

UOG HoveRx project demonstration a great success despite uncooperative weather

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 2, 2023

Pohnpei—Representatives of the University of Guam’s Professional Master of Business Administration Cohort XVIII came to Pohnpei for what they called their final “capstone project.” The trip was for a proof-of-concept of the project, which they entitled “HoveRx.” On April 2, the intention was to demonstrate the ability to utilize drones for the delivery of preventative healthcare items to remote areas in the State of Pohnpei.

Members of the team did a successful flight from Seinwar Elementary School in Kitti to and from Ahnd Atoll (often spelled “Ant”) on April 1, a distance of over 10 miles. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate on April 2 at the scheduled time for the demonstration. The intention on that day was to fly the large drone to Ahnd Atoll, a distance of over 10 miles, where other members of the team were stationed to receive it. The large drone would make the return trip on the following day.

The drone is actually waterproof, so it can fly in the rain, which was definitely

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FSM Congress instructs FSM President to make no changes in diplomatic relations with China Resolution passed after External Affairs committee canceled its announced hearing on the resolution

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 8, 2023

FSM—On April 4, the FSM Congress adopted resolution 22-200 CD1 CD2 regarding FSM’s Diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China. The CD numbers represent the changes from the original form of the resolution as it was originally submitted by Senator Ferny S. Perman as covered in the March 29, 2023 issue of The Kaselehlie Press (see article here). The main thrust of the resolution was to reiterate that the One China Policy is the official policy of the FSM and to instruct the President that he should make no changes in the FSM’s diplomatic policy regarding China.

The main change was that the finalized resolution that Congress passed did not include a mention of requiring President Panuelo to fully brief Congress on all

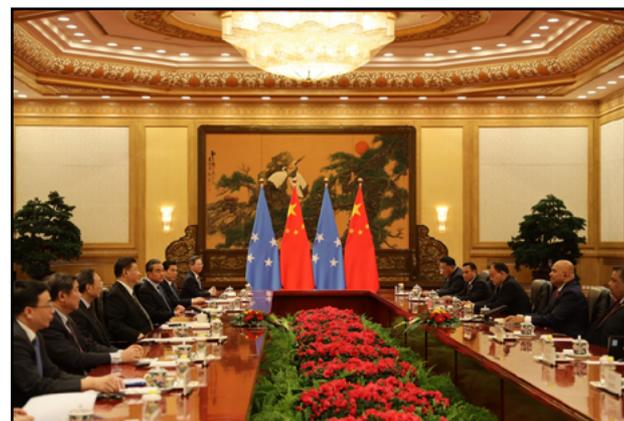
foreign affairs matters. Apparently, Congress did not have the power to make that requirement and so removed it from the original resolution.

The adoption of the resolution came the day after the Congress Standing Committee on External Affairs canceled its hearing on the matter, which had been scheduled to take place on April 3 at 2:00 in the afternoon. The President, who was off island at the time for a meeting of PRIMO (Pacific Risk Management Ohana) but had spent most of the morning in a Zoom conference with Vice President Palik and cabinet members to prepare for the scheduled hearing.

After the hearing was cancelled, President Panuelo wrote a letter to Congress Speaker Senator Wesley Simina providing the talking points he had used for his meeting with the cabinet and the Vice President. He had instructed

the Vice President and cabinet members to use the talking points during the hearing, which ended up having been cancelled. They essentially summarized the accusations against China that the President had made in his now internationally well-known letter of March 9. That letter to FSM’s top elected officials was intended to have been confidential, but the full text very quickly “leaked” to the media from one or possibly more of the letter’s recipients.

The talking points shared with the Speaker added two accusations of notable importance. They said that China had brought weapons into the FSM, likely referring to an incident in Yap, in which



FSM Maritime Officers found weapons aboard a vessel that the captain and crew said were there to defend themselves. The other was “China meeting directly with states to subvert policies, including diplomats’ recent trip to Kosrae to tell Governor Palik to go against the letter.”

[Click here for continuation](#)

FSM ONPA finds no wrong doing in Finance Department's \$9.5 million book entry to reflect PII potential liabilities

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

April 8, 2023

FSM—The FSM Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) has released the results of an audit (CR 22-194) requested by the FSM Congress of the Department of Finance and Administration's (DoFA) books in regards to a fiscal year 2019 booking of a \$9.5 million liability to cover potential exposure of the FSM Government to the FSM v Pacific International, Inc. (CA 2014-46) appeal case. Civil Action 2014-46 had to do with wrongful termination of PII's contract to build the paved road in Weno, Chuuk which was funded by an infrastructure sector grant of the Compact of Free Association with the United States. Ultimately, PII was awarded \$6 million by the court for the FSM's actions in that case.

"According to the Committee on Ways and Means trip report dated January 12, 2023 on their meeting with the external auditors responsible for the audit of the FSM National Government accounts, the Committee as well as other members of the Congress and some staff had concerns surrounding the action by the Secretary of Finance for the fiscal year 2019 to record an accrued expenditure of \$9.5 million against the general fund without an appropriation from the Congress," the audit report said in explaining the background on

why the audit was conducted. "In the opinion of the Committee on Ways and Means, the action taken by the Secretary of DoFA is contrary to the requirements of Title 55, FSM Code Section 221 which states that "Unless otherwise specifically authorized by law, no officer or employee of the FSM, or allottee of funds shall make or authorize and obligation pursuant to any appropriation, apportionment, reapportionment, or allotment of fund of the FSM Government."

The same Ways and Means trip report said that the Secretary of DoFA justified the action that was taken in order to avoid getting a qualified opinion on the financial statement and to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. If it had not done so, the FSM's financial position would have been overstated because of the potential of the estimated dollar amount liability. The government's total worth is balanced between assets and liabilities, and the liability was recorded so that the money the government might potentially owe would not be spent in the event that it lost its case.

But on November 2, 2022, the FSM Supreme Court ruled that the judgment against the FSM be amended to limit the arbitration award amount to a total of \$6 million with no pre-judgment or post-judgment interest. The DoFA then adjusted the earlier booked liability downward by \$3.5 million.

ONPA concluded in its audit that the \$9.5 million booked for fiscal year 2019 was a book-entry adjustment. The book entry was made to reflect the legal confirmation letter from the FSM Department of Justice dated August 4, 2020 (part of FY 2019) that the FSM could anticipate a potential liability in that amount in the event that PII prevailed in the case. DoFA recorded the liability on November 30, 2020. Appropriately, DoFA recorded an increase of expenditure in the account "DOJ Special Item." Expenditure accounts are increased by debits. DoFA also recorded an increase in the Accounts Payable liability account for the DOJ Case. Liability increases are recorded as credits. The booking and recording of the liability of \$9.5 million impacted the Fund balance.

When the FSM Supreme Court ruled to limit liability to \$6 million, DoFA made a reversing entry in October of 2022 to reverse \$3.5 million of the earlier \$9.5 million entry in order to reflect the new realities. The book entry decreased the Accounts Payable by \$3.5 million by debiting that account and increased the revenue account of "Other Miscellaneous" by use of a credit as was appropriate in order to reflect the realities.

No cash has yet ever entered or left the FSM's General Fund in order to pay the judgment, and as of March 31, 2023, no payment has yet been made to PII.

ONPA had no audit findings but reported to Congress that the book entry transactions were appropriate.



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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

**THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THE KASELEHLIE PRESS
WILL BE RELEASED ON:**

April 26, 2023

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

Monday, April 24, 2023

Perman introduces a bill to again increase FSM senator's salaries by 25 percent and Speaker salary by a third

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 8, 2023

FSM—On April 4, FSM Senator Ferny Perman, who will not be returning to Congress when the 23rd Congress takes its seat in Palikir, introduced a bill (C.B. 22-291) to again increase the salaries of FSM Senators.

The proposed bill has not yet received any attention from Congress other than to have been introduced to the current special session of Congress.

If Congress chooses to pass it in its current state, FSM Senators would, after being seated in Congress, be entitled to receive \$65,000 per year as salary, up from the current rate of \$52,000 annually. The Speaker of the Congress would be entitled

to \$75,000 per year from the current rate of \$55,000.

On May 10 of 2021, just under two years ago, the 21st Congress increased its salary for members with public law 21-251. It was the last Act of the 21st Congress that President Panuelo signed into law on that day.

The new proposed level would represent a salary increase of 25

percent or 13,000 additional dollars per year for 13 senators, a total budget increase of \$169,000 for the Senators who are not the Speaker. For the Speaker, the proposed percentage increase is a full third higher than the current rate authorized by PL 21-151.

At press time, the 22nd Congress had not yet voted on Perman's proposed bill to increase salaries.

FSM President asks Congress to extend security detail to Presidents and Vice Presidents even after their terms are complete

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 8, 2023

FSM—On April 3, 2023, FSM President David W. Panuelo transmitted a bill entitled "Presidential Security Act," which was submitted to the FSM Congress by Floor Leader Senator Singkor Harper. The bill was accompanied by a letter from the President to Speaker Senator Wesley W. Simina that explained his reasons for the bill.

