

FSM Congress seats election winners Marar and Asher and upholds court ruling, seating Sigrah

By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 2, 2024

Palikir, Pohnpei— This morning, the 23rd FSM Congress opened its second session. While most special session opening day activities are uneventful, this morning's event was an exception in that Congress swore in its three new Senators with a larger than usual crowd in the gallery. This was the morning that ended the months-long legal proceedings at the FSM Supreme Court, culminating in the appeals panel ruling that Congress must seat Yoslyn G. Sigrah of Kosrae to the At-Large seat for that State. Congress also approved and swore in special election winners Julio M. Marar of Chuuk and Johnson A. Asher of Kosrae to fill the two-year seats vacated by the passing of Chuuk's Florencio Singkoro-Harper and Kosrae's Paliknoa Welly.

The first order of business for the day was to appoint the credentials committee to review the credentials of the Senators-elect and to report to the body as a whole. Speaker Esmond Moses appointed Senators Isaac Figir, Robson Romolow, Merlynn Abello-Alfonso, and Fabian Nimea to the committee. The committee considered the credentials of the At-



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Nett Elementary hosts cultural celebration on FSM National Holiday as youth embrace heritage



By Bill Jaynes
The Kaselehlie Press

April 1, 2024

Nett, Pohnpei— FSM Law has designated April 1 of each year as a National Holiday, a day set aside for cultural celebrations and displays. In years past, Pohnpei has celebrated Cultural Day with community-wide displays featuring dancers, farmers, and craftspeople showcasing their cultural talents. However, recent years have seen a shift in focus, particularly towards ensuring the preservation of cultural heritage among the younger generation.

This year's event was held at Nett Elementary School on the grounds, centering on the tiny traditional nahs on the campus. It began with a parade through town to Nett Elementary School.

"This year's festivities were unique as they were entirely organized and executed by students from Nett, Wone, Saladak, Awak, and Parem Elementary Schools, who are part of the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) Indigenous Learning Recovery Program. Their dedication and commitment to preserving Pohnpeian culture were evident throughout the program," said a press release from Pohnpei Public Information.



Photos by Bill Jaynes, Pohnpei State, and Pohnpei Tourism

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PIF's Esala Nayasi embarks on tour for better Forum understanding of North Pacific issues

By **Bill Jaynes**
The Kaselehlie Press

March 24, 2024

Pohnpei—The Pacific Island Forum (PIF) is making a renewed and concerted effort to ensure that rifts like the one that occurred when the Micronesian nations threatened to withdraw from the Forum. Esala Nayasi Pacific Islands Forum Deputy Secretary General - Strategic Policy & Programming this week made visits to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia. He will visit the Republic of Palau as his next stop.

“It has been some time (since) we've been to the North,” he said. “Given that the political impasse basically affected relationships within the forum, particularly the northern Pacific and broadly the Micronesian region and countries which also includes Kiribati and Nauru. Therefore, it is important for us to be here, to show presence, to meet and engage with our government counterparts, be able to see and brief them on what we are doing and also get feedback on some of the key policy initiatives that our leaders have asked us to prioritize this year.”

He said that when Pacific leaders met in Tuvalu in 2019 the Pacific region needed a regional strategy to put into place through 2050. They called it the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

“They also wanted us to review the regional architecture,” he said. “Looking at all the actors within the region, from regional organizations to our partners to see how best we can redesign an architecture that best supports the implementation of the 2050 strategy. So, the 2050 strategy therefore was then agreed by leaders and endorsed by leaders in 2022. The implementation plan was endorsed last year in Cook Islands. The priority will be

the review of the real architecture. That is one of the key policy initiatives that we are driving this year. And they have access to report to leaders in August when they meet in Tonga.”

He said that the context of the North is likely different from countries in the South in terms of partnerships and the level of engagement that northern Pacific countries have. “It is important for us to see how best we can bring the region together, through the sub-regional mechanism to be able to see how best the regional mechanism, regional system can best support sub-regionalism and also countries, individual countries, in their efforts to meet their own goals and aspirations in their development plan. In our own discussions, there are also issues that are probably, and challenges that are probably familiar to the FSM and other Micronesian countries.”

The US relationship in the north is another key issue that the Forum will consider in the way that they review the architecture.

He said that for the Forum there are nine regional organizations but in terms of presence in the north, only SPC has an office in Pohnpei. Based on the Micronesian leaders' agreement, the Forum is in the process of setting up a sub-regional office in Kiribati that they hope to have established by the end of the year.

“But of course through our visits here in these past few days, the critical question that we continue to be asking is presence, being able to hear their views, being able to see, go through their own experiences, understand their issues, so that we can then better drive some of the regional initiatives and policies that we need to work on. So as part of the objectives of our meeting, I think at the first level is engagement. One thing that we found across the Pacific, the turnover of offices

and officials within government is quick. So therefore, the need for us to be consistently there with engaging at the national level and being able to articulate and address some of these issues that they are facing so that we are always informed of national developments,” he said.

The first issue to address for the Forum is engagement. He said that the second issue is advocacy; advocacy on all of the issues he mentioned related to the 2050 strategy, and also issues related to security, gender, trade, and non-economic issues.

There are also issues for the Pacific Island nations that the Forum currently refers to as “smaller island states”, thought there is a move among Forum leaders to come up with another less pejorative sounding term for them.

“But the Micronesian countries are in that category,” he said. “Because of their level of vulnerability and their special category within the forum, we are now looking at how we need to review the grouping within the forum, given that the countries, even though the challenges are, there are similarities, but context and dynamics could be different. Of course, the level of vulnerabilities, it differs too, and the level of economic development capabilities and capacity of countries differ. And therefore, the need for us to re-look at how we can strategize and put in place strategies so that we are looking at these different contexts for countries. There's no one size fits all.”

“One of the key issues that smaller countries, even smaller countries, have always talked about is access to finance, particularly climate finance. Talking to government ministries, it is a key issue. The vulnerability is getting worse. Sea



level rise and the effects of climate change are increasingly great. And therefore, the need for financing mechanisms at a global or regional level to be accessible for communities. So as part of this initiative that we are coming to consult members on including my commissioner is the development of a Pacific resilience facility to help communities ensure that there is easy access facility that is owned and led and driven by Pacific countries, and it's a first of its kind.”

He said that the facility is not a new plan but it was delayed due to COVID. He said that delay allowed them to incorporate more learning into the plan. “So, the office is now in transition this year and it will be in operation come next year. So, we'll begin fundraising at the end of this year, and then next year we hope it will be up and running.”

Nayasi said that he would also be meeting with some of the sub-regional offices that are located in Pohnpei during his visit such as the UN, UNDP, and other development partners.

The Kaselehlie Press

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Bill Jaynes
Managing Editor

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Monday, April 15, 2024

Australian Ambassador Jo Cowley concludes term in FSM with fond memories at reception in her honor

By *Bill Jaynes*
The Kaselehlie Press

March 21, 2024

Pohnpei, FSM— Four years after her arrival and the acceptance of her credentials, the time for Australia's Ambassador to the FSM, Jo Cowley, to move on has come. On the evening of March 21 at Cliff Rainbow Hotel, the Australian Embassy hosted a farewell reception for her to bid farewell to the people of the FSM. The evening also celebrated the productive bilateral talks that the FSM and Australia completed that morning.

"Those talks, as usual, reflected the characteristics of our relationship: Trust, mutual respect, partnership, and optimism," she said during her emotional and heartfelt speech at the reception. "This year, on the 6th of July, we will celebrate 37 years of diplomatic relations. And over the last four years, in particular, our partnership has expanded considerably. This morning it was very satisfying to take stock of all of that. Our task spans maritime security, climate change, renewable energy, oceans, telecommunications, aviation, gender equality, sports, health, volunteers, and scholarships. We are working together in every single FSM state. Both our countries are also committed to ensuring a safe, secure, and prosperous Blue Pacific through our membership of the Pacific Islands Forum. I want to thank all of our partners for all of this, the FSM and state governments, communities, NGOs, diplomatic and international partners, and business for all that we have achieved together."

She spent several minutes speaking of the highlights of her term as Ambassador to the FSM. She spoke of the visit to the FSM from Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and her delegation. That visit included face-to-face meetings with FSM leadership and a visit to Ohmine Elementary School to see how the students and teachers were implementing an Australia-funded program. "It was also memorable because it proved, once and for all, that Pohnpeian sakau is the most potent Kava in the Pacific," she said, eliciting laughter from the audience who remembered that one member of the delegation had thought that the FSM's sakau was like South Pacific kava and had to be medically treated.

She highlighted the arrival of the FSS Bethwel Henry, the Australian-donated



marine surveillance vessel, and the visit to Australia by FSM Vice President Palik and an FSM national delegation for the commissioning of the vessel. Henry's daughters, Sophia and Joycelynn, were also there to witness the sendoff of the vessel named in honor of their father.

She spoke of her visits to each of the FSM States on many occasions during the three years that she and her husband Matt have been "in country." Though Ambassador Cowley was assigned to the FSM four years ago, the COVID epidemic and the FSM's closure to the outside world delayed their arrival for nearly a year.

She spoke of the beauty of Pohnpei, the island that hosts the Australian Ambassador and her family. She said that Sokehs Mountain figures strongly in their memories. "Our back veranda looks straight onto the beautiful Sokehs Island. It's often the first thing that we see in the morning and often the last thing we see at night. We see the magnificence of the Pohnpei sunset against Sokehs Mountain... Sitting on our veranda, we hear the daily sounds of the Sokehs communities drifting up to our house: kids laughing, pigs squealing, roosters crowing, dogs fighting, families chatting, and barbecuing."

She spoke of snorkeling at Ahnd Atoll, kayaking into Nan Mado, the six waterfalls trek, and the food that she and her husband enjoyed in Pohnpei.

"Outside of Pohnpei, we also have so

many great memories. We absolutely loved the Lelu ruins and tangerines in Kosrae. Of course, we went diving in Chuuk and Yap as well, and they are just pristine, absolutely pristine places. Now this all sounds like a tourism advertisement, it really does, but this is the reality. I know you don't want the world to know too much about it, but this has been our lucky reality for three years. We're very lucky to have lived here. So, thank you to all the Pohnpeians for making my husband and me feel so welcome in your communities, and for all the States for the great hospitality that you've shown us," she said.

She spent the remainder of her time at the podium thanking many people with whom she had worked and known while in the FSM.

"So that brings me to the end of the thank yous, but I think as many of you know my successor will be arriving in April. Her name, yes, "her," a woman.

Her name is Jenny Grant-Curnow and she is extremely confident and experienced, and she's really looking forward to coming here," she said. "We are briefing her on everything that we do and all the fabulous and wonderful people that we work with and she hopefully will pick up things seamlessly. And I know that you'll make her welcome in the traditional Micronesian way."

Vice President Aren B. Palik had the honor of bidding farewell to his friend, Ambassador Cowley on behalf of the FSM. "Many of you would see Jo Cowley simply as an ambassador of Australia to the FSM. And some of us see her also as a fisherwoman, a very good fisherwoman. She's also, as you heard, a very good softball player. But for many of us, and I'm sure you will agree with me, that we also see her as simply a decent, hardworking person that is a friend of ours," he said.

"In today's talks, some reflections were exchanged on notable activities and engagements recently undertaken between our two countries. And I'd like to mention, I think it's important for our people, our citizens, colleagues, and friends in the nation to know some of the things that you have helped us, this country, with during your assignment here in the country," he said.

The Vice President spoke of Australia's financial assistance on the East Micronesia Cable Project, the new undersea cable that will improve connectivity and access

to digital technologies for Kosrae, Nauru, and Kiribati. He also thanked the US and Japanese governments for their funding and assistance on the project which is now being implemented.

He spoke of the donation and assistance with the two Guardian class patrol boats, the FSS Tosiwo Nakayama and the FSS Bethwel Henry to patrol the FSM's Exclusive Economic Zone for law enforcement.

Vice President Palik spoke of Australia's commitment to supporting the FSM in environmentally related programs. "As a classic example of working together with other like-minded partners, Australia is providing complementary support to the Japan Mines Action Service, in short, JMAS, a program designed to remove oil that is leaking from World War II wreckage in Chuuk Lagoon." He said that a few days earlier, he had arrived in Chuuk and witnessed the arrival of the team as it got underway.

"Ambassador, you have also helped with elevating critical assistance provided to the FSM in the realm of education, volunteers, community development programs, scholarship, regional policing, and with the pending re-establishment of ABC Radio Australia in the FSM," the Vice President said.

