Supreme Court. Those rulings came in 2016.

The closing paragraph addressed Plaintiffs' attorney, Yoslyn Sigrah directly:

"The issues raised by Plaintiffs in their Brief to the Court Regarding Petition for Removal from Pohnpei State Supreme Court to FSM Supreme Court have already been decided. Plaintiffs' attorney is warned that if she continues to raise these issues in this Court, she will be subject to sanctions under Rule 11 of the Pohnpei Rules of Civil Procedure. Plaintiffs' attorney is further warned that Rule 3.3(a)(2) of the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct ("ABA Model Rules") prohibits a lawyer from knowingly failing to "disclose to the tribunal legal authority in the controlling jurisdiction known to the lawyer to be directly adverse to position of the client and not disclosed by opposing counsel." An attorney or trial counselor may be disciplined under Rule 2(h) of the Pohnpei Attorney/ Trial Counselor Disciplinary Rules for failure to abide by the ABA Model Rules. Future attempts by Plaintiffs' attorney to ignore or hide adverse legal authority will be met with disciplinary action. Further action in PCA No. 35-21 is suspended unless the FSM Supreme Court remands the case back to this Court," the ruling concluded.

## Government of Japan hands over a \$177k grant for garbage trucks for Kolonia Town

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 8, 2021

**Pohnpei**—International Women's Day events in Pohnpei were spread throughout Pohnpei at several different events over the course of a week. Organizers were unable to provide information on those events, but one event occurred for which we did receive information, a historic first meeting between a Pohnpei First Lady with the wives of the Nanmwahrkis and Isonahnkens of Pohnpei—a meeting between government and ladies of tradition, First Lady Patricia Edwin called it.

On March 8, Edwin held a dinner at her home hosting Likend Kelekel of Madolenimw, Merleen M. Hebel; Nahnperehng Nahnalek Sokehs, Susana F. Kohler; Nahnalek Sapwuaifik, Carlin A. Solomon. Representing Kesouwa of Pingelap Nancy N. Solomon was Sihna N. Lawrence who is also President of Lien-Alem of Pohnpei. Nahnkenieis, who are the wives of the Isonahnkens who attended were Nahnkeniei Madolenimw, Piliانا Adolph; Nahnkeniei Uh, Permina M. Joseph; Nahnkeniei Kitti, Justina Peter; and Nahnkeniei Nett, Ruth Iriarte.

Edwin said that during the dinner, she updated them with what's happening in government, especially with issues relating to women, children, and persons with disabilities. They discussed Pohnpei's vaccination rate and Asian Development Bank funding which will directly assist women. They discussed ways in which us mothers of wehi & traditional leaders can help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities when/if it does arrive on our shores, not just in our households but in our larger community as traditional leaders. Edwin also urged all the ladies to get vaccinated and to spread the word in their communities urging their people to get vaccinated as well.

Edwin said that under the theme #ChooseToChallenge, the women pledged to Celebrate Women's Achievements, influence others' beliefs and actions, and to forge positive visibility of women.



## Pohnpei celebrates World Forest Day

By Conservation Society of Pohnpei

March 22, 2021

**Pohnpei**—Every time we drink a class of water, write in a notebook, take medicine for a fever or shelter in the safety of our homes, we sometimes miss the connection we have living harmoniously and comfortably with the forests. Forest sustainable management and their use of resources are key to combating climate change and to contributing to the prosperity and well-being of current and future generations. Forests also play a crucial role in poverty alleviation and in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). However, despite all of these priceless ecological, economic, social and health benefits, deforestation continues at an alarming rate in most countries including Pohnpei.



On March 22, 2021, Pohnpei joined the world in celebrating International Day of Forests. The theme for this year's event is "Forest Restoration: a path to recovery and well-being". The event was hosted by the Department of Resources and Development (R&D), in partnership with Invasive Species Taskforce of Pohnpei (iSTOP), Island Food Community of Pohnpei (IFCP) and Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT).

The program started with a small ceremony that included a presentation from iSTOP. Pohnpei has been known as the garden island of Micronesia. Unfortunately, we have lost most of our native forest due to destructive farming practices over the years. As a result, we are seeing an increase in invasive weeds and plants that may cause ecological and economic nightmares if not managed or controlled. iSTOP presented a list of invasive weeds and plants that exist in Pohnpei, along with their plans to control and eradicate them. iSTOP continues to seek community involvement in controlling the invasive species that disrupt the balance to Pohnpei's forest ecosystem.

Following the iSTOP presentation was the keynote address delivered by the Executive Director of MCT, Mr. William Kostka. In his address, Mr. Kostka highlighted the need to strengthen management capacity to Pohnpei's farmers. Pohnpei's traditional farming practice, also known as agroforestry, is now being recommended globally to address deforestation.

Following the short ceremony, all participants proceeded to the farm to plant a few coconuts to commemorate the event. After planting, everyone then reconvened at the station to collect plant seedlings. A total of 119 seedlings were provided by the Division of Natural Resource Management including soursop, papaya, avocado, tamarine, lime, cinnamon/madeu, coffee, mountain apple, banana and coconuts and were distributed to all participants to take back and grow in their respective lands.

We look forward to the next international day of forests and hope to see more farmers joining this important event.

## President Panuelo discusses COVID-19 vaccination efforts, repatriation plans, with the Congressional Committee to Wait; mid-May offered as a tentative repatriation timeframe for citizens stranded in COVID-19 affected jurisdictions

*FSM Information Services*

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**— The 21st Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) began its Tenth Special Session on March 22nd, 2021. After the opening session, His Excellency David W. Panuelo virtually received the Committee to Wait on the President, Chaired by the Honorable Ferny S. Perman, Chairman of the Congressional Committee on Health & Social Affairs, with committee members inclusive of the Honorable Isaac V. Figir, the Honorable Derensio S. Konman, and the Honorable Aren B. Palik.

Arguably the bulk of the discussion focused on the COVID-19 Pandemic, with foci on the Nation's vaccination efforts and repatriation plans.

Regarding the vaccination efforts, President Panuelo described that, as of March 22nd, 2021, 23% of the Nation's eligible population (i.e. adults aged 18 and up) have received their first dose of the vaccine, and 15% have received their second dose. The Government has asked the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention to send more Johnson & Johnson vaccines, which are not as fragile as the Moderna vaccines, to increase vaccination rates on lagoon islands, and in remote villages and communities. The documents informing the briefing President Panuelo gave the Senators may be found here: [https://gov.fm/files/FSM\\_COVID19\\_Vaccination\\_March\\_22\\_2021\\_Update\\_for\\_CTW.pdf](https://gov.fm/files/FSM_COVID19_Vaccination_March_22_2021_Update_for_CTW.pdf)

The Honorable Senators probed for information on why the FSM's vaccination rate is so slow compared to other jurisdictions, advising that to their knowledge misinformation on social media may be spreading unnecessary fear and concern over the vaccine. President Panuelo described that one avenue the Nation is considering to increase the COVID-19 vaccination rate is to tie citizens' receipt of financial stimulus programming for low-income and elderly citizens with documentary evidence that said citizens have received their COVID-19 vaccine.

"If we mandate children to take certain

vaccines before going to school for their safety and our Nation's safety, it behooves our Nation's adults to do the same before getting their financial stimulus," President Panuelo said.

It was described that it may be beneficial for more national and state leaders to publicly take the vaccine. It was advised that some public figures like President Panuelo and Senator Perman at the National level, and Governors Carson K. Sigrah and Reed B. Oliver at the State level, have taken their vaccines. Thus, it was recommended that the National COVID-19 Task Force work to greater publicize the efforts of elected officials to take the vaccine and/or promote its use.

Repatriation efforts were discussed disproportionately in comparison to other topics of interest. Senator Perman advised President Panuelo that Congress may be willing to extend the Declaration of Public Health Emergency to May 30th, 2021. President Panuelo, for his part, advised that the Government is targeting the middle to the end of May for the repatriation of medical patients and their corresponding attendants, so as to allow for more work to be done on the Nation's vaccination efforts. President Panuelo also advised that, were it not for mechanical issues on the chartered Air Marshall Islands flight, repatriation from the Republic of the Marshall Islands can otherwise begin immediately. President Panuelo has authorized repatriation from the Republic of Palau to the FSM—of whom all stranded citizens in Palau are residents of the State of Yap—at the State of Yap's nearest convenience.

Senator Perman inquired if President Panuelo is willing to use international commercial carriers for repatriation activities. President Panuelo advised that the National COVID-19 Task Force has been instructed to determine that possibility, but that it otherwise remains the Government's intent to request the U.S. Government to procure a U.S. Coast Guard asset for the initial repatriation of medical patients and attendants, to include diplomats and medical professionals, to assist with vaccinations and ventilator training.

President Panuelo described that the Panuelo-George administration would be submitting several nominations for Congress' consideration.

For the position of Secretary of the National Department of Education, President Panuelo has sent his formal nomination for T.H. Gardenia Aisek.

For the position of Public Defender of the FSM, President Panuelo has sent his formal nomination for Mr. Alik K. Jackson, Esq.

For the position of Permanent Representative for the Nation's Diplomatic Mission to the United Nations in New York City, President Panuelo has sent his formal nomination for H.E. Jane Chigiyal.

For the position of Board Member of the FSM Telecommunications Corporation, representing the National Government, President Panuelo has sent his formal nomination for Mr. Mathew Chigiyal.

For the position of Board Member of the Trust Fund for the People of the FSM (i.e. the "Compact Trust Fund"), President Panuelo has sent his formal nomination for former President of the FSM, Emanuel "Manny" Mori.

For the position of Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji, President Panuelo intends to submit the Honorable Jeem S. Lippwe as his nomination.

The remainder of the meeting focused on updates on recent activities within the Executive Branch, such as the Government's efforts to join the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education, which would allow for FSM students to qualify for 150% of in-state tuition for undergraduate degrees at participating institutions and 100% of in-state tuition for graduate degrees; the signing ceremony for the first Green Climate Fund project for the FSM, which initiates the beginning of the 9.4 million-dollar Climate Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the FSM Project; and the transfer of 2.5 million dollars from the FSM to Portland, Oregon for the purchase of a new office for the FSM Consulate based there.

## U.S.-Funded Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program extended until September 2021

*FSM Information Services*

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—On March 23rd, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and the Honorable Eugene Amor, Secretary of the Department of Finance & Administration, announced that the U.S.-funded Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Program will be extended until September 2021. The Office of PUA under the Department of Finance & Administration received the official notice for extension of the PUA program from the U.S. Department of Labor on March 15th, 2021.

The President of the United States signed into law the American Rescue Act of 2021 (ARPA) on March 11th, 2021, extending the PUA program for the second time. The ARPA extends the PUA and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) programs from March 14th, 2021 to September 6th, 2021, an additional 29 weeks for an overall total of 79 weeks. Qualified individuals will continue to receive their weekly benefit of \$166 plus the FPUC of \$300 per week.