"You will appreciate the sensitivity of the official matters that any FSM President must act and take a decisive action. Many of the official actions of the President affect our nation and people in much more impactful way. The subject matters that President acts upon could also involve international relations with other nations and numerous sensitive matters of national strategic security and international order of such importance and magnitude that could jeopardize the personal safety and security of the President and his family."

He wrote that he feels that his personal security is severely at "heightened risk" and that those risks would follow him even after his tenure as President.

With that in mind, President Panuelo is requesting that Congress pass a law that would require that a security detail be assigned to FSM Presidents and Vice Presidents not only while they are in office, but also after their term of office.

The President's now internationally famous letter to the top elected officials of the FSM accusing the Chinese government of espionage and other hostile acts within the FSM also said that he was warning the leaders about the actions despite his own concerns for his and his family's personal safety.

If Congress decides to pass the bill for an Act in an unchanged manner, the security detail would also be assigned

to At-Large members of Congress as potential Presidents or Vice Presidents during the transition period between an outgoing President and Vice President being selected by the FSM Congress. Two of the current and returning At-Large representatives to Congress have previously served as the FSM's President. Sitting FSM Vice President Palik will also be returning as an At-Large representative. Congress Speaker Wesley Simina is the sole At-Large representative who has not served in either capacity.

Though the bill has been introduced to the FSM Congress, that body has not yet voted on whether or not to adopt it in either first or second reading.

"By transmitting this bill, I wish to address in particular the heightened personal risks involved of any sitting, outgoing and even former FSM Presidents," the President's letter said.

An Analysis of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment on Revenue Sharing for Fishing Fees

FSM Information Services

March 29, 2023

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—This July, 2023, the People of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) will vote on nine proposed amendments to the Constitution. This release is the second in a series about these proposals, and focuses on the proposed amendment to Article IX, Section 2(m) on the topic of revenue sharing of fishing fees.

Although the largest total source of income into the FSM is money received from the Compact of Free Association, the second largest

revenue stream is received from the sale of fishing licenses for vessels to fish within the FSM's Exclusive Economic Zone. This figure is approximately \$70,000,000 per annum, though subject to change.

Currently, all of the money received from fishing fees is deposited into the FSM Treasury; how the money is spent is determined by the President and Congress. Under current laws and policies, 20% of the total income generated goes directly into the FSM Trust Fund, and the remaining 80% is used to fund the Executive Branch, the Legislative Branch (Congress), and the Judicial Branch (the Supreme Court), including any and all monies

that are used on public projects within the FSM's States.

Under the proposed amendment, the money received from fishing fees would be shared with the States. The FSM National Government would receive 50% or half of the total money accrued, and the States would receive the other half.

The distribution formula for the states would be divided 70% by population and 30% equally amongst the states, the rationale in part being that the States receive some basic minimum amount of money for budgetary line items that population does not impact

(e.g., maintenance of an airport), as well as ensuring that States with a larger population are better able to meet the needs of their residents.

The immediate effect if this proposed amendment is passed is that individual FSM States will have more resources to determine the use of directly, and by extension that the FSM National Government will have less financial power in the development and implementation of projects within FSM States that are sourced through domestically generated revenue from fishing fees.

Tuna Commission and CFC sponsors first Pohnpei Fishing Club tournament of the year

Precocious club member Marvey Spencer wins \$1000 for his two big yellow fin tuna

By Pohnpei Fishing Club

March 25, 2023

Pohnpei—The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, known as the “Tuna Commission”, and Caroline Fisheries Corporation sponsored the first Pohnpei Fishing Club tournament of the year on March 25.

21 boats registered for the tournament, and several large yellowfin tuna were caught. All of the big fish prizes were awarded for yellowfin tuna catches, the largest, a 91.4-pound monster caught by amazing and precocious Marvey Spencer, Jr., who fishes aboard his father’s boat, “Dolphin”. That fish won young Marvey the \$700 top prize for big fish. But that wasn’t all for Marvey, Jr. He also won fourth place for a 72.8-pound yellowfin earning him another \$300.

Second place big fish went to Marlino Mihkel aboard “Miss Enipein” for his 88.4-pound fish for a prize of \$500. Jeff Seely, aboard “Pohnpei Surf Club” won the \$400 third place prize for a 79.4-pound yellowfin.

Anglers who caught the largest of other qualifying species of fish who didn’t also win a “big fish” prize were each awarded \$150. Ohsan Ernest caught the largest remaining yellowfin tuna at 43.4 pounds. Penikinus (last name not included in results spreadsheet) aboard Miss Enipein caught a nice Mahi Mahi that weighed in at 17.8 pounds. Kevin Sehpin, aboard Sapwu, caught another great eating fish, a Wahoo of 21.6 pounds. Marlino Mihkel, aboard the prolific “Miss Enipein”, landed a 9.4-pound skip jack tuna for first prize in that species.

Roland (last name again not listed) landed a 14.6-pound barracuda, not surprisingly for club members, aboard Bavarrria II captained by Konrad Englberger.

Geniveive Gruss, aboard the “Dirty Oar”, won the top lady angler prize of \$100 for her 11.2-pound barracuda.

The United States Embassy to the FSM awarded two more EPIRBS for boat safety in a drawing. The winners of those EPIRBS were Kevin Sehpin of the boat “Sapwu”, and Roy Lowe of “4 Reels”. The Pohnpei Fishing Club is trying to get an EPIRB aboard every boat owned by a member of the club by July 31, 2023, and is well on its way to accomplishing that task due to the generosity of donors like the U.S. Embassy and the Pohnpei Surf Club.

Big thanks to all the people who helped out, including Virgie, Kumer’s guys on the boom truck, all the guys on the dock, and Mangrove Bay for hosting. Thanks again, also, to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission/Caroline Fisheries Corporation for sponsoring.

The club is planning another big year of fishing, so keep your hooks sharp and boats at the ready. The next tournament information will be coming soon.



...China relations

Continued from front page

According to the Congress press officer and press liaison, the planned 2:00 hearing of the External Affairs committee was supposed to have been a public hearing. The Kaselehlie Press, having been instructed during a “public hearing” of another committee that morning that it was not allowed to write about that hearing and that it would be given the results of the hearing, instead sought assurance that the afternoon hearing was indeed public and that the press would be allowed free access. As a result of the incident at the morning hearing, Congress said that it would make an announcement during the April 3 full session as to whether the hearing was public or not. Shortly after noon, the Congress press liaison informed The Kaselehlie Press that the hearing had been cancelled “for now”.

However, at the meeting of the committee of the whole the next morning, Congress voted to pass the resolution affirming the One China policy. Congress sessions are open to the public, as opposed to committee hearings, which are sometimes held behind closed doors. Some officials of the PRC Embassy in the FSM were in attendance at the hearing during which the vote was taken. All of the members voted to pass the resolution.

The first of President Panuelo’s talking points shared with Speaker Simina was, “The FSM’s Foreign Policy is to be a friend to all and an enemy to none, but the FSM’s national interest must always come first.”

His last two were: “I know this topic can make us nervous and scared—but it is the real conversation we must have. There will be no dignity for Micronesia if there is a war in our region, and there will be even less if we find ourselves partly responsible for allowing it to happen by not taking action to prevent it.” And, “I’ve always believed that leaders must be (b)old and to take actions today for our Nation’s prosperity tomorrow.”



Embassy of the United States of America

Vacancy Announcement:
VA2023.004

POSITION TITLE:
Maintenance Mechanic
OPENING PERIOD:
April 3 to April 21
SERIES/GRADE:
LE-1210/06
SALARY:
USD \$12,804.00

FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION AND JOB DESCRIPTION VISIT:

fm.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/

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RESOURCES OFFICE:

KoloniahumanResourceRequests@state.gov

DUTIES: Working in the Facility Management section of the Embassy, Maintenance Worker carries out scheduled and unscheduled plumbing, electrical, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) preventive maintenance and repair work in all mission buildings and facilities including residential owned and leased properties.

EDUCATION: Completion of secondary school is required and/or completion of vocational training from an accredited institute recognized as producing journeyman level technicians with concentration in electrical, plumbing or HVAC principles & application is required.

EXPERIENCE: Minimum of three (3) years of experience in the repair and maintenance of building plumbing and mechanical systems, electrical systems and equipment, or commercial/industrial HVAC systems.

LANGUAGE: Level 3 (Fluent) Good working knowledge is required. (This may be tested.)

Selected applicant under consideration will be required to pass medical and security certifications.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO):

The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.



Vacancies

Deputy Secretary General – Strategic Policy and Programming (DSG-SPP)

The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

PIFS is an Employer of Choice in the region, aiming to recruit and employ staff based on merit and organisational needs, and ensures that employment selection upholds its values and commitment to Forum membership, gender balance and building a diverse and inclusive organisation. PIFS is committed to achieving gender balance and being fully representative of our member countries. Our workforce is currently over 50% female, and we have representatives from twelve of the eighteen Forum member countries.

The Opportunity

The Forum Secretariat invites suitably experienced and qualified individuals to apply for the position of the DSG-SPP.

The position will provide support to the Secretary General and will be responsible for the overall delivery of KRAs sitting underneath the Director Policy, and the Director Programmes and Initiatives. Responsibilities include, but not limited to:

- Providing strategic advice on the leadership and management of the organisation;
- Providing strategic and managerial advice on the management of the Annual Key Results Area (KRA) Framework for the following functional areas: (i) Policy; and (ii) Programmes and Initiatives;
- Developing and maintaining effective working relationships and partnerships with member countries, CROP agencies, development partners and other stakeholders; and
- Flexibility and Continual Improvement.

