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# Short FSM reprieve as its first suspected COVID-19 cases in Pohnpei and Yap test negative for the virus

## Responders struggle with learning curve and urge continued vigilance by FSM residents

By **Bill Jaynes**  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 20, 2020

**FSM**—As of today, the Federated States of Micronesia officially announced that after testing for suspected cases the FSM has NO cases of COVID-19. The tests for the three people who presented with suspect symptoms in Yap and the one in Pohnpei all came back negative for the novel coronavirus.

Though the news is good news, health officials are cautioning residents to remain vigilant by continuing the practices of social distancing and thorough and frequent hand washing. The Task Force in Pohnpei says that if you have COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath and body aches) DO NOT go to the hospital, clinics or dispensaries as this can cause further

See "COVID-19" on page 4



Infection control training at Misko quarantine for China Star and PPA staff

# Three Pohnpei correctional officers charged with abuses of Chuukese prisoner in their custody

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Young Sun gives notice of \$9 million claim against Pohnpei if sea cucumber contract canceled by new law  
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By **Bill Jaynes**  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 18, 2020

**Pohnpei**—On March 13, 2020, the FSM Department of Justice filed criminal charges against three correctional officers of the Pohnpei State Correctional Facility. M.C. Ioanis, Robert Celestine, and Isabella Sipwoli Primo each face charges of Deprivation of Rights, Official Repression, and Assault against a female inmate at the prison.

On March 13, the FSM Supreme Court in Chuuk sentenced Anreta Fred and her husband Jayson Jappan of Fananu, Chuuk to eight months of probation and 92 months in prison after having been convicted of Human Trafficking, Trafficking in Children, Aggravated Human Trafficking and Conspiracy. Jappan is serving

his prison term in the Kosrae Correctional Facility. Fred is serving her sentence in Pohnpei.

The charges say that in approximately July 2019, Correctional Officer Ioanis told inmate Fred to give him a massage and that while Fred was massaging him he told Fred to have sex with him. Allegedly Fred initially resisted but eventually complied with Ioanis' demand for sex.

Officer Celestine is accused of entering Fred's cell sometime in January while Fred was sleeping and performing oral sex on her.

The charges accuse Primo of repeatedly verbally abusing and threatening Fred, and on at least one occasion assaulting her. The

See "Prisoner Abuse" on page 4

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# FSM Constitutional Convention sues FSM Department of Finance for payment of two delegates

By *Bill Jaynes*  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 19, 2020

FSM—The Fourth Constitution Convention of the FSM (Con Con) has filed a complaint (CA 2020-004) at the FSM Supreme Court against Eugene Amor in his official capacity as the Secretary of Finance and Administration. The ConCon asks the court to require Amor to authorize payment for daily allowances for two delegates he has so far refused to pay.

The complaint says that according to FSM law, delegates who are not getting paid by the national government or a state government

during the session for the Constitutional Convention are entitled to a daily allowance of \$200 per day of attendance. On February 20, Secretary Kapilly Capelle submitted a request to the Secretary of Finance for all eligible delegates of the Con Con to be paid and included Roll Call Attendance sheets as documentation. On February 25 Secretary Amor let Capelle know he would not authorize payment for Chuuk Representatives Kind K. Kanto and Tendy Liwy because they are employees of the College of Micronesia FSM and as such were employees of the National Government.

After Con Con President Redley Killion wrote a letter to FSM President David Panuelo requesting that he instruct his Secretary of Finance to make the payment since FSM law explicitly states that COM-FSM employees are not National Government employees, he received a letter from an FSM Assistant Attorney General saying that COM-FSM employees are in fact employees of the national government.

Both COM-FSM legal counsel and Chief legal counsel to the Con Con sent letters quoting the law to the Assistant Attorney General specifically stating that COM-FSM employees are not FSM National Government employees.

The Con Con is asking the Court make a ruling on the matter declaring that the delegates should be paid.

# Court dismisses Semes Panuelo claims against FSM President and government regarding “First Lady” designation

By *Bill Jaynes*  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 16, 2020

*Palikir, Pohnpei*—In a 29 page ruling, the FSM Supreme Court has dismissed the claims of Janet Semes Panuelo against the FSM Government, the FSM Public Information Office, the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs, the FSM Congress, President David Panuelo, and Patricia Edwin.

On December 3, 2019 Semes Panuelo filed a civil action containing several claims related to the use of the term “First Lady” as applied to Patricia Edwin and for the government’s treatment of Edwin as such. She claimed to be still legally married to President Panuelo, a legal matter that is currently before the Pohnpei Supreme Court.

The court dismissed the claims against all of the government actors including the FSM Congress “with prejudice” which means that those same claims cannot be brought against them again in any court. It generally dismissed the claims against President Panuelo and Patricia Edwin “without prejudice” which means that Semes Panuelo’s claims against them are dismissed at the FSM Supreme Court but the same claims or others can be brought against

them in another court.

The court thoroughly explained its ruling based on legal precedence and interpretation of existing law. It concluded:

“Accordingly, the court dismisses the intentional infliction of emotional distress claims against every defendant because Janet Semes Panuelo’s factual allegations are insufficient for a court to grant any relief thereon. The court dismisses Janet Semes Panuelo’s claims against Congress with prejudice because they present a non-justiciable political question. The court dismisses all causes of action against the government defendants because they do not present claims for which the court can grant relief. And the court dismisses the tortious interference with a marriage contract [alienation of affections, enticement (causing spouse to separate from other spouse), or criminal conversation], slander claims (and civil conspiracy, if it has survived with slander as the underlying tort) against Patricia Edwin (and David Panuelo) without prejudice to any future state court proceedings thereon.”

So ruling Associate Justice Larry Wentworth ruled the case to be closed.

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Bill Jaynes  
Managing Editor

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# Ricky Carl notifies Legislature and State of intent to sue for damages of \$250,000

By *Bill Jaynes*  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 13, 2020

**Pohnpei**—On March 13, 2020, the attorney for Ricky Carl notified Speaker Ausen T. Lambert of his intent to file claims for violation of civil and due process rights by the Credentials Committee and the Tenth Pohnpei Legislature. It says that Pohnpei State will also be considered an additional defendant.

Under Pohnpei State Law, government entities must be given notice of 50 days of any intent to file a claim against them.

The notice says that the claims arose from the Legislature’s refusal to seat him as a member of the 10th Legislature despite a Pohnpei State Supreme court ruling stating that Carl was eligible to run for office, an election that he won.

The notice of claim says that the Credential Committee report misstated facts, failed to mention the civil action that allowed Carl to run and be elected, and contained flawed legal reasoning. It theorizes that the report would put out without any input or review from legislative counsel, “which may explain the serious constitutional deficiencies in the report.”

“Even though the Legislature is the sole judge of its members, it cannot base decisions on false and inaccurate statements and irresponsible legal analysis,” the letter said. “To do so is a violation of due process and civil rights.”

“Further, my client asked you directly about these issues. Initially you informed Mr. Carl he would be seated on February 5, 2020. He was not, and you apparently took no steps to assure that he was seated. You additionally ignored letters sent by my client requesting the status of his seating and his request for reconsideration of the Credentials Committee finding,” it says.

The letter says that the matter could still be corrected at this time but that Carl has already incurred substantial damages. It itemized the damages as:

- Loss of wages as a Senator of \$25,000 per year.
- Campaign expenditures for participating in the special election of \$30,000.
- Damages for humiliation, slander and libel of \$100,000
- Damages for violations of civil rights of \$50,000
- Legal fees for the future civil action and for contesting the original action of \$20,000

The letter provides 50 days for response.



Representatives of Micronesia Registration Advisers present a check for \$27,500 to officials from Pohnpei Port Authority. The Port will use the money to completely enclose the check-in area at the Pohnpei International Airport and to install air conditioning in that area.