"May we also acknowledge, Ambassador, and appreciate the government's key role in tackling our most serious existential threat, climate change and climate crisis. Australia being an island and ocean state, as you stated, understands the challenges we face with respect to climate change. FSM appreciates the robust climate and environment programs being pursued by Australia, which takes into account our situation in small island states such as FSM and many of our neighboring countries."

"So, as you depart, Ambassador, our humble shores, I truly hope that you have had an enriching and remarkable experience here in our country, in our communities. From our end, I assure you that you will always have friends here in the FSM. Madam Ambassador, I wish you the best in your future endeavors and I hope you and your husband and your family will come back and visit us again in the future. Good friends never say goodbye, they simply say, see you soon," he concluded.

The speeches were followed by a buffet-styled dinner.

...Cultural Day

Continued from front page

Students from Nett Elementary School led the proceedings with a traditional sakau ceremony, executed with precision and occasionally met with lighthearted chuckles from the crowd in response to minor mishaps.

Addressing the assembled crowd, Pohnpei Governor Stevenson A. Joseph emphasized the significance of preserving and celebrating the island's rich cultural heritage.

Following the governor's remarks, students from Awak, Wone, Saladak, and Parem Elementary Schools took center stage, showcasing various cultural demonstrations including weaving and canoe building. These hands-on displays provided insight into the island's traditional skills and craftsmanship.

The cultural extravaganza continued with energetic performances by students from Wone, Saladak, and Nett Elementary Schools, who captivated the audience with traditional dances steeped in Pohnpeian heritage.

Throughout the event, each school proudly exhibited cultural exhibitions featuring locally grown produce displayed in intricately handwoven baskets, alongside other traditional crafts.

The importance of keeping Pohnpei's culture alive and well into future generations cannot be understated. From the interactions we had with the children as they were preparing for their presentations it seems that their generation is excited to take up the mantle.



...Congress

Continued from front page

Large Senator-elect in one meeting and the two-year Senator-elects in a separate meeting, each reported out separately.

The deliberations of the credentials committee were substantially longer for Yoslyn Sigrah than for Marar and Asher. Senator Nimea served as the chair and said that "in the interest of transparency", he would read the full contents of the reports before the body as a whole took the matter of acceptance of the report to a vote.

The committee report for Yoslyn Sigrah outlined the entire process of her election and the court proceedings that led to the FSM Supreme Court's legal mandate to seat her. During the discussion phase before the body as a whole voted to accept or reject the report, two Senators made statements with similar messages. Senators Robson Romolow and Peter Christian expressed their sentiment that the FSM Supreme Court had overstepped its bounds in terms of the separation of powers. "The Constitution has been pierced," said Senator Christian. He and Romolow both referred to the Constitution's mandate that Congress is the ultimate authority over the



final decision on whom it would seat.

Senator Christian said that the matter is not one of personality but of Constitutional mandates and precedents for the future. He said that though he is not a lawyer, he could not understand how a Court who had banned someone from practicing law could rule to allow that same person to be a lawmaker. But he said that as FSM Senators and lawmakers, they had to do their duty and uphold the decision of the court whether or not they agreed with it.

Sigrah's attorneys had argued that the information regarding the alleged "ban" was incorrect.

open for discussion, and Senator Christian made a motion to amend the report to remove verbiage pertaining to Congress maintaining its Constitutional right of final approval of its members, saying that in light of the recent Supreme Court decision, the verbiage was superfluous. His motion received no seconds.

Congress, having accepted the credentials of all Senators-elect, Acting Supreme Court Chief Justice Beaulen Carl-Worswick administered the oaths of office to the Senators who were then seated in their rightful seats on the Congress floor.

Several Senators rose on a point of privilege to introduce dignitaries and constituents who were in the chamber.

Before any of the new Senators spoke, Senator Peter Christian moved to postpone the rest of the day's agenda to tomorrow, and Congress adjourned for the day.

The credentials committee report made it clear that Congress was seating Sigrah because the Supreme Court had ruled that it must. Congress agreed to seat Yoslyn G. Sigrah with only one "nay" vote, that of Senator Christian.

Again, Senator Nimea read out the full contents of the Credentials Committee report on the two at-large Senators-Elect and moved that it be adopted. The floor was



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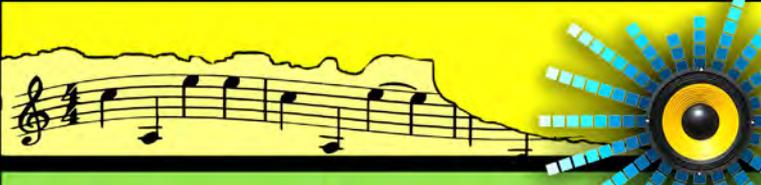
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President Simina finalizes renewed COFA agreements at the U.S. State Department

FSM Information Services

March 20, 2024

Washington, D.C.—In a ceremony held in the U.S. State Department Treaty Room, H.E. President Wesley W. Simina exchanged diplomatic notes with the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. State Department, Kurt Campbell, formally bringing into force the renewed Compact of Free Association.

The ceremony followed a productive meeting with Deputy Secretary Campbell and senior officials of the State Department, including U.S. Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia Jennifer Johnson. President Simina and Deputy Secretary Campbell discussed an array of issues of mutual importance, particularly regarding matters related to the new COFA agreements.

President Simina highlighted the need for close collaboration in implementing the expanded benefits for the people of the FSM under the new Compact, such as in the areas of veterans' affairs and education. President Simina also shared that he had convened a meeting with the governors of Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk and Yap immediately following the passage of the COFA, and reported that all four states stand ready to do their part to ensure a smooth transition to implementation.

President Simina also discussed his administration's desire to enhance cooperation for capacity building in areas such as law enforcement cooperation through the FBI Academy, educational opportunities through the military academies, educational opportunities through fellowships from the White House, and diplomatic training through the U.S. Foreign Service Institute (FSI).

Other areas of potential cooperation that President Simina and Deputy Secretary Campbell discussed included the possible return of the Peace Corps to the FSM and addressing the environmental effects of shipwrecks in



Chuuk's lagoon.

Deputy Secretary Campbell emphasized the vitality of the U.S. relationship with the FSM, pointing out that despite the delays in Washington, "the one thing that has gone through is the COFA agreement." The Deputy Secretary went on to underscore that the State Department is prioritizing support for "these critical relationships in the Pacific."

During the ceremony to exchange diplomatic notes, President Simina stated, "It's an honor to stand here today as we mark a pivotal moment in the history of our two nations. With today's exchange of notes, we formally embark on a new and even closer chapter of our relationship under the Compact of Free Association." He continued, "Our teams have worked tirelessly for over four years, crafting a set of landmark agreements that advance the interests of both our countries. This is a major achievement about which we can all be proud."

In closing President Simina added "I would like to thank each and every one of you for being here to witness this special moment with us. This indeed is a historic day for the enduring partnership between the Federated States of Micronesia and the United States. We look forward to the next 20 years, and beyond."



Title: Programme Analyst, NOB, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia [16801]

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- Proven track record of team-work and ability to coordinate inter-agency collaboration;
- Sound knowledge of the social and cultural realities of the region and skills in interpersonal and cultural relationships;
- Strong research and analytical skills with field experience is an asset;
- Substantive knowledge and practical experience in population, reproductive and sexual health programming is strongly desired;
- Computer Literacy: Knowledge of MS Office packages and the Internet.
- Previous experience with UN is an asset

Full job description of the position and instructions on how to apply can be accessed on: <https://pacific.unfpa.org/en/vacancies>

CLOSING DATE: Sunday, 31st March 2024

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President Simina concludes productive week of meetings in Washington D.C. with key government officials on COFA implementation

FSM Information Services

March 24, 2024

Washington D.C.—H.E. President Wesley W. Simina has concluded a highly successful series of meetings in Washington D.C. this week, engaging with key members of the executive and legislative branches of the United States government. President Simina held 24 official meetings over the course of 4 days to discuss the implementation of the recently renewed Compact of Free Association (COFA) legislation.

Throughout the week, President Simina and his delegation held constructive discussions with executive branch cabinet members and officials, including:

- Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III;
- Secretary of Interior Deb Haaland;
- Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell;
- Director of the Peace Corps Carol Spahn;



Additionally, President Simina and his delegation engaged with members of Congress from both the House and Senate, who played critical roles as Chairs or ranking members of committees of jurisdiction on COFA, as sponsors or co-sponsors of the COFA Amendments Act, Compact Impact Fairness Act, and Care for COFA Veterans Act, as well as signatories of the bipartisan letters to House and Senate leadership that urged for the passage of the COFA legislation, including:

- Senator John Barrasso (R-WY);
- Representative Young Kim (R-CA);
- Representative Jim McGovern (D-MA);
- Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI);
- Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI);
- Delegate Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen (R-AS);
- Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD);
- Senator John Boozman (R-AR);
- Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK);
- Congresswoman Chellie Pingree (D-ME);
- Representative Andy Barr (R-KY);
- Representative Dina Titus (D-NV);
- Representative Steve Womack (R-AR);
- Representative Ed Case (D-HI);
- Delegate Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan (D-MP);
- Representative Bruce Westerman (R-AR);
- Representative Ami Bera (D-CA);
- Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV);
- Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA);
- Representative Rob Wittman (R-VA);



President Simina personally thanked these members for their leadership and support that led to the ultimate passage of the COFA legislation. The President also sought members' support for the potential return of the Peace Corps to the FSM, following a discussion with the Director of the Peace Corps at the top of the week. The central theme of these discussions were around actionable next steps, continued support and continued collaboration to ensure that the transition to implementation moves forward expeditiously.

In all of the meetings, the moods were that of great satisfaction in the bipartisan effort that got COFA over the finish line and an overall recognition and appreciation of the importance of the partnership that the United States has with the Freely Associated States.

President Simina stated “As I conclude this week of important discussions in Washington D.C. and prepare to engage our own FSM citizens who reside here in the U.S., I am deeply grateful to have had the opportunity to begin these talks with key people in the executive and legislative branches in order to keep the momentum on COFA going. While I may not have had the chance to personally meet and thank everyone who worked tirelessly to reach this point, my gratitude is theirs. I look forward to continued close collaboration as we work together to ensure that everything we worked so hard to agree on and get passed, will now come into fruition to strengthen the partnership between the FSM and U.S.”



President Simina will lead his delegation to Kansas City, where there is a hub of FSM citizens, to hold a joint town hall meeting alongside Speaker Moses and several members of the 23rd FSM Congress, JCRP and the FSM Dept. of Justice, to answer citizens' questions on the renewed COFA and other issues.

Ambassador Jo Cowley pays farewell visit to FSM leadership

Australian Embassy to the FSM
March 21, 2024

Pohnpei—After four years of working with the FSM (including three in-country), Ambassador Cowley paid her farewell call on President Simina, Vice President Palik and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Robert.

Both countries are also committed to ensuring a safe, secure and prosperous Blue Pacific, through our membership of the Pacific Islands Forum.

They discussed the continuing priority both countries attach to the FSM-Australia bilateral partnership, built on trust, respect, friendship and shared values.

The partnership has expanded in recent years, now spanning maritime security, climate change, renewable energy, oceans, gender equality, telecommunications and aviation connectivity, health and scholarships.

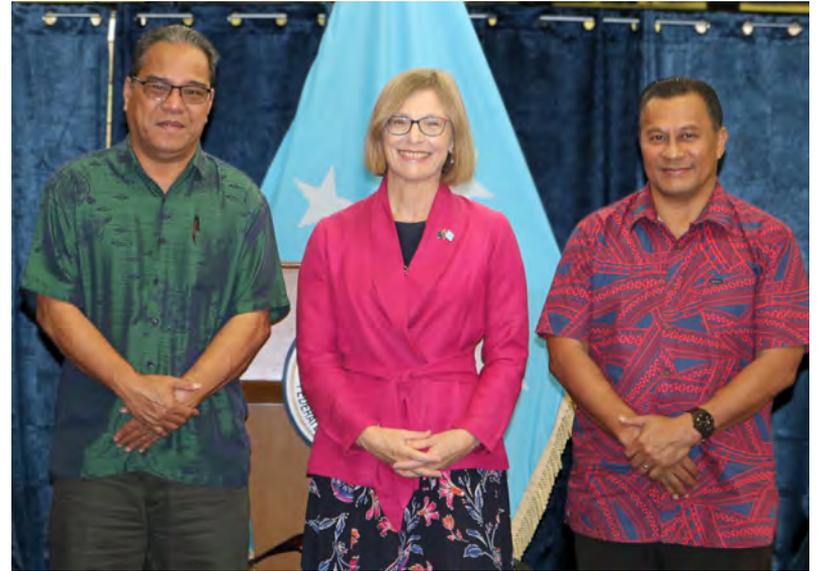
Ambassador Cowley thanks the FSM and State governments and all the Embassy's partners and friends for all we have achieved so far, and for their generosity, advice and hospitality during her term.