Applicants should have a master’s degree (or higher) in economic/development studies, political science, or a related discipline with at least 15 years’ experience in a relevant senior management position in economic or political or sustainable development, or a related field - including senior management experience within national government structures of a PIF member country. Demonstrated experience in economic, social, security and trade policy or related field with a sound working knowledge and deep appreciation of the economic and political interests and realities of the people of the Pacific Islands, their governments, and countries.

The Eligibility Procedure

The Executive Team of the Secretariat (comprised of the Secretary General, and the two Deputy Secretaries General) is rotated among nationals from the 3 sub-regions – Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. The Incoming PIF Secretary General in 2024 is from Micronesia meaning that the two DSGs will be from Melanesia and Polynesia, and to be recruited separately in that order.

To be eligible, applicants must be a national from Melanesia only, which includes: Australia, Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Applicants must be willing to travel periodically via economy class.

The Benefits

The position carries a competitive and attractive remuneration and benefits package including medical and life insurance, education, and housing allowance. The position is placed at our Executive level with a starting base salary range from SDR 79,000 to 88,875 per annum equivalent to (FJD 233,382 to 265,555) at Band 16 on our salary scale. Amounts are based on 1 March foreign exchange rate, but your final salary will be dependent on foreign exchange rates at the time of payment.

Interested applicants are encouraged to apply through our website: www.forumsec.org where an information package containing the position description and full remuneration details is available. Candidates must include in either their application or Curriculum Vitae the full contact details of three referees.

Deadline for applications is at 5pm (Fiji time), 28 April 2023.

Member States of the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

...HoveRx

Continued from front page

present on the day of the demonstration. It can also fly in fairly high winds, but on the day of the demonstration, the wind that accompanied the storm system over Pohnpei at the time was too unpredictable to risk the full flight. Instead, the crew members demonstrated some of the flight capabilities of the drone and performed a drop of a seven-pound package containing sample preventive medicines on the beach behind Seinwar Elementary School.

Local operators recorded the flight using their consumer-level drones. They were dwarfed in the sky and on the land by the size of the drone that the UOG team used for their demonstration. One of the pilots said that the drone they used had a flight speed of approximately 50 miles per hour and a battery life of approximately three and a half hours. The combination of those two might lead readers to believe that would give the drone a range of approximately 150 miles, but as the pilot said, that would be right on the outer edge of the drone’s capability, which no drone operator likes to push. The range also depends on conditions in the air that it flies through. Higher winds would

mean slower operating speed and higher battery drain.

The drone is much more stable in flight than consumer drones due in large part to the addition of wings to the four propellers.

The team explained the purpose of the operation and held a free raffle of UOG prizes before and after the demonstration.

“This team has worked hard for the last nine months in the UOG PMBA program, and this project really is a culmination of everything we’ve learned,” HOVERx Project manager Hazel Estrellado told the Saipan Tribune. “We are excited to see our plans come to life, especially for a project like HOVERx that has the potential to impact so many people.”

Despite the lack of the weather’s cooperation, the cohort could very easily call their demonstration and the previous day’s flight to Ahnd Atoll and back a great success.

The cohort’s capstone project demonstration in partnership with Bella Wings Aviation was supported by a number of donors, including PFM, IT&E, Citadel, IP&E, Outerbridge Technical Solutions, AK, AM Insurance, and Cohort friends and family.



Pohnpeians celebrate Cultural Day at PICS track

On March 31, 2023, Pohnpeian groups gathered together at PICS Track and Field with the theme “Sapwelimataih Tiahk iei Soaren Pei Wet”, or in English “Our Tradition Our Pride Pohnpei”. Groups participated with traditional dances and music.

All photos by Pohnpei Tourism





College of Micronesia-FSM

Yap | Chuuk | Pohnpei | Kosrae

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30th Founding Day Highlights



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR PERSONNEL AUDIT

General Information

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from qualified firms or individuals to perform a Position Classification, Job Evaluation, Compensation, Benefits Study, and Audit the areas of recruitment and onboarding, policies and procedures, performance management and records retention for the College of Micronesia-FSM.

Request for Proposal

Issued by: MAILING ADDRESS:

College of Micronesia-FSM
President's Office
P.O. Box 159
Kolonias, Pohnpei FM 96941
Date Issued: April 7, 2023

Submission Deadline: 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 24, 2023.

To be considered, all proposals are to be submitted in full electronically by the DEADLINE to the HR Director at rencelly@comfsm.edu.fm

CLICK HERE TO [VIEW](#) THE FULL INFORMATION

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BANKGUAM HOLDING COMPANY AND SUBSIDIARIES

AUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2022; in 000's US Dollars)

| Assets | | Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity | |
|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| Cash and due from banks | \$ 31,152 | Deposits: | |
| Interest bearing deposits in banks | 160,789 | Non-interest bearing | \$ 850,480 |
| Total cash and cash equivalents | 191,941 | Interest bearing | 1,497,217 |
| Restricted cash | 150 | Total deposits | 2,347,697 |
| Investment securities available-for-sale, at fair value | 501,899 | Accrued interest payable | 30 |
| Investment securities held-to-maturity, at amortized cost | 318,674 | Subordinated debt, net | 34,469 |
| Federal Home Loan Bank stock, at cost | 3,318 | Other liabilities | 47,475 |
| Loans, net of allowance for loan losses | 1,379,613 | Total Liabilities | 2,429,671 |
| Accrued interest receivable | 7,613 | Commitments and contingencies | |
| Premises and equipment, net | 19,396 | Stockholders' equity: | |
| Goodwill | 13,014 | Common stock | 2,034 |
| Intangible assets | 9,980 | Preferred stock | 980 |
| Other assets | 116,526 | Additional paid-in capital, Common stock | 24,989 |
| Total Assets | \$ 2,562,124 | Additional paid-in capital, Preferred stock | 8,803 |
| | | Retained earnings | 168,193 |
| | | Accumulated other comprehensive loss | (70,408) |
| | | Non-controlling interest | 7,220 |
| | | Common stock in treasury, at cost | (9,358) |
| | | Total stockholders' equity | 132,453 |
| | | Total Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity | \$ 2,562,124 |

AUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2022; in 000's US Dollars)

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Interest income | \$ 93,187 |
| Interest expense | 2,058 |
| Net interest income | 91,129 |
| Provision for loan losses | 5,700 |
| Net interest income, after provision for loan losses | 85,429 |
| Non-interest income | 34,204 |
| Non-interest expense | 96,475 |
| Income before income taxes | 23,158 |
| Income tax expense | 3,479 |
| Net Income | \$ 19,679 |

BANK OF GUAM FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA BRANCHES

STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2022; in 000's US Dollars)

| Assets | | Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Cash and cash equivalents | \$ 2,058 | Deposits: | |
| Loans, net of allowance for loan losses | 22,495 | Non-interest bearing | \$ 80,817 |
| Premises and equipment, net | 408 | Interest bearing | 153,760 |
| Accrued interest receivable | 39 | Total deposits | 234,577 |
| Other assets | 1,109 | Accrued interest payable | 1 |
| Due from the Parent | 209,763 | Other liabilities | 1,294 |
| Total Assets | \$ 235,872 | Total Liabilities | \$ 235,872 |

STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2022; in 000's US Dollars)

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Interest income | \$ 6,207 |
| Interest expense | 18 |
| Net interest income | 6,189 |
| Provision for loan losses | 360 |
| Net interest income, after provision for loan losses | 5,829 |
| Non-interest income | 1,423 |
| Non-interest expense | 2,027 |
| Net Income | \$ 5,225 |

EASTER EGG HUNT SMS GAME

text HUNT to 505

Rank 1:
\$1,000.00 &
Samsung Galaxy S23

Rank 2: \$800.00

Rank 3: \$500.00

Game Duration:
April 05 - 30, 2023

Weekly instant \$50 topups.

Terms and Conditions: Campaign starts April 05, 2023 at 12:01am (Pohnpei local time) and ends April 30, 2023 at 11:59pm (Pohnpei local time). To participate in the EASTER EGG HUNT SMS GAME, the customer will need to text the keyword **HUNT** to short-code 505 to collect points. With a chance to win promotional and eventually win the grand prize, customer will need to play the game on a daily basis to accumulate points. Each text (correct or incorrect keyword) sent to short-code 505 will be charged 0.40/txt (GST incl.). For more information call customer care at 691-320-2740.



Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia
Statements of Condition
December 31, 2022 and 2021

| ASSETS | 2022 | 2021 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Cash and due from banks | \$6,199,280 | \$3,844,018 |
| Federal funds sold | 8,545,000 | 4,510,000 |
| Interest-bearing deposits in banks | 53,523,533 | 43,683,015 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 68,267,813 | 52,037,033 |
| Interest-bearing deposits in banks | 32,220,000 | 22,188,000 |
| Securities available for sale | 61,622,048 | 79,223,191 |
| Loans, net of allowance for loan losses | 60,195,951 | 52,893,204 |
| Accrued interest receivable | 614,544 | 666,496 |
| Prepaid expenses and other assets | 548,670 | 563,878 |
| Premises and equipment, net | 1,781,937 | 1,821,011 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total Assets | \$225,250,963 | \$209,392,813 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY | | |
| Liabilities: | | |
| Deposits: | | |
| Noninterest-bearing | 73,481,503 | 63,868,298 |
| Interest-bearing | 127,863,037 | 117,413,926 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total deposits | 201,344,540 | 181,282,224 |
| Accrued interest payable | 7,368 | 2,864 |
| Accrued expenses and other liabilities | 544,067 | 795,093 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total liabilities | 201,895,975 | 182,080,181 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Commitments and contingencies | | |
| Stockholders' equity: | | |
| Common Stock, \$5 par value, 1,000,000 shares authorized; 934,348 shares issued and outstanding | 4,671,740 | 4,671,740 |
| Additional paid-in capital | 4,663,576 | 4,663,576 |
| Retained earnings | 19,139,566 | 17,878,377 |
| Accumulated other comprehensive (loss) income | (5,119,894) | 98,939 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total stockholders' equity | 23,354,988 | 27,312,632 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total Liabilities & Stockholder's Equity | \$225,250,963 | \$209,392,813 |
| | ----- | ----- |

Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia
Statements of Comprehensive (Loss) Income
Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021

| | 2022 | 2021 |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Interest income: | | |
| Loans | \$5,090,760 | \$4,413,191 |
| Interest-bearing deposits | 1,108,954 | 342,205 |
| Investment securities | 1,002,145 | 995,029 |
| Federal funds sold | 91,226 | 4,718 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total interest income | 7,293,085 | 5,755,143 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Interest expense: | | |
| Savings | 267,299 | 42,429 |
| Other time deposits | 27,494 | 23,363 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total interest expense | 294,793 | 65,792 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Net interest income | 6,998,292 | 5,689,351 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Provision for loan losses | 550,000 | 5,000 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Net interest income, after loan losses | 6,448,292 | 5,684,351 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Non-interest income: | | |
| Loan fee income | 351,261 | 326,080 |
| Service charges on deposit accounts | 176,543 | 178,630 |
| Other | 402,645 | 423,479 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total Non-interest Income | 930,449 | 928,189 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Non-interest expenses: | | |
| Salaries and wages | 2,209,603 | 2,073,808 |
| Data processing | 387,185 | 336,857 |
| Employee benefits | 379,430 | 390,461 |
| Occupancy | 378,385 | 342,464 |
| Gross receipts and use taxes | 318,487 | 225,112 |
| Furniture and equipment | 262,105 | 207,708 |
| Electronic banking | 190,863 | 190,726 |
| Professional fees | 171,211 | 715 |
| Correspondent bank fees | 160,045 | 147,165 |
| Telephone | 131,959 | 138,475 |
| Insurance | 118,251 | 108,765 |
| Stationery and supplies | 111,723 | 123,952 |
| Miscellaneous | 63,528 | 57,272 |
| Director and shareholder | 63,527 | 95,113 |
| FDIC deposit insurance | 54,000 | 54,000 |
| Travel | 43,987 | 55,000 |
| Business development | 26,502 | 15,010 |
| Credit and collection | 15,476 | 11,178 |
| Postage | 10,888 | 8,823 |
| Teller and operating losses | 1,958 | 2,369 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Total Non-Interest Expenses | 5,099,113 | 4,584,973 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Net Income | 2,279,628 | 2,027,567 |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Other comprehensive loss: | | |
| Net unrealized loss on investment securities | (5,218,833) | (1,127,382) |
| | ----- | ----- |
| Comprehensive (loss) income | (2,939,205) | 900,185 |
| | ----- | ----- |

FSM receives three infrastructure sector grant awards totaling \$64,591,163 for the Kosrae State Hospital, Yap Water Treatment Plant, & Yap Wastewater Treatment Plant Tuesday

FSM Information Services

March 28, 2023

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—On March 27th, His Excellency David W. Panuelo—President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)—and the Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the FSM, received information from the Office of Compact Management and the Department of Transportation, Communications, & Infrastructure regarding the FSM receiving three Infrastructure Sector grant awards through the FSM’s Compact of Free Association, as Amended, with the United States of America.

The first of the three grant awards is for the \$41.5 Million (\$41,532,163) Kosrae State Hospital Project which concludes one of the FSM’s lengthiest, and arguably most colorful, procurement histories, which originally began in 2008. The multi-phase Project will see the construction of a new hospital for the People of Kosrae that will

have the physical infrastructure necessary for the government to provide quality healthcare services.

The second of the three grant awards is for the \$12.5 Million (\$12,510,000) Yap Public Services Corporation’s Water Treatment Plant. Generally speaking, a Water Treatment Plant will take surface water, rainwater, or groundwater, and make it drinkable; this is then distributed either to water storage tanks or directly to homes and businesses.

The third of the three grant awards is for the \$10.5 Million (\$10,549,000) Yap Public Services Corporation’s Wastewater Treatment Plant. Generally speaking, a Wastewater Treatment Plant will collect sewage, cleans it, and then releases it back into the environment at a safe level for humans, plants, and fish to be around.

Combined together, the three projects represent a total of \$64.5 Million

(\$65,591,163) in Infrastructure Sector Association, as Amended, coming into the funding through the Compact of Free FSM

TUNE IN TO POHNPEI'S #1 RADIO

PARADISE RADIO

FM 89.5 V6WI



JICA ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION (JAA) conducts a waste survey and VAPE presentation with Educational Talent Search Students, and celebrates its 17th Year Anniversary

On March 4, 2023, the JAA led by Acting President Justino Helgen conducted a waste survey and VAPE presentation to Educational Talent Search Students at the Small Business Building at CTECH. The purpose of the survey and presentation is to inform and encourage the high school seniors to manage their waste on a daily basis and to learn about the hidden effects of VAPE. The survey was conducted by JAA-Pohnpei representatives which included Ms. Patti Pedrus and Mr. Alfred David from the Environment and Health Sectors, while the VAPE presentation was conducted by Mr. Sebastian Tairupewiy from the Sports Division of the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs. Mr. Kazuhiko ISHIJIMA, Volunteer Coordinator gave the opening remarks and thanked everyone for coming, while the Educational Talent Search Program Director Rita Hadley expressed ETS' gratitude to JICA for engaging the students in such activities, and encouraged the students to participate actively as mindful citizens. JAA Acting President Justino Helgen

thanked JICA and ETS for the collaboration.

During the 17th JAA/JICA Anniversary on March 16, 2023 event at H.E Hisashi Michigami, Ambassador of Japan's residence, JAA and JICA members and guests gathered to celebrate their achievements and express gratitude to the Japan Government. Mr. Keiichi MURAOKA, Resident Representative of JICA Micronesia Office delivered his welcoming remarks and acknowledged all distinguished guests including Honorable Dahker Daniel, Senator of Pohnpei State Legislature, Mr. Peteriko Hairens, Public Affairs Officers, representative from the Office of Pohnpei State Governor, Mr. Tos Nakayama, Director of Department of Public Works & Transportation in Chuuk and all JAA members. High Level speeches were delivered by His Excellency Ambassador Michigami and JAA Acting President Helgen followed by a presentation by Mr. Dayn Darin Iehsi, who recently completed his



BID INVITATION NOTICE

05th April, 2023

The Project Management Office (PMO) of the Office of Transportation and Infrastructure, Pohnpei State Government of the Federated States of Micronesia is hereby issuing this Bid Invitation Notice to qualified contractors for the following projects located in **Pohnpei, FSM**:

| # | Project Name | Pre-Bid Conference | Bid Closing |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Construction of the Ohmine Elementary School | 13 th April, 2023 @ 11AM | 24 th May, 2023 @ 10AM |
| 2 | Construction of the PICS New Classroom Buildings and Ancillary Features | 12 th April, 2023 @ 11AM | 24 th May, 2023 @ 10AM |

Further information on this bid invitation may be obtained by submitting a written request for details to Mr. Farhad Khan, Program Manager, Project Management Office, Pohnpei State Government P.O. Box 2246, Kolonia, Pohnpei FM at email : info@pnipmo.gov.fm

The bidding documents, including the instructions to bidders, scope of work and conditions of contract may also be directly obtained from the Pohnpei State PMO website.


John Adolph
 Administrator / Contracting Officer
 OT&I , Pohnpei State Government,
 Kolonia, Pohnpei, FM 96941

www.pnipmo.gov.fm/projects.html

Note: All times are Pohnpei Local (UTC +11)

Masters Program from the University of Hokkaido in Japan. An election of JAA officers was held and new officers for 2023-2025 have been elected. The newly elected officers include -President Justino Helgen, Vice President Dayn Darin Iehsi, Treasurer Desiree Mori, and Secretary Joyce Roby. *JAA consists of members who have been trained in Japan made possible through the relationship between Japan and FSM to build capacity. Members return to their states and are expected to apply what they have learned through activities that engage the general public. JAA wishes to thank H.E Ambassador Hisashi Michigami, JICA Resident Representative Keiichi Muraoka for supporting the activities.