# Patrick Gorong—young Yapese making a difference in resource management in Hawaii

By *Bill Jaynes*  
The Kaselehlie Press

March 19, 2020

**Hawaii**—For the last two years, Patrick Gorong of Yap, FSM has worked as a Hatchery Technician as part of the Aquatic Invasive Species – Sea Urchin Hatchery project. The project which is under the Division of Aquatic Resources of the Department of Land and Natural Resources focuses on the removal of invasive algae that was introduced into Kaneohe Bay.

Gorong said that the project is tackled in two parts. One is mechanical removal where a field team surveys and removes invasive algae from the reef. The other is the introduction of sea urchins that are produced in an aquaculture facility and planted in the bay as a biological control.

“At the hatchery our main goal is to produce healthy sea urchins, specifically the *Tripneustes gratilla*, for out planting into Kaneohe Bay,” he said. “As of about a year ago I became our main algae technician where I focus on culturing phytoplankton for use as feed for the urchins during their planktonic larval phase which usually only takes up the first half of a regular workday for me. The rest of the day I help with regular hatchery routines such as feeding settled urchins, cleaning tanks, and harvesting sea urchins ready for out planting as well as assisting with daily tasks that come with running an aquaculture facility.” He said he also performs other tasks such as

repair, maintenance, and plumbing of tanks, water pipes, air lines, and other tasks.

He said that what he most enjoys about his job is learning about aquaculture from the day to day work that he does at the hatchery from his coworkers and from his boss, David Cohen who has been in the industry for long time.

He said that he majored in Marine science in college and so has limited aquaculture understanding but that he is grateful for the experience gained from being part of the project. While in college he worked with the Pacific Aquaculture and Coastal Resources Center (PACRC) in Hilo, Hawaii as a student technician. There he learned the basics of aquaculture work and gained a general understanding of how an aquaculture facility is operated. He said that he learned concepts such as the importance of air, water quality, and cleanliness as well as gaining experience with PVC plumbing and basic fabrication but he has learned much more since then.



## ...COVID-19

*Continued from front page*

spread. In Pohnpei call 320-3109 if you are experiencing symptoms and don't ignore symptoms. Do not attend public gatherings or crowds. Do not come in close contact with anyone who has fever and a cough.

FSM and State governments have assured FSM citizens that freight will continue to be carried and have asked residents not to stockpile supplies as more will come and stockpiling deprives others of supplies they may need while you don't use them.

Several times United Airlines has announced flight cancellations due to the arrival of the virus in Hawaii and in Guam. According to The Village travel agency, who has not received an official notification from United Airlines who also did not confirm them for us, today was to be the last full island hopper flight from Hawaii to Guam until May 3, but it did not arrive. This weekend they will do a short island hopper flight from Guam to Pohnpei and back again and will repeat that flight again on Monday. After this weekend's flights the short route will only fly on Saturdays until May 3. Those route announcements are subject to change. Kosrae will not have another flight from United until May 3.

Asia Pacific Airlines will continue to carry cargo to FSM's states during that time.

Misinformation on social media and by word of mouth has become a big factor that FSM health practitioners have not had to deal with during past viral outbreaks like SARS or the Cholera epidemic. The public is challenged not to share misinformation and rumors or discriminate against anyone associated with COVID-19. Don't believe everything you read on social media or on the Internet in general.

Unfortunately, according to comments on social media, some residents of Pohnpei took the negative test result as a sign that all is well. One FB poster wrote that the danger was over for now so they could go back to the sakau market. Others agreed, however, the virus itself has not yet been defeated in the world and social gatherings are still a dangerous idea for all concerned. Though the FSM has yet to have an identified case of COVID-19, it does NOT mean that COVID-19 is not already here and each person should act as if they are a transmitter of the disease and take precautions to avoid the possibility of infecting everyone they care about.

Another person on Facebook wanted to know why people are still in quarantine if the test came back negative. People are in quarantine because they have come to Pohnpei on a flight that may have been carrying people who are infected but don't yet know it yet; people who perhaps traveled from Guam or Hawaii where the COVID-19 virus has definitely been identified. The quarantine is for observation of arriving passengers to ensure that they do not have the virus in order to protect the community.

As the press release from the National Government on page seven of this issue says, ALL travelers arriving in the FSM must be quarantined for 14 days. For now, no travelers are allowed to disembark in Chuuk while it makes quarantine arrangements it apparently had not made before the virus arrived in Hawaii and in Guam despite having been given funding to do so. Pohnpei will allow only residents to enter except for invited medical professionals and those residents will need to be evaluated for quarantine. Qualified doctors make the call on how long a traveler must be quarantined based on a variety of factors and their professional opinion. Only they can authorize release a person earlier than 14 days. Some have been released earlier or even never admitted at all based on standards and qualifications that the doctors know.

FSM President David Panuelo and Patricia Edwin were allowed to quarantine in home after they requested to do so. The State grudgingly allowed that arrangement because it is just the two of them and they have 24 hour security at their home to keep outsiders away for their own safety.

The US Ambassador and the US Deputy Chief of Mission were allowed to quarantine in home for similar reasons but also because under the Vienna Convention, diplomats are not allowed to be detained.

On social media, many people have complained about quarantine arrangements in Pohnpei calling the quarantine centers "incubation grounds for the virus" rather than a proper quarantine. Rumors have circulated that employees at the three quarantine centers serve quarantined passengers and then go home at the end of their shift.

"That's absolutely incorrect," said Pohnpei Chief of Staff Suzanne Gallen. All of the employees have been trained in Infectious Disease Control training. All staff members are also quarantined. They never leave. They live onsite.

Four doctors and numerous nurses are

on rotation at the quarantine centers which are Yvonne's and China Star Hotels and the small center at the former Misko's. Because there is only one communal bathroom at the Misko's center, only a few beds are occupied there.

"None of us are experts at quarantining," Gallen said. "This is new territory for us." She said that every day they find gaps in the quarantining procedure and every day they make corrections and close those gaps. Security is much better than when quarantining first began. Still during that time, only one person under quarantine took it upon herself to simply leave from Yvonne's Hotel and go home. Security is much tighter since then. That quarantined person has since been returned to Yvonne's.

Outside people are NOT allowed into quarantine centers though early in the quarantine process security was lax and people did get into the centers. That gap has been shored up.

China Star Hotel was the first quarantine center and the Task Force had printed information sheets for every quarantined person so that they would know what to expect. Yvonne's was later added and the instructions from China Star didn't exactly apply there and the list for each person's room has not yet been updated though that is happening. People in quarantine there received no information on what to expect. There are phones in the room but no phone book and no information on how to contact the front desk or anyone else with questions or needs.

According to one person quarantined at Yvonne's, linens for his bed are a problem. His pillows have no cases and there is one sheet on his bed. Cigarette smoke and loud music waft in from the room next door constantly. A friend dropped off a favorite breakfast for him outside the hotel this morning and he never got it. It's not an ideal situation for him but he said that there are always at least 10 people in his home and if this is what he needs to do to protect them then this is what he will do.

Not everyone has quite as good an attitude

*See "COVID-19 (2)" on page 13*

## ...Prisoner Abuse

*Continued from front page*

charges accuse her of removing the sheets, mattress and pillow from Fred, forcing her to sleep on the concrete floor, and refusing to allow Fred to leave her cell on several occasions.

The accused correctional officers have had their initial appearance at the FSM Supreme Court on March 13 and were remanded to the custody of National Police until March 16 at which time the court released them on their own recognizance. The defendants are not allowed to go "anywhere near the Pohnpei State Jail. Additionally, if any of the defendants, "at some point, seek to perform a traditional apology ceremony toward the alleged victim, that defendant must first seek, by motion, the court's permission."

The parties will have until May 21, 2020 to file pretrial motions and opposing parties will then have until May 31 to respond to a pretrial motion.

The pretrial release said that since it is expected that Chief Justice Dennis K. Yamase will preside of the the case for all matters beyond the initial appearance, hearing dates will be set by later court order.

