

## Following the unjustified & brutal invasion of Ukraine, the FSM severs diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation

### FSM Information Services

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—On February 25th, 2022, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has conveyed to the Russian Federation that diplomatic relations between our two countries have been severed. The FSM will only entertain renewing diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation when the latter demonstrates actionable commitments to peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity.

stand in solidarity with the People & Government of Ukraine, a country that, like ours, embraces democracy and democratic principles, and the rule of law. The FSM, with great sympathy to the People & Government of Ukraine, recognizes that Ukraine has been violently and unjustifiably invaded by the Russian Federation.” His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, said in a statement. “To the People & Government of Ukraine: while it may be little comfort, the People & Government of the FSM supports your sovereignty, and supports your right to exist, including your right to

exist in peace and harmony with your neighbors.”

“To the People of the Russian Federation: the FSM continues to extend to you peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity, which we extend to all peoples and nations on this shared planet of ours. The People & Government of the FSM have no animosity towards the People of the Russian Federation,”



[Click here for continuation](#)

“The People & Government of the FSM

## 13 competitors vie for top prizes in Micronesian Productions first “Got Talent” competition

By **Bill Jaynes**  
 The Kaselehlie Press

February 26, 2022

**Pohnpei**—On the windy afternoon of February 26, 13 individuals and groups sang, danced, and even read at the “Got Talent” competition at the Kolonia

gymnasium in Pohnpei. The event, conceived and organized by Micronesian Productions was the first of six planned “Got Talent” events. The next event is planned for April 30.

The excitement level was high among the competitors and the crowd and the

atmosphere was supportive as each act took the stage. Major supporter of the event, V6AH broadcasted the event live online. However, because of Youtube’s policy regarding copyrighted material such as music used for dance performances, Youtube blocked further views of the video after the live transmission completed.

The event began with speeches from the Pohnpei Women’s Council, Micronesia Red Cross, and Pohnpei Department of Education.

[Click here for continuation](#)



  
**Ramp & Mida**  
 Law Firm  
 Suite 2W Varner-Boylan Building No.2, Nett  
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# FSM President rejects decision of Personnel committees to reinstate DeOrio and Oliver with back pay

By *Bill Jaynes*  
The Kaselehlie Press

February 21, 2022

**Palikir, Pohnpei**—On February 10, 2022, FSM President David Panuelo transmitted his final decision rejecting the decisions of the Ad Hoc Committee of the FSM Office of Personnel to reinstate Mark DeOrio and Norleen Oliver. Before being fired in November of 2020 DeOrio had been a high-level employee of the FSM Department of Transportation, Communications, and Infrastructure. He was accused of stealing an official document related to a special project to pave a driveway to a home belonging to President Panuelo's partner. The FSM Congress allocated the funds to pay for the driveway that would cross DeOrio and Oliver's property in Sokehs. Norleen Oliver had worked at the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs and was accused of having received the document and hindering the progress of the project. While Oliver was acquitted of criminal charges filed against her by the FSM Department of Justice, DeOrio was convicted of a misdemeanor.

After DeOrio and Oliver each appealed the termination decisions, the Office of Personnel appointed an Ad Hoc committee to review the appeals. On April 20, 2021, the committee issued two separate findings reversing the termination decision and recommending that the two be reinstated with full retroactive pay. Their findings were subject to the decision of the "highest management official" for final decision. That person is the FSM President, who received the finding near the end of April.

By July of 2021, President Panuelo had

issued no final decision on the appeal and DeOrio and Oliver filed a petition at the FSM Supreme Court to issue a Writ of Mandamus (a court order that requires a public official to do his or her job). When the Court had made no ruling, by the end of September, plaintiffs' attorney filed a motion asking the Court to rule. Approximately two weeks later, the Acting Chief Justice assigned an Associate Justice to the matter. That Associate Justice ordered President Panuelo and the FSM Government to file and serve an answer to the petition for the writ by October 29, 2021, but they did not do so.

"The court considered the possibility that the President may not have acted because he felt he had a conflict of interest since the events leading to the petitioners' termination of government employment involved the President's wife," the ruling granting the Writ said. "The court mulled over the possibility of holding a hearing at which it would inquire into this possibility and whether the President could designate a final decision maker without a personal conflict, but discarded that notion because the respondents' failure to comply with the order to file an answer indicated that any such hearing would be fruitless if, as seemed likely, no one appeared for the respondents."

He issued the Writ of Mandamus on December 21, 2021 and required a decision on the matter within 45 days. That gave the President until February 4 to issue his decision. He requested an additional two weeks and the Court granted that request. The President's decisions overturning the outcome of the Ad Hoc committee hearings on each employee's appeal came on February

10 and Plaintiffs' attorney received that decision on February 14.

In his decision the President wrote that the same three people heard the separate appeals of DeOrio and Oliver, but their recommendations did not explain the specific evidence relied upon and the reasons for their recommendations to reinstate them.

He said that on January 3, 2022 he directed the committees to expound upon their recommendations but "they refused to do so and stated that they stood by their respective recommendation(s)." He directed them to forward all the documents, papers, and recording(s) of the proceedings and reiterated the request on January 21 at which time "the committees finally complied".

He said that during the hearings, the FSM Department of Justice objected that having the same members serve as Ad Hoc committee members on both appeals was a conflict of interest since testimony would be interrelated. He said that committee members found nothing improper about appellants' comments during a break related to the criminal case against DeOrio, a fact that he found "quite disturbing". He didn't say what those comments were. He said that committee members should have recused themselves but did not.

"I heard and gave weight to the testimony of Secretary Carl Apis (FSM TC&I) regarding the negative impact the DeOrio's conduct caused to the integrity of the bidding process...In short, DeOrio caused damage to the integrity of public service because of a personal interest that his family had

on a matter brought before TC&I... he had a motive to take this document given the personal interest that his wife, Norleen, had on the matter. He had no authority to take this document and give it to his wife," he wrote in his decision to reject the Ad Hoc committees' recommendations.

As to Norleen Oliver's appeal, the President said that she had "waived the presentation of evidence during administrative proceed, accordingly she failed to prove her case...only the oral arguments of appellant's counsel could be heard in the audio recording. But the arguments of appellant's legal counsel were not considered as evidence; therefore, I could not rely on them in formulating this decision."

"Given the alarming factual situation of the ad hoc committee as discussed above, by this decision, I am instructing the Director of Personnel to conduct trainings to the members appointed to the Ad Hoc Committee to ensure that they become familiar with proper procedures in conducting administrative appeal proceedings, and to also train them in the rules of evidence and how to write reasoned recommendations supported by evidence presented during the appeal. In this regard, the Department of Justice will provide guidance and assistance during training," his decision document concluded.

Plaintiffs are barred from seeking a remedy in court until all administrative remedies are exhausted. The President's decision to uphold the termination satisfied that requirement. The attorney for DeOrio and Oliver has indicated that further legal action by her clients is forthcoming.

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P.O. Box 2222 Pohnpei, FM 96941  
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Bill Jaynes  
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF  
THE KASELEHLIE PRESS  
WILL BE RELEASED ON:  
March 16, 2022**

**Deadline for submission of articles or  
advertisements for this issue is the end  
of working hours on:**

**Monday, March 14, 2022**

# Pohnpei students take part in second annual “Takeover Day”

Enginkehlap News

February 24, 2022

**Pohnpei**—The 2nd annual Student Takeover Day successfully concluded at the PICS gymnasium on Wednesday, February 24, 2022, with a ceremony to recognize the student leaders and employers. This year also saw more student participation including special remarks at the closing ceremony by Student Governor, the Honorable Ian Perman, student reflections by July-O Saimon, Prinnet Richard, Isabella Sipos, JD Nelper, Jade Dawn Holiday, Kachaena Tolenoa, and Kathleen Dacanay, and closing remarks by the Student Director of the Department of Education, Ja’cy Wes Lukan.