New World Bank Regional Hub signals growing commitment to the North Pacific

New hub will provide a space for collaboration, support, and knowledge exchange for Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau

The World Bank

POHNPEI, March 30, 2023 – The World Bank has officially opened a permanent office in Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia, following several years of an expanding presence and portfolio across the North Pacific.

The new regional hub will play a vital role in delivering the near half-billion USD in total support across Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Marshall Islands, and Palau.

World Bank assistance across the three countries has grown rapidly in recent years, with the number of projects tripling between 2016 and 2023 and amount of financing increasing six-fold. These projects include support for communities in Marshall Islands to prepare for the impacts of climate change; work to scale up renewable energy in Marshall Islands and FSM; an expansion of digital connectivity and the digital economy in FSM, Marshall Islands and Palau; improved maritime and road transport in FSM; and support for Early Childhood Development initiatives in Marshall Islands.

“We’re pleased to have the opportunity to host this important new hub for the World Bank in Pohnpei State,” said David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, who attended the opening event. “While we are honored the World Bank has selected the Federated States of Micronesia for their hub, it is important to make clear that this center is for our use and the use of our brothers and sisters in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau equally, and we call on our North Pacific neighbors to treat this as their own asset, and link into the World Bank’s data, knowledge, and experience – as well as The FSM’s.”

President Panuelo was joined at the opening by Marshall Islands’ Minister of Finance, the Hon. Brenson Wase, with official remarks also delivered by Palau’s Minister of Finance, the Hon. Kaleb Udui, Jr.

The World Bank’s total commitment to the North Pacific has increased from US\$76.9 million in 2016 to US\$486.2 million in 2023. All support is delivered in the form of grants from the International Development Association, the World Bank’s fund for the world’s most in-need countries.

“Our growing commitment and deepening relationship with the governments and people of the North Pacific are clearly reflected in the size and ambition of our portfolio of projects here,” said Stephen Ndegwa, World Bank Country Director for the Pacific Islands and Papua New Guinea. “While we’re proud of our existing work to drive digital transformation, early childhood health and education, oceans management, and climate adaptation in the region – I am pleased that this important hub will deepen our local knowledge and strengthen our North Pacific team on the ground.”

“As the first Resident Representative of the World Bank in the North Pacific, I look forward to expanding our presence and bringing more North Pacific knowledge, culture, and spirit of inclusiveness into the way we work both here and across the Pacific,” said Degi Young, World Bank Resident Representative for the North Pacific. “This new space is an invitation for greater collaboration and will mark an increase in North Pacific people’s representation and engagement within our portfolio – I look forward to seeing how that changes our assistance and support, for the better.”



US Embassy Defense Attache' visit with Governor Oliver

Pohnpei State Public Information

April 6, 2023

Pohnpei—Thank you to U.S. Embassy Kolonia acting Defense Attache' Kyle Papish and U.S. Navy Lieutenant Adam Bossom for their visit with Governor Oliver. Mr. Papish and Lt. Bossom provided updates on upcoming scheduled visits by the U.S. Military and current projects that U.S. Navy Seabees

are undertaking around Pohnpei.

Governor Oliver expressed his sincere appreciation for the enduring friendship and cooperation provided by the U.S. Government to the State of Pohnpei and looks forward to the upcoming visits and projects in the State of Pohnpei.



Project launched to strengthen water security and limit the impact of COVID-19 in Micronesia

International Organization for Migration

Chuuk – The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has launched a new project to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The project will respond to community spread of COVID-19 which reached the FSM in July 2022, nearly three years after the first case was confirmed globally.

The USD 1.5 million Covid-19 Response: Improving WASH Access in Public Facilities project, funded by the Government of Japan, is also implemented in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) where community transmission of COVID-19 began in August 2022.

The project in FSM and RMI aims to limit the impact of the pandemic by improving access to WASH in public facilities. The project is very timely, launched some days before World Health Day on 7 April, which this year focuses on Health for All.

“The rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in FSM and RMI, despite the Governments of both nations taking urgent measures to curb its transmission, was a public health challenge that required immediate attention,” said Salvatore Sortino, IOM Chief of Mission in Micronesia speaking at the project launch on 29 March.

“IOM is pleased to work with the Government of Japan and collaborate with the Governments of FSM and

RMI to deliver much-needed WASH assistance to prevent the infection from spreading further, particularly in hard-to-reach outer islands,” Sortino added.

“Sanitary water is essential for our daily lives and it turned out to be at risk during the pandemic, especially in outer islands. As all of us have learned in the last couple of years, COVID-19 can spread quickly but basic measures especially washing hands frequently are the most effective way to prevent the spread and limit the impact of the outbreak,” stated Yasutaka Okamoto, Second Secretary of the Embassy of Japan in the Federated States of Micronesia.

The 12-month project targets 76,000 community members in six islands in RMI and 13 islands in FSM’s Chuuk State with a focus on remote outer

islands where access to WASH facilities and health services is limited.

Across all target islands, the project aims to install a set of WASH facilities including a water tank, roofing and piping for a rainwater catchment system, a handsfree handwashing station, and a medical sink.

The WASH facilities will be installed in public places such as schools, churches and Government offices which have gaps in water and sanitation facilities, receive many visitors on a regular basis and where local authorities and partners can sustain the facilities after handover by the project.

Additionally, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) activities will be implemented to

increase knowledge on transmission and hygiene habits in the community and address immediate and long-term needs. At the launch event, consultations on selection of public infrastructures and methodologies for RCCE were conducted with mayors of target islands in Chuuk to ensure the project is adapted to local needs and capacities.

IOM will work in close partnership with national and state Departments of Health, Mayors, Office of the Governor and national and state disaster management agencies to implement activities timely and ensure relevant agencies assume ownership over the facilities once installations are completed.

For more information, contact at IOM Micronesia: Haimanot Abebe, Email: haabebe@iom.int, +691 320 8735



UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme holds discussions with North Pacific Countries on strengthening maritime law enforcement



Mr. Shanaka (in the middle) with Acting FSM Secretary of Justice Leonito Bacalando, Maritime Commander Steward Peter, Chief of National Police Cindy Ludrick, TCU Darrel Poll and UNODC/TCO focal point Sophia H. Pretrick (1st from the left).

United Nations Micronesia

Pacific Island Countries have a vast geographical ocean space that plays a critical role in the national security, economic development, and sustainable livelihoods of these countries. Noting the importance of maritime security in the strategic policy of countries in the Pacific, the Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) of UNODC conducted a visit to several North Pacific countries, FSM, RMI, Nauru and Kiribati, in March 2023 to discuss with relevant authorities on capacity-building needs to strengthen maritime law enforcement.

In the Federated States of Micronesia, Mr. Shanaka Jayasekara - GMCP Regional Programme Coordinator for Southeast Asia and the Pacific met with Acting Secretary of Justice and the Head of the Police Maritime Wing, as well as the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). He held similar discussions with Acting Police Commissioner and Maritime Police Unit of Kiribati; with Acting Foreign Secretary, Attorney General, Deputy Police Commissioner, and Director of MIMRA in Marshall Islands, and with the Police Commissioner and Police Maritime Unit of Nauru.

GMCP representative also visited and held discussion with the Office of Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) based in Majuro.

GMCP is currently implementing a project to install Terrestrial-based Automatic Identification System (AIS) Receivers in Fiji, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The objective of the project is to develop a low cost and sustainable maritime surveillance capability focused on small craft. At present, there is an excessive dependence on AIS Class A signals collected from space-based satellites for maritime surveillance. However, this is not adequate for monitoring purpose as AIS Class A transponders are used primarily by larger vessels, while small craft including yachts, pleasure craft, fishing vessels and buoys use AIS Class B. The GMCP Project plans to install up to 20 Terrestrial AIS Receivers in 8 Pacific Island Countries that can collect AIS Class B signals and link the data to the national maritime surveillance centre in each capital city.

Besides the discussion on capacity-building needs, part of the visit was also to help identify potential locations to install coastal AIS station for the project. Improved maritime surveillance will help law enforcement agencies in the targeted states monitor their maritime zones more effectively, particularly in detecting illicit activity at sea, intercepting suspicious vessels in a timely manner, and providing more efficient Search and Rescue operations.

The UNODC Global Maritime Crime Programme looks forward to working closely with countries in the Pacific in the time to come to strengthen their overall maritime law enforcement capacity, and further deepening regional cooperation to effectively counter maritime crime in the region.



Animal health experts train to improve livestock health and production in the Pacific

Pacific Community

31 March 2023

Nadi, Fiji – Over 42 health experts from 17 countries gathered in Nadi, Fiji, this week to train on improving animal and livestock health in the Pacific.

The Performance of Veterinary Services (PVS) Pathway Orientation Training Workshop brought the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) experts together with country representatives to evaluate veterinary services during the gathering organised by the Pacific Community (SPC) and WOAH. The participants included 32 country representatives, 6 WOAH PVS experts, staff and 4 observers.

The lack of qualified veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals and diagnostic services has been a long-standing challenge impacting the Pacific's animal health and livestock sector. Veterinarians and vet paraprofessionals protect livestock health and production, monitor animal disease risks, and safeguard the region from emerging threats.

