

FSM swimmers set new FSM national records at Fukuoka World Aquatic Championships

By FSM Swimming

August 14, 2023

Fukuoka, Japan—The road to the Olympics can be difficult, lonely, and full of sacrifice, but it can also be rewarding and victorious, as four of FSM Swimming’s top swimmers experienced in Fukuoka, Japan at the World Aquatics Championships. Team FSM saw five new FSM National Records in Fukuoka, a remarkable accomplishment for the team.

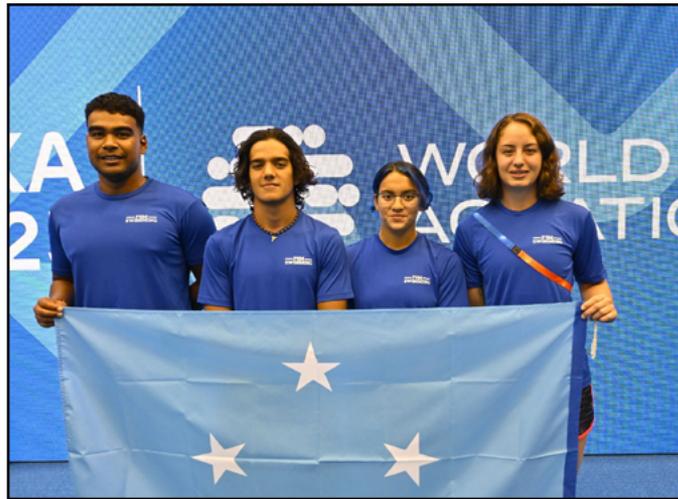
The World Aquatics Championships in Fukuoka, held from July 14 to 30, included six different aquatics sports, culminating in swimming the final eight days of the competition. The swimming portion of the Championships was held in a 50-meter swimming pool and serves as an Olympic qualifying event for the Paris 2024 Olympics.

FSM Swimming sent four athletes to the prestigious event. FSM Olympian Tasi Limtiaco competed in the Men’s 50 Meter and 100 Meter Breaststroke events. Limtiaco has been training in Coronado, California in preparation. His hard work in training paid off

with an astounding new FSM National Record in both of these events. FSM swimmer Kestra Kihleng has been training in Phuket, Thailand with a World Aquatics training scholarship since April 2023. Kihleng also set two new FSM National Records with her individual events in the Women’s 50 Meter Freestyle and the Women’s 50 Meter Breaststroke. Tyler Kihleng, who has been training in Pohnpei, FSM, competed in the Men’s 100 Meter and 200 Meter Freestyle events, accomplishing two personal best times. FSM Olympian Taeyanna Adams, currently training in Chapel Hill, NC, competed in the Women’s 50 Meter Butterfly and 100 Meter Breaststroke, finishing with a personal best time in the 50 Meter Butterfly.

All four swimmers came together for two relay events - the Mixed 4x100 Medley Relay and the Mixed 4x100 Freestyle Relay. Relay events are always exciting to watch, and these were no exception. Team FSM walked away with a new FSM National Record in the Mixed 4x100 Freestyle Relay.

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ONPA says Caroline Islands air “lacks indications” of financial viability

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

August 13, 2023

FSM—The FSM Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) recently released a performance audit of the government-owned corporation, Caroline Islands Air (CIA). The corporation was established in 1997 with the passage of Public Law 19-072 with a multi-tiered mandate based on the primary mandate to provide air transportation services

throughout the FSM.

The audit had three major findings:

- “Lack of indications to support that the Corporation is financially viable to sustain its current and future operations;
- Some of the requirements of the Board of Director By-Laws, Establishing Law and its amendments were not complied with;
- Due to lack of documentation, we

were not able to confirm when the Corporation has adequate and sufficient staff to administer its operations.”

The audit pointed out that while the beleaguered nationally held airline was certainly affected by the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19, CIA has been forced to take FSM subsidies in order to continue to operate. The audit showed significant annual subsidies as high as \$323,429 since 2015, the only years the audit listed. The subsidy in 2015 was only

\$10,000, but the cash injections have largely been in the low six-figure range since then.

The largest listed operating loss was in 2020, when the corporation experienced a \$676,945 loss.

To support its first finding of lack of CIA’s financial viability, ONPA listed five principal findings, the first of which was “insufficient

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World Health Organization and collaborators turn over EMT cache to help establish FSM National EMTs

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

August 8, 2023

Pohnpei—The Federated States of Micronesia has come one giant step closer toward reaching its goal of establishing four national Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) units in the country—one in each of the States of Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. Today at the National Warehouse in Dekehtik, Pohnpei, the World Health Organization handed over a comprehensive set of tools and supplies, referred to as the “EMT Cache” to the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs. The EMT Cache contains over 130 essential items that EMTs require to be fully self-sufficient for a three-day deployment.

According to the Master of Ceremonies at today’s ceremony, the FSM, with the support of USAID, began its efforts to establish EMTs in 2019. The ambitious project was hampered by the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19, but efforts continued toward today’s landmark. In April of 2022, the World Health Organization (WHO) embarked on a collaborative project with the Government of Japan to enhance the COVID-19 response and emergency preparedness. That allowed the WHO to accelerate its support for the EMT programs in the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

“Thanks to the generous contributions from Japan and the United States, our FSM-EMT will have access to the necessary training and resources,” said Dr. Momoe Takeuchi, Country Liaison Officer for WHO Northern Micronesia. “Our primary focus remains

on ensuring that even the most remote communities have access to emergency care, a challenge given FSM’s expansive geography.”

“When it comes to emergencies, preparedness is absolutely crucial, as underscored by the lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic,” Dr. Takeuchi said. “It highlighted the significance of having a well-defined strategy, a trained-up team, and adequate supplies in place to address health emergencies effectively. This is where Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) come into play. These dedicated teams, composed of

doctors, nurses, public health experts, and logistic experts, play a crucial role in responding to emergencies. They swiftly step in to save lives, provide immediate care, and alleviate pressure on healthcare facilities pushed to their limits.”

Japan’s Ambassador to the FSM, Hisashi Michigami, and United States Charge d’affaires, Alissa Bibb, were present at the handing over ceremony, and each spoke with pride of the support each other’s governments provided and continue to provide in the FSM on a variety of fronts including health care. Moses Pretrick, Acting

Secretary of the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs profusely thanked the representative of Japan, the United States, the WHO, and the International Office for Migration representatives and promised to continue to support and develop the FSM EMT programs.

The ceremony concluded with a signing ceremony with Pretrick signing for the FSM and Dr. Takeuchi signing for WHO.



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ph:(691) 320-6547

email: Kpress@mail.fm

Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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August 30, 2023

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

Monday, August 28, 2023

ONPA says that National Fisheries Corporation Board oversight needs to be significantly strengthened

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

August 13, 2023

FSM—Citing the National Fisheries Corporation’s (NFC) operation in a key FSM strategic area, the fact that NFC has not had an audit since 2012, major structural changes, and an NFC loss of \$100,000 due to an online fraud as bases for an audit, the FSM Office of the National Public Auditor (ONPA) released an audit of NFC on August 4. The audit had six major findings:

- “The current composition of the Board of Directors is not aligned with legislative requirements;
- Process for budget preparations is not aligned with the required procedures;
- Passenger vessel operation in Chuuk State is non-compliant to the established law;
- Inadequate internal controls in the fishing vessel management and Chuuk Branch operations;
- Administration of contract agreements was not effective;
- Four out of seven prior findings and recommendations remain outstanding for implementation.”

Apparently, the problem with the composition of the Board was not the fault of NFC but of the former FSM President, who didn’t make a nomination to fill the position of the FSM government’s representative when his appointed representative resigned in February of 2021. Still, ONPA made the lack of the national government a finding in the audit because it could not find evidence that the board had followed up with the President to remind the President of the vacant seat.

For the budget, the law requires that line managers and divisional heads be involved in the preparation of budget figures as an aid to accountability. ONPA found that NFC had not been including those personnel in the preparation of the annual budget, so some “budget components from the various divisions may (have been) missed out, resulting in unplanned expenditures that could affect operations.”

In 2020, NFC began operating a passenger vessel, the “North Star,” in

Chuuk. The vessel is operated by an NFC branch office with 10 employees, and though it was intended that the vessel would also carry pelagic fish from the outer islands, “this did not work out due to storage issues (ice to sustain the fish) during the journeys.”

The NFC Board approved the proposal for the operation based on the former CEO’s knowledge of shipping and operating passenger vessels as well as the transportation needs of the outer islands. The Board approved the operation “with caution in response to the need to generate income to sustain the operations of the Corporation.”

The passenger vessel is generating good income for the corporation; however, the enabling legislation that established NFC deals only and exclusively with development of fishing and fisheries operations.

ONPA found that “the corporation is not complying with the legislative authority of the Corporation. The operations may be generating income; however, it could pose legal and safety risks to the Corporation due to the absence of legal mandate and necessary management knowledge and skills to operate passenger vessels.”

ONPA admitted that the introduction of the “North Star” has aided the corporation’s increase of entire earnings, which increased from \$337,745 to \$664,699 between 2019 and 2020, and a further increase to \$814,535 in 2021.

ONPA reported inadequate controls in the Fishing Vessel Management and Chuuk Branch operations.

On Fishing Vessel Management, ONPA noted that there were no documented policies and procedures to guide employees responsible for related activities on:

- “Vessel Management, including key engagements and reconciliations with the joint venture companies;
- Manning agency (recruitment process between the Agent (NFC) and Principal (Joint Venture

- partner));
- Monitoring of Vessel Days Scheme (tracking fishing days used by NRC’s joint venture fishing vessels)
- Permits and Licensing (for the vessels, ship station, etc.)”

Auditors also pointed out that there were not Board approved procedures specifically for the processes of the North Star office in Chuuk, including:

- “cargo and passenger handling (an interim procedure was provided for this; however, it was not approved by the Board);
- Receipting of passenger and cargo fees;
- Processing of refunds;
- Banking and reconciliation procedures;
- Recovery of receivables (from organizations/individuals that chartered the North Star);
- Payroll processing.”

ONPA listed several examples that occurred as a result of the absence of documented policies and procedures:

- “The license for the ship station for the North Star had expired in September 2020, and the new license was not obtained from the FSM Department of Transportation, Communication, and Infrastructure until the audit enquired in May 2023, which is valid from September 2020 and expires in September 2023;
- Decrease in the number of local crew in the fishing vessels as compared to the past (a challenge for the Manning Agency);
- Discrepancies in the recording, reconciling, banking, and monitoring and reporting of collections and revenue. This includes the following:
 - Receipt books for FY2021 were not provided at all;
 - Retrieving documents for the audit took time—not all voyage summary reports and receipts books were collected, and we could not verify all transactions within our scope.
 - We could not fully reconcile the cash collected from service trips to the bank statements due to missing summary reports and

absence of reconciliation records to confirm the banking collections...”. Auditors then listed substantial differences between recorded and filed totals from provided voyage summary reports from 2021, 2022 and the amount banked by NFC. In 2021, over \$92,000 less was banked than reported, and in 2022, over \$471,000 more was banked than reported as collected.

- “Lack of controls in the processing of refunds to passengers due to no supporting documents being filed, and refunds were requested to Head office via email, which were never filed.
- A lot of ‘voids’ in the receipt books (FY2022 - \$11,582), and we could not confirm and verify the reason for the void(s) due to absence of supporting documents. There was no log to justify if this was the right amount collected and deposited.
- Accounts receivables (aging report) for the Chuuk office... with a total of over \$300,000 owed to NFC through the Chuuk North Start operations for the Fiscal Year 2022”. Amounts were for 11 different customers who had chartered the vessel and had not paid.

ONPA, under the heading of audit finding four, also noted several specific examples of payments processed with significant discrepancies mainly due to lack of documentation to support the payments.

ONPA also found that the administration of contracts was not effective and that several prior audit findings had not been resolved.

NFC’s Chief Executive Office is still relatively new to NFC and had not been aware of the previous audit’s findings, as that audit was conducted over 11 years ago. She responded to each of the audit exceptions and took responsibility for the implementation of corrections.

Fuel price changes Quarter 3

Vital FSM Petroleum Corporation

August 14th, 2023

The Vital FSM Petroleum Corporation (“Vital FSMPC”) wishes to announce new prices of unleaded gasoline (ULP), diesel (ADO), and kerosene (DPK) which will be implemented in August 2023. This was determined after the review of global trends, domestic and regional prices.