Associate Justice Larry Wentworth presided over the preliminary hearings.

The defendants are presumed to be innocent unless they are proven to be otherwise after a fair hearing.

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# Pohnpei celebrates International Women's Day in a week of activities from March 3rd to 14th, 2020

Pohnpei Women Council, Social Affairs Division and many others in Pohnpei celebrated International Women's Day from March 3 to 14, 2020 bringing together many leaders, men, women and children in participation to such events at different locations and dates, raising more awareness on the issues at hand and critical to our society. This year's global theme is "I am Generation Equality; Realizing Women's Rights."

Pohnpei Women Council is the umbrella organization to 30 different women's group in Pohnpei, inclusive of the outer islands with more than 2,000 members of these various women's groups.

On March 3rd and 4th, Pohnpei Women Council partnering with different Government Departments and NGO partners held a three day open workshop at the Governor's Conference Room ending on March 5th at the Pohnpei Hospital Conference Room. On the first day, March 3rd The Honorable Reed B Oliver, Governor of Pohnpei State, welcomed and congratulated all women in attendance and went on to say that perhaps, such event, workshop to educate the women should be done or held more often than just once a year. He went on to say that he was happy to see women taking part in the development of Pohnpei state coinciding with his Administrations theme, Enginkehlap.

Pohnpei Women Interest Coordinator lead another session immediately after the Governors' address and presented on progress of women in Pohnpei and updates from each women's groups. On Wednesday, presentations were from various government offices and the FSM National Judiciary on Incorporation and chartering of NGO's, Access to Justice & Enabling Rights for Unrepresented Litigants, Customs & Revenue Tax and Natural Resources Office. On the last day, March 5th all the women who participated in the workshop wore black, to commemorate Black Thursday. Black Thursday is a campaign, first created by the World Council of Churches to stand up to Gender Based Violence. Black being the color of resilience, it also represents the stand for Peace and Unity. The Department of Health, Primary Health Care spend the first part of day presenting on Non-Communicable Diseases, Leprosy, Tuberculosis, Sexually Transmitted Diseases/HIV and more on other health matters/issues. The IStop program and impact of climate change were introduced by the Conservation Society of Pohnpei. To end the workshop, the participants were fortunate to have members from the Pohnpei delegation on the 4th FSM Constitutional Convention share updates from the ConCon.

On Friday, March 6th Lien Alem (Women from United Church of Christ, Pohnpei)

hosted a candle-lighting and prayer ceremony in observation of World Day of Prayer at the Nohnno en Mwomwohdiso, UCCP Kolonia, bringing together over 300 women from all over Pohnpei together.

March 7th on Saturday, the Pohnpei Women Council gathered for their annual landscaping and beautification at the Pohnpei State Hospital. This activity included cleanup, planting of flowers and plants outside the hospital premises. On the next day, March 8th Pohnpei Women Council again visited the patients at the Pohnpei State Hospital and Genesis Clinic with prayers and small monetary donations to the patients as they have repeatedly done so in the last years. They later visited the Pohnpei jail where food were also donated to the inmates.

On Monday, March 9th 2020 the Pohnpei Women Council and its member organizations celebrated International Women's Day with mass at Our Lady of Mercy church in the morning followed by the main program at the Kolonia/China Friendship Center. There were over 2,000 participants and spectators. Special guests and dignitaries included the Iso Nahnken of Wein Nett, The Honorable Salvador Iriarte, Pohnpei State Governor, The Honorable Reed B Oliver and First Lady Estel, Honorable Peteriko Jacob, Mayor and First Lady of Kolonia Town, Traditional Women: Lehpmoar Madolenihmw, Nahnep Madolenihmw, Nahnep Kitti. PWC Vice President Maria Donre accepted everyone in a welcoming remarks followed by Keynote Address by PWC officer Emeliana Musrasrik-Carl. In Mrs Carl's remarks, she highlighted the IWD theme: "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights," stating "(w)e join the rest of the world in celebrating International Women's Day. We have spent a whole week addressing some of the pressing issues that we face as women: health, violence, economy, environment and human rights, in recognizing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action." "Despite the global challenges, there are some positive changes in the FSM. Reports show an increase in number of girls graduating from school and women's representation across the board. However, we need to work harder to create a country that does not discriminate against women" says Carl.

Iso Nahnken of Nett, the Honorable Salvador Iriarte gave an inspirational speech, stressing the importance of women in our culture and society. "It is important that we understand the different roles and responsibilities that women play in offices, at home, in the communities and our traditional and cultural obligations," stated Iso Nahnken Iriarte.

Pohnpei Department of Education contributed to International Women's day by hosting an essay contest with this year's theme amongst 12th grade students from all

High Schools in Pohnpei. All three winning essays (from 1st to 3rd place winners) recited their essays for the guests and crowd. The following winners of this year's essay contest are, Bethlyann Lebehn of Pohnpei Island Central School High in 1st place. GraceLynn Pangelinan from Seventh-Day Adventist High School came in second place and coming in at third place is Lorenzo Rafael from Nanpei Memorial High School.



PWC President, Ms Susanna Sohs in her closing remarks, reiterated the importance of Unity. "IWD events continue to improve every year and we are proud of that. This year marks another history for Pohnpei Women where we celebrate our accomplishments altogether." Following the speeches and recitals of the essays, the program proceeded with dances, displays of various handicrafts and local foods, etc., from 16 women's groups that participated in this year's IWD events.

Ending the many activities of International Women's Day, the Australian Embassy hosted a Saturday brunch on March 14 2020 in honor of IWD and invited many recognized/accomplished women from Pohnpei. The event took place at the Ocean View Restaurant. Among the many women in attendance were Likend U, Honorable Antonia Moses, Chief Justice of U Municipal Court, Honorable Herolyn S Movick, Pohnpei State Senator, Associate Judge Erwine H Nanpei, Councilwoman Yuko Nakasone and many others. Also invited to this event were the winning essay contest students who recited their essays earlier at the International Women's Day on March 9th and their mothers. The winner had the opportunity to recite her essay again and received a valuable prize from the American Embassy, Kolonia. The International Organization for Migration presented prizes for the 2nd place winner as well. Pohnpei Women Council and women from all over Pohnpei would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to all who gave their time and support through presentations, facilitation and sponsorship: Mwoalen Wahu en Pohnpei, Likend Pah U, Iso Nahnken of Wein Nett, the FSM National Government, Department of Health & Social Affairs, FSM Supreme Court, The Honorable Reed B Oliver, Governor of Pohnpei State, Mayor Peteriko Jacob of Kolonia Town Government, Pohnpei State Department of Health & Social Services, Pohnpei Department of Education, the Pohnpei Delegation to the 4th FSM ConCon, FSM Development Bank, UCCP, Vicariate of Pohnpei/Kosrae, the Pacific Resources for Education & Learning, Kaselehlie Press, V6AH and all other media present on various activities, Australian Embassy, American Embassy, Kolonia, all the women and families who came out to help the women of Pohnpei observe and celebrate International Women's Day activities.



# Travelers encouraged to stay home; if travel to the FSM is necessary, you will be subject to quarantine/isolation requirements; travel to Chuuk banned until March 29th, 2020

## FSM Information Services

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—Per the National Declaration Placing the Entire Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) under a State of National Public Health Emergency in Connection with the COVID-19 Pandemic, now that both the U.S. State of Hawaii and the U.S. Territory of Guam have confirmed cases of the COVID-19 coronavirus, visibly healthy travelers originating from Guam and Hawaii with no symptoms may travel into the FSM. All travelers will be subject to mandatory quarantine upon their arrival into the Nation regardless of the FSM State they are arriving to, except for Chuuk State where disembarking is not allowed until March 29th, 2020. Quarantine is mandatory; there are to be no exceptions to this policy in any circumstance.