In his closing remarks, Student Governor Perman said it was his honor to speak on behalf of Governor Oliver and conveyed gratitude and appreciation to the Department of Education for arranging the Student Takeover Day. He said the future of our country depends on the youth and this Student Takeover Day has helped to inspire, motivate and encourage the youth to be the best they can be. He closed by saying that he believed like him, most of the students that participated in this year’s Student Takeover Day will take the experiences they had to help them decide on a career path.

Congratulations to all the students and employers who participated in the 2nd annual student takeover day.

2022 Student Takeover Placement:

1. Sean Troy Moses Acting Executive Director, NORMA
2. Ja’cy Wes Lukan Director, PDOE
3. Lavonna Abraham Acting Executive Officer, EPA
4. Jovane Oliver Irons Chief Financial Officer, FSMDB
5. Isabella Sipos Acting General Manager, PPA

6. Kathleen Dacanay Executive Director, PCHC
7. Prinnet Richard Directing Attorney, MLSC
8. Jenna Helieisar Chief, Health & Social Affairs
9. Nathan Pasley Fredrick Acting Coordinator, Pohnpei Sports Council
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11. Ferny Daman David Perman Jr. Administrator, OFA
12. Ian L. Perman Governor, Office of the Governor
13. Jeffrin Saul Acting Marketing Manager, PPA
14. Just Wesley John Ringlen State Auditor, Public Auditor
15. Justin carto Santiago Chief of land, Land
16. Mary Mae Alten Manager, PNI Social Security

17. Carol Griss Johnny Communication Officer, UNICEF
18. Ashlen Rose Anna Liwy Chief Executive Officer/President, FSMTC
19. Kidannia May Rappa Classroom Teacher, Kolonia Elem. School
20. Marmayon Santiago Airport Manager, PPA
21. Mary Alice Esiel Secretary, Office of the Governor
22. Mersayes Ladore Vice President Engineering, FSMTC
23. July-o-Saimon Chief C&I, PDOE
24. JD Nelper Executive Director, MCT
25. Glorianne Aliven Administrator, Pohnpei TC&I
26. Lashante Estephan Acting Budget Officer, Budget Office

27. Destiny Gallen Lt. Governor, Office of the Governor
28. Kachaena Tolenoa Officer in Charge, Weather Station
29. Jade Dawn Holiday Seaport Manager, PPA
30. MelliRose F. Alfaro Principal, Ohmine Elem. School
31. layvaleen Primo Attorney at law, MLSC
32. Jasiree Leon Director, Treasury & Administration
33. Litana Curley Chief of Tourism, Tourism Office
34. Ricky Jr. David Commissioner, PTA
35. Beljin Baily Weilbacher Director, Pohnpei Housing Authority
36. Lauren Kalio Commissioner PPBC

# Educational Talent Search Program invites guest speakers to be part of college and career path activities

On February 26, 2022, the Educational Talent Search Program hosted Guest Speaker sessions during its morning tutorial period at CTECH, which brought together key members of society to share their college and career experiences to the participating public high school seniors. There are 75 high school seniors under the program. The Guest Speakers for the sessions included Mrs. Yeeting from the FSM NORMA, who is currently serving as Manager for Maritime Licensing; Pohnpei

Girls Scout President Mrs. Justleen Alisoma and her Scouts; and the Honorable Jayson Walter, Senator of Pohnpei State.

The purpose of the Guest Speaker sessions was to motivate the seniors under the program to consider their college and career paths with an open mind. They were encouraged to know themselves in relation to their culture which will help them know what they want to do in the future. The high school seniors from MHS, PICS, NMHS and a few from the private schools have just completed taking the COMET,

and are now exploring their college majors through a number of activities.

Mrs. Yeeting encouraged the students to consider the question, “Do I want to be somebody in the future and to whom and for what?” while the Pohnpei Girls Scouts and their leader challenged the seniors to become effective citizens and help protect the environment. Senator Jayson Walter invited the students to visit his office and inform them about their needs. He encouraged the students to be real, humbly serve, and aim to help oneself and others.

The Educational Talent Program is managed by its Director, Mrs. Rita Harris-Hadley with several administrative staff, and tutors at the elementary and high school level. The aim of the program is to prepare selected public elementary and high school students academically and socially so their chances of obtaining a college education will be enhanced. The program is a U.S Federal funded program sponsored by the College of Micronesia-FSM which has been in existence since 1994.



Senator Walter with Director Hadley and students



Pohnpei Girls Scouts

## ... Got Talent

*Continued from front page*

Bernolina Hedson, Pamela Joseph, and Burton Charley served as the judges for the event and in the end, chose three winners for first, second and third prizes. As it happened, all three were dance groups.

Prizes for the second and third places were the same, one LG K52 cell phone and Vevo earbuds provided by FSM Telecommunications, \$150 cash, cell phone cards, Isla Nesia coconut oil and soaps provided by Vital, and hats, mugs and journals provided by the Embassy of the People's Republic of China.

The third prize winners were the dance group, "The Ambassadors". Second place went to the dance group, "Team Katairong". Since there was only one phone awarded for each group, organizers encouraged them to use the phone as a group to learn from dance videos and to record their talent.

The first prize winner was the dance group, "Ngehi". They won an ROG, 128 Gb cell phone valued at \$818 provided by FSMTC, a \$50 gift certificate for Ace Hardware, \$100 cash, phone cards, Isla Nesia products provided by Vital, and hats, mugs, and journals provided by the Chinese Embassy.

Each of the other performers were runners up and were awarded mugs, hats, and journals from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China. Those competitors were Freddie Hebel, "Education groups 1, 2, and 3" (one of whom demonstrated his talent at reading braille), "The Unknowns", "The Little Butterflies" (Kisin Liparourou), Awak Elementary, "Nancy", Francis Nayer, and Dwayne Joseph.

"We still can't believe how much support came in for our event," said Micronesian Productions' Director of the Audio Visual Department. "We received an amazing \$4,876 worth of prizes and cash! It takes a lot of courage to get out there and perform. Everybody did their best and made Pohnpei proud! Thanks to everyone's support, we have a jump start on our next event, which will be April 30th."

The major sponsors for the first "Got Talent" competition were FSM Telecommunications Corporation, who provided three cell phones, five \$20 phone card, and live coverage fees for a total value of \$2,076. V6AH provided \$800 worth of live coverage. The Embassy of the People's Republic of China provided \$500 in cash, and a large number of hats, mugs, journals. Other donors included Vital which provided Isla Nesia products for prizes. Ace Hardware provided four \$50 gift certificates. Black Sand provided \$200 cash. The Pohnpei Women's Council provided \$100 in cash. One anonymous donor provided \$100 in cash and also paid entry fees for the three Department of Education Disability Group performers.



## ...FSM, Russia

*Continued from front page*

President Panuelo continued. "The same can only be said of the Government of the Russian Federation, however, once they recognize that choosing war instead of peace, violence instead of friendship, betrayal instead of cooperation, and hatred instead of love, is both unsustainable and unjustified. The FSM condemns the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine and the unjustified and brutal assault on its people and territory, which our country recognizes as unambiguously villainous and holds in the highest form of contempt. The FSM condemns the Government of Russia for their invasion into the sovereign territory of Ukraine, and the hardship placed upon Ukraine's people. The FSM condemns any actions which threaten global peace and stability and the rules-based international order."