The next Australian Ambassador, Jenny Grant-Curnow, will commence her mission in the FSM in April.

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Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attends launch ceremony of ASYCUDA Computerized Customs Management System

Pohnpei Public Information

March 27, 2024

Palikir, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, alongside esteemed dignitaries including Vice President Palik and FSM Secretary of Finance and Administration, Rose Nakanaga, attended the launch ceremony of the ASYCUDA computerized customs management system. The event, held at Central Facilities in Palikir marked a significant milestone in enhancing customs operations within the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

The ASYCUDA system, developed in collaboration with the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the European Union (EU), is designed to streamline customs procedures. This comprehensive platform handles manifests and customs declarations, accounting procedures, transit, suspense procedures, and importantly, generates trade data for statistical economic analysis. During the Q&A portion of the ceremony, Governor Joseph posed a crucial question regarding the system's ability to generate data relevant to his food security policy. Specifically, he sought to ascertain if the system could provide insights into the fluctuations of imports, thus aiding in policy formulation. Governor Joseph was also interested in the system's ability to accurately track and record transactions from end to end to assist with the prevention of smuggling.

The ceremony was also marked by remarks from Vice President Palik, who reminisced about his past collaboration with Governor Joseph at the Bank of Hawaii, as they also dealt with the modernization of banking systems. He



emphasized the significance of the ASYCUDA project, citing its alignment with the FSM National Government's digitalization initiative.

The FSM will be the 14th country in the Pacific region to implement the ASYCUDA system. Pohnpei, in particular, is honored to be the first state in the FSM to interact with this cutting-edge technology.

The launch of the ASYCUDA system underscores the FSM's commitment to modernizing customs operations and fostering economic development. It represents a pivotal step towards efficiency, transparency, and data-driven decision-making within the customs sector.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Lt. Governor Francisco L. Ioanis Lead 3rd Cabinet Meeting

Pohnpei Public Information

March 28, 2024

Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Lt. Governor Francisco L. Ioanis convened the 3rd cabinet meeting for the Joseph/Ioanis administration at the Kolonia Office of Fisheries and Aquaculture conference room. Moderating the discussions was the Governor's Chief of Staff, Kapilly Capelle.

The primary agenda items for discussion were a Supplemental Budget request and Strategic Development Plan review. Governor Joseph briefed cabinet members on the unassigned funds amounting to approximately \$4 million in the general fund with approximately \$2 million earmarked for the Municipal Governments and \$2 million to address urgent needs of the Government. Governor Joseph has directed Departments to submit their urgent needs request for inclusion into one supplemental budget request to the Legislature. Governor Joseph noted that planning is paramount and multiple supplemental budget requests do not reflect proper

planning.

Addressing the Strategic Development Plan (SDP), Governor Joseph emphasized the creation of an SDP advisory working group to facilitate the review process that will include various government and private sector members. This working group will adopt a systematic approach to outline priorities, outputs, and outcomes essential for addressing the mission and vision of each government sector. The division chiefs of departments and offices will also play a crucial role in the SDP review, to effectively implement the SDP. Governor Joseph reiterated the necessity for all assistance and support to align with the SDP to ensure effective work on behalf of the people and the economic development of Pohnpei State.

The meeting concluded with a call for concerted efforts from all cabinet members to implement the discussed initiatives efficiently.



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT NO. 2024-003

Opening Date: March 28, 2024

Closing Date: April 28, 2024

It is the policy of the FSM Development bank that FSM citizens be given first priority for employment consideration, with other Micronesians, U.S. citizens, and other nationals utilized in positions for which no qualified citizens are available.

POSITION: Loan Officer

LOCATION: FSM Development Bank, Chuuk Branch Office
Weno, Chuuk FSM

SALARY: \$25,000 per annum

GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (Illustrative only):

1. Provides information regarding the Bank's services, functions, loan procedures and business advantages to potential customers and clients
2. Interviews applicants for loans and compiles all necessary data regarding the client's proposed project. Informs clients regarding the Bank's requirements and standards for loans. Negotiates and explains terms and conditions of loans to applicants. Issues applications and other lending documents.
3. Assists applicants in completing the loan applications, related documents and/or direct them to appropriate agencies for assistance. Ensures that all loan applications are properly documented.
4. Assesses the economic and financial viability of proposed projects in terms of management experience, technical abilities, marketing, and financial capabilities. Conducts detailed feasibility studies regarding proposals as necessary.
5. Compiles information and prepare loan packages in standard formats for review by the Credit Committee.
6. Administers the disbursement of loan funds to approved projects.
7. Ensures that borrowers fulfill the terms and conditions set out in loan document and lending guidelines. Monitors projects progress via reports and with visits to the project.
8. Pursues the collection of loan payments on current and delinquent loans. Provides assistance to clients with problem accounts within the established policies and procedures of the Bank. Reports progress regarding such loans to the Branch Manager and the Loan Manager or the Senior Vice President/CCO and implements instructions accordingly.
9. Promotes Bank's business and develops recommendations to market the Bank's services in the local community.
10. Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS:

Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Finance, Business Administration, Economic or related field from a four-year college or university; plus one to two years related work experience and/or training. Ability to read, analyze, and interpret general business proposals, technical procedures, or governmental regulations. Ability to perform economic and financial analysis on loan packages. Ability to write reports, business correspondence, and procedure manuals. Ability to effectively present information and respond to questions from clients/customers, and the general public. Ability to work with mathematical concepts such as fractions, percentages, ratios, and proportions to practical situations. Ability to interpret a variety of instructions furnished in writing, oral diagram, or schedule form.

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

All applications, curriculum vitae, and at least three letters of reference shall be completed and submitted to: FSMDB Corporate Office in Kolonia, Pohnpei, or any of the FSMDB Branch offices in Chuuk, Kosrae and Yap State. You may mail to: FSM Development Bank HQ, P.O. Box M, Kolonia, Pohnpei FM 96941; or fax to 320-2842 or email to: info@fsmdb.fm, on or before April 28, 2024.

The FSM Development Bank is an equal opportunity employer, provider and lender. For discrimination complaints, please write to: Chairman of the Board of Directors, P.O. Box M, Kolonia, Pohnpei FM 96941; or fax to 320-2842 or email to: info@fsmdb.fm, on or before April 28, 2024.

The FSM engages in second Japan Pacific Islands Defense Cooperation Dialogue held in Tokyo

FSM Information Services

March 29, 2024

Tokyo—The FSM Department of Justice participated in the 2nd Japan Pacific Islands Defense Cooperation Dialogue that convened in Tokyo from March 19-20, 2024.

Facilitated in person for the first time, the dialogue fostered a more dynamic and fruitful exchange among attendees. Leading the FSM Delegation was Acting Secretary of Justice Leonito Bacalando, Jr. and Assistant AG Josephine Joseph-Silem, supported by Ambassador John Fritz and First Secretary Kunio Suenaga from the FSM Mission in Tokyo.

The dialogue served as a platform for open discussions on pressing issues such as Maritime Security, IUU Fishing, Humanitarian Assistance, Cyber Security, Climate Change, Sea-Level Rise, and Transnational Crimes. Bilateral consultations were also held with key partners including the



United States, Japan, Australia, and Palau, reinforcing the importance of collaborative efforts.

Acknowledging the significance of sustained cooperation, Japan expressed its endorsement of the Pacific Region's 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, aligning with the Pacific Island Forum's overarching framework for engagement with partners.



President Simina declares state of emergency amid drought

FSM Information Services

March 12, 2024

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—H.E. President Wesley W. Simina has issued Emergency Declaration No. 2024-001 in response to severe drought conditions being faced throughout the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

Through the Declaration of Emergency, President Simina has directed the following:

- Committing the resources of the National Government to supplement available resources through foreign assistance and domestic resources as needed.
- Establishment of a National Emergency Task Force, headed by the Secretary of the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management, to develop and implement immediate relief efforts and monitor vulnerable populations, especially in the outer islands.
- Activation of disaster relief funds to support national and state relief efforts, including waivers for competitive bidding and import taxes for emergency-related procurements.
- Coordination with state authorities to ensure a cohesive and effective emergency response.
- Allocation of \$1,288,824 into the Disaster Relief Fund to support relief efforts, with the potential for additional funds to be decreed as necessary.

The Declaration has been transmitted to the FSM Congress for its review, and according to Article X, Section 9 (c), it is expected that Congress will convene to consider revocation, amendment or extension of this emergency declaration.

“We are committed to taking all necessary steps to mitigate the adverse effects of this emergency and ensure the safety and well-being of all our citizens, especially the most vulnerable,” President Simina said. “Unfortunately, these intensified events are the realities of climate change that we know all too well, but we are a resilient people and we will get through this.”

For further information and updates, citizens and residents may contact the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Emergency Management (DECEM) at (691) 320-8815 or by emailing decem@decem.gov.fm

MicSem Library set to reopen in Yap After successful fundraiser

Habele Outer Island Education Fund

March 22, 2024

Dededo, Guam—Tens of thousands of dollars are headed to Yap to re-open the Micronesian Seminar Library, now situated on the campus of Yap Catholic High School.

Over four decades, Micronesian Seminar built an internationally recognized library of over 120,000 documents, photos and recordings. After MicSem operations ended in 2012 the library was ultimately relocated to the campus of Yap Catholic High School.

Broad public access to Micronesia's living history, through an actively maintained, growing collection, is vital to realizing the full value of this regional treasure. Father Hezel, in partnership with Yap Catholic's Father Rich McAuliff, developed a detailed multi-year plan to reopen the MicSem Library. Habele organized a fundraising drive to realize the plan. Individual donations were matched 2-to-1 by Habele's endowment.

Over the course of the forty-day

fundraising drive, \$15,159 was donated by fifty-six individual donors. The sum was matched, two-to-one, with a \$30,318 contribution from Habele's endowment. All told, a total of \$45,477 will be issued to Yap Catholic High School in the form of a MicSem specific grant by Habele for the project. A US-based 501c3 nonprofit, Habele was established by former Peace Corps Volunteers to serve students and schools across Micronesia in 2006.

The grant will allow for the final stages of the relocation of the Micronesian Seminar library at Yap Catholic High School. This includes implementing a transitional process for the management of the library from the long-time former curator to the new one as well as providing certain basic equipment needed to service those who utilize the collection in the future. These final steps of the relocation of the MicSem library in Yap will begin once the first portion of grant funds is transferred and essential equipment such as scanners, additional bookshelves and tables needed for the library to go into full operation are purchased.



Father Francis Hezel, founder of MicSem; Larry Raigetel of the University of Guam; Father Rich McAuliff of Yap Catholic High School; and Neil Mellen of Habele gather to coordinate fundraising for the reopening of the MicSem Library

“It was startling to see how so many people felt so strongly about reestablishing this unequalled Micronesian resource, and preserving and recognizing Father Hezel's legacy of service and scholarship,” observed Neil Mellen, Executive Director of Habele. “Pride in our shared histories and person-to-person connections remain the vibrant bedrock of the US-Micronesian partnership. Habele is proud to play a minor role in that. Though the formal fundraiser is complete, we intend to continue Habele's partnership and support of this important, evolving, work in the years ahead.”

E-commerce grants, tailored coaching and a Community of Practice following PIF regional training for Pacific businesses



Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

March 19, 2024

Eight E-commerce grants of up to 5,000 EUR will be awarded for successful applicants following PIFS E-commerce training course uniting Pacific entrepreneurs from Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) last week.

were appropriate to the different audience of the workshop given that we are all starting from different levels whether one has some experience in venturing out into e-commerce or just simply starting out. I have truly enjoyed engaging in meaningful conversations with the other participants and have also learned a great deal from them.

Aligned with the Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy and Roadmap and implemented by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the course aimed to empower businesses to thrive in the digital age. During the workshop, around, 119 entrepreneurs took the opportunity to discuss their visions for digital business in the Pacific, sharing insights and addressing misconceptions.

Reflecting on the workshop's success, Marc Gerard, E-commerce trainer in Vanuatu, commented, "Most of the Pacific Islands are barely starting their digital transformation. Business opportunities are massive. Being an entrepreneur today in this context is exciting indeed, despite facing issues such as limited connectivity or payment solutions."

Dalida Borlasa from Yumi Up, a Vanuatu startup focusing on recycling services, said, "I found the E-commerce workshop very valuable because it taught me to create good relationships with customers who interact with my business online. I believe that the course will help me move forward with my business goals".