The 14-day delay in a COVID-19 free jurisdiction no longer applies on the premise that there are no COVID-19 free jurisdictions for FSM citizens to delay in. FSM citizens are discouraged from traveling back home unless absolutely necessary; non-FSM citizens are strongly encouraged to remain abroad until after the COVID-19 pandemic has subsided.

In the event a conflict emerges between the FSM National and FSM State Declarations and Emergency Orders, the Declaration by His Excellency David W. Panuelo takes precedence. All components of FSM State Declarations and Emergency Orders that do not conflict with the President’s Declaration are to be respected and adhered to in full, such as the FSM State of Pohnpei requiring a medical certificate from a licensed medical professional stating that the traveler is symptom-free.

On his way back to Pohnpei, His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, called the Honorable Johnson S. Elimo, Governor of the FSM State of Chuuk, regarding Chuuk State’s declaration banning all arrivals until March 29th, 2020. Although the President’s

declaration legally supersedes the Governor’s, President Panuelo and Governor Elimo—agreeing that the safety and security of the people of Chuuk is paramount, and that the finalization on the establishment of quarantine facilities is necessary—agreed that no passengers will be allowed to deplane in Chuuk given the lack of sufficient quarantine facilities. After March 29th, 2020, any traveler to Chuuk will require a 14-day stay in a designated quarantine facility.

Travel to the FSM State of Pohnpei, per a March 19th amendment to Pohnpei’s Constitutional Emergency Order 20-01, is only allowed for “Pohnpei residents”, which “include noncitizens who are employed by the Pohnpei State Government, the FSM National Government, diplomatic corps, businesses, international agencies and nonprofit organizations” as well as “medical and technical personnel to assist with COVID-19, at the request of Pohnpei State.” This also includes any medical or technical personnel requests by the FSM National Government.

President Panuelo, in a phone call with the Honorable Reed B. Oliver, Governor of Pohnpei State, advised that the FSM National Government is willing to look past jurisdictional issues and adapt to a rapidly evolving scenario to work with the Nation’s States as the FSM endeavors to protect its citizens and residents.

Non-FSM citizens remain discouraged from traveling to the FSM at this time. Travel to the FSM State of Chuuk is banned. Travel to the FSM State of Pohnpei, per a March 19th amendment to Pohnpei’s Constitutional Emergency Order 20-01, is only allowed for Pohnpei State residents, with exceptions for medical capacity-building and technical personnel the state or Nation requests. Every traveler to the FSM at this time is subject to mandatory quarantine.



# COM-FSM Traditional Navigation Program and canoe launch



On March 7, 2020, the College of Micronesia-FSM traditional canoe was launched for the very first time to help promote the upcoming Traditional Navigation Program scheduled to start on June 1, 2020 at FSM-FMI in Yap in collaboration with Okeanos Foundation. The canoe sailed from the causeway leading to the airport to Nihco Marine Park where the Yapese Community of Pohnpei celebrated Yap Day and sailed around for all to see. The wind was very good for sailing that day so it took the canoe about two hours to get to Nihco Beach. The next day, the students sailed the canoe back to the causeway and transported the canoe back to the National Campus Werieng Canoe House. This was a historic event for the people of Pohnpei to watch a canoe of that size sailing around its coast.

The college is promoting alternative sustainable water transportation for the future of the people of FSM. We hope canoe builders from Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Chuuk can come forward to build canoes to revive our traditional knowledge, not only traditional navigation but also canoe building or craftsmanship.



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The college in collaboration with Okeanos Foundation is recruiting ten students for the upcoming Traditional Navigation Program “Traditional Navigation and applied Seamanship on offshore sailing canoes”. This program will be held on the FSM-FMI campus in Yap and students will finish the first level in one year. Interested students must be citizens of FSM, high school graduates, and healthy individuals. The program will be taught by Grand Master Navigator Ali Haleyalur of the Werieng School of Navigation, one of the last two schools of traditional navigation. Werieng means “Seen/see winds”, indicating that the canoe can catch all winds or can catch wind from all directions. The applied Seamanship part of the program will be taught by Okeanos Grand Master Navigator Peia Patai.

Anyone interested in joining the traditional navigation program should contact one of the following: Tioti B. Teburea at [tioti@comfsm.fm](mailto:tioti@comfsm.fm) or Karen Simion at [ksimion@comfsm.fm](mailto:ksimion@comfsm.fm)

# PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

## AGAINST **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)**

### WASH YOUR HANDS

WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND RUNNING WATER WHEN HANDS ARE **VISIBLY DIRTY**



IF YOUR HANDS ARE **NOT VISIBLY DIRTY**, FREQUENTLY CLEAN THEM BY USING ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUB OR SOAP AND WATER

### WASH YOUR HANDS

- after coughing
- when caring for the sick
- before, during and after you prepare food
- before eating
- after toilet use
- when hands are visibly dirty
- after handling animals or animal waste

### PROTECT OTHERS FROM GETTING SICK



WHEN COUGHING AND SNEEZING COVER **MOUTH AND NOSE** WITH FLEXED ELBOW OR TISSUE

THROW TISSUE INTO A CLOSED BIN IMMEDIATELY AFTER USE



**AVOID CLOSE CONTACT** WHEN YOU ARE EXPERIENCING COUGH AND FEVER

**AVOID SPITTING IN PUBLIC** AND SHARING SPITTING CONTAINERS



IF YOU HAVE FEVER, COUGH, AND DIFFICULTY BREATHING **SEEK MEDICAL CARE EARLY** AND SHARE PREVIOUS TRAVEL HISTORY WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER



FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs  
(691) 320-2619 | [health@fsmhealth.fm](mailto:health@fsmhealth.fm)

IF YOU ARE COUGHING, HAVING A FEVER AND HAVE DIFFICULTY BREATHING, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COVID-19 LINE

CHUUK (330-2214); KOSRAE (370-3012)  
POHNPEI (320-3107); YAP (350-2110)

# The FSM delegation attends video conference of health experts on COVID-19 between China and Pacific Island Countries

On March 10, 2020, China and Pacific island countries held a video conference to share experience and information on fighting COVID-19, bringing together officials from Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Health Commission, Chinese health and epidemiological experts, and officials and health experts from all 10 Pacific island countries that have diplomatic relations with China, namely, the Federated States of Micronesia, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Cook Islands and Niue. Among the 100 plus participants of the conference, the FSM delegation was led by Mr. Moses E. Pretrick, Acting Secretary of Health and Social Affairs, and composed of Ms. Lisa Barrow, Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Infectious Disease Coordinator, Mr. Patrick Carl, Chief of Fire of Pohnpei State Department of Public Safety, and representatives of the national and Pohnpei State coronavirus task forces. H.E. Huang Zheng, Chinese Ambassador to the FSM, also attended the conference with the FSM delegates at the Chinese Embassy in Palikir.

The Chinese side briefed on the latest developments in relation to China's fight against COVID-19, saying that President Xi Jinping personally commands and deploys the epidemic prevention and control efforts

and the situation is increasingly trending in a positive direction, with production and normal life gradually resumed in China. President Xi is now in Wuhan, Hubei Province, the epicenter of the epidemic for an inspection on the prevention and control work. China has full confidence, capability and determination to win the battle against the epidemic. Meanwhile, China is working hard to achieve this year's socio-economic development goals. Upholding the concept of a community with a shared future for humanity, China has been actively engaged in international cooperation in an open, transparent and highly responsible manner. China and Pacific island countries are both developing countries. China relates to the special difficulties Pacific island countries are facing in their response to COVID-19 and has promptly briefed relevant countries on related information, and taken strong measures to safeguard the health and safety of foreign nationals and international students in China from Pacific island countries. China wishes to join hands with Pacific island countries to step up information sharing, deepen cooperation on epidemic prevention, work in the spirit of solidarity and mutual assistance to break through the current difficulties, and protect regional and global public health security. China stands ready to provide necessary support and assistance within its means to

Pacific island countries in their epidemic prevention and control efforts as the situation evolves.

