

# Two WWII bombs exposed by erosion found near College of Micronesia-FSM CTEC Campus

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

February 3, 2025

**Pohnpei**—A College of Micronesia-FSM security guard, patrolling the Daini CTEC campus in the Daini area on the afternoon of January 21, 2025, made a startling discovery when he found what looked like an old bomb. The World War II-era bomb was uncovered due to erosion after heavy rains.

Making the right choice, he called the Pohnpei Department of Public Safety. Police officers and firemen removed the bomb, but then, on January 27 at 10:00 p.m., a COM security guard found yet another unexploded bomb that had also been exposed due to erosion after heavy rains. It was situated close to the first bomb discovery.



Assistant Police Chief Bronson Martin says that both bombs were removed and stored in the secure and heavily fortified World War II-era bunker near the Pohnpei State Legislature.

According to a press release by the College of Micronesia-FSM, the CTEC campus was closed to students and faculty, and instruction reverted to online learning, similar to the COVID-era closures.

Assistant Chief Martin said that DPS has been in contact with international partners to discuss the complete removal of what he called the “Explosive

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# Ambassador Grant-Curnow honors diversity and unity at Australia Day event in Sokehs

By Bill Jaynes  
The Kaselehlie Press

August 24, 2025

**Pohnpei**—On January 24, Australian Ambassador Jenny Grant-Curnow and the staff of the Australian Embassy to the FSM hosted an Australia Day celebration for the first time this year at AA Getaway in Sokehs.

“In Australia, we have a rich history from our First Nations people, custodians of the oldest culture in the world, spanning 65,000 years, along with millions of migrants who have come to our shores over the last 240 years,” Ambassador Grant-Curnow said. “Australia has flourished because of that diversity. Today is a day to reflect on who we are and what we aspire to be. It’s also a day for all Australians to celebrate our desire for unity, safety, and prosperity.”

“I don’t know how many of you have been to Australia, but it is a place where, no matter where you live, who you love, who you worship, or what your name is, you can chart your own future in

safety and prosperity. Ladies and gentlemen, the Federated States of Micronesia and Australia share common values. As democratic countries, we’re committed to peace and prosperity for all of our people,” she said.

She noted that the recent establishment of an FSM Embassy in Australia demonstrates the trust that the FSM and

[Click here for continuation on page 4](#)



# Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attends funeral of late Nahnmwarki of Kitti, pays final respects and presents Pohnpei state flag on behalf of Pohnpei State Government



*Pohnpei Public Information*

*January 29, 2025*

*Pohnpei*—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph attended the funeral services of the late Gregorio Peter, Soukischleng, Nahnmwarki of Kitti, to pay his final respects on behalf of the Pohnpei State Government. The solemn occasion, held in Kitti Municipality, was a moment of reverence for a leader who played a significant role in the preservation of Pohnpeian culture and traditions.



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P.O. Box 2222 Pohnpei, FM 96941

phone:(691) 320-6547

email: [Kpress@mail.fm](mailto:Kpress@mail.fm)

Bill Jaynes  
Managing Editor

### THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE KASELEHLIE PRESS WILL BE RELEASED ON: **February 19, 2025**

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

**Monday, February 17, 2025**

As part of the state's tribute, Governor Joseph presented the family of the late Nahnmwarki with a Pohnpei State flag, symbolizing the deep appreciation and respect of the government and people of Pohnpei for his lifelong dedication and leadership.

The passing of Nahnmwarki Gregorio Peter marks the end of an era for Kitti and Pohnpei as a whole. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations, reminding them of the importance of cultural preservation, unity, and service to the people.

The Pohnpei State Government stands in solidarity with the people of Kitti during this time of mourning and extends its deepest sympathies to all who were touched by the late Nahnmwarki's leadership and kindness.



# FAS Ambassadors meet with U.S. Officials in DC to discuss Executive Orders, pause of Foreign Assistance, and other matters of mutual interest

*FSM Embassy to the United States*

*February 2, 2025*

**WASHINGTON, DC**—In a joint meeting with the U.S. Departments of State and Interior, the embassies of the three Freely Associated States (FAS) in the United States, Palau, Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), met with key U.S. officials to discuss recent Executive Orders issued by the new U.S. administration, the 90-day pause on some categories of foreign assistance, and other matters of mutual concern.

The FAS ambassadors noted that the Executive Orders on immigration issues should not affect FAS citizens living

and residing in the United States legally under the special provisions of the Compact of Free Association applicable to each government. The ambassadors explained that the Orders, including the birthright Executive Orders, are not applicable to their citizens because of the detailed rights accorded to FAS citizens under the Compacts. The U.S. side noted that it understood the Compact rights, took these concerns seriously, and would continue to be in touch with the FAS embassies.

The ambassadors raised the 90-day U.S. pause on some categories of foreign assistance and noted their understanding that the pause was not relevant to Compact sector grants, which are administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior and therefore not covered under the foreign assistance order. The ambassadors also noted the importance of having no or minimal interruptions in other categories of assistance that are administered by the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International



Development (and therefore covered by the pause). The United States officials in attendance agreed to review the foreign assistance Orders with these concerns in mind and noted that the 90-day freeze on some categories of foreign assistance was, in any event, the subject of undergoing internal review.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the U.S. officials assured the FAS ambassadors that the United States was taking these issues seriously and would continue to keep channels of communication open to address these or other concerns of FAS citizens.

# Reviving oceanic traditions: YTNS leads efforts to preserve Yapese canoe

*By Habele*

*January 28, 2025*

**Yap**—Across the vast Pacific, the traditional navigation practices of Yap have long symbolized resilience, ingenuity, and deep cultural identity. These canoes are more than vessels—they are lifelines that connect the people of Yap to their past, the ocean, and each other. The art of voyaging, perfected over centuries, is deeply intertwined with Yap's identity, and its survival holds profound significance for Pacific Islanders and the world's shared cultural heritage. Yet, this priceless tradition stands at a crossroads.

As time passes, the knowledge and skills that define Yapese navigation risk being lost, placing this extraordinary legacy in peril. Through the efforts of the Yap Traditional Navigation Society (YTNS), hope sails forward.

YTNS has embarked on an ambitious mission to preserve and restore the last remaining traditional canoes on Yap. This effort began in late 2024 with the dismantling, labeling, and safe storage of three significant canoes, including the Mathow Maram, the island's only remaining voyaging canoe. Each piece was meticulously cataloged to ensure

accurate restoration and preservation.

The process didn't stop with physical preservation. YTNS worked with Yapese storytellers to document the cultural significance of these canoes, capturing their role in navigation and community life. These stories, shared through video and photography, breathe life into the restoration effort, connecting audiences around the globe to the richness of Yapese tradition.

A vast network of partners, including Habele, the Yap State Resource and Development Office, and other collaborators, has supported the project, emphasizing that preserving this heritage is a collective endeavor, not an individual responsibility.

Preserving the physical canoes is only part of the challenge. The more profound complication lies in ensuring that the knowledge and skills tied to these vessels—star navigation, canoe construction, and voyaging techniques—are not lost with time. The Mathow Maram, for example, represents both a cultural artifact and a repository of generations of seafaring wisdom.

Another challenge is finding resources and creating spaces where these

traditions can be taught, practiced, and celebrated. Without intentional action, the inevitable pressures of modernization, environmental change, and diminishing transmission of traditional knowledge could erode this vital cultural legacy.

Restoring these canoes and safeguarding Yapese navigation traditions will benefit the islanders and enrich the broader human story of resilience and innovation. The canoes are symbols of unity, ingenuity, and respect for nature—values that resonate far beyond the shores of Yap.

Through this work, YTNS is charting a path forward that connects generations, strengthens community bonds, and creates opportunities for cultural pride. A restored Mathow Maram and a functional canoe house at the Yap Living History Museum will inspire youth, engage visitors, and position Yap as a global leader in cultural preservation.

The success of this project so far is a testament to collaboration, resourcefulness, and determination. But there is much more to be done. Later in 2025, YTNS will begin construction of a

new canoe house, which will serve as a central hub for restoring canoes and teaching traditional skills. Additionally, the restoration of the Mathow Maram is scheduled for late 2025, ensuring its legacy endures. For more information about the work of the Yap Traditional Navigation Society or to learn how you can support these efforts, please visit [yapnavigators.org](http://yapnavigators.org) or consider donating at [habele.org](http://habele.org).



## ...Australia Day

*Continued from front page*

Australia have for each other.

She introduced the recently developed logo symbolizing the partnership between the FSM and Australia. It features the four stars of the FSM flag, a palm tree representing the islands, and the red kangaroo of Australia. Overarching it all is the blue of the ocean, a symbol of what connects the two island nations.

The Ambassador summarized some of the projects that Australia has supported on behalf of the FSM. She spoke of the Air Nauru connection and the partnership on the new subsea fiber-optic cable to finally bring high-speed internet to Kosrae. She also highlighted the project to remove leaking oil from World War II ships in Chuuk Lagoon and the introduction of the 24-hour ABC radio service, which brings global news closer to the FSM and is soon to launch in other FSM states besides Pohnpei.