Zarak Khan, PIFS Director of Programmes and Initiatives, says the rising demand for e-commerce training is demonstrating the growth of this sector across the region.

"The Pacific Regional E-commerce Strategy aims to elevate our entrepreneurs, and this workshop is one of the practical initiatives to achieve that goal."

Conducted simultaneously in Samoa, Vanuatu, and Tuvalu in January 2024, the course leveraged technology for cross-border engagement. Live demonstrations by Pacific service providers, including Vodafone or Maua App, also enhanced the practical learning experience.

Post-workshop, all participants have the opportunity to apply for grants up to EUR 5,000, with two grants available in each country – Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Samoa, and FSM grant winners will receive coaching and ongoing support from the E-commerce experts. Regional support, though, does not end here.

The pivotal E-commerce training workshop was extended to the four states of FSM from 13 to 15 March. Among the FSM participants was Norleen Oliver, owner of Hard Rock Sokehs a general merchandise store, commended the quality of the training content and added,

The materials/tools provided

The training programs have led to the creation of an online Community of Practice providing Pacific entrepreneurs with access to training material, resources, information, direct support from mentors and network support.

U.S. Air Force Trains FSM law enforcement officers in Weno March 11-18.



U.S. Embassy Kolonia

March 28, 2024

U.S. Air Force firearm trainers from the 36th Tactical Advisory Squadron (TAS), Anderson Air Force Base, Guam provided firearm training and instruction to 68 law enforcement officers



in Chuuk State from March 11-18. Participants were comprised of police officers from the FSM National Government (including the Maritime Wing) as well as Chuuk State Government.

Held in Weno, this training provided critical assistance to the FSM's law enforcement community for continuity of safe and secure law enforcement activities throughout the FSM.

Due to previous COVID-19 border closures, police officers were unable to receive weapons training since 2019.

The Air Force trainers also provided an Armorer's course to teach police officers how to properly maintain and safeguard firearms.

New video series by UN Development Programme presents climate solutions from 12 countries

Climate Action explained, introduced by UNDP’s Goodwill Ambassador Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, takes viewers on a world tour that proves meaningful climate action is possible

UN Development Programme

New York, USA – The UN Development Programme (UNDP) has unveiled a new YouTube series, Climate Action Explained, which explores what climate action looks like around the world. As climate change impacts intensify, the series outlines the need to scale up the many climate solutions already underway to secure a greener, safer future.

Introduced by UNDP’s Goodwill Ambassador and actor Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, the four videos showcase how we can adapt to the impacts of climate change, restore the world’s forests, power communities with sustainable energy and enable young people to drive climate action.

The solutions come from 12 countries across five continents: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ecuador, Georgia, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, India, Panama, Tuvalu, Uruguay and Zimbabwe.

“The climate crisis can feel overwhelming and scary, but we do have the solutions we need to address this challenge head on. By showcasing

the leadership of developing countries around the world, our new video series proves that,” remarked Cassie Flynn, Global Director of Climate Change at UNDP. “What we now need is to boldly scale up these solutions, together.”

The Climate Action Explained video series is part of UNDP’s efforts to ignite public conversation and mobilize action on climate change on the road to the COP30 climate negotiations which will be held in Brazil in 2025. COP30 will mark the ten-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and

is a critical opportunity to get the world on a path aligned with limiting global temperature rise to 1.5° C, as countries submit a new round of climate pledges and action plans. These plans – known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – are at the very heart of the global fight against climate change.

“The climate crisis is already here, hitting headlines across the globe. The bad news is that, without urgent and meaningful action, extreme weather and disasters are set to become only more common and more intense. On the other side of that, we have the good news, which is that progress is possible,” UNDP’s Goodwill Ambassador and

actor Nikolaj Coster-Waldau said. “The stories highlighted in the Climate Action Explained video series show us that we have the answers to fight climate change and build a better, safer future.”

UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji Resident Representative Munkhtuya Altangerel added:

“As the impacts of climate change accelerate — including more extreme weather and sea level rise — it is increasingly urgent that countries and communities adapt, and we explore partnerships that are fit for the future. UNDP Pacific’s support to the people of Tuvalu is the embodiment of partnership, through

support from both the Green Climate Fund and the Government of Australia, alongside the Government of Tuvalu. Together we are not only helping build resilience to the impacts of climate change but supporting a valuable investment for the future of Tuvalu with a focus on both people and planet.”

The Climate Action Explained video series is underpinned by UNDP’s extensive work on climate change

and climate action. UNDP’s newly established Climate Hub delivers the UN system’s largest portfolio of support on climate action in more than 140 countries. UNDP’s flagship Climate Promise initiative has supported action to tackle the climate crisis by working with more than 80 percent of the world’s developing countries on their NDC submissions.

The Climate Action Explained video series will be available in English, French and Spanish at launch and will be further translated to other languages in the coming months.

The video series is released jointly with UNDP’s Weather Kids campaign. Designed to look exactly like weather reports television viewers see every day, Weather Kids features children reading projected weather forecasts from 2050, urging meaningful climate action today. Created in partnership with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and The Weather Company, the campaign is part of UNDP’s efforts to boost awareness on the impacts of climate change and to mobilize people around the world to take meaningful climate action.

Office of Insular Affairs announces grant assistance to support development of new hospital project in Chuuk State, FSM

The U.S Department of the Interior

March 26, 2024

WASHINGTON - The Office of Insular Affairs today announced an investment of \$8,486,000 in Compact of Free Association grant assistance in support of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia’s efforts toward designing, developing and engineering a new hospital in Chuuk State.

“We are thrilled to contribute to and support the initial development of a much-needed healthcare facility to address health care needs on Weno and communities throughout Chuuk State,” said Carmen G. Cantor, Assistant

Secretary, Insular and International Affairs. “The collaboration efforts underscore our commitment under the Compact of Free Association to improve infrastructure in the region.”

The funding announced today is supported by collaborative efforts among the Federated States of Micronesia National Government, the Chuuk State Government, the U.S. Government, and other important partners. This marks a significant milestone in collaborations to enhance healthcare services in Chuuk and replace hospital infrastructure that was built prior to 1986 or the beginning of the Compact of Free Association relationship. Through collaborative design planning, and thoughtful financing, this new hospital project is expected to have a positive impact on the local community and specifically scaling needed health programs that contribute to the overall well-being of residents in Chuuk.

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Vice President Aren B. Palik opens 43rd Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) officials meeting in Chuuk

FSM Information Services

March 27, 2024

Chuuk—On March 18, 2024, the Honorable Aren B. Palik, Vice President of the Federated States of Micronesia attended the opening ceremony of the 43rd Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) Officials Meeting to deliver the keynote remarks.

The 43rd PNA Meeting convenes the Fisheries heads of PNA members* plus Tokelau. At this Officials meeting, technical matters relevant to the Vessel Day Scheme, FSM Arrangements, Palau Arrangements and PNAO governance are addressed. It is also noteworthy that in this meeting, the Chairmanship transferred from the Solomon Islands to the FSM.

In his remarks, Vice President Palik focused on the PNA members as custodians of our natural resources to ensure its sustainability for future generations. “We [FSM leadership] are confident that with your stewardship, our tuna stocks will remain healthy and resilient to the current fishing pressures while remaining vibrant for future generations to come”. He especially noted and applauded

the FSM’s pioneering in containerized transshipment and its contributions to these initiatives.

While in Chuuk, Vice President Palik took the opportunity to meet with the Chuuk State leadership, including meetings with the Honorable Governor Alexander Narruhn, the Honorable Speaker - House of Representatives Lester Mersai, the Honorable Vice President of Chuuk Legislature – House of Senate Wisney Nakayama and the Honorable Chief Justice Jason Robert. During these meetings, the Honorable Vice President Palik took the opportunity to update on the status of FSM-US Compact and related implementation prerequisites. Vice President Palik was briefed on several pending matters including Chuuk’s Strategic Development Plan, ongoing infrastructure projects and Chuuk State’s planned participation in upcoming events such as the Pacific Festival of Arts, 10th Micronesian Games, Third MicroExpo.

Accompanying the Honorable Vice President Palik during the meeting with Governor Narruhn was NORMA Consultant Mr. Eugene Pangelinan, and Special Assistant to the Vice President Ari Skilling.



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President Simina holds joint outreach in Kansas City – Pledges to pursue the establishment of a consulate office

FSM Information Services

March 27, 2024

Kansas City, Missouri—On March 24th, H.E. President Wesley W. Simina, alongside T.H. Speaker Esmond Moses, T.H. Floor Leader Quincy Lawrence and T.H. Chairman Peter Christian, held a joint town hall meeting in Kansas City, MO, a hub for FSM citizens. Also in attendance to help answer questions related to their areas were the FSM’s Ambassador to the U.S., the Joint Committee on Compact Review & Planning (JCRP) and the FSM Dept. of Justice. This event is a part of the Simina-Palik administration's outreach efforts, aimed at open dialogue and community engagement to build mutual understanding. It also marks the first outreach following the recent passage of the amended Compact of Free Association.

Over a hundred citizens came together to participate in the town hall meeting and provided a platform for dialogue on pressing issues affecting FSM citizens residing in the U.S., including the recently passed Compact of Free Association (COFA) and constitutional amendments such as dual citizenship and consular services.

President Simina pledged his commitment to looking into establishing an FSM Consulate Office in the Kansas City area or central U.S., by creating a working group to assess its feasibility. This decision was reinforced throughout the valuable input and feedback received from the citizens during the discussions. This initiative underscores the administration's proactive approach to addressing the needs of the FSM’s diaspora.

As the meeting concluded, local music and festivity filled the room, as the residents sang and danced while offering gifts to the visiting delegation, as customary back home.

President Simina and his delegation extend heartfelt gratitude to all attendees for the warm welcome and productive discussions, especially those who traveled significant distances to be present.



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT



Job Title: Construction Field Supervisor
Division: Project Management Unit (PMU)
Location: CPUC Head Office, Weno, Chuuk FSM
Salary: \$50,000 per annum (National)
\$65,000 per annum (International)
**Depending Upon Qualifications*
Opening Date: March 28, 2024
Closing Date: Until filled

Scope of Work

The role is as a Construction Field Supervisor working directly on the supervision of contractors undertaking construction works under the CWSSP.

Two (2) Construction Field Supervisor contracts will be for an initial full time period of 24 months that may be extended by mutual agreement subject to progress and timing of construction work.

Duties & Responsibilities

The Construction Supervisor is directly responsible to the Project Manager or his designated representative and are responsible for the following

- To observe the Contractor's activities and note all relevant details in agreed diary and report forms.
- To be familiar with those parts of the Specification related to the construction being undertaken.
- To ensure that construction activities are in compliance with plans and specifications and to regularly inspect the areas of work and report upon the quality of workmanship of the contractor.
- Maintain a safe, secure and healthy work environment by following guidelines, standards and procedures
- Perform daily site inspections and attend meetings as needed
- Other duties as assigned

Required Qualifications

- Degree in Civil Engineering or related fields
- Strong leadership and organizational skills
- Ability to read and understand construction plans
- Minimum of five years in the construction industry in a supervisory role
- Valid driver's license

If you are interested, please submit an application or resume to the following contacts:

CPUC HR DIVISION
 Kayleen Billimon
 Project Implementation
 Officer/HR Manager
 Email: kayleen.billimon@cpuc.fm

CPUC MAIN OFFICE
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CPUC - Working for a Brighter Future

P.O. Box 910 Weno, Chuuk FSM 96942 - Phone: (691) 330 2400

Vice President Palik meets with TSP students from Madolenihmw High School

FSM Information Services

March 27, 2024

Palikir, Pohnpei—On March 22, 2024, Vice President T.H. Aren B. Palik of the Federated States of Micronesia welcomed students from Madolenihmw High School participating in the Talent Search Program (TSP) to the Office of the President in Palikir, Pohnpei. As part of their Career Exploration field trip, the 84 students had the opportunity to learn about the FSM National Government and the Executive Branch, followed by visits to the FSM Congress and the FSM Supreme Court.

During the visit, Vice President Palik delivered a heartfelt message to the students and the program, emphasizing the significance of education and the development of strong character. Under the Simina-Palik administration, youth empowerment remains a top priority, recognizing their role as future leaders and citizens of the FSM.

Wrapping up the visit, Vice President Palik encouraged the students to pursue their aspirations through education, underscoring its crucial role in their personal growth as contributors to our FSM's future.