Professor Wu Zunyou, Chief Epidemiologist of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Professor Wang Guiqiang, Chairman of the Department of Infectious Diseases of Peking University First Hospital briefed on the etiology, routes of transmission, epidemiological developments, China's response and clinical treatment and answered dozens of questions regarding the viral information, protective measures for medical staff, targeted prevention and control, port of entry screening and quarantine, therapeutic solutions and vaccine development.

Acting Secretary Pretrick, along with the other officials and experts from Pacific island countries, praised China's outstanding achievements in fighting COVID-19 and major contributions to the global public health security, saying that China's experience has set a high standard and a good model for Pacific island countries, including the FSM, in their response to the epidemic. By personally going to Wuhan, President Xi Jinping effectively boosted the



morale and confidence of the Chinese people to overcome the disease and sent a positive signal to the international community that the epidemic will surely be contained. They expressed deep appreciation for China's initiative to hold the video conference and share China's experience, which they believe has provided timely and helpful information for the work in their respective countries. They added that virus respects no borders and friendship withstands the test of time. As China's good brothers and good partners, the FSM and the other Pacific islands countries look forward to enhancing cooperation with China in epidemic prevention and control and triumphing over COVID-19 together, as part of our concerted efforts to build a community with a shared future for humanity.

# We're hiring!

**Two positions available in Chuuk:**

- Power Plant Operator 1
- Power Plant Operator 2

Visit us online for job descriptions and more, at [www.vitalenergy.fm/career-opportunities](http://www.vitalenergy.fm/career-opportunities)



# BANKGUAM HOLDING COMPANY

P.O. Box BW • Hagåtña, Guam 96932

Tel: (671) 472-5273

## BANKGUAM HOLDING COMPANY AND SUBSIDIARIES

### UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2019; in 000's US Dollars)

Assets		Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity	
Cash and due from banks	\$ 37,870	Deposits:	
Interest bearing deposits in banks	93,846	Non-interest bearing	\$ 582,967
Total cash and cash equivalents	131,716	Interest bearing	1,146,939
Restricted cash	400	Total deposits	1,729,906
Investment in unconsolidated subsidiary	7,443	Accrued interest payable	118
Investment securities available-for-sale, at fair value	377,130	Subordinated debt, net	14,751
Investment securities held-to-maturity, at amortized cost	49,984	Other liabilities	44,044
Federal Home Loan Bank stock, at cost	2,267	Total Liabilities	1,788,819
Loans, net of allowance for loan losses	1,275,272	Commitments and contingencies	
Accrued interest receivable	5,581	Stockholders' equity:	
Premises and equipment, net	19,754	Common stock	2,023
Other assets	83,515	Preferred stock	980
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,953,062</b>	Additional paid-in capital, Common stock	24,478
		Additional paid-in capital, Preferred stock	8,803
		Retained earnings	129,576
		Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(1,327)
		Common stock in treasury, at cost	(290)
		Total stockholders' equity	164,243
		<b>Total Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity</b>	<b>\$ 1,953,062</b>

### UNAUDITED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2019; in 000's US Dollars)

Interest income	\$ 92,905
Interest expense	2,494
<b>Net interest income</b>	<b>90,411</b>
Provision for loan losses	9,788
<b>Net interest income, after provision for loan losses</b>	<b>80,623</b>
Non-interest income	17,679
Non-interest expense	76,550
<b>Income before income taxes</b>	<b>21,752</b>
Income tax expense	5,601
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 16,151</b>

## BANK OF GUAM FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA BRANCHES

### STATEMENT OF CONDITION (Year ended December 31, 2019; in 000's US Dollars)

Assets		Liabilities and Equity	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,147	Deposits:	
Loans, net of allowance for loan losses	26,696	Non-interest bearing	\$ 51,647
Accrued interest receivable	103	Interest bearing	137,100
Premises and equipment, net	446	Total deposits	188,747
Other assets	1,218	Accrued interest payable	25
Due from Bank of Guam	160,488	Other liabilities	1,326
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 190,098</b>	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 190,098</b>

### STATEMENT OF INCOME (Year ended December 31, 2019; in 000's US Dollars)

Interest income	\$ 6,489
Interest expense	249
<b>Net interest income</b>	<b>6,240</b>
Provision for loan losses	302
<b>Net interest income, after provision for loan losses</b>	<b>5,938</b>
Non-interest income	1,021
Non-interest expense	2,286
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 4,673</b>

## UH Hilo graduate student Bryan Tonga initiates first comprehensive study ever done on nearshore water quality in Micronesia

Findings from the research will contribute vital information to climate adaptation efforts in Pohnpei and other tropical Pacific island nations, allowing them to better manage their coastal waters, improve water quality, and reduce damage to coral reefs in the face of climate change.

By Leah Sherwood

February 25, 2020

A graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo has been collecting data to assess nearshore water quality and its effect on coral reefs in the island state of Pohnpei, the capital of the Federated States of Micronesia. FSM is an island nation in the Western Pacific situated south of Guam and east of the Philippines.

Bryan Tonga, in 2017 as an undergraduate, weighs out samples for analysis on the Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometer, UH Hilo Analytical Lab.

Bryan Tonga, who is from Pohnpei and a graduate student in the UH Hilo tropical conservation biology and environmental science program, says he and his colleagues are evaluating sewage pollution using a multi-indicator approach.

"We are measuring salinity, turbidity, nutrients, nitrates, and fecal indicator bacteria levels in the water," he explains. "We also sampled macroalgae for stable nitrogen isotopes and nitrogen content."

Tonga has spent the past two summers in Micronesia collecting water and macroalgae samples from 31 stations around Pohnpei's coastline, including both populated and pristine remote areas, which are difficult to reach due to the mangrove forests covering most of the island's coast. His work is the first comprehensive documentation of the water quality conditions on Pohnpei's coastline.

He says the macroalgae get their nutrients from the water column.

"In order to figure out if the macroalgae

Continued on next page

# Chuuk Women's Council officially launches FSM's first Violence Against Women Counselling Center

March 9, 2020

**Chuuk State, FSM-** Chuuk State First Lady, The Honorable Lady Bersita Elimo officially launched the Chuuk Women's Council "Tongen Inepwinew Counseling Center," which translated means "Love of the Family Counseling Center".

The Tongen Inepwinew Counseling Center is the first crisis support center for survivors of violence against women in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The Center provides free, confidential and non-judgmental counseling through trained "safe counselors" who provide counseling and support to survivors of domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment and child sexual abuse.

To develop its crisis counseling project, Chuuk Women's Council (CWC) has received funding and extensive on-going technical support from the Australian Government through Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women).

In his opening remarks, the Hon. Lt. Governor Mark Mailo said it is unfortunate that FSM has high rates of violence against women where it is estimated that one out of every three women in FSM have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner. "Chuuk State has the highest rate of violence against women compared to the other FSM States. This plague of violence in families is against our culture and our human rights values".

The Chuuk Women's Council project has

taken ten years to complete and includes the renovation of the Center's building to meet the required standards for a counseling service facility along with ongoing professional development and training of its counselors' ready for full service.

Christina Stinnett (better known as "Kiki") is the President of the Chuuk Women's Council, which is an umbrella organization of more than 60 women's organizations in Chuuk State and more than 1000 women members.

In her remarks, Ms. Kiki Stinnett said, "I believe that all women should live a life free from all forms of violence and discrimination. But it is essential that all women in Chuuk are made aware that there is a service available for survivors of violence against women. During CWC monthly Market Day on Feb. 28, 2020, the Tongen Inepwinew Counseling Team did community awareness to inform and educate the public about the new counseling center and the service they are providing. In an interview with a woman participant at the Market Day said and I quote, "Why now? You should have provided this service long time ago. It is good that we have this in Chuuk now as we are in-need of this center." I agree with this woman, if we don't do it now, then when and who will do it?" The Tongen Inepwinew Counseling Center envisions a Chuuk State that is free from all forms of violence and discrimination against women. All its activities are survivor or women centered which means we do not



blame the women for the domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment that she has experienced or is experiencing. It is never the woman's fault. The perpetrator is responsible for his violent behavior! The more we give excuses for his violent behavior, the more we are allowing the perpetrator to continue with his criminal act".