She mentioned several other ongoing programs, including a family safety program in cooperation with the UNDP, and the Australian Volunteers posted in the FSM. She also spoke of the Australia Awards scholarships, which were awarded to eight Micronesians this year.

Lastly, she introduced two new Australian Maritime Advisors who have just arrived in Pohnpei: Lt. Commander Paul Norton and Petty Officer Nathan Langley.

She concluded her speech with a toast to the FSM-Australia relationship.

“This is truly an auspicious occasion, and we are very proud to share this special occasion with you in celebration,” said FSM Vice President Aren Palik. “Australia Day is not only a celebration of the country's rich culture and heritage, but also an opportunity to reflect on the values that have shaped this nation—values such as unity, resilience, and a commitment to fairness and opportunity for all.”

“These values resonate not only within Australia, but also across the Pacific, where the Federated States of Micronesia is proud to call Australia a close friend and trusted partner. Our nations share not only geographical proximity, but also a shared commitment to peace,

security, and prosperity in the Pacific region.”

“Through our continued cooperation, we work together to address the challenges of climate change, strengthening our economies, and promoting sustainable development. In this period of continued collaboration,” he continued, speaking of the new FSM Embassy in Australia as a landmark. “The embassy will play a key role in enhancing our presence in Australia, facilitating communication, and advancing cooperation in trade, education, and security. It stands as a symbol of our commitment to deepening our partnership and strengthening our shared values and future.”

In closing, he offered a toast to the FSM’s “close friend and trusted partner, to the continued good health of the people of Australia, and to a brighter future filled with peace, security, and prosperity.”

After the formal ceremony, guests were treated to a buffet that included many local dishes. The event was attended by members of the Diplomatic Corps, international aid partners, Australian nationals, and friends of the Australian Embassy. On January 24, Australian Ambassador Jenny Grant-Curnow and the staff of the Australian Embassy to the FSM hosted an Australia Day celebration for the first time this year at AA Getaway in Sokehs.

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# India's Minister of State for External Affairs completes historic visit to the FSM

*FSM Information Services*

January 21, 2025

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) proudly welcomed the Honorable Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for External Affairs of the Republic of India, for a historic visit from January 18 to 21, 2025. This first official visit by an Indian Minister of State to the FSM marks a major milestone in the growing partnership between the two nations.



foundation for a lasting partnership.

The visit also highlighted both nations' shared interest in advancing regional engagement, particularly through the upcoming Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC), the Pacific Island Forum in the Solomon Islands, and the United Nations General Assembly in September.

During the visit, Minister Margherita met with His Excellency President Wesley W. Simina, Vice President Aren B. Palik, and senior government officials. These discussions focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation in critical areas such as India's support for the construction of the One UN House project, the FSM National Diagnostic Center, and a proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the FSM and

the Republic of India on Development Cooperation in the areas of bilateral trade and investment, education, health and medical technology, labor mobility, maritime technology and services, sea transportation, climate change, environment, water and energy, infrastructure development, technology and cyber security, agriculture and forestry, tourism, and sports. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to

advancing mutual priorities of interest aimed to elevate the FSM-India Partnership to greater heights.

President Simina expressed gratitude for Minister Margherita's visit, underscoring its importance in strengthening ties between the FSM and India. This visit represents a shared vision of sustainability, prosperity, and deeper cooperation, reinforcing the

A dinner reception was hosted in honor of the historic visit, celebrating the partnership between the two nations. The event featured remarks by Pohnpei Governor Stevenson A. Joseph, Vice President Aren B. Palik and was attended by the Speaker of the 23rd FSM Congress, the Hon. Esmond Moses, resident Ambassadors in the FSM, and representatives from resident international and regional organizations.

## Governor Stevenson A. Joseph welcomes Honorable Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for External Affairs of the Republic of India, to Pohnpei

*Pohnpei Public Information*

January 20, 2025

**Pohnpei**—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph delivered welcoming remarks during a dinner reception hosted by His Excellency Wesley W. Simina, President of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), in honor of the Honorable Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for External Affairs of the Republic of India. The event, held on January 21 at the Cliff Rainbow Hotel, celebrated the growing bonds of friendship and cooperation between the FSM and the Republic of India.



In his address, Governor Joseph expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to welcome Minister Margherita and highlighted Pohnpei's natural beauty and cultural heritage. He described the island as the "garden state" of Micronesia, a land enriched by

its lush rainforests, majestic waterfalls, and ancient landmarks such as Nan Madol, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

"Honorable Minister," Governor Joseph remarked, "Pohnpei is often called the 'garden state' of Micronesia, a land blessed with lush rainforests, cascading waterfalls, and ancient landmarks such as Nan Madol. As you explore our island, I hope you will feel the warmth

of our people and experience the rich tapestry of traditions that define our identity."

Governor Joseph also underscored the potential for enhanced collaboration between the FSM and the Republic of India, outlining areas of mutual interest and opportunity.

"As we embark on this new chapter of collaboration, we look forward to deepening our partnership with India,"

Governor Joseph said. "Be it in areas of trade, education, renewable energy, or healthcare, there is immense potential for us to learn from one another and work together for the benefit of our people."

The reception brought together key dignitaries, including FSM Vice President Palik, Speaker

of the 23rd FSM Congress Esmond Moses, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps H.E. Wu Wei, and other national and state officials. The event reflected the FSM's commitment to strengthening its international relationships and building meaningful partnerships.

Governor Joseph's remarks exemplified Pohnpei State's dedication to fostering cultural exchange, economic cooperation, and shared progress with the Republic of India and other global partners.



# Governor Joseph commends China Jiangxi International Corporation for exceptional contributions

## Pohnpei Public Information

January 22, 2025

**Pohnpei**—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph recently held a meeting with key officials from China Jiangxi International Economic and Technical Corporation Co., Ltd. to express the gratitude of the Pohnpei State Government for their exceptional contributions to the renovation of the Pohnpei State Government Administration Building. The meeting was attended by:

Mr. QIU Can, Project Manager  
Mr. DENG Zhong, Deputy Project Manager  
Mr. JIN Wei, Chief Engineer  
Mr. CHEN Kun, Engineer

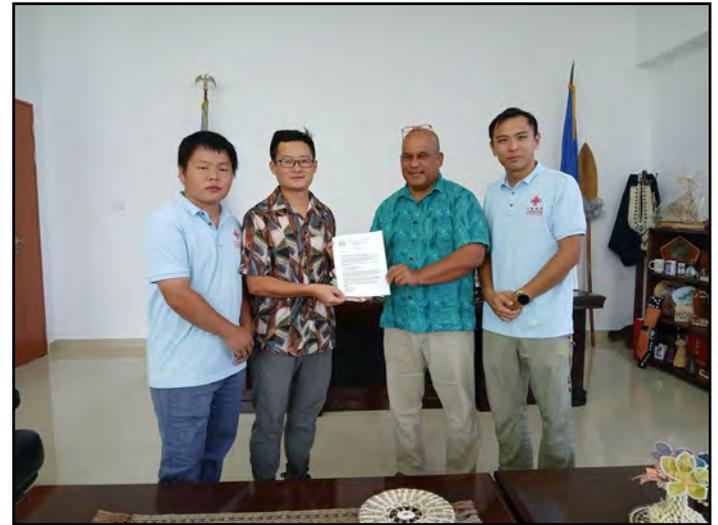
During the meeting, Governor Joseph presented a formal letter of appreciation to the company, which praised the team's commitment and sacrifice. The letter stated:

"We are particularly mindful of the personal sacrifices made by these gentlemen, who left their homes and families to undertake this important work far from their own country. Their commitment and hard work have not only enhanced

our state's infrastructure but have also deepened the bonds of friendship between our people. Please convey our heartfelt appreciation to each member of the project team for their exceptional contributions."

Governor Joseph extended a heartfelt "Kalahngan" to the Chinese officials and their team for their invaluable role in improving Pohnpei's public infrastructure. The Governor also emphasized that the Pohnpei State Government Administration Building stands as a testament to the positive outcomes of international collaboration and the shared goal of development.

The State of Pohnpei remains committed to fostering meaningful partnerships that enhance the lives of its people and strengthen the future of the state.



# Governor Joseph expands Energy Task Force to address ongoing power crisis

## Pohnpei Public Information

January 27, 2025

**Pohnpei**—Governor Stevenson A. Joseph has taken decisive action to address the ongoing power generation crisis in Pohnpei State by issuing Executive Order No. 01-2025, which formally establishes the Energy Task Force. This action builds upon the Emergency Declaration signed on January 15, 2025, underscoring the administration's commitment to securing immediate and long-term solutions to the state's energy challenges.

The power crisis, exacerbated by deteriorating generators, financial instability, and undercapitalization of the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation (PUC), has significantly impacted

businesses and residents alike. Recognizing the urgent need for intervention, the Governor's Executive Order establishes the Energy Task Force to work alongside the existing Pohnpei State Commission on Energy to conduct research, propose solutions, and ensure the sustainability of the state's power infrastructure.