SPC's Land Resources Division (LRD) Director Karen Mapusua said

the training was timely, as it helped to maintain the momentum from the recent Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) and Pacific Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry Services (MOAFS) meetings held earlier on 9 – 10 March.

"This event supports the implementation of the Pacific Animal Health and Production Framework and the Pacific Animal Health and Production Capacity Development Plan endorsed by the HOAFS and MOAFS. It articulates regional priorities in addressing animal health and product development needs in Pacific countries and territories," said Ms Mapusua during the opening event.

The newly endorsed plan highlights critical issues, including availability and access to veterinary services across the Pacific.

"This framework and the plan acknowledge and recommends the PVS Pathway as an important tool that empowers national veterinary services by providing them with a comprehensive understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. It is our understanding that WOAH's PVS Pathway has helped countries worldwide to improve

veterinary services and delivery of animal health initiatives," said Ms Mapusua.

The PVS Pathway, developed by WOAH, is a worldwide capacity-building platform that empowers national veterinary services to improve animal health and welfare.

"The PVS Pathway is a powerful programme starting from an evaluation of the current status of veterinary services, which can lead member countries to strengthen their capacities and improve their competencies," said WOAH Regional Representative Dr Hirofumi Kugita during her opening address.

"This enables countries to take ownership and prioritise improvements to their animal health system."

Participants provided reflections and country updates on their animal health status and context during the training. The PVS Pathway includes four stages: orientation, evaluation, planning, and targeted support for member countries that will help lead to better animal health outcomes for the Pacific.



"WOAH and SPC have been working closely together to better understand the animal health and production activities in the region and how we can work together, and with SPC member countries, to improve them. This workshop is one of the fruits of this valued collaboration and I look forward to continued and deepened partnership to the benefit of our region," said Ms Mapusua.

Ms Mapusua also acknowledged partners that are supporting work on strengthening animal health in the region, including the Australian Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, WOAH, New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, and the European Union.

Early Action Rainfall Watch could reduce impacts of rainfall extremes in Pohnpei

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

27 March 2023

FSM—Last week, the Weather Service Office Pohnpei underwent training on development of an Early Action Rainfall Watch (EAR Watch), a bulletin providing early warning of rainfall extremes for the disaster management sector. Training was provided with assistance from the Australian and New Zealand aid funded Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac) and delivered by Australia Bureau of Meteorology and Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP). There were 10 Stakeholders representing disaster management agencies and outer island authorities joined the workshop to discuss ways to channel predictions of extreme rainfall to the community level.

Rainfall extremes are problematic for

communities in the Federated States of Micronesia. Prolonged drought associated with the 2015/16 El Niño event led to severe water shortages across most islands. Current dry conditions on the islands of Nukuoro and Kapingamarangi in Pohnpei State have led to widespread crop damage.

"On Kapingamarangi It has been very dry. When you shake the coconuts, there's very little water inside", noted MR Juity Hainrich, Mayor Representative, Nukuoro Community. Advanced warning is crucial for communities on outer islands, who are far away from National and State Government services. "We need drought early warning so we can clean our tanks in advance rather than waiting for the drought to begin. The COSPPac programme is a critical need for our communities".

The EAR Watch could cover all islands

in FSM, providing information on current drought status and rainfall predictions for future months. MR Wendolin Lainos, Captain of the Fire and Emergency Services believed the the EAR Watch could help the Disaster Coordinating Office to more effectively pass drought information to the heads of agencies. "The EAR Watch template includes detail on impacts. This would make it easier for the DCO to present drought early warning information to the Governor when needed".

Simplified infographics, social media posts and radio broadcasts are important for channelling key messages to communities and households. "I hope WSO Pohnpei will adopt the EAR Watch" said MR Rickson Higgins, Disaster Focal Point and Community Liaison with the Department of Education. "The infographics will really help schools in the outer islands. They will be able to request assistance with

maintaining water tanks in advance of a drought, so that they can capture any rainfall that comes leading up to a drought".

The EAR Watch also provides an early 'heads up' about upcoming prolonged wet periods. "if we know that the coming months are likely to be very wet, we can train our volunteer network in advance to roll out hygiene campaigns. If they are able to do this before water borne disease outbreaks start, we can avoid a lot of suffering" said MR Morgan David, Disaster Management Officer with the Micronesia Red Cross Society.

The Early Action Rainfall Watch training in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia was held from 23 to 24 March, 2022. This was funded by the Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac) which is funded by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand.



Embassy of the United States of America

Vacancy
Announcement: VA2023.005

POSITION TITLE:
Maintenance Supervisor
OPENING PERIOD:
April 3 to April 21

SERIES/GRADE:
LE-1205/08

SALARY:
USD \$17,453

FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION AND JOB DESCRIPTION VISIT:

fm.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/

CONTACT THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE:

KoloniahumanResourceRequests@state.gov

DUTIES: Position supervises maintenance personnel. Direct and supports maintenance and operation of all U.S. facilities and residential properties. Serves as Post Safety Coordinator with responsibility for assisting the Post Occupational safety and Health officer (POSHO) in carrying out the day-to-day functions of the Safety, Health, and Environmental Management (SHEM) and Fire Protection Division programs at the embassy.

EDUCATION: Completion of secondary school, a minimum of two years relevant technical courses pertaining to the job functions and journeyman's level of certification in carpentry, electrical, air conditioning, or plumbing are required.

EXPERIENCE: Four (4) years' experience in Facility Maintenance work such as repair, alteration, and limited design and construction including carpentry, electrical and plumbing trades.

LANGUAGE: Level 3 (Fluent) Good working knowledge is required. (This may be tested.)

Selected applicant under consideration will be required to pass medical and security certifications.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO): The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation.

Out Briefing for Yap DHS with USACE, OIA and Honolulu District, HHF Planners

Yap Department of Health Services

April 05, 2023

KENG, Weloy—On April 4, 2023, the Yap Department of Health Services (DHS) team accompanied by Yap State Governor, Honorable Charles Chieng, Yap State Legislature Floor Leader, Honorable Terence Fong and members of the Yap DHS Governing Board met with the team from the US Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA), the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Honolulu District, Helber Hastert & Fee (HHF) Planners for an out briefing on their general preliminary findings and recommendations from their Hospital Maintenance Failures Root Cause Analysis.

Yap State is the last USAPI jurisdiction for the team to visit as it went through the islands conducting a similar analysis for other hospitals in the region.

The team is composed of Mr. Donald W. Schlack Project Manager International and Interagency

Services - US Army Corps of Engineers, Mr. Martin J. Moore III Grants Management Analyst - Office of Insular Affairs US Department of Interior, Ms. Cheryl Burkindine Field Representative for the FSM - Office of Insular Affairs US Department of Interior, and Mr. Thomas A. Fee - President of HHF Planners and their technical experts.

Yap DHS Acting Director, Maria Marfel, welcomed the team and expressed her most sincere appreciation for the teams' work and assessment of the hospital and agreed with their findings and recommendations.

The team requested relevant hospital documents and reports, such as facility master plans and maintenance/CIP budgets, as part of the site visit pre-planning process in 2020. The site visit was delayed until now by Covid-19.

Mr. Schlack and Mr. Fee also brought an architect, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer, and a physician to interview key hospital and other personnel, conduct group sessions,

look into all aspects of facilities issues and discuss root causes and opportunities to improve maintenance management practices for long term sustainability.

The USAPI jurisdiction includes American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

Root cause analysis helps identify and prevent recurrence of maintenance and system failures by collecting data, cause charting, root cause identification, and recommendation generation and implementation. Addressing root causes provides long term comprehensive solutions as opposed to trying to simply fix each problem when it comes up.

The visiting team departed Yap on April 5, 2023, and has 60 days to finalize its report after which time it will share a copy with the Yap DHS and the Yap State government.

An analysis of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment on Veto Override

FSM Information Services

March 30, 2023

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—This July, 2023, the People of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) will vote on nine proposed amendments to the Constitution. This release is the third in a series about these proposals, and focuses on the proposed amendment to Article IX, Section 2(q) on the topic of Presidential Veto Override.

Under the FSM Constitution, the Congress has the power to create laws, including the power to decide how money will be spent. Congress creates laws by passing bills. A bill passed by Congress must be approved by the President before it becomes a law (or become law without the President's signature after thirty days). If the President believes that Congress has passed a bill that is not in the FSM's national interest, the

President has the power to stop the bill from becoming a law by vetoing the bill. If Congress believes the President's decision to veto is wrong, the Congress can pass the bill by a veto override.

Currently, for the Congress to pass a bill, the bill must pass First Reading by a 2/3 vote of all Senators. The Congress presently has 14 Senators and, thus, to pass First Reading, 10 out of the 14 Senators must vote in agreement with the bill. A bill that has been passed on First Reading must then be passed on Second Reading by 2/3 vote of the state delegations, with each state casting one vote. As the FSM only has four States, the practical effect is that 3 out of 4 Senators must vote for the bill in order for it to pass Second Reading.

If the President vetoes a returned bill to Congress, Congress can currently pass the bill by Veto Override using

the same number of votes as needed to pass on Second Reading. The practical effect is that the Presidential Veto, while symbolic, carries little power.