FSM is directly impacted by the world market prices for refined oils and as such, any changes to the world market prices will eventually be reflected in fuel prices in FSM.

The decrease in prices are as follows:

- ULP – decrease of \$0.15 per gallon;
- ADO – decrease of \$0.15 per gallon; and
- DPK – decrease of \$0.15 per gallon.

The year 2023 has seen notable movements in international oil product prices impacting regional and ultimately domestic prices over a period. This movement in prices is expected to continue noting an increase over time as according to a report published in a CNN article on July 3rd, 2023, the US Energy Administration forecasted global fuel prices to increase notably towards the latter half of 2023 and early 2024 due to the planned decrease in oil production by OPEC+ and Russia. The forecast is for US Oil prices to increase by 11.4% in the first quarter of 2024.

International Price Movement

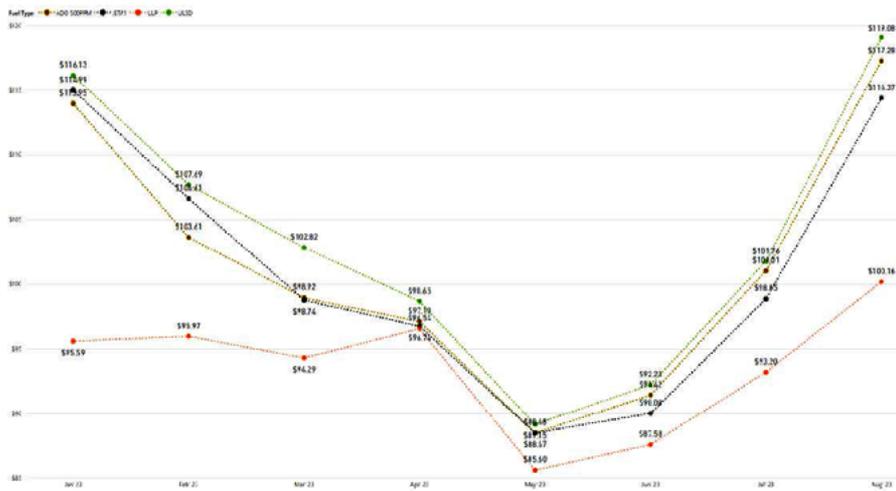


Figure 1 –The ULP prices dropped in July by about 11% compared to prices in January 2023 while ULSD and JetA1 dropped by 20% and 19% respectively.

Regional Price Comparison – ADO (diesel) and ULP

At the regional level pump prices in Guam for ADO and ULP have remained steady since May as can be seen in the figures below.



Figure 2: As of July 18th, 2023, variance for ADO (diesel) pump prices between Guam and Pohnpei is still at \$ 0.87 (Guam = 5.23/ usg and Pohnpei = \$ 6.10/usg). No new pump prices for Guam since May 3rd 2023.

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Officials and representatives of the FSM convene the Annual Joint Committee Meeting in Kosrae

Commander, Joint Region Marianas

Aug. 14, 2023

ASAN, Guam – Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman, the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) Senior Military Official for the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), along with FSM Vice President Aren Palik; Chargé de Affaires Alissa Bibb of U.S. Embassy Kolonia, and senior leaders from the FSM will convene the bilateral Joint Committee Meeting (JCM) in Kosrae, Aug. 14-15.

The JCM is in accordance with the Compact of Free Association (COFA) Title III: Security and Defense Relations, and enables ongoing dialogue

between nations, which prove to enhance security and defense responsibilities in the region.

“The FSM is an important partner for the United States as we work to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific region,” said Huffman. “These meetings are crucial to our commitment to the defense of the Micronesian region.”

The JCM agenda for this year comprises of four lines of effort – defense responsibilities, support for law enforcement, increasing maritime security for sovereign borders, and preparing for and responding to hazards unique to Pacific island communities.



Figure 3 - As of July 18th, 2023, Variance for ULP pump prices between Guam and Pohnpei is still at \$ 0.65 (Guam = 4.85 usg and Pohnpei = \$ 5.50/usg). No new pump prices for Guam since May 9th, 2023.

Vital FSMPC has monitored and evaluated the global and regional market trends for oil products between the last quarters of 2022 and first quarters of 2023 and despite the fluctuation of rates in markets, the domestic level prices have remained steady over the past few months.

The methodology used by the Vital FSMPC focuses on price stabilization over a period before it eventually rises or falls. Our Policy Framework allows us to stabilize domestic prices against international volatility and benchmark prices against neighboring countries pump prices. This approach helps our customers plan their spending and budget related to fuel products and in looking out for customer welfare we try to avoid significant fluctuation in prices which can impact day-to-day business and affairs of customers.

The Chairman of Vital FSMPC Mr. Faustino Yangmog stated that Vital FSMPC has been monitoring trends and ensuring that energy security is maintained in FSM. The company’s plans allow ability to withstand shocks, have financial capability to be able to purchase and retain stocks on island over a period of time. He added that the pricing policy framework adopted by Vital FSMPC allows for such stability in prices during massive fluctuations globally and for now considering the latest trends, a decrease is due for the customers of fuel products in FSM.

However, according to the Chief Risk and Compliance Officer, Mr. Johnny Adolph, responsible for ensuring that company risks are managed and policies complied with, there will be continued price volatility periods. He added that the Vital FSMPC will continue to monitor the prices at the domestic, regional and international levels and keep our customers informed of the next round of changes in the prices.

Environmental Stewardship Youth Summer Camp successfully completed

Conservation Society of Pohnpei

On July 28, 2023, the Head Village Chief, Midion Neth, Nahnapas Madolenihmw, Kuloap Madolenihmw, Mr. Honer Weital (Nanwap MPA CCO Chairman), the Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP), the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL), OneReef Micronesia, Lien Wehi Association, Nanwap MPA CCOs, the MLMDA community members and parents of Summer Camp attendees gathered at the MLMDA Community Center to celebrate the successful completion of the 2023 Environmental Youth Summer Camp.

Congratulations to all twenty-one youth participants, representing Nahtik MPA and villages around Madolenihmw and MLMDA community, that attended this Summer Camp. The theme of the camp is “Amplifying Ecoliteracy by Promoting Traditional Knowledge and Practices Leading Towards Positive Impacts on Pohnpei’s Environment. Throughout the weeklong place-based traditional stewardship learning exchange and at the closing event, the youth participants demonstrated what they learned about the importance of Marine Protected Area (MPA) and aquaculture alternative income generation initiatives, traditional fishing net crafting, traditional basket weaving of various types, raft making skills, invasive species awareness, importance of Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) along with safety at sea, and essential traditional stewardship lessons they learned through evening sakau ceremony sessions storytelling time by Nanwap MPA CCOs and traditional knowledge elders from the MLMDA community.

In addition to the hands-on traditional stewardship learning, key partners from the national and state offices, agencies, and NGO partners presented the work they do to manage and keep protecting Pohnpei’s environment and delicate resources. MERIP shared their aquaculture projects that are providing alternative income sources to MPA communities. FSM Resources and Development, under the GEF6 Invasive Alien Species (IAS) program, presented the existing invasive species and impact they may cause to our environment and economy. Pohnpei EPA shared their key roles and responsibilities

in keeping Pohnpei clean and how the youth can help contribute in spreading the awareness amongst their peers. Pohnpei State Resources and Development through Natural Resource Management Division also shared their important roles in managing Pohnpei’s watershed forest reserve, mangrove and marine protected areas. Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture, in partnership with the Secretariat of Pacific Communities (SPC), shared the importance of Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) and sea safety protocols. All partner presentations played a crucial role in the summer camp to display their connectivity and interactions towards positive impacts on Pohnpei’s environment and its natural resources. The key focus of the learning is to build respect for our traditional practices through STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics). Embedding STEAM into their daily activities will not only amplify their knowledge, but motivate their desires to transform and advocate for positive impacts regardless of what profession they choose to become. As stated by Eugene Joseph, Executive Director of Conservation Society of Pohnpei, in his closing remarks, “you don’t need to be a scientist in order to preserve our beautiful islands; you can be whatever you wish to become, as long as you understand and respect the connections between our cultures, the land and the sea, then you will have a powerful feeling of responsibility to care”.

CSP, PREL, OneReef, and MLMDA jointly thank all Village Chiefs, the 10th Pohnpei State Legislature-Madolenihmw delegation, Madolenihmw Municipal Government and MMG Police, Pohnpei State Department of Education and Lukop Elementary School Principal, Kuloap Madolenihmw and Nanwap MPA CCOs, Lien Wehi Association, the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT), Pohnpei State OFA, SPC, FSM UNDP GEF Invasive Species Project, Pohnpei State EPA, MERIP, State Fish and Wildlife division of Public Safety, Sunrise View Market, all community traditional knowledge trainers and storytellers and MLMDA community members that worked together to provide funding support, resources, shared traditional knowledge, awareness raising, cooked meals, and provided space to host the



summer camp.

At the closing event, MCT, through representative Winfred Mudong, declared MCT's funding support from the Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies to support MLMDA's Nanwap Marine Protected Area Management and alternative Income Generation Project that will continue to strengthen effective community-based management of the Nanwap MPA that the youth learned about during the Summer Camp.

Altogether, this Environmental Youth Camp helped strengthen youth traditional knowledge and environmental stewardship place-based learning, which completed successfully with strong support from the community leaders, local and state government leaders support and partners that worked together to make it happen.

CSP also wants acknowledge the donors and supporters for making this summer camp successful. Our big kalahngan lap to PREL, OneReef, Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMA) Network through USAID Our Fish, Our Future Project, Luhk en Lengiso (Honorable Senator Ricky Carl), Nahnihdlapalap



(Honorable State Legislature Floor Leader, Senator Hudson Abraham), Honorable Senator Nelbert Perez, Honorable Kiyomi Albert, Meninkeder Lapalap (Mayor) Madolenihmw Municipal Government, Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) and Sunrise View Market.



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...FSM Swimming

Continued from front page

The FSM swimmers have demonstrated amazing talent in the pool, steadily improving their times with each competition and proving to be a powerhouse among the Pacific federations.

What is up next for FSM Swimming? In the first week of September, FSM Swimming will send three junior swimmers to the World Aquatics Junior Swimming Championships in Netanya, Israel. Katerson Moya, age 16, Katrianne Kihleng, age 16, and Elijah Eperiam, also age 16, will compete in the six-day competition among the world's top junior-aged swimmers (age 14-18). In November, FSM will also send athletes to the 2023 Pacific Games in the Solomon Islands.

FSM Swimming would like to thank the FSM National Olympic Committee for their support and sponsorship for the World Aquatics Championships in providing funding as well as uniforms for the team.

Videos of all swims from the World Aquatics Championships, as well as full results, can be found on the FSM Swimming Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FSMSwimming>.



...CIA

Continued from front page

funding to invest in quality aircraft.” CIA provided manifest documents for January 2021 to December 2022. Those documents showed that until February 2022, CIA was operating only one aircraft and that aircraft was grounded for over a year from March 2022 to June 2023, awaiting parts the corporation didn't have the money to pay for.

On September 16, 2022, CIA purchased a used aircraft for \$350,000. That aircraft operated for only 10 days in April before it started having mechanical problems. CIA offered no services from March 2022 to April 2023, and from April 15 to June 26, 2023, a total period of more than one year because the plane was grounded for repair work.

CIA only provided copies of “draft” letters to Congress with no provable indication that they had ever been sent to Congress. However, CIA's Board Chair, in his response, said that the Board had several meetings with members of Congress regarding the need for funding for quality aircraft but that Congress never acted. His response pointed out that CIA's challenges were similar to those of the MS Caroline Voyager and the MS Navigator, which are having similar difficulties due to lack of funding. He said those vessels had also received subsidies from Congress. However, he said, “because of the essential

service in the air services, Caroline Island Air continues to provide air service to the people of this nation even though the operation is not financially viable.”

ONPA said also that there was an absence of an approved and documented procedures regarding the involvement of the corporation in the acquisition of aircrafts. They said that inspection of aircraft is jointly conducted by the FSM National Government and that there were no approved procedures to guide CIA in their involvement in the acquisition of aircraft. ONPA challenged the Board of Directors to strengthen their oversight function by ensuring that standard operating procedures are in place.

ONPA said that there was a “lack of strategic planning”.

“It is true that there is a lack of strategic planning,” wrote CIA's Board Chair. “One of the contributing factors is the changing of members on the Board. There were times that the management and the Board of Directors are not working together, especially the old management. Considering the difficulty in calling the old management to sit on meetings, both the Board of Directors and the Management cannot come up with good strategic planning for the Corporation.”