"It is often described that the preference of any Pacific Island Country, to include the FSM, is that we be friends to all, and enemies to none," President Panuelo said. "This indeed and truly remains the cornerstone of our Nation's foreign policy. But values and convictions must matter more than not at all, and as this Paradise in Our Backyards is founded on our Micronesian ideals of peace, unity, and liberty, so too do we advocate for these ideals to be shared and spread."

"The Pacific Way is built on respect, where problems and disagreements are resolved through conversation and spending time getting to truly know the points of view that differ from your own and, from there, reaching a consensus. The presence of war

is, on its face, the starkest demonstration of the absence of respect." "Ukraine has severed diplomatic relations with Russia and has called on its partners to do the same.

The FSM is a partner of Ukraine and other democracies, and is taking the same step to sever diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation. The FSM is taking this concrete step as a demonstration that we stand with Ukraine and categorically reject the most blatant act of aggression in Europe since World War 2. The FSM will only entertain renewing diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation when the latter demonstrates actionable commitments to peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity."

"The FSM aligns itself with the international rules-based order and the rule of law. The FSM reaffirms its commitment to our first and foremost ally, the United States of America, as codified through our Compact of Free Association, as Amended. The FSM affirms its stalwart support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations, who correctly condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The FSM supports the removal of the Russian Federation in its capacity as President of the United Nations Security Council; Russia remaining there is a façade, as they need to be upholding the international rules-based order instead of undermining it."

The FSM's diplomatic note sent to the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Manila can be found here: [https://gov.fm/files/Official Notification - Severing of Diplomatic Relation - Russian Federation 1.pdf](https://gov.fm/files/Official%20Notification%20-%20Severing%20of%20Diplomatic%20Relation%20-%20Russian%20Federation%201.pdf)



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*We look forward hearing from you!*

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Location: National Campus | Closing Date: March 22, 2022

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The VP-IEQA is a key contributor to policy development and implementation related to institutional effectiveness and quality assurance.

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- Achievements, actions, benefits to ozone layer protection and climate change attributed to the Vienna Convention, the Montreal Protocol including the Kigali Amendment.  
<https://ozone.unep.org/ozone-and-you>
- Theme of World Ozone Day 2021 - Montreal Protocol - Keeping us, our food and vaccines cool.  
<https://ozone.unep.org/ozone-day/montreal-protocol-keeping-us-our-food-and-vaccines-cool>



**Eligibility & Submission Info**

- Youth:** Age 15 years or below with parental consent
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# Iehsi receives Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun from the Emperor and the Government of Japan

*Pohnpei Enginkehlap News*

*February 25, 2022*

**Pohnpei**—On Friday, February 25, 2022, Governor Oliver joined former President John Haglegam, H.E. Hisashi Michigami Japanese Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Deputy Secretary of FSM Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ricky Cantero, former FSM Ambassador to Japan, Kasio Mida and friends and family of Mr. Iehsi to honor him as he was bestowed with the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun from the Emperor and Government of Japan. Mr. Iehsi received this prestigious honor because of his many contributions to the strengthening of relations between Japan and the FSM. The decoration is awarded to individuals who have made distinguished achievements in international relations, this honor is one of the highest orders bestowed by the Japanese government.

Mr. Iehsi is only the second citizen of the FSM, and first from Pohnpei, to be honored by the Emperor and Government of Japan for services to promote good relations with Japan. Ambassador Kasio Mida was bestowed with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2019.

Kaselehlie Press video coverage of the event can be found by clicking on the link above.



## Editor Correction on Sokehs Special Projects Article

On the front page of the February 16, 2022 issue of The Kaselehlie Press we placed an article entitled, "FSM auditors refer Sokehs Special Projects findings to Compliance Investigation Division". In that article, we called in to question the Math of the auditors on their first finding. It appeared, in the context of the audit wording, that auditors were saying that the first bid amount for the retaining wall was \$46,107.20. A change order amounted to \$6,107.20, which auditors said brought the total bill for the first phase of the retaining wall project up to the exact amount of the money Congress appropriated for it. I asked for clarification on the auditors' assertion which came several days after we published.

In fact, the bid amount was not \$46,107.20 as I thought they had listed in that finding, but \$48,392.80. With those numbers, the auditors' Math is, of course, correct. The actual original bid amount did not appear in the text of the first finding at all but was in the management letter and in a summary. The figure of \$46,107.20 to which they referred in finding one was not the amount of the initial bid but was the DIFFERENCE between the original bid and the TOTAL amount of both appropriations.

We apologize for any difficulties our assertion may have caused.



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# Pohnpei Leadership meets with Pohnpei Delegation to the Fourth FSM Constitutional Convention

*Pohnpei Enginkehlap News*

February 28, 2022

**Pohnpei**—Governor Oliver welcomed participants and members of the public to the Joint Leadership Meeting between Executive and Legislative branches of Pohnpei State Government and 4th FSM Constitutional Convention Delegates at the Pohnpei State Gymnasium on Monday, February 28, 2022. The event was streamed LIVE, and available for viewing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tup4gfIHPlg>

Pohnpei Delegation chair IsoNahnken of Nett Hon. Salvador Iriarte was joined by delegates Ricky Cantero, Dendy Liwy, Mason Albert, Berney Martin, and Secretariat Kapilly Capelle. They updated Pohnpei State leadership on the progress of the Constitutional Convention. Two proposed amendments have been approved and will now require the citizens of the FSM to decide in a national public referendum.

The two approved amendments are:

1. Threshold (3/4 to 2/3) - Amending the required number of votes to approve an amendment to the Constitution from 3/4 of the votes cast in 3/4 of the states to 2/3 of the votes cast in 3/4 of the states.
2. Dual Citizenship

Pending:

1. Allottee of public funds shall be the Executive Branch (President, Governors)
2. FSM Laws that provide land

# FSY Carwash Fundraiser Barrigada Guam Stake - Youth earn money for FSY

*Guam News Release*

19 February 2022

The sun shines bright in Guam today. There's no better time to set up a carwash. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Barrigada Ward's Bishop, Rod Boss, along with Young Women's President, Carrie Ksau, got together with all the youth and decided a carwash would be a great fundraiser.

What was the youth's motivation to spend a sunny Saturday washing cars? They are excited about the "For the Strength of Youth" conference, also known as FSY, that is coming up.

The FSY Conference is a large event designed to bring the youth together, develop lifelong friends, facilitate feeling the Spirit, strengthen testimonies while having fun and learning to apply the gospel in all aspects of their life. It consists of five days of devotionals, classes, and activities which will help strengthen faith in Jesus Christ and facilitate feeling joy and belonging in living the gospel.

Charlie Balbastro and Danny Alik energetically waved carwash signs encouraging people driving down the street to come get their car sparkling clean. "I like holding the sign" says Danny. Charlie stated, " For whoever washes the cars, the FSY fee will be paid off."

Carrie Ksau comments how "All of us got together and decided that we wanted to do a carwash to help raise funds for

- ownership should be nullified
3. Limit annual aggregate salary and allowance for congress members, other purposes
4. Creation an office of independent prosecutor
5. Direct election of President and Vice President
6. Not less than 40% of all revenues collected from fishing fees to be shared with the states



FSY and to help those other kids who are not able to afford to go. So, we thought we'd all come together and have a carwash and it's been a lot of fun."

Pathshepa Christopher said "It's really fun and we have a good time. Especially with the young women and young men. We are so happy that people came to join us. I like washing the cars."

The rays of sun are hot while the island breeze tempers the heat. Water sprays everywhere, cooling all it touches.



Bishop Boss explains "We're happy to have our kids do a carwash today. We wanted them to each feel they had a part in earning the money. We had some members who were willing to donate the money, but we really wanted the kids to feel some ownership, so everybody came out today. Everybody who participates today will have their FSY fees paid for

them by the ward and its budget."