The PUA program is for individuals whose employment or self-employment was interrupted as a direct result of the COVID-19 Declaration of Public Health Emergency. For the FSM, which remains COVID-19 free, eligible individuals need to be directly impacted by the border closure, or other emergency measures, mandated in the National or State Government Emergency Declarations. It does not cover individuals who are unemployed for reasons not specified in the public health declarations, such as voluntary reduction of work hours, reduction of work hours in response to economic hardship, or working from home but continuing to receive regular income levels.

The first PUA extension occurred on December 27th, 2020 when the President of the United States signed into law the Continued Assistance Act (CAA). The enactment of the CAA extended the PUA program for an additional 11 weeks and reauthorized, but modified, the FPUC supplement to \$300 per week from December 27, 2020 to the week ending on or before March 14th, 2021.

The Office of PUA in the FSM continues to require individuals to submit proof of identification and documentation for employment or self-employment. Individuals are also required to submit Weekly Payment Requests on a bi-weekly basis. Failure to provide required documentation, and/or untimely filing, may disqualify an individual for the program.

It is a violation of both U.S. and FSM law to collect the PUA benefit illegally. If you suspect someone is collecting the PUA benefit illegally, contact the Office of PUA fraud hotline at +691- 320-1103 or email [opua@gov.fm](mailto:opua@gov.fm).

The FSM National Government wishes to thank the U.S. Government for including the FSM in this program, and the U.S. Department of Labor for its continued technical guidance in the administration of PUA and FPUC benefits.

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the amendments made to the Airport Rules and Regulations directly toward Part 12, Sections 12.2, 12.20, and 12.21, which hereby approved by the Board of Directors of Pohnpei Port Authority August 28, 2020, and thereafter publicly announced for comments September 8, 2020, and received concurrence of the Governor March 22, 2021, PPA wishes to inform the general public that such amendments will be implemented effective April 15, 2021:

- Departure passenger fee: \$40.00.  
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For more information and queries, please contact Pohnpei Port Authority at +691-320-2793 or email [luciano.abraham@ppa.fm](mailto:luciano.abraham@ppa.fm).

## Advertisement – Request for Quotation RFQ 21/044



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### Consultancy to Conduct Gender Equality, Social Inclusion, and Rights Based Analysis of the National Energy Frameworks in the Federated States of Micronesia, and develop a GESI and Rights Based Rights Integration Plan for EU FSM SEAM REEE

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1. You are requested to submit a quotation to carry out specific tasks as outlined in the Terms of Reference (Annex I).
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5. This RFQ has been requested from at least 3 service providers and quotations will be assessed based on both their assessed abilities to achieve the outcomes and cost.
6. Please email your quotation to [koine@spc.int](mailto:koine@spc.int) by 5pm Fiji time on 9 April 2021

Detailed "Terms of Reference" and the "Submission forms" can be accessed from: <https://www.spc.int/procurement/micro-public-tenders/rfq21-044-seam-project-consultancy-to-conduct-gender-equality>

This letter is not to be construed in any way as an offer to contract your organization.

## ...Chuuk Civil Action

*Continued from front page*

to law...(2) to seek specific performance in referring the allegations of election fraud and voters oppression to the defendant FSM Department of Justice to assign a special counsel to look into such allegations if there are criminal violations involved; and (3) to seek punitive damages against the named defendants for such alleged civil rights violations against opposing voters' and opposing candidates' during the March 2021 general election and other local state and municipal elections," the civil action begins.

Plaintiffs point out that in 2003, the FSM Supreme Court ruled that it is a violation of the Separation of Powers of the FSM Constitution for members of the Congress to be directly or indirectly involved in the distribution and implementation of public projects funds appropriated by the Congress. It says that the Chuuk Statewide Development Authority, and the Faichuk Development Authority were set up by Speaker Simina and Senator Aritos, respectively, in order to process and administer their public projects approved by the FSM Congress.

Plaintiffs allege that the two named Senators backed Marsolo, the incumbent Mayor of Tol by not only promising but by actually providing public project funds for boat motors and other things to voters who pledged to vote for their candidate. They allege that the Senators withheld project funds to people who would not vote for their candidate.

Plaintiffs also allege that the congressmen, Mayor Marsolo and their municipal election officials "coordinated a plan to urge votes at the polling places to openly vote for Mayor Marsolo to ascertain their entitlement to the public projects as they all agreed...Some of the voters who tried to refuse to vote openly, some of the election workers and supporters went ahead and check(ed) the ballots for them over their objections."

They allege that during the inauguration of Mayor Marsolo, Senator Aritos told the crowd that voters who voted for Aritos during the congressional election, Alexander Narruhn for Governor, and other named candidates for the Chuuk Senate and House of Representatives would receive public projects after the gubernatorial election.

They claim that the FSM Department of Justice sent its patrol boat to take Speaker Simina, Senator Aritos, and Alexander Narruhn to municipal functions in the Lower Mortlocks islands of Satowal, Lekionich, and Oneop. They claim that during those functions Speaker Simina told

the people that he and Senator Aritos could help them with a project grant of \$50,000 to extend their municipal office. Plaintiffs claim that promise was premised on votes for their candidates.

Plaintiffs claim that on the day before the gubernatorial elections, the Senators and Narruhn met with Udot municipal officials at the Truk Stop Hotel on Weno "to urge the municipal officials' support for their candidate in exchange for projects for their municipality and themselves."

They claim that after the March 2 election, Speaker Simina and Narruhn also met with officials and people from Uman at the Uman House of Representative's home and distributed bags of rice and cases of chicken while urging to vote for Alexander Narruhn.

The Plaintiffs finally allege that after the March 2 election Senator Aritos, using his personal and official resources, took his relatives and Narruhn to Tonoas for campaign purposes.

The case filing includes several affidavits from witnesses of events claimed.

Plaintiffs are asking the court to declare that the defendants violated their civil rights by using their official authorities and their national public projects to advance their own candidates and injuring opposing candidates.

They are asking the court to issue injunctions barring defendants and their governmental agencies from distributing any public projects to individuals, family, or groups of people other than an official government entity during election years, or not less than 12 months before or six months after any election.

They want the court to issue permanent injunctions requiring all agencies, including development authorities involved in processing and distributing public projects, to process only public projects showing the minutes of a board's votes. They want the injunction to also bar development authorities from being located in congressman's residence nor include any employee that is closely related to a congressman.

They want the court to refer the allegations contained in the civil action to the FSM Department of Justice for referral to outside counsel for appropriate referral or actions.

They also want punitive damages for each of the plaintiffs in an amount equal to the amount of public projects distributed by each defendant Senator for the Tol Municipal and Chuuk State 2020 and 2021 elections.

As the civil action has only just been filed, none of the defendants have yet had opportunity to officially respond to the court filing. Their sides have not yet been heard.

# Pohnpei NGOs and Government agencies host second Mangrove Conference

By Conservation Society of Pohnpei

March 17, 2021

**Pohnpei**—On March 17th, the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), in partnership with Pohnpei State Department of Resources and Development (R&D), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) co-hosted the Second Mangrove Conference. The objectives of the conference were to bring together elected officials from both state and municipal governments, village chiefs, resource managers and stakeholders to inspire sharing of information and continued stewardship of the mangrove ecosystem that provides protection, livelihoods and ecosystem services to the people of Pohnpei. The conference also provided an opportunity for the local resource managers to report on the recent findings from the rigorous surveys conducted in the past years by United States Forest Services (USFS), US Geological Survey (USGS), and the University of Tasmania in partnership with Pohnpei state government and local partners to evaluate the status of Pohnpei’s mangroves. The surveys provided some recommendations and strategies from the analysis that are critical for decision-making in terms of mangrove management.

in November 2020 where it established a dynamic platform motivating a dialogue between resource management agencies, elected officials, village chiefs and community members. The 2nd conference was a follow up to the first one mainly to discuss and prioritize actions based on the recommendations provided by the recent surveys. The participants broke out into working groups representing each municipality to review and prioritize the recommendations. After some deliberate discussions between the municipalities, everyone finally agreed to settle on 5 immediate recommendations that would help improve the management of our mangrove in the long run.

Development of the Pohnpei State Mangrove Management Plan was the top recommendation across all municipalities. Over thirty years, laws and regulations were established to manage our valuable mangrove without a management plan. The second recommendation was to strengthen conservation laws agreed upon at all levels (community, municipal, state, and national governments) and to enforce them at all levels. Improving local management capacity was the third recommendation prioritized by all municipalities. This particular recommendation is very critical as it will build competency and awareness at all levels. The fourth recommendation was to strengthen science and the traditional knowledge-based decision-making process. This is a call for our top officials to make proper decisions based on science and traditional knowledge. Resource management agencies must also heighten the Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) protocols to make sure conditions are fully met. The last recommendation was to improve current dredging laws and regulations. There are 45 dredge sites around Pohnpei and 12 are still active with more rising. Should we keep the status quo, we might end up losing our vital coastal resource within the next ten years.

The partner agencies co-hosting the conference will compile the recommendations and draft an action plan which will then



be transmitted to all decision-making officials at all municipal, state and national governments for endorsement. The municipal governments have also agreed to join the partnership by facilitating the awareness of the drafted action plan to the council of traditional chiefs at each municipality for their blessings. We aim to coordinate and continue this mangrove conference to be held once or twice every year. This way, we can keep building, changing and improving our management effort harmoniously with all stakeholders involved.

The 1st Mangrove Conference was held

# Pacific Fisheries surveillance operation a success

**HONIARA, 25 March, 2021** – The first Forum Fisheries Agency coordinated fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance operation of 2021, Operation Rai Balang concluded last week after two weeks of increased surveillance effort in eight Pacific nations.

National organisations in Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu have been working together to conduct surveillance, supported by the four Pacific Quad partners (Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States).

Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Director General, Dr Manu Tupou-Roosen said the operation provided maritime surveillance across 13.3million square kilometres of the Pacific and achieved 349 sightings and 30 boardings. The operation included 11 surface ships and 6 surveillance aircraft.

“Working collaboratively to protect the income generated by our oceanic fisheries means protecting the incomes, jobs and livelihoods of many

Pacific people,” said Dr Manu Tupou-Roosen.

“This is a great example of the power of united effort. The strength of our cooperation has ensured this Operation was a success. We extend our sincere thanks to all our Members and partners who joined us for Operation Rai Balang.”

RSIPF Maritime, Deckhand, Mrs Tricia Wilimae said Op Rai Balang was a great learning experience for her. “I could see the way the RFSC worked with the different agencies in our country, and how working together we all achieved a better result,” said Wilimae. “I know that I will take back things I have learnt, to share with my colleagues in Maritime Police.”

Speaking from the FFA’s Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC) in Honiara, FFA Surveillance Operations Officer, Commander Robert Lewis reflected that Operation Rai Balang wasn’t just about catching perpetrators.