### Composition of the Energy Task Force

The Energy Task Force comprises representatives from key sectors, ensuring a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to the crisis:

Herman Semes – Representing the Private Sector  
Marcelino Actouka – Representing the People of Pohnpei

Belsipa Isom or designee – Representing the Attorney General's Office  
Benjamin Rodriguez – Representing the Governor's Office  
Churchill Edward – SDP Consultant

### Mandate of the Task Force

The Energy Task Force has been directed to:

- Conduct immediate research and analysis on alternative energy solutions and power generation backup options.
- Finalize the work of the Pohnpei State Commission on Energy and issue recommendations to improve PUC operations.
- Assess financial strategies, including the proposed legislation in the 11th Pohnpei Legislature,

which would grant PUC the ability to adjust tariffs up to 20% to stabilize its financial position.

- Work independently while collaborating with relevant agencies to ensure the effective execution of its responsibilities.
- Deliver findings and recommendations within a 90-day timeframe, subject to extension if necessary.
- All government agencies have been instructed to fully support the work of the Task Force. The administration remains committed to transparency and will provide regular updates to the public as progress is made.

For further information, please contact the Governor's Office, Public Affairs Office.



# College of Micronesia-FSM

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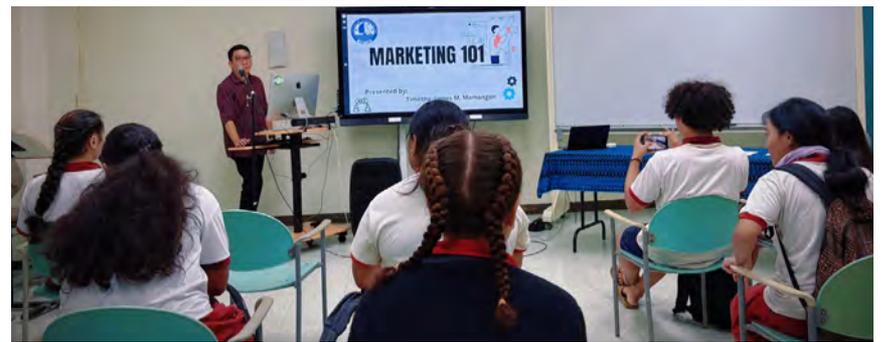
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## Empowering Young Creators: Marketing & Media Training with PICS Media Arts Club

The Center for Entrepreneurship under CRE was thrilled to host the talented students of the PICS Media Arts Club for a special Marketing and Media Training Day at the College of Micronesia-FSM. This hands-on workshop focused on marketing strategies, audio recording techniques, and creative content production, equipping students with the skills to enhance their projects and bring their ideas to life. One of the training highlights was the GarageBand session, where students learned how to record and edit high-quality audio for their media projects. Led by Mr. Timothy James Mamangon, Executive Director, the session didn't just teach—it

challenged students to think outside the box and apply their new skills in a creative project. Beyond the training, CFE donated an iMac Computer to the PICS Media Club to support their growing media initiatives. We believe in investing in young talents and providing the tools needed to elevate their creative storytelling and marketing skills. A huge thank you to the dedicated members of the PICS Media Club for their enthusiasm, creativity, and passion for learning! We look forward to seeing how they apply these skills in their future projects. Stay tuned for more training opportunities as we continue to support young entrepreneurs, media artists, and innovators across FSM!



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Manager Human Resources

Reporting to the President, the Manager Human Resources has the key responsibility for the development and implementation of people strategies and to lead Human Resources' initiatives across all campuses.

The Manager is an expert advisor to the President and the Senior Leadership Team on managing HR risks, promoting an organisational culture of respect and collegiality and ensuring that fairness and equity are embedded in all aspects of the College's activities and practices. Furthermore, the Manager will also provide visioning scenarios for both new and revised positions in alignment with continuous improvement and best practices. Required positions for the achievement of the college's strategic goals should also be included in visioning activities.

The Manager is responsible for the delivery of HR services across all areas of employment in the College. The role is accountable for the delivery of HR support in areas of recruitment, employment and labor relations, talent acquisition and development, job evaluation, compensation, performance management, equal opportunity, anti-discrimination and the provision of fair and unbiased advice to managers, faculty and staff. The Manager is accountable for the management of employee records and HR systems and processes.

### Agronomy Researcher (Chuuk)

The Agronomy Researcher/Extension directly reports to the Coordinator of Cooperative Research and Extension (CRE), Chuuk Campus with management support from the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) Campus Dean and the VPCRE. The position is based in and primarily responsible for agriculture/horticulture-related activities in the State of Pohnpei but will also serve and share responsibilities across the FSM.

Serious inquiries can be made to the Human Resources Office at email address [hro@comfsm.fm](mailto:hro@comfsm.fm) and telephone number (691) 320-2482 extension numbers 179, 180, 181

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Fax: (691)320-2479  
E-Mail: [national@comfsm.fm](mailto:national@comfsm.fm)

Chuuk Campus  
P.O. Box 879  
Chuuk, FM 96942  
Phone: (691)330-2689  
Fax: (691)330-2740  
E-Mail: [chuuk@comfsm.fm](mailto:chuuk@comfsm.fm)

FSM-FMI  
P.O. Box 1056  
Colonia Yap, FM 96943  
Phone: (691)350-5244  
Fax: (691)350-5245  
E-Mail: [fmi@comfsm.fm](mailto:fmi@comfsm.fm)

Kosrae Campus  
P.O. Box 37  
Tofol Kosrae, FM 96944  
Phone: (691)370-3191  
Fax: (691)370-3193  
E-Mail: [kosrae@comfsm.fm](mailto:kosrae@comfsm.fm)

CTEC Campus  
P.O. Box 614  
Kolonias Pohnpei, FM 96941  
Phone: (691)320-3795  
Fax: (691)320-3799  
E-Mail: [pohnpei@comfsm.fm](mailto:pohnpei@comfsm.fm)

Yap Campus  
P.O. Box 286  
Colonia Yap, FM 96943  
Phone: (691)350-2296/5149  
Fax: (691)350-5150  
E-Mail: [yap@comfsm.fm](mailto:yap@comfsm.fm)



## Terms of Reference

### I. Objectives

1. Develop on-the-job professional knowledge, skills, and abilities in Operational Procurement to improve the development effectiveness of the World Bank's operations.
2. Facilitate hands-on learning of World Bank's Procurement Policies and procedures in support of the preparation and supervision of the Bank's operations in EEAR2 Procurement unit.
3. Exposure to working with operational teams, including support for the preparation and supervision of projects in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI).

### II. Background

The candidate will assist the North Pacific Country Management Unit (CMU) in supporting the Procurement Fiduciary team. Under this program, the candidate will be actively engaged with the Pacific Procurement Team across several activities, including supporting Project Implementation Units (PIUs) in preparing Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) documents and participating in Post Procurement Reviews (PPRs), majority of the work will be procurement transaction review focused of both Prior/Post document reviews.

The STC will be required to complete various procurement trainings including the "New Procurement Framework for IPF Operations" online course, and successfully complete a test of knowledge of the new Procurement Framework (**Procurement Certification**.)

### III. Performance Outcomes, Supervision, and Performance Evaluation

Expected performance outcomes are: (i) acquired capacity to deliver procurement support to task teams working in the North Pacific portfolio, throughout the project cycle; (ii) strengthened ability to collect data and produce operational and procurement-related analyses on the portfolio and/or specific projects, drawing good practices and lessons learned, providing procurement inputs to support the Procurement Team.

The STC will work under the supervision of the Pacific Hub Senior Procurement Specialist and in collaboration with other Procurement Specialists in Sydney and the East Asia and Pacific (EAP) region, who will assess the progress made through periodic reviews. The final evaluation of the STC's performance will take place at the end of the assignment and will include feedback from both peers and clients.

### IV. Duties and Responsibilities

Under the supervision of the North Pacific Procurement Specialist and in cooperation with the procurement team, the incumbent will:

1. Operate and keep updated procurement information tools and systems for reporting purposes (e.g. Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP), Procurement Post Reviews (PPRs), Contract Management). Produce progress and timely reports for CMU and other stakeholders before and during missions.
2. Contribute to preparing Procurement Post Review reports, giving support to the Procurement Specialists during their missions, and delivering final reports.
3. Enhance the Procurement Dashboard, collect data and produce

operational and procurement-related analyses on the portfolio and/or specific projects.