The date for FSY is June 20th through the 25th so there is still plenty of time to earn funds Not only will this fundraiser help fund this event for the youth on Guam, but it will also extend to the outer islands of the FSM, Palau, and the CNMI. What a great opportunity for these youth.

A question-and-answer session was provided after the general overview by delegation members.

Wasalalalap Isipahu Nahnmarki of Madolenihmw, Likend Kelekel, Speaker of FSM Congress, Hon. Esmond Moses, Pohnpei State Senator Ricky Carl, who was MC of the event, Pohnpei State

Senator Jayson, and Senator Jack Harris also joined the meeting. Vice Speaker of the Pohnpei State Legislature, Hon. McGarry Miguel delivered the closing remarks.

For more information on the 4th FSM ConCon, please visit their webpage at: <https://constitution.gov.fm/>

## Opinion Editorial

### Island communities need local sustainable solutions to build resilience and drive sustainability

By James Ellsmoor

“Our people are watching and taking note,” exclaimed Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley to world leaders at the United Nations’ climate summit, COP26, in Glasgow. Her speech on the opening day of the two-week event



set the stage for several rounds of negotiations and stock-taking as delegations sought to find solutions to further mitigate the climate crisis. Echoing the sentiments of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and vulnerable communities around the world, Prime Minister Mottley did not hold back.

“On finance we are 20 billion dollars short of the 100 [billion pledged] and this commitment might only be met in 2023. On adaptation - adaptation finance remains only 25% - not the 50:50 split needed given the warming that is already taking place. Climate finance to frontline SIDS declined by 25% in 2019. Failure to provide this critical finance and that of loss and damage is measured in lives and livelihoods being lost in our communities. It is immoral and unjust.”

#### Opportunities for Climate Finance

Ahead of COP26, much had been said about the little that had been done about climate finance. Developed economies had pledged \$100 billion per year in aid to vulnerable communities from 2009 onwards, yet that target had not been reached. However, as the Caribbean Climate-Smart Accelerator’s CEO Racquel Moses pointed out prior to COP26, oil and gas companies received over \$3.3 trillion in subsidies in just five years after the Paris Agreement had been signed in 2015.

Some of the positive takeaways from the COP26 negotiations was the phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies, and major economies agreeing to reach the annual \$100 billion finance mark by 2023. Yet, despite these advancements, public climate finance remained an unresolved issue following two weeks of negotiations. Although no major assurances or goals were set regarding the availability of public finance in order to support sustainability projects in vulnerable communities, the private sector emerged as a willing financial contributor.

Whether or not the \$100 billion in pledges is honored, there are projects and initiatives in island communities that need to be funded now. Islands and developing countries cannot afford to wait for potential investment

opportunities from the public sector - this has facilitated the rise of private sector funds for climate mitigation projects. The slower, top-down approach of international politics is not fitted to the rapidly deteriorating environmental conditions certain communities are facing.

#### Funding Local Programmes

Globally, private companies and investors are seeking to invest in climate mitigation programmes and have been able to mobilize funds for local projects a lot faster than its public sector counterparts. With a better understanding of local climate adaptation issues, as well as the key stakeholders within their communities, private financiers have become key sources of funding for local organizations. Acting on a global issue like climate change requires local action, and local action necessitates collaboration across different industries to find workable sustainable solutions for their respective communities.

It was under this premise that the Island Finance Forum was successfully launched early last year. Recognizing the gaps in funding that existed in island communities, the entirely free event sets out to close them by creating an event that unites decision makers from different sectors to create lasting change. As the World Resource Institute’s Emma Illick-Frank explains, local resilience programmes are important, a one-size-fits-all approach may be able to tackle a core issue, but it will not take into account local communities’ needs.

This means that while major summits like COP26 are helpful with creating an overarching framework, it cannot be relied upon to enact changes at a local level. The first steps towards successful adaptation programmes and subsequent resilience is the involvement of stakeholders that are familiar with the challenges being faced in their communities and how they might be remedied best. However, changemakers at a local level often do not have the same tools or resources at their disposal as the entities that attend major events - there needs to be opportunities for local stakeholders to share their knowledge.

#### Local Action for Global Impact

Providing a platform for financiers, innovators and entrepreneurs to present their projects and collaborate on key sustainability issues enriches local economies and creates opportunities to support local programmes. Such events are making island communities become more resilient, building pathways for partnerships and capacity-building using local resources and solutions that fit local needs. The Island Finance Forum is returning in April 2022 and will build upon the growing demand for local sustainability projects and climate funding by showcasing the opportunities available on global islands.

James Ellsmoor is an award-winning serial entrepreneur and writer. He is both Co-Founder and Director of Solar Head of State, and CEO at Island Innovation. Recognised on the Forbes 30 under 30 list for his work on sustainable energy, James is passionate about climate change advocacy and environmental policy.

### Bringing sustainability back: How Esther Anson serves her island community

By Tiffany Sigrah

February 24, 2022

**Pohnpei**—For the people of Pohnpei, household farming has been a long-standing tradition within the culture, but due to westernization, the idea of food sustainability has gradually lost over the years. That is no longer the case. On the island of Pohnpei, agricultural revitalization is underway and progressing, and a key participant in the movement is Esther Anson, Nahnapasepei, Kitti.

Esther, one of the many recipients to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Inspiring Women’s Advancement Through Collective Action (IWA) project is from Kipar, Kitti, where she owns and operates the Kipar Green Nursery. Having a great passion for her island people and receiving support of grant money from IOM, Esther says she started this business with the hope to provide fresh and healthy crops for her family and especially their community.

Under the Kitti COVID-19 Prevention and Protection Plan, there is a component that highly recommends household farming to ensure food security. Thinking of her family and the community, especially during the pandemic, it inspired her to be the first to create her own plant nursery in Kipar.

Kipar Green Nursery is a new start-up business that specializes in the production and sale of seedlings and planting materials for men and women. While Esther’s target market is in Kipar, she says that Kipar Green Nursery serves all of Pohnpei. She is currently selling from her Kipar home where she farms but would like to have the venue or opportunity to sell once a month in Kolonia where majority of Pohnpei’s consumers come together for businesses.

“I am still learning the farming process, but I want to share the seedlings and harvest with the communities,” said Esther.

In Micronesia, everybody looks out for each other, and this is Esther’s intention, the “you help me, I’ll help you” mentality that is engraved in most Islanders.

While selling her harvest was not in her original plan, Yuser (Nahnapas, Kitti), Esther’s husband explains that “What we aspire to do is to go beyond only selling seedlings but to sell the crop as well” to take a further step in ensuring food security in their communities. The Anson’s showcase an equal partnership with responsibilities to their Kipar Green Nursery, an inspiring effort, one that can empower others too.

In Kipar village, Esther says there are about 50 to 100

*Continued on next page*

### ...sustainability

*Continued from previous page*

households and she intends to reach out to at least 75 of them so that they may also create small gardens of their own, which she hopes will blossom and generate an active market. this will also help Kipar Green Nursery grow significantly.

Esther hopes that her business will inspire, empower, and improve women's livelihood.

Since beginning this journey for Kipar Green Nursery, Esther says she's faced many challenges. "Farming and growing may be a difficult process, it involves a lot of patience, but it is worth it in the end, and you will feel a sense of pride and accomplishment," Esther advises

other aspiring Micronesian household farmers. Esther wants to spread this feeling throughout her community and the entire island of Pohnpei, and she encourages everyone to consider doing their own household farming.