“Our operation brings many



benefits to FFA’s member countries,” said Commander Lewis. “It helps build a national skills base across many Pacific nations. We focus on intelligence driven and targeted operations to create a deterrence effect. There’s been a change towards a culture of greater operational collaboration across the Pacific, and the shared assets participating make the operation more effective.”

“It has also helped us to deliver a sharper picture of what risks this sector faces and how it can be protected. It is sometimes not as obvious as a vessel operating illegally or running “dark”.

IUU fishing by the licensed fleet is estimated to account for over 95% of IUU activity in Pacific tuna fisheries. Operation Rai Balang attempted to close these gaps by encouraging FFA Members to actively consider inspections, including monitoring catch and effort reporting, unloading or transshipment, and verification of catch data for licensed vessels during dockside activity or at sea.”

In FSM the patrol boats FSS Palikir and FSS Independence along with USCG Cutters Kimble and Myrtle Hazard successfully patrolled large areas of the South Eastern region of the FSM Exclusive Economic Zone. During the first week of the operation FSS Palikir, USCG Cutter Myrtle Hazard supported by a USCG C-130 aircraft combined to conduct a successful search and rescue operation for five missing fishermen from Pulusuk Atoll in Chuuk State. This successful rescue once again demonstrated the excellent coordination and cooperation between the FSM Maritime Police and the USCG.

## Secretary Apis updates contractors on the FSM Infrastructure Development Program, seeks feedback on how to improve public-private partnerships in the construction sector

### FSM Information Services

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—Recently, the Honorable Carlson D. Apis—Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Communication, & Infrastructure (TC&I)—met with Pohnpei-registered private contractors. The aim of the meeting was to update them on the current status of the FSM’s Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP), and to solicit their suggestions on how to improve the partnership between the contractors and the National Government, so as to ensure that local contractors play a more active role in the implementation of the FSM IDP. Similar meetings are being planned with the contractors from the other States.

Over the near to medium term, the FSM will be embarking on a construction drive on a scale never before equaled in its history. The construction boom will be fueled by already secured funding from a wide spectrum of reliable sources, including the Compact of Free Association, as Amended, the Federal Aviation Administration, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and others.

Approximately four hundred million dollars (\$400,000,000) is already committed for these purposes.

For the State of Yap, the rehabilitation of the airport runway is already out to bid. The replacement of the water treatment plant, and the replacement of the wastewater treatment plant, are expected to have their Request for Proposals (RFPs) ready in July. Improvements on bridges and schools are currently being designed and/or in the process of hiring a designer.

For the State of Chuuk, the construction of five (5) dispensaries, and three (3) schools, are having their bidding documents prepared. A design consultant is being procured for the extension of Weno’s paved road, and scoping and design is expected to start in mid-2021 for the construction of the new Chuuk State Hospital.

For the State of Pohnpei, the RFP is ready for the Kinakpw to Lehn Diadi Waterline Project, as well as the new Teaching Clinic at the College of Micronesia-FSM. Meanwhile, bidding documents are being finalized for the

## First Lady hosts a first time “Women of Tradition” gathering with traditional leader wives

By *Bill Jaynes*  
*The Kaselehlie Press*

March 8, 2021

**Pohnpei**—International Women’s Day events in Pohnpei were spread throughout Pohnpei at several different events over the course of a week. Organizers were unable to provide information on those events, but one event occurred for which we did receive information, a historic first meeting between a Pohnpei First Lady with the wives of the Nanmwahrkis and Isonahnkens of Pohnpei—a meeting between government and ladies of tradition, First Lady Patricia Edwin called it.

On March 8, Edwin held a dinner at her home hosting Likend Kelekel of Madolenimw, Merleen M. Hebel; Nahnperehlegh Nahnalek Sokehs, Susana F. Kohler;

Nahnalek Sapwuaifik, Carlin A. Solomon. Representing Kesouwa of Pingelap Nancy N. Solomon was Sihna N. Lawrence who is also President of Lien-Alem of Pohnpei. Nahnkenieis, who are the wives of the Isonahnkens who attended were Nahnkeniei Madolenimhw, Piliana Adolph; Nahnkeniei Uh, Permina M. Joseph; Nahnkeniei Kitti, Justina Peter; and Nahnkeniei Nett, Ruth Iriarte.

Edwin said that during the dinner, she updated them with what’s happening in government, especially with issues relating to women, children, and persons with disabilities. They discussed Pohnpei’s vaccination rate and Asian Development Bank funding which will directly assist women. They discussed ways in which us mothers of wehi & traditional leaders can help stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities when/if it does arrive on our shores, not just in our households but in our larger community as traditional leaders. Edwin also urged all the ladies to get vaccinated and to spread the word in their communities urging their people to get vaccinated as well.

Edwin said that under the theme #ChooseToChallenge, the women pledged to Celebrate Women’s Achievements, influence others’ beliefs and actions, and to forge positive visibility of women.



construction of the Pohnpei Primary Healthcare Facility, as well as Pohnpei Island Central School’s (PICS) Campus & Library Improvements. A design consultant is being procured for the replacement of the Awak Bridge.

For the State of Kosrae, design consultants are being procured for the re-paving of the airport runway, improvements to Malem Elementary School, and improvements to the Lelu Causeway.

Contractors noted in the Q&A session that there are ongoing concerns regarding which standards are upheld in a given construction project, noting that a designer from the United States will follow different standards than a designer from New Zealand and the result on the ground in the FSM is inconsistent.

Secretary Apis noted that the FSM is in the progress of developing its own FSM Building Code, which would seek to universalize construction requirements in the FSM.

Several contractors noted that an issue in their attainment of acquiring construction projects is that local contractors may not have the necessary equipment, manpower, licenses, or cash reserves to take on such projects, with the result being that foreign contractors frequently win the bid for FSM- based projects. Secretary Apis explained that, while there has been good progress in securing necessary funding for infrastructure programming, that an ongoing issue remains the scarcity of contractors. The Secretary suggested that, in addition to the development of the FSM’s own Building Code—currently in development—it may be fruitful

for FSM-based contractors to consider partnerships with foreign construction firms.

“Our Government’s preference is really to have our own companies participate more in our projects,” Secretary Apis said in the meeting.

Citizens and stakeholders interested in reviewing the PowerPoint Presentation shown during the meeting may find it here: <https://tci.gov.fm/documents/pmu/presentation/presentation-to-pohnpei-contractors-2021.pdf>

Contractors interested in receiving the most up-to-date bids and RFPs are advised to submit their interest at the Department of TC&I’s website at: <https://tci.gov.fm/contact.html>

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## FSM pushes forward to be first Pacific Island to fully establish electronic monitoring for sustainable fisheries

*FSM Information Services*

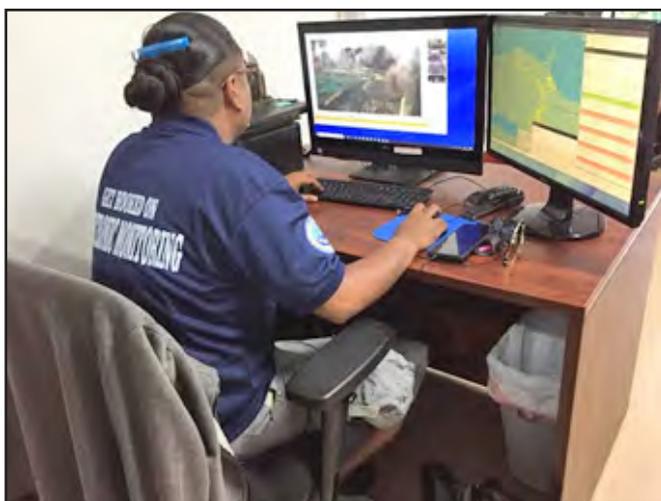
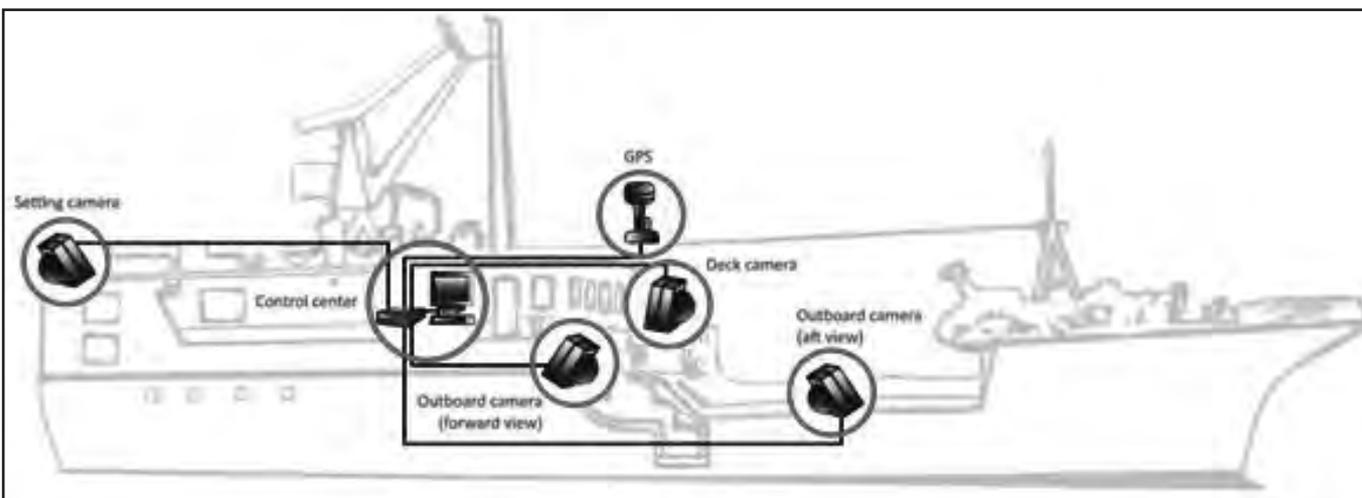
**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia's (FSM) National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) is pushing forward with the Nation's bid to be the first Pacific Island country to fully establish the capacity to monitor longline vessels fishing in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) using Electronic Monitoring by 2023.

Electronic Monitoring of fishing activities is the setting-up of cameras, GPS, sensors, and hard-disk drives onboard fishing vessels. This method of data collection has been successfully implemented in over twenty (20) fisheries worldwide over the past two decades. In the Pacific, Electronic Monitoring is emerging with trials ongoing since 2016 in the FSM, the Republic of Fiji, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Solomon Islands.

In the FSM, trials have been carried out on eight vessels (8) fishing within and outside of the FSM EEZ. A current trial, in partnership with Japanese vessels, is testing a four-camera system. At the end of fishing trips, video files are viewed by fisheries observers to collect relevant data.