Under the proposed amendment, the Presidential Veto Override would now require two steps. The first would be for 2/3 of the Senators representing Election Districts (i.e., 7 out of 10 Senators) to override the veto. The second step would be for 3/4 of the At-Large Senators to vote in favor of the bill and override the veto.

The immediate effect of the passage of this proposed amendment is that it increases the number of Senators who must support a bill after the President vetoes it, and so the balance of power between the Executive and Legislative Branches will be more equal than before, with the Executive Branch gaining more power than it previously had.

DOI and DOE Grants for FSM Groundbreaking



U.S. Embassy Kolonia

April 10, 2023

Chargé d'affaires Alissa Bibb participated in the groundbreaking of the College of Micronesia-FSM Teaching Clinic and Student Center Buildings in Palikir on Thursday, April 6. The COM-FSM Teaching Clinic (5.6 million) is funded by the CARES Act through the U.S. Department of Education. The Student Center is funded by Compact Infrastructure Funds (8.3 million) through the U.S. Department of Interior Office of Insular Affairs.

With the assistance provided to construct these two buildings, the United States reiterates our commitment to ensure access to a safe space for training, counseling, and creative learning. The teaching clinic will also include a dispensary that will allow nursing students to work closely with Pohnpei State Health officials for hands on training. The student center will feature a tutoring space, counseling center and other student services programs.

Governor Oliver meets JICS Director



Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

March 29, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver met Mr. Serizawa Shinichiro, Director, Country Assistance Division, and Mr. Yosuke Ishikawa from the Japan International Cooperation System (JICS). Mr. Serizawa and Ishikawa are in Pohnpei to oversee site preparation for a press machine at the Pohnpei State Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new

recycling center in Dekehtik. The press machine is provided through Japan's Grant Aid for the Economic and Social Development Programme.

Thank you to the Government of Japan for their ongoing support and cooperation.

Governor Oliver meets with RMI Minister of Foreign Affairs

Pohnpei State Information

April 3, 2023

Peilapalap, Pohnpei—Governor Oliver welcomed the Republic of the Marshall Island's (RMI) Minister of Foreign Affairs, T.H. Kitlang Kabua to the Governor's office. Minister Kabua and Finance Minister T.H. Brenson Wase, came to Pohnpei to attend the opening of the World Bank's regional office on Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Governor Oliver thanked Foreign Minister Kabua and delegation for their visit. He also commended and congratulated her for her efforts as the Chief Negotiator for the RMI compact negotiations. Governor Oliver spoke fondly of the previous leaders of RMI and their achievements that benefitted all of Micronesia. He also spoke of the long-established connections between our two countries and expressed his gratitude for the continuing cooperation and connections.

Among those accompanying Minister Kabua to the Governor's office were the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Annjanette Katil, Sally DeBrum, Bill Joseph, Kino Kabua, Thomas Addison, and Leion Anitok.



Weather Service Office Chuuk looks forward to continued support from the Climate and Oceans Support Programme in the Pacific

By Olivia Warrick, COSPPac

Extreme rainfall causes problems for communities in Chuuk State. ‘Too little’ rain can cause widespread water shortages and crop damage, while ‘too much’ rain can lead to flooding. Last week, the Weather Service Office Chuuk hosted a workshop with Chuuk disaster management stakeholders to together develop a new extreme rainfall early warning tool called the Early Action Rainfall Watch (EAR Watch). Training was provided by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme with assistance from the Australian and New Zealand aid funded Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac).

Johannes Berdon, Official in Charge

of the Weather Service Office Chuuk, emphasised the importance of support from programmes such as COSPPac. “This is the first time that COSPPac has come to support us with training in FSM. Stakeholder engagement – like this workshop - is essential to ensuring our climate services are impactful at the community level” noted Mr. Berdon. “We’re grateful for the help of the COSPPac team and we’re looking forward to this crucial support continuing in the years ahead”

Early warning is particularly crucial to minimizing the impacts of drought. Stakeholders attending the workshop expressed strong interest in developing a dedicated drought management plan for Chuuk State. “Drought is a real problem in Chuuk state. It’s common for people

to wait until the impacts start before they do anything, but response is very costly. We need to put a drought management plan in place to allow anticipatory action to offset impacts instead” noted Roger Arnold, Special Adviser to the Governor of Chuuk on Economic Matters. “This workshop is a good first step for WSO, to put in place the rainfall monitoring and forecasting information necessary to anticipate drought”.

Stakeholders participating in the workshop included representatives of the Chuuk Disaster and Emergency Operations Centre, Chuuk Public Utility Commission, Micronesia Red Cross Society, and Chuuk Women’s Council. “The way our system is set up means that when we receive data from Chuuk Weather Service that there will be sign of drought we inform

the municipalities on HF/VHF radio and announce on V6 AK Radio that they need to assess their islands, make their reports on what they experience and submit it to our office. Our DEOC Office will make a report based on the climate information and Municipalities reports submitted to the Governor. Governor will make a declaration for assistance relief. However, an early warning tool like the EAR Watch, could help to trigger actions in advance to prevent impacts, by working together with WSO” stated Isen Ainis from the Chuuk Disaster and Emergency Operations Centre.

For more information about rainfall predictions and the EAR Watch, contact the WSO Chuuk, at johannes.berdon@noaa.gov or boyd.mackenzie@noaa.gov

UNICEF and Rotary strive to protect 100,000 Pacific Island children from life-threatening illnesses

UNICEF & Rotary

31 March 2023 – A Rotary and UNICEF immunisation program will protect up to 100,000 children in nine Pacific countries from potentially deadly illnesses including Rotavirus, Pneumococcal disease and Human Papillomavirus.

The immunisation program is being implemented by UNICEF in Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, Tokelau and Kiribati, in cooperation with the Ministries of Health, and with the support of millions in fundraising by Rotary members in Australia and New Zealand, and contribution from the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Visiting the Pacific this week, Rotary International President, Jennifer Jones, has seen firsthand the impact the vaccination program is having on children and families.

“While visiting Kiribati this week I have seen how critical preventative care is for newborns and children, and where access to clean water and nutrition is limited, it is even more critical to protect children’s already

vulnerable health from illness,” Ms Jones said.

“Together with UNICEF, Rotary is committed to strengthening health systems and ensuring sustainable access to health care in the Pacific through immunisations and health worker training.”

The US\$3.9 million project has enabled UNICEF to procure, transport and store vaccines; and provide technical assistance and training to health workers, including support to educate parents about the vaccine.

UNICEF Pacific Islands Representative, Jonathan Veitch, said the program is literally lifesaving for Pacific Island children.

“Every year in the Pacific, families grieve the loss of 1,500 children who die before their fifth birthday. Pneumonia and diarrhoea are leading killers of children in this age group, and it is heartbreaking that Pacific Island families are suffering because of preventable illnesses. We’re proud that this partnership is protecting the precious lives of infants and children in the Pacific,” Mr Veitch said.

Pacific Resilience Partnership spearheads anticipatory action in the region

Joint Press Release- Forum News

28 March 2023

NADI, Fiji – In an effort to build resilience to climate change and disaster risk in the Pacific, the United Nations (UN), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and Pacific Regional Partners, under the umbrella of the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP), are hosting a four-day workshop to sensitize regional and national partners on the importance of anticipatory action, a proactive approach to humanitarian response that aims to reduce the impact of disasters and crises before they occur.

“The United Nations is committed to supporting Pacific Island countries in strengthening these combined efforts accordingly and accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,” said the UN Resident Coordinator, Alpha Bah in his opening remarks.

The workshop will enable shared understanding on anticipatory action and its key building blocks. It will also identify key players regionally and at country-level and establish a coordination mechanism for anticipatory action in the Pacific.

“Governments play a critical role in setting policies, allocating resources, and creating legal frameworks that enable effective disaster risk reduction,” added Mr Bah. Effective coordination and partnerships will therefore be crucial to identify gaps and opportunities in existing early warning and disaster risk management

mechanisms and to integrate anticipatory action approaches into policy frameworks. “To manage the growing impacts of disasters more effectively, we need to increase collective understanding of the entire system of actors and activities that make up anticipatory action. By connecting with the experiences of communities and ensuring these are hard-wired into our policies and processes, we can enhance risk-informed action, and ensure communities build longer-term, more sustainable, stable and secure resilience. As a result, we can minimize the human and economic losses that can set back development progress,” said Katie Greenwood, Head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Pacific Delegation.

“The best way to prepare for disasters is to work and deliver strategically and smartly, working with our resilient communities to strengthen solutions and deliver innovation – events like this provide the opportunities for a cohesive Pacific response to disaster risk management, and the Forum is pleased to be part of these forward-facing, life-saving initiatives,” said Dr. Fillimon Manoni, Acting Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS).

The workshop provides a critical opportunity for regional and national partners to share their experiences, best practices and challenges related to anticipatory action with a view to enhance preparedness among communities, improve response times and strengthen resilience to multi-hazard shocks and stressors.