4. Participate and assist in designing procurement arrangements for new operations, including completing capacity assessments, risk mitigation plans, and procurement arrangements for relatively non-complex operations.
5. Participate in project and/or procurement team missions and be able to discuss the project objectives and understand the implementation environment.
6. Assist the Procurement Specialists by reviewing procurement issues and documents in all operational phases.
7. Propose modifications to Borrowers' draft bidding documents to address issues of adequacy, clarity, and qualifications of bidders, the sufficiency of time, bid clarifications, substantial responsiveness, evaluation criteria, currency and payments, price adjustments, award criteria, arbitration, application of domestic price preference, etc.
8. Evaluate the procurement implications of project design, typically for simple projects and/or in consultation with Senior Procurement Staff for more complex projects; advise Team Leaders/Technical Specialists on options and suitability of different procurement/selection methods, appropriateness, and acceptability of local and/or international competitive procedures for the procurement of goods, works and services.
9. Participate in negotiations and project discussions, and contribute to the preparation of procurement plans, implementation schedules, procurement supervision plans, and development of procurement monitoring systems. Assist in the preparation of a range of documents and reports, including Country Procurement Assessment Reviews, Agency Capacity Assessments, Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) documents and Market Assessments.
10. Effectively monitor large contracts, contract completion and contract expiration dates and reflect in STEP. Ensure CMU has timely monitoring reports and disbursement linked Aide Memoires for disbursement efficiency and targeted disbursement of high value contracts.

### Qualifications and other Essential Requirements

The Consultant must meet the following requirements:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in fields relevant to procurement management, such as engineering, business and administration, economics, and law.
- Experience with World Bank procurement processes and procedures, ideally under the Procurement Regulations for Investment Project Financing Borrowers.
- Experience working in Micronesia, and/or on WB projects or another country with a similar context.
- Fluency in English and ideally, at least one of the Micronesian languages.

### Engagement Timeframe

The Consultant will be based in Pohnpei, FSM.

The initial phase of this assignment is 150 days between 20 Feb 2025 and 20 Feb 2026.

The assignment may be extended beyond February 2026.

**Interested candidates, please send your resume under cover email expressing interest to [dgeorgakopoulos@worldbank.org](mailto:dgeorgakopoulos@worldbank.org) with a copy to [wbnorthpacific@worldbank.org](mailto:wbnorthpacific@worldbank.org) by 5:00pm Pohnpei time, February 16, 2025.**



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# iPhone 16

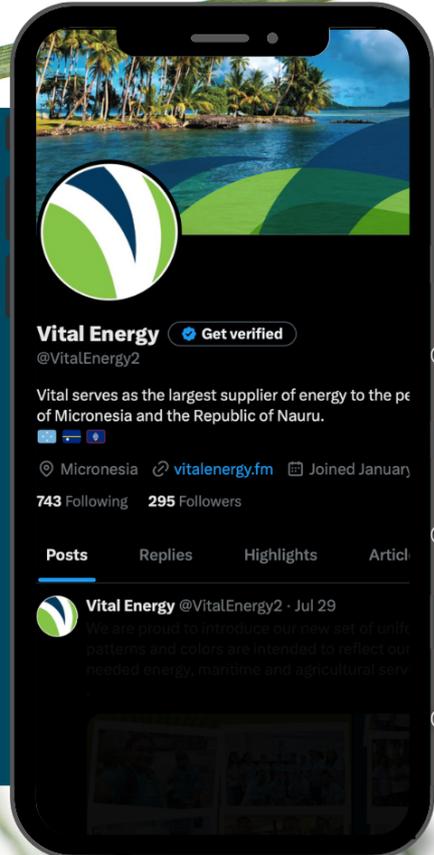
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# Habele issues annual report, looks back on work in 2024

By Habele

January 30, 2025

FSM--Habele is a US nonprofit, created by former Peace Corps Volunteers who lived and worked in Micronesia, and who wanted to remain engaged with the communities they served after their Peace Corps service.

The word Habele is a Ulithian word. Ulithian is one of the many languages used in Micronesia. It means “to be” but it also has a symbolic meaning. In that way it means to “make it be” or to accomplish a plan, or a dream. Habele was established in 2006. To this day, nearly all those who donate to, or volunteer for, Habele in the US are either former Peace Corps Volunteers, or other Americans who lived and worked in Micronesia.

In late January, Habele published its annual report to donors and volunteers. The document provides a review of Habele’s activities over the course of 2024. Among the highlights:

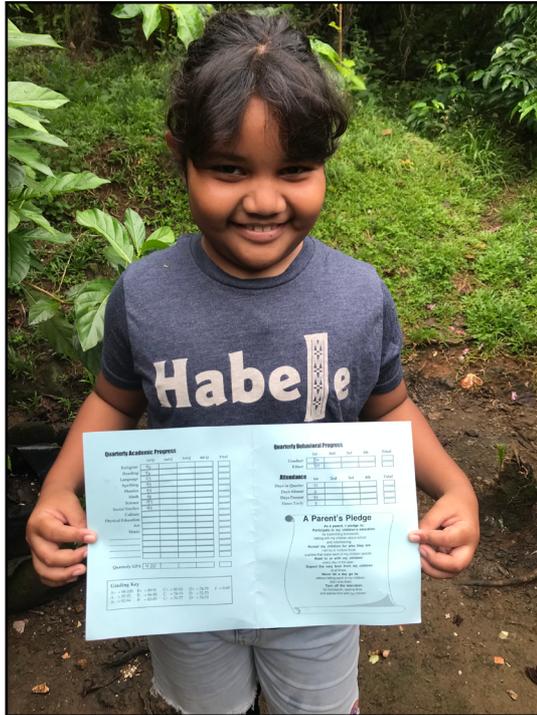
-151 scholarships were awarded, sending low- and middle-income students to top performing private elementary and high schools across all four Micronesian States.

-7,102 books were sent directly to children under five years of age through the Young Island Readers book-a-month program.

-69 boxes of books were provided to libraries, schools, and community health centers.

-12 boxes, tools & equipment were sent, for school and club-based robotics, 3D printing, and traditional vocational skills programs and mentorships.

-\$36,000 in local capacity grants were awarded, funding on-island collaborations at schools and libraries, including the first of two grants for Micronesian Seminar’s



reopening.

“So many Americans with a love for Micronesia help out,” explained Neil Mellen, the Founder and sole full-time employee of Habele. “This report gives them a chance to see the scope and depth of our work and I hope also solicits some pride in them for the work.”

As detailed in the report, Habele neither sought nor received any financial support from the US or FSM Governments in 2024. As such, Habele funded its operation entirely from donations generously made one hundred and thirteen individuals in the United States, as well as funds from an endowment established by such individual Americans.

The report can be found online at [www.habele.org](http://www.habele.org).



## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES) (FSM Nationals Only) Re-advertisement

**Country:** Federated States of Micronesia

**Project:** Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program – Economic Resilience (PROPER)

**Grant No.:** IDA-E371-FM

**Assignment Title:** State Project Coordinator (Pohnpei State)

The National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has applied for financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Pacific Island Oceanscape Program – Second Phase for Economic Resilience and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include playing a vital role in ensuring the smooth execution of PROPER Project activities at the state level., for an initial one (1) year period commencing approximately in February 2025. The position will be contracted by the FSM Government but will be based in Pohnpei State to service the PROPER State Focal Point and State Working Group comprised mainly of the Project IAs in the State. This is a full-time position and may be extended based on “satisfactory performance” i.e. satisfactory performance as determined through a performance evaluation against agreed key performance indicators and availability of funds. The position supports the FSMPROPER Project implementation phases of the project.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment DOFA website at [dofa.gov.fm](http://dofa.gov.fm) or at the NORMA website at [norma.fm](http://norma.fm).

The FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) now invites eligible individuals (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae, copies of degrees and relevant certificates with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.).

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

### Required experience and educational background:

- Bachelor's Degree in a relevant field such as marine or environmental science, fisheries or environmental management, project management, or a related discipline OR a relevant Associate Degree with a minimum of three (3) years of practical work experience in project coordination, community engagement, or a related role.
- Exceptional organizational skills with the ability to manage multiple tasks, prioritize effectively, and meet deadlines.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.
- Proficiency in using standard office software, including word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation tools.
- Familiarity with the context, culture, and local languages of the designated FSM state.

### Desirable skills:

- Demonstrated experience in stakeholder engagement, community outreach, or participatory approaches.
- Prior engagement in development of projects or working within the fisheries sector.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers dated September 2023 (“the Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0800 to 1700 hours Pohnpei local time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) preferably by February 14th, 2025.

FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority  
Attn: Mr. O’Kean Ehmes, PROPER Project Manager  
PO Box PS 122  
Pohnpei, FM 96941  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Telephone: (691) 320-2700/5181  
E-mail: [okean.ehmes@norma.fm](mailto:okean.ehmes@norma.fm) and copy to [crawford.nimea@norma.fm](mailto:crawford.nimea@norma.fm)



# H.E. Ambassador Wu Wei attends “2025 Warm Spring Festival, celebrates Chinese New Year” reception

*Embassy of China to the FSM*

*January 27, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—On January 27, 2025, H.E. Wu Wei, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to the FSM, attended the “2025 Warm Spring Festival, Celebrates Chinese New Year” Reception to celebrate the upcoming Spring Festival. Overseas Chinese in Pohnpei were cordially invited to the Chinese Embassy to join the event, coming together to enjoy a truly wonderful and memorable time filled with joy and festive spirit.