"With a 10-year commitment, Pacific Women enables support to diverse women's and civil society organizations and other partners to strengthen their own capacities to assist communities and empower women. Providing technical, convening and knowledge sharing support to the portfolio of initiatives and partners is Pacific Women's Support Unit, working alongside partners to improve the political, economical and social opportunities of Pacific women and to end violence against women and girls. It is this support that is proving invaluable to partners such as the Chuuk Women's Council. To have a dream to open a counseling service is one thing, but to be able to access international and local expertise to make that happen, in

addition to funding resources, is what makes the Australian Government's Pacific Women program support so unique" - Ms. Dionisia Bernard Asher, Senior Program Manager, Australian Embassy, FSM

"I would like to acknowledge the kindness of the Japan Government through their Japan Embassy in Pohnpei, FSM for their generosity by funding this beautiful Shinobu M. Poll Memorial Center. Our sincere "Kinisou Chapur", and thank you, to the Australian Government and its Pacific Women team who have tirelessly supported us to make this dream a reality in funding the Federated States of Micronesia's first Counseling Center for survivors of violence against women here in Chuuk State", Ms. Kiki Stinnett, President Chuuk Women's Council.

For more information please contact the President of the Chuuk Women's Council, Christina "Kiki" Stinnett, Phone Number: (691) 330- 5263/ 8397/ 4232 Email: kikinnett@chuukwomen.org

Continued from previous page

are getting nutrients from sewage pollution in the water, we're taking readings of Nitrogen-15, which has very specific values for human sewage," he explains. Tonga notes that development along coastal areas in Pohnpei is increasing, causing more water pollution.

**Managing the effects of climate change:** Findings from Tonga's research will contribute vital information to climate adaptation efforts in Pohnpei and other tropical Pacific island nations, allowing them to better manage their coastal waters, improve water quality, and reduce damage to coral reefs in the face of climate change in the region.

"We need to establish baseline water quality conditions because with climate change the water quality could shift dramatically," says Tracy Wiegner, a water quality expert and professor of marine science who is on Tonga's thesis committee. "In Pohnpei, like here on the island of Hawai'i, a lot of houses

use cesspools. With rising sea levels, they can become inundated with sea water and sewage can flow out to the nearshore reefs. Also, climate change could bring increased precipitation, which would mean increased land runoff to the shores and potential flooding of cesspools."

Wiegner is the director of the Analytical Laboratory at UH Hilo, where Tonga is analyzing his collected samples. "Bryan has collected the first nutrient samples from Micronesia ever," notes Wiegner.

Bryan Tonga, at right, with fellow student Sione Lam Yuen, in 2017 when Tonga was a marine science undergraduate and worked as a laboratory assistant at the UH Hilo Analytical Lab. Here, the students prepare samples for analysis on the Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometer. Courtesy photo.

Along with Wiegner, Tonga's thesis work is being supervised by UH Hilo marine



science professors Karla McDermid and Steven Colbert. McDermid, an expert in phycology, will help Tonga identify the macroalgal tissue samples since distinct species may take up nutrients from the ocean differently.

Tonga plans to share his data with stakeholder agencies in Pohnpei such as the Pohnpei Environmental Protection Agency (PEPA), the National Food Safety Laboratory in Pohnpei, the Conservation Society of Pohnpei, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. He says the agencies recognize the significance of his research and have responded by contributing institutional resources to support his efforts in creating baseline data for nutrients in the water.

"PEPA let me use their lab to do my readings and bacteria culturing, but they cannot process the nutrient content, so that is being done in the UH Hilo Analytical

Lab," says Tonga. "PEPA hosted me and provided me with transportation and a lab technician. They think it is really important for Pohnpei to have me doing this kind of project because the research capacity is low, and they are currently only able to do limited amounts of water quality testing."

While in Pohnpei, Tonga also mentored Wayneheart Celestine, an undergraduate from the College of Micronesia, on water quality sampling and laboratory analyses. Celestine's internship was supported by the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program at UH Hilo.

Tonga's project is supported by the Pacific Islands Climate Adaptation Science Center and Hawai'i Sea Grant. His travel in 2018 was funded by an L-SAMP grant from the National Science Foundation.

Story by Leah Sherwood, a graduate student in the tropical conservation biology and environmental science program at UH Hilo. She received her bachelor of science in biology and bachelor of arts in English from Boise State University.

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## Young Sun gives notice of \$9 million claim against Pohnpei if sea cucumber contract canceled by new law

By *Bill Jaynes*  
*The Kaselehlie Press*

*March 20, 2020*

**Pohnpei**—After the new law on sea cucumber harvests passed which established a five year moratorium on Sea Cucumber harvests and set up a Sea Cucumber Commission, Marstella Jack, attorney for eight young plaintiffs filed a motion to dismiss the case asking the court to put a permanent stop to the contract between Pohnpei State and Young Sun International Trading Company to do a sea cucumber harvest. However, on March 6 she filed another motion on behalf of her clients asking the court to hold in abeyance her previous motion to dismiss. The new motion came after Pohnpei Governor Reed Oliver wrote a letter to Speaker Ausen T. Lambert that, though he unreservedly associates himself with the new sea cucumber harvest law, a legal question had arisen regarding the contract with Young Sun. He quoted Section 5 of Article 4 of Pohnpei's Constitution which says "No law may impair an existing contractual obligation, except for protection of an essential public interest."

The reason that Jack had initially filed a motion to dismiss was because the new law would have made the claims of the case moot. However, since it appears that the Legislature is considering changing the law so that it does not apply retroactively to Young Sun, the claims may once again be applicable.

Young Sun opposed the dismissal of the case because they want to be able to sue the young defendants for damages.

The Governor's letter to the Speaker of the Legislature seems to have been motivated by a notice of intent to collect \$3 million in damages if the State cancels its contract with Young Sun dated January 31. Salomon Saimon, attorney for Young Sun wrote that it is his client's position that no essential public interest needs to be protected as the Constitution allows because earlier studies had already showed that the planned sea cucumber harvest is sustainable. Saimon wrote that the amount of damages is "because of thrashing my client's reputation and destruction of my client's business in the market."

On March 3, Pohnpei Acting Attorney General responded to the notice of intent to sue saying that the Governor had submitted an amendment to the law in question that if passed would allow for the contract to be honored as planned.

On February 3, Saimon increased the amount of damages that Young Sun intends to claim from the State to \$9 million. He said that the reason for the increase was that in training in preparation for a harvest, Young Sun's expert revealed trade secrets to employees of the State.

The Governor's proposed amendment to the law has been assigned to the Legislature's Standing Committee on Resources and Development.

## ANZAC DAY

25 APRIL 2020  
DAWN SERVICE - KANGAROO COURT, POHNPEI



The Australian Defence Force and Australian Embassy Pohnpei wish to advise that due to COVID-19 a decision has been made to cancel this year's ANZAC Day Dawn Service.

ANZAC Day is a time to commemorate the sacrifices made by members of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corp (ANZAC) on the beaches of Gallipoli, Turkey during World War I and to recognise the contribution of all service men and women across the globe who have served since. We hope you can take a moment to remember those sacrifices privately on the 25th of April 2020.





**FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA  
DEVELOPMENT BANK**

P.O. Box M  
Kolonias, Pohnpei FM 96941

**Opening Date: March 12, 2020**  
**Closing Date: April 12, 2020**

**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT  
NO. 2020-001**

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:** Branch Manager  
**LOCATION:** FSM Development Bank, Chuuk Branch Weno, Chuuk FSM  
**SALARY:** \$21,361.60 minimum per annum,  
Higher Salary may be Considered Depending on Qualification

**GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (Illustrative only):**

1. Supervises the Branch staff and oversees the daily operation of the Branch office.
2. Ensures that the Branch office provides effective financial services to the public as prescribed by the bank's mandate, policy and stated objectives.
3. Ensures that all inquiries and applications for loans receive a prompt response.
4. Ensures that evaluations of loan applications are effectively and efficiently processed using the Bank's credit criteria and evaluation reports and supporting documents are dispatched to the Loan Division of the Headquarters without delay.
5. Provides guidance and orientation to ensure that employees of the Branch are knowledgeable regarding the Bank's services, policies, procedures and regulations to the extent that they may effectively and efficiently serve the bank's customers and general public.
6. Provides effective monitoring and evaluation of all branch projects to ensure that they are performing accordingly and to provide periodic reports to the Headquarters office.
7. Represents the bank at official functions, activities, and forums within the State and provides periodic reports to the President regarding developments in the State with appropriate recommendations for policy changes.

8. Ensures that all reports, reviews, correspondence, statistics, and other information originating from the Branch Office is accurate and timely.
9. Effects loan disbursements and supervises the use of the bank's funds.
10. Pursues collection of loan payments including late and delinquent loan payments.
11. Assists clients who have difficulties meeting payment schedules by suggesting alternative payment arrangements within the established policies and procedures of the bank.
12. Reports progress regarding such loans to the Corporate Office and implement instructions accordingly.
13. Prepares branch annual plans (MBO) and budget estimates for the Branch according to policies and procedures, and manage approved budgets accordingly.
14. Advises clients regarding services of the Branch to promote new business and local enterprise. Conducts research and documents potential local projects to be financed by the Bank, and advises the Corporate Office accordingly.
15. Continuously evaluates the performance of the Branch and the operating environment and make recommendations to the Corporate Office as to ways that the performance may be improved.
16. Performs other duties as assigned.

**QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS:**

Bachelor's degree in in business, economics, finance or other related field of study from an accredited college or university plus two (2) to four (4) years of related work experience and training, or equivalent combination of education and experience.

**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 by email to: loverh@fsmdb.fm, on or before April 12, 2020.

**COVID-19 (2)**

*Continued from page 4*

and many have complained, finding the quarantine procedure to be a needless formality. Others have written to the Governor expressing their appreciation for the quarantine facility.

“There will continue to be gaps, despite our best efforts. We have to come to terms with the fact that the virus may make its way here eventually. The sooner people start taking our efforts seriously and helping rather than just criticizing, complaining and posting nasty comments on social media, the sooner we can focus on other areas where we desperately need to start planning for, like increasing the capacity of our morgue, how to ensure the elderly get their social security checks without making them more vulnerable to the disease then they already are, what to do about our students who possibly won't finish the rest of the school year, what kinds of laws we need to put in place to ensure hygiene is paramount in our daily lives, but more important than all of these, how to get people to change their habits and attitudes. Spitting, nose-blowing onto the ground, sharing

cups, not washing hands properly, not sanitizing public areas--we cannot afford to keep up these unhygienic behaviors. Our lives depend on it more now than ever before,” Gallen wrote.

Pohnpei is still not ready despite their best efforts but they are trying to be. Funding is an issue. “For now, we are running severely short on Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) especially masks. We still have zero hospital machinery or equipment such as ventilators. Even first world countries are not equipped, so it should come as no surprise to anyone that we are not prepared or equipped either. Not IF, but WHEN this virus hits, we will likely have to go on complete lockdown. People should prepare for that—not panic and go out and buy all the rice and toilet paper. But prepare responsibly, practically, and with common sense and foresight. We were also told that we are running out of “our share” of funds from the National Government, according to the FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs. We've only just begun and the funds have depleted. We're not even close to ready.”

But for now, the novel coronavirus has not yet been confirmed in the FSM.

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# Seabees return to Yap - 50 years of good will

By Lt. Brad Garrigues, CEC, USN Det Yap Officer in Charge

U.S. Navy Seabees with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 arrived in Yap, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) on Jan. 6 to reestablish a permanent presence within the community that began over 50 years ago by the “Better than Best” Bees of ‘69.

The new construction detail in Yap will execute engineering civic assistance projects, conduct skills exchanges with the host nation, and perform community service events to enhance shared capabilities and maintain vital relationships in the region. The addition of another construction detail in FSM will also allow Seabees deployed to either Yap or Pohnpei to conduct short term construction projects in Chuuk and Kosrae through “fly-away” teams, which are able to move back and forth between the islands quickly easily when called upon.

“Adding a construction detail in Yap expands the Seabees capability and strengthens our ties to the community, enhancing the relationship between the Navy and Micronesia,” said Capt. Steve Stasick, Commodore 30th Naval Construction Regiment.

Yap is one of four states that make up FSM, situated across the Caroline Island chain. From West to East, they are the States of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae. While Yap encompasses over 200 miles of coral islands, the seat of government is situated in Colonia, on the largest main island.

It is from Colonia that the Spanish (1668-1899), German (1899-1919), and Japanese (1919-1945) ruled, bringing trade, missionaries, and weapons of war. Over the years, the Yapese maintained a cohesive cultural identity, even as one foreign nation after another imparted Yap with new and diverse ways of life. World War II historical markers dot Yap where American Hellcats, B17s, and Japanese Zeros fell over the Japanese held island. Fortuitously bypassed by America in the island-hopping campaign, Yap was finally liberated from Japan in 1945. In 1947, the United Nations turned official control of Yap over to the U.S. as a Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI). This designation allowed the fledgling island nations of Marshall Islands, Palau, and the future FSM access to many governmental functions as they modernized.

In the late 1960s, an agreement between the Department of Interior, Defense, and the Micronesian people allowed for the deployment of Seabee Civic Action Teams (CAT Teams or Seabee Teams) throughout

the TTPI on missions of good will. The CAT Teams, typically 13 Seabees strong, arrived with the express goals of improving economic, educational, and health care development. They achieved this by providing critical road, utility, and government facility construction. Their secondary goal was to provide locals with technical skills training and develop enduring relationships within the community.

Seabee Team 0315 (NMCB-3, Team 15) touched down in Colonia, Yap on July 29th, 1969 in a torrential downpour. As the story goes, the first bulldozer rolling off the landing ship discovered local roads completely awash. Without hesitation, the equipment operators set to work clearing and opening roads. This left an enduring impression on the Yapese, who were impressed to find the U.S. Navy Seabees improving their island even before completing debarkation. This would have been their fifth tour in Vietnam, but a last-minute orders change found these men in a tropical paradise of coconut trees, pristine fishing, and a populace eager to learn from them.

Yap’s main island is a conglomeration of four smaller islands, governed by three Paramount Chiefs. Seabee Team 0315 immediately set to work cutting roads and bridges through thick coconut jungle and mangrove swamps, binding the islands together for the first time. Before these roads, it was virtually impossible to arrange meetings with all of the Paramount Chiefs and many Village Chiefs for the purpose of democratic organization.

In the succeeding years, Seabees built airfields, water catchments, schools, and dispensaries. They led technical skills training in construction, medicine, and heavy machinery. They maintained the roads and repaired water lines, even collecting trash twice a week. In the evenings, Seabees visited villages and showed Hollywood movies via a generator and film projector. This proved an ingenious way to entertain families, while ensuring maximum participation of government leaders “town hall” meetings. At the conclusion of the meeting, the movie would begin.

In 1979, Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae formed the FSM constitution and were recognized by the United Nations as a new federation. In 1986, FSM and the U.S. signed the mutually beneficial Compact of Free Association (COFA), recognizing FSM’s full self-governance while articulating the unique partnership the two countries would continue to share. COFA ensures continued national defense by the U.S., as well as other key services

like Peace Corps, Postal Service, FEMA, National Weather Service, and U.S. military eligibility for FSM citizens.