The Board Chair also responded to ONPA sub-point four admitting that there is no approved Business Continuity Plan, but the Board is trying to work on one.

ONPA also reiterated that CIA continues

to operate at a loss which is, of course, unsustainable.

Supporting its second main finding regarding non-compliance with the Board of Directors bylaws, ONPA pointed out that Directors were paid allowances for attending meetings but that on many occasions, no Board Meeting minutes existed, substantiating that the meetings actually took place. Auditors also said that contrary to corporate requirements, minutes were, when they did exist, prepared by staff members.

No documentation could be found either to support an increase of meeting allowances from \$75 to \$100, and a former CIA staff member also received \$1,100 worth of meeting allowances when that person was not a board member.

Neither ONPA nor the CIA board could determine whether the terms of office or board member selection processes were as proscribed by law. ONPA found evidence of at least one board member who was still serving but whose term actually had expired. Lack of documentation also caused ONPA to question whether some other board members had been selected in the manner proscribed by law.

Finally, ONPA found that the absence of an organizational structure chart, approved employee selection and recruitment policy, and a proper filing system contributed to the auditors' inability to determine if current staff members were properly qualified.

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August 14 - October 02, 2023
DRAW DATE: October 02, 2023 (4:00PM)



Former Guam Legislator with Chuukese heritage talks Guam and FSM

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

July 27, 2023

Pohnpei—Clynton Ridgell is the Deputy Chief of Staff for the Office of the Governor of Guam. Ridgell is the first person of Federated States of Micronesia heritage to have served in Guam's Legislature, where he served as a senator in the 35th and 36th Guam Legislatures. He has previously served as Director of Policy, Planning, and Community Relations at the Judiciary of Guam. Outside of government, he served as news director, anchor, and reporter at the Pacific News Center. He began his career in journalism as a reporter for KUAM News and has a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from the University of Guam.

Ridgell accompanied Guam Lt. Governor Joshua Tenorio to Pohnpei to attend the joint inauguration celebration of FSM Government leaders. Long time friend of The Kaselehlie Press, Carlotta Leon Guerrero pointed out Ridgell's unique association with the FSM and put us together for a chat.

Ridgell's mother is from the outer island of Chuuk in the Mortlocks region, specifically from the small island of Ta. His father, Reilly Ridgell, was a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Chuuk in the 70s. After his time in the Peace Corps, he moved to Guam, where he taught High School students and also taught geography, government, and civics at the Guam Community College. The elder Ridgell, who had been assigned to teach geography at the college, found that there was little to know information on Micronesian geography. He set about to correct that problem and in 1983 published the textbook "Pacific Nations and Territories", which is now in its fourth edition and is used throughout the Micronesian region as a standard textbook in secondary schools.

Ridgell was born and raised in Guam, but his heritage has given him a unique insight into relationships of the Micronesians from the FSM and Micronesians who are the people of Guam that he has brought with him into his various roles in Gov Guam.

"Unfortunately, there's negative stereotypes of people from the FSM in general," he said. "I realize it's like that for the people of any immigrant group that moves anywhere. I've used examples when I talk to people. In the

U.S. the Irish went through it. Polish people, you know, whoever, and now in the U.S. it's Mexicans. Whoever the new immigrant group is, there's all this negative stereotype and, of course, politicians like to grab on to that, and it becomes part of the political rhetoric—the 'build a wall' syndrome."

"There's a lot of pressure and strain (on the people of the FSM) because the local native inhabitants of Guam, some of them feel like, 'why are people coming from the FSM'. They were being viewed as a drain on resources. A lot of the local people don't have any real grasp of the Compacts of Free Association, and it's not their fault. It's not properly taught in schools...Part of it too—the feelings of the locals—is that it was an agreement that was sort of thrust upon Guam between two sovereign nations, which is the U.S. and the FSM, and Guam is sort of in the middle as an unincorporated territory of the United States with no say in these negotiations; no vote in these negotiations. But yet, a major part of it, because the Compact of Free Association allows FSM citizens the right to move freely throughout the U.S. Where is the closest U.S. port? Guam."

"The people of the FSM are just doing what's allowed to them under the Compact and seeking other opportunities. So, they're coming to Guam and not realizing, 'Oh, wow. These people are upset because they didn't have a say about the Compact.'"

"And then there's a lot of arguments about Guam not being properly reimbursed under the Compact Impact that the Federal government is supposed to be reimbursing. So, it creates all these tensions in addition to the natural tensions that happen when new migrants move to a new country or a new place."

When asked what he would say to a person of the FSM if they were considering relocating to Guam, Ridgell said that some of the people who migrate don't really know what to expect and how things work. Because of that, there has been a lot of talk about some sort of orientation process. Previously in the FSM, the International Organization for Migration conducted just such orientation processes, but the funding for those classes went away several years ago, and they stopped. There has been very little in that regard after those classes stopped. He said that in Guam there has been a lot of talk about asking the FSM to start those classes again because they believe

that it will help the transition process.

In terms of further lack of understanding in Guam, Ridgell said that the people of Guam tend to think of themselves as part of the Marianas Islands and U.S. citizens. A majority of the people of Guam do not view themselves as Micronesians. Ridgell said that he has always tried to convey that important bit of information to help foster further understanding that Guam and the Marianas are IN Micronesia. But of course, the people of Guam didn't make the decision that it is part of Micronesia, "some white guy did a long time ago," he said.

He said that he still occasionally gets upset about the lack of understanding of Guam as part of Micronesia. The news makes the mistake all the time. "Oh, the description of the suspect was a Micronesian guy," they report. "And I'm like, 'Oh, so it's anyone on Guam who's not white?'. Of course, everyone knew what they meant. They meant people from the FSM or Palau or RMI; anyone who's not a Chamorro but is an islander."

We spent some time talking about the differences in development between Guam and the FSM. He reminded me that Guam was the first island in the Micronesian region to have been colonized by Europeans, who spent a great deal of effort on development there. Guam had a more substantial infrastructure than the FSM well before the FSM became a sovereign nation. It was not absorption by the United States that caused the development, but a good deal of it comes from the substantial number of tourists who visit the island each year—upwards of a million and a half visitors per year. Part of that has to do with the fact that it is a beautiful tropical island with beaches that is closer for Asian tourists than Hawaii.

Certainly, there are substantial differences in terms of tourism between Guam and the FSM, but Ridgell, who has spent some time on his mother's island of Ta, said that this was his first visit to Pohnpei, and he wants to come back. "I'm amazed that there's not more tourists," he exclaimed. "I was thinking, 'this has got to be a great tourist destination'. I mean, Nan Madol in and of itself is a huge draw. The tropical landscape, of course; we got to go out the Ahnd atoll, and it was beautiful. It's totally different here than it is on Guam—just sort of the feel? I don't know how to explain it, lush tropical rainforests. I was looking at the landscaping around the hotel, and



it's not like typical landscaping around hotels. It's more like kind of a 'Bali feel', tropical rainforest, jungle-y type of feel than in our tourist district in Guam."

Ridgell said that a lot of people from the FSM who live in Guam work in the tourism industry. They are a major contributing workforce for the tourism industry. The main message was that FSM citizens are not just a drain on the resources of Guam but are contributing members of the community with a few that have not yet been able to adjust.

"A big part, when I ran for office and when I got into office was me pushing to change those stereotypes, or at least show them another side of the FSM. To show them that we're not all a bunch of alcoholics and troublemakers and whatnot," he said. "The fact that there is some reinforcement of those stereotypes makes it a bit of a challenge."

"One of the things I would put forward as a Senator and when I was running for office was that FSM immigrants are often looked at just as a strain on the economy. But they're not accounting for the positive impacts. Like I was saying earlier, who's taking all these jobs, they're doing jobs that a lot of people don't want. So, the FSM community has filled a niche with a lot of these jobs that need to be done but that a lot of people don't want. Also, every FSM citizen on Guam is paying taxes through at the very least, the gross receipts tax. We have a gross receipts tax on anything you buy in the stores, which goes right into Gov Guam's coffers," he said. "So that wasn't being accounted for properly. What are they putting back into the economy rather than just a strain on the services and everything else."

Australian Embassy welcomes new Second Secretary Rachelle Wood to the FSM

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

August 9, 2023

Pohnpei—This evening, Australia’s Ambassador to the FSM Jo Cowley held a cocktail reception to welcome the new Second Secretary of the Embassy, Rachelle Wood. Though Wood has been in her position for just over two months, it was the first opportunity the Embassy had to officially welcome her and to introduce her to the community.

Rachelle Wood is not new to Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). She has worked with DFAT and the former AusAID since 2011. She started her professional career in finance before moving to the Middle East Branch in



DFAT to support the public diplomacy program. After that assignment, she moved to what is now called the “Office of the Pacific” (OTP).

“I would say working in OTP was the catalyst for my career in DFAT,” Wood said. There she worked in the Humanitarian Division to support the Australian NGO Cooperation Program, where she saw the work that Australia was delivering across the globe. “I was hooked. I loved working with Pacific people, their energy, passion, and resilience inspired me, so I followed my passion and applied for a posting to Kiribati and spent almost two years managing the Education Portfolio—basic education and scholarships.”

In her new posting as Second Secretary will be able to continue her work in Education and Scholarship along with other development work in the FSM for at least the next two years.

“I am a huge advocate for the Australia’s scholarship program because I have met the people whose lives have been changed forever because of the scholarship – including the next generation of people across the Pacific,” Wood said during her remarks at the reception. “Australia is a dedicated and reliable partner to FSM. I am excited to be working alongside you (our partners) in education, climate, health, and gender and more.”

Wood shared a bit of her background, underpinning her strong commitment to supporting vulnerable women and girls and to promoting gender equality. She said that she was born in the Philippines to an extremely poor family, and when she migrated to Australia, she didn’t speak a word of English. “I share this story with you



because if the same barriers that so many women and girls are still facing today happened to me - from teen pregnancy, abuse, or had I never been given the opportunity to pursue a career, I know I wouldn’t be here today representing Australia.”

During her introduction of her newest staff member, Ambassador Cowley described the many things that the Australian government has continued to assist the FSM with and also announced that on the previous day, the Australian Government launched a new international development policy.

“This new, long-term policy comes on the heels of increased Australian development funding for the Pacific and the FSM,” Ambassador Cowley said. “It is designed to make our development impacts even stronger and more effective; essentially fit for the challenges of our time.”

“Key aspects of the new policy include: investing more in locally-led solutions; a new fund to provide direct support to community organisations, a new vehicle to provide a catalyst for private impact investment in the Indo-Pacific and even greater focus on gender equality and climate action.

“As our Foreign Minister has said, ‘This new policy reflects who we are. That Australia is here, not only in times of crisis but working with the FSM and region to strengthen resilience and to help deliver their aspirations.’”

Ambassador Cowley said that with such a large Australian agenda that will only grow, she is pleased to welcome Rachelle Wood to the Embassy team. She encouraged those in attendance at the reception to say hello to her and have a chat about how Australia and the FSM are and could be working together on shared priorities that make a difference in people’s lives in the FSM.





Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - JOB DESCRIPTION

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the knowledge frontier organization for sustainable development in the UN Development System and serves as the integrator for collective action to realize the Sustainable Development Goals. UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet. This position is located at the UNDP Pacific sub-office in Pohnpei State in the Federated States of Micronesia which was established in October 2021. This office is set up to serve the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The office will work to deliver the UNDP multi-country programme document (MCPD, 2023-2027) in these five countries.

UNDP in the Pacific has developed its MCPD, 2023-2027 to guide its interventions in the next five years in full alignment and directly to contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF, 2023–27). The UNSDCF and UNDP MCPD are designed in full alignment with the 2030 agenda, Samoa Pathway, and 2050 Blue Content Strategy, which is endorsed by the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) among others.

The UNDP Pacific Office next five-year plan strategic priorities are encapsulated under three outcome areas: (i) Planet, (ii) Prosperity, and (iii) Peace. The programme portfolio will include mutually reinforcing work streams crafted around two clusters (i) Resilience and Climate Change; and ii) Inclusive growth and Effective governance, supported by a policy and innovation team, Operations team, Management and Oversight team that provides strategic guidance on results Management and compliance entrusted with the corporate alignment, programme finance management and quality assurance, and strategic communications team that provides knowledge management and communication support to all programme interventions.