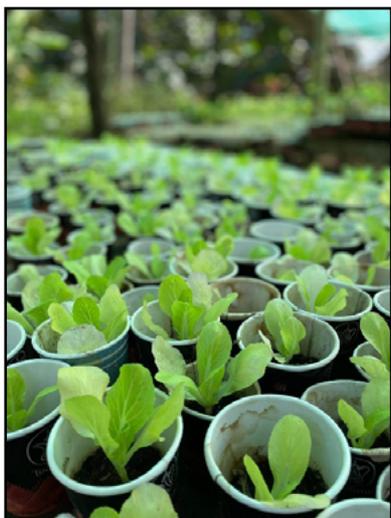
Esther Anson is an inspiring woman who shares her passion for food sustainability with everyone, demonstrating her love for her island community.

If you love cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplants, okra, cabbage, bell peppers, pumpkins, and more, Kipar Green Nursery is the place to go. Or if you're

even interested in growing some yourself, they also sell seedlings for only \$0.50 each, encouraging food sustainability for all.

Be sure to check out and follow their facebook page "Kipar Green Nursery" or call 320-5418 to arrange visits or delivery!

Through funding from the US Department of State, IOM Micronesia provided Competitive Start-up awards to business owners and entrepreneurs in the island of Pohnpei. Proposal focuses on starting, expanding or developing a business that will increase economic opportunity for women and promote women's livelihoods and participation in the private sector.



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## Pohnpei sets new International Women's Day holiday for March 8



### Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

February 22, 2022

**Pohnpei**—On Tuesday, February 22, 2022, Governor Oliver signed L.B. No. 02-20 into State Law 10L-75-22, amending 1 PC 7-101 of the Pohnpei Code by creating a new Holiday to be known as “International Women’s Day” in recognition of Women’s Day celebrated throughout the world on March 8.

Joining Governor Oliver to witness this historic occasion from the Pohnpei Women’s Council, President: Mrs. Emy

Musrasrik-Carl, Vice President, Maria Donre, Secretary – Bernolina Hedson, Treasurer – Judy Shoniber Perman Mauricio, and from the Women’s Program Coordinator from the Division of Social Services, Ms. Katsandra Shed. Chief of Staff, Kapilly Capelle, Public Affairs Officer, Peteriko Hairens, and Mrs. Elsy Santos, Legislative Liaison from the Governor’s Office were also present.

Congratulations Pohnpei Women’s Council and all who supported this important undertaking!

## Advertisement – Request for Proposals RFP 22/3275



Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique

Suva Regional Office  
Private Mail Bag  
Suva, Fiji  
Email: spc@spc.int  
Phone: +679 337 0733  
Fax: +679 337 0021

SPC Headquarters  
95 Promenade Roger Laroque  
BP D5, 98848 Noumea Cedex  
New Caledonia  
Email: spc@spc.int  
Phone: +687 26 20 00  
Fax: +687 26 38 18

Supply and delivery of construction materials for tank concrete bases, fencing, roofing, gutters, pipes and plumbing fittings to Chuuk, FSM

Pacific Community Operations Management Division through Procurements, Grants, Risk and Asset Section (PGRA) would like to invite interested individuals/companies to submit a proposal for the “Supply and delivery of construction materials for tank concrete bases, fencing, roofing, gutters, pipes and plumbing fittings to Chuuk, FSM.”

All interested individuals/Companies are to submit proposals in two separate emails : Email 1-(Technical Proposal Submission) & Email 2- submission form Part B

(Financial Proposal submission), and should be emailed to procurement@spc.int with the heading “RFP22-3275 Supply and delivery of construction materials for tank concrete bases, fencing, roofing, gutters, pipes and plumbing fittings to Chuuk,FSM ” on or before 11th March 2022 before 4pm (Fiji time).

Detailed “Terms of Reference” and the “Submission forms” can be accessed from:

RFP22-3275 Supply and delivery of construction materials to Chuuk, FSM

All proposals should reach SPC before 11th March 2022 before 4pm (Fiji time).

## Employment Opportunity NORMA Communications Officer Application submissions starting March 01, 2022 until filled



The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) seeks well qualified individuals to fill the position of FSM NORMA Communications Officer in the office of NORMA, FSM National Government, Kolonia, Pohnpei FM 96941.

### The Position:

The FSM NORMA Communications Officer will report to the Assistant Director for the Division of Corporate Services and undertake the following illustrative activities:

Primary responsibility for implementation of the NORMA Communications Plan; Initiate and coordinate all communications and awareness activities, including those of World Tuna Day, in alignment with the NORMA Communications Plan; Oversee working groups and individuals assigned to organize and provide support to such activities; Conduct awareness raising activities including powerpoint presentations to various audiences in the four FSM States of the FSM; Promote the work of NORMA and Fisheries management issues in public events, social media or other modes as may be approved by FSM NORMA; Provide support to NORMA in development of appropriate public awareness materials, particularly those relating to World Tuna Day and public presentations; Provide advice to FSM NORMA on appropriate communications activities and appropriate tools with proper audience to target; Oversee updating of content and format of NORMA website and other modes of information dissemination by NORMA; Assist NORMA staff in drafting of press releases or other communications materials as needed by FSM NORMA; Coordinate the development and publishing of NORMA Annual Report, Newsletter and other required periodic reports and publications; Other related communications activities as may be assigned under the Communications Plan implementation; perform other related duties as required by the Authority.

### The Incumbent:

Bachelors Degree in communications, journalism, marine science or related fields. Associate degree may be acceptable given additional years of experience. Minimum of one year relevant work experience. FSM Nationals are highly encouraged to apply.

### Benefits:

The Annual Salary is based on market rates but negotiable within a range from \$15,000.00 to \$20,000.00 depending on the qualifications of the applicant and the number of work experience years. This will be a full-time position under contract with FSM NORMA with likelihood of extension based on performance and funding availability.

### To Apply:

Full Terms of Reference or Job Description can be obtained by contacting NORMA as below. Submit resume by mail or in person, but preferably by email to the following address with subject line “Communications Officer”:

NORMA Office  
Ambros Building, 2nd floor  
P.O. Box PS-122  
Kolonia, Pohnpei FM 96941  
Phone: (691) 320-2700  
Email: info@norma.fm

# U.S. Embassy Kolonia COVID-19 Vaccine Drive a Big Success During Valentine's Day Week

U.S. Embassy Kolonia

February 25, 2022

The U.S. Embassy in Kolonia hosted a Covid-19 Vaccination Drive on Friday February 18 in the Embassy Parking Lot. In a nod to Valentine's Day week, the theme was "Show Your Love! Get a Vaccine or Booster Shot! Always free to the public, approximately 200 people received vaccinations, which included children, adolescents, and adults. Cashpower cards, phone cards, and children's backpacks were giveaways provided to the first 100 participants.

The Embassy has vaccinated 450 people on three vaccine drives since last June. Ambassador Carmen G. Cantor attended last week's event and said: "We are always happy to contribute not just vaccine but a venue and resources to this critical public health initiative. Partnering with the State of Pohnpei, Division of Public



Health Services gives the public highly experienced vaccinators and public health professionals in a convenient, safe, and fun setting."

The U.S. Embassy is planning additional

vaccination drives soon. Follow our Facebook page at U.S. Embassy Kolonia and our weekly American Waves radio program on soundcloud.com to stay updated!



## The Pacific Community (SPC) invites applications for the position of Country Focal Officer (Pacific Women Lead). This position will be located at the FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs, Pohnpei, Micronesia.