Electronic Monitoring is a significant step towards collecting information from the longline fishery that, historically and currently, has had extremely low levels of independent monitoring. For example, whereas the tuna purse seine fishery possesses 100% observer coverage (i.e. all vessels have a real human being onboard whose job is to see what's happening), the longline fishery possesses only 5% observer coverage. The primary reason for this low level of observer coverage is that longline vessels are typically much smaller, and governments' frequently have concerns for the living conditions and/or safety of human observers; however, the lack of observer coverage compromises the ability of national fishery management organizations to effectively regulate fishing in their jurisdiction.

While the FSM and other Pacific Island countries carry a reputation for leading in the adoption of new strategies and tools to manage tuna fisheries, the implementation of Electronic Monitoring presents its own set of challenges, primarily in the cost and development of its technology. However, the returns on improving the management of the Nation's fisheries, so as to maintain sustainability whilst maximizing



economic benefits, are—in the Government's view—worth it, as achieving greater monitoring in the Nation's longline fishery will reduce the occurrence of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, increase revenue from fishing, and provide the Nation's leadership critical information to support their decision-making.

Crucially, the FSM's progress in Electronic Monitoring at the national level also contributes to the advancement of Electronic Monitoring at the subregional and regional fisheries circles, as the

FSM is a member of both the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) and the Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

Since Electronic Monitoring trials began in 2016, NORMA has successfully setup a data review center in Pohnpei State, and trained fifteen (15) observers to analyze video files. Further, NORMA has developed a Strategic Plan for the implementation of the FSM's Electronic Monitoring program, including the development of data standards and protocols, engagement with the fishing industry, staff training, infrastructure improvements, and the harmonization of national efforts with thematically similar developments in the region.

Financial and technical support for the FSM's Electronic Monitoring initiatives derive from numerous sources, of which the FSM Congress, the WCPFC Special Requirements Fund, and The Nature Conservancy play an outsized—and deeply appreciated—role.

"I applaud the efforts of our dedicated public servants at

NORMA for their diligence in ensuring

our Nation's ocean resources are sustained so that they can support our citizens for generations to come," His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, said in a statement.

"Electronic Monitoring offers a spectacular pathway towards ensuring that our Nation's invaluable ocean resources are used in a manner that both enhances our national prosperity whilst ensuring environmental sustainability. The use of Electronic Monitoring is consistent with our Nation's efforts to protect our oceans and oceanic resources, and is complementary with the FSM's partnerships, such as those with the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, the Western & Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, the Nature Conservancy, Blue Prosperity Micronesia, Micronesia Conservation Trust, and our IUU-prevention efforts with Australia, Japan, and the United States of America, among others. For Fiscal Year 2022, I have submitted, for Congress' review, an additional proposed \$150,000 to support Electronic Monitoring across our Nation."

# ...Indigenous learning

Continued from front page

then 6th, 7th and 8th graders spent part of each school week receiving instruction on weaving techniques with coconut fronds, carving with machetes, use of some wooden tools that are used traditionally for husking coconuts, splitting and pounding breadfruit, and sakau cups. Students in all grades participated in the program and the learning also included traditional dancing and even canoe carving. Students planted a working garden using traditional techniques, learned all of the traditional names for the plants and maintained the garden. Some student spent time learning the honorific language and traditional titles as well as all of the village names in the U municipality.

“This has been a dream project for me for a long time. After 30 years of trying to get everyone ready for college it became abundantly clear that we also need an educational pathway for those students who just want to live on their Islands and be productive citizens,” wrote Paul Hadik, PREL CEO in an email last November. “I did this years ago in Kosrae and now with the enthusiastic support of Governor Oliver and Director of Ed Etse we are piloting at Saladak Elementary School. Two-Three days a week the local Elders come in and teach everything from weaving, songs and chants, farming and fishing, canoe and navigation, family lineages, story-telling, local medicine, etc.” he continued.

Hadik said that the program will last until May at which time PREL will conduct a one-week skills test for the community leaders.

“The goal is to come away soon with an alternative education system that does not eliminate College Prep, but adds another finish line so to speak, for those students and communities (especially on outer islands) who want an education system more relevant to Island life,” he wrote.

On Friday morning, the students gave impressive performances on the campus of Saladak Elementary School. ECE students each told the gathered crowd which clan they each came from. Fourth grade students each gave a specific example of the importance of local foods. Fifth grade students gave the names of each traditional leader in U and their specific titles within the traditional leadership structure. Sixth graders each demonstrated weaving of mwahmwars, bowls, and baskets from scratch. Seventh graders also demonstrated weaving from scratch using coconut fronds. In their demonstration, they weaved containers for carrying specific food items such as coconut, cooked fish, and breadfruit. The seventh graders also performed two traditional dances. Eighth graders demonstrated their knowledge of the traditional names of the various parts of the traditional canoe, a surprising number of parts. They also demonstrated coconut husking and grating.

The demonstration ended with seventh and eighth graders conducting ahmwadang, a traditional sakau ceremony.

PREL’s representative is Canita Rilometo who has worked with the students since the pilot program’s beginning. Pohnpei Governor Reed Oliver and Department of Education Director Stanley Etse attended Friday’s demonstration.



## Youngest Woman ever to visit the Marianas Trench to Meet with FSM President First Pacific Islander to Visit the Deepest Underwater Trench on Earth

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—On March 11th ChST, Nicole Yamase, graduate student at the University of Hawaii, Manoa, and citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia, became the first Pacific Islander, third and youngest woman to travel to the deepest part of the ocean, the Challenger Deep. The Challenger Deep, part of the Marianas Trench, is 35,856 ft (10,929 m) below sea level; Nicole is one of only a handful of people to ever descend to the bottom of the ocean and,

as the Challenger Deep is located within the territory of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), she is the first citizen to visit this unique environment of her country.

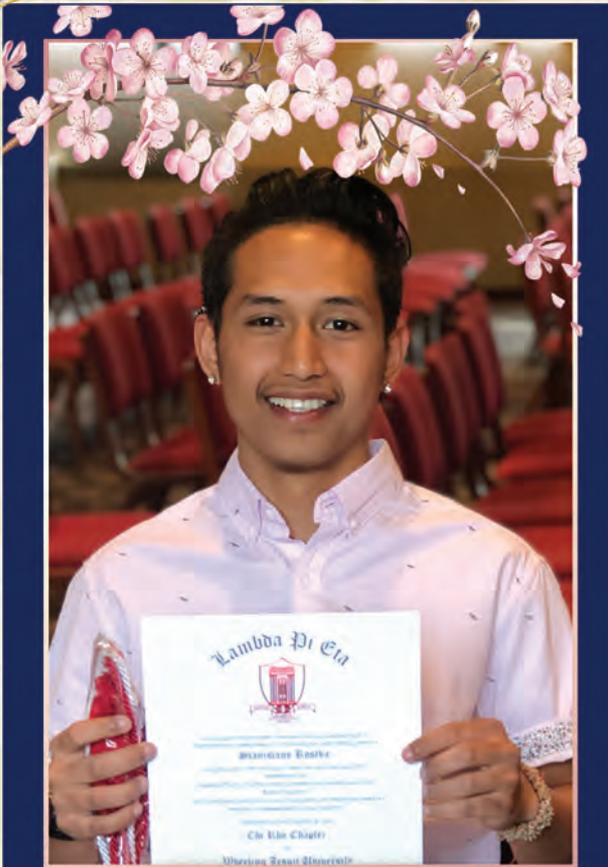
On March 30th at 1:00PM HST, President of the FSM, David W. Panuelo, Nicole Yamase, and Yolanda Joab Mori, Program Coordinator for Blue Prosperity Micronesia, will virtually “sit down” for a discussion in celebration of this historic event. This virtual Talk Story will share Nicole’s unique story, her hopes for the future of the FSM, and why it is so critical to protect and manage our rich ocean environments.



# Congratulations!

Spring 2021

## SCHOLARSHIPS



**STANISLAUS KOSTKA**  
 BA candidate, May 2021  
 Major in Communications  
 Minor in Criminal Justice  
 Wheeling Jesuit University



**MAXINE YAMADA IEHSI**  
 1st Year  
 MBA Program  
 Western Governors University

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**THE FSM DEVELOPMENT BANK WISHES TO CONGRATULATE THE RECIPIENTS OF THE SPRING 2021 FSMDB SCHOLARSHIPS. WE TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN SUPPORTING THE FSM'S BRIGHTEST SCHOLARS IN THEIR PURSUIT OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, AS WE ANTICIPATE THEIR RESPECTIVE ENTRIES INTO THEIR ROLES IN LEADING OUR NATION FORWARD!**

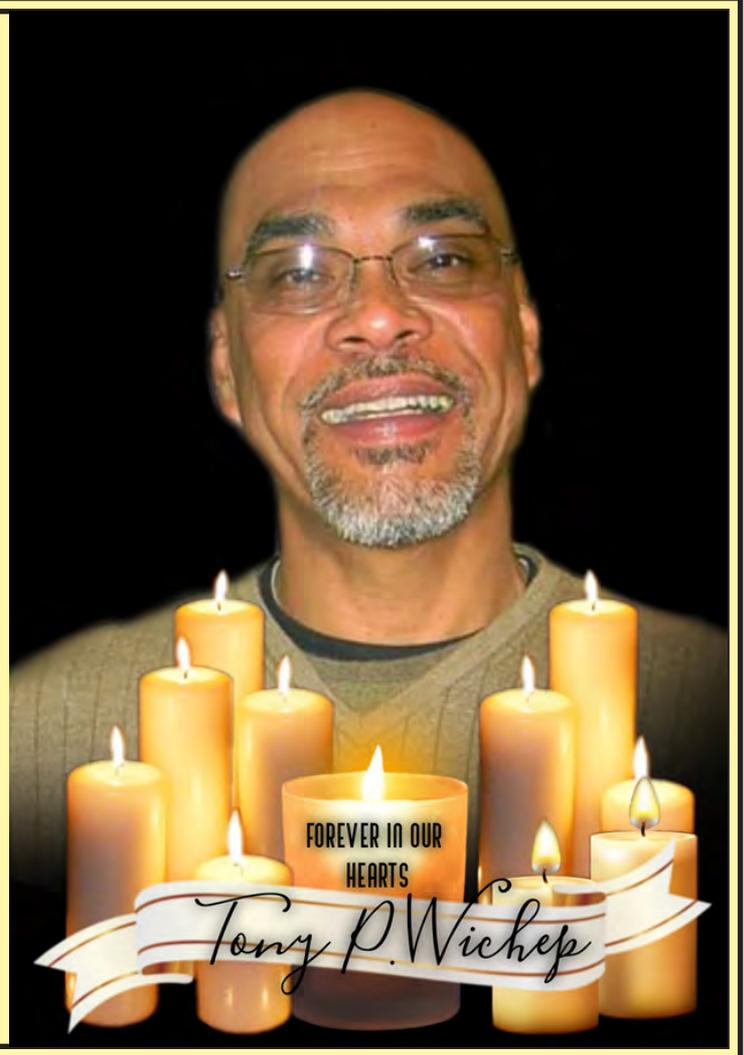
Visit [www.fsmdb.fm/about-fsmdb/scholarships/](http://www.fsmdb.fm/about-fsmdb/scholarships/) for more information on our Scholarship Program.