Job Vacancies: Deadline for all applications is 20 August 2023. Please call 3204456 for more information

<p>1. Job Title: Human Resources Associate Department: Operations Reports to: Operations Manager, P3 Grade Level: G6 Salary range: \$22,331 to \$30,955 annually Direct Reports: none Position Number: 00196884 Duty Station: Pohnpei, FSM Career Track: General Service Contract Modality: Fixed Term Appointment Local Link to advertisement: www.undp.org/pacific/jobs</p>	<p>2. Job Title: Operations and Travel Associate Department: Operations Reports to: Administrative Analyst, NOA Grade Level: G6 Salary Range: \$22,331 to \$30,955 annually Direct Reports: Driver, G2 Position Number: 00196886 Duty Station: Pohnpei, FSM Career Track: General Service Contract Modality: Fixed Term Appointment Link to advertisement: www.undp.org/pacific/jobs</p>
<p>3. Job Title: Programme Associate, Planet Department: Programme Reports to: Programme Analyst, P2 Grade Level: G6 Salary Range: \$22,331 to \$30,955 annually Direct Reports: none Position Number: 00196888 Duty Station: Pohnpei, FSM Career Stream: Programme Contract Modality: Fixed Term Appointment Link to advertisement: www.undp.org/pacific/jobs</p>	<p>4. Job Title: Procurement and Administrative Associate Department: Programme Reports to: Procurement and Contract Management Analyst, P1 Grade Level: G6 Salary Range: \$22,331 to \$30,955 annually Direct Reports: none Position Number: 00196889 Duty Station: Pohnpei, FSM Career Stream: General Service Contract Modality: Fixed Term Appointment Link to Advertisement: www.undp.org/pacific/jobs</p>



Stevenson A. Joseph

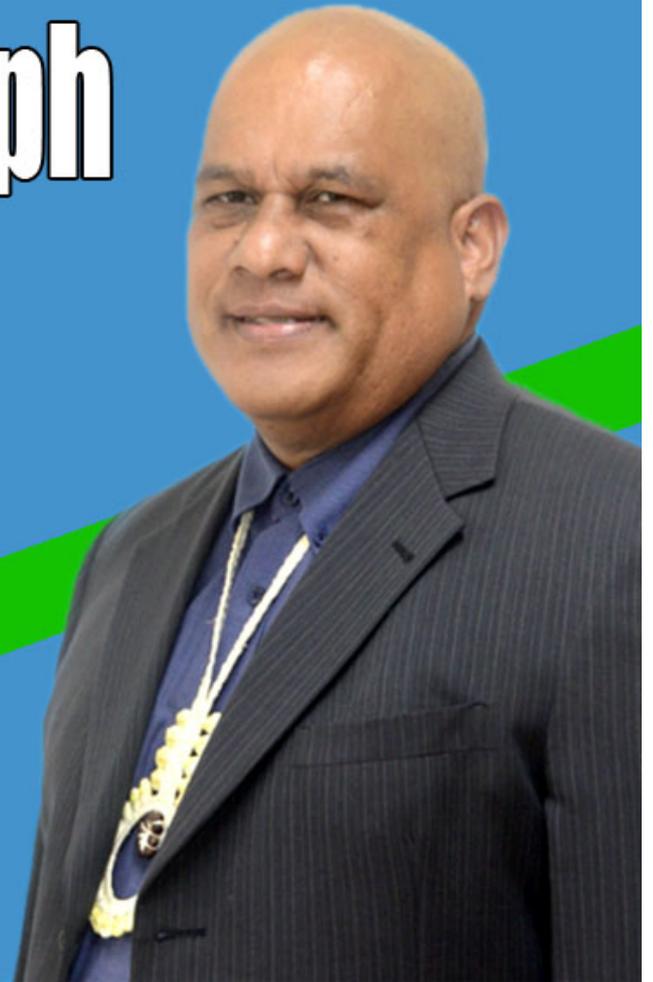
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KEPINA

Koupweliki, Lirohrohki Pohnpei

Pohnpei Mahs 🙌 #1 :

Atail Pwukoa, Atail Mour!!



Job Vacancy: FIELD OFFICER

ABOUT CRS

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. CRS works to save, protect, and transform lives in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality. CRS' relief and development work is accomplished through programs of emergency response, health, agriculture, education, microfinance and peacebuilding. We welcome as a part of our staff people of all faiths and secular traditions who share our values and our commitment to serving those in need. CRS is an Equal Opportunity Employer

ABOUT the CREATE PROJECT

CRS plans to open an office in Pohnpei State to implement the Communities Recycle- Empowering Artisans, Transforming Environments (CREATE) project, a 12-month intervention with the goal of reducing ocean plastic in Pohnpei State. CREATE is an integrated approach that diverts plastic waste and other pollutants from entering the ocean through strengthened governance and value chains while improving and diversifying livelihoods in target Pohnpeian communities. CREATE is part of the Clean Cities, Blue Ocean (CCBO) program, contract from USAID being implemented by Tetra Tech ARD.

JOB SUMMARY

You will assist project implementation by working directly with local stakeholders and community members, coordinating various project activities and events. You will facilitate trainings, host meetings, and promote key conservation practices, including promoting recycling and livelihoods development.

Basic Qualifications

- High School diploma required. Bachelor's degree a plus. Additional education may substitute for some experience.
- 2 years of work or volunteer experience in community development and mobilization.
- Basic computer skills required.
- **Required Languages** - English and Pohnpeian

For more information or to request an application, please call the CRS at: (691) 350-2388 or email at stella.laamar@crs.org.

Good sized fish caught at LP Gas – Seven Stars Fishing Tournament

By Pohnpei Fishing Club

August 5, 2023

Pohnpei—Twenty-three boat owners and their crews of anglers signed up to compete in the LP Gas-Seven Stars Tournament. Good prize offerings and the promise of good fishing weather were the principal draws for the anglers, and the day did not disappoint with many decent-sized fish landed.

Once again, the intrepid Marvey Spencer, Jr. took the top \$1000 prize with a yellowfin tuna of 77 pounds! Another member of the Spencer family took the \$600 second prize with a 26.4-pound yellowfin. Leeson David earned \$400 for his slightly smaller yellowfin of 25.6 pounds. Long-time fishing club member and angler Dane Nighswander rounded off the big fish category in fourth place with a really nice 25.6-pound wahoo. He earned \$275 for his day's efforts.

Species prizes were also awarded for landed fish of varying species that did not also win a prize in the big fish category.

Once again, the prolific young Marvey Spencer, Jr. dominated the yellowfin tuna category with wins of both the top two spots, earning him a total of another

\$350. The first of those fish was 22 pounds. It was followed by a near twin of 21.6 pounds.

First and second places for the remaining species won \$150 for a first-place fish and \$100 for a second-place fish. Leeson David had the biggest skipjack tuna at 16.8 pounds. Sidney Felix took second place with a 13.6-pound skipjack.

For wahoo, Dan Ryan's 24-pound example of the species earned him the top prize. Calvin Peterson followed that up with a 21.6-pound fish.

Two mahi mahis also made it onto the

winners' board. Mikey Peterson had the first at 14.6 pounds. Jenson David's was next at 9.4 pounds.

The sponsors for the tournament also donated six gift certificates redeemable at one of the sponsors' businesses. Those certificates were awarded by raffles and were presented to boat owners. The winners were the owners of "Happy Tuna," "Kamehlele," "Morning Star," "Kalikiano," "Miss Julia," and "MITI."

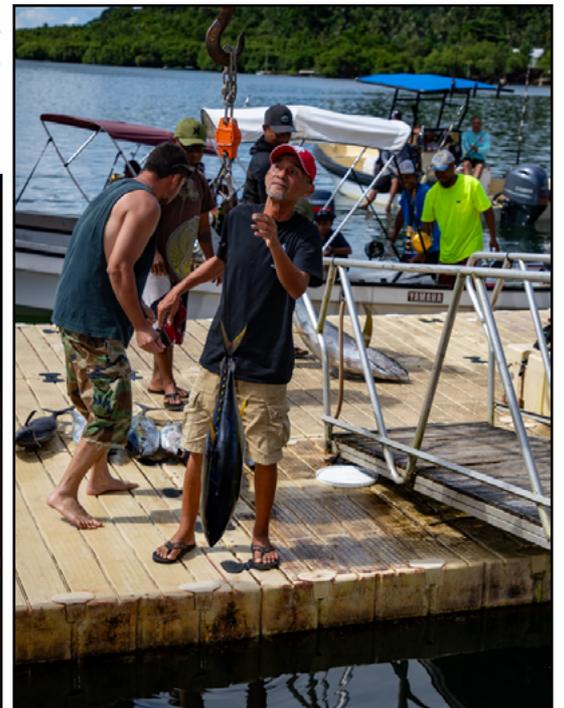
The marlin jackpot and tuna jackpot still are unclaimed and getting bigger each tourney.

Many thanks to the helpers who helped on the dock and with keeping score.

Also thank you Mangrove Bay for the use of the bar and the dock.

Our biggest thanks go to LP Gas and 7Star for making this tournament possible.

The next tourney is August 19, so keep those hooks sharp.



Governor Oliver honors Pohnpei Expo representatives at reception

Pohnpei Enginkehlap

August 3, 2023

Pohnpei—A joyful atmosphere filled the grounds of the Pohnpei Administrative Building as Governor Oliver played host to a grand welcome reception in honor of the delegation that proudly represented Pohnpei State at the 2nd Micronesia Expo in Kosrae. The event was a celebration of the delegation's outstanding accomplishments and contributions to showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Pohnpei.

The Micronesia Expo, held annually, serves as a platform for the states of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) to unite their diverse cultures and economies. This year's Expo in Kosrae showcased the best of each of the four FSM states, highlighting their unique traditions, products and opportunities for trade and investment.

In his welcoming remarks, Governor Oliver started off with apologies to the delegation for the late welcome

reception. He went on to express his deep appreciation for the dedication, enthusiasm and hard work done to bring honor to Pohnpei State as a result of their performances and representation in Kosrae. Speaker Yamaguchi echoed the Governor's words of appreciation, thanking the delegation for their beautiful representation of Pohnpei culture. Head of Delegation, Director of Treasury and Administration, Christina Elnei expressed her gratitude to the Governor and Speaker for their support, she also thanked the traditional leaders of the delegation who kept order and organization during the trip, including Dauk Kitti, Soulik en Sawmwei and Mr. Emerson Eperiam. Vice Speaker Miguel, who was also a member of the delegation, highlighted the important help from the Governor, Speaker and Legislature for funding assistance with the delegation. IsoNahnken of Madolenihmw and Administrator of the Office of Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. John Adolph, closed the remarks for the day echoing again the deep appreciation for the delegation's

good work.

The welcome reception not only celebrated the delegation's achievements but also underscored Pohnpei's commitment to cultural exchange, economic growth and regional cooperation. The delegation was also able to perform their original

song "KAMORALE" composed by Mr. Emerson Eperiam for the Governor, Speaker, IsoNahnken of Madolenihmw and all. Pohnpei is proud of the work done by the delegation to the 2nd Micronesia Expo in Kosrae and looks forward to the next annual Expo in Chuuk.



Mayors and Traditional leaders ready to Champion Routine Immunization in Chuuk State through partnership with Health Department and UNICEF



UNICEF

Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia — A groundbreaking initiative is unfolding in the FSM, where Mayors and Traditional leaders are partnering with FSM National/State Public Health teams and UNICEF Pacific to spearhead an impactful campaign for improved routine immunization of children. This joint effort is poised to significantly strengthen public health and improve community participation and accountability for positive immunization outcomes.

Routine Immunization stands as a fundamental pillar of public health, a fact reinforced by the synergy among Mayors, Traditional leaders, health experts from FSM National/State Public Health teams, and the strategic guidance of UNICEF. The culmination of this collaborative endeavor has birthed meticulously crafted action plans, rooted in data

and tailored to optimize routine immunization processes.

In a recent gathering on Wednesday, August 2nd, at the Kurassa Conference Room in Weno-Chuuk, Community leaders, including Mayors, Traditional leaders, and Experts from UNICEF, converged. This assembly became a crucible for dynamic discussions, the exchange of strategic insights, and the crystallization of a shared vision for bolstering community health.