- Pohnpei-based position
- Join the principal development organisation in the region

### Description

The Pacific Community (SPC) is the principal scientific and technical organisation in the Pacific region, supporting development since 1947. We are an international development organisation owned and governed by our 26 country and territory members. In pursuit of sustainable development to benefit Pacific people, our unique organisation works across more than 25 sectors. We are known for our knowledge and innovation in such areas as fisheries science, public health surveillance, geoscience, and conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The Human Rights and Social Development Division - For over 20 years SPC has operated as the region's pioneer in human rights and gender capacity building to Pacific states, institutions and civil society. Through a team of regional advisors and Country Focal Officers (CFOs) based in member states,

it provides a comprehensive suite of policy and legislative advice, technical assistance and capacity building to support Pacific states to respond effectively to priority regional human rights priorities, such as gender equality, ending violence against women and children, disability rights, climate change and equitable, sustainable development.

The role – the Country Focal Officer (Pacific Women Lead) will support the host country government and relevant ministries to meet its national, regional and international gender equality commitments through the provision of advisory services, technical assistance, networking, coordination, and capacity-building, with a focus on implementing Pacific Women Lead.

The key responsibilities of the role include the following:

1. Country Planning and Implementation
2. Technical Assistance and Advice
3. Training and Capacity-Building
4. Networking and Partnership
5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

For a more detailed account of the key responsibilities, please refer to the online job description.

### 1. Qualifications

- Tertiary qualification in public policy, law, human rights, gender, youth, culture, social science, community development, international relations, development studies or similar field.

### 2. Technical expertise

- At least five years' experience in Pacific Island country/territory working to in human rights, gender equality and social inclusion, youth for development or culture for development (in government and/or civil society).
- Strategic planning experience and in-depth understanding of country cultures, context, challenges and opportunities.
- Knowledge of legislative reform process and policy development.
- Experience in community development, non-formal adult education and/or community outreach.
- Experience in financial management, budgeting and acquittals.
- Computer literacy in Microsoft Office suite.
- Driver's license.

**Closing date: 20 March 2022 – 11:00 pm Pohnpei time**

Job Reference: SH000131

Applicants must apply online at <http://careers.spc.int/>

For your application to be considered, you must provide us with:

- an updated resume with contact details for three professional referees
- a cover letter detailing your skills, experience and interest in this position
- responses to all screening questions

Please answer all of the screening questions, if you do not answer these questions your application will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed at shortlisting stage.

### Screening questions:

1. What attracted you to this position and why do you think you are the best candidate for the position?
2. What are three priority needs for improving gender equality standards in Pohnpei, FSM?
3. What does Women's Economic Empowerment mean to you and for women in FSM?

## Pohnpei Consumer Organization and USVPA host stakeholders meeting for people with disability

On February 15, 2022, the Pohnpei Consumer Organization and USVPA hosted a stakeholder meeting at the Disability Center in Nett, Pohnpei. The purpose of the meeting was to bring all stakeholders, non-profit organizations, and civil society groups advocating and supporting persons with disabilities together to share information about each respective organization and discuss issues of importance to all.

The USVPA President, Mr. Herman Semes, Jr., thanked Chairman Henry

Phillip and the Honorable Perez, Senator from Madolehnmw, for the opportunity to meet and for their leadership advocating and supporting persons with disabilities for a long time. He also raised issues relating to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between PCO/USVPA terms and conditions, Security Concerns of the Building, Maintenance and Cleaning of the Building, Internet Connection and Telephone Installation. Most importantly, USVPA President assured PCO/USVPA working relations and partnership to continue to support persons with disabilities

including veterans with disabilities.

Organizations participated in the meeting were: Pohnpei Consumer Organization (PCO); US Veteran of Pohnpei Association (USVPA); Pohnpei Women with Disabilities

(PWWD); Youth with Disabilities (YWD); My Child Speak (Autism); Outer Island Disability Association (OIDA); Pohnpei State Disability Coordinator representing Pohnpei State Government.



## IOM hosts focus group on inclusive disaster plans for people of all capabilities

*International Organization for Migration*

*February 25, 2022*

**Pohnpei**—A disaster management plan that takes into account the needs of all people, including persons with disabilities, is a successful plan. Towards this goal, IOM conducted a focus group discussion (FGD) with persons with disabilities in Pohnpei on 25 February 2022. Representatives from Pohnpei Outer Island Disability Corporation, My Child Speaks, Pohnpei Women with Disability, Pohnpei Disabled Veterans, DECEM, and Pohnpei State participated the meeting. Participants discussed the inherent challenges faced by persons with disabilities (PWD) including their specific needs before, during and after a disaster. Participants also shared their views on the best means of alerting them on impending natural hazards.

Such planning is important because research indicates that usually, disaster preparedness and emergency response systems are typically designed for people without disabilities, for whom escape, or rescue involves walking, running, driving, seeing, hearing, and quickly responding to instructions, alerts, and evacuation announcements.

Participants identified several priority areas including the need to raise awareness on the vulnerabilities faced by persons with disabilities, updating the registry of persons with disabilities, as well as effective information dissemination techniques. IOM will work with its partners and through its various projects, including IMPACT and RESLIENCE, both of which are funded by USAID, to address such needs.



## Cook Islands welcome Micronesia's pause on exiting the Pacific Islands Forum

*Government of the Cook Islands*

*February 16, 2022*

“Prime Minister Brown welcomes the decision by the Micronesian Leaders to “pause” their withdrawal from the Pacific Islands Forum to enable additional time for further dialogue in seeking a resolution to the current situation. As one of the founding Members, the Cook Islands are acutely aware of the history and standing of the Forum that has been a critical part of our Pacific identity for 50 years.

The Cook Islands has always supported the sanctity of Leaders’ decisions and the Pacific way of dialogue, respect, and consensus.

The Cook Islands is aware that media reports and statements are circulating that the Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General Henry Puna is to step down before June 2022 purportedly as part of an undertaking between Micronesia and other Forum Members.

Prime Minister Brown understands that no such arrangement has been agreed by the Forum Members and any discussions relating to SG Puna stepping aside would need to involve the Cook Islands. Prime Minister Brown can confirm he has not participated in any discussions with the Chair, Micronesia or any other Pacific Leaders relating to SG Puna

stepping down. It is disappointing that such a proposal has been disclosed via the media without prior consultation with the Cook Islands and fellow Pacific leaders.

The Cook Islands remains committed to the decision made by Leaders in 2021. Any decision for SG Puna to step aside would need careful consideration and assent by the Cook Islands Government before being put forward to all Forum Leaders. This process has not happened so we are unsure of what undertakings have been proposed to Micronesia at this juncture.

The Cook Islands current position is that the non-Micronesian Leaders in the Forum submitted a reform package to Micronesia last year and non-Micronesian Leaders are waiting an official response to this before determining next steps. Until we receive notification from the Chair on the status of this proposal, any discussions relating to the SG stepping aside are premature and puzzling. The Cook Islands looks forward to working with the Chair and all Leaders in resolving the current impasse.

Queries regarding this release can be directed to MFAI at [antonina.browne@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:antonina.browne@cookislands.gov.ck)

# President Panuelo briefs Yap State leadership on Yap, national, regional, & international items of interest & importance

## FSM Information Services

**COLONIA, Yap**—Beginning on February 24th and to conclude on March 3rd, 2022, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—has been visiting the State of Yap. This release will cover the bulk of the contents relayed by President Panuelo to Yap State leadership in his initial briefing.

President Panuelo began by discussing the COVID-19 Pandemic. The President relayed that approximately 4,000 citizens have left the FSM since the border closure in 2020 till present, with a median age of 25. 1,451 persons have been repatriated into the FSM since that time, of which 138 persons have been repatriated into Yap State.

The President suggested that repatriation activities might begin again in March or April, depending on the severity of the Omicron-variant in Guam, and the vaccination rate for young children and adolescents.