*We, the family of the late Anthonio Perman Wichep would like to once again acknowledge and express our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to the Wasalapalap Isipahu, Nahnmwarkj and Isonahnken of Madolenihmw, Rohsa of Kittj, other traditional leaders, church leaders, government leaders, individuals, friends, colleagues and families here in Pohnpei and abroad, who have joined us during the untimely passing and final resting of our beloved, Anthonio Perman Wichep, on March 7, 2021.*

*Your unwavering support, prayers, and words of sympathy and comfort truly lifted our spirits during our time of sorrow. Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts. May the good Lord bless You.*

*From his surviving wife Denia, sons, Nigel and Nathan; brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, and grand nephews & nieces.*

*Deuteronomy 31:8  
"The Lord himself will go before you.  
He will be with you. He will not forget you.  
Don't be afraid. Don't worry."*



# The Vital Annual Scholarship

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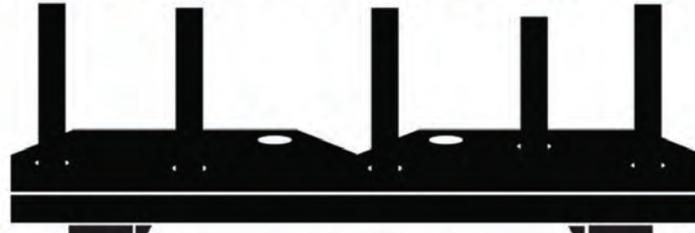
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## Building a Loom

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- Warp Board
- Loom Frame
- Front Beam
- Weaving Sword

# World Water Day: IOM working with the community in Kapingamarangi to provide sustainable drought relief

By: International Organization for Migration

March 22 marks World Water Day — an annual UN day to raise awareness on the importance of freshwater. This year’s theme is the value of water, which is about much more than its price. Water has enormous value for households, food, culture, health, education, economics and the environment. The value of water is especially important for the outer islands of Pohnpei.

Over the past several months, the community of Kapingamarangi has been threatened by water shortages due to prolonged periods without rain. As part of Pohnpei State’s coordinated effort to support the community, IOM and USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) will build a water catchment system consisting of eight 1,500-gallon water tanks. IOM is partnering with the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), who will also build another water catchment system, also consisting of eight 1,500-gallon water tanks. The tanks are expected to meet the long-term water needs of the community.



The water catchment systems being built by IOM are funded by USAID/BHA through the Inclusive Mitigation and Preparedness in Action (IMPACT) project. IOM delivered the eight tanks (each with a capacity of 1,500 gallons) to Kapingamarangi on January 21, and the materials necessary for constructing the structure will follow. Chief Magistrate Edgar Lickaneth of Kapingamarangi highlighted that for his community, “Water is our lifeline, especially for us on a remote island where we depend on rainfall. We are so blessed with this generous donation and wish to extend our heartfelt thank you to IOM.”

As a member of the Kapingamarangi Task Force, IOM had the opportunity to return to the island to conduct a follow-up

visit. The visit took place from February 24 to March 1, during which IOM repaired the Reverse Osmosis Unit, capable of purifying 360 gallons of water per day, and trained eight community members on its maintenance. IOM also met directly with the community to discuss the hazards facing their community and identify their needs. Over 70 community members participated in the discussion, including women, youth and the elderly. The IMPACT project emphasizes inclusiveness in all

its activities, as integrating the needs of all members of a community results in a more sustainable and effective project.

IOM is looking forward to working with its partners and the community at large to successfully implement the IMPACT project and to highlight the important value of water!



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 \*Only one photo per contestant  
 \*Submission of your photo is consent to use by Rotary Club of Pohnpei in our calendar

## Talk Story with President Panuelo and Nicole Yamase

A Conversation on Navigating the FSM's Blue Heritage and Future

Blue Prosperity Micronesia

### TALK STORY

with  
H.E. President Panuelo  
and Nicole Yamase

A Conversation on Navigating the FSM's Blue Heritage and Future

Moderated by Yolanda Joab Mori | LIVESTREAMED ON FACEBOOK & YOUTUBE @BlueProsperityMicronesia

WED. MARCH 31 10AM Pohnpei  
TUE. MARCH 30 1PM Hawaii | 4PM Pacific

Blue Prosperity Micronesia Facebook

### March 30th

Nicole grew up on the islands of Palau, Saipan, Pohnpei, and Chuuk, and was passionate about science and the environment from a young age. She graduated from Chaminade University of Honolulu with a Bachelors of Arts in Biology and Bachelors of Science in Environmental Studies. She received the Bill Raynor Micronesia Challenge scholarship from Micronesia Conservation

Trust to continue her PhD in the Marine Biology Graduate Program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Her research focuses on the effects of climate change on the marine plant community. Understanding how primary producers respond to these changes will help scientists and managers predict the future health of reefs, which is crucial for the livelihoods of Pacific Islanders who highly depend on the ocean for many purposes.

Says Nicole: "Climate change will be a long-term issue, which means we need a long-term solution. I believe that the long-term solution is found in the education of our youth. I hope the expedition will help inspire young Pacific Islanders to pursue STEM fields and encourage them to obtain higher degrees."

Despite their distance from human communities, the offshore and deep sea environments are increasingly impacted by human activities like deep sea mining, bottom-trawl fishing, and pollution. Nicole's journey is a reminder that like the ancestors of the FSM, we are fundamentally connected to the ocean and are supported by its vast and diverse habitats. Nicole made this voyage thanks to deep sea explorer Victor Vescovo, who owns and operates the Limiting Factor, one of the only submarines capable of descending to such depths.

Blue Prosperity Micronesia is a partnership between the Government of the FSM and the Blue Prosperity Coalition, including Micronesia Conservation Trust, the Waitt Institute, National Geographic Pristine Seas, and Oceans5, to protect 30% of the FSM's waters, including unique places like the deep sea.

For more information, please contact:  
Yolanda Joab Mori | yjmori.  
blueprosperitymicronesia@gmail.com |  
Canon Purdy | cpurdy@waittfoundation.org  
| +1 415-747-4360

### POHNPEI-MADE COUCH 4 AND 5 FEET COUCHES WITH TRIPLE REINFORCEMENT.



Contact Island Arts and Craft  
Pohnrakiet Village  
Phone Number 320-1242

### REQUEST FOR TENDER: Strengthening of Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system to support reporting requirements and tracking of NDC implementation efforts in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)

The Regional Pacific NDC Hub (NDC Hub) arose as a response to calls from Pacific Island Countries (PICs) for a regional platform to support them in implementing, enhancing and financing their NDCs. The NDC Hub furthermore works to enhance regional cooperation and coordination between governments and other agencies working on NDC implementation in PICs. In doing this, the Hub aims to strengthen existing regional frameworks such as the Regional Technical Support Mechanism and works under the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP). The NDC Hub is implemented through a partnership of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, The Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Region Environment Program (SPREP), and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI). The NDC Hub works in contribution to the NDC Partnership's Support Unit (NDCP SU). The NDC Hub is financed by the governments of Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

### Scope of Works

The NDC Hub is seeking tenders from eligible consultants or consulting firms to support the Government of Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECHEM) to strengthen its MRV system that would support FSM's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) reporting requirements under the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change. A detailed scope of works is part of the Terms of Reference for this assignment.

### Requirements and Qualifications

The eligible consultants or consulting firms should have the following qualifications and experience:

- Education/training University qualification (Bachelor's or Master's) in related field (Climate Change, Economics, Natural Resources, Planning/Policy etc.)
- Fluency in written and spoken English, an understanding of FSM local language is considered an advantage.
- At least 10 years of professional experience in the climate change and sustainable development sector.
- Specific professional experience in addressing climate change issues and related plans and policies in FSM
- Regional experience of at least 5 years on climate change and/or related projects in the Pacific Region
- Good understanding of UNFCCC and Paris Agreement reporting instruments, requirements, and guidelines, especially pertaining to MRV of NDCs
- Good facilitation skills and experience with stakeholder engagement and participatory consultation processes

### Application Process

The tender shall be open for eligible consultants or consulting firms from FSM and the Pacific Region. Interested tenderers are required to submit their Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal. For detailed Terms of Reference (TOR), tender related documents or queries relating to this assignment, please contact Sangeeta Prasad at sangeeta.prasad@giz.de

### Submission of Tender Bids

Submission of tender documents shall be emailed to the following address: FJ\_Quotations@giz.de before 5:00 pm 14th April 2021, marked as "Tender: Strengthening MRV in FSM".

GIZ is an equal opportunity employer; we encourage women and men to apply.



# BANKGUAM HOLDING COMPANY

P.O. Box BW • Hagåtña, Guam 96932

Tel: (671) 472-5273

## BANKGUAM HOLDING COMPANY AND SUBSIDIARIES

### AUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2020; in 000's US Dollars)

Assets		Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity	
Cash and due from banks	\$ 42,875	Deposits:	
Interest bearing deposits in banks	244,753	Non-interest bearing	\$ 770,037
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>287,628</u>	Interest bearing	<u>1,348,807</u>
Restricted cash	150	Total deposits	<u>2,118,844</u>
Investment in unconsolidated subsidiary	7,719	Accrued interest payable	77
Investment securities available-for-sale, at fair value	510,111	Subordinated debt, net	14,777
Investment securities held-to-maturity, at amortized cost	46,584	Other liabilities	<u>41,607</u>
		Total Liabilities	<u>2,175,305</u>
Federal Home Loan Bank stock, at cost	2,335	Commitments and contingencies	
Loans, net of allowance for loan losses	1,392,722	Stockholders' equity:	
Accrued interest receivable	8,068	Common stock	2,029
Premises and equipment, net	19,921	Preferred stock	980
Other assets	<u>77,123</u>	Additional paid-in capital, Common stock	24,777
		Additional paid-in capital, Preferred stock	8,803
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 2,352,361</u></b>	Retained earnings	137,646
		Accumulated other comprehensive loss	3,111
		Common stock in treasury, at cost	<u>(290)</u>
		Total stockholders' equity	<u>177,056</u>
		<b>Total Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity</b>	<b><u>\$ 2,352,361</u></b>

### AUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2020; in 000's US Dollars)

Interest income	\$ 84,767
Interest expense	<u>2,269</u>
<b>Net interest income</b>	<b>82,498</b>
Provision for loan losses	<u>10,358</u>
<b>Net interest income, after provision for loan losses</b>	<b>72,140</b>
Non-interest income	16,392
Non-interest expense	<u>72,576</u>
<b>Income before income taxes</b>	<b>15,956</b>
Income tax expense	<u>3,464</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b><u>\$ 12,492</u></b>