An integral aspect of this Immunization Action Planning workshop was the participation of Micronesian Productions to document the voices and stories of the participants on how they intend to be a strong linkage between their respective communities and Public Health. Deresa Roider, a health aid at Chuuk Public Health said, “My advice is for the Public Health providers to conduct more education and awareness to the community people, but especially the parents; go to the villages and reach out to the parents by conducting house to house visits to improve the awareness among the least or illiterate parents.

The genesis of this initiative harks back to the pivotal role played by these community leaders during FSM's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Mayors, Traditional leaders, and local officials played crucial roles in disseminating vital information, promoting preventive behaviors, and advocating for accessible healthcare services including COVID-19 testing for therapeutic treatment. Drawing on the strength from this foundation of trust and influence, these leaders are now embarking on a mission to rally

their communities behind routine immunization as a bedrock of public health resilience.

Enriched by their revered status, Traditional leaders bridge the gap between communities and spiritual beliefs, while Mayors wield substantial influence as elected heads of municipal governments. This collaboration, fortified by Health experts and the expertise of UNICEF Social and Behavior Change, represents the harmonious fusion of leadership and proficiency essential for navigating complex healthcare landscapes

The objectives of this endeavor encompass facilitating equal access to immunization, fostering information dissemination, and empowering leaders to champion the delivery of uncompromised health services. Engagement forums will serve as platforms for robust dialogues, the exchange of knowledge, and actionable goal setting.

The collaborative efforts of Mayors, Traditional leaders, FSM National/State Public Health teams, and UNICEF Pacific underscore the potency of shared initiatives in strengthening immunization and broader public health interventions. This alliance amplifies the intrinsic strength of community spirit and positions it as a driving force for comprehensive and enduring health improvements in the FSM.

For more information, please contact Micronesian Productions at micronesianproductions@gmail.com.

Australian team briefs Pohnpei Governor Oliver on East Micronesia

Cable progress

Australia in Micronesia

August 9, 2023

Pohnpei--Ambassador Jo Cowley called on Pohnpei State Governor the Hon Reed B. Oliver today, to provide an update on progress on the East Micronesia Cable (EMC) System.

The EMC, funded by Australia, Japan and the United States, is an estimated AUD135 million (USD95m) project to

deliver an undersea cable connecting Kosrae, Tarawa in Kiribati, and Nauru to the existing HANTRU-1 cable landing point located in Pohnpei.

As the starting point of the EMC, Pohnpei will effectively serve as the digital gateway for the citizens of Kosrae, Kiribati and Nauru to the world, connecting more than 100,000 people across the three Pacific locations.



Ambassador Cowley was accompanied by the EMC Project Coordination Unit and the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific

(#AIFFP), who are currently visiting FSM to conduct technical tests, confirm permitting arrangements, and finalize construction plans.

Pohnpei Cabinet provide briefing to Governor Oliver on infrastructure projects

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

August 7, 2023

Pohnpei--In a recent cabinet meeting held at the Governor's conference room, Governor Reed B. Oliver was briefed on the latest developments, challenges and strategic initiatives undertaken by various government departments, offices and agencies.

During the meeting, Governor Oliver emphasized the importance of coordination and collaborative efforts among the various departments to drive positive change and address pressing

issues. He thanked the Cabinet members for their ongoing work to serve the people of Pohnpei.

One of the presentations during the meeting was provided by the Office of Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I), with Iso John Adolph as the Administrator. He provided updates on key infrastructure projects that are expected to have a significant impact for Pohnpei residents:

- Mwoakilloa Elementary School renovation - project substantially completed, need final inspection by T&I - Total contract cost - \$50,000 from Infrastructure Maintenance Fund (IMF)
- Pingelap Elementary School - Need final T&I inspection - Total contract - \$50,000 (IMF)
- Kapingamarangi Elementary School - Completed 100% - Total contract - \$50,000 (IMF)
- Nukuoro Elementary School - Need final T&I

- inspection - Total contract - \$50,000 (IMF)
- Sapwuaifik Elementary School - Last inspection in July 2023 shows 40% completion - Total contract - \$50,000 (IMF)

The following primary road repairs and improvements, consisting of 17 road segments, are currently being worked on by the Pohnpei Transportation Authority (PTA). Source of fund:

- Paved Road Maintenance (PRM) fund - Total Contract Cost - \$1,000,000.00
- ROHI, Kitti Paved road maintenance and improvement
- Green Bay to Luhke, Nett
- Kolonia Town Road patching
- Nanpailong culvert
- Circumferential road potholes/patching
- Target completion is September 2023.

UPCOMING PROJECTS:

The following road projects have been

introduced by the 10th Pohnpei Legislature and signed into law by Governor Oliver and are currently awaiting preparation of contract documents:

- Nanpohnmal to Sekere Road Improvement - \$150,000.00
- Dolonier Road Improvement - \$100,000.00
- Palikir Loop Road Maintenance - \$40,000.00
- Nanmadap Road maintenance - \$50,000.00
- Nanmand Salapwuk asphalt Road - \$71,558.00
- Nanwelin Pehleng secondary asphalt road overlay - \$111,948.00
- Enipein pah access paved road - \$75,890.00
- U Municipality asphalt road - \$50,000.00
- Kolonia Town asphalt road - \$50,000.00
- Sokehs asphalt road - \$50,000.00
- Madolenihmw asphalt road - \$50,000.00
- Nett asphalt road maintenance - \$50,000.00

More updates will be provided at a later date.



Governor Oliver welcomes IOM Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

August 4, 2023

Pohnpei—Governor Oliver welcomed Sarah Lou Ysmael Arriola, International Organization for Migration (IOM) Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, to Peilapalap. Regional Director Arriola was accompanied by IOM Chief of Mission Salvatore Sortino and IOM-Micronesia local staff, Mr. Dudley Lorrin and Mr. Warren Ching.

Previously, Ms. Arriola was the Undersecretary (Vice-Minister) for Migrant Workers' Affairs of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines. Her work involved the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of distressed nationals who were caught in wars, natural disasters, victims of abuse or stranded due to economic hardships and the recent pandemic.

During their discussions, Ms. Arriola explained that this is her first visit to

Pohnpei and most of the North Pacific region, she extended continued support and coordination from IOM. She spoke of areas that IOM can assist with include climate change, skills training and labor mobility. IOM Chief of Mission Sortino shared updates on IOM ongoing projects in areas like women's empowerment and capacity building for disaster preparedness. Governor Oliver warmly welcomed Ms. Arriola, Chief Sortino and staff. He shared some of Pohnpei's priorities and challenges, noting that Pohnpei is going through an interesting time with the amended compact of free association and some of the challenges deal with public service employment, capacity building, and the loss of residents who are migrating to greener pastures in the U.S.A. Governor Oliver looked forward to coordinating with the IOM staff to see how their programs can address Pohnpei's priorities and challenges.

The meeting was an introductory one that provided a platform for sharing ideas and concerns. Governor Oliver looks forward to the continued partnership and collaboration of development partners, like IOM, for the success and betterment of the State of Pohnpei and the Nation.



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computer software for wireless content delivery; downloadable and recorded computer software for electronic storage of data; downloadable and recorded computer software for storing, organizing, editing and sharing photos; downloadable and recorded computer software for image and speech recognition; downloadable and recorded computer software for home automation; downloadable and recorded internet browser software; downloadable and recorded computer software for purchasing, accessing and viewing movies, tv shows, videos, music, and multimedia content; downloadable and recorded game software; downloadable music files; downloadable films and movies featuring fiction and non-fiction stories on a variety of topics provided via a video-on-demand service; downloadable motion pictures and television shows featuring fiction and non-fiction stories on a variety of topics, and audio and video recordings featuring fiction and non-fiction stories on a variety of topics; digital media, namely, pre-recorded digital video discs, digital versatile discs; downloadable audio and video recordings, DVDs, and high definition digital discs featuring fiction and non-fiction stories on a variety of topics; downloadable audio files, multimedia files, text files, written documents, audio material, video material and games featuring fiction and non-fiction content on a variety of topics; downloadable fiction books on a variety of topics, downloadable e-books in the field of fiction and non-fiction stories on a variety of topics and audio books in the field of fiction and non-fiction stories on a variety of topics; magnetically encoded gift cards in International Class 9.

Paper gift cards, printed gift certificates; non-magnetically encoded prepaid purchase cards for transferring financial value online via retail computer networks; printed publications, namely, books, magazines, periodicals, brochures, journals, newsletters, and newspapers in fields of general human interest; paper in International Class 16.

Services:

Retail store services and online retail store services; Retail store services and online retail store services featuring a wide array of goods; retail store services and online retail store services featuring a wide array of consumer goods of others; retail grocery store services and wholesale distributorship featuring fresh foods and groceries; retail services, namely, administration of a discount program for enabling participants to obtain discounts on shipping services through use of a discount membership program; online retail store services featuring audio and video recordings, spoken word recordings, electronic books and computer games; advertising services; promoting and marketing the goods and services of others by distributing advertising material, coupons, discounts on goods and services, and information about exclusive deals; providing consumer product information and advice via the internet; providing product recommendations to consumers for commercial purposes; providing online consumer product information; sales promotion for others; providing stores for buyers and sellers of goods and services; advertising and marketing; commercial information; wholesale store services; customer loyalty program services featuring rewards in the form of discounted shipping services, early access to retail discounts and offers, access to books and other publications,

access to audiobooks, discounted online storage of photos and music, discounted music, video, game, and data streaming, home try-on services allowing consumers to sample clothing, apparel accessories, eyewear, watches, jewelry, wallets, and bags before selection and purchase, and discounted medicine, prescriptions, and medical and general wellness products; customer loyalty rewards program for shoppers, namely, arranging and conducting incentive reward programs to promote the sale of a wide variety of consumer goods of others; administration of a discount program enabling participants to obtain discounts on shipping services, early access to retail discounts and offers, access to books and other publications, access to audiobooks, discounted online storage of photos and music, discounted music, video, game, and data streaming, home try-on services allowing consumers to sample clothing, apparel accessories, eyewear, watches, jewelry, wallets, and bags before selection and purchase, and discounted medicine, prescriptions, and medical and general wellness products; subscription-based order fulfillment services in the fields of books, audiobooks, music, movies, tv shows, videos, games, data, clothing, and discounted medicine, prescriptions, and medical and general wellness products; expedited shipping services, namely, arranging for freight transportation of packages by means of truck and air; computerized tracking and tracing of packages in transit to ensure on-time delivery for business purposes; order fulfillment; electronic processing of orders for others; logistics management; business management; data processing services, in International Class 35.

Video-on-demand transmission; internet protocol television (IPTV) transmission services; streaming of audio and video material on the internet; streaming of data; streaming of music, movies, tv shows and games on the internet; broadcasting services; audio and video broadcasting services; subscription-based audio and video broadcasting services over the internet; internet broadcasting services; internet radio broadcasting services; electronic data transmission; electronic transmission and streaming of digital media content for others via global and local computer networks; telecommunication services, namely, transmission of webcasts; transmission of digital files; electronic transmission of digital photo files among internet users; providing access to digital music websites on the internet; providing access to online directories, databases, websites, blogs and reference materials; transmission of news; delivery of messages by electronic transmission; electronic transmission of mail and messages; podcasting services; providing on-line chat rooms for social networking; providing internet chatrooms; providing an on-line forum for transmission of messages among computer users and the transmission of photos, videos, text, data, images and sound; electronic bulletin board services, in International Class 38.

Delivery of goods by truck, air, and self-driving delivery robots; Shipping of goods; freight forwarding; freighting; packaging of goods; parcel delivery; wrapping of goods; transport of goods; shipping, delivery, and storage of goods; freight transportation by means of truck, train and air; packaging articles for transportation; merchandise packaging for others; expedited shipping services,

namely, arranging for freight transportation by means of truck, train and air; expedited shipping service for others; membership-based truck, train, and air shipping programs; delivery services, namely, shipping and delivery of goods; providing transportation, shipping, and delivery information; delivery of goods by mail order, namely, healthcare items, prescription medication, and over the counter medications for consumers; providing a website featuring information and commentary in the field of transportation; goods warehousing; locating and arranging for reservations for storage space for others; rental of storage containers; courier services; messenger services; mailbox rental; distribution services, namely, providing online services which afford customers the ability to select a distribution point for goods purchased on the internet; coordinating travel arrangements for individuals and for groups; travel booking agencies; providing a web site featuring travel information and commentary; supply chain logistics services, in International Class 39.