Ambassador Wu warmly welcomed the guests and extended Spring Festival greetings. He highlighted the outcomes of the Third Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, reviewed the Chinese diplomatic achievements of the past year, and shared practical cooperation and friendly exchanges between China and the FSM. He stressed that the Embassy would actively practice diplomacy for the people and provide high-quality and efficient consular services with heart and soul. He hoped that everyone would continue to carry forward the fine tradition of patriotism, play the role of bridges to promote the friendship and cooperation between China and the FSM.

The Embassy presented the guests with “reunion dinner” and Spring Festival couplets. With warm applause and a harmonious atmosphere at the event, everyone wished the prosperity of the motherland. After the reception, they visited the newly built China-aided National Convention Center of the FSM.



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# Ambassador Kagomiya attends UNDP Workshop for legislative budget staff

*Embassy of Japan to the FSM*

*January 28, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—On January 28, 2025, Ambassador Kagomiya participated in the Capacity Building Workshop for Legislative Budget Staff of the FSM and other Pacific Island countries held by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Since 2018, UNDP has been carrying out the Strengthening Legislatures Capacity in the Pacific Project (SLIP) with the funding from the Government of Japan.

Reflecting the Pacific Island legislatures' strong need and interest for a

strengthening of the budget work, this workshop focusing on topics such as the Amended Compact and the Sector Grants, Citizen's budget, and legislature's role in ensuring Transparency and Accountability, Aid Effectiveness, etc., has been held as a part of the project.

Ambassador sincerely hopes this project will contribute to the capacity building of these legislatures and to maximizing 'Value for Money' of the government budget of Pacific Island countries.



# Japanese education expert pays courtesy call on Ambassador Kagomiya

*Embassy of Japan to the FSM*

*January 22, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—On January 22, 2025, Ms. Tomoko Nakajima Noro, an education expert from Japan made a courtesy call to Ambassador Kagomiya.

She has rich experience in education policy making and planning in various developing countries including the FSM, Solomon Islands and Fiji as well as some African countries as a consultant and expert of UNICEF and UNHCR.

Among others, she has been contributing to developing Early Childhood Education (ECE) program of the national and state Department of Education in the FSM with the financial help from the World Bank.

She is particularly interested in the data

collection and the analysis of ECE in the FSM.

Ambassador sincerely hopes her works will lead the prevalence of high quality ECE in the FSM.



# Ambassador Kagomiya attends Education Day

*Embassy of Japan to the FSM*

*January 31, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—On January 31, 2025, Ambassador Kagomiya attended the Education Day event held by Pohnpei State Government.

This year's theme of the event is strong collaboration to foster quality education for all.

In the event, students, teachers, and education staffs who demonstrated exemplary performances in the last school year (2023-24) were celebrated and awarded.

Ambassador also joined the awarding ceremony.

Among JICA volunteers, Ms. Nanako



Koe working for Pohnpei State and Ms. Miyu Namekawa working for Madolenihmw Highschool participated the event.

Ambassador sincerely hopes education system in the FSM will be improved furthermore and lead to the accumulation of human capital and economic and social development.

# ...ERW

*Continued from front page*

Remnants of War" (ERW). The department has received confirmation that one of the partners will send representatives sometime this year to assist in dealing with the problem and to scan the Daini Ballfield area, where ERWs have been discovered before.

In the early 2000s, when land was being cleared for the Daini Ballfield, other ERWs were discovered. Experts detonated them at what they thought was a safe distance from Pohnpei, but the explosions shattered windows in Kolonia.

Martin said that while DPS officers have received training in various emergency situations, they have

not been trained in the handling of explosives. He said that they have asked international partners to assist with organizing training in the safe handling of explosives, along with providing equipment to help them both detect and safely handle such devices.

When asked how many ERWs were stored in the Kolonia bunker, Martin said that he didn't know the exact number. He has directed that an

inventory and total count of the ERWs be conducted, noting that there are enough that the department does not have a clear count.

ERWs are occasionally found in Pohnpei. "It's very important for anyone who thinks they've found one to call 911 right away," Martin said. "They should be considered live and dangerous and should not be touched until emergency responders arrive."

# Conserving Marine Resources while creating economic opportunities: FSM PROPER Inception Workshop success

*FSM Central Implementation Unit*

*January 31, 2025*

**Pohnpei, FSM**—The Federated States of Micronesia celebrated a key milestone in marine resource management with the conclusion of the FSM PROPER (Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program – Economic Resilience) Inception Workshop. The event, held from January 20-22, 2025, brought together state, national leaders and technical experts to collaboratively define the project's implementation strategy. The FSM PROPER project, funded by the World Bank, represents a groundbreaking initiative combining innovative approaches to sustainable fisheries management, smart fishing practices, and marine habitat conservation, prioritizing fishing safety while bolstering the economic resilience of FSM communities.

Organized by the National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA), the three-day workshop laid the foundation for the six-year, \$56 million PROPER Project, which aims to foster sustainable fisheries management and marine habitat conservation while addressing economic resilience using smart fishing practises across FSM's four states—Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae.

**Setting the Stage for Collaboration**  
The workshop began with opening remarks by Ms. Limanman Helgenberger, Acting Secretary of NORMA, who

emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration. "This project demonstrates our commitment to preserving our ocean resources while enhancing the economic resilience of our communities through sustainable and smart fishing practices," she stated. By equipping local fishers with tools, knowledge and safety equipment, FSM PROPER aims to strengthen livelihoods and provide lasting economic opportunities.

Key participants included representatives from all four FSM States; Chuuk (Gov. office, DRM, EPA, Planning and Public Works), Kosrae (Gov. Office, DREA and KIRMA), Yap (RD, MRMD, YFA, EPA) and Pohnpei (OFA, EPA, AG's office, RD and Dpt of Land) as well as National Government: NORMA, DECEM, DRD, DoJ and DHS. Mr. Okean Ehmes, the Project Manager for FSM PROPER, added, "This workshop represents the culmination of months of preparation and planning. It is a testament to the dedication of everyone involved, and I look forward to seeing our shared vision come to life."

**Workshop Summary**  
The workshop opened with remarks from key officials and featured presentations on key project components, including oceanic fisheries management, coastal fisheries activities, and marine habitat conservation. Detailed discussions focused on refining the FY25 workplan and budget, ensuring alignment with the project's goals. Participants



reviewed critical strategies, such as the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Gender Strategy, and Communication and Engagement Strategy.

Breakout sessions allowed groups to dive deeper into commitments and strategies, concluding with group presentations of FY25 activities.

States also identified preferred communication channels to maximise engagement, including community radio, social media, and in-person consultations. These efforts reflect the project's community-driven focus, ensuring that both innovation and livelihood support remain at the heart of FSM PROPER

**Reflections on Final Remarks**  
The workshop concluded with a heartfelt thank-you roundtable, where key stakeholders reflected on the event. Mr. Moses Pretrick, DHS Assistant Secretary, expressed gratitude for the collaborative efforts, stating, "This workshop has set a strong foundation for FSM PROPER. I am confident that with the commitment shown here, we will achieve our goals."

Stakeholders expressed deep gratitude and appreciation for the collaborative efforts that brought them together. Speakers from all FSM states highlighted the importance of teamwork and acknowledged the significant contributions of various parties, including the World Bank, national and state governments, traditional leaders, and project consultants. Several participants reflected on the workshop's success in fostering dialogue, building partnerships, and setting a strong

foundation for the project's next phases. A recurring theme was acknowledging the project's potential to positively impact economic development and marine conservation, particularly through sustainable practices and resource protection.

Representatives from Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae shared their perspectives, including Mr. Roger Mori, Chairman of Chuuk's Governor's Office, who remarked, "As we embark on this journey, FSM PROPER will continue to champion innovative approaches, promote smart fishing practices, and enhance livelihoods, leaving a lasting legacy for the FSM"

In their closing remarks, participants shared good wishes for continued collaboration and success in implementing the project's goals. They emphasized the importance of translating the workshop's planning efforts into actionable outcomes that prioritize innovation, smart fishing practices, and the well-being of local communities. By fostering sustainable methods and economic resilience, FSM PROPER is poised to leave a legacy of lasting impact for FSM. The workshop concluded on a high note, with a shared purpose and commitment to addressing challenges and achieving long-term impact.



## Ambassador Kagomiya visits Ms. Nakada, a JICA volunteer

*Embassy of Japan to the FSM*

*January 30, 2025*

**Pohnpei**—On January 30, 2025, Ambassador Kagomiya visited the Pohnpei Public Healthcare, where Ms. Natsuko Nakada, a JICA volunteer, is working.

After meeting with the Director of Public Healthcare, Ambassador witnessed her lecture on the obesity preventive measures and participated in the radio exercise she introduced to the center.

Ambassador was impressed by her strong passion for tackling obesity and Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes and sincerely hopes her work will contribute to solving the problem.