## BANK OF GUAM FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA BRANCHES

### STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2020; in 000's US Dollars)

Assets		Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,223	Deposits:	
Loans, net of allowance for loan losses	24,099	Non-interest bearing	\$ 62,055
Accrued interest receivable	99	Interest bearing	<u>156,341</u>
Premises and equipment, net	359	Total deposits	<u>218,396</u>
Other assets	1,136	Accrued interest payable	5
Due from the Parent	<u>191,726</u>	Other liabilities	<u>1,241</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 219,642</u></b>	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b><u>\$ 219,642</u></b>

### STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2020; in 000's US Dollars)

Interest income	\$ 3,683
Interest expense	<u>145</u>
<b>Net interest income</b>	<b>3,538</b>
Provision for loan losses	<u>663</u>
<b>Net interest income, after provision for loan losses</b>	<b>2,875</b>
Non-interest income	840
Non-interest expense	<u>2,073</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b><u>\$ 1,642</u></b>

## Defending our rights and our fish: Camille Movick-Inatio

*FFA's Moana Voices series on women shaping the future of oceanic fisheries is edited, researched and produced by Lisa Williams. This interview for Moana Voices 2021 edition is with Camille Movick-Inatio, of Federated States of Micronesia, who at the time worked as a VDS administrator at NORMA. The interview is published here to mark International Women's Day.*



“There’s nothing more rewarding and exciting for me than that moment where people commit their countries to a common goal. Putting aside their differences so that, as a region, we can progress makes me happy and proud because that’s almost impossible in other regions. And that’s what makes us people in the Pacific unique. We put our people first, and we may not always agree, but we will always look after one another.”

I didn’t know it at the time, but my first job at the FSM Department of Resources and Development shaped me for the step into Oceans and Fish. I was the assistant secretary of the Trade and Investment Division. We were doing quite a lot of trade negotiations with the European Union (EU) for fisheries market access. From those access issues and trade talks, I began to glimpse an entirely different world around the tuna question, especially around conservation and management rules of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), which has its headquarters in Pohnpei.

In my resources and development work, the focus was primarily on being able to export our fish to the EU market, not so much on the conservation and preservation of the stock. My NORMA [National Oceanic Resource Management Authority] role has brought in that extra layer of ensuring you make the best of the economic opportunities now, while ensuring you do have something to export in the future – so it’s made me realise the journeys in fisheries work involve a lot more than fishing.

At meetings like the WCPFC sessions, much of why we are here is around the conservation aspect of it. And in spaces like this you come to realise just how important fisheries is, not just to FSM but to the entire Pacific region. Perhaps Papua New Guinea is an exception with all its other resources, and Fiji to some extent with its tourism lead on the rest of the Pacific. But for the rest of the small

island, large ocean developing states, that’s our bread and butter right there. If you’re going to talk about trade, our fish is perhaps the only commodity most of us can trade.

So, throughout my career so far, the significance of fisheries was and remains that ongoing need to generate revenue to sustain economies. It’s an attractive option for those who can see that it’s a career choice where there’s so much going on and a lot of range when it comes to choices.

Even from the trade corner, I can see the support and priorities when it comes to budget for fisheries compared to other sectors, simply because it’s an area that generates so much revenue back. It’s what made me decide to move into this field; to see how much I can do to ensure this resource, which we greatly depend on, continues to feed our economy in the future.

My role as the VDS [Vessel Day Scheme] Administrator is to ensure vessels fishing in our exclusive economic zone (EEZ) are within their reported vessel day allocations. I monitor those fishing under the FSM arrangement in the same way, monitoring activities to ensure the proper trades, processing and purchasing of vessel days are managed.

On the economics side, I provide analysis and advice to the board and management, presenting options for the best economic returns from our fishery. While we are keen to see domestic fleets benefit from preferential arrangements to support domestic development, at the same time there is substantial foregone revenue to the government from these preferential arrangements, funds that could support our hospitals, schools, etc., so we need to ensure that whatever preferences, or concessions, anyone is given, generate greater economic returns back to FSM.

Maximising fisheries access revenues is important, especially with demand for fishing in our EEZ high, but domestic or onshore investments are equally important, too, because they provide additional economic benefits in the form of local employment, tax revenues, etc.

It’s fascinating doing assessments and working on scenarios informed by the data, or whatever information we have at hand. Are contributions from those given concessions proving their value? How would proposed WCPFC measures impact on FSM? What would be the financial or economic impacts to our country? How do the measures impact at the PNA level? At the WCPFC level? So many questions, so many lives affected, it’s a big part of the work.

A big part of my move into fisheries has been the influence of my father, James Movick. He’s basically lived and breathed fisheries most of his life. He’s done so much not just for FSM, but also for the region, and looking at what he’s been able to do, I would love to continue that legacy. My work in fisheries and his own experiences make for some great conversations! He’s been around long enough to know so much of the history, and is a great mentor.

Speaking of mentors, my Executive Director at NORMA, Eugene Pangelinan, is also a huge influence in my decision to take a career step into fisheries. I knew how the sector was evolving from my time in trade and was intrigued by the really complex types of work they do, especially as members of the PNA and the FFA group, and given FSM is the host country of the WCPFC, the Tuna Commission. To be linked to all that, through a team like this, working with the people I work with, I’m happy and proud to be here.

For me, having family support has been key to that career journey. I have 4 children now, and had my first child at a very young age. Through great family support, I was able to eventually complete my education and advance to where I am in my career today. That support from my husband and my extremely amazing and supportive parents who step in to help with the kids is beyond words. I will forever be grateful for all that they do – it’s why I work hard, so I can provide for them to repay all that they have done for me.

I was 24 when I joined the FSM resources and development team as a trade official. I was seen by many as too young and perhaps inexperienced to be in a senior level post, but I can say with confidence I proved that perception wrong. I worked hard, focused on doing my job, and gained a promotion to become Assistant Secretary of R&D, which was the highest level I could reach in the organisation under the Minister or, in our case, the Secretary.

To be the youngest at the table at all these regional meetings as part of the FSM delegation gave me a determination to learn more. In trade, I was working for a Minister who carried many portfolios beyond that, for investment, fisheries, agriculture, energy, tourism. Often, I had to be his proxy at meetings. From that I gained first-hand experience in diplomacy, negotiations, and sharing our national policy positions to many different partners and stakeholders.

There’s no doubt that we are in a region where we recognise the role of elders in our communities. For young ones who take up senior roles, it’s a chance to learn from the wisdom of being in a room with so many of the “tall trees” of the community but not being overwhelmed by it. You are there to do a job, and you need to get on with it.

As well as being young, being a woman in this field, yes, you do notice almost immediately how the age and the gender gaps are. But honestly speaking, I’ve never actually really felt that I was discriminated against in some ways because I was the youngest, or the woman, not in my office for sure. Maybe because of the position I held (and hold).

Like every other sector where there are decisions being made, there are far more men than women. It’s not just fisheries, but I have noticed an increasing number of women coming through. The years are passing, and the numbers are growing, especially in areas like fisheries and trade. Forum Fisheries now has its first woman director-general, and I anticipate that into the future we will continue to see more and more women assuming leadership roles in this sector.

I would encourage young career seekers out there who are wondering whether to

*Continued on next page*

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take on oceanic fisheries to go for it! The work is complex and very demanding but when you see the result of the sweat that you put into it, it's a wonderful feeling. It makes me happy to know that I contribute to the work that generates the revenue that funds our public services and projects and facilitates the onshore investments that employ our local people. I tell myself, "Wow! Did I really contribute to all of that?!"

And the wow moments continue at the regional level, often away from the public eye. Like ocean fisheries, ocean negotiations happen away from the public eye, so it's not an area many are aware of. For example, at the 2017 WCPFC meeting in Manila, on that final night the plenary session went on until 3.40 in the morning, so the commission could come away with something we could all agree on. The country teams become smaller as people had to leave to catch flights, and the work of the negotiators, especially in those small hours, took on a new meaning. Every word is so important and after all day in the same conference room, the reality that we may be back doing the same thing in 12 months can be hard to cope with. Frustrations are becoming harder to manage; compromise and drama come through.

But these Pacific nations, some of them with just one or two delegates, will be there fighting the Pacific fight, and not giving up. We don't usually get everything we want; no one ever does, but to be able to walk away with some form of win and benefit, and save the rest of the fight for another year – those moments are something I will never forget.

In one year, I represented FSM at a key FFA meeting, called the Management Options Consultation, or the MOC. To sit at the main table, not in the back seats being an information or advisory support person, that was a huge learning curve. To be shaping and in the debate among all Pacific countries and hearing everyone else's different positions on issues that we need to come to a regional agreement on, it was an unforgettable moment. It's when it really dawned on me that the only way to progress past all our unique positions and differences is to keep the goal of cooperation above everything. Cooperation is key. We all come to the table with our national interests, ready to fight and die for those positions, but regional solidarity and cooperation is why we are successful in many of our fisheries

conservation and management efforts. So certain sacrifices almost always have to be made to achieve more for the entire region.

There's nothing more rewarding and exciting for me than that moment where people commit their countries to a common goal. Putting aside their differences so that, as a region, we can progress makes me happy and proud because that's almost impossible in other regions. And that's what makes us people in the Pacific unique. We put our people first, and we may not always agree, but we will always look after one another.

I'm in my 30s now. Looking back, I've learnt to celebrate those milestones in life without letting them get to your head. No one is better than anyone else, and there's always something to learn from the person next to you. Being kind, humble, open-minded, of good heart – these qualities are life goals worth pursuing.

Where will I be five years from now? I will take things as they come, but hope to still be in fisheries, whether with NORMA or at a regional level. I still have so much to learn about fisheries. It's an extremely complex and dynamic sector so it takes a while to get a full grasp of the issues. Where I have been so far has shown me the value of hard work and patience in getting where you need to be. Looking back at my younger self, I'd have told young Camille to have more faith in and less worry about the future. Hard work and patience are going to eventually get you where you need to be.

As for the future of fisheries, the goal is to ensure that we don't end up like other regional fisheries management organisations of the world. Our ocean is what we live off. For our Pacific nations, our oceanic resource is all we have.

For FSM it's especially important, because the financial assistance package from our compact with the US is terminating in 2023. If and when that really ends, the only other revenue that we will have is from fisheries access fees.

My biggest hope is when my kids grow older, we will still have the fish stocks to depend on. It's why we come into a room like this, defending our rights and our fish; it's what our people rely on. I know it's a difficult process, but I think slowly we're getting to where we want to be, and I hope we maintain it into the future. The futures of our children and their children depend on it.

## “Weaving Connections” site supports Micronesian Weavers in US Mainland

*Habele*

Beautiful loom-woven textiles of Micronesia display an artistry and technical virtuosity unrivaled elsewhere in the Pacific. Chief among them is the lavalava, a woven skirt from the Outer Islands of Yap State, situated in the Western Caroline Islands.