Providing non-downloadable electronic publications in the nature of books, magazines, periodicals, brochures, journals, newsletters, and newspapers in the fields of art, biography, business, children and young adults, comedy, comics, drama, economics, education, entertainment, fashion, fiction, finance, food, geography, hobbies, history, law, lifestyle, literature, medicine, music, nature, non-fiction, novels, parenting, politics, religion, romance, science, science fiction, technology, self-help, spirituality, sports, style, technology, and travel; loaning and rental of books, audiobooks and other publications; provision of non-downloadable videos, films, movies and television shows via a video-on-demand service; film and video rental services; entertainment services, namely, providing non-downloadable prerecorded music and audio programs featuring fiction and non-fiction stories on a variety of topics, and information in the field of music, and commentary and articles about music, all on-line via a global computer network; providing online video games; providing online non-downloadable game software; providing information online relating to computer games and enhancements for games; publishing of reviews; entertainment information; entertainment services, namely, in the nature of live visual and audio performances, namely, musical, variety, news and comedy shows; publication of printed matter; book, audiobook, newspaper, magazine and web magazine publishing; publishing of electronic publications; digital imaging services; film, movie, tv show and video production and distribution; creating and developing concepts for movies and television programs; audio and video recording services; providing online radio programming; digital audio, video and multimedia publishing services; providing information, news and commentary in the field of music; providing information, news and commentary in the field of reviews of audiobooks for entertainment purposes; presenting live musical concerts and performances; music production services; music publishing services; multimedia publishing of games; production of video and computer game software; rental of video games; entertainment services, namely, live performances by video game players; entertainment services, namely, providing online non-downloadable videos in the field of video games featuring video games

being played by others; entertainment services, namely, providing virtual environments in which users can interact for recreational, leisure or entertainment purposes; entertainment services, namely, providing on-line, non-downloadable virtual clothing, colors, badges, tools and weapons for use in virtual environments created for entertainment purposes; providing an online website portal for consumers to play and participate in on-line gaming and online electronic games for recreational computer games playing purposes; arranging and conducting sports competitions and tournaments for video game players; organizing video gaming leagues; providing a web site featuring the ratings, reviews and recommendations of users on events and activities in the fields of entertainment and education; providing a website featuring the ratings and reviews of television, movies, videos, music, screenplays, scripts, books and video game content; providing online news, information and commentary in the field of entertainment; online journals, namely, blogs featuring information about entertainment; entertainment services, namely, profiling of musicians, artists and bands by providing non-downloadable video clips of musical performances over a global computer network; arranging of contests; sweepstake services; sweepstake services provided over a global computer network hosting online sweepstakes and contests for others, in International Class 41.

Leasing and rental of computers and computer software; computer time-sharing services; computer co-location services, namely, providing facilities for the location of computer servers with the equipment of others; rental of computing and data storage facilities of variable capacity to third parties; computer diagnostic services; technical support services, namely, troubleshooting in the nature of diagnosing computer hardware and software problems; application service provider (asp), namely, hosting computer software applications for others; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for streaming, broadcasting, transmitting, distributing, reproducing, organizing and sharing music, audio, video, games and other data; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for use in authoring, downloading, transmitting, receiving, editing, extracting, encoding, decoding, playing, viewing, storing and organizing text, data, images, and audio and video files; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software to enable users to view or listen to audio, video, text and multimedia content; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for creating and providing user access to searchable databases of information and data; providing temporary use of non-downloadable search engine software; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for wireless content delivery; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for accessing online information; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for database management; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for customer service; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for price management; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for inventory management; providing temporary

use of non-downloadable computer software for order fulfillment; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for facilitating payments and online transactions; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for use in e-commerce and the retail industry, namely, software for point of sale transactions; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for online shopping; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software that provides retail and ordering services for a wide variety of consumer goods; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for use in disseminating advertising for others; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for creating, managing, and disseminating advertising, promotions, and marketing; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for disseminating information regarding consumer product discounts; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for use in sharing information about products, services, and deals; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for use in barcode scanning and price comparison; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for scheduling shipping and deliveries; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for logistics management; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for shipping management; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for electronic storage of data; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for storing, organizing, editing and sharing photos; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for image and speech recognition; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for home automation; providing temporary use of non-downloadable computer software for purchasing, accessing and viewing movies, tv shows, videos, music, and multimedia content; electronic data storage; data backup and recovery services; file sharing services, namely, providing a website featuring technology enabling users to upload and download electronic files; hosting of digital content on the internet; hosting, building and maintaining web sites; computer services, namely, cloud hosting provider services; providing search engines for the internet; computer services, namely, creating computer network-based indexes of information, websites and resources; computer services, namely, hosting on-line web facilities for others for organizing and conducting online meetings, gatherings, and interactive discussions; computer services, namely, uploading music and photos to the internet for others; computer services, namely, creating an on-line community for registered users to participate in discussions, get feedback from their peers, form virtual communities, and engage in social networking services in the fields of books, tv shows, films, music, entertainment, video games, fiction, and non-fiction; creating an on-line community for connecting video game players, teams and leagues for the purpose of organizing game and sports activities; providing a website featuring technology that creates personalized movie, tv show, video and music channels for listening, viewing, and sharing; providing a subscription based website featuring

non-downloadable music, radio, movies, tv shows, videos and information about music, albums, artists and songs; providing an online website featuring technology that enables users to share video game enhancements and game strategies; providing a website featuring technology for database management; providing a website featuring technology for sales management; providing a website featuring technology for customer service; providing a website featuring technology for price management; providing a website featuring technology for inventory management; providing a website featuring technology for logistics management; providing a website featuring technology for shipping management; providing a website featuring technology for scheduling shipping and deliveries; providing a website featuring technology for order fulfillment; providing a website featuring technology for payment processing; providing a website featuring technology for creating, managing, and disseminating advertising, promotions, and marketing; providing a website featuring technology for sharing information about products, services, and deals, in International Class 42.

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USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance addresses women's health needs in Pohnpei Workshop



U.S. Embassy Kolonia

Protecting women, girls, and people with disabilities was a chief topic of a 3-day workshop in Pohnpei from August 1-3. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) conducted the workshop in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Affairs, the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management, State Health Officials from Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Chuuk, the Red Cross, and others. The workshop was funded by USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance via a grant to the UNFPA. The workshop focused on how to provide for the sexual and reproductive needs of women and girls, as well as protecting them from Gender Based Violence following a natural disaster. U.S. Embassy Kolonia Chargé d'Affaires Alissa Bibb shared the following during her remarks: "We appreciate that you have focused on an often-neglected area of protecting women and girls' special needs. After a crisis event, we often focus on providing clean water, food, and shelter to those harmed by the crisis. But in addition, we need to ensure that reproductive health needs are met."

PUC updates Governor Oliver on completed and ongoing projects

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

August 3, 2023

Pohnpei--The leadership team of Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC) led by the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Erick Paul, General Manager, Nixon Anson, and Chief of Corporate Services, Trevayne Esiel, met with Governor Oliver to present an overview of the latest developments in PUC's completed and ongoing projects. The meeting served as a platform to discuss progress, achievements, and future strategies aimed at enhancing utility services across Pohnpei.

The leadership team reported the following completed projects:

1. Iron Removal Plant - \$1,800,000.00 funding source - US compact unallocated infrastructure funds
2. Palikir Capital Water Rehabilitation - \$621,094.24 funding source - FSM Congress
3. Cash-water meters phase 1 - \$500,000.00 funding source - US Office of Insular Affairs through unallocated FSM public infrastructure sector grants
4. Cash-water meters phase 2 - \$500,000.00 funding source - Same as above
5. Waste-to-heat energy - \$2,292,600.00 funding source - USDA Rural Development and PUC contribution
6. Nanpohnmal Power-line extension - \$50,000.00 funding source - FSM Congress
7. Takaiu, U power extension Phase 1- \$25,000.00 funding source - FSM congress
8. Salapwuk, Kitti Power extension - \$43,000.00 funding source - FSM congress

The leadership team also updated Governor Oliver on the On-going projects:

1. 7.5 mega-watt power plant: \$11, 379, 728.68 funding source - World Bank (SEDAP)

2. 2,000 KWh Solar power system with 2,000 KWh battery storage: \$14, 668, 023.00 funding source - City Pro/KSEL (IPP/PPA)
3. Maintenance Assistance program - \$164,500.00 funding source - US Department of Interior, Office of Insular Affairs
4. Lehnmesi Hydro and Drinking Water Readiness - \$2,500,000.00 funding source - Asian Development Bank (PRF)
5. Tomwara & Sekere power extension - \$100,000.00 funding source - FSM Congress
6. Mwudokalap, Madolenihmw power extension - \$10,000.00 funding source - FSM Congress
7. PUC Water Tank Rehabilitation - \$5,500,000.00 funding source - US Compact unallocated infrastructure grants
8. PUC Reform Phase 1 - \$730,000.00 funding source - Asian Development Bank
9. PUC Reform Phase 2 - \$600,000.00 funding source - Asian Development Bank (REDP)

Governor Oliver commended PUC's dedication to enhancing the quality of life for Pohnpei's residents through these crucial infrastructure improvements. He shared and recognized their commitment to serving the public, while improving their services. He emphasized the importance of cooperation, coordination and prioritization between government bodies, public utilities and donor partners to ensure Pohnpei's development and growth.

Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC) is Pohnpei's provider of water, wastewater, and electric utility services. PUC is dedicated to provide efficient, reliable, accessible and cost-effective utility services to improve and sustain the quality of life in Pohnpei. More information on PUC services including the current tariff schedule can be found at: [PUC \(pohnpeipuc.fm\)](http://pohnpeipuc.fm)



Governor Oliver welcomes returning OLMCHS students from robotics peer-to-peer instruction in Chuuk



Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

August 7, 2023

Pohnpei--Governor Oliver warmly welcomed students from Our Lady of Mercy Catholic High School (OLMCHS) and their Principal Mr. Russell Figueras to the Governor's Office. The students recently returned from Chuuk State where they were involved in peer-to-peer instruction on Robotics with High School students there.

The students from OLMCHS helped train and guide their fellow students from Saramen Chuuk Academy, Xavier High and Weipat High School in Robotics. Over the course of four days, the OLMCHS Robotics team worked with and guided their Chuukese peers towards a Robotics competition on August 3, 2023, where Saramen Chuuk took first place, followed by Xavier High and Weipat High School. The trip was funded by the Habel Outer Island Education Fund. Mr. Matt Coleman, Executive Director of Habel was also in Chuuk with the students.

During their visit to the Governor's Office, Governor Oliver expressed his pride and gratitude for the following OLMCHS students who went to Chuuk:

Jimmy Obispo
Eiji Lopez
Marikai Oliver



He was pleased to hear that the OLMCHS students from Pohnpei were in Chuuk to offer their guidance and training in robotics to their fellow Chuukese High School students. He noted the advances in technology that surround us today, and encouraged the students to continue to work towards fields of study that will benefit our island society. Governor Oliver highlighted their trip of guidance and instruction to their Chuukese peers as a unifying effort that brings us together.

The OLMCHS students were in Chuuk from July 29 - August 4, 2023. Thank you to Habel Fund for sponsoring and funding this very valuable activity. Habel Fund was the same sponsor and donor that helped the PICS High School Robotics team to attend the First Global Robotics competition in Geneva, Switzerland last year. Thank you Principal Figueras and Pearcylyta Cubacub as chaperones and a special thank you to Mr. TR Mori in Chuuk for your assistance.

Rear Admiral Huffman arrives for first visit to the FSM

U.S. Embassy Kolonia

U.S. Embassy Kolonia warmly welcomed INDOPACOM Rear Admiral Gregory C. Huffman, Commander of Joint Region Marianas to the FSM last month. Here for his first visit to the FSM, he was the Senior Military Official of the U.S. Presidential Delegation led by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Haaland for the Inauguration of H.E. President Wesley W. Simina. After representing the delegation at the Inaugural Interdenominational Service held at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Kitti on Tuesday July 25, Rear Admiral Huffman attended meetings the

next day as part of the U.S. Presidential delegation, engaging with President Simina, his administration, and the 23rd Congress. He also attended the inaugural ceremony and cultural activities. In addition to these engagements, Rear Admiral Huffman held a meeting with U.S. Embassy Chargé de Affaires Alissa Bibb and her team, as well as visiting with marines and sailors at Camp Koa, touring the camp where the Marines and Seabees reside. Task Force Koa Moana is in full swing in the FSM, with more than 100 Marines doing community engagement work throughout the four states, in alignment with the Seabees ongoing deployments to the FSM.