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# Pohnpei Soccer Association to conduct fund raising for Kosrae matches

By *Giulio Biddau*

January 30, 2025

**Pohnpei**—In the last four years, when you pass by the Pohnpei Track and Field, yes, the PICS field, every single Tuesday and Thursday, after 5:30 pm, you have surely noticed a group of volunteers and a swarm of happy children playing regardless of age, gender, nationality, language or social conditions. Rain or shine. They are playing soccer, together, distracting each other by shouting while reaching for a ball, instead of tackling hard with their feet. That is a group of happy and healthy children growing together, growing to like each other, joking with each other, and being respectful of each other, having fun no matter who is winning or losing.

The children are happily playing, and so far, the Pohnpei Soccer Association Kids Club have been able to keep the things great and slowly enhancing the sport and human experiences for the children. Recently they played in Awak against the children of the Awak Elementary school, and more matches with other elementary schools are head thanks to the collaboration with the Sport Office of Ramsie Joab.

One of these matches will be against the Kosrae Soccer Association Kids Club. The group has been invited to play in Kosrae from the 14th to the 18th of April 2025. Right before Easter. This way there won't be too much time taken away from their education while they will learn other important life lessons: visiting another State of the Nation, establishing new friendship and cementing their own. Children are sponges for knowledge and everything they will get on this trip, winning or losing the games, will form their characters for the years to come, giving them unique memories.

So now to us, dear reader.

We would like to ask you to do something to help those 15 children who will go Kosrae and those who will remain in Pohnpei that, hopefully, will have a different series of games, because it is important that no one is ever left behind, or feel to be.

To do so we want to buy their first official jersey, personalized with name and numbers. For all of them. Below you can see the graphic ideas for the kit of the players, left, and for the goalkeepers, right. Importantly the jersey will be made by a Micronesian family company in Guam, for Micronesians.



Each jersey costs 25\$.

To reach our goals we will need everybody's help, but also our own will, therefore:

- The children will make some fundraising themselves with a car washing, at the State Library, probably on 22nd February;
- Their relatives and the friends of the association will cook and sell their specialties (Italian, Guyanese, Fijian, and other international cuisine will be available).

Obviously for any other donations please feel free to reach us at: psa.pohnpeisoccerassociation@gmail.com or donate at our account.

Having said so, I would like to extend the gratitude of all of us for any help and invite you all, and all children you may know, to join us at these events and our trainings!

## Last chance to apply for Graduate Scholarship in Tokyo, Japan

There is one last chance to get information on a full scholarship in Environmental Studies at Sophia University, one of the top research universities in Japan. With a March 12th deadline to apply for admission and the scholarship, an online information briefing on February 12th is the last chance to learn about this extremely generous scholarship. The scholarship is for citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau and Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The scholarship will pay all expenses to earn a Master's Degree in Global Environmental Studies from the prestigious Sophia University's Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies in Tokyo, Japan. The full-ride scholarship is offered by

Sophia University, the Association for Promotion of International Cooperation (APIC), a private foundation based in Tokyo, and the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT).

To find out more about the scholarship opportunity, please plan on joining the virtual information briefing via Zoom on Wednesday, February 12th, at the following times: 1 pm in the Marshall Islands; 12 noon in Kosrae, and Pohnpei; 11 a.m. in Chuuk Yap; Guam and Saipan; and, 10 a.m. in Palau and Japan.

The Zoom session:

- URL: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85053137300?pwd=aSrW5tuwD38wxAbDoQMmEpLz4Cm3Ys.1>
- meeting ID: 850 5313 7300
- passcode: 096108

The deadline for applying for the scholarship and for applying to Sophia University is fast approaching. Sophia University is ranked as one of the top research universities in Japan. The master's degree in environmental studies is offered in English.

For information, contact Ms. Bertha Reyuw at the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT): [breyuw@ourmicronesia.org](mailto:breyuw@ourmicronesia.org).

### SOPHIA-APIC-BRMC SCHOLARSHIP

**INFORMATION SHARING SESSION**

Date: Wed. February 12th, 2025  
Time: 10:00am (Palau&Japan)  
11:00am (Yap&Chuuk)  
12:00 noon (Pohnpei&Kosrae)  
1:00pm (RMI)

Venue: Zoom  
ID: 850 5313 7300  
Passcode: 096108

**PROGRAM**

- Interdisciplinary M.A. Program in Environmental Studies at Sophia Univ. in Tokyo, Japan
- Full ride scholarship in partnership between Sophia-APIC-MCT
- Application deadline is March 12th, 2025
- Required classes are all in English

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Winfred Mudong: [wmudong@ourmicronesia.org](mailto:wmudong@ourmicronesia.org) / Bertha Reyuw: [breyuw@ourmicronesia.org](mailto:breyuw@ourmicronesia.org)

## Opinion Editorial

### Senior USG officials should evaluate alignment between Biden renegotiated COFAs and Trump foreign policy agenda

On Inauguration Day, President Donald Trump formally directed Secretary of State Marco Rubio to align U.S. foreign policy with the America First Agenda. That policy directive logically requires Secretary Rubio to ensure that the recently renegotiated Compacts of Free Associations (COFAs) with

the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands “champion core American interests” and “always put America and American citizens first.” The reality is that Secretary Rubio will struggle to comply with those orders. The Secretary of State may be the Senior Official of the U.S. Department of State. But, the Secretary of State is not the Senior Official for all of the lead federal agencies that have been delegated responsibility for implementing the various COFA provisions. If President Trump wants Secretary Rubio to advance the America First Foreign Policy Agenda in bilateral relations with the Freely Associated States, then The White House will need

to issue a separate executive order on the Compacts of Free Association. Unlike the America First Policy Directive to the Secretary of State, that executive order should be jointly issued to all of the Senior Officials of the lead federal agencies for the COFAs. That includes the U.S. Secretary of Defense and U.S. Secretary of Interior. Among other things, the new executive order should direct those Senior Officials to provide an inter-agency assessment on the degree to which the existing COFAs put the prosperity, safety, and well-being of the American people first. While some Americans and COFA migrants may have qualms about the U.S. Government reassessing the COFAs so soon after their renegotiation, the reality

is that there has been a radical shift in the national security and foreign policy priorities of the U.S. Government since the COFAs were renegotiated under the Biden Administration. Putting partisan views aside, it would be irresponsible for the appropriate Senior Officials not to advise the President of the United States on whether the renegotiated COFA Agreements are well-aligned with the strategic priorities of his administration. Without that information, Secretary Rubio cannot hope to comply with the America First Policy Directive to the Secretary of State.

Michael Walsh is an Affiliate of the Georgetown School of Foreign Service.

## Solomon Islands prepare to host international conference on SDG 14.4: Honiara Summit 2025

*Government of the Solomon Islands*

*January 25, 2025*

**Honiara, Solomon Islands**—Solomon Islands is preparing to host the Honiara Summit 2025, an international gathering focused on the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.4: Conserving and sustainably using oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

With the theme “Iumi tugeda delivering on SDG 14.4: Achieving Sustainable

Fisheries” the Honiara Summit will bring together Pacific leaders, global experts and representatives from 24 – 27 February 2025 to address the need for sustainable fisheries management in the region.

More than 350 delegates are expected to arrive in the country for the Summit.

Prime Minister Hon. Jeremiah Manele had earlier expressed pride in Solomon Islands' hosting of this event

The Summit is co-hosted by the Solomon Islands Government and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), with support from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the Special Oceans Envoy of the UN Secretary General and the Pacific Community (SPC).

A Steering Committee was established to help preparations for the Summit, made up of representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister and



Cabinet, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade (MFAET) and the Honiara Summit hosting partners.

*Click here for continuation on page 19*

# PASAI welcomes Sophia H Pretrick as new Program Director

January 31, 2025

Auckland, NZ—An experienced fraud investigator, Sophia H Pretrick, has joined the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI) as a program director who will be based in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM).

Ms Pretrick was most recently a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Transnational Organised Crime Program Officer. As the UNODC focal point for the north Pacific, Ms Pretrick’s role over the last 2 years included enhancing partnerships with member states and building awareness of emerging transnational crime trends.

This experience followed more than 20 years working as an investigator in various government audit offices around Micronesia. Ms Pretrick also led an integrity unit that investigated instances of fraud and identify theft relating to COVID-19 Pandemic Unemployment Assistance claims for the FSM Department of Finance and Administration.

PASAI Chief Executive, Esther Lameko-Poutoa, is pleased that Ms Pretrick has joined PASAI’s cohort of program directors.

“With more than 20 years of experience in transnational crime, audit and public fraud investigations, Sophia’s skillset will strengthen the capacity of our member offices that conduct investigations and fraud awareness briefings,” she said.

In 2021, the United States Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, awarded Ms Pretrick with an International Anti-Corruption Champions Award in recognition of her tireless work to combat corruption and fight for accountability. This acknowledged her grassroots fraud awareness work and lead role in investigating high-profile cases that have led to criminal convictions.

In joining PASAI, Ms Pretrick expressed an eagerness to build on



the legacy of her predecessor in the north Pacific-based Program Director role, former Guam Public Auditor, Doris Flores Brooks.