A new website aims to ensure this important cultural skill is preserved among weavers who have moved far from home.

Weaving these skirts requires tremendous skill, work and patience. It also requires a special type of backstrap loom. The size and weight of these items are such that few women who move off island for health, education, or employment are able to bring a loom with them.

Many migrants are young women, who depart the islands to further their education at an age by which they may not have completely mastered weaving skills. Once in the United States they are often in proximity to other Outer Islanders with expertise, but who similarly lack looms. It is at this point –when young women who lack weaving skills arrive in the US, or women who can weave but lack access to looms give birth to daughters in the US- that the

link in transmission of weaving skills is fatally severed.

Habele's WeavingConnections.org was created to help sustain the tradition among migrants in the mainland US. The site offers context on the lavalava and the cultural tradition in which it is situated. The project provides details about the parts of the loom used to weave lavalavas. Most importantly, Weaving Connections offers simple Do-It-Yourself instructions for Remathau in the mainland US to make looms from easily obtainable materials.

“The site is a labor of love,” explained Habele Founder Neil Mellen. “So many passionate skilled women in the Outer Islands, Yap, Guam, Hawaii and the mainland have given generously of their time and expertise. It is clear to them all how fragile the transmission of these skills really is as Micronesian migrants fan out far from their home islands.”

“Weaving Connections” is an initiative of the Habele Outer Island Education Fund, a nonprofit established by former Peace Corps who served in Micronesia. Since 2006, Habele has provided direct support to students, schools and communities across the FSM through book donations, tuition scholarships, high school robotics and the support of traditional mentorship programs.



# Coastal communities in FSM to benefit from new project on Fish Aggregating Devices and seas safety

March 31, 2021

**Pohnpei** – A new project aiming to increase community awareness of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) and sea safety in FSM has been launched this week. The project is a partnership between the Pacific Community (SPC), and the National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA), with support from Pohnpei State Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture (OFA) and the FSM Department of Resources and Development – Division of Marine Resources (FSM R&D).

Jamel James from NORMA says, “This project is a great opportunity for fishers and the community of FSM to improve sea safety practices and build their knowledge and capacity in relation to the use of FADs in their waters”.

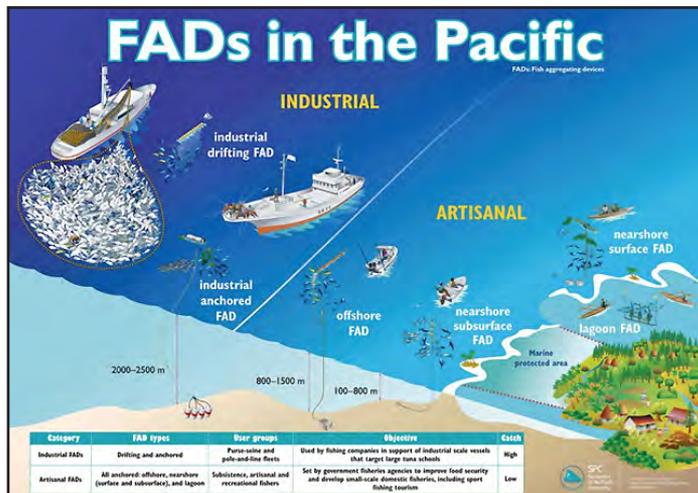
FADs are used widely throughout the Pacific to benefit local fishers when anchored inshore and industrial tuna fleets when drifting in offshore areas, but community and stakeholder awareness of the benefits, risks and issues related to FAD use is often low.

Recently around Pohnpei a number of FADs have been anchored close to shore to benefit local artisanal and recreational fishers. There are plans to expand these deployments to other locations, not only around Pohnpei, but also in the outer islands of Pohnpei.

“To really understand the benefits of these anchored FADs, what we really need is better data” says project co-investigator Naiten Bradley Phillip Jnr. “Data on what and how much people catch around the anchored FADs would be really valuable, and through this project and the great support of the OFA we hope to start collecting it”.

James Wichman, SPC’s newly appointed FADs Focal Officer for FSM makes the point that, “We want people to benefit from using anchored FADs safely, so promoting and educating people on sea safety goes hand-in-hand with the development of an anchored FAD network in FSM. Improving sea safety practices and access to sea safety equipment is therefore a key part of this new project”.

FSM is also experiencing the occurrence of drifting FADs washing up on their shores. Drifting FADs are



used by the industrial tuna purse seine fleets in oceanic waters to attract tuna, especially skipjack, which they then catch with their large encircling nets. The industrial tuna fleets deploy thousands of drifting FADs in the Pacific each year. These drifting FADs are often made with large amounts of old fishing net and many now have electronic buoys attached that allow the vessels to locate the FADs at sea, and which even transmit information on the amount of tuna around the FAD.

Economic revenue from the industrial tuna fleets is incredibly important for many Pacific Island countries. However, a by-product of this benefit is that many of the drifting FADs are lost or abandoned and eventually wash onto island shores, potentially catching on the reefs and mangroves.

SPC lead scientist for this project, Lauriane Escalle, says “Although we are starting to get a better idea of how many drifting FADs are deployed each year in the region, we still don’t have much data on how many are being beached or snag on reefs, and where this is occurring. We need this information to better understand how often drifting FADs beach, and the implications for local communities and habitats”.

This new project will therefore also work with local communities and stakeholders throughout FSM, starting in Pohnpei, to collect data on the numbers and locations of beached drifting FADs.

For the coming months, awareness raising activities around this new project will be increased, especially through the work of the new FADs Focal Officer and staff from NORMA and the

**Where is the buoy ID number?**

**WHAT IS A DRIFTING FAD?**  
It is a raft, generally made of bamboo, with a tail of net, cords and/or canvas and a satellite buoy, deployed by tuna purse seiners to aggregate and catch tuna.

**WHY ARE WE COLLECTING THIS DATA?**  
To quantify the number of beached or lost FADs, and to note their impact on coastal areas, which will help improve the management of FAD fishing.

**WHAT TO DO WITH THE FAD?**  
If possible, tow the drifting FAD back to shore then contact the Norma office.

**RECORD ANY OF THESE DETAILS:-**

- What did you find?
  - a FAD by itself
  - a FAD with a buoy
  - a buoy by itself
- Buoy ID number and any mark painted on the buoy
- Date found
- Location (Lat/Lon or name of beach, village, island...)

**IF POSSIBLE, NOTE:-**

- Environment: at-sea, coral reef, beach, lagoon
- Materials: bamboo, net, cord, floats
- Tail length (if possible)
- What did you do with the FAD/buoy? (e.g. removed from water or land, left drifting, sunk, fished)
- Any additional comments? (e.g. environmental damage, entangled animals or aggregated tuna or other animals)

**TAKE PICTURES:-**

- General picture of what you found
- A close-up of the buoy with the ID number visible

**SEND AN EMAIL TO:** FAD-reports@norma.fm  
**OR CALL** 320-7523



OFA. In the mean time if you come across a FAD washed up on your island or have FADs or FAD buoys you have collected from previous beaching events, please report these by contacting: SPC MRO 320 7523 or send an email to FAD-reports@norma.fm

# OCAPA releases its blueprint for strengthened independence

Office of the Chuuk State Public Auditor

and protected against any influence.

March 4, 2021

**Chuuk**—This is to announce the release of a blueprint for strengthened independence of the Office of the Chuuk State Public Auditor (OCAPA). It includes an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, opportunities, and threats to the independence of the OCPA, and the formulation of corresponding strategies and plan for implementation that can help overcome or address such challenges and threats.

The important role of the public auditor's office is to contribute and help in promoting efficiency, accountability, effectiveness, and transparency of public administration. Among others, the auditor's office helps the government to improve performance, enhance transparency, ensure accountability, maintain credibility, fight corruption, promote public trust, and foster the efficient and effective receipt and use of public resources for the value and benefits of their citizens.

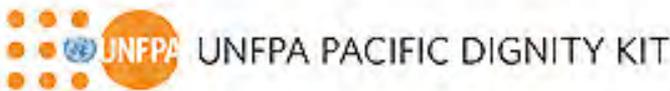
The fact is that the public auditor's office can accomplish its tasks more objectively and effectively only if it is independent

Thus, the overall objective of the OCPA in this task is to pursue and achieve greater independence thru its legal (legal framework- constitutional and law) and its day-day-operation. The basic strategies include the following:

- Develop and implement enhancements in the legal framework (especially in the public auditor's act) and in actual operations to provide for greater independence
- Implement a communication strategy. Advocate and engage with relevant stakeholders.
- Prepare and implement an audit strategic plan
- Request for the approval of budget for the right size of manpower for the office considering its mandate
- Monitor the independence, prepare to be accountable and lead by example.

With greater independence coupled with the right resources and right number of qualified and trained manpower, the OCPA would be able to deliver an effective value and benefits that can reasonably contribute to making a difference to the lives of Chuuk State citizens.

# UNFPA Pacific donates Personal Protective Equipment to FSM



# FSM health centers to receive \$9,023,875 in American rescue plan funding for COVID-19 response HHS to award funding starting in April

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

and lower-income communities,” said HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra. “The Biden Administration is committed to getting help to those who need it most, and the communities hit hardest by COVID-19 will benefit from these critical investments.”

Four (4) community health centers in the Federated States of Micronesia will receive \$9,023,875 in American Rescue Plan funding to support COVID-19 vaccination and services for vulnerable populations, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced today. The funding will be awarded beginning in April by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

HRSA-funded health centers are community-based and patient-directed organizations that deliver affordable, accessible, quality, and cost-effective primary health care to medically underserved communities and vulnerable populations, including high-need urban, rural, and frontier communities across the country. Health centers serve 1 in 5 people living in rural communities, and 1 in 11 people nationwide. More than 91% of health center patients are individuals or families living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, and nearly 63% are racial or ethnic minorities.

Health centers will be able to use the funds to support and expand COVID-19 vaccination, testing, and treatment for vulnerable populations; deliver needed preventive and primary health care services to those at higher risk for COVID-19; and expand health centers' operational capacity during the pandemic and beyond, including modifying and improving physical infrastructure and adding mobile units. This investment will help increase access to vaccinations among hard-hit populations, as well as confidence in the vaccine by empowering local, trusted health professionals in their efforts to expand vaccinations.

For detailed information on how this funding is being distributed to health centers, including an interactive map of which health centers will receive funding, please visit: <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/program-opportunities/american-rescue-plan/awards>.

“Every American should have the security of knowing they have access to quality, affordable health care, especially as we face a pandemic that has exposed the disparities facing rural, minority,

For information on ensuring equity in COVID-19 vaccine distribution, visit: <https://www.hrsa.gov/coronavirus/health-center-program>

## UNICEF

**FSM, 25 March 2021** – The United Nations Population Fund's Pacific Sub-Regional Office has donated the Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) and Dignity Kits to the Department of Health and Social Affairs of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia.

example, are very impressive and the contents are very well thought out in terms of what women would need in an emergency.”