Regarding the negotiations on the Compact of Free Association, President Panuelo advised that the Joint Committee on Compact Review & Planning is relatively close towards agreement on a proposed package which, if accepted internally, would be submitted to the US-side sometime in March. The President relayed that both countries are committed to our Enduring Partnership and special relationship, with an aim towards continuing this relationship.

Regarding the Trust Funds, the President relayed that the Compact Trust Fund has a balance of \$1,079,914,682 and that the FSM Trust Fund has a balance of \$380,421,000.

Regarding the Nation's defense arrangements with the United States, the President described that the U.S. remains 100% committed to the FSM's security and would treat any threat or attack on the FSM as the same as an attack on the U.S. and any of its states or territories. President Panuelo described that there are forthcoming upgrades and expansions to Yap State's airport and seaport, including the construction of multi-purpose buildings that will serve the

interests of both the FSM and the United States.

Regarding the United Nations Multi-Country Office, President Panuelo described that the office has been established and that the FSM is hoping to solicit funding assistance from partners such as Australia for the construction of its campus.

Regarding the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders (PICL), President Panuelo described that he and the Pacific Islands Development Program are working to see if it would be possible for the next convening of the PICL to occur in or around May or June, and with the intention for U.S. President Joseph R. Biden to open the meeting (with President Panuelo serving as the Chair).

Regarding the recent King Tides across the FSM, President Panuelo described that he has amended the Declaration of Emergency that had previously applied only to the State of Chuuk. With the Declaration now including the State of Yap, the People & Government of Yap can expect additional recovery support. President Panuelo instructed the Department of Environment, Climate Change, & Emergency Management to purchase relief items in the State of Yap for distribution to islands across the state, and so as to help its economy in this time of need.

Regarding the Pave the Nation program, President Panuelo described that work is expected to commence on the Donoch and Taaginyal bridges by the end of 2023, with funding provided by the World Bank. The President further described that portions of the \$75,000,000 from the PRIME project, and \$12,000,000 from the SCORE project, will go directly to transportation projects in Yap State.

Regarding the Nation's various Social Protection programming, the President described that Yap State residents have received \$3,447,845 under the U.S.-funded Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program; that Yap State residents have received \$920,000 under the ADB and FSM-funded Low-Income Household Assistance Program; and that Yap State businesses have received \$1,595,716 of assistance under the FSM-funded Tourism Sector Mitigation Fund (aka the FSM Economic Stimulus package).

Regarding the Hapilmohol-2 or H-2, the successor to the Hapilmohol-1 or H-1, the President conveyed that the Chinese-constructed and donated ship is presently in the water, and that the FSM expects delivery of the vessel sometime in April, 2022. President Panuelo also relayed that the forthcoming Guardian-class patrol boats, constructed and donated by Australia, are due to arrive in April and July, 2022, and that the FSM is working with Japan to acquire four smaller patrol boats, of which one would be dedicated exclusively to Yap State.

Near the end of his briefing, the President advocated for Yap State's support on a number of proposed legislation currently



sitting with the 22nd FSM Congress, including the Freedom of Information Act, the Cybercrimes bill, the Foreign Investment bill, the Non-Communicable Diseases Bill, and the renewable energy mandate for FSM Petroleum Corporation/Vital.

While the majority of the President's schedule in Yap State has been, and continues to be, dedicated to supporting Yap State through various briefings, discussions, and dialogues on items of import to the FSM and to Yap, the President has also entertained tours to some of Yap's communities. These have included trips to the proposed World Heritage Site in Yap, the FSM-FMI Campus, the Yap Living History Museum, and other locations of interest across Yap.

## Yap State kick-starts the FSM's Update of its Country Program for the World's Largest Climate Fund, the Green Climate Fund (GCF)

*FSM Department of Finance and Administration | National Designated Authority to the Green Climate Fund*

**Palikir, Pohnpei** - On 3 to 4 February 2022, The National Designated Authority (NDA) to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), located within the Department of Finance and Administration, delivered its first workshop on updating the Country Program in Yap State.

The original Country Program was completed in 2018. It was the outcome of a year's long, nation-wide stakeholders' engagement in addressing the FSM's financing needs for resilient development in the FSM. It identified a 7-year, co-financed amount of over USD 1 billion in priority projects for the GCF's funding pipeline. To date, the FSM has been able to secure over USD 27million in GCF investments, particularly in the area of Food Security, Health and local-level climate finance access. Yet, the Country Program's greatest value is in the country-owned and driven processes that it has developed to access the GCF and other complementing sources of climate finance, across the National Government and the four State Governments of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae.

The Yap State workshop is the first in a series of workshops as part of the process of updating the Country Program.

Upon revisiting the Yap state priority projects in the Country Program pipeline, it was decided at the workshop that two projects may have already been funded or implemented except for the Yap Renewable Investment Program Phase III. Yap state is undertaking further consultations in order to confirm its priority projects for inclusion into the updated CP.

Yap State also helped kick-start the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system for the Country Program's implementation. The M&E system measures the strategic, institutional and administrative progress to date and was able to capture the challenges experienced particularly in both operational and technical capacity to move forward with projects development.

The workshop was virtually attended by a team from the Micronesia Conservation Trust, which is the Direct Access Entity helping to deliver the Climate Resilient Food Security for Farming Households Across the FSM project. The team shared some important lessons learned, including how they were able to navigate complex GCF approval processes, and how technical capacity in various areas of projects development such as in gender and social safeguards, was necessary for success. The NDA also presented some complementing lessons learned at the administrative level, including the need

to cultivate increased understanding within the GCF of the realities of the interlinkage between climate change and development in a small islands developing state, like the FSM.

The lessons shared by MCT and the NDA are important guideposts that will improve the FSM's ability in proposal development and accessing climate finance.

A representative from the FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs presented on the updates to the FSM Gender Policy. The national policy was endorsed in 2018 and is one of the key policy pieces that enables the FSM to fully meet the GCF investment criteria on Gender and Social Inclusion. The workshop was attended by 55% of women (14 males and 18 females). Yap State supported the importance of gender in their planning needs for climate change, but also outlined the institutional and capacity challenges that still need to be addressed to ensure a dedicated position or office within the State on this important area of work.

It was also valuable to hear from the FSMDB, a nominated direct access entity for the GCF, on the importance of the private sector and the role of the banking sector in sustainable development. It was highlighted that



FSMDB's strategy is focused on catalysing climate-smart finance for the FSM and supported the GCF's promotion of green finance, which is helping to create an enabling environment for climate-compatible investments. FSMDB expects to progress its accreditation at the Fund's next board meeting in June 2022.

The workshops are supported by a Rapid Assessment Report on the status of FSM's climate finance strategy and its programming pipeline to the GCF. The situational analysis presented in the report was reviewed and further enhanced by Yap State.

The Honorable Eugene Amor, Secretary for FSM Department of Finance & Administration and the National Designated Authority for the Green Climate Fund would like to take this opportunity to express on behalf of the FSM National Government their sincerest thanks to all the participants, who made the Yap State workshop a productive and engaging event.

## Transfer of Authority (TOA) between new and old officers of USVPA

*By Johnny Musrasrik*

On February 11, 2022, the newly-elected Officers of the US veterans of Pohnpei Association (USVPA) had an official transfer of authority (TOA) from the old Officers at the Disability Center Building in Dolonier Nett, Pohnpei. The TOA also included transfer of equipment, keys, documents, and lengthy discussion of pending issues for veterans and veterans with disabilities.

The new President, Mr. Herman Semes, Jr., took the opportunity to thank the outgoing officers, Acting President

Strick Ricardo and Mr. Richard F. Porter, Treasurer, including those who were not present for their outstanding achievements in assisting USVPA. The new President later presented recognition awards for all old officers for their exemplary work and dedication to their volunteer duties as officers of USVPA.