“I’m excited to support audit offices in their roles combatting and curbing corruption. Many Pacific Island nations pay a high price for government fraud, mismanagement and waste so I’m passionate about the independent role audit offices can play in investigating public complaints, anonymous tips and financial irregularities.

“Strong, independent audit offices are pillars of integrity that enhance public trust in government when they can operate effectively within a functional system,” she said.

Ms Pretrick has a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from Park University in Missouri, USA and has a Master of Fraud and Financial Crime from Charles Sturt University in Australia. She has been a Certified Fraud Examiner since 2003.

PASAI acknowledges the support of the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTING SERVICES) (FSM Nationals Only)

Re-advertisement

**Country:** Federated States of Micronesia  
**Project:** Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program – Economic Resilience (PROPER)  
**Grant No.:** IDA-E371-FM  
**Assignment Title:** Monitoring and Evaluation Officer  
**Reference No. (as per Procurement Plan):** FM-NORMA-450783-CS-INDV

The National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has applied for financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Pacific Island Oceanscape Program – Second Phase for Economic Resilience and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services (“the Services”) include coordinating the development and updating of the overall M&E strategy for the FSM PROPER Project and subsequently implementing, reporting on, and managing it in collaboration with project partners, for an initial one (1) year period commencing approximately in December 2024. This is a full-time position and may be extended based on “satisfactory performance” i.e. satisfactory performance as determined through a performance evaluation against agreed key performance indicators and availability of funds. The position supports the FSMPROPER Project implementation phases of the project.

The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment DOFA website at dofa.gov.fm or at the NORMA website at norma.fm.

The FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority (NORMA) now invites eligible individuals (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services (attach curriculum vitae, copies of degrees and relevant certificates with description of experience in similar assignments, similar conditions, etc.).

The criteria for selecting the Consultant are:

**Required experience and educational background:**

- Bachelor's Degree in a relevant field such as economics, development studies, statistics, or a related discipline OR a relevant Associates Degree with five (5) years of proven related experience.
- Demonstrated understanding of quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods and related tools.
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to interpret and present complex data in a clear and concise manner.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.

**Desirable skills:**

- Experience in working with development projects or initiatives in the Pacific region.
- Understanding of fisheries.
- Knowledge of the context of FSM.
- Experience using data collection and analysis software and tools.
- Familiarity with fisheries management concepts and practices.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 3.14, 3.16 and 3.17 of the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers dated September 2023 (“the Regulations”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours 0800 to 1700 hours Pohnpei local time.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) preferably by February 7th, 2025.

FSM National Oceanic Resource Management Authority  
Attn: Mr. O’Kean Ehmes, PROPER Project Manager  
PO Box PS 122  
Pohnpei, FM 96941  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Telephone: (691) 320-2700/5181  
E-mail: okean.ehmes@norma.fm and copy to crawford.nimea@norma.fm



# As Fiji announces HIV outbreak, UNAIDS echoes calls for a non-discriminatory approach

United Nations AIDS

January 23, 2025

**Suva/Bangkok**—The Government of Fiji has declared an HIV outbreak in response to a sharp increase in reported newly diagnosed cases during 2024.

A targeted 90-day containment plan will speed up immediate, high-impact interventions while the HIV Surge Strategy approved last September will guide the AIDS response until 2027. UNAIDS will continue to support the generation of strategic information, technical planning, program innovation and resource mobilisation as Fiji implements short- and longer-term plans to prevent new infections and ensure people living with HIV benefit from life-saving services. For these strategies to work, those most vulnerable to HIV infection must be able to safely access the information and care they require. They should also play a leading role in the design and delivery of those services.

“Prioritization of HIV by the Government is critical for not only the people of Fiji, but the entire Pacific,” said Eamonn Murphy, Regional Director of UNAIDS Asia Pacific and Eastern Europe Central Asia. “Rising new infections in Fiji put the entire Pacific region at risk. Political will is the essential first step. There must also be community leadership and regional solidarity to ensure these strategies work.”

As Minister for Health and Medical Services, Hon. Dr. Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu noted yesterday, there were 1093 newly-reported cases from January to September



2024. This is three times as many as there were in 2023. According to the Ministry, reported cases have increased nine-fold over the last five years. The rapid rise in newly-diagnosed cases met the national criteria for declaring HIV a national outbreak.

Preliminary Ministry of Health numbers show that among the newly-diagnosed individuals who are currently receiving antiretroviral therapy, half contracted HIV through injecting drug-use. An additional concern is that over half of all people living with HIV who are aware of their status are not on treatment.

“Fiji has the second fastest growing HIV epidemic in the Asia and the Pacific region. These data do not just tell the story about a lack of services,” Mr Murphy explained. “They indicate that even when people know they are HIV-positive, they are fearful to receive care. There must be a deliberate effort to not only strengthen health systems, but to respond to the

unique needs of the most affected populations, including people who use drugs. Perpetuating prejudice against any group will slow progress. We must work together to make it safe and easy for people to access the information, services and support they require. In the words of Minister Lalabalavu ‘discrimination and stigma will only serve to make our current situation worse’.”

The HIV Outbreak Response Plan calls for a combination of prevention approaches including the introduction of harm reduction programs for people who inject drugs. Since the sexual transmission of HIV remains a significant factor, other key approaches are condom distribution and pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP. (PrEP is treatment taken by an HIV-negative person to reduce the risk of contracting HIV if they are exposed.) Through the Australian Government’s Indo-Pacific HIV Partnership, UNAIDS is supporting Fiji to scale up these comprehensive prevention approaches.

The United Nations in Fiji recognizes the Government’s decisive leadership in addressing the HIV epidemic and reaffirms its commitment to supporting the national response.

“The declaration of an HIV outbreak and the launch of high-impact interventions, such as needle syringe programs and PrEP, mark a critical turning point in Fiji’s efforts to combat the epidemic,” said Mr. Dirk Wagener, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Fiji. “We commend the Hon. Minister for Health and Medical Services for his bold leadership in taking this pivotal step. The Joint UN Team on HIV, with UNAIDS as its Secretariat, stands ready to provide coordinated and sustained support to ensure the success of these strategies and to protect the most vulnerable.”

The HIV Surge Strategy includes tactics for Fiji to achieve the Global AIDS Strategy targets—95% of all people living with HIV aware their status, 95% of diagnosed people on antiretroviral therapy, and 95% of people on treatment achieving a suppressed viral load. People who attain viral suppression through treatment adherence and monitoring will live normal healthy lives and a person with an undetectable viral load cannot pass on the virus through sexual intercourse. This is known as Undetectable equals Untransmittable (U=U).

“HIV treatment is effective. It not only keeps people living with HIV healthy, but can help prevent new infections,” explained Renata Ram, UNAIDS HIV Adviser in Fiji. “Every Fijian has a part to play by making our homes, communities, schools, workplaces and places of worship, spaces that support and care for people rather than shame and exclude them.”

## UN Resident Coordinator presents credentials at Foreign Ministry of Mongolia

By AKIpress

January 24, 2025

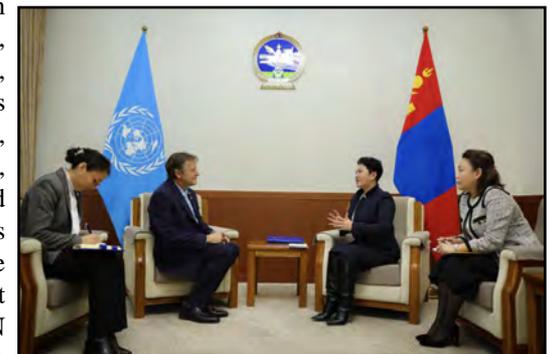
**Mongolia**—United Nations Resident Coordinator in Mongolia Jaap van Hierden presented his letter of credence to Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia Battsetseg Batmunkh on January 23, Montsame reported.

Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh congratulated Jaap van Hierden on being appointed as Resident Coordinator in Mongolia and expressed confidence in his contribution to strengthening

and expanding cooperation between Mongolia and the United Nations.

Jaap van Hierden expressed gratitude to Foreign Minister Battsetseg and affirmed close collaboration in implementing joint development agendas. The Resident Coordinator also praised the government of Mongolia for successfully hosting the Female Foreign Ministers Meeting and the World Women’s Forum, highlighting Mongolia’s efforts toward gender equality and promoting women’s leadership.

Resident Coordinator Jaap van Hierden has over 30 years of experience in development, humanitarian action, and peacebuilding, including establishing, managing, and leading offices and projects and strategic, policy, operational, managerial, and coordination roles and responsibilities. Prior to his appointment to Mongolia, he served as the first UN Resident Coordinator of the new UN Multi-Country Office in Micronesia hosted by Pohnpei/Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) supporting Palau, FSM, Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Kiribati.