U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman, the Joint Region Marianas Commander, receives a tour of the Combat Operations Center during his visit with the U.S. Marines and Sailors with Task Force Koa Moana 23 in Camp Koa, Dekehtik, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, July 24, 2023. Task Force Koa Moana 23, composed of U.S. Marines and Sailors from I Marine Expeditionary Force, deployed to the Indo-Pacific to strengthen relationships with Pacific Island partners through bilateral and multilateral security cooperation and community engagements. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Trent A. Henry) 230724-M-FP389-1235



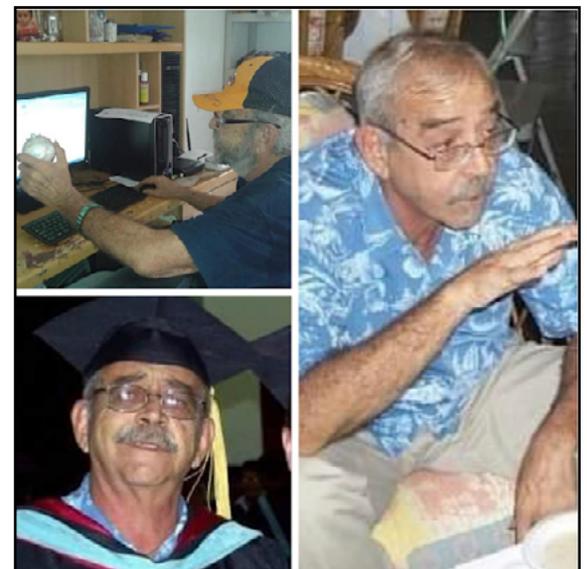
U.S. Marine Corps Capt. Nick Ranahan, left, a native of San Francisco and the Pohnpei officer in charge with Task Force Koa Moana 23, presents a gift to U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman, the Joint Region Marianas Commander, during Huffman's visit to Camp Koa Dekehtik, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, July 24, 2023. Task Force Koa Moana 23, composed of U.S. Marines and Sailors from I Marine Expeditionary Force, deployed to the Indo-Pacific to strengthen relationships with Pacific Island partners through bilateral and multilateral security cooperation and community engagements. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Trent A. Henry)



U.S. Marines and Sailors with Task Force Koa Moana 23 pose for a photograph with U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Gregory Huffman, the Joint Region Marianas Commander, during his visit to Camp Koa, Dekehtik, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, July 24, 2023. Task Force Koa Moana 23, composed of U.S. Marines and Sailors from I Marine Expeditionary Force, deployed to the Indo-Pacific to strengthen relationships with Pacific Island partners through bilateral and multilateral security cooperation and community engagements. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Trent A. Henry)

Passing of a former COM-FSM Professor-Dr. Richard Womack

Dr. Richard Womack a long-time professor of COM-FSM was laid to rest on August 5, 2023 on his birthday at his family home in Net, Pohnpei Island. Dr. Womack was a long time Professor at COM-FSM and contributed so much to where the college is now. He taught a generation of classroom teachers and his teachings live on through his students. He was a leading member of the team who sought to bring forth an independent national college for the FSM, now known as the College of Micronesia-FSM. He advocated on behalf of the faculty, the current practice of the 10 months of work and 2 months of leave with pay for the teaching faculty of the college which is still in practice today. Dr. Womack contributed so much to the education of young Micronesians now they are leaders and work force of this FSM Nation. Thank you so much for your services and your contributions to COM-FSM and the development of the FSM. Dr. Richard Womack was buried on August 6, 2023 in Net at his wife family home.



Task Force Koa Moana 23 conducts Pest Control Training

US Embassy Kolonia

Aug 12, 2023

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia - Navy medical officers with Task Force Koa Moana 23 provided training to strengthen Micronesia's capability to respond to outbreaks of pests that may transmit disease to humans. The Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency, Pohnpei Division of Public Health, and FSM National Environmental Health and Food Safety Program also took part in the training from 7-11 August in Kolonia, Pohnpei. In total, 28 participants took part in the training to calculate how much pesticides should be applied to certain areas to help protect the environment in FSM. They also learned how to protect the health of those applying pesticides while ensuring effective management of insects and rodents that may transmit disease. The training was coordinated through the non-governmental organization, Pacific Island Health Officers Association (PIHOA). LCDR James Harwood, Entomologist with TF Koa Moana, was one of the lead instructors for the course. "The opportunity for TF Koa Moana to partner with PIHOA greatly improved our ability to support our government partners here in Pohnpei," said Harwood. The medical staff conducting the training said they wanted to ensure a clear understanding on the processes, policies, and requirements to apply chemical

pesticides and implement integrated pest management programs throughout the communities in Pohnpei. The same training is scheduled to take place in Yap and Kosrae later this year. "The combination of our efforts resulted in more realistic training scenarios and more relevant information to the Pacific islands being presented," said Harwood. "It was a great opportunity for us to improve our interoperability and relationships among all our partners." For questions regarding this release, please contact 1stLt Arthur Deal, USMC at arthur.deal@usmc.mil. Photos and videos will be made available for download and use via the Defense Visual Information Distribution System (<https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/koamoana23>).



Pacific Recovery Picks Up Amid Uncertain Global Outlook

The World Bank

Benefits of labor migration can be maximized with investments in education, support for reintegration, and improving economic opportunities at home.

SUVA, August 8, 2023 – Despite uncertainty about the outlook for inflation and interest rates in major economies and trading partners, developing Pacific economies are expected to grow in 2023 and 2024 due to a recovery in tourism, post-disaster rebuilding, and infrastructure construction, a World Bank report released today says.

Pacific growth is expected to pick up to 3.9 percent this year from 2 percent in 2022 and then moderate to 3.3 percent next year as the initial post-COVID-19 rebound dissipates and as the region moves towards its long-term trend growth of 2.6 percent, according to the Pacific Economic Update: Recovering in the Midst of Uncertainty.

Fiji is expected to continue leading the Pacific's recovery from the pandemic, starting from a strong rebound in 2022 (18.6 percent) and into 2023 (7.7 percent), owing to a revival of tourism. Robust growth is also projected for Palau (10.3 percent), Samoa (5.5 percent), Tuvalu (3.9 percent), and Federated States of Micronesia (3.2 percent).

"Most Pacific countries are projected to reach their pre-pandemic GDP level by 2024," said World Bank Economist for the Pacific, Reshika Singh. "For tourism-based economies, international travel mainly explains the recovery path. For others, the effects of post-pandemic border reopening will be evident in higher public investment and construction. Continued strong remittance inflows will also support consumption and growth, particularly in Samoa and Tonga."

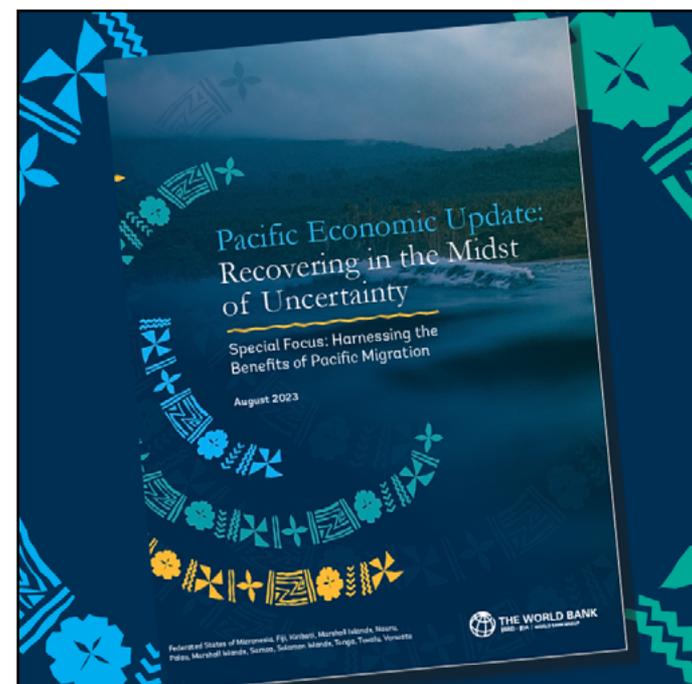
At the same time, uncertainty about global commodity price movements, geopolitical tensions, slower growth among major trading partners, and the region's vulnerability to natural disasters pose downside risks to the Pacific economic recovery. Many Pacific countries rely heavily on energy and food imports, and persistently elevated international food and energy prices will create prolonged price pressures on the region, with the potential to push vulnerable populations into poverty.

A special focus of the report examines the impact of labor migration, which has served as an engine of development and an increasingly important pillar of bilateral and regional economic relationships. Six of the top 10 remittance recipients in the East Asia and Pacific region, by share of GDP, are in the Pacific. In Tonga and Samoa, four out of every five households receive remittances from abroad, with remittance income making up on average 30 percent and eight percent of household consumption, respectively. "Pacific workers engaged in labor mobility programs earn significantly more overseas than they would at home, with latest estimates showing Tongan seasonal workers in Australia and New Zealand make three to four times more than they could at home. For Ni-Vanuatu workers, it's up to ten times as much," said World Bank Program Leader for Human Development in the Pacific, Thomas Walker.

The Pacific Economic Update highlights that participation

in labor mobility programs can strengthen family relationships, empower women, and deliver better health and education outcomes for migrants' families.

Yet despite the immense benefits labour mobility can provide, it also poses significant challenges, including workers' prolonged absences from home, dissatisfaction with earnings and health coverage, and the risk of losing skilled workers in home countries. For Pacific countries to reap the most benefit from labor mobility programs, the region must invest more in education and training, including through programs to support returning migrant workers. Improvements to the business climate in Pacific countries can also help create more and better jobs in Pacific countries themselves.



Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs Provides Guam with Recovery Support for Typhoon Mawar Impacts

U.S. Department of the Interior

WASHINGTON – The Department of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs today announced \$550,000 in additional assistance for recovery and response to the impacts of Typhoon Mawar that hit Guam on May 22, 2023.

“In response to the Governor’s request, we are pleased to provide this additional support for Guam following President Biden’s emergency declaration and thank all of our federal partners for their continued support for supplemental territorial and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from Typhoon Mawar,” said Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor. “We anticipate that this grant to Guam will provide stability and continuity of services in this current time of need and in the future.”

The announcement comes after Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and Assistant Secretary Cantor traveled to Guam to meet with Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero and Lt. Governor Joshua Tenorio to discuss the island’s ongoing recovery.

The funding awards announced today will meet the following needs:

- \$420,000 to purchase a 350 kVA emergency generator and a 10,000-gallon water tank and pump system for the non-congregate shelter in Anigua, Guam.

- \$130,000 to procure a security system that includes cameras and alarms for warehouse and storage facilities used to store materials needed to sufficiently respond to the COVID pandemic and other natural and man-made disasters. Funds will also be used to procure a forklift to manage handling and organizing supplies and materials within the shelter.

Similar support in response to Typhoon Mawar was provided to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and announced by Secretary Haaland during a recent visit to the territories.

The Assistant Secretary of Insular and International Affairs and the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) carry out the Secretary of the Interior’s responsibilities for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, OIA administers and oversees federal assistance under the Compacts of Free Association to the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. OIA also administers a discretionary Technical Assistance Program for all the Insular Areas. Find information about OIA and its work on www.doi.gov/oia, Facebook, the platform formerly known as Twitter, and YouTube.

“End The Years Of Secrecy” Accountability.Fish Applies for “Unconditional” WCPFC Observer Status

Accountability.Fish

WASHINGTON: In a bid to end the practice of international fisheries decision-making bodies conducting some of their most crucial meetings in secret, the Accountability.Fish advocacy group has applied for “unconditional” observer status for the upcoming Western Central Pacific Fisheries Council meetings later this year.

“International fisheries decisions have far reaching economic and ecological consequences, and the citizens of the WCPFC countries, and indeed those of the world, have a right to know what decisions are being made and why. It’s time to end the years of secrecy - particularly at the WCPFC, which is one that has a history of ensuring information used to make key decisions remains behind closed doors,” said Ryan Orgera, Accountability.Fish’s Global Director.

WCPFC members include: Australia, China, Canada, Cook Islands, European Union, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu.

In addition, participating territories include: American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, French Polynesia, Guam, New Caledonia, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna, and cooperating non-members are Curacao, Ecuador, El Salvador, Liberia, Nicaragua, Panama, Thailand, Vietnam.

Noting that observers who gain access to meetings of other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations often have to abide by conditions intended to shield nations from having their actions at the meetings appear in the public record, Orgera made a point of requesting “unconditional” observer status for the upcoming WCPFC meetings.