BANKGUAM HOLDING COMPANY

P.O. Box BW • Hagåtña, Guam 96932

Tel: (671) 472-5273

BANKGUAM HOLDING COMPANY AND SUBSIDIARIES

AUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2023; in 000's US Dollars)

Assets		Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity	
Cash and due from banks	\$ 32,043	Deposits:	
Interest bearing deposits in banks	57,533	Non-interest bearing	\$ 863,797
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>89,596</u>	Interest bearing	1,459,658
Restricted cash	150	Total deposits	<u>2,323,455</u>
Investment securities available-for-sale, at fair value	446,616	Accrued interest payable	31
Investment securities held-to-maturity, at amortized cost	314,906	Subordinated debt, net	34,537
Federal Home Loan Bank stock, at cost	1,524	Other liabilities	44,032
Loans, net of allowance for credit losses	1,557,652	Total Liabilities	<u>2,402,055</u>
Accrued interest receivable	9,281	Commitments and contingencies	
Premises and equipment, net	19,276	Stockholders' equity:	
Goodwill	13,014	Common stock	2,034
Intangible assets	9,240	Preferred stock	980
Other assets	114,445	Additional paid-in capital, Common stock	24,989
Total Assets	<u>\$ 2,575,700</u>	Additional paid-in capital, Preferred stock	8,803
		Retained earnings	198,170
		Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(59,320)
		Non-controlling interest	7,347
		Common stock in treasury, at cost	(9,358)
		Total stockholders' equity	<u>173,645</u>
		Total Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity	<u>\$ 2,575,700</u>

AUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2023; in 000's US Dollars)

Interest income	\$ 119,282
Interest expense	2,732
Net interest income	116,550
Provision for credit losses	7,493
Net interest income, after provision for credit losses	109,057
Non-interest income	37,623
Non-interest expense	107,678
Income before income taxes	39,002
Income tax expense	7,547
Net Income	<u>\$ 31,455</u>

BANK OF GUAM FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA BRANCHES

AUDITED STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2023; in 000's US Dollars)

Assets		Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,648	Deposits:	
Loans, net of allowance for credit losses	22,948	Non-interest bearing	\$ 88,798
Accrued interest receivable	26	Interest bearing	149,528
Premises and equipment, net	455	Total deposits	<u>238,326</u>
Other assets	1,011	Accrued interest payable	2
Due from the Parent	212,488	Other liabilities	1,248
Total Assets	<u>\$ 239,576</u>	Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 239,576</u>

AUDITED STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2023; in 000's US Dollars)

Interest income	\$ 13,672
Interest expense	91
Net interest income	13,581
Provision for credit losses	206
Net interest income, after provision for credit losses	13,375
Non-interest income	1,352
Non-interest expense	2,548
Income before income taxes	12,179
Income tax expense	-
Net Income	<u>\$ 12,179</u>

Empowering electoral excellence in the North Pacific: Insights and Inspiration

United Nations Development Programme

In both the global arena and here in the Pacific, democracies are under pressure from changing national, regional, and global factors – such as heightened citizen expectations, geopolitical competition, climate change, economic hardship, advances in digital media, and other challenges. Election Management Bodies (EMBs) are at the face of these challenges as they work to ensure representative, participative, transparent, non-corrupt, civil, inclusive, and tolerant electoral processes. Their role and their success are essential for stability, conflict prevention, democracy, and peace.

Strong Pacific EMBs are vital for democratic resilience, but they also face extra difficulties given the Pacific's geography of small, remote communities; exacerbating challenges for when it comes to the take-up of new ideas and systems. This, ultimately, slows down the progress of democratic advancement.

Building Capacity Through BRIDGE

Creating opportunities for electoral professionals to come together at a subregional level fosters a space where they can share common experiences; this ongoing mutual support creating a sense of purpose, a space where electoral staff can share in the benefits of collective action. This approach is also crucial for promoting their independence and enhancing their capacity to conduct robust electoral processes.

Providing such an opportunity for EMBs to exchange experiences and support was a key reason for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Office in Fiji and the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators Network (PIANZEA) – with the support of the Australian Electoral Commission – to conduct an introduction to electoral administration workshop for North Pacific EMBs. Representatives from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Kiribati and this year's host country, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), attended from 28 February to 1 March 2024.

BRIDGE, short for Building Resources

in Democracy, Governance, and Elections, is a training program aimed at enhancing the skills of electoral administrators and other stakeholders involved in elections. The Introduction to Electoral Administration module aims to equip EMB staff with standards, principles and management techniques required for effective electoral practice.

In her welcome remarks at the workshop's opening session, Australian Ambassador to the FSM, Her Excellency Jo Cowley, highlighted the importance of BRIDGE in enhancing electoral processes in the Pacific and around the world. In its 25 years, BRIDGE has had over 17,500 electoral stakeholder participants from 120 countries. These BRIDGE workshops aim to create a platform for knowledge exchange of good election practices and assist in developing and strengthening networks among EMBs.

"It is important that we deepen the pool of electoral administrators and build peer-to-peer relationships among EMBs in the Pacific and consult each other on good practices and innovations that can be shared even after this workshop," the Ambassador said.

UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji Resident Representative, Munkhtuya Altangerel, noted in her message that this workshop is not only meant for EMBs to enhance their knowledge on good electoral practices, but also to become advocates of the right to vote to achieve better governance in their countries.

"Democracy is not the right to vote but it's the right to live in dignity.

"As electoral commissioners, you are imparting the knowledge and understanding why voting is a fundamental human right," she said.

Fostering Collaboration for a Stronger Democracy

In the Federated States of Micronesia, voter turnout remains a persistent challenge. In the country's 2007 General Election 53 percent of the eligible population exercised their democratic right. In elections in 2017 that number dipped to just to just 33 percent. In response to these dwindling figures, Acting Commissioner Gregorio Ioanis emphasized the need for citizen



awareness and education on the importance of elections and their right to vote.

"Empowering citizens through education is crucial in fostering a culture of active participation," he said.

Additionally, Ioanis believes that incentivizing voter engagement across all sectors of society could significantly improve turnout and enhance the overall productivity of the electoral process.

In the Republic of Marshall Islands, where a similar sentiment is evident amongst voters, Dewey Langué's newfound understanding of the electoral cycle has ignited a sincere commitment to ensuring its integrity.

"Elections do not begin and end in voting; they encompass a spectrum of responsibilities before and after the polls," Langué reflects.

He stresses the Commissioners' duty to safeguard the process at every stage.

"Integrity is paramount," He emphasized.

Langué also highlighted the ripple effect of well-conducted elections, anticipating that if conducted with integrity and professionalism this will inspire greater candidacy interest, and enrich the leadership pool available to the citizens of the RMI.

"A diverse array of candidates offers voters meaningful choices," he added.

As Kiribati prepares for its General Elections sometime in August this year, Principal Electoral Officer Takiakia Maatia said that a major challenge for the atoll nation was managing the influx of complaints during both the electoral

and counting phases. She acknowledged the need for improved stakeholder engagement to address such concerns, while prioritizing internal processes that would ensure the accurate recording of results.

"We receive complaints from everyone. Misinformation and false accusations are also posing additional challenges in our process," Maatia said.

Sharing similar sentiments, Nauruan Electoral Commissioner Cronisa Baguga emphasized the importance of tailored solutions; there is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach that can be applied to the management of EMBs across the Pacific.

"What works in one country may not necessarily work in the other," Baguga said.

She also highlighted the value of regional collaboration such as the support provided through PIANZEA, where EMBs and their staff can share best practices and navigate the complexities of electoral governance collectively.

UNDP Electoral Advisor Daniel Hinchcliff described how this foundation module is crucial for ongoing professional growth, as it helps to lay the groundwork for all participants to develop further as election experts and provides guidance on important themes for growth. He highlighted the importance of participants connecting and learning from each other, and how this collaboration and growing relationships was an equally important outcome. He sees the friendships formed during the workshop as being able to provide a genuine level of support for each election professional in their work back home in the years to come.



VACANCY
Micronesia Project Coordinator
(Re-Advertised)



We are seeking a dynamic and results-oriented individual to join our team and Nationals of Micronesia, including the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, are encouraged to apply. Candidates who have previously applied need not reapply.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) OurFish OurFuture Project is a cooperative agreement awarded by USAID that seeks to address the drivers of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing that are degrading coastal fisheries and biodiversity and negatively impacting local livelihoods, food stability, and maritime security in the Pacific Islands region. The five-year project (2021-2026) is implemented by the University of Rhode Island (URI) in collaboration the Locally-Managed Marine Areas Network International Trust (LMMA), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and The University of the South Pacific (USP). The project is implemented across six countries in Micronesia and Melanesia: Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands (SI), and Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The Role

The Micronesia Project Coordinator will coordinate the field implementation of the project activities in Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and will support country-level project activities implemented by partners in One Reef Palau, Conservation Society of Pohnpei (CSP) and Marshall Island Conservation Society (MICS). The Coordinator will work closely with the OurFish Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management Community of Practice (ECOP) Facilitator. The role will be under contract with URI and reports to the Chief of Party for formal supervision and to LMMA Project Team Leader for technical coordination and collaboration. A country national from one of the Micronesian countries (FSM, Palau, RMI) is preferred and the position location is optional – either the University of Rhode Island (URI) foreign branch office in Suva, Fiji, or in one of Micronesian countries (FSM, Palau, RMI).

REQUIREMENT QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

- University degree in Environmental/Marine Science, Biology, Fisheries, Marine Affairs, Management, or a discipline relevant to sustainable coastal fisheries management.
- At least five years' experience in project coordination or management, community-based resource management, and/or sustainable development projects in the Pacific Islands, preferably in coastal fisheries in Micronesia.
- Demonstrated field implementation experience in fisheries or project coordination with a preference for sustainable coastal fisheries management and other development issues at the national level.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

- Demonstrated ability to initiate and establish partnerships and networks, maintaining effective relationships and influencing key partners and stakeholders.
- Coordinating and overseeing the timely implementation of annually approved project activities with project leads in FSM, RMI and Palau.
- Maintaining up to date project management systems to enable timely reminders to field teams and partners for upcoming activities and deliverables and updating the OurFish OurFuture project work plan for each quarterly period;
- Preparing internal and external communications, working with the Fiji based Communications Specialist to highlight project progress in FSM, RMI and Palau;
- Coordinating with the OurFish Regional Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Advisor in the collection, update, and maintenance of Micronesia data for the project's monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning database;
- Outcome driven focus, with the ability to coordinate multiple activities.
- High level capacity for self-management and initiative while operating with minimal supervision.

Compensation & Benefits:

An attractive package will be offered to the successful candidate based on appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.

Contract Duration:

Contract duration is for 1 year and to be renewed annually upon positive annual performance review and funding availability

Job Description

For more information on the role and job description, please email info@ourfish.crcuri.org

How to Apply:

To apply please email all of the following, in order, in one single PDF file to the OurFish Chief of Party on email only at rjimmy@ourfish.crcuri.org and cc the OurFish Finance and Administration Manager at vnair@ourfish.crcuri.org:

- Cover letter
- Resume or CV (must include contacts of 3 recent referees)

Deadline: Application will close at **4.00pm (Fiji Time) on 12 April 2024**. The position remains open until filled.

This Project follows US Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity laws and does not discriminate in consideration or hiring of individuals.

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Chief of Staff Kapilly Capelle visit Health Services Department Leadership

Pohnpei Public Information

March 20, 2024

Nett, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, accompanied by Chief of Staff Kapilly Capelle, recently met with Dr. Marcelle Gallen, Acting Director of Health Services, and division chiefs to discuss urgent needs and the future direction of health services in Pohnpei State.

During the meeting, Governor Joseph addressed key priorities, including the establishment of a dedicated annual schedule for health services to the outer islands, aimed at facilitating better access to healthcare for residents in the outer islands. He also emphasized the importance of addressing pending issues, such as the need for a new dispensary on Mwoakilloa.

Furthermore, Governor Joseph highlighted his vision for optimizing service delivery by reallocating resources strategically and maximizing funding sources. He listened to concerns raised by department chiefs regarding budget constraints, personnel retention, and increasing stipends for patients and staff involved in outer island healthcare operations.

Governor Joseph underscored the commitment to maintaining public confidence in healthcare services, stating, "As much as possible, we owe it to the people we serve to give our best service."

The visit served as a proactive step towards addressing immediate challenges and charting a course for the future of healthcare delivery in Pohnpei State.



Mrs. Sihna Lawrence sworn in as Director of Department of Treasury and Administration

Pohnpei Public Information

March 25, 2024

Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph administered the oath of administration to Mrs. Sihna Lawrence, officially appointing her as the Director of the Department of Treasury and Administration. The ceremony, held at the Emergency Operations Center Conference room was attended by Wasalapalap Isipahu, Nanmwarki of Madolenihmw, Likend Kelekel Madolenihmw, Nahlaimw Madolenihmw, Nahnapas Madolenihmw, Meninkeder Lapalap, Speaker of Menitiensapw Madolenihmw, government officials, family members, and well-wishers.