# Marshall Islands, military leaders strengthen partnership, defense

By Lt. Cmdr. Michelle Tucker  
Joint Task Force – Micronesia

January 23, 2025

**Majuro, RMI**—U.S. Indo-Pacific Command’s senior military official to the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) met with local leaders in Majuro to discuss defense and security, Jan 23.

Commander, Joint Task Force-Micronesia (JTF-M) U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Greg Huffman spoke with representatives from the U.S. Embassy and RMI National Security Director Chris deBrum during the visit.

The U.S. has a longstanding relationship with the RMI and, continued under the recently renewed Compact of Free Association, is responsible for its defense. Established in June 2024, JTF-M’s mission is to synchronize military operations and activities across all

domains from seabed to space to promote regional security and stability.

“I am thankful for the opportunity to build upon the partnership we share with the people of the Marshall Islands,” Huffman said. “We have the common goal of maintaining peace and security in the region and will continue to work together to grow our collective maritime domain awareness and strengthen our defense here and across all of Micronesia.”

Huffman shared his commitment to open lines of communication with RMI’s leadership and community about potential military activities and future investments. He also underscored the value of a common operating picture to counter illegal activity in the region.

“We look forward to partnering more closely with INDOPACOM to address security concerns,” deBrum said. “We

have overlapping issues so to be able to share resources is critical to our mutual success.”

Huffman met with members of the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA) at their headquarters in Majuro, where the MIMRA team provided a capabilities brief. He also met with Commander, U.S. Army Garrison-Kwajalein Atoll Col. Andrew Morgan and Royal Australian Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lachlan Sommerville, maritime security advisor, for updates in their respective areas of responsibility.

Dedicated to promoting regional stability, JTF-M performs Homeland Defense, Defense Support to Civil Authorities, and Foreign Humanitarian Assistance through a whole of government approach within its assigned joint operations area.



# 2024 the warmest year on record in the Western Pacific

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

January 28, 2025

**Suva, Fiji**--The World Meteorological Organization declared 2024

the warmest year on record, with global temperature exceeding 1.5°C above the pre-industrial average.

Regionally, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, as part of the Australian and New Zealand-funded Climate and Ocean Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac,) analysed the Fifth Generation of European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts Reanalysis (ERA5) dataset for the Western Pacific, which revealed that 2024 was the warmest year on record not only globally but also in the Western Pacific. The data showed that the average air temperature for 2024 in the Western Pacific was 0.87°C above the 1961-1990 average.

The findings also showed that Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, and the Southern Federated States of Micronesia experienced the largest warming of all countries in the Western Pacific.

It also indicated that air temperatures during the first half of 2024 broke more records than temperatures during the second half of the year. For example, the months of January, February, March, May, August and October had their highest recorded average air temperatures in 2024. January, February, May, June, and August also broke records for maximum (daytime) air temperature. While January, February, March, May, August, September, and October broke records for minimum (night-time) air temperature. The higher number of broken records during the first half of the year occurred during a

decaying El Niño event which began in 2023.

Furthermore, the results indicated that the five warmest years on record within this region have all occurred since 2016.

Chair of the Pacific Meteorological Council, Mr Levu Antfalo said, “Pacific Island countries already face a range of development challenges and a relatively high exposure to disasters. Historical and further projected warming presents another challenging dimension that the region will need to grapple with.”

“To put it simply, the increase in Pacific average temperatures over the last 75 years has had and will continue to have significant impacts on human health, food security, the environment and energy demand. Continuous instrumentation, monitoring and



measuring across all Pacific Island states in terms temperature needs to be maintained and improved as we cannot manage what we do not measure,” he added.

Since 1950, regional average air temperatures have increased by 0.1°C per decade.

# ...SDG 14.4

Continued from page 16

The Committee has identified facilities at the Friendship Hall and Aquatic Centre at the Nationals Sports Stadium in Honiara for the hosting of the summit.

The Summit will feature high-level sessions, technical workshops, and interactive panel discussions covering key topics, including:

The state of global fish stocks and fisheries management.  
Climate change impacts on marine ecosystems.  
Regional cooperation for sustainable

fisheries.  
Innovative approaches to monitoring, control, and surveillance.  
Outcomes from the Honiara Summit are expected to contribute to international conversations on ocean conservation, feeding into preparations for the next United Nations Oceans Conference, where the world will assess progress towards achieving SDG 14 and other

ocean-related targets.

Further details about the programme, registration, and participation will be announced soon.  
Honiara Summit General Information at: [HS-info@sig.gov.sb](mailto:HS-info@sig.gov.sb)  
For more information, visit: <https://honiarasummit.sig.gov.sb/>

## Study tour to deepen efforts to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption in the Pacific

UNDP

February 3, 2025

**Suva Fiji**—Five Pacific Island Countries – Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tonga – are uniting in a landmark anti-corruption initiative as the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC) hosts a regional study tour in Suva.

The two-day event from 3-4 February is supported by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Office in Fiji under the UK Government-funded Pacific Anti-Corruption Project. The tour will serve as a crucial platform for knowledge exchange, with FICAC sharing its expertise in preventing, investigating, and prosecuting corruption.

The participation of multiple Pacific nations, including Papua New Guinea, creates a strong opportunity to address both traditional cultural practices and modern corruption challenges while strengthening regional cooperation in upholding UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) commitments.

The invitation from FICAC comes at an opportune time for anti-corruption advocates across the Pacific, with key recent developments including:

- SIICAC formalising its partnership with Fiji's independent anti-corruption agency following the two parties signing a Memorandum of Understanding in 2024.
- Tonga recently appointing an experienced Anti-Corruption Commissioner who will specifically address the intersection between traditional gift-giving customs and corruption.
- Samoa launching its first National Anti-Corruption Policy and Strategy in June 2024, demonstrating its commitment to UNCAC principles.

Josh Kemp – Counsellor, UK Integrated Security Fund Pacific Programme – British High Commission to Fiji, said:

“The UK is proud to support Pacific regionalism and information sharing when it comes to tackling the challenge of corruption. We recognise that this is a crucial time for Pacific authorities to be coming together on this issue, with



climate financing and other support coming into the region, and it's essential that public funds are protected and deliver for communities, including the most marginalised. I am grateful to FICAC for hosting this study tour, and hope that the exchange of ideas provides a stronger network to jointly tackle this threat in the future.”

Alma Sedlar, Chief Technical Advisor on Anti-Corruption with UNDP Papua New Guinea under the European Union-funded PNG Anti-Corruption Project, said this unified approach remained a key element to fighting corruption across the region:

“By strengthening these partnerships and sharing best practices, we're not only enhancing governance across the Pacific but directly contributing to SDG 16's vision of building effective, accountable institutions. This initiative demonstrates how regional cooperation can accelerate our progress toward transparent, just, and inclusive societies.”

The study tour launches a week of strategic discussions aimed at building stronger anti-corruption frameworks across the Pacific, including a two-day conference looking at beneficial ownership in the context of the Pacific.

## Church donates technology to Safe Haven Pregnancy Center Helps empower young women in difficult circumstances

*Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints*

An unexpected pregnancy can be frightening for a young woman with little support and few resources. Suddenly, she finds herself faced with difficult decisions which will have profound consequences for her as well as for the unborn child.

Fortunately, there are people willing to help.

Ramona McManus, president and director of Safe Haven Pregnancy Center, has dedicated her life to being there for young women facing the sometimes scary uncertainties that come with pregnancy and motherhood.

“We don't just give them information,” says McManus, “but we walk with them and stay with them and help them navigate toward self-reliance and stability. We especially let them know their options so that they can make informed decisions.”

On January 27th, The Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints presented McManus with an iMac computer, 2 Macbooks, and two iPads that will help clients of Safe Haven access information essential to their health and ability to prepare for parenthood.

More donations are in the works as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints joins with other Christians to help Safe Haven in its wonderful mission to help some of Guam's most vulnerable citizens.

“This is a wonderful organization that provides a much-needed service for the community,” said Elder Craig Brooksby, representing the humanitarian outreach efforts of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “It's a privilege to be able to help them.”

McManus further explained how the donation would aid Safe Haven in providing necessary information about

pregnancy and parenting. “Our clients often don't have access to or a knowledge of resources on the internet. The computers and iPads will help provide essential lessons through a well-known program in the Christian community, Bright Course.”

Sometimes Safe Haven's clients are unable or reluctant to visit the facility in person, but they can receive electronic pamphlets containing valuable information. “Then perhaps they can come in when they are ready,” said McManus.

Safe Haven especially focusses on helping homeless teens who are pregnant. They provide them with a place to come where they can have the proper care, counseling, and love they need. A central goal is to make sure these young women are able to finish high school and earn their diplomas. When necessary, Safe Haven helps find and provide childcare.

Safe Haven has served over 300



visitors over the past year, engaged 546 participants in pregnancy and parenting education and met the material needs of over 250 babies.

All this help would not be possible, of course, without the generous donations and contributions from the community. Many prayers have been answered as Safe Haven has worked to establish their support facility.

If you would like to help answer those prayers, please contact them at [director@safehavenguam.org](mailto:director@safehavenguam.org).