The newly elected Officers were Mr. Herman Semes Jr., President; Mr. Winfred Mudong, Vice President; Mrs. Clarita Rilometo Nakamura, Treasurer; and Mr. Ray John, Secretary. Representing the Board of Advisors

was Mr. John Eldridge, who is an active member of the USVPA and staff of the US Embassy in Pohnpei.

The new team is enthusiastically taking on the helm and already strategizing ahead on how best to meet the needs of active members of the USVPA.

**US VETERANS OF POHNPEI ASSOCIATION PURPOSE STATEMENT**

To formally and legally organize US veterans of Pohnpei Association (USVPA) into a non-profit organization recognized by the governments of

Pohnpei, FSM, and the United States of America.

To serve as a community outreach source and information center in the State of Pohnpei for men and women seeking opportunities in the US armed forces.

To serve as advocacy, liaison, and lobby group for veterans and veterans with disabilities interests and benefits. To be an indispensable source of information that can be very helpful for prospective service members prior to, during, and after service is the US armed forces.

## Governor Salalu, President Panuelo, & Ted Waitt sign declaration of commitment to Blue Prosperity Micronesia

*FSM Information Services*

**COLONIA, Yap**—During the State Visit to Yap, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—joined the Honorable Jesse J. Salalu, Governor of the State of Yap, in a signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Government



of the FSM, the State of Yap, and Blue Prosperity Coalition, so as to declare their collective commitment to Blue Prosperity Micronesia. Ted Waitt, Founder & Chair of the Waitt Institute, signed in absentia and on behalf of the Blue Prosperity Coalition. Also joining the signing ceremony as observers were the Honorable Isaac V. Figir, Senator representing Yap in the 22nd FSM Congress, members of Yap State's leadership, including traditional chiefs, the Honorable Vincent Figir, Speaker of Yap State's Legislature and other Members of the 10th Yap State Legislature, and representatives of Yap State's Judiciary, as well as Her Excellency Jo Cowley, Ambassador of Australia to the FSM, and the Honorable Benjamin Dille, Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States of America to the FSM.

Citizens may recall that the FSM and Blue Prosperity Coalition signed an MOU in July 2019 to support the nation's efforts to advance sustainable ocean use. The resulting program generated by that MOU is Blue Prosperity Micronesia, a five-year nation-wide initiative with the aim to protect 30% of the FSM's waters, develop strategies for economic well-being, and strengthen existing fisheries management to support the sustainable growth of the FSM's marine resources for current and future generations.

Blue Prosperity Micronesia remains one of the Panuelo-George administration's top priorities. What the MOU signed between the FSM National Government, the Yap State Government, and Blue Prosperity Coalition represents is, firstly, an acknowledgement of Blue Prosperity Micronesia's overarching goals and intentions; secondly, to clarify and confirm that the State of Yap has the authority to manage its marine environment zero to twelve nautical miles from shore, including authority related to economic activities, human use, fisheries, and protected areas; thirdly, a recognition

that the State of Yap has committed to achieving the goals of the Micronesia Challenge (which seeks to protect and effectively manage 50% of coastal territory and 30% of terrestrial territory by 2030); fourthly, an agreement that broad consultation among stakeholders is essential, as such consultation would consider community-based conservation and management efforts, traditional knowledge, and practices of local communities with respect to sustainable and equitable conservation; and fifthly, to agree to support the July 2019 MOU between the FSM Government and Blue Prosperity Coalition, including to work in partnership to develop a comprehensive, legally-binding marine spatial plan for Yap's coastal waters that uses best available information with a series of steps and expected timelines, and with technical and financial support from the Blue Prosperity

Coalition. Blue Prosperity Micronesia seeks to work across all levels of government and, with this MOU, acknowledges that the work within Yap must support the Yapese communities, while also strengthening the prosperity of the FSM as a whole.

In his comments to the attendees at the signing ceremony, President Panuelo noted his appreciation for "traditional sensitivity of ownership of the reefs being that of the chiefs", and equally his appreciation that the fourth branch of Yap State's Government, the traditional leadership, had shown full support for Blue Prosperity Micronesia.

As a first step following the signing, the MOU partners will convene to develop a work plan for Blue Prosperity Micronesia in Yap that is expected to include a coastal marine spatial planning process, and broad community consultations in water science, policy development, and outreach.

## Mensenieng Credit Union Tennis Tournament opens with short ceremony

*By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press*

*February 28, 2022*

**Pohnpei**—In the pouring down rain, a few members of the Pohnpei Tennis Club gathered for a short opening ceremony for the Mensenieng Credit Union Tennis Tournament which begins on March 1.

The matches for the tournament will be held at the tennis courts near Nan Pepper and at the Kolonia Town tennis courts, beginning at 5:30 PM, March 1, weather permitting.

Albert Johnny, Manager of Mensenieng Credit Union opened with a short speech saying that he had not known when the Tennis Club approached him that the Credit Union would be the sole sponsor for the event, but that he was proud to be able to support it. He said that though Mensenieng Credit Union had supported many other community events, particularly education events, this was their first sporting event.

United States Ambassador Carmen Cantor, who will be competing in the tournament, also spoke, saying that she didn't grow up in sports but during her last year in college, though she didn't need the physical education credit, she enrolled in a tennis class. That was it—the last time she picked up a racket until she arrived in Pohnpei two years ago. "Playing gives me a chance to feel like Serena Williams", and then laughed saying that there was no comparison between her playing and that of Williams.

She said that the tennis tournaments, both this year's upcoming event and last year's event are wonderful events for bringing the community together. People of all backgrounds get together and laugh and cheer each other on. She said she was particularly glad to see a junior division in this year's tournament, both because it's great for the young people to participate but also because she didn't want to have to face them as an opponent.



# Happy Yap Day!

## FSM Information Services

**COLONIA, Yap**—Today, March 1st, 2022, is Yap Day. A legal holiday held annually on March 1st, Yap Day is a celebration of traditional Yapese culture. Famous within the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) for its unique quality of both emphasizing the best of modern society, including democracy and democratic principles, and the best of traditional society, including respect for others and the implementation of a fourth branch of Government (traditional leadership), Yap Day allows the People of the State of Yap to strengthen and promote their individual and communal identities as Micronesians.

Prior to Yap Day proper, His Excellency David W. Panuelo visited the Municipality of Weloy where he was invited to attend the opening of a new traditional house. The Chief of Weloy, James Manguon, and the People of Weloy, gifted the President a stone money as well as a shell money. The community placed the stone money, on behalf of the President, outside of the traditional house, and the President signed the shell money. Both the stone and shell monies will be located in Yap, and will serve as a remembrance of the President of the FSM—not David W. Panuelo himself and exclusively, but all FSM Presidents, past, present, and future.

While some Western financiers are quick to ascribe Yapese stone money as the first cryptocurrency, the FSM National Government rejects this claim on the premise that Yapese stone money is not merely a means of advancing one's real and/or perceived wealth but is, rather, a demonstration of Yap's unique Micronesian culture.

In addition to the placing and signing of the stone and shell monies respectively, President Panuelo joined with First Lady Patricia Edwin, Her Excellency Jo Cowley, Ambassador of Australia to the FSM, and the Honorable Benjamin Dille, Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States of America to the FSM,

in planting the Tree of Life i.e. coconut trees outside the traditional house in Weloy.

In his remarks, President Panuelo solicited the support of Yap State to advocate to the FSM Congress that it would be culturally beneficial to the whole of the FSM for an exact replica of the traditional house to be built somewhere in the Palikir Capitol Complex.

The FSM National Government joins with the rest of the People of the FSM to collectively wish the People of the State of Yap a very happy Yap Day.