During the swearing-in, Mrs. Lawrence was assisted by her husband, Mr. Mathias Lawrence, who held the family Bible. In his remarks, Governor Joseph expressed gratitude to Director Lawrence for accepting the responsibility of leading the Department of Treasury and Administration. He thanked her for her positive response to the appointment, despite her prior service at the national government as Secretary of Finance and Administration. Governor Joseph also extended appreciation to Mr. Mathias Lawrence and the Lawrence family for their support.

Director Lawrence, in her remarks,

expressed thanks to the Speaker and the 11th Pohnpei Legislature for their support in confirming her nomination and to the Governor and Lt. Governor for their nomination. She pledged to fulfill her duties to the best of her abilities and uphold the responsibilities of her appointed office. Mrs. Lawrence also expressed gratitude to all who attended the ceremony and requested their support through prayer.

Speaker Marvin T. Yamaguchi, speaking on behalf of the 11th Pohnpei Legislature, commended Governor Joseph and Lt. Governor for nominating Mrs. Lawrence, noting her experience and qualifications for the role. He expressed appreciation for the Legislature's unanimous confirmation of her nomination and urged fellow Senators to assist Director Lawrence as she assumes her new responsibilities.

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph closed remarks with sincere gratitude and appreciation to Director Lawrence, Speaker Yamaguchi, Isipahu, Nanmwarki of Madolenihmw and Likend and all for their support and attendance at the momentous event.

The swearing-in ceremony concluded with best wishes for Director Lawrence as she takes on her new role in service to the people of Pohnpei State.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AND QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Professional Consulting Services for the

"Construction Management for the Construction of four schools, one each in the Mortlocks and Northwest Regions, and two on the lagoon islands in Chuuk. FSM"

NOTICE

The Project Management Office, Chuuk State Government, Federated States of Micronesia is hereby soliciting Statements of Professional Qualifications from interested entities for the purpose of implementing the Construction Management Services for the Construction of four schools, one each in the Mortlocks and Northwest region and two in the lagoon islands, Chuuk, FSM. Work will be funded by Infrastructure Sector Grants under the Amended Compact of Free Association between the United States and FSM. Consultants will have the option of choosing the CM Consultancy for one (Mortlocks or Northwest), two (including the two lagoon schools) or all four schools.

The duration of the consulting services is 24 calendar months starting from the date of Notice to Proceed issued to the selected consultant.

Further details of this RFQ may be obtained by submitting a written letter of interest to Sanjata Basu, Project Manager, PMO, P. O. Box 1659, Weno, Chuuk, FM 96942 or at email chuukpmo@gmail.com with the subject heading:

"Statement of Qualifications for the Construction Management Services or Construction of (Specify name of school/s), Chuuk, FSM 96942". The RFQ may also be directly obtained from DTC&I 's website www.tci.gov.fm.

In order to be considered, Statements of Professional Proposal and Qualifications must be submitted to the above contact address no later than 4:00 pm Chuuk time, Monday, April 19, 2024.

In order to be considered, Statements of Professional Proposal and Qualifications must be submitted to the above contact address no later than 4:00 pm Chuuk time, Monday, April 19, 2024.


Alexander R. Narruhn AIF®
Governor and Contracting Officer
Chuuk State

3/22/24
Date

TRADE MARK CAUTIONARY NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that our client, Ashley Furniture Industries, LLC, a company organized and existing under the laws of the United States of America and with a principal place of business at One Ashley Way, Arcadia, Wisconsin 54612, is the owner and sole proprietor of the following trademark in Micronesia:



Which is used in connection with the following:

Class	Goods
20	Furniture.
35	Retail store services in the field of furniture and home furnishings.

Please take notice that Ashley Furniture Industries, LLC, a company organized and existing under the laws of the United States of America and with a principal place of business at One Ashley Way Arcadia, Wisconsin 54612, attaches singular importance to its above referenced trademark and will immediately take the strongest legal actions to protect its intellectual property rights against any person(s) or business(es) found to be infringing those rights in Micronesia. Note that any infringing or unauthorized use of this mark will be met with civil and criminal action including injunctions orders to seize, audits, full damages and costs.

Any inquiry regarding said trademark may be referred to the attorneys for Ashley Furniture Industries, LLC as follows:

Hilborne, Hawkin & Co.
230 Commerce Drive, Suite 185
Irvine, California 92602
United States of America
Telephone: (714) 283-1155
Facsimile: (714) 283-1555
Email: info@hilbornehawkin.com

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attends Australia-FSM Bilateral Talks in Palikir, Pohnpei

Pohnpei Public Information

March 21, 2024

Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph participated in the opening ceremony of the Australia-Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) bilateral talks held in Palikir, Pohnpei. The discussions saw the presence of Vice President Aren B. Palik, Her Excellency Jo Cowley, Australian Ambassador to FSM, and key officials from both the FSM National Government and the Australian Embassy, including a representative from the Royal Australian Navy.

was held in 2021, making this year's discussions especially significant.

During the event, Vice President Palik and Ambassador Cowley delivered remarks highlighting the longstanding partnership between Australia and FSM, which has spanned 37 years of diplomatic relations. They acknowledged the presence and participation of Pohnpei State Governor Joseph, host of the Capital of the FSM, and the Australian Mission to include the Royal Australian Navy, in furthering the dialogue and cooperation between the two nations.

The bilateral talks, an annual tradition, serve as consultative engagements between Australia and FSM. Due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the last round of talks

The talks aimed to strengthen existing ties and explore avenues for collaboration across various sectors of mutual interest.



Title: Programme Finance Associate, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia [16953]

****This post is only open for the Nationals of FSM****

Call to Action

- Are you result driven and can you work well in teams?
 - Do you have a keen eye for detail and can you ensure high quality and accuracy of work?
 - Can you multi-task, prioritize and manage programme outcomes?
- If so, this might be the job for you.

How You Can Make a Difference:

UNFPA is the lead UN agency for delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA is seeking candidates that transform, inspire and deliver high impact and sustained results; we need staff who are transparent, exceptional in how they manage the resources entrusted to them and who commit to deliver excellence in programme results.

Job Purpose:

The post of Programme Finance Associate is located in one of the field offices of the UNFPA Pacific Sub-Regional Office (Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu) and reports directly to the Programme Specialist. S/He provides financial and programmatic support to strengthen programme delivery and management. S/he also works in close collaboration with the Program and Operations in Suva team to ensure timely support to the programme implementation.

Qualification and Experience:

Your Education

- Completed secondary level education required.
- First level University (Bachelor) degree in Public/Business Administration, Finance, Commerce, Accountancy/Chartered Accountancy, and related field is preferred.

Your Experience

- Minimum of six (6) years of relevant experience in programme, administration, finance or office management;
- Some experience in research assistance and general understanding of programme support, monitoring and evaluation is desirable;
- Good writing and communication skills with the ability to draft correspondence in a clear, accurate and concise manner;
- Previous experience and knowledge of protocol in the United Nations is an advantage,
- Good interpersonal, planning, organizational and multi-tasking skills;
- Ability to work independently and harmoniously in a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic team environment maintaining tact and discretion in all dealings;
- Computer literacy – Proficiency in the use of MS Office Packages and the Internet;
- Good knowledge of Atlas/PeopleSoft is an asset.

Full job description of the position and instructions on how to apply can be accessed on: <https://pacific.unfpa.org/en/vacancies>

Closing Date: Saturday, 13th April 2024. The selected individual should be prepared to assume the post within one (1) month.

Notice: UNFPA does not charge any application, processing, training, interviewing, testing or other fee in connection with the application or recruitment process. UNFPA is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality, and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence. UNFPA does not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse, any kind of harassment, including sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. All selected candidates will, therefore, undergo rigorous reference and background checks. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for the next phase of the selection process.

Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia
Statements of Condition
December 31, 2023 and 2022

ASSETS	2023	2022
Cash and due from banks	\$4,431,707	\$6,199,280
Federal funds sold	7,505,000	8,545,000
Interest-bearing deposits in banks	72,069,768	53,523,533
	-----	-----
Cash and cash equivalents	84,006,475	68,267,813
Interest-bearing deposits in banks	26,554,000	32,220,000
Securities available for sale	43,549,635	61,622,048
Loans, net of allowance for loan losses	58,659,504	60,195,951
Accrued interest receivable	565,306	614,544
Prepaid expenses and other assets	849,605	548,670
Right of use assets, net	476,207	0
Premises and equipment, net	1,941,687	1,781,937
	-----	-----
Total Assets	\$216,602,419	\$225,250,963
	-----	-----
LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Liabilities:		
Deposits:		
Noninterest-bearing	75,853,717	73,481,503
Interest-bearing	112,208,958	127,863,037
	-----	-----
Total deposits	188,062,675	201,344,540
Accrued interest payable	16,955	7,368
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	690,402	544,067
Operating lease liabilities	484,964	0
	-----	-----
Total liabilities	189,254,996	201,895,975
Commitments and contingencies		
Stockholders' equity:		
Common Stock, \$5 par value, 1,000,000 shares authorized; 934,348 shares issued and outstanding	4,671,740	4,671,740
Additional paid-in capital	4,663,576	4,663,576
Retained earnings	21,785,405	19,139,566
Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(3,773,298)	(5,119,894)
	-----	-----
Total stockholders' equity	27,347,423	23,354,988
	-----	-----
Total Liabilities & Stockholder's Equity	\$216,602,419	\$225,250,963
	-----	-----



Bank of the Federated States of Micronesia
Statements of Comprehensive Income (Loss)
Years Ended December 31, 2023 and 2022

	2023	2022
Interest income:		
Loans		
Interest-bearing deposits	\$5,329,494	\$5,090,760
Investment securities	3,831,766	1,108,954
Federal funds sold	861,988	1,002,145
	292,734	91,226
	-----	-----
Total interest income	10,315,982	7,293,085
	-----	-----
Interest expense:		
Savings	480,928	267,299
Other time deposits	90,608	27,494
	-----	-----
Total interest expense	571,536	294,793
	-----	-----
Net interest income	9,744,446	6,998,292
	-----	-----
Provision for loan losses	830,000	550,000
	-----	-----
Net interest income, after loan losses	8,914,446	6,448,292
	-----	-----
Non-interest income:		
Loan fees	236,141	289,904
Service charges on deposit accounts	165,771	176,543
Other	546,303	464,002
	-----	-----
Total Non-interest Income	948,215	930,449
	-----	-----
Non-interest expenses:		
Salaries and wages	2,423,360	2,209,603
Employee benefits	451,138	379,430
Electronic banking	446,830	190,863
Data processing	414,077	387,185
Occupancy	375,094	378,385
Furniture and equipment	345,682	262,105
Correspondent bank fees	265,555	160,045
Professional fees	243,454	171,211
Travel	194,698	43,987
Gross receipts and use taxes	149,842	318,487
Insurance	126,995	118,251
Telephone	126,045	131,959
Stationery and supplies	122,397	111,723
Director and shareholder	121,743	63,527
FDIC deposit insurance	101,103	54,000
Miscellaneous	79,712	63,528
Business development	51,248	26,502
Postage	16,509	10,888
Credit and collection	8,902	15,476
Lease Expense	8,758	0
Teller and operating losses	3,866	1,958
	-----	-----
Total Non-Interest Expense	6,077,008	5,099,113
	-----	-----
Net Income	3,785,653	2,279,628
	-----	-----
Other comprehensive gain (loss):		
Net unrealized gain (loss) on investment securities	1,346,596	(5,218,833)
	-----	-----
Comprehensive income (loss)	5,132,249	(2,939,205)
	-----	-----

Joint Leadership Meeting enhances collaboration for Pohnpei State progress

Pohnpei Public Information

March 22, 2024

Pohnpei State – Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and Lt. Governor Francisco L. Ioanis orchestrated a Joint Leadership Meeting on Friday, March 22, 2024, at the Department of Health Services conference room. The gathering, which convened representatives from both the Executive and Legislative branches of the Pohnpei State Government, exemplified a concerted effort to address crucial matters impacting the state.

The meeting delved into various significant topics, including deliberations on the recently approved Compact III and budgetary considerations, with a particular focus on allocations within the budget ceiling. Discussions also centered on defining priorities for the utilization of unassigned compact funds, amounting to approximately \$9 million.

Noteworthy among the deliberations

was the identification of two primary areas for potential allocation of funds – financial investments aimed at enhancing the infrastructure and development of Pohnpei State, alongside initiatives to facilitate educational opportunities through scholarships for local students. Furthermore, the future trajectory of the Pohnpei Transportation Authority (PTA) was thoroughly explored, with plans outlined for its potential privatization or corporatization soon, to improve efficiency and service delivery within the transportation sector.