This equipment was donated to support the continuity of sexual and reproductive health services and protect health workers who will deliver these services in the event of community transmission of COVID19.

These kits ensure that women and girls can access basic services, including health care during the disasters. UNFPA also works through these distributions to ensure women and girls and young people have access to knowledge of where to access ongoing needs for sexual and reproductive health services and responses for gender-based violence. The UNFPA Pacific Dignity Kits (in the blue waterproof bag) consists of sarongs, reusable sanitary napkins, soap and combs, sandals, towels, t-shirts, underwear, soap case, flashlights, mosquito coils, zip lock bags, toothbrush and toothpaste, whistle, and disposable sanitary napkins.

Upon receipt of the donated supplies at the Pohnpei State Public Health, Public Health Chief Dr. Rally Jim said that the “Donation of PPEs and dignity kits from UNFPA will support Pohnpei health services' overall COVID-19 preparedness. The dignity kits, for

## FSM's first Green Climate Fund project begins

*FSM Information Services*

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—On March 19th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—gave an address on the occasion of the signing of the Nation's first single-country project with the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The FSM Climate Resilient Food Security Project, the result of diligent effort on behalf of Micronesia Conservation Trust and the GCF National Designated Authority Office in Palikir, with support from the Departments of Resources & Development, Environment, Climate Change, & Emergency Management, and Finance & Administration, the State Governments of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae, the College of Micronesia-FSM, The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Agency for International Development, et al., is a 9.4 million-dollar project of which nearly 8.6 million will be directly financed by the GCF.

Operating under the broader theme of Climate Change adaptation, the entirety of the FSM will benefit directly or indirectly from the project which focuses on climate resilient food security for farming households across the Nation. It is expected that approximately 68,250 Micronesian farmers will directly benefit

from the project, with an additional 44,390 Micronesians benefiting indirectly.

The project is a comprehensive national effort to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities to food insecurity due to Climate Change, by improving access to climate information, investing in climate-smart agriculture and livelihood practices, and developing agricultural markets and value chains.

The project is the GCF's first single-country project in the FSM, and its first project with the Micronesia Conservation Trust. It represents a milestone in delivering rapid financial support for building Climate Change adaptation and engages a wide spectrum of stakeholders at the Government, academic, and household levels.

"The Climate Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the FSM Project will be the first system-wide project of its kind in the FSM," said President Panuelo. "It is country-owned and will remain country-driven, as national organizations will be the implementing and executing entities. This project will be targeting the most vulnerable to Climate Change to support their ability to withstand the multiple threats of Climate Change impacts."



*President Panuelo poses with the attendees on the FSM's side*



*MCT Executive-Director William Kostka shows his signature on the Funded Activity Agreement*

## President Panuelo solicits the U.S. Department of Interior for the FSM's membership into the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education

*FSM Information Services*

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—On March 19th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—sent a letter to the Honorable Debra Anne Haaland, the newly confirmed and first Native American Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), requesting the FSM's membership in the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE). The letter was sent as a response by the Vice Speaker of the U.S. Territory of Guam, the Honorable Tina Muña-Barnes, requesting DOI's Office of Insular Affairs to consider funding the WICHE annual membership

fee for the U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands, including the FSM, with the purpose of demonstrating the Nation's enthusiastic endorsement of that request.

The rationale for the FSM's membership in WICHE is simple: higher education is expensive—some citizens may argue excessively so—and FSM citizens studying abroad often dropout because they are not able to afford it, despite the FSM funding three million dollars (\$3,000,000) annually for the FSM National Scholarship program. If the FSM is a member of WICHE, the practical result for the Nation's students

*Continued on next page*

## UNICEF welcomes US\$9M contribution from Japan to support Pacific island countries during global pandemic

*UNICEF*

**SUVA, Fiji, 24 March 2021** - UNICEF welcomes a US\$9 million contribution from the Government and the people of Japan that will strengthen the vaccine cold chain, and the logistics capacity, to address the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic in ten countries in the Pacific region. These countries are: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

"In recognition of the importance of ensuring equitable access and swift distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, the Government of Japan has decided to assist ten Pacific island countries. This assistance will provide the recipient countries with medical and cold chain equipment such as cold-storage facilities and transportation, as part of the 'Last One Mile Support' to ensure vaccination in each country through UNICEF," said His Excellency, Mr. Fumihiro Kawakami, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Fiji. "I believe that this assistance will contribute to the safe delivery of vaccines in the recipient countries. It will further complement the efforts of the COVAX facility, to which Japan has announced its financial contribution of 200 million US dollars."

UNICEF has been working with Pacific governments to help prevent the spread of the virus among communities, as well as supporting the vital procurement of COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX facility.

These funds will strengthen the capacity of these countries' governments to handle the COVID-19 pandemic, in the context of achieving universal health coverage, through the procurement of cold chain equipment and the strengthening of the institutional capacity to manage the equipment during the introduction of COVID-19 vaccines over a 12-month period throughout 2021–22.

"We thank the Government of Japan for its continued and strengthened partnership with UNICEF to support the Pacific region through the global pandemic," said UNICEF Pacific Representative, Sheldon Yett. "We will continue to work with the host governments, WHO and other partners, to ensure their health system is well prepared to respond appropriately to the on-going threat of this pandemic."

This funding is part of the broader Japanese Emergency Grant Aid of approximately US\$41 million to 25 countries\* in the Southeast and Southwest Asia and the Pacific.

# President Panuelo advocates for gender equality, announces expansion of maternity leave from six to twelve weeks, at the inspiring Women’s Advancement Through Collective Action Project Launch & Inception Workshop

FSM Information Services

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—On March 18th, 2021, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—attended the project launch and inception workshop for the new Inspiring Women’s Advancement Through Collective Action (IWA) program. Funded by the Government of the United States of America and implemented through the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the IWA is a \$2,200,000 program with the intent to contribute towards increased local understanding, and demand, on removing barriers to gender equality in the FSM, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau, through diplomacy and galvanizing coordinated actions.

The intended outcomes of the IWA program are, firstly, that gender discrimination towards women in the workplace, women in business, and entrepreneurs, is reduced through community awareness and socioeconomic empowerment of women. Secondly, the IWA intends to ensure that project partners have increased capacity to take action against gender discrimination within their institution.

The IWA project includes numerous activities for women and youth, some of which include the creation of a Youth for Art initiative; the creation of a media influencer program; the creation of a Communication as Change campaign; a review of the regulatory landscape session; an emerging women leaders’ session; and competitive small grants to NGOs, youth-lead, and faith-based organizations to address gender discrimination, among many more. The FSM National Government strongly encourages citizens to review a video made by Her Excellency Carmen G. Cantor, Ambassador of the United States of America to the FSM, which is available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ik\\_geis-uws](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ik_geis-uws)

The project launch and inception workshop’s schedule included opening remarks from Lululeen Santos and Nathan Glancy, Consultant and Chief of Party of IOM respectively, the Honorable Somer Bessire-Briers, Charge’d’Affairs of the U.S. Embassy, and President Panuelo.

Prior to his remarks proper, President Panuelo addressed the proverbial elephant in the room—the COVID-19 Pandemic—and the Nation’s vaccination rate. Noting that, while Palau will reach an

adult vaccination rate of 70% by late April to early May, the FSM is currently at approximately 13%; thus, President Panuelo suggested, the Nation will be simultaneously requesting additional Johnson & Johnson vaccines from the U.S. for remote communities and islands, and may decide to tie citizens’ receipt of financial stimulus programming for low-income and elderly citizens with documentary evidence that said citizens have received their COVID-19 vaccine.

“If we mandate children to take certain vaccines before going to school for their safety and our Nation’s safety, it behooves our Nation’s adults to do the same before getting their financial stimulus,” President Panuelo said.



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is that an FSM student would qualify for 150% of in-state tuition for eligible undergraduate programs, and in-state tuition for eligible graduate studies, significantly reducing the cost of these degrees.

FSM citizens disproportionately journey to the U.S. Territory of Guam, the U.S. State of Hawaii, the U.S. State of Washington, and the U.S. State of Oregon to acquire their Bachelors, Masters, and Doctorate degrees. These jurisdictions, along with Alaska, California, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, North Dakota, and South Dakota, are WICHE members. Thus, the FSM’s membership in WICHE would mean that an FSM student choosing to study in any of these jurisdictions would qualify for these significantly reduced tuition rates.

In addition to his letter to Secretary Haaland endorsing Guam’s request for OIA to fund the annual WICHE membership for the FSM, President Panuelo also wrote to His Excellency Surangel Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, His Excellency David Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Honorable Lemanu Peleti Mauga, Governor of American Samoa, recommending that they, too, join WICHE, noting that such membership is beneficial to students as well as scholarship budgets.

“As a graduate of Eastern Oregon University,” President Panuelo said in a statement, “I am acutely aware of the value in achieving higher education and how it contributes to our Nation-building process. I look forward to building a productive working relationship with Secretary Haaland, and hope that our Nation’s students are able to enjoy the benefit of significantly reduced tuition at more than 160 participating universities and colleges as soon as possible.”



**Kosrae Campus** is physically located adjacent to Kosrae High School and State Department of Education complex. It serves about 250 students a semester. It offers an associate degree program in teacher education –elementary, an associate of applied science in electronics technology, an associate of applied science in telecommunication technology, and 6 certificates of achievement programs: 1) agriculture and food technology, 2) carpentry, 3) electronic engineering technology, 4) trial counseling, 5) bookkeeping, and 6) general studies. Kosrae campus sponsors the Peer Counseling Center that provides counseling services for both high school and college students. Like other state campuses, the Cooperative Research and Extension is actively involved in educating the community on grassroots economics and social development.

## PROGRAMS OFFERED:

### Bachelor of Science in

- Elementary Education

### Third Year Certificate of Achievement in

- Accounting
- General Business
- Public Health
- Teacher Preparation-Elementary

### Associate of Science in

- Agriculture and Natural Resource Management
- Business Administration
- Computer Information Systems
- Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Marine Science
- Nursing
- Public Health

### Associate of Arts in

- Health Career Opportunity Program
- Liberal Arts
- Micronesian Studies
- Pre-Teacher Preparation
- Associate of Applied Science in
- Building Technology
- Telecommunication Technology
- Electronic Technology

### Certificate of Achievement in

- Agriculture and Food Technology
- Basic Public Health
- Bookkeeping
- Cabinet Making
- Career Education: Motor Vehicle Mechanics
- Carpentry

### Certificate of Achievement in

- Community Health Services
- Construction Electricity
- Electronic Engineering Technology
- Nursing Assistant
- Refrigeration and Air conditioning
- Secretarial Science
- Trial Counselor

For more information, please contact

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135, 136

*We look Forward to hear from You!*

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