In recent years, FSM had only seen Seabees for survey visits, fleet exercises (e.g., Pacific Partnership 2018), or two-month deployments by Underwater Construction Teams. These short, intense visits did not provide the close-knit partnering that takes years to build within a community. Yapese used to send their Seabees home in celebratory fashion, with dancing, feasts, and gifting of their extremely precious Stone Money. One such Stone Money gift to Seabee Team 6207 (NMCB-62) can be viewed in the Seabee Museum in Port Hueneme, California.

Today, the legacy of the Seabees in Yap are found at every turn. Along roads first blazed by Alfa Company operators into Gagil and Tomil; in the painted “Fearless 74” beep sticker on Dalipebinaw Elementary; and at Camp Gutaw, turned into the College of FSM – Yap Campus, but still known locally as “Seabee Flat.” Their legacy is found in every Yapese citizens older than 25 who will eagerly share a story of U.S. Seabees handing out popsicles, showing movies, or repairing schools. They are in the stories of the Public Works Director, who as a young boy helped Seabees carry tools to and from the project site near his home.

Their legacy is found in the memories of Yap State Governor Henry Falan, who was deeply moved by the professionalism and hard work of the Vietnam-veteran Ensign officer-in-charge. Falan was a young man when assigned by his Village Chief to assist the Seabees as they built the reinforced concrete bridge connecting his home in Maap to Colonia. In the governor’s first meeting with NMCB-5, he began with, “Welcome to Yap. I urge you, don’t leave!”

Through social media, former Seabee CAT members reach out to share pictures,

stories, and words of encouragement. Is the Seabee camp still there? Will the CAT Teams return?

Chief Equipment Operator Rod Yost, retired of Seabee Team 7415 (1989-1990) shared, “A funny time was when we had a 400lb pig take up residence in our camp, he would not leave. We named the pig Porky, turnover mascot.” Senior Chief Construction Mechanic David Tucker, retired of CAT 0425 in 1991 does not remember Porky, but he does recall a delicious pig roast at his turnover party. They all speak proudly of the work they completed and the beautiful people and culture of Yap.

The “Professionals,” of NMCB-5 are reestablishing the detail site, surveying minor projects, receiving tools, and reacquainting themselves with the Yapese. With a spirit of service, Seabees in Yap can be found in schools throughout the island installing mosquito screens, and repairing water and electrical systems.

“It’s an honor to have our Navy Seabees back in Yap-helping improve the infrastructure as well as upholding our deep ties and relationships,” said Cmdr. Ryan Carey, NMCB-5’s commanding officer. “It’s extremely gratifying to reconnect our Seabee heritage with our hosts, the people of Yap, who already have such a rich history. We look forward to implementing and bilaterally supporting community construction projects with our friends in FSM.”

Elsewhere, America’s Bees are carrying the mantle of their CAT Team forefathers in Palau, Timor-Leste, Palawan, Marshall Islands, Tinian, and Pohnpei. NMCB-5 is deployed across the Indo-Pacific region conducting high-quality construction to support U.S. and partner nations to strengthen partnerships, deter aggression, and enable expeditionary logistics and naval power projection.



Photo By Petty Officer 1st Class Stephane Belcher | 200221-N-PG340-1002 YAP, Federated States of Micronesia

# The FSM Trust Fund's current balance is \$284,200,000

## FSM Information Services

**PALIKIR, Pohnpei**—On March 5th, 2020, the Board of Trustees of the FSM Trust Fund met in the State of Pohnpei with Ms. Maggie Ralbovsky, the investment advisor and Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) from Wilshire Associates who has been providing innovative investment solutions and objective, independent investment advice to the Nation. Ms. Ralbovsky demonstrated that, as of January 31st, 2020, the FSM Trust Fund

had a total balance of \$284,200,000 (284.2 million dollars), compared to a balance of \$266,900,000 (266.9 million dollars) reported at the end of fiscal year 2019 (i.e. September 30th, 2019.) This represents a fiscal-year-to-date return of 5%.

Since 2011, the FSM Trust Fund's investment gains has reached approximately \$82,000,000 (82 million dollars). The rapid increase in the value of the FSM Trust Fund reflects the strong

commitments from the Executive and Legislative Branches to ensure the long-term financial prosperity of the Nation.

"While we are pleased with the investment results, we are mindful of the challenges and risks we are facing from multiple fronts, including the ongoing disruption caused by the COVID-19 virus, and long-term disruptions from climate change induced events," said Iso Ihlen Joseph, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The Secretary of Finance and Administration, the Honorable Eugene Amor, added that "It is important for us fiduciaries of this FSM sovereign wealth fund to keep a long-term perspective without being distracted by near term market volatilities. Long term sustainable investment principles require us to continuously evaluate sound diversification alternatives and promote responsible investment strategies to ensure the long-term sustainability of our Trust Fund."

Trustees, Mr. Fabian Nimea, further added that "The FSM Trust Fund can [be a] leader among the Pacific Islands in impacting future investment initiatives of the companies we invest in. We can engage with all companies that we provide capital to in the collective effort to ensure continued progress in curbing climate change and promoting sustainable ocean economy."

With these remarks, the Board set its future initiatives in studying and promoting more sustainable investment strategies while managing near term market risks.

The FSM Trust Fund is a sovereign wealth fund that was created by the FSM Congress through the FSM Code Title 55, Chapter 12 (as amended by subsequent Public Laws). The Investment Advisor, Wilshire Associates, is based in California and is one of the world's major investment advisory and management firms for large institutions.



The Vice Chairman of the Board of

## Australian Embassy provides \$20K grant to Pohnpei Swimming Club

The Australian Embassy recently provided Pohnpei Swimming Club with \$20,000 grant to assist with the re-painting of the swimming pool and other related improvements. Pohnpei swimming club has been responsible for the management pool for past few years, however, there was demand for some improvements and repairs. As a result, they were able to secure funding support from the Australian Embassy to facilitate swimming pool renovation plans. With the grant provided, it is envisaged that the new look pool will further enhance and promote community learn to swim programs for men and women in Pohnpei, and foster increased participation in swimming activities to improve healthy lifestyles and wellbeing.



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## Message from the COM-FSM President's Office

In times of uncertainty, such as the Coronavirus pandemic, it is the responsibility of the College of Micronesia-FSM (COM-FSM) President's Office to disseminate factual and relevant information on a timely and regular basis. The purpose of these communications is to inform the community so as to mitigate rumors, panic and fear. Communications from this office will appear on the COM-FSM webpage with weekly updates or as necessary.

The college's primary objective is to keep students, faculty and staff as safe and healthy as possible at this time. With this in mind, the college has taken the following preventative actions and preparations since the emergency public health declarations from the nation and states.

### PREVENTIVE REMINDERS:

- IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS SUCH AS TEMPERATURE, SORE THROAT, RUNNY NOSE – STAY HOME AND CONTACT YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICE
- PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING
- SANITIZE FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES
- COUGH OR SNEEZE INTO A TISSUE OR FOLDED ELBOW
- PRACTICE GOOD HAND HYGIENE

### Actions:

**The College of Micronesia-FSM will cease classes immediately. This will end the semester and final grades are due from faculty on Friday, March 20, 2020. Staff should ask their immediate supervisor for further instructions.**

### Previous Actions include:

- Activate the Emergency Management Team with representatives on each state's emergency task force;
- Educate the college community on preventive measures – practice good hand hygiene, disinfect frequently touched surfaces, practice social distancing Identify plans and procedures should a case of the virus be suspected on the island, including training staff and securing necessary supplies;
- Identify plans, procedures and quarantine space should a student or employee have symptoms of the virus while on campus;
- Cancelled all student extra-curricular activities;
- Banned all unnecessary college travel;
- The college will then follow the US Department of Education regulations on shortening a term if this happens prior to the end of the semester;
- Collaborate with FSM Health and State Health Departments and task force.

Updates on plans and actions will be posted on the COM-FSM website regularly. Stay healthy!



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