Governor Joseph and Lt. Governor Ioanis took the opportunity to provide comprehensive updates to Speaker Yamaguchi and the 11th Pohnpei Legislature. The updates included progress made in the review and refinement of the Strategic Development Plan, as well as the latest advancements in the state's response to challenges posed by drought and saltwater inundation.



Additionally, discussions between the two branches emphasized the importance of adhering to the principles of separation of powers. Reminders were exchanged regarding recent vetoes by Governor Joseph and overrides by the Legislature, with both parties reaffirming their mutual understanding and agreement, in principle, that their distinct roles serve

the collective benefit of the people of Pohnpei.

The Joint Leadership Meeting underscored the commitment of both branches to collaborative governance, fostering dialogue and cooperation to address pressing issues and advance the common interests of the state and its residents.

PIF Secretariat submits written statement to the International Court of Justice

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

22 March 2023

The Hague—The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat has submitted a written statement to the International Court of Justice on the question of the Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change. This is the first time the Secretariat is participating in a proceeding of the World Court, whose seat is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands).

The Secretariat was represented by Her Excellency Merewalesi Falemaka, Permanent Observer, Ambassador of the Pacific Islands Forum to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva, and International Legal Adviser, Mary Victoria Faasau.

As directed by Forum Members and guided by the Forum Specialist Sub-Committee on Sea-level rise in relation

to International Law, the PIF statement focuses on agreed Forum regional collective positions, to date, on the issue of climate change related sea-level rise.

Pacific nations are amongst the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and sea-level rise related to climate change is a real and pressing issue. Forum Leaders continue to reaffirm climate change, inclusive of sea-level rise caused by anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases, as the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security, and wellbeing of the people of the Pacific.

Two key PIF instruments cited in the statement are the “2021 Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise” and the “2023 Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on the Continuity of Statehood and the Protection of Persons in the face of Climate Change-Related



Sea-Level Rise”.

The 2021 and 2023 PIF Declarations offer interpretation of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and relevant international law principles, as pertaining to the global phenomenon of climate change-related sea-level rise, and in pursuit of the protection of States, Peoples and individuals of

present and future generations affected by the adverse effects of climate change.

In terms of next steps, States, and organizations, having presented written statements to the Court, may submit written comments on the other written statements by the deadline of 24 June 2024. The oral proceedings of the Court will be notified in due course.

Ambassador Kagomiya visits Chuuk

Embassy of Japan to the FSM

March 22, 2024

Chuuk—Ambassador Kagomiya visited Chuuk state accompanied with his spouse from March 17. Ambassador Kagomiya paid a courtesy call on T.H. Alexander Narruhn, Governor of Chuuk state, T.H. Lester Mersai, Speaker of the House of Representatives, T.H. Wisney Nakayama, Vice President of the House of Senate, and T.H. Jayson Robert, Chief Justice of Chuuk State Supreme Court. The joint handover ceremony for

the current three economic assistance projects was held at the Chuuk state government office. On behalf of the Chuuk state, Governor Narruhn welcomed Ambassador Kagomiya's visit to Chuuk and expressed his gratitude for economic assistance provided by the Government of Japan.

In addition to Weno, main island of Chuuk, Ambassador Kagomiya visited Tonoas, Parem and Siis islands with

the staffs of International Organization for Migration and had opportunities to interact with local communities and youth when visiting Chuuk Women Council, St. Cecilia school and Xavier high school. In Weno, Ambassador Kagomiya worshiped at a war memorial for Japanese military personnel and Japanese and Micronesian residents who sacrificed their lives.



Austin welcomes Micronesia's President to Pentagon

By Joseph Clark
U.S. Department of Defense News

March 21, 2024

Arlington, Virginia--Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III underscored the close ties between the U.S. and Micronesia as he met today with Micronesian President Wesley Simina.

Austin welcomed Simina to the Pentagon following the recent renewal of the Compacts of Free Association, or COFA, which establish defense and economic ties between three Pacific Island nations: Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau.

Under the renewed agreements, the U.S. will extend defense and economic support to the three nations, known collectively as the Freely Associated States, into the 2040s.

"Renewing the compacts was a landmark achievement, and it will help advance our shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific," Austin said.

"The compacts ensure that the United States can maintain a military presence in the Freely Associated States. That presence helps secure a vital and vast part of the Indo-Pacific, an area that's larger than the continental United States."

The compacts, which were first adopted in the mid-1980s by the U.S., the Marshall Islands and Micronesia and later joined by Palau in the 1990s, provide for U.S. military defense of the three nations.

The compacts also permit citizens of the Freely Associated States to serve in the U.S. military.

"We're grateful for the military service of your country's citizens, Mr. President," Austin said today. "And we're proud to serve shoulder to shoulder with you."

Since taking office, Austin has worked extensively to further strengthen U.S. partnerships across the Pacific Island region.

Austin met with the presidents of the Freely Associated States nations of Palau and the Marshall Islands in 2021 and 2022, respectively.

Simina underscored the shared values between his country and the U.S. that serve as the foundation for lasting ties.

"Our friendship is one based on shared democratic principles and values – peace, unity and freedom," he said. "In these highest of pursuits, our people have stood shoulder to shoulder."

Through these shared bonds, Simina said, the two nations will remain close partners for many decades to come.

Ahead of their talks, Austin previewed discussions ranging from new opportunities for defense cooperation between the two countries and opportunities to enhance military exercises.



Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attends memorial service for Tesiwo M. Liwy

Pohnpei Public Information

March 26, 2024

Sokehs Pah, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attended the memorial service of the late Tesiwo M. Liwy, former Legislator held at the Sokehs Pah Protestant Church. The service, filled with both reverence and remembrance, gathered community members, friends, and dignitaries to honor the life and legacy of a dedicated public servant.

In his short remarks, Governor Stevenson A. Joseph reflected on the profound impact of Tesiwo M. Liwy's life, emphasizing his unwavering commitment to serving his family, his community, and the State of Pohnpei. He spoke of the late Tesiwo M. Liwy's

exemplary dedication, highlighting the responsibilities he shouldered with grace and integrity throughout his years of service.

Governor Stevenson A. Joseph concluded his remarks by reading out Executive Proclamation 2024-02, which declares a period of mourning for the late Tesiwo M. Liwy. The proclamation orders all flags to be flown at half-mast from March 26, 2024, to March 28, 2024, as a mark of respect and honor for the departed soul.

The Governor extended his heartfelt condolences to the family and loved ones of Tesiwo M. Liwy, expressing solidarity and support during this time of profound loss.



Courtesy visit of Public Auditors to Governor Stevenson Joseph for Peer Review Audit Presentation

Pohnpei Public Information

March 21, 2024

Pohnpei—Mr. Saturnino Tewid, Acting Public Auditor of the Republic of Palau, along with Sumch Chin from the Republic of Palau Office of Public Auditor and Alice George from the Kosrae Office of the Public Auditor, visited Governor Stevenson Joseph to present a peer review audit of the Pohnpei State Public Auditor's Office.



Accompanied by Pohnpei Public Auditor T.H. Iso Ihlen Joseph, Mr. Tewid highlighted that it is common practice for Public Auditors to conduct peer reviews on their counterparts every three years. He conveyed his congratulations to Pohnpei Public Auditor Iso Ihlen Joseph for a well-executed peer review. Governor Joseph expressed his gratitude to Mr. Tewid and Pohnpei Public Auditor Iso Ihlen Joseph for their visit and the insightful presentation of the peer review audit.

The courtesy visit and peer review audit presentation underscore the commitment to transparency and accountability in government operations.

Officials from USAID, CRS, and EPA visit Governor Stevenson A. Joseph to discuss pollution and recycling initiatives

Pohnpei Public Information

March 20, 2024

Pohnpei—Officials from USAID, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) convened with Governor Stevenson A. Joseph to explore strategies for addressing ocean plastic pollution through the Clean Cities, Blue Ocean Program, and other projects.

Mr. Rene Acosta, Regional Director for the program, disclosed that negotiations for a 12-month extension of the pilot program in Kolonia are in their final stages. Mr. Acosta emphasized the importance of behavior change in waste management and segregation, citing ongoing efforts to promote these practices.

Mr. Acosta also addressed the recent dumpsite fire at Dekehtik and offered assistance in drafting designs for new dumpsite locations and tenders for construction and operations. Governor Joseph expressed appreciation for the support and shared plans for relocating the dumpsite.

Discussions also revolved around establishing collection points

throughout Pohnpei Island, with waste collection centralized at the main dumpsite. Mr. Roger Garner from USAID highlighted an upcoming recycling project in collaboration with CRS, focusing on repurposing recycled plastic for furniture production and other similar uses.

Moreover, Mr. Garner reminded Governor Joseph of his pivotal role as the convening authority to bring donors together to address Pohnpei State priorities.

The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to collaborative efforts in combatting plastic pollution and advancing sustainable waste management practices in Pohnpei State.



Courtesy call of Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) representatives to Governor Stevenson A. Joseph

Pohnpei Public Information

March 21, 2024

Pohnpei—Mrs. Suwanna S. R. Lawrence and Paulina Yourupi-Sandy, representatives from the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) office in Pohnpei, paid a courtesy visit to Governor Stevenson A. Joseph at the state office.

During the meeting, Mrs. Lawrence conveyed apologies for the absence of PREL's third employee in Pohnpei, Canita Rilometo Nakamura. Expressing congratulations and gratitude to Governor Joseph, discussions primarily revolved around PREL's ongoing initiatives in Indigenous Learning Recovery (ILR) at selected elementary schools in Pohnpei.

Governor Joseph, appreciating the significance of the ILR program, expressed his desire for its expansion, advocating for its inclusion in the curriculum of all Pohnpei State elementary schools. Additionally, talks involved formalizing an agreement for PREL to lease and manage their own building and land, paving the way for the expansion of their operations in Pohnpei as a base in Micronesia.

Governor Joseph warmly welcomed the proposal, expressing his support for PREL's endeavors. He particularly highlighted the importance of their work in the ILR program, language policies, and their support for neurodivergent students.

The meeting concluded on a positive note, reflecting a shared commitment to educational development and collaboration between PREL and the Pohnpei State Government.

PREL is an independent, nonprofit organization with staff in Hawai'i, American Sāmoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia: Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap. Through their work, they collaborate with schools and school systems, families, community organizations, and government agencies to transform education and promote dynamic reciprocal learning communities built on strong social and cultural capital.



Governor Joseph welcomes consultative team for PRIME Project Review in Pohnpei

Pohnpei Public Information

March 20, 2024

Pohnpei—Governor Joseph of Pohnpei State graciously hosted Mr. Serge Cartier Van Dissel from Cartier Consult and Mr. Robert Hardy from 7 Dee Consultant, alongside their esteemed colleagues, Mr. Olivier Wortel and Mr. Mark Johnny from Palikir Consultants. Joining Governor Joseph was Mr. Daniel Isaac, Administrator of the Office of Transportation and Infrastructure.

The visit of Mr. Van Dissel and Mr. Hardy to Pohnpei marks a pivotal moment in the ongoing efforts of the World Bank-funded Prioritized Road Investment Management Enhancements (PRIME) project. Tasked with conducting an institutional and governance review, the consultants aim to strengthen road management and maintenance practices within the region.

Governor Joseph extended a warm welcome to the consultants, expressing keen anticipation for the insights they will provide. He underscored the importance of ensuring efficient ongoing maintenance of roads and emphasized the necessity of establishing robust systems and resources for future road projects. Governor Joseph highlighted that this

visit aligns seamlessly with Pohnpei State's current endeavors to review and update its Strategic Development Plan (SDP), focusing on sustainable economic growth with infrastructure playing a crucial role.

Governor Joseph stressed the importance of alignment between external aid and assistance and the SDP's objectives. He emphasized that road maintenance would be included in the SDP, marking a significant milestone for the state. Mr. Wortel highlighted that Pohnpei State's inclusion of road maintenance in its SDP is a pioneering move, setting a precedent for other states to follow.

In addition to the forthcoming report and review, the consultants will return to conduct workshops with states to raise awareness of the importance of road maintenance and standard design.

The collaborative efforts between Governor Joseph, Mr. Van Dissel, Mr. Hardy, and their team underscore the shared commitment to advancing infrastructure development and governance practices in Pohnpei State. Through constructive dialogue and strategic partnerships, the aim is to lay a foundation for enhanced infrastructure and a sustainable future for the people of Pohnpei State.