“Offering only conditional or partial access to NGO and other observers only reinforces bad practices in the international fishing arena. With the UN High Seas Treaty still taking some years to go into effect and a more holistic and sustainable approach to oceans management still to emerge, we need to be vigilant to make sure the industrial fishing industry doesn’t do irreversible damage in the meantime.”

Accountability.Fish is a coalition of citizens around the world seeking greater openness in international fisheries management. It is funded by the Oceans Five foundation.

UOG President Enriquez officially begins appointment

University of Guam

The University of Guam Board of Regents and Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez last week executed the contract officially appointing her as the 12th president of UOG. Dr. Enriquez assumed her new role as President effective August 6, following a search process that began with 30 U.S. and international applicants and was later whittled down to three finalists. She moves to the presidency after serving as the senior vice president and provost at UOG for the last 10 years. "The Board is excited about the future of the University under her capable leadership," said Chairperson Liza Provido. "We are confident that she will bring a wealth of experience, leadership, and vision to her new role, leading UOG to even greater heights." Over her 30-year career at UOG, Dr. Enriquez has held other

administrator positions — including serving as the first female CHamoru dean of the UOG School of Business and Public Administration, interim director of the Center for Continuing Education and Outreach Programs, and most recently, the senior vice president and provost. In addition to her career in academia, Dr. Enriquez has extensive private sector experience in organizational management and marketing and as an entrepreneur. She believes her careers in private enterprise and public service fuels her passion for workforce and economic development for the island and the rest of Micronesia. "The University of Guam is a conduit that energizes our economy, provides our community opportunities for social mobility, informs public policy, and cultivates our future thought leaders," said Dr. Enriquez.

Thankful for the Board’s vote of

confidence, Dr. Enriquez said she will be guided by Guam's “cultural values of respect, of compassion, of community. The University’s mission is 'Ina, Deskubre, Setbe — To Enlighten, To Discover, To Serve,' she said. "Student-centered focus and service to our island and region is woven into everything we do as a university." Dr. Enriquez holds a Bachelor of Science in Management from University of Maryland Global Campus, a Master of Business Administration from the University of Guam, and a Doctor of Business Administration in International Business Administration (Marketing) from Alliant International University. Dr. Enriquez is the second



woman to become president in the 71-year history of UOG. The late Rosa Carter was president of the university from 1977 to 1983. The transition in leadership follows the completion of former President Thomas W. Krise’s five-year term on August 5. The schedule for Dr. Enriquez’s investiture ceremony will be announced in the coming weeks.

Maintenance Assistance Program provides \$5.2 Million for the Insular Areas in Fiscal Year 2023

U.S. Department of the Interior

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) has announced \$5,298,740 in fiscal year 2023 Maintenance Assistance Program (MAP) grant funding that will go towards supporting programs and projects benefitting American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the freely associated states: the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

“Maintenance and upkeep are necessary for the islands where the warmer weather, higher humidity, and the saltwater environment cause faster degradation of equipment and buildings,” said Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs Carmen G. Cantor. “All across the Insular Areas, OIA’s Maintenance Assistance Program is making a difference in small and big ways.”

Projects and programs funded through MAP in fiscal year 2023 for the Insular Areas follow:

American Samoa - \$750,280

- \$544,780 to the American Samoa Power Authority for the Lineman Training and Development program;
- \$150,000 to the Department of Parks and Recreation for renovation at the Tia Seu Lupe or Star Mound Historical Site, in Ottoville, Tufuna; and
- \$55,500 to the American Samoa Telecommunications Authority for the Geographic Information System Mapping and Survey Software & Hardware project.

Guam - \$839,150

- \$644,800 to the Guam Public Broadcasting Service to Upgrade the Power Infrastructure in Support of more Reliable Broadcasting Services; and
- \$194,350 to the Guam Community College for the Increasing Facilities Maintenance Capabilities project.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands - \$1,097,640

- \$827,640 to the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation for the Granular Activated Carbon System Monitoring and Maintenance project at ten water production wells on Saipan; and

- \$270,000 to the Northern Marianas Technical Institute for the Fuetsan i Futurata pilot project to teach and train local laborers in construction and maintenance skills.

U.S. Virgin Islands - \$904,060

- \$318,816 to the Virgin Islands Water & Power Authority (WAPA) for the Water Department Equipment program;
- \$210,353 to WAPA for the Substation Maintenance program.
- \$189,000 to the Department of Agriculture for acquisition of a Front End Loader, and
- \$185,891 to the Fire Service and Emergency Services for acquisition of a Quick Attack Pumper/Brush Truck.

Federated States of Micronesia - \$273,600

- \$165,000 to the Yap State Public Services Corporation for the Pacific Lineman Training Program, a regional program that includes the territories and each of the states in the freely associated states in the Western Pacific;
- \$108,600 to the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation for the Construction and Extension of Pipeline

with Power line for Centrifugal Pump project on Pohnpei.

Republic of the Marshall Islands - \$821,242

- \$315,000 to the Majuro Water and Sewer Company for the Pump and Collection System Renewal program;
- \$256,242 to the Majuro Atoll Waste Company for Waste Collection Improvement and Expansion project on Majuro; and
- \$250,000 to the Ministry of Health for the Remodeling of the Section 177 Clinic project, also on Majuro.

Republic of Palau - \$612,768

- \$532,730 to the Ministry of Health and Human Services for the Belau National Hospital Renovations project.
- \$80,038 to the Palau Public Utilities Corporation for the Babeldaob Water Quality Monitoring project.

MAP funds are discretionary and may only fund maintenance-related needs and training in the Insular Areas. The Technical Assistance Program, an additional discretionary funding program, may support a more diverse pool of needs benefitting the Insular Areas, some of which were announced by Secretary Haaland on her recent trip to the Pacific.

Funds under both programs are distributed following a competitive grant application process that is open for applications each year in October on grants.gov under CFDA 15.875. More information about these and other funding provided to the Insular Areas through OIA may be found at www.doi.gov/oia.

The Assistant Secretary for Insular and International Affairs and the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) carry out the Secretary of the Interior’s responsibilities for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Additionally, OIA administers and oversees federal assistance under the Compacts of Free Association to the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau. OIA also administers a discretionary Technical Assistance Program for all the Insular Areas.

UOG to receive \$526K toward addressing environmental challenges

University of Guam

The University of Guam’s Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant will receive \$526,000 as part of a new nationwide initiative to help local communities access federal technical assistance as they resolve environmental challenges.

UOG’s participation will be through a partnership with San Diego State University (SDSU).

SDSU will establish one of 17 Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers nationwide. Each of the 17 centers will receive \$10 million from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and UOG’s \$526,000 will come from its partnership with SDSU.

“UOG continues to serve our students, our island, and our region through our faculty and research expertise, as well as through meaningful partnerships we are building across the globe,” said UOG President

Anita Borja Enriquez. “We are pleased to partner with the prestigious San Diego State University under the leadership of its President, Dr. Adela Dela Torre, to deliver new resources and networks for the benefit of our island communities.”

Many communities across the nation have the solutions to the environmental challenges they face but have lacked access or faced barriers when it comes to the crucial federal resources needed to deliver these solutions, said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan in a previously issued statement about the \$177 million nationwide effort.

The 17 Centers will ensure all communities can access benefits from President Biden’s historic economic plan, Regan said, “which includes groundbreaking investments in clean air, clean water, and our clean energy future.”

In Guam, the UOG Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant will lead outreach, engagement, and service delivery

for Guam and the rest of the Micronesia region. The local efforts will be coordinated with the Guam Green Growth (G3) and the Guam Energy Office.

“Guam and the rest of Micronesia are no strangers to environmental justice issues. We are on the frontlines of climate change’s impacts despite contributing the least to its causes. This significant grant will build local capacity to address some of these justice issues and expand our center’s ability to support sustainable development in Guam and our region,” stated Austin Shelton, Director of the UOG Center for Island Sustainability and Sea Grant.

Over the next five years, the SDSU Center for Community Energy and Environmental Justice and its partners will co-create accessible, multilingual, in-person, and virtual services to help communities that are often most affected by environmental challenges like drought, flooding, and pollution apply for government funding.

Joint statement by UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell and WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on the occasion of World Breastfeeding Week

UNICEF & WHO Joint Release

1 August 2023

NEW YORK/GENEVA - In the last 10 years, many countries have made significant progress to increase exclusive breastfeeding rates. Yet even greater progress is possible when breastfeeding is protected and supported, particularly in the workplace.

This World Breastfeeding Week, under its theme, “Let’s make breastfeeding at work, work” – UNICEF and WHO are emphasizing the need for greater breastfeeding support across all workplaces to sustain and improve progress on breastfeeding rates globally.

In the last decade, the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding has increased by a remarkable 10 percentage points, to 48 per cent globally. Countries as diverse as Cote d’Ivoire, Marshall Islands, the Philippines, Somalia, and Viet Nam have

achieved large increases in breastfeeding rates, showing that progress is possible when breastfeeding is protected, promoted, and supported. In the Pacific, the average prevalence is higher at 57 per cent, but with significant variations by country (ranging from below 40 per cent to 76 per cent). In some countries, there is a decreasing trend.

To reach the global 2030 target of 70 percent, the barriers women and families face to achieve their breastfeeding goals must be addressed.

Supportive workplaces are key. Evidence shows that while breastfeeding rates drop significantly for women when they return to work, that negative impact can be reversed when workplaces facilitate mothers to continue to breastfeed their babies.

Family-friendly workplace policies - such as paid maternity leave,

breastfeeding breaks, and a room where mothers can breastfeed or express milk - create an environment that benefits not only working women and their families but also employers. These policies generate economic returns by reducing maternity-related absenteeism, increasing the retention of female workers, and reducing the costs of hiring and training new staff.

From the earliest moments of a child’s life, breastfeeding is the ultimate child survival and development intervention. Breastfeeding protects babies from common infectious diseases and boosts children’s immune systems, providing the key nutrients children need to grow and develop to their full potential. Babies who are not breastfed are 14 times more likely to die before they reach their first birthday than babies who are exclusively breastfed.

Supporting breastfeeding in the workplace is good for mothers, babies,

and businesses, and that is why UNICEF and WHO are calling on governments, donors, civil society, and the private sector to step up efforts to:

- Ensure a supportive breastfeeding environment for all working mothers - including those in the informal sector or on temporary contracts - by having access to regular breastfeeding breaks and facilities that enable mothers to continue breastfeeding their children once they return to work.
- Provide sufficient paid leave to all working parents and caregivers to meet the needs of their young children. This includes paid maternity leave for a minimum of 18 weeks, preferably for a period of six months or more after birth.
- Increase investments in breastfeeding support policies and programmes in all settings, including a national policy and programme that regulates and promotes public and private sector support to breastfeeding women in the workplace.

Historic First World Religions Conference Held in Pohnpei

Imam, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community FSM

In an effort to promote religious diversity and inclusion in Micronesia, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community FSM held its first World Religions Conference. With the aim of bringing all religions represented on the island together in an interfaith symposium, seven religious representatives alongside their congregations convened at the Cupids Restaurant on July 15th. Beginning with scripture readings, this year's program was held on the topic of “how religion can protect the environment”. Moderated by the chief of staff of the United Nations, Kay Schwendinger, guest remarks were given by an official representative from the United States government, Mr. Andrew Posner, after which the head of the WHO, Dr. Momoe Takeuchi, presented comments on behalf of the UN Micronesia Resident Coordinator, Jaap Van Hierdan. The purpose of the venue was simple in its purpose: seven speakers from different faiths spent around ten minutes presenting their perspectives on how religion

can be used as a force of preserving the environment for tomorrow.

Representing their respected faiths were Craig Reffner on behalf of the Jewish faith, Tokamarewe Taasu from Baha’i Spirituality, Dr. Manoj Nair representing Hinduism, Crystal Michaela Jackson representing Aboriginal Spirituality, Imam Serjeel Ahmed representing Islam, Pastor Walter John representing the SDA church, and President Ozimy Edward representing the Latter Day Saints. Being the first of it’s kind in Micronesia, the World Religions Conference laid a precedence of peace, interfaith love, and harmony in society. It laid testament that all religions stem from the same creator, and we have an opportunity to delight in our differences, and see how similar we are in our prayers and practices.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community believes in ‘love for all, hatred for none’, and hopes to continue this program every year.