FSM Congressional Resolutions Seal Funding to Start Construction of EMC

Joint Press Release: Australian, Japanese, and United States Embassies to the FSM

April 10, 2023

The FSM Congress on April 7 passed three resolutions accepting grants to fund the construction of the East Micronesia Cable that will connect the island of Kosrae and the island states of Kiribati and Nauru with the HANTRU-1 cable at Pohnpei. The United States provided two grants for FSM's share

of the project totaling \$20 million and Australia provided an additional grant for \$10 million to the FSM through the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific. The acceptance of the grant facilities paves the way for the three island states to enter into a contract with a supplier to commence construction of the submarine cable. The East Micronesia Cable project, supported by Australia, Japan and the United States, will provide faster, high quality and more reliable connectivity.



Governor Reed Oliver appointed Belsipa Mikel-Isom as Pohnpei's Attorney General. She took the oath of office on March 29, 2023

\$300,000 in grant funding from the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies awarded to organizations and communities to advance Micronesia Challenge efforts

The Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) through a grant from the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies (MACP) awarded subgrants to ten (10) organizations and communities across the Micronesia Challenge (MC) jurisdictions. The purpose of the project is to further build the resilience of Micronesian communities and ecosystems to better withstand the impacts of increasing stressors from climate change and global warming by expanding the protection of the region's most critical natural resources. MCT issued a Request for Proposals for projects and issued \$300,000 in subgrants to the following organizations and communities to implement locally led initiatives on the ground (listed alphabetically):



| Awardee | Location | Project Title |
|--|------------------|---|
| Ajeltake Community Development Association Inc. | Marshall Islands | Ajeltake Coconut Replanting and Climate Adaptation Project |
| Conservation Society of Pohnpei | Pohnpei | Ecosystem-based Food Security Management through Prevention, Eradication, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in Pohnpei, FSM |
| Kosrae Conservation & Safety Organization | Kosrae | Enhancing capacity of locally-managed protected area network (LMA) in Kosrae |
| MLMDA Youth Organization | Pohnpei | MLMDA Nanwap Marine Protected Area Management and alternative Income Generation Project |
| Ngardmau State Government PAN Office | Palau | Building Resiliency of Ngermasech Conservation Area – Maintaining mangrove socio-ecological systems through generation of low impact use of mangrove resources to generate women focused alternative livelihood |
| One Reef | Palau | Enhancing Community Compliance & Surveillance in Palau |
| Oneisomw Environmental Conservation Management Association | Chuuk | Engagement of advance marine resources management for Oneisomw community through enhancement of local capacity and expansion of MPA Network |
| Palau Conservation Society | Palau | Rebuilding resilience of biodiversity and people through recovery of unique forests in the atoll islands of Kayangel, Palau |
| Palau International Coral Reef Center | Palau | Tracking the movements of the longface emperor Lethrinus olivaceus at a spawning aggregation site to inform fisheries management in Palau |
| Palau Protected Areas Network Fund | Palau | Integrating Climate Change and Fisheries Management in PAN Site Management Plan in Palau |

The Micronesia Challenge is a commitment by the leaders of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau to effectively manage the natural resources that are crucial to the survival of Pacific traditions, cultures and livelihoods. The funding support from MACP enables local partners to design projects that will capacitate the communities and contribute to the advancement of fisheries, livelihoods, protected areas, and policy across the jurisdictions.

UOG student headed to Arctic to assist with climate change research

University of Guam

March 31, 2023

This summer will be colder than usual for University of Guam student Loreto Paulino Jr., but it will also be unforgettable. The UOG chemistry major will be looking for information on climate change while camping in an Arctic region of Alaska with no phone, no internet, and access only by small plane.

Paulino is one of 11 students selected nationwide — and the first from UOG — to be on this year’s Polaris Project research team under the Woodwell Climate Research Center. The project describes its work, funded by the National Science Foundation since 2008, as investigating the fate of the vast quantities of ancient carbon locked in Arctic permafrost as it melts. It seeks to inform decision makers and the public about climate change and to train future Arctic researchers.

Paulino found out about the Polaris Project at the 2022 SACNAS Diversity in STEM Conference in Puerto Rico. He visited the booth for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Woods Hole Oceanographic

Institution — one of his top picks for grad school — and met Dr. Nigel Golden, a post-doctoral researcher studying the response of Arctic species to climate change, who encouraged Paulino to apply for the Polaris Project.

A program focused on diversity Paulino said he was drawn to the opportunity because of the project’s focus on addressing climate change and its focus on building diversity in STEM and among future leaders in Arctic research. When reviewing the application, Paulino said one question stood out to him: How do justice, equity, and inclusion relate to addressing climate change?

“I immediately thought of Guam and how unfair it is that the people living in this region, who will be hit the hardest by the effects of climate change, are not included in climate

votes in the United States,” he said. “This exclusion highlights the urgent need to empower and include the most vulnerable communities in our efforts to tackle climate change.”

Paulino will head to Massachusetts in April for field safety training. He will then spend two weeks in July with the Polaris Project faculty and research staff doing intensive fieldwork in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta of Alaska. Each of the students will conduct their own research project there and then spend another two weeks back at Woodwell Climate Research Center analyzing their data.

Unexpected Alaskan experience

“Alaska is a place I never imagined I would go, but I am excited to explore its beautiful wildlife and scenery,” he said.

Paulino is pursuing a degree in chemistry and a minor in mathematics with the ultimate goal of obtaining a doctorate in chemical oceanography, a field that studies the composition of seawater and how it interacts chemically with the atmosphere and marine organisms. It’s a field he hopes more students from Guam will get into as well.



The Polaris Project field expedition in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta of Alaska in 2017. University of Guam student Loreto Paulino will join the expedition this summer. Photo by John Schade and courtesy of the Polaris Project



The Polaris Project research crew boards a seaplane on their way to the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta of Alaska in 2017, a remote area in the Arctic. University of Guam student Loreto Paulino will join the expedition this summer. Photo by John Schade and courtesy of the Polaris Project



Loreto Paulino Jr. was one of 11 students selected nationwide to go on an Arctic research expedition in July called the Polaris Project under the Woodwell Climate Research Center. Photo courtesy of Guam EPSCoR, University of Gua



University of Guam chemistry major Loreto Paulino Jr. works at the UOG Marine Laboratory. He has been assisting graduate students with their research as a way to gain valuable experience for when he applies to doctoral programs in oceanography. Photo courtesy of University of Guam

Forum Election Observers complete first Mission to FSM

Forum Secretariat

March 30, 2023

A Pacific Islands Forum Election Observer Team has completed its first every deployment to the Federated States of Micronesia General Election. The Forum Observer Mission team comprised Ms Rosalie Motellang of the Republic of the Marshall Islands Election Office, supported by the Forum Secretariat, and was deployed in-country from 1 to 10 March 2023.

The Forum Team were the only international observers to observe the March 7th elections.

Contesting 14 seats in the FSM Congress were 29 candidates (26 men and 3 women) across the four States of Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and Yap. Each State elected one candidate as its ‘At-Large’ representative

to serve a term of four years. The other ten elected representatives serve a two-year term. Of the 14 elected representatives, 2 women were elected.

The Forum Team observed pre-enabling election activities as well as polling day in Pohnpei State. The Team commends the National Election Office for the overall implementation of the legislative and technical aspects of the election and will prepare a comprehensive mission report containing its observations and recommendations, with some interim observations as follows:

- Election day was peaceful, calm, and orderly, and the Forum Team did not witness any attempts to disrupt polling;
- Election Offices face capacity and resourcing constraints, including the adequate and timely disbursement of funds to conduct elections;

- There are indicators of election and political fatigue in the FSM, particularly noting the regular frequency of elections (legislative elections every two years);
- The low number of women candidates, and persisting obstacles to women’s election and representation at national political decision-making positions. ;
- The need to reconcile election legal frameworks for conducting National, State and Municipal elections to avoid unnecessary complexities in conducting elections at the three different levels; and
- There are opportunities to strengthen some administrative, logistical, and integrity building aspects of the election, particularly with respect to: the accuracy of the electoral roll; civic awareness; better election-related coordination among and

between public offices and civil society; the secrecy afforded to voters while marking their ballots; and the process for conveying unofficial election results from each State to the National Election Office and the public thereafter.

Before concluding its mission the Forum Team met with representatives of the FSM Government and National Election Office to share some of their observations, and were grateful for the commitment of officials to address some of the identified issues. The Forum Team’s final report will be submitted to the FSM Government and National Election Office for consideration before it is made publicly available.

Forum Election Observer Missions have been deployed since 2001, the most recent to the 2022 Vanuatu snap election.

FSM Ambassador on ICJ Advisory opinion on the obligations of States in respect of climate change

By Kenneth Welles-FSM UN Mission Statement

March 29, 2023

New York, FSMUN – Ambassador Lippwe today delivered a group statement on behalf of the Pacific SIDS, following the adoption of the draft resolution to request an Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on legal obligations in respect of climate change.

In the statement, the Ambassador noted that the “resolution is yet another marker that multilateralism is still one of our most effective tools to solve the problems we have together”. He also noted that today’s adoption of the process. He called on all states and stakeholders to begin preparing for the next phase of submissions.

FSM is part of a core group of 18 countries from all regions of the world with FSM, Samoa and Vanuatu representing the 3 Pacific subregions. The group held over 50 meetings to strengthen the draft and to broaden support. A total of 132 countries have announced their support and sponsored the draft, a two-thirds majority of members of the United Nations. The General Assembly adopted it today by consensus.



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