Governor Joseph signs Japan grant of \$63,008 for renovation of main Public Health building

Pohnpei Public Information

March 22, 2024

Nett, Pohnpei—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph and First Lady Dr. Aina Garstang participated in a significant ceremony held at the public health division of the Department of Health Services. The event marked the signing over of a \$63,008.00 grant for the renovation of the main public health building. In his opening remarks, Governor Joseph expressed heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of Japan for their generous donation and ongoing support for various projects benefiting the people of Pohnpei. He pledged to uphold the responsibility of being custodians of these generous donations. Governor Joseph also apologized, recognizing that despite having sources available to address needs, obtaining funds can often take longer than applying for grants from trusted donor partners.

Governor Joseph shared his vision for the Department of Health, emphasizing the importance of procuring a dedicated boat for service to the outer islands. He highlighted that medevac requests are sometimes delayed due to scheduling constraints, and having a boat would significantly enhance Pohnpei State's ability to effectively serve the outer islands.

Touching briefly on the Nan Madol project, Governor Joseph assured Ambassador Nobuo Kagomiya of Japan that he and Lt. Governor Ioanis are diligently working to resolve the issue, underscoring the importance of continued cooperation between Japan and Pohnpei.

Japanese Ambassador to FSM, H.E. Nobuo Kagomiya, accompanied by his spouse, emphasized that the \$63,008.00 grant aims to improve the environment of the public health building,



ensuring a clean, safe, and sanitary environment for patients. Ambassador Kagomiya commended Pohnpei's efforts in various sectors, including health, education, agriculture, and social development, and affirmed Japan's commitment to sustainable development in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Senator Shelten Neth, Chairman of the Health Committee, spoke warmly of

the grant as a gesture of love, emphasizing its significance in enhancing healthcare facilities for the community.

The ceremony concluded with a dance number by the ladies of public health and a tour of the building slated for renovation, symbolizing the collaborative efforts towards improving public health infrastructure in Pohnpei State.

Mr. Alain Apis of PYCK visits Governor Joseph for regulatory guidance for telecom venture in Pohnpei and FSM

Pohnpei Public Information

March 28, 2024

Kolonia, Pohnpei—Mr. Alain Apis, representing PYCK Micronesia, a burgeoning telecommunications corporation, paid a courtesy visit to Governor Joseph to discuss the company's vision and seek regulatory guidance for its upcoming venture in Pohnpei and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

During the meeting, Governor Joseph warmly welcomed Mr. Apis and expressed his enthusiasm for the competition that PYCK Micronesia would bring to the telecommunications sector. Recognizing the potential benefits for consumers, Governor Joseph reiterated his commitment to fostering a competitive market that prioritizes innovation and customer satisfaction.

Mr. Apis highlighted the company's mission to provide reliable and affordable telecommunications services to Pohnpei and emphasized the importance of regulatory clarity in ensuring a smooth startup process. He expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to meet with Governor Joseph and sought his assistance in navigating any regulatory challenges that may arise.

Governor Joseph affirmed his full support for PYCK Micronesia's endeavors, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between the government and private sector to drive

economic growth and technological advancement in Pohnpei and the FSM.

As PYCK Micronesia prepares to embark on its journey to transform the telecommunications landscape in the region, the collaborative efforts between Mr. Apis and Governor Joseph set a promising precedent for future innovation and development.



Micronesia launches ground breaking Coastal Fisheries Project with Kiwa Initiative

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

March 26, 2024

Pohnpei—A significant milestone has been reached in Micronesia's efforts to bolster coastal fisheries resilience in the face of climate change. The Regional MiCOAST Project, funded by the Kiwa Initiative, kicked off with an inception workshop attended by various national and regional organisations.

From January 22 to 26, 2024, stakeholders gathered in Pohnpei for the inaugural workshop, jointly hosted by the Conservation Society of Pohnpei and OneReef Worldwide Stewardship. Among the participants were key organisations from around the region (Marshall Islands Conservation Society; Kosrae Conservation and Safety Organization; Rare; cChange; Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority; the Pacific Community (SPC)) and representatives from national, state, and local governments, and traditional leaders.

The MiCOAST project, an abbreviation for "Micronesian Community-based Fisheries Management as a Nature-Based Solution for Coastal Resilience," spans three years and aims to promote Community-Based Fisheries Management and Nature-based Solutions across Micronesia. By leveraging the concept of Nature-based Solutions, the project seeks to foster collaboration among local fishers, communities, and stakeholders, ultimately enhancing the sustainability

of coastal fisheries management in the region. Notably, it aligns with regional and global commitments such as the Micronesia Challenge 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Local inception meetings for the MiCOAST project are expected to take place in other represented jurisdictions in the coming months.

"MiCOAST is a really important project in terms of providing resources and solutions for the future, and also being able to transfer much of our traditional knowledge and practices to younger generations. A lot of the project's activities are meant to support not only economic livelihoods, but also to ensure that we have food security for our communities," said Ms. Madelsar Ngiraingas, OneReef Micronesia, Director of Operations, Palau.

The Kiwa Initiative, overseen by the French Development Agency (AFD), embodies a concerted effort to bolster local and national capacities while championing strategies attuned to addressing social vulnerability and gender disparities. A pivotal aspect of its mission involves fostering dialogue among various stakeholders, including donors, regional bodies, and individual nations, to streamline Official Development Assistance efforts. At its core, the Kiwa Initiative harnesses Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to fortify the climate resilience of Pacific Islands ecosystems, communities, and economies.

"The launch of the MiCOAST Project not

only implies a significant step towards fostering community empowerment but also underscores the value of collaborative efforts in bolstering grassroots capacity. By amplifying community voices and legitimising their operational capabilities, this endeavour has the power to catalyse meaningful change and foster sustainable resource management practices," said Mr. Watisoni Lalavanua, Community-based Fisheries Management Officer at SPC.

"Through the MiCOAST Project, we are not just building resilience in coastal fisheries; we are fostering a legacy of sustainability and stewardship for future generations. By integrating traditional knowledge with innovative Nature-based Solutions, we empower communities to thrive in harmony with their natural surroundings," said Mr Ludovic Branlant, Nature-based Solutions Mainstreaming Advisor at SPC. "Harnessing the benefits

of Nature-based Solutions, such as ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation, we ensure that community-based fisheries management becomes not only effective but also inherently resilient."

Key initiatives under the MiCOAST project include comprehensive efforts across Micronesia, including marine protected area management, aquaculture expansion, and community-based resource management plans. Partnerships between national and regional organisations will advocate for policy reforms, knowledge dissemination, and the replication of successful models to maximize the project's impact.

The launch of the Kiwa MiCOAST project marks a significant step forward in enhancing coastal fisheries resilience and promoting sustainable management practices in Micronesia.



Exploiting Agriculture Innovations: UOG meeting at Yap R&D Agriculture Division

Yap DYCA

March 19, 2024

Colonia, Yap—On Wednesday, March 20th, 2024, at 9:30 AM, the University of Guam (UOG) Agriculture Division scheduled a meeting with the Department of Resources and Development (R&D) at the Division of Agriculture and Forestry site. Representatives from UOG included Dr. Mari Marutani (Principal Investigator), Dr. Kuan-Ju Chen (Co-Principal Investigator),

Maegan Delfin (the project coordinator), and 4 UOG students. The meeting discussions focused on the various programs in Agriculture Natural and Applied Science sponsored by UOG and grant funding opportunities (e.g. Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (WSARE)) available for farmers in Yap State.

The forum served as a platform for the UOG and Yap State Agriculture and Forestry teams to share agricultural issues, foster stronger relationships, and explore opportunities for future collaboration.



Yap Government weekly: Cabinet members meeting goes live

Yap DYCA

March 21, 2024

Colonia, Yap—At 10 AM, a cabinet meeting was held at the Governor's Office, presided over by Governor Charles Chieng. Attendees included the Director of the Department of Youth and Civics Affairs, Alex Gilfiley; the Chief of Finance at the Office of Administration, Irene Laabrug; the Director of the Office of Planning and Budget, Julius Tun; the acting-Director and Chief of Workforce Enrichment division at the Department of Resource and Development, Bernard Gorong; the Director of the Department of Public Works & Transportation, Joe Giltug; the Director of the Department of Education, Dominic Fanasog; the Director of the Department of Health Services, Maria Marfel; the Attorney General at the Attorney General Office, Joses Gallen; and the Chief of Staff,

Paul Ayin.

The meeting covered a range of departmental issues, including updates on ongoing projects and departmental initiatives. Chief Laabrug discussed ongoing projects such as the minimum wage, FY22 audits progress, and estimated completion. Director Gilfiley shared upcoming projects and events, for example, a town hall on the review of the political status, Civic Affairs local cooking competition to commemorate Women International Day, and summer youth events (e.g. Youth summit and 17 and under Microgames). Director Tun elaborated on ongoing tasks such as the prioritising FY24 and FY25 budget process, updating the status of the H2 ship sailing out with relief items to the Outer Islands, and grants opportunities for climate resilience. Chief Gorong reported on upcoming projects and ongoing tasks, including representatives

of the Division of Agriculture from the University of Guam (UOG) visited to discuss the online programs provided, certified individuals for Air conditioning training, and Commerce and Industry(C&I) scheduled trip to the Outer Islands. Attorney General Gallen briefed on recent incidents for Law and Enforcement that occurred based on stolen possessions, the status of arrival of the new assistant, arrest status on underage drinking, and upcoming training for new officers in mid-July. Director Fanasog clarified the status of ongoing projects, such as Palau Community College's arrival to recruit students, the arrival of an Australian education advisor, and highlights on the Pac-Med program. Director Giltug shared updates on the arrival of two battleships, a Japanese research vessel visit with 104 students, the departure status for the H2 ship, eight road repairs for Road and Ground, OI airport

maintenance, and the number of flights at the airport (e.g. eight to Ulithi, two to Woleia, three for military, and four for United). Director Marfel elaborated on the updated status of viral case outbreaks, new schedule hours to accommodate the increase in outbreaks, the return of the IOM assessment team from the OIs, maintenance of the new oxygen plant in still operation, ongoing UNICEF wash project estimated time to retrieve materials, and updates on the number of medical referrals off-island. Furthermore, upcoming basic training (e.g. CPR, first aid, etc.) and services (e.g. Dental work, eye examination, radiologist, etc.) will be provided to Yap State doctors and nurses.

Furthermore, the cabinet meeting has currently been scheduled to only stream live on the last Thursday of each month on the Yap State government's Facebook page to ensure transparency.

Cultural Collaboration: Japanese visitors engage in sustainable project in Yap State

Yap DYCA

March 25, 2024

Yap, FSM--On March 17th, 2024, seven Japanese visitors, including five students and two adults, arrived in Yap state as part of the Eco Plus program. They partnered with Tamil Resource Conservation Trust (TRCT) for a sustainable project focused on cultural exchange. The project aims to immerse participants in the customs,

traditions, and lifestyles of the State of Yap. During their stay in the Aff village in Tamil, the Japanese visitors were accommodated in Aff community houses and engaged in various activities such as learning local food preparation, gardening (e.g. Taro patch cultivation), revitalizing water wells, and constructing traditional Yapese houses. After a week-long stay, the Japanese visitors departed on Saturday, March 23rd, 2024, returning to Japan.

Fostering Partnerships: DYCA and FBI work to train Government agencies and the community

Yap DYCA

March 20, 2024

Colonia, Yap—The Yap State Foreign Affairs and Department of Defense Focal Point, and Director of the Department of Youth and Civic Affairs(DYCA), Alex Gilfiley, had a meeting with agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation(FBI) to explore opportunities for future collaboration on Monday, March 18th, 2024, at

Pine Club. The discussion focused on inviting the FBI agents to engage with the schools and youth groups to provide insight into the FBI's role and mission—additionally, possible basic training for V.I.P. and dignitaries escorts during their visits to Yap. The DYCA Director made these requests for the DYCA Protocol Team as well as the state police and other Yap State Government agencies.

Nourishing communities: Green Climate Fund Food Security and Livelihood outreach

Yap DYCA

March 18, 2024

Yap, FSM—The Green Climate Fund (GCF) Food Security and Livelihood (FSL) project team, part of the Division of Agriculture at the Department of Resources and Development, conducted an outreach session with a women's community and intends to conduct additional outreach activities in the future. Their purpose was to discuss the objectives of the food security project and detail the activities planned

for each component. Additionally, they outlined the role and responsibilities of the farmer's association, emphasizing the importance of establishing a coordination mechanism for Yap State and the FSM for future food security projects. This visit provided the opportunity for individual farmers and active women groups in the community to ask questions and provide feedback on various aspects of the project.

